

19 January 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Mr Bourvassa, Premier of Quebec (photocall) and hosts reception for Olympic and Paralympics medallists (photocall)

Piper Alpha inquiry opens, Aberdeen

ICAO Council considers Lockerbie disaster

STATISTICS

BOE: Institutional investment (3rd Qtr)

CO/CSO: Social trends, 1989 edition

CSO: Index of output of the production industries (Nov)

DEM: Labour Market Statistics: unemployment and unfilled vacancies (Dec-prov); average earnings indices (Nov-prov); employment, hours, productivity and unit wage costs; industrial disputes

DTI: Vehicle production figures (Dec)

PUBLICATIONS

CO: Review of Government Legal Service

PSA: Management of the Civil Estate

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Treasury; Prime Minister

Business: Motions on the Rate Support Grant (England) 1989-90 and the Supplementary Reports, details of which will be given in the Official Report

Adjournment Debates: Poverty in Manchester (Mr A Morris)

Select Committees: COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS
Associated British Ports (No.2) Bill
North Killingholme Cargo Terminal Bill

Lords: Starred Questions
Children Bill (HL): Committee (4th Day)
National Maritime Museums Bill (HL): Second Reading

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Gorbachev says he is to cut spending on troops and weapons by 14.2% and military technology by nearly 20%. He also tells Western figures that a decision on establishing links with IMF is close.

Way cleared for legalisation of Solidarity in Poland.

President Botha has a mild stroke; he may appoint acting president today. Heunis tipped for job.

Shares reach highest level since Stock Market collapse.

Dollar advances strongly despite intervention and higher than expected US trade deficit for November, pulling London equities with it.

CBI will report next week that business confidence has suffered a sharp reversal in response to Chancellor's policy of high interest rates and strong pound (Times).

Chancellor poised for £15billion budget surplus (Times).

Demonstrations in Manchester after police enter church and detain Viraj Mendis pending deportation. Mendis's lawyers have asked Denmark to accept him.

His great aunt in Columbo said they cannot understand all "this nonsense - he has a very nice home waiting for him". His father said to be furious with him.

Home Secretary warns Church against shielding law-breakers; Mail leads with "Hurd warns off the Church" and wins overwhelming approval of Tory MPs.

Social Trends mainly reported in terms of changing fortunes of women in Britain.

General welcome for MAFF measures to make eggs safer - John MacGregor says it is one of the most comprehensive national programmes for dealing with salmonella. Express: At last!

Boy died from salmonella yesterday, father claiming it was caused by an egg.

PRESS DIGEST

Further calls for MAFF to relinquish its responsibility for food safety. This time from the National Consumer Council and the Institution of Environmental Health Officers.

Occidentals confirm an attempt to sabotage Piper Alpha a year before last July's explosion. A major explosion was narrowly averted. Inquiry, opening today, could be the longest and most expensive in Scottish history.

Former chairman of London Underground, Dr Tony Ridley, who resigned after King's Cross fire, appointed managing director of Channel Tunnel company.

Boeing failed to tell aviation authority about faulty wiring last August (Independent); second cleaning firm at Heathrow has its security passes withdrawn.

Trevor Kavanagh, in Sun, asks "how dare they mock Maggie?" for going to sites of disasters and to memorial services.

Express says Britain's coal mining industry may be cut by half by plans to use cheap foreign coal.

John Baker, CEEB, tells Cecil Parkinson leaked speech does not represent his views.

Independent leader says that yesterday's leak of John Baker's speech will have done some good if it forces Cecil Parkinson to say exactly how the electricity industry is to be regulated.

Prince Charles said to have expressed concern about any plan to make Dounreay NIREX nuclear waste dump (Express).

Lord Justice Dillon suggests that Al Fayeds' acquisition of House of Fraser could be investigated by both the MMC and the Serious Fraud Office.

Fokker declare an interest in buying Short Brothers.

Lowest paid NHS workers demand extra £15 a week.

At least 29 universities affected by dons' exam boycott.

Increasing numbers of Tory MPs are accepting paid consultancies with British and foreign companies. List of members' interests printed on 2 pages in Guardian.

PRESS DIGEST

CAA to announce ban today on pilots from flying for more than 11 hours at a stretch.

More than one-third of 1585 air passengers who died in crashes last year were victims of terrorism.

