

5 February 1988

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister on regional tour of Kent

Comic Relief Day

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Business:

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILL

Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Rear Seat Belts by Children)
Bill: 2nd Reading. (Mr Steven Day)

Environment and Safety Information Bill: 2nd Reading.
(Mr Chris Smith)

Unfair Reporting and Right of Reply Bill: 2nd Reading.
(Mrs Ann Clwyd)

Adjournment Debate: Speed limits and related transport safety matters in
Rutland and Melton constituency (Mr M Lathan)

Lords: Debate on EC Agricultural Stabilisers

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGESTMAIN NEWS

Seamen defy court - and union - to continue ferry strike; 1000 trucks waiting to get away at Dover.

Ford car workers reject improved pay offer backed by unions - deal sabotaged by shop floor militants, according to union official.

Postmen agree cuts in pay in return for £4,500 lump sum and one-and-half hour cut in working week.

Prison Officers' Association balloting for strike action at Broadmoor over location allowances.

Step ups for Cecil Parkinson and John Major in distribution of chairmanships held by Lord Whitelaw. Telegraph, Mail and Times lead with developments.

ILEA to be killed from 1990; ILEA teachers vote to strike over budget cuts.

Telegraph says Messrs Heseltine and Tebbit have done the parents of London a service by prodding Government into relinquishing the ILEA.

You attack Kinnock over nurses' strike - Labour seem to be more interested in having strikes than in welfare of patients. But Mail says Kinnock yesterday admitted Left wingers had given day of action and Labour Party a bad name.

Government considering using health stamps rather than taxation to fund NHS.

Birmingham professor resigns over plans to close beds in hospital there.

Edwina Currie, according to Today, wants Armed Forces to ban smoking in billets, mess halls and recreation rooms.

16 City men share £10m in golden handshakes from Barclays de Zoete Wedd share dealing section.

Reagan suffers reverse - some say worst foreign policy defeat - when Congress blocks military support for Contras. Guardian says Congress gives peace a chance.

Express, following up its Stalker revelations, says MPs' pressure for RUC Chief Constable Hermon to be sacked is increasing.

Another big IRA arms cache found in a house in North Belfast.

George gale, in Mail, says if Attorney General is right in concluding that peace in Northern Ireland will be more gravely threatened by prosecuting RUC officials than putting Stalker on the shelf, it is proof we cannot govern Ulster.

Guardian says Government is to bring forward legislation to make job discrimination against Roman Catholics a criminal offence.

Pictures of policeman battered by motorist stopped at road check with hammer.

Row over man, 23, who raped a woman while out on bail on another rape charge - jailed for ten-and-a-half years. MPs attack magistrates.

Tory MPs refuse to accept Government's guns confiscation without compensation policy.

Today says any MP who fails to vote today for Private Members Bill requiring children to be seat-belted in cars will be an "accomplice in the continuing slaughter of the innocents".

House prices rose 25% last year in South East.

Mail says you are throwing your weight behind a campaign to change charity laws to strip Moonies of tax free privileges.

Mail also claims that you are studying the idea of setting up a separate agency responsible for collecting VAT.

Times says it has located vital document which may prove a link between President Waldheim and execution of British commandoes.

NHS

Sun leader tells its readers not to be misled by Wednesday's rentamob scenes. The big day of action was one big flop with fewer than 1% of nurses supporting it. The Government's best idea yet for curing crisis in hospitals is health stamps because it would show people what they were paying for health.

Edward Pearce, in Express, urges you to listen to what public is saying over NHS.

Telegraph says nursing unions are to switch their tactics from strikes to pressure on MPs because of a fear of losing public sympathy.

Times: Health unions, encouraged by Wednesday's strike, are planning four more days of protests against NHS pay and funding, culminating in national TUC rally on 5 March.

Times: Health authorities warn you that radical reform in NHS could lead to higher administrative costs and varying standards of patient care.

Independent: NHS review set to be dominated by Ministers with high degree of financial expertise but relatively little experience of health services. They will be backed up by a support group of senior civil servants who are already meeting regularly. Change is likely to come in stages.

