

6 February 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

The Princess Royal visits SEHM menswear exhibition, Porte de Versailles, Paris

Mr Knud Engaard, Danish Defence Minister, visits the UK (to 8 February)

Mr Vladimir Kamentsev, Soviet Deputy Prime Minister, visits the UK (to 10 February)

STATISTICS

DOE: Housebuilding (Dec 1987)

DTI: Retail Sales (Dec 1988 revised and annual figure 1988)

DTI: Credit Business (Dec 1988 and annual figure 1988)

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Social Security; Transport; Wales

Business: Timetable Motion on the Water Bill

OPPOSED PRIVATE BUSINESS

British Railways (Penalty Fares) Bill (Lords)

London Regional Transport (Penalty Fares)

Motions on the Adoption Allowance Schemes and Adoption Allowance Schemes (Scotland) Orders

Adjournment Debates: Funeral costs (Mr L Cunliffe)

Select Committees:

HOME AFFAIRS

Subject: Future Funding of Channel Four Television

Witnesses: Mr Michael Grade, Chief Executive and Mr David Scott, Director of Finance and Company Secretary, Channel Four Television

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Subject: Administrative Telecommunications

Witness: J Anson CB, Second Permanent Secretary, HM Treasury

Select Committees: (Cont'd)

TELEVISIONING OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE
Witnesses: Rt Hon Terence Higgins MP and other
members of the Liaison Committee; Social and Liberal
democrats; Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru

Lords: Starred Questions

National Maritime Museum Bill (HL): Third Reading

Petroleum Royalties (Relief) and Continental Shelf Bill: Third Reading

Children Bill (HL): Report (1st Day)

Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed
Applications) Regulations 1989: Motion for Approval

Adoption Allowance Schemes Order 1989: Motion for Approval

Adoption Allowance Schemes (Scotland) Order 1989: Motion for
Approval

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGESTMain News

After 11% Conservative lead at weekend, Times notes MORI poll shows support for Conservatives among the elderly is falling. Conservatives 47; Labour 36; Democrats 8; SDP 5.

Edwina Currie on collision course with Commons - Telegraph; she has few allies in the press.

Labour MPs plan to table a Commons motion to force her to give evidence to a Select Committee on the eggs issue after it is revealed she is writing a book on the episode.

Star says Edwina Currie is to be brought back into the Government as Minister of Food. Leader says its just the job for her.

Sun says if she doesn't first appear before the Select Committee before writing a book, she will never be offered another Government job. Today says she is literally writing off her career.

Mirror claims she will get £100,000 from the book. Mail says if Mrs Currie has anything further to say of interest about eggs and hens courtesy demands she tells the Commons before her publishers.

Telegraph leader says if the story of the book is true it would appear Mrs Currie has not been thwarting the constitutional process out of party loyalty but in order to maintain the exclusivity of her account. It would be regrettable if she allowed that impression to stand.

Times leader says it is one thing for Edwina Currie to decline to appear before the Select Committee because she wishes to say no more about the salmonella issue. It is quite another for her to refuse and then give utterance in a well-remunerated book. The investigation into the salmonella affair is an important one. Mrs Currie has an important parliamentary duty to fulfill.

Widespread speculation that the Chancellor will use the Budget to cut interest rates.

Growing confidence in the economy underscored by your 11% lead in opinion poll.

British Chambers of Commerce report an acute shortage of skilled labour.

PRESS DIGEST

Pay increases rising to their highest levels since 1981 and CBI defends them as productivity rises.

US dollar is expected to advance on world's currency markets after last week's G7 (FT).

Express, campaigning for the refurbishment of school buildings, says this is how part of Government's massive surplus could be spent.

EC concern that following privatisation standards of water quality may fall short of Community demands.

Claims that 30-50% water charge increases are in the offing from 28 private water companies. Michael Howard says such increases would be totally unjustified.

New effort to sort out Wandsworth prison dispute today; Governors see Douglas Hogg over prison service as a whole. Talk of national action by POA. Mirror says the dispute can only damage unions.

Claims that Wandsworth warders have agreed a secret formula to end dispute.

Now the campaign extends to shutting down soft porn as well as chat lines.

Express leads with John Patten plan for young hooligans to be made to do something useful by way of recompense - cleaning up streets under supervision.

Labour releases its list of the 320 hospitals likely to become Trusts.

NFC employees will cash in today when their privatised firm goes to market.

Peter Brooke to unveil this week's plans to transfer at least 20,000 Civil Service jobs out of London.

Times pge 1 - Two of the country's top kidney specialists may face inquiry after wide-ranging dossier is studied by Ministers who are likely to bring in early law to ban sale of human organs. The administrative director of National Kidney Centre is dismissed by the Charity's trustees.

PRESS DIGEST

The Margaret Pyke Family Planning Centre faces crippling budget cuts amounting to 30% of its annual running costs. During your visit 3 months ago you spoke of your admiration for their work (Independent).

Friends of the Earth claim radioactive contamination of River Esk near Sellafield exceeds safety limits five times.

