

20 February 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Duke of Edinburgh visits Kenya, Tanzania and Nairobi (to 21 February)
EC: Foreign Affairs Council, Brussels (to 21 February)
EC: Anglo-German Summit, Frankfurt (to 21 February)

STATISTICS

BOE: Provisional estimates of monetary aggregates (Jan)
CBI: Monthly trends enquiry (Feb)
CLSB: London and Scottish banks monthly statement (Jan)
CSO: Cyclical indicators for the UK economy (Jan)

PUBLICATIONS

DES: Education Observed No 9: Special Needs in Further Education

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Wales; Energy; Social Security
Business: Transport (Scotland) Bill: Remaining Stages
Adjournment Debates: Pelican crossings for the blind (Mr N Griffiths)

Select Committees: PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
Subject: Prosecution of Crime in Scotland;
Review of the Procurator Fiscal Service
Witnesses: The Crown Office for Scotland;
Mr I Dean, The Crown Agent, Crown Office

Lords: Starred Questions
Football Spectators Bill (HL): Committee
Industrial Training Levy (Construction Board) Order 1989: Motion for Approval
Industrial Training Levy (Engineering Board) Order 1989: Motion for Approval

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Ayatollah rejects Rushdie's apology and says he must be "sent to hell". Denies execution order lifted.

Foreign Secretary to raise the issue at EC Foreign Ministers' meeting today.

Contradictory statements from Tehran seen as reflecting power struggle going on there.

Terrorist suspect, Patrick Ryan, reported to have left Irish Republic. His lawyer says he has gone abroad on holiday with friends. Tory MPs angry.

Independent says an Anglo-Irish row of major proportions looks inevitable if Ryan has left the Republic. Dublin authorities unwilling - or unable - to confirm or deny he had slipped out of the country. Irish DPP expected to rule in about 10 days on whether a prosecution is possible.

CBI trends shows Government's measures are beginning to bite on demand. Order books at lowest level since June 1987.

Senior Ministers expect Chancellor to concentrate any tax cuts on raising thresholds for lower paid and to postpone any further cut in basic income tax (Times).

Bow Group to urge Government to abolish mortgage interest tax relief when community charge is introduced (Times).

Chancellor is under pressure from Cabinet colleagues to use the Budget to abolish tax paid by workers on child care facilities provided by the employers (FT).

Mail sees you flying to Frankfurt today "to stop the rot" and to put some backbone into West Germany.

You will press Kohl to end muddle on missiles and give a clear commitment to modernising short-range weapons. He may tell you that if you insist too hard, you will find a much more anti-missile Social Democrat Government after 1990 (Independent).

Telegraph says you will offer Kohl a compromise deal - agree in principle while leaving decision on the kind of weapons and where they will be deployed until later.

PRESS DIGEST

Chancellor Kohl will today spell out its twin desire of cutting levels of short-range nuclear weapons in Europe and keeping options open over the modernisation of US Lance missiles in the 1990s (FT).

Big row in Cleveland after 11 doctors claim most of the children in the sex abuse case had in fact been abused. Doctors are accused of cruelty in reopening wounds. Stuart Bell MP says action of 11 doctors is "scandalous".

Labour Party claims £90million cost of privatising electricity will be kept secret from consumers who would foot the bill. Cecil Parkinson says it is nonsense.

Confidential memorandum shows that Government will force through a doubling of profits to more than £1billion in electricity industry in the run-up to privatisation. £3.5billion of assets are also to be written down this year, making it easier to sell the business as a whole. Independent leader says the whole idea of privatisation is discredited, given that its aim is to introduce competition and thus reduce prices, rather than increase them.

Leading representatives of food industry to meet senior Health and MAFF officials today to agree tough new hygiene standards (Times).

Concern over sales of out-of-date food for supermarkets to salvage warehouses which then sell them on to street-traders.

Claims that meat and milk from BSE cattle have got into the food chain.

Anti-smoking lobby wants to use proceeds of a 1p tax on every packet of cigarettes to buy out sports sponsorship.

Adam Smith Institute calls for complete deregulation of Sunday shop opening.

