

20 April 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visit West Glamorgan and Mid Glamorgan accompanied by Mr Walker

24 hour tube strike

HO: Archbishop Desmond Tuto visits HMP Winson Green, Birmingham

Grant Maintained School ballot announcement of Bishopshalt School, Uxbridge

STATISTICS

BOE: Institutional investment (3rd Qtr)

BOE: Provisional estimate of monetary aggregates (Mar)

CLSB: London and Scottish banks monthly statement (Mar)

DTI: Vehicle production (Mar)

HO: Fire statistics (1987)

OPCS: Hospital in-patient enquiry trends (1979-85)

PUBLICATIONS

Law Commission: Compensation for tenants' improvements

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Northern Ireland; Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Prime Minister

Business: There will be a debate on Private Bill Procedure on a Motion for the Adjournment. The Report of the Joint Committee on Private Bill Procedure (HC 625) will be relevant to the debate.

Adjournment Debates: The case for drawing up comprehensive rules of procedure for the General Commissioners of Income Tax (Mr M Marshall)

Select Committees: COURT OF REFEREES

Lords: Starred Questions
Security Service Bill: Report
Companies Bill: Report (4th day)
Antarctic Minerals Bill (HL): Second Reading

PRESS DIGESTMain News

You face a full-scale revolt over Football Spectators Bill - Cabinet to consider today.

You are understood to have accepted the case for a longer postponement for the Football Spectators Bill after being warned it could be defeated in Commons if brought forward now. Ministers who met last night to consider Bill's prospects in view of backbench feeling decided that there must be a response to the call for it to be delayed until Taylor reports (Times).

Reports that five of the 95 dead may have died outside the ground.

Police in South Yorkshire and on Merseyside fall out over allegations of bad behaviour by Liverpool fans at Hillsborough during and after the disaster; Chief Constable of South Yorkshire orders silence. Home Secretary tells them to stop it.

Meanwhile Sun persists in its allegations and leads with story of publican who had his premises vandalised and plundered after he had given them help.

Times: picture of excessive drinking before match in Sheffield is emerging and police may need force of 150 for inquiry team.

Other publicans report how fans drank them dry on Saturday and emptied four supermarkets of beer.

FT leader calls on Government to bury its pride and withdraw the Football Bill. It goes on to argue that the problems which plague British football are unlikely to be cured by artificial devices such as identity cards.

Guardian leads with "Thatcher to insist on ID timetable".

FA give permission for all clubs to postpone next Saturday's matches out of respect for Hillsborough dead if they wish to do so.

Sun says Labour canvassers believe Conservatives are set to hold Vale of Glamorgan.

Telegraph says Labour are 13-8 on to win.

PRESS DIGEST

France and West Germany agree to give general political support to the Delors report. Sam Brittan attacks the report as an unholy mixture of central bankers' and central planners' ideas; and argues in favour of Britain's joining the full EMS as a means of influencing future developments towards monetary union (FT).

47 die as gun turret on US battleship Iowa blows up; 45 injured.

Guardian says the first rule of war is not to throw the infantry into an unwinnable battle.

UK oil production out again by oil platform explosion; price pushed up to 21.45 dollars.

Explosion in Brent pipeline shuts down 25% of oil production.

Times - Tony Worthington's Right of Reply Bill likely to be rejected; leader says the Bill should be talked out as its very simplicity renders it a minefield. Scrutiny of the media is healthy but the proposed remedy is open to manipulation, including political manipulation, of the most perilous kind.

Andreas Whittam Smith says the Right of Reply Bill has already acted as a spur; it is not needed as a curb - national newspapers know what they must do and they must get on with it (Independent).

Port employers reject ACAS offer of help in dispute over abolition of National Dock Labour Scheme - they say it would be inappropriate. Express says port employers are right to reject the proffered ACAS intervention.

Jimmy Knapp, NUR, tells Scottish TUC that railway workers might strike in support of dockers.

Dockers leaders meet today and are expected to urge the TGWU to call a national strike ballot (FT).

London hit again today by Tube strike in support of £64 a week rise.

Threat of a strike each week.

Telegraph page feature on Britain's crumbling railways.

BBC reject call by broadcasting unions to try to avert pay strike planned for Monday.

PRESS DIGEST

Government plans to change special pay machinery guaranteeing firemen large wage increases could lead to strike (Times).

Vauxhall returns record profits of £151.9million - seven times better than 1987. They are to be the first to fit catalytic converters in UK.

Sun asks why Toyota are coming to Derby: because the hand of the Rising Sun recognises rising opportunity. "Yet when Socialists were in power", it adds, "the Nips would rather have committed hari kari than take their chances here".

EC says GEC/Siemens bid for Plessey can go ahead; DTI yet to pronounce.

Claims that plans to plough back some of proceeds of water privatisation into water and environmental improvements are being blocked by Treasury.

