

15 December 1988

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Princess of Wales attends a Carol Concert, Westminster Abbey

Epping and East Hampshire By-Elections

EC: Research Council, Brussels

EC: Political Committee, Athens (to 16 December)

Rally against Official Secrets Bill, London

House of Commons Defence Committee visit Chatham

Publication of Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Bill

Introduction of Social Security Bill

UN Assembly meeting, Geneva

? CERN announcement

STATISTICS

CSO: Balance of Payments (3rd qtr)

DEM: Labour Market Statistics (Unemployment, Employment, Vacancies, Earnings, Hours, Unit Wages Costs, Productivity and Industrial Stoppages)

DTI: Investment Intentions (Autumn 1988)

DTI: Car and Commercial Vehicles (November 1988)

HO: Control of Immigration statistics (3rd Qtr)

OPCS: Abortion statistics 1987

PUBLICATIONS

SO: Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland annual report

PARLIAMENTCommons

Questions: Home Office; Northern Ireland; Prime Minister

Business: Security Service Bill: 2nd Reading and Money Resolution
Petroleum Royalties (Relief) and Continental Shelf Bill:
Committee and Remaining Stages.

Adjournment Debates: The case for a causeway to the Islands of Vatersy,
Outer Hebrides (Mr C MacDonald)

Select Committees:

Lords: Starred Questions
City of Glasgow District Council Order Confirmation Bill:
Consideration of Report.
Road Traffic Bill (HL): Second Reading.
Advice and Assistance (Assistance by Way of Representation)
(Scotland) Regulations 1988. Motion for Approval.
Advice and Assistance (Scotland) (Prospective Cost) (No 3)
Regulations 1988. Motion for Approval.
Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986 Amendment Regulations 1988.
Motion for Approval.
Debate on ECC Report on Package Travel (20th Report, 1987-88,
HL Paper 107).
UQ to ask HMG what action they propose to take to prevent
breaches of the 4th Geneva convention in Gaza and the West
Bank.

MINISTERS _ See Annex

PRESS DIGESTMain News

USA agrees to dialogue with the PLO after Arafat says the right things at a press conference. Much distress in Israel. Seen as an extraordinary climbdown by Shultz.

Senior Ministers believe Nigel Lawson will stay as Chancellor after your expected large mid-term reshuffle next autumn (Times).

Attorney General says reasons for not extraditing Ryan were "regrettably offensive".

Doctor says those who died in Clapham rail crash did so quickly and that they did not suffer.

B/Rail begins its own inquiry into the disaster.

Lots of coverage for survivors and tragic stories of those who died.

Mail says future of British Rail Chairman Reid is in jeopardy.

Unions say BR faces a severe shortage of signals engineers.

Government introduces £500,000 advertising campaign on use of eggs - some say to soothe the poultry industry's ruffled feathers. Some, like the Sun, say Edwina Currie has won. Others, like the Star, says it is a rap over the knuckles for her.

Post says 10million hens will be slaughtered within a fortnight if advertising campaign fails.

Egg producers chairman complains about the advertising campaign - "We need a campaign that gives eggs a clean bill of health". Paul Marland MP says the advert will do nothing to help farmers.

Prince Charles dismisses salmonella scare as "just a load of nonsense".

TGWU steps up campaign to defend National Docks Labour Scheme, calling a special conference of port delegates in London next Wednesday (FT).

BP may sell its mineral interests to RTZ for £2billion.

Co-op to reintroduce "divi".

PRESS DIGEST

Engineering employers heed Chancellor's advice to refuse to improve on 5.4% offer on basic rates. Express says they are right to do so.

Tory Backbenchers confident order for new Army tank will go to Vickers.

Construction industry employers plan a national skills register which would require all craftsmen to gain a certificate of competence to work. Deficiencies in training standards were revealed in a Construction Industry Training Board report (FT).

UDM rule out industrial action over pay claim.

Boycott of all exam work by 31,000 university lecturers almost certain in New year in row over pay (Times).

DTI steering group rejects notion of Government support for installing a fibre optic cable network in every home (Independent).

World's first transatlantic optical fibre cable, capable of carrying up to 40,000 simultaneous telephone calls between America and UK and France opened for business yesterday (Times).

Guardian says Peter Rost MP is seeking a consultancy, worth £2,900 a month, from Danish district heating companies to promote their interests in Britain in run up to electricity privatisation.

While overall crime dropped by 3% over year to October, violent crime up 13% and sex attacks 6%.

2 policemen and 3 raiders shot in incident outside Post Office being raided by gang of blacks in Acton; all six arrested. Bullet hits pram with baby in it during shoot-out. 30 shots said to have been fired.

Sun says Home Secretary yesterday backed the police who protected it during Wapping dispute after news that 20 are to face charges arising out of riots.

Wood Green chemist who sold steroids to bodybuilders for easy cash struck off Pharmaceutical Society register.

Ralph Howell MP to introduce Bill on national identity card (Times).

