

24 February 1988

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Abdul Haq and later lunches with the Royal College of Surgeons

EC: Political Committee, Bonn (to 25 February)

Scottish NHS Unions' day of protest against privatisation

MoD statement on Met Office October hurricane forecast

STATISTICS

CSO: Cyclical indicators for the UK economy (Jan)

DOE: Construction - new orders (Dec)

PUBLICATIONS

HO: Discussion document on mutual legal assistance

HO: Metropolitan Police fundamental accounts

PAY

NHS Hospital Pharmacists: 1 April

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Scotland; Foreign and Commonwealth; Trade and Industry

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Security Services (Parliamentary Scrutiny)

Debate on a Motion to take note of the Government's Expenditure Plans 1988-89 to 1990-91

Motions on Scottish Housing Support Grant Orders. Details will be given in the Official Report

Adjournment Debate: The future of the Hospital complex at Dunnpatrick, County Down (Mr E McGrady)

Select Committees: TRADE AND INDUSTRY
Subject: DTI - the department for Enterprise
Witness: Rt Hon Lord Young of Graffham, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Subject: Current UK policy towards the Iran-Iraq conflict

Witnesses: Shell International; BP

PARLIAMENT (cont'd)Select Committees: (cont'd)

DEFENCE

Subject: The Royal Navy's surface fleet: aircraft carriers

Witness: Ministry of Defence

ENERGY

Subject: The Structure, Regulation and Economic Consequences of Electricity Supply in the Private Sector

Witnesses: Officials of the South Wales Electricity Board and officials of the London Electricity Board

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND ARTS

Subject: DES and OAL Estimates

Witnesses: The Royal Society; Advisory Board for the Research Councils

EMPLOYMENT

Subject: Urban Development Corporations

Witness: Department of the Environment officials

HOME AFFAIRS

Subject: Estimates and Expenditure

Witness: Sir Brian Cubbon, Permanent Under-Secretary, Home Office

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Subject: External trade measures for agricultural produce

Witnesses: Mr D H Andrews CB CBE, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Intervention Board for Agricultural Produce; Mr J B Unwin, Chairman, Board of Customs and Excise

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Subject: Information Technology

Witness: Business Equipment and Information Technology Association

JOINT COMMITTEE

PRIVATE BILL PROCEDURE

Witness: Rt Hon Harold Walker MP, Chairman of Ways and Means

Lords: Starred Questions

Debate to call attention to the developing disparities in opportunity and income and to the case for policies to reduce divisions in the community

UQ to ask HMG whether they are satisfied with the effectiveness of the arrangements for representing the consumer interest in the telecommunications and gas industries since privatisation.

PRESS DIGESTMAIN NEWS

Anglo-Irish Inter-Government Council meets today amidst a sea of troubles.

Mail (P1) says Anglo-Irish Agreement looks doomed.

You warn the Irish Government to mind its own business over shooting of Mr McAnespie which Cardinal O'Fee condemns as murder.

Soldier jailed for life for murdering a Catholic in Northern Ireland back on duty with Army after release on parole after serving only 3 years. Mirror claims at least 9 cases of lifers who have gone free after serving less than 4 years.

Two of Tom King's bodyguards taken off security work after leaving guard on Tom King's home while he was away to visit woman.

Prince Charles says he will never go to Northern Ireland because of risk of assassination.

Euro Court rules we can no longer exempt spectacles etc from VAT on medical grounds.

Express says MPs are stunned by blow; Mail leads with "Europe wins fight to fix British tax" - a giant victory for Europe.

Growth last year very nearly 5% - fastest since 1973.

Record fall in number of long term unemployed last year - down 234,000 (29%).

Japanese Ambassador tells Institute of Directors we head economic growth table and would be winning gold medals in any business Olympics. Express says even more impressive than Ambassador's words is willingness of biggest Japanese companies to invest here.

Mail says if Japanese think so highly of British goods and enterprise, how about letting more into Japan?

