

1 March 1988

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Mr Shultz, later dines with King Hussein

Commons Statement on Scottish Electricity privatisation

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh hold an investiture at Buckingham Palace

UN Emergency Session on UK reinforcement of Falklands exercise

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PUBLICATIONS

DES: HMI Report on Cyril Jackson Primary School

DES: HMI Report on Tower Hamlets (ILEA)

DES: HMI Report on Woolwich Polytechnic, Woolwich (ILEA)

HO: HMCIP Report: E. Sutton Park

Law Commission: 22nd Annual Report 1986-87

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Employment; Social Services; Prime Minister

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Cervical Cancer (Testing and Treatment)

Motions on the Unemployment Benefit (Disqualification Period) Order.

Motion on the Social Security (Benefit) (Members of the Forces Amendment) Regulations.

Motion on the Appropriation (No 1) (Northern Ireland) Order.

Firearms Bill: Money Resolution.

Motion on the Annual Report from the European Court of Auditors for 1986.

Adjournment Debate: Job losses in Wakefield (Mr D Hinchcliffe)

Select Committees: PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATION  
Subject: Working methods of the office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration and the Health Service Commissioner  
Witnesses: Mr Anthony Barrowclough and officials

COMMITTEE ON A PRIVATE BILL  
London Docklands Railway (Beckton)

Lords: Starred Questions  
Copyright, Designs and Patents Bill (HL): Report (3rd Day)

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PRESS DIGESTMAIN NEWS

Big row - which the Express describes as well-practised - over rise in prescription charges; prescriptions now costs 13 times more than when you were elected in spite of Government's rolling in money (Opposition). But it is estimated of drugs prescribed in 30m cases are cheaper if bought at retail price.

BMA says rise could put people off visiting doctor.

Ambulancemen want £20 a week, shorter hours and longer holidays.

Two IRA men blow themselves up moving weaponry outside Crossmaglen.

Britain in trade deficit of £905m - worst ever, but an aberration, according to Treasury because of introduction of new Euro documentation.

Some papers say tax cuts are in peril; others not. City stays pretty calm.

Norman Fowler, in California, claims 5,000 new jobs will be created in Britain by American firms intending to invest in Britain.

Lord Young launches campaign to double sales to Japan in 3 years.

Up to 25% redundancies forecast from merged GEC/Plessey telecommunications firm.

Four shop stewards being sued for £45,000 - cost of a loss of a day's production through an NHS demo at Thorn-EMI, Manchester.

Benn tells Kinnock that he and trade union bosses have failed to give leadership the party is crying out for. Telegraph says Kinnock is facing a fresh onslaught from Left.

Times says Prescott is defying Kinnock and pressing his campaign for a campaigning role for Labour's deputy leader.

Moderates in TGWU launch campaign to get Certification Officer to investigate ballot.

Times: In a carefully timed intervention on the eve of the NATO summit in Brussels, President Mitterrand of France has revealed his opposition to modernisation plans for the Western alliance short-range nuclear arsenal. Arguing that European Security is

better served by continued disarmament, Mitterrand has set the scene for a potentially serious clash with you.

Mail says you will have to draw on all your political skills to keep NATO alliance together at Summit.

Guardian says you and George Younger are examining a confidential report which exposes a lack of control over defence contracts.

Amendment to Criminal Justice Bill makes it an offence to possess child porn - fines up to £2000.

Mail leads with report from Home Office showing millions, the majority women and elderly, live in fear of crime and being attacked in the street.

Teddy Taylor joins Star's campaign for return of hanging.

Sun approves of the prospect of losing Douglas Hurd as Home Secretary if Commons vote to return hanging, which it wants.

Tory MPs angry over ITV 'World in Action' programme which claims BBC has lost its independence through your appointing supporters to Board of Governors.

But IBA survey, according to Mail, shows BBC is politically biased towards Tories.

Fierce opposition likely, according to Express, from ITV companies to plan to auction franchises; Express leader says it is an excellent idea; if people are to be given their own money presses they should have to pay a competitive price for their monopoly privileges.

Rowntree Trust withdraws its £20,000 backing from Liberals.

Rosie Barnes MP says thousands of women are ready to desert merged SDP/Libs and follow charismatic Owen.