John Cunningham leaks a document which it is said links a number of Tory MPs with attempts to shape the Water Bill for the benefit of water authorities at expense of consumer.

Michael Portillo will be told by Royal Town Planning Institute today that growing traffic chaos will worsen over next decade unless Government reverses policy of transport planning (Times).

British Transplant Society to introduce tougher rules to halt trade in transplant operations (Independent).

Edinburgh and other universities may have to sell rare books and manuscripts because the Treasury has vetoed an early retirement scheme funded with private money (Independent).

Home Secretary announces moves to stop tycoons from owning too big a share of press, radio and TV and Independent describes this as a major retreat from White Paper plans.

Nearly 300,000 TV licence dodgers were caught last year - a record.

You are known to support the aims of John Browne's private members' Bill making it possible to sue journalists who invade privacy. Home Office takes a cooler view though the omens for progress on the Bill are good (Independent).

Times reports that there are plans to privatise three key police services - the Police National Computer organisation, the Directorate of Telecommunications and the Forensic Science Services.

Police questioning 27 after raids on 54 addresses in London in attempt to smash a £3.5million social security swindle involving counterfeit allowance books.

Prisoner, freed from Brixton by mistake, stabbed black pastor's daughter to death on Tube.

John Patten visits tower block in which couple, afraid of burglars, died in fire locked up in their flat and says he won't just go away and forget.

PRESS DIGEST

IRA rated third most dangerous terror organisation after Abu Nidal and Hezbollah by Pentagon.

HM Customs seized record £185million of illegal drugs last year.

Sun claims 100,000 of its readers have signed a petition to free woman who scalded man who raped her 5 year old daughter and was sent to prison for 30 months.

Case of youth 16 who dies when, during night exercise, he was thrown into sea of Sidmouth in a simulated rescue operation and lost by inshore lifeboat service's stupidity (Star).

Great to do over Brian Clough, Notts Forest manager, hitting four fans who invaded the pitch after last night's Cup tie. Police investigating TV pictures.

You warn public that if exhortation and example did not end litter problem tougher laws would be introduced. Your remarks well covered in most newspapers. Express says the report you launched makes depressing reading and confirms we are becoming one of the grubbiest in Europe. A country with our record of achievement, civilised values and affluence should not for one moment tolerate the squalor.

Duchess of York to return to Klosters ski slopes after tomorrow's Winchester memorial service.

Irish army plunged into crisis as almost 70 sergeants plan an orchestrated mass resignation to force Government to improve soldiers' pay (Times).

West German Government admits it knew as long ago as May that Germans could be involved in building Libyan chemical weapons plant. Bundestag orders report by February 15.

Two US TV networks report that Iraq is developing germ weapons capable of being delivered by long-range missile in an underground plant 35 miles from Baghdad.

Israeli Foreign Minister charges William Waldegrave with "slanders and insults".

Shevardnadze reacts badly and negatively to West's call for Berlin Wall to be pulled down.

PRESS DIGESTPOLITICS

Today editorial, on Labour Party membership scheme launched yesterday, says the party stands for those things for which the British people increasingly do not want - nationalisation, higher taxes and State interference.

MENDIS

Sun commenting on need for 50 police to arrest one illegal immigrant, sarcastically wonders where the Tank Corps and nuclear subs were.

Mail says the operation mounted by the police looks excessive - a battering ram instead of a jemmy - but it finds Mendis an utterly unconvincing martyr. The Home Office is fully justified in deporting him.

Independent - Mendis arrest sparks political row. The police came with hammers at dawn. Refugee, immigration and church organisations use the case to illustrate what they describe as Britain's deteriorating record on asylum.

Times - Government relations with Church of England under renewed strain over removal of Viraj Mendis from Manchester church. Under the heading "No Refugee" leader says breaking into the church by police was a distasteful task, but it had become necessary. It criticises the Church for allowing affair to come to such a climax. The Home Office had been scrupulously fair; it was impossible to imagine what else it could have done.

Guardian says local support for Mendis is understandable because British deportation procedures are a disgrace. But it should be admitted Mendis is no ideal focal point for outrage.

SOCIAL TRENDS etc, including CPAG

Star - Britain has become a rich man, poor man nation. Richest 25% have 4p in the pound more to spend than in 1976; poorest 20% have lost more than 1p in the pound - CPAG.

