

January 11, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

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STATISTICS

HO: Probation statistics, England and Wales 1988

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Prime Minister

Business: Opposition Day (2nd Allotted Day)  
Debate on an Opposition Motion. The subject for debate to be announced

Adjournment Debate: The funding of police costs of annual party conferences (Mr P Pike)

Select Committees: STANDING COMMITTEE A  
Further to consider the COAL INDUSTRY BILL

STANDING COMMITTEE B  
Further to consider the EDUCATION (STUDENT LOANS) BILL

STANDING COMMITTEE E  
Further to consider the NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE AND COMMUNITY CARE BILL

SIXTH STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS ETC  
To consider the draft DRIVING LICENCES (COMMUNITY DRIVING LICENCE) REGULATIONS 1989

SECOND STANDING COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN COMMUNITY DOCUMENTS  
To consider EUROPEAN COMMUNITY DOCUMENT No 7871/89, RELATING TO PROTECTION OF ANIMALS DURING TRANSPORT

COMMITTEE ON A PRIVATE BILL  
KING'S CROSS RAILWAYS BILL

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PRESS DIGESTMain News

The focus today is on the level of pay settlements after your Telegraph interview (which is widely picked up) and Ford unions' rejection of 10.2%. Fears that this will be used as a benchmark by other negotiators.

Mail headline "Even 10% is not enough".

The latest move is seen as a blow to the Government's counter-inflation effort.

Chancellor warns of job losses if there is no pay restraint; higher pay deals will prolong high interest rates.

Times says senior Tory MPs are backing the Chancellor's insistence that pay rises have to be bought with productivity gains. Ministers are taking the political risk of fighting the ambulance pay dispute so hard because they fear a high deal will trigger a rush of other pay claims, soaring through the 7.7% inflation rate.

Independent says the Ford offer revives the prospect of another rise in interest rates and mars Budget preparations.

NUT threatens to disrupt schools if it does not get 20% and will put pressure on Tory MPs in 50 marginal seats.

Some production work on Airbus may be switched abroad as a result of engineering workers' strike at BAe. Increased flexibility at BAe's UK plants, and more manufacture of components overseas could put thousands of jobs in the UK aircraft industry at risk (Independent).

Times leader criticises Bill Jordan's handling of the BAe strike saying he might be wise not to plan any fraternal visits to plants in Hamburg, Madrid or St Nazaire just at the moment as solidarity has its limits. One reason for the resurgence of inflation is the inadequacy of industrial productivity in this country compared with that of our competitors. A reduction in working hours would almost certainly lead to increased overtime, which would inflate wage bills and raise British wage costs.

1,000 electricity managers accept individual contracts in move against collective bargaining. They will get pay rises of up to £2,000 in return (FT).



PRESS DIGEST

Commons to debate ambulance dispute today. Oxfordshire gets injunction preventing staff from using ambulances in defiance of managers.

Guardian leader sets out what it thinks Kenneth Clarke should say in today's debate - concede that there have been mistakes on both sides; and to offer to negotiate and be flexible.

Sir Gerard Vaughan MP attacks Government's "insensitive" handling of ambulance dispute.

Significant worsening of dispute as crews in Hampshire vote for series of 24 hour strikes, withdrawing for the first time accident and emergency cover (Times).

Today claims tax men and pollution experts are to get 20% to halt "brain drain" from Civil Service.

West German economic growth at highest level for 10 years as exports and investments boom (FT).

France relaxes controls on foreign investment as liberal economic thinking spreads through Socialist government (FT).

Leading American philosopher, Noam Chomsky, forecasts that the US, Japan and a reunified Germany will be the three superpowers of the new millenium (Independent).

Sales of imported cars in Japan rose by 35% in 1989. West German vehicles are most popular (FT).

Cabinet's EMS enthusiasts say the lira's move within ERM boosts the case for full British participation (FT).

Comecon agrees to move from rigid central planning to market-based trade system. But members still divided on how far and how fast to go (FT).

Gorbachev due in Lithuania today - likely to meet large demo calling for independence.