Michael Howard says private water companies are likely to back down over plans for 30-50% price increases.

Survey shows that British businessmen are complacent and ill-informed about how to survive in the competitive climate of 1992. You should accentuate the positive about the opportunities.

DTI plans radical proposals for auctioning radio spectrum (FT).

PRESS DIGEST

Select Committee to demand from MOD names of every senior servicemen and Civil Servant who has left in past 5 years because MPs are alarmed at potential for corruption and impropriety when defence contractors employ them (Times).

Kinnock in weekend attack on you - "the Green Goddess" - accuses you of jumping on the environmental bandwagon and of thereby putting the hype into hypocrisy.

Mail leader warns you of the need to take a firm grip over the Government and to meet the pay challenge - notably by water workers who want 25%.

Telegraph leads with report that government is reviewing social security support for single parents which could lead to State pursuing fathers for maintenance payments and teenage mothers losing their guarantee of a council flat.

Ivan Lawrence QC MP, in the Times, looks at the dangers in the law reform proposals saying Lord Mackay's reforms are unlikely to be good for the consumer.

Law Society says plans to contract out advice work presently done by solicitors under legal aid scheme could threaten quality and level of the legal advice service (Times).

Guardian leader says the most senior judges in the land are making fools of themselves and so are their co-defendants - the leaders of the Bar. They have, like many guilty people in the dock, resorted to bluster, exaggeration and invention to cover up their inadequate defence. The legal profession protests too much.

British and US scientists believe they are close to developing a fool-proof way of checking passengers' luggage for plastic explosives (Times).

4 arrested in connection with "steaming" on Bedford to London railway line.

Liverpool and Tranmere football fans wreck a train taking them back to Merseyside.

Guardian Angels' leader, flying home, says Britain is a Jekyll & Hyde country in which lager louts come out at night.

Thirteen reform groups join forces to press for reduction in jail sentences (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Independent devotes whole page to the booming private security industry and says pressure on the Government is growing to introduce licensing for such companies.

Concern over Ulster family sent packing by IRA because of their petty criminal tendencies and having to be found accommodation in England.

Last year's social security changes have cut benefit entitlements of AIDS sufferers by up to £20 per week (Independent).

Drunk car drivers to have to pass "supertest" to regain their licences, lasting 90 minutes over 25-mile route.

Home Office to report next month that the number of car fires has doubled in 10 years as motorists deliberately set light to their vehicles to claim the insurance (Times).

Confidential documents show fierce dispute brewing amid security fears within MOD over plans to cut military police jobs (Independent).

The first two schools to opt out of local authority control - one in Skegness and the other in Bolton - expected to be given go-ahead this week by Kenneth Baker (Times).

Almost one in 10 maths and physics teachers unemployed 6 months after graduation (Times).

Government may transfer control of student grants and tuition fees from local authorities to universities and polytechnics (FT).

First Professor of Public Understanding of Science appointed - at Imperial College.

Police take away clothing and evidence of bloodstains from Winnie Mandela's house. Four members of her "football team" bodyguards held.

Express "exclusive" interview has Winnie Mandela proclaiming her innocence and that she is the victim of an orchestrated hate campaign by white Churchmen.

Lady Stevens, wife of Lord Stevens, collapses and dies suddenly.

Reports that Duchess of York is expecting a child.

PRESS DIGEST

"Truce" agreed in beef hormones war between US and EC. Task force to seek compromise.

Klu Klux Klan leader elected to Louisiana legislative - blow for Bush.

Norway halts baby seal cull for a year after outcry over sealing methods.

On ground-breaking visit to the Middle East, Shevardnadze gives two sharp blows to the peace process. He unveils a three-stage process to prepare for an international conference, and plans to meet Arens on Wednesday.

IRAN/RUSHDIE

Star asks what the FCO is doing about it and gives its own answer "Not a lot". There is only one way to deal with crazy fanatics - the way Reagan dealt with Gaddafi.

Mirror - British Government has no reason to pussyfoot any longer. We ought to deport all Iranians, refuse permission for Iranian aircraft to land, ban all Iranian imports, seize Iranian assets and break off diplomatic relations.