You warn striking Land Rover workers they could be handing their jobs over to Japanese - Today picks this out of its interview with you for its front page.

Production at Ford plants threatened by breakdown in talks with white collar staff.

Rail unions want a "substantial" pay increase and NUR demands £20

a week.

Protests over Government's decision to allow BP to take over Britoil and not use golden share.

Chairman of Britoil, Sir Philip Shelbourne, to get £127,000 for a 3-day month as "consultant" and £92 a day for lunch - "the golden wheelbarrow" (Sun).

Theft by customers estimated to be costing food chains £200m a year.

You promise in Commons a speedy settlement for nurses but refuse to promise to fund it in full.

Birmingham Children's Hospital to recruit 13 specialist nurses to try to end backlog of heart operations.

Express feature highlights quality of life in the North.

British holidaymakers will no longer need visas for USA after this year.

Labour Party said to be £1.6m in red; call in Peat-Marwick to investigate finances.

Key Kinnock supporter, Brian Nicholson, said to have lost his TGWU executive seat to militant. Times says hard Left have won control of the executive and moderates are preparing to challenge ballot after complaints of irregularities.

Duke Hussey says BBC was "arrogant, complacent and reluctant to acknowledge public criticism". Now it is changing its attitudes.

Case of senior Home Office secretary who hid her lover after breaking out of jail - sentenced to suspended 2 months sentence.

UK agrees to £900m loan to EC under inter-governmental agreement to tide over EC this year until new own resources can operate.

Michael Heseltine calls for a vision and a strategy for Europe from Government.

Plans for Waldheim to address Austria on 50th anniversary of Anschluss creates new political storm.

Soviet troops packing up to get out of Afghanistan.

Prince Charles bans aerosols from his home.

Eddie Edwards, Britain's ski jump champion, hailed for his performance at Calgary.

IRELAND

Sun describes as "breathtaking effrontery" Irish Government's investigation into McAnespie's death. What gives Haughey right to poke his nose into our affairs? He has done his best to block extradition of IRA killers. Has his concern something to do with McAnespie being a campaigner for Sinn Fein?

Mirror says there is a stench about the case of Private Thain, the first British soldier to be convicted of murder while on duty in Northern Ireland and released on parole from life sentence. If there were mitigating circumstances the judge did not take them into account. What were the special circumstances that won him his freedom? MPs of all parties demand inquiry.

Telegraph leader headed "Gross insensitivity" says that governing Northern Ireland is extraordinarily difficult and the Government had not been unsuccessful until a few weeks ago. Now a succession of unrelated events have shaken the fragile peace. Thain's release is remarkable but his recall to his unit is incomprehensible - an act of such stunning insensitivity that it finds it hard to imagine what MoD was thinking of.

Guardian leader, headed "Ireland: going from bad to worse", says the bizarre sequence of events which might almost have been designed to wreck the Anglo-Irish Agreement continues.

Independent leader says of McAnespie's death that it merits urgent and thorough investigation. That exercise is already under way, and it is being conducted by the appropriate authorities - those in Northern Ireland. The "justification" for this intervention by Dublin is the Anglo-Irish Agreement. That accord is fundamentally unbalanced: it gives the Irish Republic the unilateral right to involve itself in the development of policing, security and the administration of justice. It is increasingly difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Agreement is in danger of becoming part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

Times: You rebuke Irish Government for mounting its own inquiry into border shooting - with a "hands-off" warning to Mr Haughey as a new bitterness swept into Anglo-Irish relations; leader discusses the stresses and strains facing the Anglo-Irish Agreement threatened by political misjudgement in London and Dublin. It is critical of Haughey, saying the old meretricious superficiality has taken over again with his announcement to shadow the police inquiry in the North into the border shooting.

It is about time he made up his mind about the value of the agreement.

FT: Some Tory MPs, formerly supporters of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, now have serious reservations about its continuing value.