Derbyshire CC wants to stop Chesterfield School for using ancient coat of arms and replacing it with "Derbyshire CC supports nuclear free zones".

High Court judge blocks attempt by Camden Council to sack 4,000 employees who refused to accept redeployment.

Ian Stewart, Defence Minister, asks Britons with any evidence about fate of British Commandoes said to be linked with Waldheim to come forward quickly; Today's handling: Maggie calls up old soldiers to trap Waldheim.

Max Hastings, Telegraph, says it is extremely unlikely that any evidence will now be forthcoming to show Waldheim participated in war crimes. World's accusations should rest squarely on his record of deceit. Times says US Justice Department confirmed yesterday that Waldheim forwarded a plea to send Greek civilians to slave labour camps.

Mail says you will have to draw on all your political skills to keep NATO alliance together at Summit.

Archbishop Tutu and other religious leaders arrested in peaceful protest march in Capetown.

Iraq launches rocket attack on Tehran in retaliation for raid on Baghdad.

Rioting in Russia moves over border from Armenia to Azerbaijan.

Hong Kong heading for row with Britain over share of cost for British military presence as talks collapse.

Telegraph diary says Peter Wright is now writing a technical manual which gives away many of the tricks of the surveillance trade.

#### PRESCRIPTION CHARGES

Star says increase can't be justified; instead Government should have launched a campaign to persuade doctors to prescribe cheaper drugs or none at all.

Sun: Fury as Maggie puts 20p on pill bills.

Mirror: Sick? A 20p rise in cost of your medicine. Leader says rise is miserable and mean. Why are Tories so mean when they don't need to be?

Today: Drugs rip off curb as prices rise 20p - Tony Newton told that one third of items on prescription cost less than old rate. He is to consider scheme to allow chemists to give customers correct prices so that they can shop around.

Express leader headed "A small NHS price to pay" says the rise is necessary and justified because of the increased cost of medicines to NHS. What is the matter with the Labour Party? Does it think the NHS should get more money or not? And the objections from the BMA and Pharmaceutical Society are unrealistic nonsense when 75% of prescriptions supplied free.

Mail P1: Prescriptions to rise by 20p in new health fees shake-up. But it is reckoned that up to 30m prescriptions would be cheaper if they were bought at retail prices.

Telegraph leads P1 with - 20p prescription charges increase to meet costs - cheaper over counter for many.

Independent: Labour intends to use the prescription increase to step up its attack on the Government over the NHS on budget day. But Tory MPs make no criticism of the increase.

Times P1 lead headline: Anger at 20p rise in cost of prescriptions. NUPE says it is a scandal that the Government is responsible for a 1,200% increase in prescription charges since 1979. Extra tax on sickness is another step towards the Tories' two-tier health system.

Guardian: Prescription charges up 20p. BMA very concerned.

#### NHS

Today leader backs Edwina Currie's idea for upgrading nurses with "nurse practitioners" - opposed by BMA.

Independent: Commons PAC told that NHS operations often cancelled due to surgeons' absence, but chairman of NHS management board denies that this is generally because they are away working for private patients.

Independent: Frank Dobson, who claims to have confidential records relating to King's Cross disaster, demands judicial inquiry into state of the ambulance service.

Times: Association of London Authorities says that privatisation of ancillary services in the NHS has led to deteriorating standards, poor hospital hygiene and appalling working conditions.

Guardian says cut of £4-12m on budgets for cancer screening and blood tests could follow reorganisation of hospital laboratories.

#### ECONOMY/BUDGET

Today leader says that shirking cuts in income tax is not the way to avoid a balance of payments crisis. Put higher duties on spending.

Independent: Britain's record trade gap renews concern that the economy is growing too fast and scope for tax-cuts might be limited. Many City observers agree it could be a freak figure.

Independent: Labour takes first steps towards more flexible and less punitive tax policy though the final fruit of its tax review will not be put to this year's party conference.

Times: Leader says: There was once a time when a record trade deficit a fortnight before the Budget would have produced gloom in the City and sent the Chancellor back to the drawing board. Times have changed. News received in the markets with a lack of concern. Either the markets are being very brave or they are being very astute.

