

May 11, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Dr Mahathir

The Queen presents the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Medallions to mark the 25th anniversary of the Churchill Travelling Fellowship Scheme, Guildhall

The Queen mother visits Aberdeen

Ministerial adoption of EBRD Articles of Accession (prov)

National Union of Scalemakers annual delegate conference, Blackpool (to 12 May)

Launch of Robert Maxwell's new European newspaper

STATISTICS

DOE: Housing starts and completions (March)

HMT: RPI and tax and price index (April)

PUBLICATIONS

HO: HM Chief Inspector of Prisons report on Latchmere House Remand Centre

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Business: PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS
Sexual Offenders Bill: (Sir William Shelton)
Road Traffic Regulation (Speed Limits) Bill: 2nd Reading: (Mr John Bowis)
Local Government (Access to Information)(Disabled Persons) Bill: 2nd Reading: (Mr E Loyden)

Adjournment Debates: Health Authority Budget deficit (Mr H Cohen)

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Heseltine gets an appalling press; put up or shut up, they say, and some claim he's blown it (Mail Independent).

The Govt are likely to get a boost today from lower-than-expected inflation figures today.

More reflections on Kinnock's "thought-free zone".

Mail's calculations, on which it leads its front page, show most community charge payers would gain only 25p from Heseltine's proposals. It says that, like himself, his ideas on the reform of the community charge have great superficial attraction but don't always add up.

Keith Hampson admits for first time, Mirror says, Heseltine wants to be leader.

Express says you reject calls to give a top job to Heseltine. You are better off without him. George Gale, in Mail, says Heseltine has missed his chance. He should have struck earlier but he lacked political courage.

But the Independent says Heseltine declares complete loyalty to you reliving you of a debilitating anxiety and bolstering the confidence of Ministers that they can ride out the storm over inflation and the community charge.

Malcolm Rifkind challenges his critics to show themselves as a damaging split emerges between right and left factions of the Scottish Conservative Party at the start of its annual conference (Times).

Peter Kellner, in Independent, says that the London election results seem to have been the product of local factors such as the popularity of the councils and not just the community charge. What the Tories have not shown is that they can defeat a moderate, competently-led Labour Party in a national election.

Chancellor to receive a boost today when figures show inflation has not gone through 10% (Sun). Today finds cheer for homeowners in the lower-than-expected rise.

FT headline: Bank backs UK economic strategy - interest rates have slowed down economy.

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Bank of England fears that annual inflation could be stuck close to 10% this summer and end the year higher than forecast in the Budget, ruling out any hope of early cuts in interest rates (Times).

B/Telecom to slim by 10,000 jobs over next 12 months and Imperial Tobacco by 1,240 jobs over 2 years. 450 jobs to go at Winfrith but B/Airways create nearly 1,000 jobs on Tyneside.

Pay talks in construction industry break down after employers refuse to breach 10%.

Sun says teachers who resist a Commons Cttee idea of paying shortage teachers more need a lesson in economics.

Star following up Mail story on Ealing - "Revealed - the search for London's Kremlin".

Express says you are considering whether County councils should send out their own community charge bills so that public know exactly who is demanding what from them.

Officials report a favourable response to payment of community charge across the country.

Sun feature "Inside Kinnock thought free zone" says his gaffes worry even Labour MPs. He bolstered his empty headed tag this week as he struggled with the ABC of economics.

But Kinnock, on TV, says he knows he has the capacity to be Prime Minister.

In TV interview tonight Kinnock pledges to break up Murdoch media empire.

Today leader, in appreciation of Kinnock's frankness on TV about the press, says he would crack down on the press because he wants to stop papers saying things he doesn't like. He should hear what his Shadow Cabinet colleagues say about him.

Mail says Owen has told friends you tried to take him out of British politics last year by offering him an EC Commission job which went to Leon Brittan.

Ministers not over-optimistic about prospects from all-party talks on Ulster devolution (Independent).

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Times leader looks at NATO's plans for short-range nuclear weapons saying so long as there remains a case for Alliance nuclear weapons with shorter range than intercontinental missiles, that hardware should be the best available. Second-rate weapons are a waste of money. He adds that whatever the Alliance's future role, there remains a strong case for updating the RAF (and other air forces) with a weapon with a range of 250 to 300 miles.

An Independent editorial says the right way to achieve defence savings is not to start with a sum, then slash until that total is reached. A serious and thorough defence review is required. The Labour Party will be well-advised not to suggest that a Labour Govt would deliver a bigger peace dividend than the Tories. Its priority must be to convince the electorate that defence is safe in Labour's hands.

Guardian claims that Britain's land forces in Germany would have been helpless in the face of a Red Army attack after nation's store of tank spares were destroyed in warehouse fire in 1988.

Peter Stothard in the Times discusses the problems facing Republicans and Democrats at the US budget deficit discussions under the heading "Will Bush pay the penalty of his campaign promise?".

