

May 24, 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister addresses Conservative Women's Conference; and later meets Dr Mahathir (photocall)

TUC General Council

Ceramic and Allied Trades Union annual conference, Cliffs Hotel, Blackpool (to May 27)

Douglas Hogg makes drugs visit to United States and the Bahamas (to May 30)

Nicholas Ridley meets football authorities

Presbyterian synod consider appeal against suspension of the Lord Chancellor

STATISTICS

DOE: Construction - new orders (Mar)

DTI Retail sales (Apr - prov)

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Environment: Scotland; Foreign and Commonwealth

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Car Telephone (Safety). (Mr Douglas French)
Dock Work Bill: Remaining Stages
Motion to take note of EC Document on Gaseous Emissions
Details will be given in the Official Report

Adjournment Debates: School capacity (Mr T Arnold)

Select Committees:

ENVIRONMENT

Subject: Property Services Agency
Progress in Re-organisation of the Agency and Main Estimates, 1989-90
Witnesses: Property Services Agency officials

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Subject: Hong Kong
Witnesses: Mr H Keswick and the Hong Kong Association
(At approx 11.30) Hong Kong Link

WELSH AFFAIRS

Subject: Public Expenditure Plans for Wales and the Welsh Commentary
Witness: Rt Hon Peter Walker MP, Secretary of State for Wales

Select Committees (Cont'd)

AGRICULTURE

Subject: Implementation of the new beef regime

Witnesses: National Farmers' Union; National Farmers' Union of Scotland; Farmers' Union of Wales; Ulster Farmers' Union; The Association of British Abattoir Owners Limited; Federation of Freshmeat Wholesalers; Livestock Auctioneers' Market Committee for England and Wales

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Subject: Financial Services and the Single Market

Witnesses: Francis Maude MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Corporate Affairs and Department of Trade and Industry officials

DEFENCE

Subject: Vertical-Launch Sea Wolf; Type 23 Frigate Command System

Witness: Ministry of Defence

ENERGY

Subject: UK/USSR Energy Relations

Witness: Rt Hon Cecil Parkinson MP, Secretary of State for Energy

TREASURY AND CIVIL SERVICE SUB-COMMITTEE

Subject: Developments in the Government's "Next Steps" Programme

Witness: Chief Executive, HMSO

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Subject: Hong Kong

Witness: Tim Renton MP, Minister of State, Home Office

TREASURY AND CIVIL SERVICE

Subject: Delors Report

Witness: Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton, Governor of the Bank of England

SOCIAL SERVICES

Subject: Resourcing the NHS: The Government's White Paper: Working for Patients

Witnesses: Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke QC MP, Secretary of State for Health

TRANSPORT

Subject: Roads for the Future

Witness: Association of Metropolitan Authorities

PROCEDURE

Subject: The Scrutiny of European Legislation

Witness: Nigel Spearing MP

COMMITTEES ON PRIVATE BILLS

Opposed Bill:

Bromley London Borough Council
(Crystal Palace)

Select Committees (Cont'd)

Unopposed Bills

1. Buckinghamshire County Council (Lords)
2. Kingston upon Hull City Council (Lords)
3. Tees (Newport) Bridge (Lords)

Lords:

Starred Questions

Debate to call attention to the transport needs throughout the country and in particular to the problem of traffic and transport in the Greater London area

Debate on the Report of the ECC on Merger Control (6th Report, 1988-89. HL Paper 31)

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Britain says no to deadline from Kremlin as fears rise of lasting damage to Anglo-Soviet ties in expulsions row.

China's problems continue as pressure grows for Prime Minister to quit.

Confusion continues over what will happen at NATO summit.

Pound slides as opinion in City is sharply divided about prospect of further rise in interest rates.

Independent - Pound slumps after your comments were taken to suggest that base lending rates were unlikely to be lifted any higher. Leader says the Louvre Accord is now a dead letter. The Chancellor may be underestimating the seriousness of wage inflation, and on balance an interest rate rise of 14% is called for though it might not need to last long. The Chancellor may be wiser to move now than have the markets force his hand.

Fears of a rise in base interest rates. Pressure mounts after US Treasury indicate American interest rates will not be cut and concern on foreign markets that tomorrow's trade figures will show a widening current account difficult (Times).

Telegraph says you and Treasury Ministers are acutely aware that any sign that the Government is easing control of public expenditure will be seen as a weakening of resolve to prevent inflation surging ahead.

Workers are demanding big pay rises because of sky-high mortgages rather than inflation.

New mortgage commitments in April were 10% lower than last year.

Kinnock accused of stealing your Euro-clothes.