Guardian leader advocates give away of water and electricity industries in interests of wider share ownership and pressure for efficiency.

A radical new partnership involving BR, local authorities and the private sector could save the Settle-Carlisle line (Independent).

Peter Hennessy reviews a successful year for "Next Steps" (Independent).

CBI's John Banham calls for sector by sector review of case for scrapping wages councils (FT).

Announcement expected within weeks to scrap Wages Councils which Ministers believe are an arbitrary system full of anomalies and anachronisms which reduce jobs and increase unemployment (Times).

Mail says Government is winning battle to force down Council spending before the introduction of community charge.

Labour Party planning to introduce a Consumer Affairs Ministry with consumer advice bureaux like CABs.

Left tries to repackage its support for unilateralism.

Labour's defence policy review committee meets tomorrow to discuss delegation's fact-finding trip to Moscow (FT).

Brent Council ready, according to Sun, to loan £20,000 in enterprise grant to black illegal immigrant who wants to open burger bar.

Five cases of Legionnaire's Disease confirmed in Westminster.

Christopher Johnson, Lloyds Bank adviser, says Government has not worked out student loans properly and reveals banks' hostility.

Sky TV comes on air, but who is watching it? Labour wants MMC investigation into Murdoch's interests in Britain.

PRESS DIGEST

Home Secretary to consider whether senior Met Police officers should face disciplinary charges over incidents arising out of violent disturbances at Wapping (Independent).

Members of the 1986 Peacock Committee on Broadcasting are to appeal to Home office to moderate some of the proposals in the Broadcasting White Paper. In particular they urge the BBC licence fee should be indexed linked after 1991 (Independent).

Peacock Committee rejects Government proposals that ITV franchises must go to highest bidder (Times).

Drunken British fans damage country's reputation at Honeyghan's world title defeat in Las Vegas.

Graham Turner writes about "The New Traditionalists" - devout, hard-working and disciplined Muslim Britons - in Mail; they have the qualities that made us a great nation.

Guardian claims Delors' committee is proposing a Euro Bank with power to overrule Governments.

EC to renew pressure on Britain to accept elimination of border controls by 1993 and to move towards a common extradition law and a supranational police force (Independent).

Soviets complete withdrawal from Kabul.

Meanwhile Shevardnadze, in Pakistan, tries to forge a peaceful solution to conflict.

Russia claims to have freed 356 prisoners of conscience.

Tributes to Charles Price, US Ambassador, in Express; picture in Times.

As Britain and Spain begin their annual talks on Gibraltar today, evidence is growing that the Government sees a settlement of the dispute as being in Britain's best interests (Times).

Paraguay ex-President Stroesser jailed.

POLITICS

Sun leader headed "Kinnock's party of plonkers" notes the Government's 11% lead and comments about the Opposition "trapped in a timewarp of discredited dogma and old fashioned prejudice. They have completely failed to catch or reflect the public mood".

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEN: Mr Parkinson addresses British members of European Democratic Group, on work of the Department of Energy, London
- DES: Mr Baker launches Performing Arts College, Abbey Road Recording Studios, London
- DH: Mr Clarke meets Peggy Jay and John Tizzard of Exodus
- DOE: Mr Ridley receives farewell visit from Charles Price, US Ambassador, London
- DTI: Lord Young addresses Royal Society of Arts on the single market; later opens Government Business Shop, Newcastle
- DTI: Mr Newton visits Preston and Rochdale Inner City Task Forces
- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe meets Spanish Foreign Minister, London (and 7 February)
- WO: Mr Walker opens Mid Wales development stand at the International Spring Fair, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham; later launches financial services directory for Wales, Cardiff and visits Export Credit Guarantee Department insurance services, Cardiff
- DES: Mr Jackson visits Bristol Polytechnic
- DH: Mr Mellor meets the Health Visitors Association, London
- DOE: Mrs Bottomley visits North Yorkshire moors
- DOE: Mr Trippier visits Wandsworth, London
- DOE: Mr Gummer visits Yorkshire and meets Selby and Ryedale District Councils
- DOE: Lord Caithness receives Spanish Environment Minister, London
- DTI: Mr Forth addresses BSI Standards in Europe seminar, London
- DTI: Mr Maude addresses CBI Initiative, Nottingham
- HO: Lord Ferrers opens Hollyroyde Police community relations seminar, Manchester
- MAFF: Mr Thompson attends New Zealand House reception, London
- MAFF: Mr Ryder addresses Tenant Farmers Association annual general meeting, London
- SO: Mr Lang performs official unveiling ceremony, Dundee Waterfront Development, Dundee
- SO: Mr Forsyth visits Sick Children's Hospital, Edinburgh

TV AND RADIO

'Watchdog': BBC1 (19.30)

'World in Action': Thames (20.30)

'Panorama': BBC1 (21.30). Factory Fresh, the Food Revolution. Looks at farming and food processing in the light of what has happened with eggs

'The Nuclear Age': Thames (22.35). The Education of Robert McNamara. The ideas of the former U.S. Secretary of State for Defence and the development of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD)
