

15 February 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister sees Moshe Arens Israeli Foreign Minister (photocall) and Mike Ahern, Premier of Queensland (photocall)

EC: Fishing Council, Brussels

ICAO meeting on air security in Montreal (to Thursday)

The Duke of Edinburgh visits Nigerian Conservation Foundation, Nigeria (to February 19)

Norman Fowler launches "Alcohol in the Workplace" leaflet, London

Russians due out of Afghanistan

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STATISTICS

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

DTI: Vehicle production (Jan)

DTI: CAPEX (4th Qtr 1988 - prov)

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PUBLICATIONS

DES/HMI: Better libraries - good practice in schools

NAO: Department of Transport: Backlog of maintenance of motorways and trunk roads

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Trade and Industry; Environment; Scotland

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Junior Hospital Doctors (Regulation of Hours)  
Official Secrets Bill (3rd day) Consideration in Committee  
Motion to take note of EC Document relating to Community/US Trade Relations

Adjournment Debates: The proposed by-pass of Redberth and Sageston, Dyfed (Mr N Bennett)

Select Committees: WELSH AFFAIRS  
Subject: The Channel Tunnel: Implications for Wales  
Witness: Mr Peter Walker, MP, Secretary of State for Wales

PARLIAMENT (Cont'd)Select Committees (Cont'd)

## HOME AFFAIRS

Subject: Higher Police Training and the Police Staff College

Witness: Association of Police Officers

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Subject: The Plant Breeding Institute

Witnesses: Sir David Hancock, KCB,  
Permanent Secretary, Department of Education and  
Science and Professor WDP Stewart, FRSE, FRS,  
Secretary, Agricultural and Food Research Council

## SOCIAL SERVICES

Subject: The Future of the NHS

Witness: Mr Kenneth Clarke, MP, Secretary of  
State for Health

## TRANSPORT

Subject: British Rail

Witness: British Rail

## TREASURY AND CIVIL SERVICE

Subject: The Government's Expenditure Plans 1989-90  
to 1991-92

Witnesses: Treasury officials

## JOINT COMMITTEE

Consolidation &c. Bills

Subject: The draft Food (Northern Ireland)  
Order 1989

Witness: Mr A J Esdale

Lords: Starred Questions

Short Debate to call attention to the case for increasing the use of  
railways, and possible means of doing so

Short Debate to call attention to the case for more trained engineers  
and technicians and to the steps which should be taken to achieve  
this aim

London Local Authorities (No 2) Bill (HL): Second Reading

UQ to ask HMG whether they will consider a further investigation into  
the affairs of MBP Russell and Co

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MINISTERS - See Annex

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PRESS DIGESTMain News

Khomeini's order for Salman Rushdie's murder dominates most front pages.

There is also much coverage of your taking charge as food poisoning scare grows.

Express - Khomeini unleashes his worldwide army of fanatics; leader says this death threat is a sharp and timely reminder of the barbarity that remains the hallmark of his regime. Mail - "Rushdie Gets Armed Guard" as furore breaks out with Bradford Moslem leader declaring Rushdie deserves to die. "Kill Him" is the headline in the Sun while Star says the author has gone into hiding.

Independent - Islamic Society for the Promotion of Religious Tolerance denounces the Ayatollah's threat.

Iran announces Roger Cooper has been given heavy sentence after allegedly confessing to spying.

70 drug smugglers hanged in Iran (Guardian).

Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society, the ninth largest, cutting mortgage rate for new borrowers from 13.5% to 12.75% from Saturday.

Another airport safety scandal as Today reporter blows hole in Heathrow's new security rules by getting cleaner's job with fake name, bogus reference and fictitious national insurance number. The cleaning firm EMS pull their team out of airport saying they made a terrible blunder. Leader says this time there must be no excuses for abysmal security at Heathrow and calls for the sacking of Sir Norman Payne because of his failure to get on top of the security problem.

Express reveals that British Airways pilots have repeatedly closed down jet engines in flight because of faulty control gauges.

Airport fire chiefs threatening to walk out over pay and cause chaos to Easter holiday flights.

Today leader describes it as a senseless strike saying they should be sacked and replaced. President Reagan did it to air traffic controllers. Your Government should not hesitate to be just as tough.

PRESS DIGEST

CAA tell airlines they no longer need to carry out extra maintenance on engines similar to those in Boeing 737 which crashed on M1.

Israeli Intelligence claim an alliance of Palestinians and Shi-ites was responsible for the Lockerbie Pan-Am massacre (Express).

Cranley Onslow asks Conservative MPs how your 10th anniversary should be celebrated (Times).

Tara Terry returns to Britain after being cleared of starting hotel death blaze in Miami.

5 more areas have been invited to join the "Safer Cities" programme.

Harley Street specialist Dr Raymond Crockett, is directly linked to a plan to buy kidneys for £10,000 from donors in Egypt (Guardian).

