

29 January 1988

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Anglo/French Summit, London

The Duke of Edinburgh visits Ascension Island

DAVOS Symposium starts

STATISTICS

BoE: London sterling certificates of deposit (Dec)

BoE: Bill turnover statistics (Dec)

BoE: UK banks assets and liabilities and the money stock (Dec)

BoE: Sterling commercial papers (Dec)

PARLIAMENT

Commons

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILL

Business: Consumer Arbitration Agreements Bill: 2nd Reading (Mr James Pawsey)

Sunday Sports (No 2) Bill: 2nd Reading (Mr Nicholas Soames)

Abortion (Treatment of Non-Resident Women) Bill: 2nd Reading (Mr Edward Leigh)

Adjournment Debate: The future of Stonyeths and Woodilee Hospital (Mr T Clarke)

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGESTMAIN NEWS

Anglo/Irish Agreement under renewed strain after Birmingham bombers' appeal turned down in same week that no further prosecutions in Stalker affair are announced.

Irish confidence in British rule of law said to have been shaken.

Irish Government and clergy up in arms. Victims' families say "Thank God".

Campaign to free men will continue, say Granada TV. Irish Justice Minister calls on Home Secretary to exercise clemency.

All-out strike at Ford from Monday in spite of improved offer which is not to be put to workers. Ford consider it "outrageous" new offer is not to be balloted.

Star uses your interview on Wednesday leading with "My cure for the NHS" - better management of smaller units with a caring heart back into the NHS. Inside 2 pages headed "My land of hope" covering health care, Gorbachev, the resurgence of the North and hanging.

You rule out hospital charges this parliament.

Mail says Health Select Committee is to launch an inquiry into the Opren drug affair and MPs condemn pay-out as "mean and measly". Leader says it defies justice.

TUC plans "day of action" over NHS on March 5. Today says 50 hospitals face walk-out on Wednesday.

Britain's trade in the red last year by £2.7bn - Today says that means there will be only a 2p cut in tax. But share prices up.

George Gale, in Mail, says Budget should be used to benefit majority by reducing taxes instead of increasing spending.

Manchester City Council agrees cuts of £110m, involving loss of 4,000 jobs.

Kinnock calls on Benn not to contest leadership; Sun says Benn is enjoying an Indian summer.

Mirror leads with IBA report which says British TV is too violent and watching it can make people turn to violence.

Judge attacks Parole Board of undermining courts by releasing prisoners too early.

Arco pulls out of Britoil and makes dawn swoop for Tricentrol.

Klaus Fuchs, atomic spy, dies in East Germany, 76.

BIRMINGHAM BOMBING

Star: Alert in Ulster as bombers lose battle.

Sun describes Chris Mullin MP as loony for saying "This is a black day for British justice"; leader says it is to Mullin's eternal shame that he pronounced this verdict. The Birmingham six are worthless murderers who killed in cold blood.

Mirror: Outcry as pub bomb 6 are sent back to jail; leader headed "Lingering doubts" says the men will go on protesting their innocence and their protests will be fuelled by two doubts about the refusal of a trial by jury and when men confessed.

Today: Fury and fear as IRA pub bombers lose fight.

Express leads with "Justice has been done" - victims; leader headed "Guilty the only verdict" says the bombers did not lack champions determined to assert their innocence. Now after the costliest criminal appeal in legal history we have the verdict. IRA sympathisers will no doubt always proclaim the innocence of the six bombers. The public at large has no reason to suppose that justice has not been done.

Mail: IRA pub bombers lose freedom plea.

Telegraph P1 lead: Judges discuss Birmingham bombing appeal - original jury verdict safe and satisfactory says Lord Chief Justice. Leader says this has been a helpful week for the IRA's propaganda machine. But it seems reasonable to hope that there are no more than squalls in the rough but necessary passage of Anglo-Irish relations. The next few days will see a flood of critical rhetoric but much of it may be discounted in advance.

Guardian gives massive coverage to case and leads with "Irish bitter over bombs verdict". Leader says it was no part of the appeal Court to assess the political repercussions of its judgements. The widespread conclusion in Ireland today, whatever the real merits of the judgement, is certain to be that the British judiciary can't be trusted.

Times leads on Irish anger as Birmingham pub bombers go back to jail. Irish Justice Minister calls on Home Secretary to show clemency saying he is dismayed and saddened by appeal rejection. Cardinal O'Fiaich says verdict would be received with amazement by a great many Irish people. Sir John Farr MP to demand that the Home Secretary invokes Royal Prerogative and release the six men; leader says it might well have suited British diplomacy and policy in Northern Ireland for the Appeal Court to have come to a different decision.

Times: Mr Haughey vehemently criticises British Government for not prosecuting RUC officers in "shoot to kill" affair.