Independent: National Association of Health Authorities express doubts over switching NHS funding to national insurance.

Independent: Doctors in Birmingham and Manchester launch renewed protests over state of health service.

Independent: David Willetts says you ruled out a secret agenda for radical NHS reform in 1982.

FT: National Association of Health Authorities warns, in a report, that if widespread private health insurance were introduced without proper safeguards, the NHS would probably be reduced to a much narrower role.

FT: Pay review body wins hearts of some nursing leaders. Since it was set up in 1982, it has recommended average salary increases of 7.8% (1984), 8.6% (1985), 7.8% (1986) and 9.5% (1987), which the Government has always accepted though sometimes with phasing.

UNIONS

Express leader on "wreckers" says Ford workers have turned down a fair deal and the depressing aspect is their short-sightedness. Unless they have second thoughts, they could be on their way to turning a golden goose into a lame duck or, worse still, a dead one. So far as the seamen's strike is concerned, it says the rebel seamen are opening the union to risk of losing its assets and heavy damages.

Mail on "Seamen's act of folly" says NUS leaders are behaving as if they are under the impression that, having gone through the

right form of words in court, the lads are at liberty to carry on striking. The stoppage is not only idiotic but irresponsible. It harms the country as well as seamen themselves. They seem to be locked in a time warp and don't know world has changed.

Times: Hard Left plans to challenge T&GWU poll result if it fails to take control of executive.

Independent: Leading union leaders meet over the weekend to plot course for unionism into the 21st century - the first major review for 25 years.

ELECTRICITY

Times: Unions set to back Lord Marshall, who had informal talks with you last night, in row over control of national electricity prices.

Independent: CEGB shocked by flotation proposals, regarded throughout the electricity industry as a defeat for the board which had argued that it must retain control of the grid. Last night you had a two-hour meeting with Lord Marshall and Mr Parkinson.

FT: You have a strained meeting with Lord Marshall as CEGB prepares for last ditch public fight over DEn proposals to give off control of transmission grid.

INDUSTRY

Independent: Acute shortage of skilled engineers threatens to delay construction of British half of Chunnel. It is already three months behind schedule and further delays could mean stiff financial penalties for the consortium. On the French side, work has been plagued by strikes. You are to visit the Folkestone site for the first time today.

Times: B/Cal engineers and cleaners reject BA's new pay structure and prepare for ballot on possible strike action.

MEDIA

Independent leader says that unless the press regulates itself more effectively, Parliament will eventually legislate against it. The Press Council should be improved and a system of fines considered.

BUDGET

Telegraph says Treasury confirms Chancellor will unveil a "prudent" budget but denied this would mean sacrificing the Government's objective of reducing the basic rate of income tax to 25p.

Guardian says Treasury research suggests tax cuts would worsen trade deficit much less than most economists fear.

FT: Concerns about upsurge in inflationary pressures have been exaggerated, according to analysis published by Oxford Economic Forecasting Group.

CIVIL SERVICE

Independent: Whitehall unions are summoned to meeting next week with Sir Robin Butler, believed to be about the drastic reorganisation of the Civil Service. In parallel with the Ibbs report, the Treasury is coordinating a major new programme of job dispersal and drive for regional pay variations.

FT: Cabinet committee will shortly consider radical plans from Sir Robin Ibbs to reshape management of Civil Service, notably a plan to transfer some administrative functions to semi-independent agencies.

ILEA

Times leader says there should be no tears over the planned abolition of the ILEA but some of the boroughs taking over have become national by-words for political extremism, bloody-mindedness, incompetence and, in one case, corruption. It concludes that the best that can be said of some of the rotten boroughs is that they are small and more vulnerable to their electorate than the ILEA.

Independent leader says the decision is more logical than the manifesto proposals, although Mr Baker would have done better to give ILEA schools direct-grant status thus making them less vulnerable to feverish political passions.

LAW AND ORDER

Times: Lords uphold rights of prisoners to challenge disciplinary decisions of governors in the court Times: More solicitors may sit as judges under new selection system being discussed between Lord Chancellor's Department and Law society.

