

5 April 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Visit of General Secretary Gorbachev and Mrs Gorbacheva to United Kingdom (to April 7)

Outcome of Scrutiny of Government Economic Statistics

Malcolm Rifkind receives petition in support of Glasgow Veterinary School

EC: Social Affairs Council, Luxembourg (prov)

EC: Political Committee Meeting, Madrid (to April 6)

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STATISTICS

DEM: Detailed analysis of employment, unemployment, earnings, prices and other indicators

DEN: Advance energy statistics (Feb)

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PUBLICATIONS

HO: Research and Planning Unit Drinking and Disorder publication

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Scotland; Foreign and Commonwealth; Trade and Industry

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Unprescribed Spectacles (Health Warnings) (Miss Ann Widdicombe)

Electricity Bill: Progress on Remaining Stages (1st day)

Adjournment Debates: General practitioners in rural areas of Wales (Mr G Wardell)

Select Committees: Not available at time of diary completion

Lords: Starred Questions  
Short Debate to call attention to the White Paper "The Road User and the Law"  
Short Debate to call attention to the changes which Her Majesty's Government are seeking to effect in this country's attitude to training

UQ to ask HMG whether they will establish a General Teaching Council for England and Wales

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PRESS DIGESTMain News

MORI poll in Times shows that in the British public's mind threat posed by Soviet Union has diminished significantly since Mr Gorbachev took over as leader; leader says when Mr Gorbachev arrives in London tonight, the excitement that has accompanied his previous two visits is likely to be subdued. The reason will be not just the nocturnal hour of his arrival, nor the fact that this will be his third visit. Rather there is a sense that the sojourn in London has been overtaken by events. There is something second hand about it - and, despite progress in many areas, a return to old issues.

200 MPs sign a full page advertisement in Times on eve of Gorbachev's visit in protest against abuses of human rights in Russia.

Guardian leads with a report that Gorbachev is to try to persuade Europe to re-think its strategy of flexible response and to cancel its modernisation plans.

Havana police arrest 7 human rights leaders in demo at Soviet Embassy during Gorbachev's visit.

Soviet scientist being allowed to come to London for cancer treatment.

Romania's ambassador to London has "taken" himself off to Bucharest in a state of high dudgeon" - in a farewell move to the Foreign Office he said Britain was pursuing an anti-Romania policy (Independent).

George Bush to visit UK after NATO summit at end of May.

Dennis Skinner claims Harrods report shows fraud and deceit.

Speculation that Harrods' directors face sack after Lord Young says the report showed "wrongdoing".

You condemn SWAPO guerrillas as death toll in Namibia fighting tops 180.

Kinnock calls for big increase in UN force there.

P K Botha warns UN Secretary General South Africa may suspend its participation in peace initiative unless UN takes active measures very quickly.

PRESS DIGEST

Your concern about level of inflation fuels further speculation about a further rise in interest rates.

Britain's reserves shrank by \$4.72 billion last month by the largest amount since you came to power, showing the extent to which the authorities have had to intervene in the markets to support the pound (Times).

Mail says Channel 4 TV programme, featuring Sir Leon Brittan, is going to make life extremely uncomfortable for Charles Powell and Bernard Ingham.

Bruce Anderson, in Telegraph, argues you need to find a replacement for Lord Whitelaw and that the man for the job is Sir Geoffrey Howe.

Consolidated unveil innovative final bid for Minorco (Independent).

Royal College of Nursing rejects Kenneth Clarke's warnings and votes to support a campaign against NHS reforms.

Unions recommend 8.5% pay settlement for water workers.

Bill Jordan, AEU, to offer Toyota a no-strike deal if they site their plant in Britain.

Militant Tube drivers try to intimidate others into striking today over extra pay for those who drive without guards.

Widow of King's Cross fireman who lost his life in disaster wins £250,000 compensation.

US Government is to ask Paul Channon to order British airlines which fly to the US to introduce new bomb detection machines capable of spotting Semtex (Independent).

Ian Byatt appointed as director general of water services as 5 Tory MPs vote against Water Bill (Times).

British Rail pension fund sells Impressionist paintings for £38 million.

Circuit Judge Lawrence strongly attacks standards at the Bar and accuses it of failing to propose or bring about any changes in the legal profession (Times).

More than 40 millionaires have been created in the advertising and marketing business during the Thatcher years.