Independent P1 leads with Irish condemnation of Birmingham Six appeal verdict. Amid widespread criticism of decision, Irish Justice Minister says he is amazed and saddened. IRA put out statement saying the six had no connection with them. Leader says the timing of the verdict is unfortunate. The appeal must now go to the House of Lords: it would be highly unsatisfactory to leave even the faintest impression that it was rejected because judges find the prospect of police malfeasance too frightful to contemplate.

NHS

Sun says you may go in for lotteries to raise cash for NHS. Private Members' Bill being put forward.

Mirror: You attack striking nurses for harming patients.

Today: Maggie may pick lottery for NHS; leader says it is not before time that the Government is studying the idea. The pompous and high minded will object that gambling is no way to tackle the problem, but that is the opposite of the truth.

Express: Maggie quells fears over NHS charges.

Telegraph: Hotel fees for hospitals ruled out. Nurses duped by Left.

Guardian: Downing Street spokesman did not deny that Ministers are considering a plan disclosed in yesterday's Guardian to restructure the NHS and disband NHS unions!!!

Times: You confirm your election pledge not to charge patients for hospital stay.

Times: Trevor Clay of RCN accuses extreme Left-wingers in NUPE and

COHSE of driving nurses to strike. Unions estimate that up to 50 London hospitals will take part in strike.

Geoffrey Smith, in Times, discusses the NHS row and the difficulties facing the various interests. He accepts the argument not to write a blank cheque for the nurses but says Ministers should strike the right note of sympathetic understanding. That will be equally essential when the long-term reforms are published and he concludes that the country is less inclined to give the Conservatives the benefit of the doubt on health than on almost any other question.

Independent: In Commons' press conference, Kinnock attacks Government health policy as contradictory and a shambles; Guy's hospital considering scrapping deal with private health group in favour of developing its own private hospital to earn income for the NHS.

FT: NHS Chief Executive Len Peach, seconded from IBM for three years, says the last thing that is needed is another reform of management structure. He is also lavish in his praise for the 824 NHS general managers: "Their quality is as good as I have met in any industry".

FT: Ministerial review to be in stages: first a continuing drive for more efficiency; second an internal review of radical options such as abolishing regional health authorities; and third possible changes in financial provision.

AIDS

Star says conference on AIDS this week was an axe-grinder's concert, and was nobbled at the outset by homosexual lobby. A man from Mars could have sat through the whole conference without being made aware of the connection between homosexuality and disease.

Today says UK is operating an unofficial ban on AIDS sufferers at airports and ports; but Tony Newton denies it.

OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT

Today unimpressed with Home Secretary's proposals. He must come up with a more clear cut reform, otherwise Civil Service, public and press will still be left guessing. If there isn't an independent referee to decide what is and what isn't secret, secrecy will continue.

But Express records both Tory and Labour praise for proposed overhaul.

George Gale, in Mail, says journalists' sole privilege is access to public print - privilege enough for any man - and they should never expect special treatment.

And Colin Welch, in Mail, asks if it has occurred to the open Government fanatics that the more the Government is forced to be open, the more secret it will have to get.

Guardian leader counsels a wait and see policy until White Paper appears, since has not disclosed who will categorise protected information or whether there will be a public interest defence.

Times leader describes the Home Secretary's radio interview on the Official Secrets Act as one of sweetest reasonableness but adds that it is time to consider how to protect national security, and specifically how to deal with one of the key problems raised by the Spycatcher case.

Independent leader says that although Douglas Hurd surprised MPs with his "Analysis" interview so soon after telling the House it would be folly to pronounce yet; the interview left no one any the wiser. The Government still has to define what is a matter of national security and the bias should be in favour of the right to know.

LAW AND ORDER

Times: Government to amend Clause 28 of Local Government Bill to avoid a large-scale revolt in Lords.

Times: MPs plan filibuster to beat Alton abortion Bill.

Independent: "Pro-life" MPs backing Alton Bill determined to reject any amendment seeking to raise the limit to 24 weeks but could back compromise of 20 or 22 weeks. Otherwise they would try to re-run the issue in a new Bill in 12 months' time.

COMMUNITY CHARGE

Independent: Plans by DOE local government ministers to exempt monks and nuns from the poll tax challenged by the DHSS and Treasury.

EDUCATION

Times: Government admits it is considering the abolition of ILEA; Guillotine for Education Reform Bill.

ECONOMY

Times leader says the steep deterioration in balance of payments underlines the need for caution in determining the level of borrowing in the Budget.

Times: The threatened trade war between Europe and the US over illegal subsidies given to Airbus Industrie has been defused.

Times: Reappointment of Bank of England Governor met with subdued response in City as many believe that his second term confirms Bank's waning power and autonomy in relations with Treasury and Government.