Independent - Much of the extra 6% announced for university grants next academic year will be absorbed by pay-rises and pay restructuring and UGS working party claims. Britain's record in philosophy studies being damaged by government-inspired reduction in number of philosophers in universities.

Schools and education authorities accused of hampering efforts to overcome anti-police bias in classrooms (Times).

Labour, according to draft policy documents, would tackle skill shortages in the next decade by training people already in work rather than concentrating on the unemployed (Guardian).

Crackdown on local authority spending after Ridley unveils 50th Local Government Bill. Proposals will force authorities to repay debts of £45billion (Telegraph).

Business confidence remains high despite rise in interest rates, according to economic survey by Association of British Chambers of Commerce (Telegraph).

Toyota to send team of executives to Britain at end of the month to study sites for two factories (FT).

Mail leader calls on oil companies to mount a crash programme to provide more unleaded petrol pumps as the amount of lead being disgorged from vehicles is still rising apace.

PRESS DIGEST

Nappies and sanitary products to be investigated for possible health hazards as dioxins are identified (Times).

ICI launches European-wide scheme to retrieve and recycle CFC's until production begins of "environmentally friendly" alternatives (Times).

Lynda Lee-Potter, writing in Mail under the heading "BR leaves me steaming", says crime, grime and crammed trains make rail travel hell on wheels.

CEGB discloses that programmes to combat acid rain emissions from coal-fired stations could add 2% to electricity bills (Guardian).

Nicholas Winterton signals his opposition to water privatisation in a letter to the Whips (Guardian).

MOD is to appoint a Director of Reliability in an attempt to reduce £1 billion annual cost of unreliable equipment (Times).

The Government is to introduce a code of practice for computer security. DTI code is the last of its type in Britain (Telegraph).

Mail - Bishops of Peterborough and Gloucester say John Patten was right to criticise Church for having nothing to say to today's successful people; leader says the Church's reaction to each instalment of Thatcherism is hostile, while for every so-called "progressive" proposal they can scarcely wait to demonstrate their support. No wonder the Church arouses no response from a public seeking moral and spiritual guidance.

Agriculture Ministers are preparing to freeze EC farm prices amid protests from European farmers (Telegraph).

North bracing itself for Siberian snap today as weathermen forecast heavy snow and more gales.

Independent - New UN Report says detainees in Northern Ireland were tortured by the security forces.

Independent - Irish Government demands retraction by Douglas Hogg over Ulster solicitor comments.

PRESS DIGEST

Sun leader asks just who does Charles Haughey think he is by sending unsolicited advice to Britain on how she should run her affairs following murder of Belfast solicitor. It concludes that "cheeky Charlie's best course is to keep his big mouth firmly shut".

Predictable response to Tom King's fresh attempt to prompt inter-party talks in Ulster: SDLP and Alliance Party say they will enter talks with open mind, while the Unionists say the Government's refusal to suspend the Anglo-Irish Agreement remains the biggest stumbling block to progress (FT).

Lord Chalfont helped to found a charity run by people who also act as paid propagandists for the South African-backed transitional government in Namibia (Guardian).

Independent leader urges NATO to modernise its short-range nuclear weapons as part of its strategy to achieve parity of non-aggressively structured conventional forces. But it says no explicit commitment to replace Lance missiles is needed from West Germany until after their elections, merely a sufficient degree of tacit approval to persuade the US Congress to go ahead.

Advisers to President Bush warn that Gorbachev's reforms are in serious difficulty and that he cannot count on the political survival of the Soviet leader (Guardian).

Crime in Soviet Union rising with 14% more murders, 5% more rapes and 44% more thefts.

A confident President Ershad is seeking aid and investment for Bangladesh (Times).

Bhopal compensation of £274million agreed (Times).

FOOD

Mail - You step in to take charge of food poisoning crisis by setting up Cabinet group to mastermind blueprint of new Food Bill.

Express - You are to head a top-level task force to get to grips with poisoning fears over food; leader is relieved that you have taken charge saying your beady-eyed presence should ensure that consumers' interests prevail over those of the farmers, if any conflict arises.

PRESS DIGEST

Mirror - says you tried to clear up the confusion over contamination food yesterday ... and ended up creating even more; leader under heading "Maggie's Muddle" discusses the various statements made over the last week concluding "what a shambles! What a Government!".

Mirror - NFU tell John MacGregor "What a cock up".

Today - Beleaguered John MacGregor faces wrath of farmers over poison food fiasco and you personally take charge of cheese crisis.

Star - Commons erupted yesterday as you admitted two top Ministers had goofed over possible cheese ban. It also carries a feature on how the people of ITO City love to eat dolphins fried, dried and boiled.

Sun - You were thrown on the defensive yesterday after being forced to admit there is confusion over the food crisis.

Independent - John MacGregor tells farmers no confusion over food. But NFU passes a motion of no confidence in the Government's general handling of farm policies.

Telegraph - Extensive coverage on the NFU annual meeting. Highlights speech by Mr MacGregor who says British food is the best and the safest; Leader says the political controversy is a farce with Ministers fencing across cheese counters. It is time to restore a sense of proportion on an issue that has held centre stage for too long. More serious issues need to be addressed - such as the NHS White Paper.