Today says Sir Geoffrey need brood no longer over this affair. He must break off diplomatic relations. We must also clarify the law in relation to faiths other than Christianity. It is arguable we should have no blasphemy laws at all.

CLEVELAND

Sun wonders why it has taken so long for 11 paediatricians to speak out. Their actions suggest that their chief concern is for the neck of Dr Marietta Higgs. Many parents would have doubts about sending their children to this group of 11.

Express says there is no hint the 11 have hard evidence to back up their claim that 90% of Dr Higgs' diagnoses of sex abuse were correct. Until they can produce it they must be ready to live with the consequences of their actions.

Independent - 11 paediatricians who wrote to the Guardian supporting Drs Higgs and Wyatt in the Cleveland crisis based their claim partly on an analysis prepared by the two doctors. They say their stance would have been unnecessary had Butler-Sloss made clear that the majority of diagnoses were justified.

PRESS DIGESTPOLAND

Times leader says that Polish Government is proving more imaginative than its neighbours in dealing with the pressures for political reform. The tentative agreement to legalise Solidarity if it subscribes to a common platform for economic and political change is an intriguing and potentially dangerous step towards creating a loyal opposition within the Soviet Bloc.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEN: Mr Parkinson visits North West Electricity Board
- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe takes part in Pacific Rim conference via satellite (PACRIM) broadcast, BBC Westminster studios, London
- MAFF: Mr MacGregor meets Mr Duffy, Australian Minister for Trade Negotiations, London
- SO: Mr Rifkind visits Ninewells Hospital, Dundee
- DEM: Mr Lee attends lunch at Clerkenwell Heritage Centre; later receives honorary membership of Restaurateurs Association of Great Britain at 21st anniversary dinner, London
- DES: Mr Jackson takes part in Oxford Union Society debate 'That the Nation is failing to invest in the future of Universities'
- DII: Mr Freeman visits Family Practitioner Committee and Inner Cities Task Force, Leicester
- DII: Mr Mellor tests alcohol-free wines for She magazine, London W1
- DOE: Mrs Bottomley visits Cardiff and meets British Scrap Federation, Cardiff
- DOE: Mr Moynihan attends Manchester Olympic bid reception, Manchester
- DOE: Mr Gummer addresses National Association of Estate Agents annual lunch on "The implementation of the community charge"; later meets Cheshire County Council re Rate Support Grant
- DSS: Mr Lloyd meets NACAB representatives about "First Impression" report, London
- DTp: Mr Portillo addresses Price Waterhouse seminar on "The Privatisation of Local Authority Bus Companies", London
- HO: Mr Renton makes opening address at Financial Times Cable Television and Satellite Broadcasting, conference, Hotel Intercontinental, London
- HO: Mr Hogg launches Integral Sanitation Prisons report, London
- MAFF: Mr Thompson addresses Turkey Industry conference dinner, Harrogate
- SO: Mr Lang visits NEC Japanese computer components factory, Livingston, West Lothian
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- DTI: Mr Newton attends Anglo-German Summit, Frankfurt
- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe and Mrs Chalker (to 22 February) attend Foreign Affairs Council, Brussels; Sir Geoffrey Howe later attends Anglo-German Summit, Frankfurt (to 21 February)
- HO: Mr Hurd attends Anglo-German Summit, Frankfurt (to 21 February)
- MOD: Mr Younger attends Anglo-German Summit, Frankfurt (to 21 February)
- DTI: Mr Maude visits Madrid, Spain on the Single Market (to 22 February)
- DTI: Mr Clark attends Foreign Affairs Council, Brussels (to 21 February)
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- FCO: Mr Waldegrave interviewed by Stewart Simon of BBC Radio 4's "Analysis" programme, London (to be broadcast on either 23 February or 2 March)
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TV AND RADIO

- "Watchdog": BBC 1 (19.30). Includes a special report on water privatisation
- "World in Action": Thames (20.30)
- "Panorama": BBC 1 (21.30). "Will You Still Feed Me?" A look at care in the community as the number of elderly people grows
- "The Nuclear Age": Thames (22.35). "The Haves and Have Nots". Examines the global spread of nuclear weapons capability
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