Kenneth Clarke wants extra £1.5billion on top of £2billion increase already announced for this year in an attempt to defuse growing criticism of the Government's reforms of the NHS (Telegraph).

Lambeth Council freezes dealings with its health authority after expressions of interest in self-governing status for the health authorities services (Guardian).

PRESS DIGEST

7 out of 10 head teachers who left schools took early retirement because of stress.

Government urges total ban on ivory trade. Times leader welcomes Government decision although it accepts new rules will be difficult to administer.

Labour accuses government of panicking over water privatisation with the industry's debt write-off (Independent).

South West Water Authority confesses to poisoning its own rivers - for a third time.

Officials play down suggestions that smoothing the privatisation of the water industry is the reason the Government has decided to write off £5 billion debt. Leader attacks water privatisation.

Scientists predict another summer of '76: hot and waterless. Meanwhile Kent water chiefs warn turn off your taps or face water rationing.

Judges warn Government that law reforms are going too far. Top judges accuse you of trying to push through objectionable changes in legal system (Sun).

Senior lawyers have claimed that the proposed reforms are seriously eroding the separation of powers, and that they will badly affect the administration of justice (Guardian).

Times leader on judges comments on law reforms says the Lord Chancellor has a difficult task. He must apply his remarkable ingenuity and intelligence to devising a variation on his first thoughts which would preserve his own basic principles but accommodate those principles most dear to his brothers in the judiciary.

Assistant solicitors received 22% pay rises last year although women's salaries remained some 12%-25% behind their male colleagues (Times).

Home Secretary understood to be sympathetic to BBC concern that the Government should not hand over one of its night time channels to new commercial broadcasters (Times).

Private contractors sceptical over government's toll road proposals (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Railway Gazette Year Book survey says Britain is almost bottom of the table of European countries building urban railways to relieve inner city congestion (Independent).

Express says you will today launch a green revolution to make every car in Britain pollution free. You have set a timetable from 1993 for all cars to be rid of poisonous exhaust fumes. Leader says our readiness to join European demands for catalytic converters on cars as part of 1992 package is to be applauded on both practical and political grounds.

British U-turn on EC car emissions standards, though we and others are now likely to argue against the intermediate stage and for a one-step solution to higher norms (FT).

Opinion poll shows sewage in coastal bathing waters heads list of mothers' concerns about public health and the environment (Independent).

Today leader says we need to update Shakespeare. He called Britain a jewel set in a silver sea. Today it would be more like the truth to call it a sewer sunk in a cesspit. People are worried about the state of the sea, the land-based danger of radioactivity from nuclear power stations, salmonella poisoning from chickens and brain damage from petrol fumes.

Time Out claims there are serious problems storing spent radioactive fuel rods (Times).

Slivers of glass now found in a top-selling children's sweet.

Health watchdogs tell non-smokers forced to work in fume-filled offices to sue.

Wildcat strikers will have cash seized directly from their pay packets under controversial new union plans being considered by Government (Express).

London bus workers reject 8.1% pay offer and call for new strike ballot (Times).

Safety audit of London Underground reveals serious weaknesses in safety management. London Underground to act on 70 out of 71 recommendations for improvements (Times).

More than 500,000 holidaymakers face travel chaos this summer after passport staff threaten to strike in row over staffing levels.

PRESS DIGEST

Court Auditor says Britain has worst record in EC for fraud involving Community funds. Most incidents involve farm animals on Irish border (Mail).

Independent - Sir Geoffrey Howe praises your tenacious leadership in bringing about EC reform.

Spanish partners of the Tories at the European Parliament prepare to defect to a separate faction to dissociate themselves from your harsh line on Europe (Independent).

According to a BBC TV poll, a majority of Conservative MEPs want to see Britain back European monetary union (Guardian).

A report on British summertime, to be published next month, will show the majority of special interests in favour of a move to bring British time in line with Europe (Times).

Jim Baker hints that SNF row may not be resolved before the NATO summit though US officials concede they are giving ground to the West German call for negotiations on SNF (Independent).

It is now clear that intensive US/German talks have failed to remove basic differences over linking SNF negotiations with the Vienna conventional forces talks (FT).

President Bush says he doubts whether a solution can be found before the summit (Guardian).

Telegraph leader says it is just possible that you and President Bush will accept Chancellor Kohl's position on SNFs as the lesser of two evils - the other being a neutralist government led by the Social Democrats.

Hectic last minute talks fail to bridge gap between the US and West Germany over SNFs and the White House is prepared for argument on the issue at next week's NATO summit (Times).