Times: Officers who served under Stalker during RUC inquiry dissociate themselves from his public disclosures over the affair.

LAND ROVER

Today leader says the current mini wave of strikes may be a nuisance but it doesn't add up to a problem. If Land Rover workers think that they will get the Government to bail them out because it owns the firm they have another think coming, as you made clear yesterday.

Express feature on "The suicides of Land Rover".

Times: You warn Rover Group over pay demands saying the Government will not give them more money to fund pay demands; management and unions meet at Renault Trucks, Dunstable, to avert another damaging motor industry strike.

INDUSTRY

Times: MPs and peers to set up independent organisation to provide them with unbiased, high-grade information over scientific and technological issues.

Times: Leading employment specialist says most women who want to work can expect low-paid, low-skill, part-time jobs for many years to come.

MEDIA

Times: Jonathan Aitken to quit TV-AM board over Saudi shareholding in station.

BBC

Today says Duke Hussey's assertion that the BBC is changing will come as a surprise to its vast audiences. All he has done is shuffle the senior management pack. Like all his predecessors he has come to believe BBC know best.

Express however says the public will find Hussey's burst of critical honesty refreshing and spot on. His frank admission of BBC's shortcomings a good start.

Mail says Hussey is sounding the right note - confidence without conceit.

Telegraph wonders whether BBC's stainless reputation in world broadcasting will be enhanced by its nomination for a Nobel Peace Prize.

BUDGET

FT leader looks at the Treasury and Civil Service Committee's report on public expenditure and finds the Government lacking in its planning, presentation and control of public expenditure. It sees no justification for a gap of four months between the Autumn Statement and the Budget; and says there is a blurring of the way in which targets are determined and in the targets themselves. Cash limits may control public expenditure but they give no indication of the goods and services that are provided.

NHS

Times: Doctors' leaders and patient groups claim scheme to privatise GPs being considered by Government would lead to both a conflict of interests and a two-tier service.

Times: First test-tube baby conceived by implanting a frozen embryo from an anonymous donor expected to be born today at Dulwich Hospital.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Times: Prince of Wales criticises Britain's record on environmental legislation and the Government's unwillingness to take firm action.

EDUCATION

Independent: Ombudsman being called in to solve dispute over city technology college row in Nottingham. Residents claim the college will deprive them of badly needed open space.

LAW AND ORDER

Times leader says you may need another session of knocking heads together if you are to discover why the records of the British Commandoes' interrogation in Salonika were destroyed, as there is apparent confusion between the FCO and MoD over who is running the inquiry into the missing Waldheim files.

Independent: Page 1 lead headed "New child sex abuse row over diagnosis". An inquiry into a child sex abuse controversy on the scale of Cleveland is being launched next week in Hereford and Worcester. DHSS will investigate a surge in cases involving 80 children over a two-month period.

EC

Independent: EC were struggling last night to prevent summit budget deal from unravelling because of Italian objections to the fine print of Britain's annual rebate.

FT: European Commission formally complains about British legislation on product liability. Dispute could lead to Commission taking Britain to European Court.

FT: Michael Heseltine calls for British entry into the exchange rate mechanism of the EMS, a fuller integration of European defence and the appointment of a Cabinet-rank "Euro Minister".

Times: After European Court ruling Government faces uphill struggle in maintaining its declared opposition to VAT on such items as children's clothing, food and fuel.

US

Times leader discusses Casper Weinberger's honorary knighthood, saying it ought to be done more often.

EAST/WEST

Independent: Reagan warns NATO not to drop their guard against Soviet Union. His remarks reflect growing concern about the importance of maintaining a solid front in the face of the Soviet leader's persuasive diplomacy.

Times: Anglo-Soviet relations boosted with 20 Kent teenagers flying to Moscow as part of a pupil exchange programme. Russian teenagers will come here in July.

FT: Reagan speaks out against early talks with Moscow on reducing short-range nuclear weapons in Europe. He says the next steps should be cuts in strategic arms and conventional arms and a ban on chemical weapons.

