

PRIME MINISTER

27 April 1989

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Sultan of Brunei (photocall)

The Queen opens the Equine Fertility Unit of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association, Mertoun Paddocks, Newmarket, Cambridgeshire

Wales TUC annual conference, Swansea (to April 29)

EC: Telecommunications Council, Luxembourg

EC: Informal Ministerial meeting on Equal Opportunities, Toledo (to April 28)

BMA national conference on NHS Review

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STATISTICS

CLSB: Quarterly house purchase finance statistics (1st qtr)

DEN: Energy trends (Feb)

DTp: New vehicle registrations (Mar 1988)

OPCS: Marriage and divorce statistics 1987 (prov)

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Treasury; Prime Minister

Business: Children Bill (Lords): 2nd Reading, Money and Ways and Means Resolutions

Adjournment Debates: Attendance allowance - the case of Mrs D Moran

Select Committees: COURT OF REFEREES

Lords: Starred Questions  
Security Service Bill: Third Reading  
Companies Bill (HL): Third Reading

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PRESS DIGESTMain News

Nuclear power option gets most prominence in reporting of global climate seminar. Greens angry and Paddy Ashdown calls for ban on nuclear power by 2020. Labour calls for major energy conservation programme.

"Good" trade figures - lower deficit than expected - eases interest rate rise fears.

Advertising survey claims that millions of people are tearing up credit cards because of higher interest rates.

FT says Delors report has re-opened high level debate in British Government over full membership of EMS. Both Chancellor and Foreign Secretary share concern that if Britain remains outside ERM we will be in weak position to influence debate on report.

EC and Japan expected to be put on US trade enemies list and subject to trade sanctions if they fail to change their unfair policies (Times).

Thatcher heads for new row with EC. You prepare for all-out conflict over proposals by the Commission for worker participation on company boards which could be drafted by the end of next month (Independent).

Thatcherite "No Turning Back" group calls for untrammelled free-market Europe leading to the withering away of centralised European institutions (Independent).

FT feature examines battle royal brewing between economists who think something really has changed in Britain over the past 10 years and those who believe we are back to stop-go.

Big row over disclosure that police have known about food terrorism for several weeks but kept quiet about it; so far at least 43 cases of spiked baby food; John Patten says evidence suggests food spiked after leaving factories.

Heinz and Cow & Gate offer £100,000 reward. Heinz receives £1million blackmail demand.

Today says blackmailer has already received £500,000 through an intricate web of building society accounts.

Gas safety alert shuts down St Fergus terminal; wide economic implications if prolonged.



PRESS DIGEST

Kohl expected to "defy" you today and in statement to Bundestag declare his support for talks on SNF.

Mail says Denmark and Norway lined up behind Kohl.

Times says the key to a compromise between the pro-negotiation and anti-negotiation support in the now heated alliance debate over short range nuclear missiles lies in the text of a "watershed" communique produced by NATO foreign ministers in Reykjavik in June 1987.

Profile on Genscher in Times under heading "Master of the balancing act" says his single-mindedness is currently frustrating you and President Bush. But if, as is most likely, a compromise on negotiations over short range nuclear weapons is found in order to avoid an open split in the Alliance, his track record indicates that he will still be preaching Genscherism for a long time.

Independent - Genscher telephones Howe to say he cannot come to London, with the implication that Germans are in no mood to back down. President von Weizacker makes thinly veiled attack on you, saying "it would be good if NATO countries were left to speak for themselves instead of through representatives who have no mandate for doing so".

Peter Jenkins, in the Independent, says that your position on defence is simply not sustainable in the changed world. But the Germans do not have it right either: denuclearisation is not a good idea. NATO needs a new doctrine of minimal deterrence and a new vision. It should stop talking about ending the division of Europe and start talking more openly about the right to self-determination.

EC announces plan to send another £50million to combat fraud in response to your campaign.

AEU puts strong pressure on Labour to back electoral reform - the first party affiliate to make such a proposal (Independent).

Gallup poll says electricity privatisation is opposed by 80%; only 20% plan to buy shares. But 50% say they are willing to pay for a cleaner environment.

Labour threatens legal action to halt rise in government-sponsored and pre-privatisation advertising (Independent).



PRESS DIGEST

Powergen and British Coal to collaborate on Grimethorpe fluidised bed combustion project (FT).

BBC unions postpone full industrial action after management letter suggests improved offer. Sun thinks it a pity journalists have delayed their next strike; it would prefer them to go on strike for good.

British Rail to meet unions on Wednesday in shadow of threatened strike.

Telegraph says the Government must convince public that any inconvenience caused by strikes over pay is nothing to the harm that would be done if the demands were met.