Defence Select Committee say MOD's Procurement Executive, responsible for spending £8.5 billion a year, is so gravely understaffed it can no longer adequately police the defence industry (Times).

B&Q claims laws stopping stores selling some goods on Sundays break EC rules.

PRESS DIGEST

Drink drivers could soon be banned after only one pint of beer as Euro MPs approve tough new alcohol limits to make roads safer.

Today - French destroy eight truck loads of strawberries from Spain in price war. Unless French Government steps in to stop this violence strawberry prices here could rise as we import 9,000 tons a year from Spain.

Mr Shamir describes US advice to extend the hand of friendship to the Palestinians as "useless" (Mail).

Arab League to give Morocco mandate to press UNSC members to set up international conference on the Middle East (Independent).

Independent leader says that, despite Shamir's dismissal of James Baker's appeal, the latter's views were realistic and even-handed and express the sentiments widely-held on the centre-left in Israel. Mr Shamir may well eventually be obliged to pay attention to Washington.

Peter Hitchens, in the Express, under the heading "Why Shamir will never give up an inch of land" says while you view Gorbachev as an acute and charming enemy, you see Shamir as a prickly, tactless cunning friend.

You warn Mr Shamir that his election plan, while welcome, offers no magic formula for peace (Guardian).

Kevin McNamara will write to you today challenging you to answer new questions over the Gibraltar shootings, but Cabinet Ministers are confident that the controversy will not be revived (Independent).

Three year review of the workings of the Anglo-Irish Agreement to be published today will contain no startling proposals (Telegraph).

20 people arrested after clashes with police, following a police drugs raid on housing estate in Wolverhampton. Petrol bombs and stones were thrown at the police (Guardian).

Father jailed for life yesterday for murdering his three year-old son 26 years ago. Body not found until last year.

Slimming pills containing guar to be banned (Times).

PRESS DIGEST

New laws to tackle litter louts who are turning streets and highways into rubbish-strewn eyesores will be introduced next year (Express).

Local councils want to take over responsibility from the police for enforcing parking restrictions and to be allowed to employ new "parking control officers" empowered to issue tickets (Telegraph).

Home Office plans to create national register of the DNA profiles of convicted criminals during the next five years (Independent).

Labour MPs expect imminent crackdown on Kurdish asylum seekers (Independent).

Hackney and Islington have appealed to Home Office for finance to house more than 1,000 Kurdish refugees who have arrived since the beginning of May (Telegraph).

Chow mein and curries are the main ingredients in a staggering £800million boom in ethnic foods.

Manchester-based Governemnt Employment Training Scheme calls in receiver, leaving 1,000 long-term unemployed people and 200 staff in limbo (Independent).

Oftel report says British Telecom shows 'steady improvement' but could do better (Times).

British Airways' 48,000 workers get £12.5million cash bonus.

Executives are swotting Japanese in the classroom to clinch multi-million pound deals.

Boy and girl expelled and four others suspended for protesting at a Nottingham school ban on the wearing of shorts (Sun).

Geoffrey Levy, in the Mail, looks at Carlos Menem asking would you trust this man with the Falklands?

Sun says you will sack Geoffrey Howe in autumn reshuffle finally dashing his ambitions of taking your place as Conservative leader.

David Owen suffers setbacks as Mr Brocklebank-Fowler deserts SDP for Democrats and Mr Cartwright hints at reapplying for Labour membership.

Hillsborough Disaster Fund set to top the £10million mark.

PRESS DIGEST

Princess Anne cancels visit to Ethiopia for fears of her safety.

Frank Bruno to get TV chat show on BBC.

You are due to meet F W De Klerk in late June or early July, showing that the expulsion of three South African diplomats will not be allowed to stand in the way of your policy of contact rather than isolation (FT).

Ayatollah Khomeini has major surgery to stop internal bleeding.

President Tambo says ANC is stopping its sanctions campaign against South Africa.

EURO-ELECTIONS

Mail accuses Kinnock of borrowing your policies for Europe in an effort to win votes; leader says Labour's presentation of itself as the party of Europe is one of the great U-turns in modern times.

Sun - Kinnock in EC U-turn.

Mirror - Kinnock aims to hammer divided Tories at polls as united Labour go for Euro-victory. Leader says Labour has come full circle on Europe to its benefit and to think of everybody in Britain, but the manifesto will upset Tony Benn and you, which is about the best endorsement it could have.

Today leader says Labour and Tory parties have told us their plans for Europe but they are strangely quiet over European air travel, an issue that really concerns British people deeply because of last year's worst on record snarl-ups of holiday flights.

Independent - Kinnock spells out four conditions for Britain to join the EMS exchange rate mechanism.