Mirror says the hidden half of our nation is not composed of whingers and scroungers, leadswingers and spongers. You have not abolished poverty; you have hidden it.

Today - Britain's high fliers are among lowest taxed in world, according to LSE expert, who wants top rate raised to 50%.

PRESS DIGEST

Today and Express in covering regional trends, concentrate on the age of the woman and the way their lifestyle has changed.

Mail, following same theme, says women are doing better for themselves in booming Britain, but not that much.

Independent - 'Social Trends' highlights shifting values of a nation where full equality of the sexes remains elusive: working women still bear brunt of domestic burden, moral climate hardens over homosexuality, big rise in membership of 'green' societies.

Telegraph - Prosperous Britain brings growing optimism and stricter moral attitudes.

More than 10,000 northerners, predominantly middle-range technical, managerial and professional workers, have become industrial gypsies who commute weekly to work in the south east, according to Policy Studies Institute (FT).

FT - Egg consumption fell by a third between 1961 and 1987, according to Social Trends. It also reveals a decade of consumer demand fed by credit, a shift to an older workforce and a decline in the nuclear family.

NHS REVIEW

Times report that under the NHS White Paper GPs will be kept on tighter rein, they will no longer have freedom to prescribe unlimited drugs in a bid to cut the £2billion prescription costs. Medical profession and drugs industry expected strongly to oppose proposals.

New pressure group to safeguard well-being of patients discharged from mental hospitals holds inaugural meeting (Times).

EDUCATION

Independent leader looks at the ambitious new education plan unveiled by the French government and suggests that the French are setting their sights much higher than the British. It says Britain must now raise its expectations and the resources it commits to this sector. Otherwise it will be at a considerable disadvantage in the Single Market.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DH: Mr Clarke attends Camberwell H.A. dinner
- MAFF: Mr MacGregor attends National Farmers Union annual general meeting, Hollingborne, Kent
- DEM: Mr Lee makes Employment Training visits in the North West
- DEM: Mr Nicholls meets EITB Chairman, London
- DES: Mrs Rumbold addresses Industry/Education Partnership conference, County Hall, Taunton
- DH: Mr Freeman meets Association of Victims of Medical Accidents
- DOE: Mr Trippier visits Telford and hands over 4000th Corporation House bought by tenants
- DSS: Lord Skelmersdale visits Canon's Park
- DTI: Mr Forth and Mrs Rumbold address Enterprise and Education Initiative meeting, Taunton
- DTI: Mr Atkins addresses seminar on 1992, Manchester and visits Glasdon Manufacturing, Blackpool
- DTp: Mr Bottomley attends press conference on Western Environmental Improvement Route, Chelsea Town Hall, London
- FCO: Mr Eggar gives press conference on claims against China, London
- MAFF: Mr Ryder attends National Farmers Union annual dinner, North Riding and Durham
- SO: Lord Sanderson visits Dounreay Area, Caithness (and 20 January)

MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- HMT: Mr Lawson interviewed by BBC World Service, "People and Politics" programme (to be broadcast 20 January)
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TV AND RADIO

'Today': BBC Radio 4 (6.30)

'Kilroy': BBC1 (9.20)

'The Parliament Programme': C4 (12.00)

'Business Daily': C4 (12.30)

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

'Soundtrack': BBC Radio 4 (19.20). A new series of 10 programmes which take life as the microphone takes it. A look at taxi cabs in Leicester, Heathrow, Belfast and the Shetlands

'9-2-5': BBC2 (20.00). A new series about the changing world of work. Includes feature on needs of working women with children

'The North Sea': BBC2 (20.30). The Rhine - Romance and Rubbish. Third of six programmes on the use and misuse of the North Sea. Look at waste dumped into the rivers which feed it, especially the Rhine

'This Week': Thames (20.30). 'Private Lies?'. Deals with the issue of libel and the press. As headlines become more lurid, so juries are punishing the tabloids for excursions into the privacy of the rich and famous

'Forty Minutes': BBC2 (21.30). 'The Kingdom of Fun'. Inside the Metro Centre shopping complex, Newcastle. Profile of John Hall, its creator

'Question Time': BBC1 (22.15). With Virginia Bottomley MP, John Prescott MP, David Willetts MP and Pauline Perry, Director, South Bank Polytechnic

'Newsnight': BBC2 (22.30)

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

'The City Programme': Thames (22.35)