Airlines throughout Europe struggling to cope with big increase in number of delayed flights which is said to be more than one in five (Times).

Nissan to double UK car output - to 400,000 cars by the late 1990s (FT).

Lord Young called before Commons Select Committee after Government rejects virtually all of its recommendations after concern about £2.2billion information technology deficit last year (Times).

Minorco secures 54% of Consgold; but US legal fight is to continue. FT's Lex believes that although the distance between Minorco and its target has shortened appreciably, it could still prove too far.

John MacGregor expected to bow to EC pressure and recommend irradiation of certain foods (Independent).

Independent leader says it is the unhygienic farmers, dilatory wholesalers and sloppy shop managers who put their convenience before consumers' interests who stand to gain more from the legalisation of irradiation.

FT leader argues that, despite last week's EC farmprice agreement, there is a long way to go to curb the cost of agriculture.

Lawyer acting for families of King's Cross fire victims, calls for inquiry to be reopened following claims that most died from cyanide poisoning caused by anti-graffiti paint (Times).

CBI claims workplace crime is costing Britain £5billion a year.



PRESS DIGEST

CBI putting pressure on Government to make computer hacking illegal (Times).

Kenneth Clarke makes a last ditch appeal to GPs to accept new contract on eve of crucial GP meeting in London (Times).

Clarke rules out delay of Bill to change NHS, but indicates he is willing to continue negotiations on new doctors' contracts (Independent).

Newcastle health managers proposing to divide up city's health services into five separate self-governing trusts (Independent).

US scientists question cold fusion claims (FT).

Telegraph urges Lord Taylor to exercise a firm hand to prevent the Hillsborough inquiry becoming protracted by adversaries; no need for long inquiry with so much on film.

Hillsborough disaster fund tops £2million.

Government says there is no question of beneficiaries being deprived of social security if they accept payments from the fund.

Today accuses Bert Millichip of crass insensitivity for ordering Liverpool to make up its mind about continuing with FA Cup competition.

West Midlands police ask Home Secretary for special help with the multi-million pound cost to force of Hillsborough disaster (Times).

Court told how a violent, close-knit group of football hooligans, supporters of Manchester City, waited outside matches to attack, intimidate and terrorise supporters of opposing teams (Times).

Times leader says that the call by Liverpool politicians for a senior member of Royal Family to attend memorial service is a miserable campaign which ill befits a great and grieving city.

White parents attack Waltham Forest Council for introducing three new "ethnic holidays" - Diwali Day; Guru Nanak's birthday; and feast of Eid.

Nottingham Labour-controlled council bans children from taking part in mock job interviews for BBC TV programme "Maggie's children", a title which it thinks tendentious.



PRESS DIGEST

Labour selects Left-wing union official to fight Glasgow Central.

Education reforms demanded by teachers profession itself are now a significant source of teacher stress (Times).

School trips being cancelled because new legislation prevents schools from charging parents full cost if they are a necessary part of school lessons (Times).

Serious staffing difficulties and lack of cash in university legal departments are threatening to undermine the teaching of law and quality of next generation of lawyers (Times).

All party Disablement Group of MPs warn that charities and voluntary organisations could be harmed by new legislation requiring people to prove they are actively seeking work before they can draw unemployment benefit (Independent).

Lord Stevens calls for action to curb excesses of irresponsible press in Lords debate.

Soviet Union has for first time linked its refusal to grant visa to Times Moscow correspondent-designate with Britain's refusal to permit entry of a journalist from a leading Moscow economic daily (Times).

Ron Brown accused of theft from his researcher's flat in St Leonard's.

Gunmen get away with £1million after ambushing a security van in Ilford.

Police Complaints Authority accuses police of being rude and aggressive to public.

Britain protests over expulsion of 18 Britons from Iran in tit-for-tat episode; one of 18 being detained.

Mail says it is costing £1068 a day to guard Rushdie; cost so far £70,000.

Treasury expected to encounter all-party disapproval of move to cut its contribution to MPs' pensions (Times).

Robert Maxwell, at launch of Kreisky report in Brussels, speaks of the "moral outrage" at 20 million unemployed in Europe.



PRESS DIGEST

Gorbachev launches fierce attack on lazy workers and party bureaucrats in speech to Central Committee.

Mr Gorbachev says shortages of housing, food and basic consumer goods are growing in Soviet Union despite his economic reforms (Times).

NAO to investigate details of Britain's £15 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia and report on implications for state financial policy (Independent).

FOOD BLACKMAIL

Star accuses authorities of "conspiracy of silence" over blackmail. Police should tell us the full facts now. Children's lives are more important than tactics.

Sun asks "What the hell is going on?" At least a dozen babies have narrowly escaped death.