Bruges Group urges end to direct EC Parliament elections in favour of assembly made up of delegations from national parliaments (Independent).

Bruges Group paper "A proposal for European unity" proposes a European confederation plan on a parliamentary structure, recognising the sovereignty of individual states (FT).

Times says that Kohl yesterday demonstrated to the Bundestag that he, and he alone, means to dictate terms for German unity.

Polish Foreign Minister says in Independent interview that his country has "no claims whatsoever" to former eastern territories now in Soviet Union. Assurance appears to settle potentially explosive border issue.

Senior officials from Iran and EC to meet next week in Dublin to discuss the release of hostages in Lebanon and how EC-Iranian relations can be improved after the damage done by Iran's call for the death of Rushdie (times).

Sun calls on every driver at noon today to hoot his horn for a minute in support of detained Iraq's gun driver in Greece.

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Foreign Secy calls for action to speed up implementation of EC policies - a league table of tortoises and hares (Mail).

Fears of BSE grow as pet cat dies of feline form of disease.

Govt vet says there is no evidence that the virus threatens other pets or humans.

BNFL workers at Sellafield threatening to strike unless plant made safer.

Work on Channel Tunnel suspended for third day as you reiterate the Govt's concern at the safety record of the project (Times).

Express says Michael Howard must satisfy himself that charges against the Channel Tunnel consortium of cutting safety margins are baseless.

Campaigners for the continuation of historic rights of access to common land won a notable victory yesterday when the House of Lords overturned a High Court ruling that a landowner was entitled to deregister the land after selling his title of Lord of the Manor (Times).

Kenneth Baker gets a page in Today to reply to their remarks about his speech on one parent families.

Representatives at Scottish Conservative Party conference want wives who stay at home to look after young children to be entitled to reductions in their community charge bills (Times).

EC to investigate allegations that a worldwide cartel is keeping the price of international telephone calls artificially high (FT).

£10-12million payout to 250 families living in Lockerbie in compensation for Pan Am disaster.

Home Office appeals to prison officers over industrial action after more than 800 prisoners are held in police cells (Times).

Big drop in numbers sent to prison for not paying fine results from Home Office pilot project on matching fines to offenders' means (times).

Alcohol to be banned on ferries taking English soccer fans to Sardinia.

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Inquiry into claims that off-duty West Midlands Police beat up man in pub (Independent).

Rex Harrison, 82, leaving stage because he is nearly blind.

Some suggestion in Paris that ban on French imports of South African coal may be partially lifted (Independent).

Big row at annual meeting of BTR in protest against its sacking 1,000 workers in South Africa. Punches thrown.

Mr Albie Sachs, prominent white member of the ANC legal and constitutional affairs cttee, confirms that the ANC is stillholding prisoners and says he was moved to tears by a recent visit to a detention camp (Times).

Mandela to address a Commonwealth foreign ministers' cttee which Britain is boycotting (Times).

Express says you have postponed plans to visit South Africa in September.

KGB chief says there was a Fifth Man - in addition to Burgess, Maclean, Philby and Blunt - and he is alive.

Israel and US in open and angry disagreement over UN resolution condemning settlement of Soviet Jews on occupied land (Independent).

China releases prominent dissidents in public relations exercise to improve country's image and head off more US sanctions (Independent).

Top Chinese diplomat who negotiated the future of Hong Kong with Britain has gone missing while on a private visit to the US with his family (Times).

US asked to reconsider dropping its opposition to creation of social fund to help Third World countries eliminate CFCs (FT).

FT leader on the problems of world debts says those who fail to learn the lessons of history may be condemned to repeat it. The industrialised countries are determined to solve problems on the cheap so IMF and World Bank have been pushed to forefront in

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dealing with debt crisis in order to limit direct budgetary appropriations. This penny-pinching will ensure that the mistaken lending of the 1970s will poison the 1990s. Failure to resolve problem is political cowardice, unwillingness to pay for mistakes and a persistent failure to control a financial system that is deregulated in its assets and guaranteed in its liabilities.

HESELTINE

Star p2 - Captain Maggie tackles Tarzan. You'll stay centre forward and captain. A day of misery for Heseltine whose Times article turned into a damp squib.

Sun leader headed "Come clean Goldilocks" says that while his community charge proposals are far from new he acts as if he were bringing the 10 Comandments down from the mountain. He spends almost as much time denying his ambitions as he does promoting himself. Isn't it time to end the comedy? Why doesn't he end the hypocrisy? But who could trust him?

Mirror p2 - Tarzan attack puts top Tories in a flap. They can't keep him quiet. But leader says it is time Heseltine accepted that the kidding has to stop. This is the moment when he should make an honest man of himself. He should announce soon he intends to stand against you this autumn.