FT: Record current account deficit fuels pressure to limit Budget tax cuts. Leader acknowledges that January's figures look a little freakish.

Guardian: Trade deficit casts gloom over Budget; leader says Chancellor is victim of his own short term success as economy becomes over stretched. He should expand public sector activity.

#### NATO

Mail leader headed "Nato needs the Thatcher touch" says the Alliance is in the dangerous period of transition. The Americans have a point in expecting Europe to spend more on defence but even if they do, there is no way in the foreseeable future they can match Soviet conventional forces. The more nuclear weapons we withdraw, the more yawning the credibility gap in our defences. One woman at least is determined to plug it. And you are unlikely to be deflected by Kremlin propaganda. Nato has never had more need of the Thatcher touch.

Independent: Mitterrand, in two separate interviews, rejects NATO's commitment to modernise its battlefield nuclear weapons and its core strategy of flexible response. In indirectly attacking his own country's upgrading its short-range missile, he is seen by observers as playing to a domestic political audience, not unrelated to the forthcoming presidential elections.

The Government is expected to press ahead with the development of a stand-off nuclear missile for the RAF to replace the free-fall bombs which are at least 20 years old (Times).

FT: Efforts to agree a draft communique ahead of the NATO summit have been hampered by clashes between West Germany, France and Britain over plans to modernise European-based nuclear weapons.

DEFENCE

Times: An internal report which is highly critical of the way the MOD conducts its £9bn-a-year equipment procurement programme is being studied by George Younger. A copy has been sent to you.

RACE RELATIONS

Independent: New Chairman of Commission for Racial Equality attacks Government proposals in the Local Government Bill to apply race relations law to council contractors as ineffectual.

Independent: TUC ruling body to get its first black member after 120 years.

WALES

Peter Walker talks to the Independent about his efforts to rejuvenate the depressed regions of Wales. A number of Welsh Labour MPs privately acknowledge he is doing the best job of any Welsh Secretary for many years.

IRELAND

Sun says that by all accounts we are due today for another exercise in posturing impudence from Haughey who is determined to cause mischief over McAnespie, an avowed member of Sinn Fein who helped to contribute to the circumstances of his death. One of your gravest mistakes was to sign Anglo-Irish Agreement, which you must dump.

Independent: General Sir James Glover admits in BBC 'Panorama' that IRA cannot be defeated militarily. His comments will reinforce Government's strategy of persisting with the Anglo-Irish Agreement. In commentary, Peter Jenkins says there has always been an element of doubt about your own true enthusiasm for the deal but at the end of the day both you and Mr Haughey realise that there is no alternative.

Times: T E Utley's feature examines the Anglo-Irish Agreement under headline? The Torments of a bad treaty. He concludes that the British do not understand Ireland. That is true enough, but it is time that an energetic attempt was made to induce the Irish to understand Britain.

MEDIA

Independent: Radical decision to devise competitive tendering system for ITV franchises stems directly from your desire for fundamental root and branch reform of ITV. The franchise move will be introduced for new eight-year contracts running from 1992. IBA pledges its opposition to the changes, fearing influx of poor programmes. Leader says the Government is right to decide that the franchises should be auctioned but it questions whether the Government can also be trusted to discharge the responsibility of competition.

FT: DTI study suggests that local microwave television, transmitting up to 12 channels to 70% of the country, could be set up within five years.

Times: Television programme standards are bound to suffer if the Government auctions the franchises for Britain's 15 commercial stations. There was confusion and obfuscation in Whitehall last night over whether the Cabinet Committee considering broadcasting policy has yet agreed on such a radical proposal.

Times: Hundreds of High Court hearings held in secret every week may be brought into open court if the Lord Chancellor implements a change in procedures.

Times: Political bias on British television surged to record levels in 1987 according to viewers - with the Conservative Party seen as the main beneficiary.

INDUSTRY

FT: Malcolm Rifkind delays by 24 hours his Commons Statement on Scottish electricity privatisation.

EDUCATION

Independent: British Educational Equipment Association claims that two-thirds of schools are inadequately resourced in science and technology and one million pupils do not have enough exercise books or paper to do their work.

Times: Legal history was made yesterday when NAS/UWT became the first to be sued successfully by a local authority over strike action.