John MacGregor yesterday buried the "cosy relationship" between MAFF and NFU telling the NFU's AGM they had to face a period of "pain and readjustment" (Times).

Guardian - Thatcher leads food watchdog. You act to bring order to the confusion surrounding the Government's food hygiene policy. Institution of Environmental Health Officers condemns Government claim that slight listeria contamination in pre-cooked supermarket meals is acceptable. Leader, headed "Many a muck up", says that competent Parties are only as good as their last 15 bungled crises. Eggs and cheese would be containable if they didn't have water, electricity, schools and the NHS pounding in behind them. The criticism (ideology to one side) is not that the policies are wrong but that they are sketchily formulated.

PRESS DIGEST

You have taken a personal grip on the Government's handling of the food poisoning crisis. At Question Time you made what amounted to a formal statement aimed at clearing up the confusion after a meeting with Health and MAFF experts to agree a line (Times).

Dr Richard Lacey calls for supermarket refrigeration systems to be redesigned to prevent listeria and other bacteria from breeding (Times).

Food poisoning cases have doubled over 2 years (Times).

Telegraph - New research by Institute of Food Research is developing early warning systems to alert manufacturers of food poisoning risks.

Times - Chairman of Association of Medical Microbiologists advises on what is safe to eat while Eric Deakin presents case for a Ministry of Food.

MIDDLE EAST

Independent - Thatcher set for leading Middle East role. You go public for the first time with a "high-gear" approach to negotiation, with the new found backing of the Tory Zionist lobby. You are expected to see Shamir, possibly next month. Arens' task today will be to obstruct the diplomatic gains made by the PLO and disabuse the Western world that it is an acceptable negotiation partner.

FT leader looks at the Middle East and says there is confusion on both sides of the dispute. Perhaps the best chance of success is for interim proposals, combining withdrawal of troops from towns in the occupied territories with local elections and full autonomy linked to a timetable for negotiating a final settlement, rather than attempting to settle everything at one big conference.

You will urge greater Israeli moderation in dealing with the intifada when you meet Arens today. But you have no intention of insisting that Israel must have direct dialogue with the PLO (Guardian).

Times - You refuse to upgrade talks with the PLO pointing out Government do not necessarily accept the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people (Times).

Times leader says it remains impossible to contemplate the maintenance of diplomatic relations with Iran whose leader, more unequivocally even than Colonel Gadaffi, incites to murder.



MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Fowler launches Alcohol in the Workplace leaflet, London; Mr Nicholls attends
- DES: Mr Baker addresses Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education conference on the future of higher education, Royal Aeronautical Society, London
- DH: Mr Clarke addresses Royal College of Surgeons annual dinner, London
- DOE: Mr Ridley receives Dutch Planning and Transport Minister, Mrs Smit-Kroes, London
- DTI: Lord Young attends a reception for President Ershad of Bangladesh, London
- WO: Mr Walker and Mr Grist attend Association of District Councils reception, London
- DES: Mrs Rumbold launches the Local Education Authorities 'Project Management in Education' project, De Lanche Theatre, London, W1
- DES: Mr Jackson gives a lecture at the Anglican Chaplaincy conference at the University of Liverpool
- DES: Mr Butcher addresses the British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions annual lunch on 'Charging for School Activities', St Ermin's Hotel, London; Mr Roberts (WO) attends
- DOE: Mr Chope opens Grimsby Crown Court
- DTI: Mr Clark meets Bahrain Industry Minister, London
- DTp: Mr Portillo attends first meeting of Docklands Transport Steering Group, London
- DTp: Mr Bottomley launches new low alcohol beer at King and Barnes Brewery, Horsham, West Sussex
- FCO: Mr Eggar addresses all-party committee on drug abuse, House of Commons
- HO: Mr Renton addresses Charity Forum on "Broadcasting", National Film Theatre, London
- HO: Mr Patten chairs Ministerial group on women's issues
- MAFF: Mr Thompson meets Bass North Ltd, London
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- DTp: Mr Channon attends International Civil Aviation Organisations' meeting on airport security, Montreal, Canada (to 16 February)
- DTI: Mr Atkins attends Airbus Ministers meeting, Seville
- ODA: Mr Patten attends EC/ACP Ministerial meeting, Brazzaville, Congo (to 17 February)
- SO: Lord Sanderson attends Fisheries Council, Brussels
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- MAFF: Mr MacGregor interviewed by Geoffrey Cannon, Guild of Food Writers
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TV AND RADIO

'Dispatches': C4 (20.30)

'Flying Squad': Thames (21.00). The work of the Flying Squad of the Metropolitan Police

'It's My City': BBC 1 (22.05). A meeting with the judges in the 'It's My City' competition. Michael Heseltine MP, the Rev David Jenkins, Diane Abbott MP and Anita Roddick give their views on how to tackle inner city problems

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