Today p2 - Maggie 1 Tarzan 0; Michael has good poll tax ideas but I will be staying centre forward, you say. Leader headed "Et tu Tarzan" says naked ambition is never a pretty sight and when it is accompanied by bare faced lying it is very ugly indeed. There cannot be any adult in Britain who is not aware of what Heseltine is after. Yet he proclaims he is not after the Tory leadership. No wonder politicians are held in such low esteem. He has demonstrated he fails on the count of honesty.

Express leader page feature - Master of innocence is leading us up the No 10 path. Behind the smokescreen, Heseltine plans to fulfil a dream. He knows his window of opportunity is between now and 1991 party conference. Leader tells Heseltine to come clean. For him to insist his loyalty to the party and leader remains unquestionable is a nonsense which raises serious doubts about his political integrity. If he demands more after proper consideration of his community charge ideas he has to be challenged by the party to put up or shut up.

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Mail leader says Heseltine's impersonation of just another humble backbencher dropping a few ideas into the Prime Minister's suggestion box is a less convincing performance than that of the wolf in lace nightcap playing Red Riding Hood's granny.

Independent - Heseltine plans seen by experts as mildly interesting, but rather old and fraught with political and practical difficulties - a long term programme not a quick political fix.

Independent editorial says Heseltine's Times piece represents a missed opportunity. Because he could not bring himself to say the charge was a disaster and should be replaced he tinkered with the problem. This week, as the feeling grows in Westminster that the Govt might finally have turned the corner, Mr Heseltine's task was to offer the troops a clear and inspiring message. He has failed to do so.

Independent - Heseltine's intervention has little effect on Tory backbench morale, and you were said to be 'chirpy' at yesterday's Cabinet. The local election results spoiled the impact of Heseltine's article. Heseltine supporter with marginal constituency says "I still think that with a change of leader, my seat would be safe. But now I think it may be safe if Margaret Thatcher stays. That's the change".

Times p1 lead - You rule out structural changes to community charge. You say Heseltine's article had many good ideas but Ministers appeared ill-prepared for the package which dominated your Question Time. Leader says Heseltine should have nailed his colours firmly to the mast of rates - the old way, after all, was the best. His intervention was spirited but his proposals would not achieve their declared aim of swiftly winning old and new Tory voters back to their natural political home. He may have gone too far for his political health; he has not gone far enough to offer an escape from the community charge.

Tony Travers, director of research at LSE, in the Times, examines the likely implications of Heseltine's community charge proposals. He concludes that for more than a decade you have been trying to do much the same; though in different ways. There are no doubts that the proposals are radical and all-embracing. In the last resort, their success or failure would depend on the style of the Prime Minister of the day.

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Telegraph p1 - Heseltine rules out Thatcher challenge, as senior Ministers react coolly to his community charge reforms. Not put forward anything new. Leader reflects on the difficulties the community charge presents for the Govt and makes the point that neither Heseltine's main proposals resolve chief dilemma - how much more taxpayers' money to put into charge system.

Guardian p1 lead - Ministers head off Heseltine. Gove moves to smother his initiative at birth. Many MPs say he has overplayed his hand. Leader is just plain sarcastic about Heseltine, community charge and you.

FT - You give hollow welcome to Michael Heseltine's proposals while Ministers privately dismissed most of the ideas. On Question Time last night Heseltine provided the firmest indication yet that he would not mount a direct challenge to your leadership. He attacked the Labour Party's "divisive" leadership actions which had led to repeated electoral defeats and said the Tories fought loyally as a party "for our leader, for the policies of our party". He appeared to rule out any contest while you are leader (FT).

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DES: Mr MacGregor attends University of East Anglia's court meeting on "UAE into the 1990's"
- HO: Mr Waddington addresses Justices' Clerks' Society annual conference, Harrogate
- DEN: Mr Baldry visits Ricall Mine, Selby Coalfield and Gascoigne Wood Mine, near Selby
- DES: Mr Jackson addresses sixth formers at King Alfred's School, Portway, Wantage
- DH: Lady Hooper visits BUPA Hospital, Portsmouth
- DSS: Lord Henley visits Doncaster Task Force to open an independent learning centre
- DTI: Mr Hogg visits Design Museum, London
- DTp: Mr Atkins addresses Institute of Highway and Transportation conference on "motorway diversions", Hutton Police headquarters
- HMT: Mr Lilley addresses Adam Smith Institute lunch at Barings
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington visits Amerton working farm, Staffs; later visits MAFF regional office, Wolverhampton
- MAFF: Mr Maclean visits ASDA, Leeds
- OAL: Mr Luce visits Cornwall
- WO: Mr Roberts presents Gwent Young Entrepreneur of the Year award, Newport
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- MOD: Mr Hamilton attends UK/Bahrain defence talks in Bahrain (to 14 May)
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TV AND RADIO

"Public Eye" - Divorce BBC2 (8.00 pm)
Looks at proposed reforms of the divorce laws

"Any Questions?" BBC Radio 4 (8.05 pm)
With Donald Dewar MP, Ludovic Kennedy, Rt Hon David Waddington MP, and Usha Prashar