East German Communist leaders under fire for setting up a new version of security police.

East German government close to lifting ban on foreign investment in step towards market economy (FT).



PRESS DIGEST

Kohl warns East Germany to hold fair elections - or risk losing economic help from the West (FT).

Western joint ventures having little effect on Soviet manufacturing. Disappointed Soviets consider offering more incentives and simplifying regulations to attract big Western firms (FT).

China lifts marshall law in Peking; Britain mounts two-pronged offensive to improve relations with China while restoring confidence in Hong Kong (FT).

World Bank likely to resume lending to China in next few weeks as White House hints at backing for new loans (FT).

Foreign Secretary tells Tory Backbenchers Govt will go ahead with plans to allow up to 250,000 Hong Kongers to live here and that there will be no retreat over boat people. Mail says he was "commendably cool".

Sir David Wilson, Governor of Hong Kong, rejects idea that Britain is planning to sell out Hong Kong.

Independent says growing numbers of Labour MPs appear ready to defy the Party line, raising Govt hopes of pushing through legislation, expected in April, to grant settlement rights to Hong Kong Chinese.

China's two top men in Hong Kong to be replaced by hardliners with little sympathy for the democratic aspirations of the territory (Times).

Guardian says Government has decided to put off further democratic reforms in Hong Kong to avoid antagonising Peking.

Mirror says Britain is to use ships and aircraft to repatriate boat people from Hong Kong.

Express continues to focus attention on bloody repression in Albania, raising fears of a bloodbath worse than that in Rumania.

Albanian communist party firmly rules out joining the rest of Eastern Europe in introducing democratic reforms (Times).

ICI tightens belt worldwide as it prepares for slower growth in 1990. Signs that consumer slowdown is spreading to other parts of industry (FT).



PRESS DIGEST

Siemens' takeover of Nixdorf gives West Germany the largest European computer company. Strengthens chance of industry being dominated by big firms (FT).

EC to take West Germany to court over dirty drinking water (FT).

OFGAS warns that high gas prices will damage industry's capacity to compete after 1992 (FT).

Britain may recruit US air traffic controllers sacked by Reagan over pay dispute in 1982.

Record number of visitors to Britain last year - more than 15.8million when figures are finally totted up.

MPs recommend all major museum and art galleries to consider charging.

Today claims consultants are moonlighting, pushing NHS patients to one side, to make more money.

Express wants a closer watch kept on moonlighting doctors.

Gallup poll for Doctor magazine shows that out of 200 GPs only 16% would vote Tory tomorrow, down from 61% at the last election. Labour's support has risen from 8% to one-third (Times).

National Audit Office says operations bought from private hospitals, with money from Govt's special fund to cut waiting lists, costs almost twice as similar deals done within the NHS (Independent).

Extra £300million for disabled announced - Age Concern say it is an insult to elderly.

Proper application of information technology could halve the number of amputations related to diabetes each year, saving an estimated £200million, experts at St Thomas's Hospital believe.

Mirror highlights the alleged dangers from salmonella in imported eggs.

Social Services Select Committee accuses MAFF of not doing enough - and doing what it does in a vague and confusing way - to warn people about the dangers of listeria.



PRESS DIGEST

Sam Brittan in FT looks at ways to help low income families with children and opposes both increase in child benefit and reintroduction of child tax allowances.

Wary welcome for Peter Brooke's efforts to get political talks under way in Northern Ireland.

Mail leader, while acknowledging the weary cynicism over Ulster, says the fury of the Protestants over the Anglo-Irish Agreement has given way to frustration over their self-imposed abstinence from power. It is worth another try.

Independent editorial says it is unrealistic to suggest a solution is in the offing. Although his assessment of the situation in Northern Ireland is possibly too optimistic, the paper says Mr Brooke's judgment to resist the temptation to take dramatic initiatives, is sound.

Times leader says there is no evidence in what Peter Brooke said that the Govt is preparing to "abandon" the Anglo-Irish agreement. It would be a disgraceful betrayal if it were, but the speech bears no such consideration. It is hard to believe that its general and innocuous phrasing could even be such a hint delivered in code.