Times leader says privatisation plan is much unloved and flotation threatens to become a political millstone and a flop in the City. Using the proceeds of the sale for anti-pollution purposes might help to convince a deeply sceptical public that water privatisation will be, as Mr Ridley claims, good for the workers, good for the consumers and good for the environment. It would also keep the Government out of court.

Government has banned release of detailed data about compliance of drinking water with quality standards set by EC for fear that information might deter potential investors in run up to privatisation (Times).

Six local authorities are preparing to challenge in the High Court the Government's right to sell off assets transferred from the councils to the regional Water Authorities (Independent).

MAFF and DOE attack EC plan to curb the use of nitrates by farmers in a joint memorandum to the Lords Committee on European legislation (FT).

Banks agree to double or even quintuple cheque guarantee limits for plastic cards, but customers will have to apply for new cards.

MMC to investigate Black & Decker on charge of restricting DIY competition.

DTI is preparing to push through sweeping recommendations to the MMC report on the brewing industry this summer (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Decision on a preferred bidder for Girobank expected in the next few days. Front runners appear to be Alliance & Leicester and Co-op bank (FT).

Plans to build a refuse burning power station in Lewisham which would heat hundreds of homes are going ahead (Independent).

Law Lords defer judgment on Lonrho's appeal. They usually take four to six weeks to prepare their judgements. The parties return to the Lords today to discuss the scope of the special hearing on May 15 to consider whether Lonrho was in contempt (FT).

Confusion over whether it is likely that Select Committee will reopen Westland affair - Mirror says it will. Times says Commons Defence Select Committee to write to Leon Brittan asking him whether he stands by his assertion that he had Downing Street's express approval to leak Westland's letter; Telegraph says Committee took its first step yesterday to reopening the Committee.

Sir Leon Brittan has been asked by the Commons Defence Select Committee to explain his recent statement that 10 Downing Street gave "express approval" for the Westland leak (Independent). MPs will decide whether to reopen the inquiry after studying Sir Leon's response.

Tobacco companies still receive more than one reference every 3 minutes during sports events they sponsor on television and Sir Peter Lazarus, Chairman of the committee for Monitoring Agreements on Tobacco Advertising and Sponsorship, has called for them to be renegotiated (Independent).

Kenneth Clarke poised to make major concessions over GPs' contracts, according to Express, in effort to salvage NHS reforms.

Kenneth Clarke writes to GPs complaining that leaflet issued by BMA opposing NHS reforms is inaccurate and misleading (Times).

University lecturers may face pay cuts if industrial action continues - and the Government refuse to pay more than £67million due as the third part of an earlier pay deal (Independent).

3 more hospitals have emerged as possible candidates to become self-governing hospitals (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

John Butcher attacks Left-wing Labour authorities which relegate academic excellence and ban competitive sport in schools.

Campaign led by Ministers and senior Conservatives to force student unions to open their closed shop has been dealt a powerful blow by a confidential Government survey obtained by Times which shows that most student unions spend less than 0.5% of income on politics.

Nearly a quarter of babies now being born are illegitimate.

Investigating Committee of Solicitors Complaints Bureau recommend an overhaul of the system of dealing with complaints against solicitors (Times).

Government to fill gap left by West German reluctance over SNF modernisation (Express).

Britain is planning to take the lead in deploying new air-launched short range nuclear weapons. New F-111 and F-15E bombers will be based at Upper Heyford and Lakenheath and additional missiles fitted to Tornados at other bases (Independent).

NATO defence Ministers, including George Younger, move closer to taking more US nuclear bombers with lion's share almost certainly coming to Britain (Times).

US aims to station extra F-111s at Uper Heyford if NATO decides to back deployment of more nuclear-capable aircraft in Europe (FT).

Telegraph says Army is so short of men that number of rifle companies in some infantry battalions is being cut.

Express says Lord Cockfield, "a Euro raver", is no longer, out of office, the menace he once was. But he's every bit as silly. He undermines his own case, like the judges, with the wildness of his language and absurdity of his arguments.

Express feature reports Sir Leon Brittan as not intending to perform a balancing act between British and EC views but to stand up for what he believes. It suggests he wants to try to jolly you out of your "worst Euro excesses" by holding out the prospect of an EC that commits itself to Thatcherism.

EC reported as promising not to undermine our efforts to remain free of rabies.

Daphne du Maurier dies, 82.

PRESS DIGEST

Mail says Charles Powell is to leave your office at Christmas; centre page spread on your search for new Cabinet talent.

Third day of anti-government rallies in Peking in support of democracy.

Mail says workers are pouring into Peking to swell the demos.

Express reports 44.5% of West Germans see Hitler as a "great statesman"; 62.5% think World War II was forced on Hitler.

Lech Walesa expected to receive hero's welcome at Vatican today.

Renewed calls for Britain to change nationality laws and let Hong Kong people live here dominated first public hearing by Select Committee (Times).

The Hungarian government, admitting its step by step economic reforms have failed, is to try Thatcherism instead (Independent),

Tariq Ali joint author of new play which attacks Islamic fundamentalism.

