

3 April 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

House of Lords reassembles

Electrical Power Engineers' Association annual delegates' conference, York (to 5 April)

National Union of Journalists annual delegates' meeting, Glasgow (to 7 April)

Western European Union Ministerial meeting, QEII Conference Centre, London (to 4 April)

GM Ballot announcements of Claremont High School, Harrow, Brent

Confiscation of Assets Provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 comes into force

New TV Licence Fee comes into force (£66)

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STATISTICS

DTI: Retail sales (Feb-final)

DTI: Credit business (Feb)

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PARLIAMENT

Lords: Starred Questions  
Official Secrets Bill: Committee (1st Day)  
City of London (Spitalfields Market) Bill: Second Reading

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MINISTERS - See Annex

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PRESS DIGESTMain News

Death toll in border clashes in Namibia put at 140.

You persuaded Pik Botha to give UN a chance.

Express says diplomatic and UN sources in Windhoek say they feared that without your visit South Africa would have over-reacted.

Telegraph says UN sources find nothing to dispute South African claims of SWAPO attacks.

Much coverage of the "Shamrock and Sickle Summit" in Shannon with Gorbachev taking Guinness, Black & Tan or was it Irish Coffee with Haughey.

British scientist will visit Soviet space lab in 1991 under an agreement between a private UK company and Glavcosmos. The general contract is due to be signed during the Gorbachev visit (FT).

You are to tell Gorbachev to cut down on wave of KGB agents entering Britain.

In Panorama TV programme tonight Foreign Secretary says the Russian bear still threatens Europe.

Mail leads with "Maggie fury at Lonrho affair" - you deliver stern "cool it" call to senior Ministers.

Al-Fayed says only God could take Harrods store from him; he'll never give it up.

Two BBC journalists get IRA death threat; they are among witnesses due to give evidence at trial tomorrow of men accused of killing soldiers who became trapped at funeral.

Threat of Tory backbench rebellion over electricity privatisation. Sir Trevor Skeet amendment seeks to eliminate the nuclear industry from the sale (Independent).

G7 agrees to pursue scaled-down formula for using State funds channelled through the IMF and World Bank to cut the debts of Latin American countries (Times).

RIBA claims Kent could be swamped with 40 ton lorries if BR does not improve proposals for freight movements (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Alliance and Leicester Building Society will offer more than £100million for Girobank early this week (FT).

Beechams planning £9billion merger with US pharmaceutical firm (Times).

Department of Transport under renewed pressure to name "unsafe" ferries (Times).

Significant shift in Labour Party's attitude to public ownership . Only British Telecom would be taken back while gas, electricity and water would be subjected to a tighter regulatory framework (Times).

United Newspapers plans to expand into Continental Europe and may launch a national daily newspaper (FT).

Researchers find even low exposure to lead can impair children and cause aggression, especially in boys.

Labour Party spending £3-400,000 on a campaign to try to combat publicity associated with your 10th anniversary (Guardian).

Fresh demands for Scottish home rule but Mail says they are unlikely to impress you. But, it adds, Government showed crass insensitivity introducing the community charge a year earlier in Scotland. Government should show more tact.

Independent leader of Scottish nationalist revival says hatred of you is not a sufficient basis for changing constitutional arrangements.

CND describe Kinnock's attempt to revise Labour defence policy as "high falutin fudge".

Gallup finds a large majority of Britons support membership of NATO and 66% are in favour of maintaining independent deterrent.

Lambeth Council said to find "ploughman's lunch" sexist; should be "ploughperson".

Labour Party places single retirement age of 60 after transitional period of annual reductions.

Unprecedented proposal to open up social workers' secret files on alleged child abuse cases at public hearings has been made to Yorkshire parents (Times).

PRESS DIGEST

Royal College of Nursing to mount campaign to warn public that NHS review will undermine principles of the Service.

Telegraph leader suggests medical profession campaign against NHS reforms looks like a massive confidence trick on the public.

Polytechnic directors accuse funding body responsible for their finances of being committed to nationalising rather than privatising the sector (Times).

Report claims that Newham children are being held back by teachers who underestimate their potential and place union activities before their pupils (Times).

Seven police injured in disorder at Harrow Road police station, North London, last night; 8 people charged. Confrontation after death of motorcyclist.

