

15/1/90

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

EC: House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee visit Madrid re enquiry into the Single European Act (to 16 January (prov); alternative dates are 22 to 24 January)

EC: European Parliament Plenary, Strasbourg (to 19 January)

DTI: Launch of SMART 1990

STATISTICS

CBI: CBI/FT Survey of distributive trades (Dec)

CSO: Producer price index numbers (Dec-prov)

CSO: Retail sales (Dec-prov)

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Transport; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; Church Commissioners

Business: Environmental Protection Bill: 2nd Reading, Money and Ways and Means Resolutions

Adjournment Debate: Industrial disablement benefit: The case of Mr Ronald Davidson (Mr Alan Meale)

Select Committees: TELEVISIONING OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE
Subject: Assistance for the Deaf in following
Televised Parliamentary Proceedings
Witnesses: Royal National Institute for the Deaf; British Deaf Association; BBC; Independent Broadcasting Authority; Sky Television

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Subject: Text processing in the Civil Service
Witnesses: Mr J B Unwin, Customs and Excise, Sir Michael Quinlan, Ministry of Defence

TREASURY AND CIVIL SERVICE

Subject: International Debt Strategy
Witnesses: War on Want (at 4.30); Oxfam (at 5.00 approx)

Lords: Starred Questions
Food Safety Bill (HL): Committee (1st Day)
Trade Union Act 1984 (Amendment) Bill (HL) Committee

PRESS DIGESTMain News

MORI gives Labour a slightly increased lead over last quarter of 1989 - up 1% to 8% (48/40/SLDP 4/Green 4/SDP 2. Times says poll shows Labour might be suffering from plateau effect.

Times leader describes the shift in public opinion against the Govt in the last quarter of 1989 as hardly dramatic. It does not, however, offer Kinnock safe insurance against a revival of Conservative popularity if the economy were to improve. Labour is not finding it easy to break through to popularity in its own right. Yet you have much more reason to worry about your party's position now than during any previous mid-term shift of opinion.

SLDP poll says overwhelming majority of family doctors opposed to NHS reforms.

Star poll shows more than a third say Govt should put sick and those who care for them first.

Labour Party preparing for a General Election next year.

Mirror says TGWU and NUM are facing a cash crisis.

Ethnic rioting leaves 30 dead in Azerbaijan; Azeris go on rampage hunting Armenians and plundering their homes.

TASS says situation in some areas is out of control. Threat of civil war.

Three people said to have been burned alive in violence.

Armenian nationalists declare 'total mobilisation'; reports of fighting between the two communities in Nagorny Karabakh and outlying parts of Azerbaijan (Independent).

Soviet Union facing mid-winter energy crisis as north Siberian oil fields shut down for lack of maintenance because of critical shortage of aviation fuel in region (FT).

50,000 Bulgarians demonstrate in Sofia calling for wider democratic reforms and assurances about elections.

Romanian Govt in disarray after its decree outlawing Communist Party is thrown in doubt.

FT says an Army coup cannot be ruled out in Rumania to guarantee stability.

PRESS DIGEST

Rumours of an Army coup in Albania sweep Yugoslavia.

Several thousand of Mongolians stage rally in Ulan Bator calling for end of Communist Party monopoly.

East Germany's economics Minister explains economic reform programme abandoning all talk of socialist market economy.

Independent editorial says in both Eastern Europe and the USSR, Japan is preparing itself as a political as well as economic partner. The Japanese have a lot to offer, but there is tremendous opportunity for them too. As the Cold War ends Japan is left with the power to play a global role: her leaders must now accept the responsibility which goes with that power.

Extreme Rightwing Republicans demonstrate in Bavaria for unified Germany, with capital Berlin.

Govt denies shoot to kill policy in Ulster after 3 men, habitual criminals and carrying replica firearms, were shot dead by undercover soldiers while robbing a betting shop in Belfast. Sun says two had 36 convictions.

Most newspapers who comment understand shooting; Guardian and Independent want full statement and Independent an inquiry.

Retired Chief Constable Hermon says he threatened to resign if any RUC officers were prosecuted over shoot to kill allegations.

Ambulance crews at Crawley decide to stay on strike after they fail twice to answer emergency calls to man who died.

Ford craftsmen expected to walk out of Halewood and Bridgend plants today in strike against 10.% offer.

Claims that Ford failed to introduce all the efficiency changes required to pay for its high pay deal in 1988.

General Motors sets up factory in Hungary to make engines for Vauxhall Astra and Cavalier.

Police issue photo likeness of woman believed to have stolen 36-hour old baby from St Thomas's Hospital.

Norman Tebbit calls for referendum at next general election as plan to admit 225,000 Hong Kong people. He says plan could lead to ethnic strife.