

11 April 1988

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

EC: Research Council, Luxembourg

EC: European Parliament Plenary, Strasbourg (to 15 April)

EC: Fisheries Ministers informal meeting, Cuxhaven (to 12 April)

Annual benefit uprating takes effect

House of Lords resumes

CPSA industrial action on social security reforms

STATISTICS

DTI: Producer price index numbers (Mar prov)

PARLIAMENT

Lords: Starred Questions

Landlord and Tenant Bill (HL): Committee (to be discharged)

Regional Development Grants (Termination) Bill: Committee

Housing (Scotland) Bill: Second Reading.

MINISTERS

See Annex

PRESS DIGEST

Optimum for end to hijack in Cyprus today after gunmen warn you not to send in SAS. Claims they have hurt another hostage.

Iran believed to have promised hijackers sanctuary if they free the 50 hostages.

Threat to kill Terry Waite if SAS storms jet.

Ted Heath criticises your no-deals policy on TV-AM.

Mirror feature signals "the end of the Welfare State" - the reform of the Social Security System - and "the beginning of a nightmare for millions of people".

Joe Haines says you are tough yourself and believe others should be tough, too. If not, its tough.

Possibility of censure debate on changes: welfare groups accuse Government of disguising effects of reforms.

Eighty dead and hundreds wounded as Pakistan arms dump explodes.

Guerrillas shoot down Russian passenger plane over Afghanistan.

Opposition trying to make capital out of Norman Tebbit's remarks on Panorama programme this evening on Prince Charles; Michael Meacher says Mr Tebbit may have gone too far.

Sun says Mr Tebbit claims he was supporting the Prince and adds "With friends like Norman who needs enemies?"

Today says Prince Charles has attached family doctors for prescribing too many drugs and treating their patients like machines.

Kinnock and Benn fight war of words on TV. NUM thought unlikely to back Benn and Mirror also forecasts Heffer's own union UCATT will not support him in leadership challenge.

Independent leader says the challenge to Kinnock's leadership has started to oblige him to specify where he is trying to lead it. He will need to take greater risks with his party - not to make it swallow undiluted Thatcherism, but to convince voters that he has broken free from the past.

Kinnock says high earners will be taxed more heavily under Labour though not at the high levels of the past. Government must change or die.

Mail says he sounded on TV the death knoll of traditional socialism.

Mail leader says the rise in home ownership and the inheritance it implies may turn out to be the greatest Thatcher revolution of all.

Leeds parents seek a new child advice inquiry - but are turned down by local authority.

Tower Hamlets admits "inefficiency and incompetence": overcharged £1million by private hotels providing bed and breakfast for homeless.

Land Rover sending workers abroad to meet customers - come back and tell other workers what is wrong.

Jaguar achieves record sales in first three months of this year - 21% up on 1987.

P&O strikers stay out as company offers ships for sale, Times says P&O are digging for year long dispute.

Unemployment forecast to fall below 2.5 million this week.

More good news for home owners expected today as Building Societies follow up base rate cut.

Oil prices expected to rise \$1 a barrel today after OPEC decision.

Heseltine to renew his attack today on Government's regional policies.

Concern in Guernsey about AIDS epidemic alleged to have been started by girl, 18.

Express, on Dianne Abbott claiming in USA that Britain is one of the most fundamentally racist on earth, asks how this racist bunch of Brits helped her to Cambridge.

Today says one of men who led lynch mob in Belfast is walking free in Belfast; says he went to help the two soldiers.

Sir John Hermon said to be going to marry Lady Faulkner, widow of Brian Faulkner, in autumn.

Another burst of alleged marriage trouble between Prince and Princess of Wales.

Sandy Lyle wins US Masters golf tournament.

More than 1000 arrested in anti-drugs drive in Los Angeles over the weekend.

Gorbachev says Palestinian revolution of Israel is essential in search for peace.

Jon Akass, in Express, says Dukakis is a small, glib man who would be a disastrous Democratic Presidential candidate.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Sun believes there is a precious principle that no men should go hungry or live in deprivation through no fault of their own. But it is also a precious principle that people must learn to fend for themselves whenever they can. Devotes a page to explaining changes and concentration of help on those in greatest need.