PRESS DIGEST

Colin Moynihan, in meeting with Conservative Backbenchers on football Bill, hints at temporary membership for casual supporters and exceptions for children and disabled.

Today says it is not good enough for Tory MPs to bitch at the Bill; if they don't like it they have to come up with something better. Control of hooligans is essential (Today).

Britain said to be facing a new 'flu epidemic.

PAC condemns Government, British Museum and V&A for their failure to look after priceless national art collections (Times).

Channel 4 to join breakfast TV competition in New Year.

Government confirms that TV viewers will need planning permission to use more than one satellite dish (Times).

20 Labour MPs table Commons motion urging a change in libel laws following the Sun's record £1million pay out to Elton John (Times).

Mirror tips Steven Norris to win Epping today.

Continuing concern over the number of EC bureaucrats receiving invalidity pensions after Euro auditors reveal a fiddle.

Britain pledges to jump on any evidence of corruption affecting EC budget following annual report which exposes widespread fraud, deception and mismanagement (Times).

Leon Brittan to be responsible for competition portfolio when he takes up EC Commissioner post in January (Times).

Row looms after Commission decides in principle to ban public monopolies in value-added services such as data transmission, leased lines and financial data networks (FT).

Church of England Alternative Service Book might be amended to get rid of male terms which are meant to include women (Times).

Russians admit they cannot cope with major disasters. Armenian relief operation shows Civil Defence Services inadequate, says Minister.

Mail says Gorbachev is opening the eyes of the Soviet people to the truth about their country.

PRESS DIGEST

You tell Russians on TV of your horror over Armenian earthquake.

Times says of your Russian TV interview "Thatcher urges Russians to support Gorbachev".

Thatcher stresses support for Gorbachev changes. You are also anxious that his visit to London should be rescheduled as early in the New Year as possible (FT).

Britons have sent more than £1million to branch of Moscow bank for Armenian relief.

Today says rescue workers are being begged not to join in looting of supplies.

Man being questioned about murder of Swedish Prime Minister, Olaf Palme, 3 years ago.

EGGS

Star - Egged - rap for Edwina.

Sun - "Taxpayers shell out £500,000 to prove Eggwina was right - big advert safety campaign". Mrs Currie victorious.

Mirror - Prince Charles hits out at eggs.

Today - £0.5million ads bill to wipe egg off Edwina's face.

Express leader says that were jobs and businesses not on the line the Curried Eggs affair would simply add to the gaiety of the nation. But we have not heard a clear, unequivocal statement from the Government. Was Mrs Currie right or wrong? The campaign is ambiguous and doomed to failure. The Government has handled this matter ineptly, to say the least, and if this is the best it can do with a crisis of this size how can we trust it to deal with a bigger one? But news story says advertising experts agreed last night that the adverts approach was just right.

FT - NFU claims demand for fresh eggs has been halved over the past 9 days and is endangering the livelihood of several smaller egg producers.

PRESS DIGEST

Times - MAFF and Health bury their differences and agree on joint £0.5million advertising campaign to restore confidence in eggs. Report adds that it would appear that Health has scored a victory over MAFF who wanted a far more positive message giving the industry a clean bill of health. Leader looks at the differences between Health and MAFF as each looks after its own clients saying the Government's aim in future should be to equip itself with rather more scientific facts to share with the public. Its Ministers could make earlier use of the machinery which exists for co-ordinating Government pronouncements over health.

Mail - £0.5million egg campaign victory for Edwina.

Telegraph leads with £500,000 drive to restore public faith in eggs; cutting threat to 8million hens for which Government might have to foot the bill. Campaign not as positive as MAFF would have liked. Simon Gourlay, NFU, still calling for Mrs Currie's resignation and some Tory MPs doubt advert will do the trick.

Independent - A £500,000 publicity campaign on egg safety will be launched by the Government tomorrow in the wake of the row over salmonella.

Guardian - £500,000 drive to ease concern over egg risks. NFU approved the advert. Leader says MAFF and D/Health have shown about as much common cause as London and Dublin over Ryan. A rather high price to pay for one lady's unbuttoned lip.

RYAN

Star - UK bid to try Ryan in Ireland.

Post - King raps Ryan fiasco. Stormiest meeting so far of Anglo-Irish conference. Leader says that of all the weazle words over the non-extradition of Ryan the most abominable were the charge that he could not get a fair trial in Britain. An insult to the finest legal system in the world - and a sham.

Sun - Ryan trial death fear - Attorney warns of danger to witnesses in trial in Ireland. Leader headed "Labour and terrorism" asks where the Labour Party stands on terrorism given they are against the PTA, against holding suspects for even a few days; against the media ban on Sinn Fein; and even against your blunt battle to get Ryan extradited. Have they any policy except giving in?

PRESS DIGEST

Mirror leader says both you and Attorney are right in saying the decision over Ryan was an insult and offensive. But it was inevitable. The Irish nation and Government, while opposing the IRA, do not want to see Irishmen and women locked up in British jails. The South of Ireland is a semi-safe refuge for terrorists. If we want to catch terrorists we will have to rely on our own resources. News story has Attorney General trying to repair relations with the Irish.