Times leader says Neil Kinnock's tactic of presenting himself as "the better European" ought not to work. But because of the impression made by some of your recent utterances he could well make headway on this argument. He is helped by the decision within the Tory party over your attitudes. You will not easily defeat Labour's campaign unless the tone of your rhetoric on Europe gives fewer hostages to fortune than it has done hitherto.

PRESS DIGEST

FT leader contrasts the Tory and Labour approaches. It concludes that Labour stands to gain more from the elections. It thinks it would be ironic if the Tories lost seats as a result of its own internal divisions over the EC, when it speaks in its manifesto of establishing a new international orthodoxy.

ANGLO/SOVIET RELATIONS

Mail says senior Whitehall sources revealed last night that Russian spies had launched a massive bribery operation to steal Britain's world-beating industrial secrets; leader says present stand-off between London and Moscow will hardly assist the new economic revolution. But the Kremlin must have known that when it set its spies to work. Now it must accept the consequences.

Express - KGB spies expelled were all top-grade Russian agents who had offered massive bribes in return for priceless secret data.

Sun - Britain piles on pressure to force Russians to backdown in great spy row by threatening to shut down their vital Lada car network.

Independent - FCO describes Soviet deadline on diplomatic cuts as unacceptable, preposterous, ludicrous, ill-thought-out and illogical. It could be days before it becomes clear where the axe will fall.

Mirror says the 11 Soviets ordered out were involved in bribing bids to steal secrets but warnings to the Russians were ignored.

Guardian - British Ambassador flatly refuses to comply with the Soviet demand to reduce the number of Britons in Moscow. Britain will certainly retaliate against Soviet organisations in London (Guardian).

Despite Anglo-Soviet diplomatic difficulties, Moscow signs £210million trade finance loan in London to finance polythylene plan in Stavropol.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DH: Mr Clarke meets Singapore Health Minister
- DOE: Mr Ridley meets Football Association, with Mr Moynihan; later, with Mr Howard meets Sainsbury Group re planning
- DTI: Mr Newton launches VOLNET data base for voluntary sector, with Cable and Wireless, London
- DTp: Mr Channon and Mr Bottomley (to 25 May) attend ECMT meeting, Edinburgh
- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe addresses the London Diplomatic Association dinner, Middle Temple Hall, London, on "British Foreign Policy"
- HMT: Mr Major addresses Business and Corporate Finance conference, London
- MAFF: Mr MacGregor opens Food and Farming Year Art Exhibition, Canterbury
- SO: Mr Rifkind attends press launch of British Aerospace Jetstream Project, Prestwick
- WO: Mr Walker launches 1989 Craft Buyers Guide, London Welsh Craft Fair, London
- CO: Mr Luce addresses Industrial Society conference on Staffing for the Future, London; later addresses English National Ballet Association reception, London
- DEM: Mr Cope addresses Ethnic Minority Business conference, QEII Conference Centre, London
- DEM: Mr Lee visits Leicestershire (tourism) and addresses East Midlands Tourism and Leisure conference
- DEM: Mr Nicholls opens new training facilities at the College of Distributive Trades, London
- DEN: Baroness Hooper attends reception for the Ambassador of Ecuador and Senora de Correa, Park Street, London
- DES: Mr Butcher visits Norfolk LEA and youth services
- DH: Mr Mellor visits National Heart and Chest Hospital; also attends dinner with Mr Qui Mongie, President, State Pharmaceutical Association of China, Ritz Hotel, London
- DOE: Lord Caithness visits Cambridge; later opens housing scheme and visits Wandsworth Estate Action
- DOE: Lord Hesketh opens Temple Footbridge, British Waterways Board, Marlowe, Berkshire
- DOE: Mr Chope addresses British Industry Council
- DSS: Lord Skelmersdale launches Resettlement Board as an Executive Agency in Blackpool
- DTI: Mr Maude visits Finance Intermediaries Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association, London

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC) (cont'd)

- HO: Mr Patten attends Ethnic Minority business conference. QEII Conference Centre, London
- HO: Mr Hogg attends National Association of Prison Visitors AGM, Westminster Cathedral Conference Centre, London
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington visits Northern Ireland
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- FCO: Mrs Chalker attends European Parliament, Strasbourg (to 25 May)
- HO: Mr Hogg visits USA and Bahamas, on Drugs (to 30 May)
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DES: Mr Baker interviewed for Panorama Higher Education broadcast (and 5 June)
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TV AND RADIO

- Hard News: Ch 4 (20.00). Investigative series on Britain's press
- Dispatches: Ch 4 (20.30). Filmed in Afghanistan
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