HILLSBOROUGH COMMENT

Star says police allegations against Liverpool fans have hallmarks of panic reaction. Now police must produce evidence.

Sun, in defiant leader headed "The truth hurts", reiterates that many Liverpool fans who stormed the ground had been drinking and other allegations of violence and thieving. It says it did not invent this - the facts came from the police, an MP, local publicans and taxi drivers. Hopefully, telling the world what happened will mean that something is done to prevent it happening again.

Mirror attacks anonymous South Yorkshire policemen who have "smeared the dead of Hillsborough and those who mourn for them". They have attempted to fit up the fans for the tragedy in order to deflect blame from themselves - a despicable act.

Today - The descent into petty squabbling and mud slinging over the disaster is a scandal. It does not doubt that some fans were drunk and ill-behaved but that does not mean the fans were to blame any more than that the police caused it. The time for the police to defend themselves is at the inquiry.

PRESS DIGEST

Mail leader headed "The police cannot have it both ways" says after dignity and sombre restraint comes backbiting. But South Yorkshire police cannot in advance of giving their formal testimony both refuse to discuss their own controversial actions and damn the conduct of Liverpool fans.

Guardian says the point Sheffield policemen are trying to make is a serious one wrapped in foolishly combative language; the tragedy has many stands but the central one was the milling throng in too small a space outside the ground. Lord Taylor must portray the problem whole.

ANTI DRUGS TRAILS

Mail - Maggie tells how to beat drug danger.

Telegraph story with splendid picture.

YOUR TEN YEARS

Roy Jenkins in the Times "The Thatcher Decade" series, compares you with previous Prime Ministers, saying you best resemble Lloyd George, but much of the time you are most like Neville Chamberlain. You have been lucky with your opponents at home. So you have survived, never with a great surge of popular votes, but with great cohorts behind you in the Commons. How far you have been right as well as self-righteous will take longer to decide.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DES: Mr Baker addresses the Young Enterprise AGM at the Central Hall of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales
- DOE: Mr Ridley attends British Chemical Industry Association's lunch, London
- DSS: Mr Moore meets with Gingerbread, London
- DTI: Mr Newton launches Warren Spring Laboratory as Next Steps Agency
- MAFF: All Ministers attend launch of "Loaves and Fishes", MAFF centenary history exhibition, London
- DEM: Mr Lee visits Bradford (tourism) and attends ISCO5 1st anniversary birthday lunch; later launches Regional Tourist Board strategy booklet, Bradford
- DEM: Mr Nicholls attends Clothing and Allied Products Industry Training Board meeting in Leeds and tours centre
- DES: Mr Butcher attends Spring Clean Britain Day at Lillia Baylis school, London
- DES: Mrs Rumbold addresses West Northants National Association of Head Teachers, Kingsthorpe Grove Lower School, Northants
- DH: Mr Mellor attends General Practitioners Roadshow, Bristol
- DH: Mr Freeman visits OPCS, London
- DOE: Mr Gummer addresses Placemakers Luncheon Club on streamlining local government
- DOE: Mr Chope visits Wigan and Salford for unveiling ceremonies for two PSA buildings
- DOE: Lord Caithness attends Association of Metropolitan Authorities reception, London
- DOE: Mr Trippier addresses Institute of Civil Engineers 1992 Building Technology conference, London
- DOE: Mr Moynihan opens Isle of Dogs Sailing Centre; later addresses Pizza Express London Hockey League 20th anniversary supper
- DOE: Lord Hesketh visits Gloucester Docks with British Waterways Board
- DTI: Mr Forth visits North Peckham Task Force
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington addresses North Stucken presentation lunch on "Horticulture" London; later meets Thai Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Sarasin
- OAL: Mr Luce addresses Museums Collections Policy Seminar, Imperial War Museum, Oxford, Cambridgeshire; later addresses reopening of Lower Marley Gallery, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

FCO: Mr Eggar visits Bermuda and Mexico (to 30 April)

MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

DTp: Mr Channon appears on Sky Television "Target" Programme (5.30pm)

DOE: Lord Caithness has lunch with David Westell, Daily Telegraph

HO: Mr Renton interviewed by West German Television re Broadcasting

TV AND RADIO

'The Sharp End': Ch 4 (18.30) looks at the changes in the workplace and employment issues

'Hard News': Ch 4 (20.00) Raymond Snoddy of the Financial Times examines how facts are distorted and stories sensationalised by the British press. Readers get the chance to complain

'Judges in the Dock': BBC Radio 4 (20.00) Joshua Rozenberg examines the case for reform of the judiciary

'This Week': Thames (20.30)

'Nature': BBC 2 (20.30) Is Britain becoming a nation of garbage collectors for other countries' dangerous rubbish?

'Question Time': BBC 1 (22.00) with John Patten, Keith Vaz, Susan Thomas and one other