Times: Appeal Court rules that unborn child has no legal rights.

Times: Lord Denning condemns Attorney General's decision to drop High Court proceedings against the Moonies.

IRELAND

Independent: Attorney General says he cannot decide whether to prosecute Stalker under the Official Secrets Act until after his book is published. In whole page coverage of the book, Independent says central question of Stalker inquiry - did British police officers deliberately kill suspected terrorists? - remains unanswered. MI5 secrets a prime motive for cover-up. Senior political sources in Dublin still insist that clear signals had come from RUC and Whitehall that prosecutions were imminent.

Times: Police on both sides of border are cooperating closely in trying to track route of ice-cream lorry full of arms for IRA.

EC

Independent: European Court of Justice rules that British ban on European milk is illegal.

MIDDLE EAST

Independent: Richard Murphy stops off in London today on his way to new US Middle East peace initiative designed to induce Israel to grant some autonomy to Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza, prior to full-scale talks at an international peace conference.

UN row over arms for Iran closer (Times).

ITALY

Times: Italian Government coalition on brink of collapse.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

DES: Mr Baker addresses the National Association of Advisors for Computers in Education Conference at the Palace Hotel, Buxton

DOE: Mr Ridley attends dinner for University of Buckingham, Students Political Association, Buckingham

HO: Mr Hurd unveils plaque to Sir Robert Peel in London and addresses Peel Society dinner, Tamworth

SO: Mr Rifkind visits William Collins, Publishers, Glasgow; later visits J and P Coats, Paisley

DEM: Mr Cope addresses Bristol Chamber of Commerce

DEM: Mr Lee visits Frontierland Wild West Theme Park, Morecambe

DEM: Mr Nicholls presents ATO status awards, Bicton College, Devon

DES: Lady Hooper visits Essex LEA

DES: Mr Jackson attends Medical Research Council's Dinner, Leeds Castle

DHSS: Lord Skelmersdale visits COMARE, Porton Down

DHSS: Mrs Currie visits Small Heath School and Dudley Road Hospital, Birmingham

DOE: Mr Howard takes part in Cambridge Union Debate

DOE: Lord Caithness visits Slimbridge

DTI: Mr Maude visits Birmingham Stock Exchange, Money Advice Centre, County Trading Standards Department

DTp: Mr Mitchell addresses Transport 2000 Conference on the Channel Fixed Link, Manchester

HO: Lord Ferrers visits Norfolk Fire Service

MAFF: Mr Gummer attends meeting with Lowestoft Fishermen, Townnall

SO: Mr Lang announces new inward investment at news conference, Edinburgh

WO: Mr Grist visits Dyfed Social Services; later visits Carmarthen District Health Authority

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

FCO: Mr Eggar departs for Pakistan and Thailand (to 15 February)

MOD: Mr Stewart attends Wehekunde Conference, Munich

MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

TV AND RADIO

BBC1 TV AND BBC Radio One: Comic Relief Appeals for famine relief in Ethiopia and the Sudan

"Today": BBC Radio 4 (6.30)

"Kilroy": BBC 1 (9.20)

"Daytime on Two": BBC 2 (9.30) Examines the NHS in Scotland

"Analysis": BBC Radio 4 (11.00) Looks at trans-Atlantic defence relations

"Business Daily": Channel 4 (12.00)

"The Parliament Programme": Channel 4 (14.00)

"The Western Star Domino Club": BBC 2 (19.00) Looks at social club in St Paul's district, Bristol

"The Friday Report": BBC 2 (20.00) on architects' contribution to communities in the south east, interviews RIBA president

"Any Questions?": BBC Radio 4 (20.20) with Austin Mitchell MP, Gillian Reynolds, Charles Kennedy MP and Doreen Miller (Chairman, 300 Group)

"Newsnight": BBC 2 (22.30)

"AIDS now": Channel 4 (22.30) examines AIDS in Africa and effect on demographic implications for economic growth

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

"The London Programme": ITV (22.35)

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