Times: Chairman of International Stock Exchange attacks Financial Services Act because of effect it could have on small investor.

INDUSTRY

Times: DPP handed interim report about possibility of insider trading by employees of DTI, OFT and Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Times: Nissan UK to sell 40,000 British built Bluebird models in this country.

FT: US set to ease curbs on transfer to European allies of sensitive defence technology for fighter aircraft.

MEDIA

FT: Murdoch may launch satellite television news channel for Europe to compete with Cable News Network.

FT: ITN is about to launch an all-night news service, with regular two-and-a-half minute bulletins, from February 15.

ANGLO/FRENCH SUMMIT

Times: Mitterrand ready for tough talking with you over European defence and agenda for European Summit.

Independent: Thatcher calls for closer Anglo/French defence ties as a way of drawing France back into NATO. Quoting your "unusually frank" L'Express interview, it says you also criticise recent Franco-German defence initiatives. In Independent commentary, Nico Henderson says Britain and France have many common interests, particularly in European and defence matters. It is in the latter area where prospects for collaboration are likely to be most fruitful.

FT: Leader says French reaction to your insistence that West Germany's attempts to water down budget stabiliser proposals must be resisted will be an important pointer to next month's European Summit debate. But, important as these issues are, they should not be allowed to dominate to the exclusion, for example, of discussion about nuclear cooperation.

EEC

Times: Edward Heath accuses you of having a "primaeval" attitude to Europe and running a "one-woman show".

Independent: Genscher has long telephone conversation with Foreign Secretary, reflecting growing realisation by Bonn that little can be gained by isolating you at the European Council. At Wednesday's meeting of the European Commission, Delors tries, in vain, to persuade the whole Commission to resign en masse if the Brussels' Council is a failure.

MIDDLE EAST

Times: Syrian troops storm hideouts in Beirut in hunt for kidnapped West German.

Independent: New book to be published on Tuesday in France says French Government has tolerated long-established semi-official arms trade with Iran, despite official embargo imposed in 1980.

Independent: Reagan pledges US support for Mubarak's peace proposals, but avoids being specific about the details of such backing. US officials said not to be hopeful of a breakthrough.

FT: President Reagan endorses Mubarak's call for a six-month cooling off period in Israel's occupied territories.

EAST/WEST

Times: Shevardnadze hints that Afghan pull-out could slip to 1989.

BERNARD INGHAM

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

DEM: Mr Fowler attends turf cutting for task undertakings, Coventry

DHSS: Mr Moore visits Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Health Authority

DOE: Mr Ridley visits Bristol Mini-Udc (prov)

HO: Mr Hurd attends Anglo-French Summit, London

MAFF: Mr MacGregor attends Anglo-French Summit, Lancaster House, London

MOD: Mr Younger attends Anglo-French Summit, Lancaster House, London

DEM: Mr Cope visits Wolverhampton (Inner Cities)

DEM: Mr Lee attends Caravan Industry Luncheon, Manchester

DEN: Mr Morrison gives opening lecture at Visiting Business In The Offshore Industry conference, Newcastle; later visits Rite-Vent Ltd, Washington, Tyne and Wear

DHSS: Mr Newton opens West Essex Breast Cancer Screening Service

DHSS: Lord Skelmersdale opens Care Village, Ironbridge, Shropshire

DHSS: Mrs Currie visits Southampton Hospital

DOE: Mr Moynihan visits the Ordnance Survey in Milton Keynes

HO: Lord Ferrers visits Oxfordshire Fire Service

MAFF: Mr Gummer attends National Association of Catering Butchers Conference, Butchers Hall

WO: Mr Grist opens Obstetrics Department, University of Wales College of Medicine, Cardiff

MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

DES: Mr Baker interviewed for Sunday Express magazine, My Favourite Walk

TV AND RADIO

"Today": BBC Radio 4 (6.30)

"Kilroy": BBC 1 (9.20)

"Daytime on Two": BBC 2 (9.30) Examines living on a low income

"Business Daily": Channel 4 (12.00)

"The Parliament Programme": Channel 4 (14.00)

"The Friday Report": BBC 2 (20.00) on disaster funds and how they are spent

"Any Questions?": BBC Radio 4 (20.20) with Baroness Trumpington, Bryan Gould MP, David Alton MP and Max Hastings

"Newsnight": BBC 2 (22.25)

"AIDS now": Channel 4 (22.30) examines proposed measures to control the disease

"The World Tonight": BBC Radio 4 (22.30) followed by "The Financial World Tonight" then "Today in Parliament"

"The London Programme": ITV (22.35) looks at the 'loony left' tag of London's Labour party and asks whether Labour can regain lost ground

"Week Ending": BBC Radio 4 (23.30) - Bill Wallis, David Tate, Sally Bruce and Royce Mills with a satirical view of the week's news