Today says the Government's aims in wanting to simplify the huge, complex structure are clear and right. But it must closely monitor the reforms and act quickly to head off any injustice.

Independent - Social Security changes course Tory anxiety: two-thirds of a survey of 100 MPs are seriously concerned about the effects of the reforms. Half of those concerned specifically mention the £6000 pensioners' savings cut off. Other serious concerns are Poll Tax (37%), Health Service (19%) and Education (7%).

Times - You will resist making any concessions over new social security regulations in spite of deep concern within your party; Ministers privately predicting that Government will have to bow to pressure and Tory MPs believe much criticism would be avoided if housing benefit cut-off was raised to £10,000.

Times - Labour Party survey shows nearly 200,000 children from low income families will lost free school meals and get nothing in their place.

Times - Lord Henderson of Brampton, Chairman of Action on Youth Crime, says benefit cuts may lead to increase in crime.

NHS

Star says an epidemic of Government spending is spreading through the NHS - last year nearly 50% of RHAs spent more than allocated.

Independent - The RCN has dismissed the fashionable alternatives for training and running the NHS on having no worthwhile advantages and doctors hinted they might support a "health stamp" or national insurance funded system.

Financial Times - RCN has told Commons Social Services Select Committee that health service is "inherently efficient and cost-effective".

HIJACK

Express says the message from the hijackers to you warning against SAS rescue could not be a better endorsement of your rigid doctrine of no deals.

Financial Times - Yassir Arafat is at centre of attempts to free hostages. Despite speculation, direct UK involvement is seen as unlikely.

Telegraph leader says it seems likely British hostages were released last week with deliberate aim of diminishing British involvement. This is a tribute to British success in standing firm against terrorists. But if an opportunity presents itself for an arm of Western democracies to take a hand the risks should be accepted as part of the worldwide struggle against terrorists.

NORMAN TEBBIT/PRINCE CHARLES

Mirror says Mr Tebbit has turned Dracula's gage on the Prince of Wales.

This is a Government swollen with arrogance and venting its spleen on the Royal Family for doing its duty shows how far that arrogance has gone. It is too far.

Today leader says Prince Charles may not be able to take a regular job, but that is no reason for Norman Tebbit to imply that he is becoming politically over-sympathetic to the unemployed.

Express says the right of the British monarchy to make its views heard on the issues of the day is one of the more delicate grey areas of our national life. Mr Tebbit's misgivings are widely shared. The root of the problem is the failure to find the Prince a job. Finding him a function is a desirable and attainable objective and it is an issue the Government and Palace must face head on.

Independent says the British public did not need Norman Tebbit to tell them that waiting to become King must be tedious. But Mr Tebbit can claim an authority when he says the Prince feels sympathy for unemployed because he's got no job. In a way Mr Tebbit has no job until he inherits the Prime Ministership.

Times - Right wing Tory MPs support Norman Tebbit in his criticism of Prince Charles.

Paul Johnson in Mail says Mr Tebbit's advice is kindly meant and the Prince would be well advised to take it. It is likely that his words have your unofficial blessing. We all ought to be worried about the Prince. He gives the impression he has lost his way.

Guardian leader is confused over why Mr Tebbit has chosen such a target. He is always on the attack as if the Government were beleaguered. Can man who attacks the Church of England, BBC and heir to the throne really be quite the populist he imagines?

FORD

Star tells Ron Todd, TGWU, to talk sense after his visit to Dundee. If he cannot own up to his mistakes he should clam up.

ENVIRONMENT

Independent - Secret cabinet working party has been set up to try and resolve row between MAFF and DoE over nitrate levels in water supplies.

MEDIA

Independent - Equity warns that all future independently produced TV films could be blacked if its members are not guaranteed payments for repeats and screenings abroad.

Financial Times - Independent TV companies are expected to back proposals to undermine national pay and conditions agreements. But Tyne Tees plans to pull out of deals altogether.

INDUSTRY

Independent - Sir George Porter condemns government's policy on research funding in his Richard Dimbleby lecture. His remarks likely to cause considerable embarrassment, because of his position and the highly public manner in which he chose to deliver his rebuke.

X Independent - Britain has won a concession from the Canadian Government on the timing of its decision over Radarsat.