Guardian leader sees Mr Brooke's speech as a significant, even historic, event. There is a long way to go before there can be talk of a breakthrough. But it is a sign perhaps of the developing realism in Northern Ireland that the southern dimension is no longer going to deter them from getting the show on the road.

FT editorial welcomes Mr Brooke's speech. The onus is now firmly on the parties in Ulster. Can they respond to an invitation to sort out their own affairs - or are they so steeped in inertia that stalemate has become a way of life? There does come a time when the parties to a dispute recognise that it is pointless to go on. That is what Mr Brooke is hoping for, if not banking on: he is right to try.

Danny Morrison, Sinn Fein publicity officer, accused of conspiring to murder and unlawful imprisonment.

Pallotine Fathers dismiss Father Ryan for "prolonged unlawful absence".



PRESS DIGEST

Small quantity of equipment, possibly used for bomb-making by IRA, found near earlier discovery of Semtex in Pembrokeshire (Independent).

Express political column concentrates on the changing times and sayings of Kinnock.

Ron Brown MP faces demands for his resignation from a section of his constituency.

Senior Tory MPs considering last minute appeal to you about the amount of Treasury subsidy to cushion the introduction of the community charge as Govt whips grow more worried about a threatened backbench revolt next Thursday when the revenue support grant settlement is debated (Times).

Home Office circular at the end of the month will lead to Magistrates being told to make special arrangements to deal with poll tax defaulters, to head off local authority fears that "community charge" debtors would clog the courts (Independent).

Case of 5 Liverpool council workers who take 5 weeks to prune 6 trees until residents get District Auditor to work; performance improves.

"The Independent" makes £3.26million profit in year to 30 September 1989.

Guardian features media pressure on Ian Charleson, actor who died of AIDS, during the latter stages of his illness.

BBC commissioned independents to produce film of Radio 3 which produced a big row within BBC, with Radio 3 controller threatening to resign if it were not edited. Sun: "Marvellous, isn't it? You can say what you like about the Beeb provided it is favourable."

BBC plans to show play about homosexuality to children as young as 14 - MPs and teachers say it is irresponsible.

Express leader says plays about homosexuality are not suitable for children and it is symptomatic of the BBC's contempt for the views of values of the public it serves that it should insist otherwise.

Andrew Neil to give up executive chairmanship of Sky to return to Sunday Times full time. Rupert Murdoch takes personal control of Sky.



PRESS DIGEST

Mirror says any good Kaifu might achieve visiting Britain will be lost unless he stops slaughter of whales.

Paul Johnson, in Mail, writes of "the other incredible revolution" in South Africa and expects you to go there this year.

Spanish police claims Colombians main drug ring in Europe has been smashed.

Times leader on the increase in UK drug seizures announced yesterday, says that congratulations should be tempered by an awareness of the realities behind the statistics. It urges Govt to concentrate on the consumers, because it is upon them, in the end, that the drugs industry depends.

Independent says the credibility of Brazil's political will to prevent human, ecological and climatic catastrophe is being tested over the illegal mining going on in the province of Roraima. The new President, Mr Collor de Mello, must prove his commitment by sending in the army to oust the illegal miners.



MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DES: Mr MacGregor attends Taylor Woodrow lunch with Professor J Ashworth re Salford University's degree in construction
- LPC: Sir Geoffrey Howe addresses Centre for Policy Studies dinner, London
- WO: Mr Walker and Mr Grist launch Health Promotion Authority for Wales strategy meeting, London; Mr Grist also has "Healthy Breakfast", Cardiff
- DEM: Mr Eggar visits Bradford
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- WO: Mr Walker interviewed by BBC Wales' "Farming in Wales" programme
- DH: Mr Freeman interviewed by Case Weekly
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TV AND RADIO

- "True Stories: Radium City" Ch4 (22.00) Effects of occupational exposure to radiation in Canada
- "See for Yourself" Licence payers talk to Michael Checkland and Duke Hussey about the way they run the BBC
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