Times: Nearly 75% of state schools do not have enough funds for books and equipment and are relying increasingly on parental contributions, says report.

FT: More than 70% of head teachers think school funding is inadequate, according to NUT survey published with Educational Equipment Association.

#### COMMUNITY CHARGE

Times: Michael Alison told MPs it was unlikely that Anglican clergy would have to pay the community charge.

#### MIDDLE EAST

Independent: Progress of the Shultz shuttle can only be measured after his talks with King Hussein today, although at the end of his first round of talks in Jordan Prime Minister Rifai indicated that there were parts of the US proposals that Jordan liked, suggesting there is room for some degree of give and take. Leader doubts if King Hussein can offer much help today though it believes that Syria must be more involved if peace is ultimately to be found .

#### SOUTH AFRICA

Independent: Pretoria faces Church-led campaign of civil disobedience as leading clergymen vow to keep resistance to apartheid alive, despite the new restrictions. In the Commons, Kaufman calls you the handmaiden of apartheid over your refusal to consider sanctions whilst condemning the latest crackdown. Sir Geoffrey Howe angrily denies that Labour enjoys a "monopoly of virtue".

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

DEN: Mr Parkinson presents award for the Unlisted Securities Market Awards dinner

MAFF: Mr MacGregor lunches with Duncan Jeffrey, Editor of Southern Evening Echo; later has dinner with MacDonalds, Brooks' Club, London

MOD: Mr Younger visits CBE Porton Down and AWE Aldermaston

WO: Mr Walker attends St David's Day luncheon, Gwydyr House, London; later attends St David's Day, London-Welsh Celebration, Savoy Hotel, London

DEM: Mr Lee attends Buckingham Palace reception for Globe Theatre Project

DES: Mr Jackson has dinner at the Open University, Pall Mall

DES: Lady Hooper meets Russian Delegation, London; later visits the BBC about adult literacy

DOE: Lord Caithness visits Police Memorial Sites, London

DOE: Mr Trippier launches Playsafe Campaign, Docklands

DTI: Mr Maude addresses National Consumer Council, London

DTP: Mr Bottomley launches Drink/Drive Campaign at St David's Centre, Cardiff

DTP: Lord Brabazon attends Aerodrome Owners Association annual dinner, Royal Lancaster Hotel, London

FCO: Mrs Chalker addresses Southern Africa Association annual general meeting

HO: Lord Ferrers visits Ealing Police

MAFF: Mr Gummer meets David Naish, NPU, to discuss Nitrates; also meets Jennifer Tanburn, Consumer Committee of Great Britain to discuss Potato Marketing; later attends Agrifood Group Meeting, Institute of Marketing, Nat West Tower, London

MAFF: Mr Thompson visits Deer Farm; later attends Northern Poultry Conference, Preston

MAFF: Baroness Trumpington visits Suceiman Exhibition, British Museum

OAL: Mr Luce addresses Buckingham Palace reception for Globe Theatre project

ODA: Mr Pattern visits Oxford Forestry Institute and addresses the Independent Society, Oxford University

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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

DTP: Lord Brabazon attends Euro Control 25th anniversary press conference, Brussels

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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

MAFF: Mr Gummer on Visnews "Getting On" programme, about EC Free Food Scheme

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TV AND RADIO

"Today": BBC Radio 4 (6.30)

"Daytime on Two": BBC 2 (9.20) 'Inset TVEI' - series discusses the implementation of TVEI

"Daytime on Two": BBC 2 (11.35) 'Getting to grips with racism'. How black MPs see the way forward.

"Business Daily": Channel 4 (12.00)

"You and Yours": BBC Radio 4 (12.00)

"The Parliament Programme": Channel 4 (14.00) covering both Houses of Parliament

"The Local Network": BBC Radio 4 (16.15) looks at the future of lighthouses.

"File on Four": BBC Radio 4 (19.20) 'The National Health' looks at European options for the NHS (repeated Wednesday)

"Reporting London": ITV (19.30)

"First Tuesday": ITV (22.35): 'The Fatal Factor' tells how two haemophiliacs were infected with AIDS through NHS treatment.

"Newsnight": BBC 2 (22.55)

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

"Running Late": Channel 4 (00.20) Donald Trelford chairs discussion on issues in sport.

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