Times - Shortage of at least 600 aircraft engineers threaten safe maintenance of hundreds of British jets.

Times - Lords Select Committee urges wealthy to stop decline in medical research because of public spending cuts by making private legacies.

Times - More than 1200 experts from Government, union, commerce, industry and education in London to take part in training revolution which they hope will lead to more jobs, increased skills and productivity and greater competitiveness abroad.

Times - German steel industry set to cut 35,000 jobs by 1990 and a further 25,000 jobs are to be shed in its feeder industry, coal.

EDUCATION

Independent - Education tests for 7, 11 and 14 year olds should be privatised says Sir Rhodes Boyson.

Times - Royal Institute of Town Planners say local authority services are unable to cope with requests from schools seeking GCSE source materials.

Times - National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations to launch nationwide campaign against schools opting out.

POLITICS

Independent survey of 100 Tory MPs suggests your leadership is, for the foreseeable future, incontestable, reading even beyond the traditional Tory loyalty to a successful incumbent.

TURKEY

Times - During your visit to Turkey you went as far as you could to assure the Turks that Britain was sympathetic to their entry to EC, but they must understand it would be a long process.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- HMT: Mr Major addresses the Institute of Directors, Edinburgh
- HO: Mr Hurd addresses Research into Policy Issues conference, Oxford; later opens IFSEC conference
- MAFF: Mr MacGregor receives visit from Jose J. Puig De La Bella Casa, the Spanish Ambassador
- SO: Mr Rifkind and Lord James Douglas Hamilton hold press conference, Edinburgh Castle: The Way Forward, Edinburgh Castle
- DEM: Mr Nicholls addresses LCCI centenary luncheon
- DEM: Mr Lee makes keynote speech to the Association of District Councils, Tourism and Leisure conference
- DES: Mr Jackson attends dinner for Professor la Pergola, Italian European Community Minister
- DHSS: Mr Portillo addresses Institute of Practitioners Advertising Finance Group, Charing Cross Pier
- DOE: Mr Chope addresses LAMSAC national conference, Brighton
- DOE: Mr Moynihan opens Joydens Wood, Maidstone
- DTp: Mr Bottomley opens Rochester Way relief road; later opens the ROSPA RSO Course, Newcastle
- DTp: Mr Mitchell hosts dinner for Dr Toth, Hungarian Deputy Minister for Transport, Lancaster House
- FCO: Mr Mellor addresses Wilton Park conference on Middle East dilemmas
- FCO: Mrs Chalker attends dinner for Professor la Pergola, Italian European Community Minister
- HMT: Mr Lilley addresses the Westminster Industrial Brief
- HO: Mr Patten addresses Suzy Lamplugh Trust conference on Aggression and Vulnerability at work
- MAFF: Mr Thompson visits Deeside Dairy Farmers, Tattenhall, Cheshire; later addresses National Federation of Meat Traders Centenary Banquet, The Council House, Birmingham

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- DOE: Mr Moynihan attends British National Skiing Championships at Alps D'Huerz, France (to 13 April)
- MAFF: Mr Gummer attends Informal Fisheries Council, Hamburg (to 12 April)
-

MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

DES: Mr Baker interviewed by literary editor, The Independent
DHSS: Mrs Currie interviewed for BBC Women's Health Week
FCO: Mr Eggar interviewed by LBC Radio on Expo '88

TV AND RADIO

"Today": BBC Radio 4 (6.30)
"Money Box": BBC Radio 4 (10.00)
"You and Yours": BBC Radio 4 (12.00). Consumer concerns
"Business Daily": Channel 4 (12.30)
"The World at One": BBC Radio 4 (13.00)
"P.M.": BBC Radio 4 (17.00)
"Watchdog"; BBC 1 (19.35). Campaigning consumer programme
"Open Space": BBC 2 (19.40). "The Disability Disgrace" about the far-reaching changes in the Social Security system through the experiences of those who will be affected
"World in Action": ITV (20.30). "Heartbreak Hotel" about homeless families living in hotels
"Panorama": BBC 1 (21.30). "Charles, Prince of conscience" about the Prince of Wales
"The World Tonight": BBC Radio 4 (22.30) followed by "The Financial World Tonight" then "Today in Parliament"
"Newsnight"; BBC 2 (22.35).