Today - Ryan witnesses fear Dublin murder squads.

Express - Death fear dilemma on Irish Ryan trial.

FT - King tells Dublin to make full review of extradition law. UK Government officials say no decision has been taken on action in the Irish courts; but agree that the balance of argument at present suggests Sir Patrick Mayhew would probably decide against.

Times - Ministers keep up barrage of criticism of Irish decision not to extradite Ryan and calls are made for changes in their extradition law. Patrick Mayhew says Irish Attorney General's reasons for his decision were regrettably offensive and Tom King spends 6 hours with Irish Ministers objecting to what he called an unacceptable decision.

Telegraph - Extradition review plea to Dublin after "blunt speaking" at Anglo-Irish conference. Another news story says witnesses safety is the key issue.

Guardian - King seeking rethink on extradition. Another story claims Scotland Yard anti-terrorist officers have given evidence in Dublin court.

Independent - Dublin believes Britain will seek to prosecute Ryan through the Irish courts despite the difficulties. Concern for protection of witnesses. At the Anglo-Irish conference Tom King asked for a review of extradition proceedings. The Irish said the Ryan case was unique and urged greater use of extraterritorial legislation in preference to extradition. Article considers the claims by "intelligence" and "government" sources which appeared in the media and which Dublin says constituted trial by media of Ryan.

Independent leader says Anglo-Irish Agreement is doomed to become a dead letter.

PRESS DIGESTCLAPHAM CRASH

Times - A skills shortage which is crippling BR highlighted by Clapham rail disaster. Unions blame pay for key staff leaving and Kinnock calls for a £210million injection by Government to reduce train overcrowding in South East.

Independent - Inquest will examine whether the effects of congestion contributed to the death toll.

EAST/WEST

FT - CSCE talks in Vienna look likely to be concluded in next few days; and it seems increasingly probable that fresh conventional arms reduction talks will begin early in the New Year.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Fowler addresses NEDO dinner, London
- MOD: Mr Younger hosts, and Lord Trefgarne, Mr Hamilton, Mr Sainsbury and Mr Freeman attend Defence Council reception for Commonwealth and Service Advisers, Lancaster House
- SO: Mr Rifkind visits Western Isles (to 16 December)
- DEM: Mr Nicholls addresses Industrial Society conference, London
- DES: Mr Butcher addresses Textile Institute conference on Quality People for a Quality Industry
- DH: Mrs Currie accepts Petition from Midwives, Central Lobby, Houses of Parliament; later attends Food and Drink Federation Christmas Cocktail Party
- DOE: Lord Caithness visits Tidy Britain Group and High Street Project, Nelson, Lancs
- DOE: Mr Gummer meets Association of C A B about the implementation of community charge
- DOE: Mr Tripper visits Nottingham City Council
- DSS: Mr Lloyd visits Canning Town ICO
- DTp: Mr Bottomley visits Bristol to open the Vehicle Inspectorate Training Centre
- DTp: Mr Portillo visits Guildford to see Briway Transit system
- HO: Mr Patten visits Mid-Glamorgan Probation Service
- MAFF: Mr Thompson visits Smithfield Market, London
- OAL: Mr Luce addresses opening of new Sculpture Court, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool; later addresses Business in the Arts reception, Liverpool (prov) and addresses National Art Collections Fund annual dinner, Liverpool
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- DTI: Lord Young and Mr Atkins attend Airbus Ministerial Meeting, Toulouse
- DTI: Mr Newton attends Research Council, Brussels
- HMT: Mr Lawson addresses French conference on privatisation organised by M Balladur, Paris
- DEM: Mr Cope attends EC Ministers formal meeting, Brussels (to 16 December)(prov)
- DH: Mr Mellor attends European Community Health Ministers meeting, Brussels (prov)
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

HMT: Mr Major on By-Election special, BBC

TV AND RADIO

'Today': BBC Radio 4 (6.30)

'Kilroy': BBC 1 (9.20)

'The Parliament Programme': C4 (12.00)

'Business Daily': C4 (12.30)

'The World at One': BBC Radio 4 (13.00)

'Open Space' 'The Baby's fine - but how are you?' BBC 2 (20.00) Examination of post-natal depression and treatments

'Analysis': BBC Radio 4 (20.15) 'Eastwood Ho!': Germany's renewed "Ostpolitik" following Chancellor Kohl's recent trip to the Soviet Union

'This Week': ITV (20.30) 'Boat People Go Home'. Examines how compassion fatigue in the West and Vietnam's emergence are combining to thwart Boat People's aspirations for a better life in the West

'40 Minutes': BBC 2 (21.30) "Mixed Blessings" - when babies are given to wrong mothers in nursing homes

'Question Time': BBC 1 (22.00) Chantal Cuer, Bryan Gould, Michael Heseltine and Enoch Powell

'Newsnight': BBC 2 (22.30)

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

'The City Programme': ITV (22.35)