Mirror wonders what possible excuse there can be for not alerting the public and why Heinz and Cow & Gate did not clear shelves. Only way to beat blackmail is by telling the truth.

Express - Only by extreme good luck has no child been seriously hurt or killed. But luck can run out. Minister's statement will have done little to comfort mothers. Option of withdrawing products must not be ruled out further if gruesome sabotage continues.

GLOBAL CLIMATE SEMINAR

Mirror, Star, Express ignore it.

Sun - Maggie's at green for go. You pledge urgent action to save world from greenhouse effect. It could mean more nuclear power.

Today page 2 - Maggie gives nuclear power green light. David Cope, one of participants, says he is impressed by your commitment, having previously been sceptical. Leader says there are signs that the Green Bill will take the first crucial steps towards cleaning up the country and safeguarding the future of the world.

Mail - Nuclear growth to beat pollution - major expansion of Britain's nuclear power programme signalled.

Telegraph page 1 - Nuclear power to beat global warming.



PRESS DIGEST

Guardian - Nuclear hint at Prime Minister's seminar - no announcement of initiatives but a hint public attitude to nuclear power may have to change.

FT - Prime Minister told that nuclear power is needed to cut global warming. It was made clear that, if necessary, the nuclear element in electricity generation should exceed the 20% envisaged by the Government.

Times - Britain likely to concentrate on expanding nuclear power capacity to tackle "greenhouse effect" after seminar at Downing Street.

Independent report tucked away on page 2. You want to take the international lead in combating the greenhouse effect, and are likely to choose the Commonwealth summit to present a report on its effects.

ECONOMY

Mail leader says on the basis that it is better to be hit over the head by a 2-lb than a 3-lb hammer, yesterday's trade figures were worth a gasp of relief. But the trade gap is still running at an horrendous rate. Chancellor knows Government are still in one hell of a tight spot. On reaching 10 years it can hear you saying "time enough to rejoice when we're in the black and inflation is less than our rivals".

Independent - Trade figures ease pressure on interest rates. But several city economists said they still believe base rates will have to rise to 14% in the next couple of months to support the pound.



MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Fowler attends celebratory dinner on food and other matters, Fishmongers Hall, London (prov)
- DH: Mr Clarke and Mr Mellor meet the Spanish Health Minister; Mr Mellor later attends reception for Victor Flintham of the National Steering Group on Equal Opportunities for Women in the NHS, London
- DTI: Mr Newton addresses Industrial Mission Association on "UK Shipbuilding in the 1990s"
- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe addresses Policy Studies Institute on "Europe", Reform Club, London
- HMT: Mr Major addresses the American Chamber of Commerce, Savoy Hotel, London
- MOD: Mr Younger receives Mr Eyskens, Belgium Foreign Minister (designate), London; later receives Mr Undul, Turkish Under Secretary for Defence, London
- DEM: Mr Lee opens new London Wall office of Montrose Technical Recruitment, City of London
- DES: Mrs Rumbold visits schools in Leicestershire
- DOE: Mr Chope addresses Civic Trust Seminar on "Creating the Living Town Centre"
- DOE: Mr Howard gives opening address to Building a Better Britain British Property Federation Exhibition, Islington; later presents Supplier and Subcontractor of the Year awards
- DOE: Mr Gummer meets Geoffrey Pattie MP re Community Charge
- DTp: Mr Bottomley launches Birmingham's Child Pedestrian Safety Campaign
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington addresses Grain and Feed Trade Association annual dinner, London
- MAFF: Mr Thompson visits Veterinary Medicines Directorate, Weybridge
- OAL: Mr Luce addresses Sunday Times Watercolour Exhibition dinner, Mall Galleries, London
- ODA: Mr Patten addresses Caribbean Parliamentary Group and West India Committee, London
- WO: Mr Roberts addresses Tenby and South Pembrokeshire Hotels and Restaurants Association silver jubilee banquet, Saundersfoot
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

DEM: Mr Nicholls and Mr Lloyd (DSS) attend EC informal meeting on Women's Issues, Toledo, Spain (28 April prov)

DTI: Mr Atkins attends Telecommunications Council, Luxembourg

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TV AND RADIO

'Hard News': Ch 4 (20.00) Raymond Snoddy of the Financial Times looks at the behaviour of the media

'Apartheid: The Granite Wall Crumbles': BBC Radio 4 (20.00) Graham Leach on the decline of apartheid

'This Week;: Thames (20.30)

'Nature': BBC 2 (22.30) Saving Ireland's peat bogs

'40 Minutes': BBC 2 (21.30) Jimmy Savile on reforming Broadmoor

'Question Time': BBC1 (22.00) with John MacGregor, Jack Dromey, Sara Parkin and Brian Wolfson

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