FT: Spain informs NATO that, despite remaining outside the integrated military command, it intends to play a full military role in NATO strategy.

CYPRUS

FT leader welcomes the election of a new Cypriot President and says it offers the first glimmer of hope for several years for a political solution on the island as Mr Vassiliou is likely to be more flexible than his predecessor.

BERNARD INGHAM

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES, ETC)

- DEN: Mr Parkinson addresses the Coal Field Community Campaign conference, Edinburgh
- DES: Mr Baker attends meeting with NATFAE about the Education Reform Bill
- HO: Mr Hurd addresses CBI Council on crime prevention
- MAFF: Mr MacGregor has lunch with the Wine Standards Board, Vintners Hall, London
- WO: Mr Walker attends Welsh Language Television (S4C) fifth anniversary reception, House of Lords
- DEM: Mr Cope addresses Industrial Society Conference on making small firms grow
- DEM: Mr Lee visits Wales; later attends Inter Hotel annual conference and banquet, Carmarthen
- DEN: Mr Morrison dines at the Aberdeen section of the Society of Petroleum Engineering, Aberdeen Exhibition Centre
- DES: Mr Jackson visits Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and attends a performance of 'What Every Woman Knows'
- DES: Mr Dunn receives deputation led by Chris Hawkins MP about Litton and Cressbrook Primary Schools
- DES:: Lady Hooper attends awards ceremony at the College of Distributive Trades in Leicester
- DHSS: Lord Skelmersdale visits Canterbury and Thanet District General Hospital and opens new facilities
- DOE: Mr Waldegrave addresses Westminster and City Programme conference on future housing policies, London
- DOE: Mrs Roe visits Waltham Forest on housing
- DOE: Mr Chope visits Greenwich
- DTI: Mr Clark addresses Major British Exporters Association dinner
- FCO: Mrs Chalker addresses dinner given by the Luxembourg Society
- HO: Lord Ferrers visits Metropolitan Police Public Order Training Facility, Hounslow
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington addresses National Association of Agricultural Contractors AGM luncheon
- MAFF: Mr Thompson attends Game Conservancy Reception, House of Commons
- MOD: Lord Trefgarne chairs news conference on Met Office storm report
- MOD: Mr Freeman visits Coulport and Faslane
- WO: Mr Roberts receives deputation from the National Union of Students on the Education Bill, London
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- OAL: Mr Luce attends EC Public Service Conference, Maastricht, Holland (to 25 February)
- ODA: Mr Patten visits United Nations Agencies, Geneva (to 25 February)
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DTI: Mr Clarke interviewed on A Week in Politics, Channel 4
- DES: Mrs Rumbold interviewed by Devon Air Radio about the Education Reform Bill; later interviewed by Afternoon Plus - Radio 4 telephone interview
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TV AND RADIO

- "Today": BBC Radio 4 (6.30)
- "The Year of Dreams": BBC Radio 4 (11.00): continues the review of 1968 with a look at the effects on Britain of the upheavals (repeated on Sunday)
- "Schools: Teaching CDT": Channel 4 (11.41) - series made at invitation of DES
- "Business Daily": Channel 4 (12.00)
- "You and Yours": BBC Radio 4 (12.00)
- "Votes for Women": ITV (14.30) - series on current issues
- "An Outside Chance": Channel 4 (18.30) looks at non-custodial alternatives to prison
- Comment: Channel 4 (19.50): Gillian Shepherd MP (Conservative, Norfolk South West) gives her comments on education
- "A Week in Politics": Channel 4 (20.30)
- "Who owns Britain?": BBC Radio 4 (20.45) looks at the entrepreneurs who trade in office blocks, hotels, and shopping centres. (First shown last Thursday.)
- "Newsnight": BBC 2 (22.50)
- "The World Tonight": BBC Radio 4 (22.30) followed by "The Financial World Tonight: then "Today in Parliament"
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