PRESS DIGEST

High Court refuses to prevent Northern Regional Health Authority from disciplining Dr Marietta Higgs over Cleveland child abuse case.

Kinnock launches Labour campaign against community charge but says he will not support non-payment.

Kinnock hires Julie Hall, ITN political correspondent, as his Press & Broadcasting Officer.

Express says Kinnock has not yet tumbled to the benefits of tax cutting - he would still clobber high earners with 50% tax, plus bigger NI contributions.

Mail says millions would be worse off if Labour came to office for this reason.

Loyalist killers shoot dead Catholic father of 4, aged 29, while he is in bed with wife.

Labour controlled Sheffield Council calls off invitation to Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein, to give lecture after petition from ratepayers.

Prominent historians mounted sharp attack in Lords last night against Government plans to place a virtual ban on the publication of memoirs by present or former members of the security and intelligence services (Independent).

Paddy Ashdown has written to you asking for an investigation into allegations that MI5 commissioned a private security firm to monitor the activities of Sizewell nuclear power protestors (Independent).

People who drink more than 7 pints of beer a week are three times more likely to contract cancer of the pancreas and those who smoke are even more at risk, according to Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

Independent leader says Ken Baker should recognise that funding a rigid national pay agreement is incompatible with his philosophy. Instead, individual universities should receive generous grants towards wage costs, which they would be free to allocate as local market conditions and the objectives of particular institutions dictate.

Officer, in book to be published this week, says Guardsmen killed and maimed when Sir Galahad was at anchor in Falklands could easily have been saved from bombing.

PRESS DIGEST

Home Affairs Select Committee yesterday recommended Channel 4 must remain a non-profit making body with a minimum income guaranteed by the ITV companies (Independent).

Half of the 12,000 applications for 79 teaching places at Birmingham Polytechnic are from people in executive positions in industry or commerce (Times).

Today runs a leader on David Shaw MP, the man in the Bordes case, for attacking one of its photographers "badly injuring her hand"; he is the "vilest MP in Britain", He complains to Press Council about harassment.

Ministers are planning to advise UEFA to re-admit English clubs to continental competition in the 1990/91 season. Home Office Ministers are also to seek bilateral agreements with European governments that hooligans arrested abroad, should where possible, be returned for prosecution in Britain (Independent).

HARRODS/LONRHO

Sun says directors of Harrods could be sacked; their interpretation of Lord Young's remarks about wrongdoing.

Mirror - Harrods bosses face axe.

Today - Harrods board may be stripped of jobs.

Mail leader says Lord Young has impaled himself on his own injunction. It warned Lord Young that he risked rendering himself ridiculous if he did not publish the wretched report.

Telegraph leader shows impatience over the time being taken to conduct inquiries into the case and says the delay seems as unfair to the Fayeds as to all the other parties.

Independent leader says Lord Young has failed to control either his mouth or his Department. Lord Young is a businessman. He must know that British business requires and is entitled to a better regulatory performance. He could regain some credit by striving to provide it.

PRESS DIGEST

Times page 1 - Harrods' directors could face ban if found to be unfit for such office but DTI stress no consideration will be given to this until decision is taken as to whether prosecutions should take place. Edward Du Cann denounces his fellow Conservative privy Counsellor for being foolish, politically unwise in not publishing the report and accuses Lord Young of misleading Parliament.

FT - Young admits Harrods report shows evidence of wrong-doing, increasing pressure for publication.

GORBACHEV

Sun - Maggie to be tough on Mik - you warn him in Commons that good intentions are not enough to convince the world that Russia wants peace. You want action on KGB, chemical weapons and conventional arms. Leader welcomes Gorbachev in Russian and hopes we can get down to the real business of living together.

Lord Bethell says in Sun feature that Gorbachev still has a long way to go in Moscow before he is safe.

Mirror - Gorby heads for No 10 showdown. Thatcher ready to talk tough. He faces a class of hard bargaining.

Express - High hopes on Summit. Leader on "The Two Faces of Gorbachev" says he is assured of a friendly welcome but not all will be sweetness and light - arms control, KGB and chemical weapons are Western worries. A few firm frank words from you will be further encouragement to shift resources from military to civilian use.

Mail - Soviets set to roll out red carpet for visit by Queen. Her acceptance of invitation to visit Russia is being forecast in diplomatic circles.