Probation Officers' Association says the parole system should be abolished and replaced with shorter sentences and remission for good behaviour (Times).

Penal reformers welcome apparent changes of heart by Government on reform of the parole and penal system which would enable serious offenders to apply for early release. Home Office believed to be preparing White Paper based on Carlisle Committee recommendations with a view to legislation in 1990/91 (Independent).

Spycatcher affair returns to court tomorrow as the Attorney General seeks to fine the editors of the Independent, Evening Standard and the now defunct London Daily News for alleged contempt (Independent).

World in Action will urge a parliamentary inquiry into police corruption following the conviction of Roy Garner in Britain's biggest drug smuggling case. Tonight's programme will show tapes of the drug gang boasting of having a man in the Yard (Independent).

Sun critical of Roy Hattersley for warning that we must not risk upsetting Moslems in Britain because he has been having constituency problems. Hattersley says he would let Moslems set up separate schools.

Hugo Young starts serialisation of his book on your first 10 years in Guardian.

PRESS DIGEST

Pamella Bordes scars her face in motor cycle crash on holiday in Bali; she denies prostitution with politicians.

David Mudd, Conservative MP for Falmouth, to retire at next election.

Search for drunken skipper of ecological disaster oil tanker in Alaska intensifies as he goes on the run. Today leader says directors of Exxon as well as skipper must be held responsible. And Express says the buck stops with the company.

Arafat appointed president of self-declared state of Palestine - Foreign Secretary says he is ready to meet him to help achieve peace.

British Embassy car wrecked and British Council building damaged in two bomb attacks last night in Ankara.

Coup attempt in Haiti foiled.

Beirut rocked by artillery bombardment.

YOUR TOUR

Star records your return and then devotes 2 pages to the truth about Nelson Mandela.

Sun page 2 - Africa battle rocks Maggie peace bid.

Mirror page 7 - 120 rebels killed in flare up. Five battles raging in border. Bitter disappointment for you.

Today page 2 - 80 rebels killed in Namibia clashes.

Express - Cool Thatcher's Namibia lifeline as the toll rises. Leader says you are embarking upon your most adventurous and least predictable foreign policy initiative of recent years. It proves the correctness of your determination to resist sanctions. The initiatives now under way are a lot more likely to succeed with your committed support than without it.

Mail - 142 die in clashes as guerrillas invade Namibia.

Telegraph page 1 lead - Namibia peace plan threatened as fighting rages.

PRESS DIGEST

Times - South African troops engaged in heavy fighting in Namibia with reports that 122 guerrillas and 20 South Africans had been killed in the last two days; Leader says your flying visit to Namibia was doubtless intended as a brilliant piece of diplomatic stagecraft designed to dramatise your commitment to the peace agreement which is both the cause and the exemplar of your hopes for Southern Africa. In the event your presence went far beyond symbolism.

Independent - Namibian independence in danger of collapse with heavy fighting between South African police and SWAPO guerillas, 1000 of whom according to security police have infiltrated from Angola since Friday. 122 have been shot - a further 20 security police are also dead (Independent).

FT - Namibia proves a minefield for Thatcher tour. Saturday will have proved a salutary experience for you, and it may ensure that you keep an especially close eye on the transition process.

Guardian page 1 lead - 142 die in Namibian fighting - UN frantically trying to hold together independent plan.

GORBACHEV in Ireland etc

Star picture of him drinking Guinness with Haughey.

Sun says Gorbachev caused a storm in Ireland by saying there may have been a miscarriage of justice over the Birmingham and Guildford pub bombings. Terry Dicks MP tells him to keep his nose out of our affairs. Leader says Gorbachev will visit Britain recognising your stature as the most experienced world leader. And you have a secure and permanent place in the hearts and minds of the British people.

In another leader the Sun says Kremlin's objection to Foreign Secretary calling for democratic government in Afghanistan is cheeky, bearing in mind they occupied the country for 9 years.

Mirror leader describes Gorbachev as "A Man for Europe" after saying Europe can succeed only with the involvement of all European countries. You must take up his initiative in your talks with him.

Today page 2 - Too many KGB spies spoil our glasnost. You will demand he pull KGB out of Britain.