Telegraph story says Gorbachev is seeking to "soften" the Iron Lady. Although you differ on arms, human rights and ideology there are no obvious bug bears to spoil the visit; nor any clear cut concrete gains.

Fresh Soviet policy initiative expected in Gorbachev's Guildhall speech (Independent).

As for invitation to the Queen to visit Moscow - British officials refused to say what advice Her Majesty had been given as to her response if an invitation is offered (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

FT - Surprise at Gorbachev's selection for factory visit. Feature on the visit suggests he is growing increasingly impatient with your hardline position on modernisation of short-range weapons. The Guildhall speech could be the opportunity to launch a Soviet arms control initiative designed to cut the ground from beneath your position. Leader believes it would be wrong to make too much of your personal rapport with Gorbachev: Western leaders should bear in mind that he is pursuing his own diplomatic strategy.

Times - Mr Gorbachev rebuffs American calls for a signal of willingness to curb Soviet backing for Nicaragua and attacks Vice President Quayle for stating that the region was America's backyard.

Soviet Union made a number of human rights concessions yesterday as a sweetener on the eve of Gorbachev's visit including allowing Georgy Samoilovich to come to London for cancer treatment (Independent). A number of others granted visas. Officials in London said to be "delighted".

NAMIBIA

Sun - Mrs T raps rebels - you attack SWAPO for causing new fighting.

Mail leader says the first days of UN peacekeeping in Namibia have been a bloody shambles. Everybody has been seen at his worst and the UN has begun by confirming its impotence in the face of force. A beefing up of its peace keeping capacity is urgently needed.

Telegraph - Thatcher condemns SWAPO. Namibian death toll rises as UN blunders are blamed for crisis.

Guardian - Thatcher rounds on SWAPO over clashes.

Times - UN investigation confirm big incursion into Namibia by SWAPO guerrillas, but say it was without hostile intent, say diplomats.

Times - South Africa threatens to suspend UN peace plan for Namibia unless it curbs guerrilla action within the next few hours.

FT - Pretoria issues Namibia ultimatum to UN in a move seemed designed to push the issue of Southern Africa high up the agenda for your talks with Gorbachev.

PRESS DIGEST

Independent - SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma believed to have ordered infiltration of Namibia by his guerrillas and in breach of UN Resolution 438 and written undertakings he had given. Last night P. W. Botha delivered ultimatum to the UN to curb SWAPO or South Africa would suspend the peace plan for the territory. UNTAG batallion will not reach war zone until April 20.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Fowler attends National Economic Development Council meeting, Millbank Tower, London
- DTI: Lord Young meets Mr Nils Wilhjelm, Danish Minister for Trade and Industry
- LCD: Lord Mackay opens Middlesex Guildhall Courts
- DEM: Mr Lee visits North Devon (tourism) and officially opens 'Big Sheep' educational farm in Abbotsham
- DEN: Mr Morrison addresses Scottish Offshore Achievement Awards dinner, Aberdeen
- DES: Mrs Rumbold launches Work Experience video, BAFTA, London
- DES: Mr Jackson gives address at Humberside College of Higher Education; later gives address at Standing Conference of Information Officers, King's College, London
- DH: Mr Mellor addresses Pulse Roadshow
- DOE: Lord Caithness attends UKCEED press conference on Research on Environmental Policy, IBM, South Bank, London
- DOE: Mr Trippier visits Herefordshire
- DOE: Mrs Bottomley attends Careful Croydon litter launch, Croydon
- DTI: Mr Atkins visits Hampshire
- DTI: Mr Forth visits Birmingham
- DTp: Mr Portillo presents King's Cross Bravery Certificates, London
- HO: Mr Patten attends Crime Concern conference, House of Commons

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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- MOD: Mr Hamilton visits NATO/SHAPE (to 6 April)
- SO: Lord Sanderson undertakes British Tourist Authority engagement in Amsterdam

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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DES: Mr Baker interviewed on "Education on the Radio" programme (prov)
- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe appears on ABC TV's "Good Morning America" programme
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TV AND RADIO

"Breakfast Time": BBC 1 (07.00) presents assessments from London and Moscow of the importance of the Soviet President's visit

"Dispatches": Ch 4 (20.30)

"Q.E.D.": BBC 1 (21.30) on the struggle of Falkland's hero Simon Weston

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