PRESS DIGEST

Express page 4 - Haughey shares a drink of Irish coffee with Gorbachev. He also claims Gorbachev supports him on Guildford and Birmingham bombers.

Mail page 2 - Gorbachev calls for peace in Ulster.

Telegraph - Gorbachev diplomatic in Ulster - but did not wish to be drawn into controversies. Inside report says you are to raise Romanian human rights with Gorbachev.

Times page 1 - You will tell Mr Gorbachev later this week that KGB spying activities in Britain must be cut. You will also press him on chemical weapons. The report adds that Anglo-Soviet relations are the best since the Second World War.

500,000 called up for Mr Gorbachev's welcome to Cuba with theatrical bear hugs and back slapping from Castro (Times).

Times also reports Mr and Mrs Gorbachev's visit to Ireland where the Soviet leader was careful not to be drawn too deeply into Anglo-Irish relations at a Press Conference.

Separate story in Times says you will seek to boost trade with Moscow when you meet Mr Gorbachev.

Independent - Front page picture of Gorbachev and Haughey sharing an Irish coffee after talks at Shannon airport. "Ryvita" Raisa a hit with the locals.

FT - Gorbachev will raise issue of Birmingham Six and Guildford pub bombers when he meets you later this week. Soviet officials predict a sharp exchange of views on disarmament and arms control.

Guardian - Gorbachev urges new era in East-West trade.

HARRODS/LONRHO

Little coverage in Sun, Daily Star, and Mirror other than Al-Fayed saying only God can take Harrods away from him.

Today leader says you need to wield your axe in this matter ruthlessly if Lord Young refuses to publish report.

PRESS DIGEST

Mail leader headed "Why this is not another Spycatcher" says Lord Young is in danger of making himself look silly. He should have trusted his own good sense when his initial reaction to the Harrods report was to publish it soon. But he then bowed to the lawyers. But if the Government have any sense of proportion it isn't another Spycatcher.

Telegraph - Thatcher cools row on Harrods.

Times says you acted yesterday to quell the growing political controversy surrounding the House of Fraser takeover amid Ministerial fears that it could damage the Government.

Independent - Government will resist intense parliamentary pressure to publish DTI inquiry into Al-Fayed takeover of Harrods. Lord Young's preference is to publish but he believes it is improper to do so until the SFO has completed inquiries into the takeover. Your meeting yesterday postponed - in part because law officers advised waiting for the outcome of High Court proceedings today (Independent).

FT - Young expected to brief Thatcher on Harrods row. Plans for you to meet Lord Young were dropped after your return from Africa. The move was seen as an attempt by Downing Street to play down the political importance of the affair.



MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DH: Mr Clarke addresses the Royal College of Nursing Congress, Blackpool
- DTI: Lord Young chairs conference on Management Charter Initiative, Royal Horseguards Hotel, London
- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe chairs Western European Union meeting, Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London (and 4 April)
- DEM: Mr Cope launches Loan Guarantee Scheme extension, London
- DEM: Mr Lee opens new office of Montrose Technical Recruitment at London Wall, City of London
- DH: Mr Mellor meets the National Osteoporosis Society, London
- DH: Mr Freeman visits Mersey Regional Health Authority
- DOE: Mr Trippier visits Lichfield and opens Sheltered Housing Scheme in Chapel Street and visits Fradley Industrial Estate
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington addresses Dri Crops '89 Congress, Churchill College, Cambridge
- ODA: Mr Patten hosts reception for Scottish voluntary organisations at East Kilbride
- SO: Lord James Douglas-Hamilton opens New Generation Housing Society Development, Castle View, Edinburgh
- WO: Mr Grist addresses launch of Housing for Wales, Cardiff
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- HMT: Mr Lawson addresses Interim Committee of the IMF, Washington
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe appears on BBC TV's 'Panorama' programme (pre-recorded interview)
- DES: Mr Jackson interviewed for "Shout", Liverpool Polytechnic's student union magazine
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TV AND RADIO

"The Education Programme": BBC 2 (19.40) looks at how children are being equipped to cope with a time of environmental crises

"Horizon": BBC 2 (20.10) on the successes of fringe medicine

"Panorama": BBC 1 (21.30) Vivian White reports on how Mikhail Gorbachev's offer of unilateral troop cuts has left NATO in turmoil

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