

February 6, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prince of Wales gives a lecture on the rainforests, Kew Gardens

EC: M Felber, Swiss Foreign Minister visits London (to 8 February)

STATISTICS

ECGD: Annual report and trading results (1988/89)

PUBLICATIONS

HO: Criminal Justice: White Paper

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Defence; Prime Minister

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Motor Trade (Consumer protection)(Mr Gareth Wardell)

Debate on Agriculture on a Motion to take note of EC Documents, details of which will be given in the Official Report

Adjournment Debates: Disinformation about Hon Members issued by Civil Servants (Mr T Benn)

Select Committees: Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill [Lords]
King's Cross Railways Bill

Lords: Starred Questions
Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Bill (HL): Report
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill (HL): Committee (1st Day)
Chlorofluorocarbons (Control) Bill: Second Reading

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Gorbachev tells Communist Party to change or be finished. He opens door to other parties and free elections. True democracy the only way ahead.

Yeltsin says Russian people are fed up and Gorbachev's days are numbered unless he looks for radical allies.

Independent says there are signs that Gorbachev's foes will eventually have to submit to his will.

FT says he ran into a storm of protest from Party conservatives. His reform programme, which amounts to a personal gamble which could destroy the party, calls for establishment of a party chairman and an executive presidency.

Times leader describes Gorbachev's speech as his boldest attempt yet at political reform. If he succeeds he will have scored his most significant victory yet over the party's conservatives. He may also have launched the Soviet Union towards genuine democracy.

Governor of Bank says British banks should not become too involved in lending to Eastern Europe.

IMF approves £425million loan for Polish economic stabilisation plan (FT).

Bundesbank Vice President pours cold water on idea of German monetary union as East and West Germany are at odds over economy (FT).

EC foreign ministers agree to extend aid to Bulgaria, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia (Times).

Moscow to suggest new level of 150,000 troops on each side of Central Europe. US officials privately hint there is room for manoeuvre on their 195,000 proposal. "There is some fat in the figure" says one (Independent).

Manfred Woerner outlines united Germany's role in future of NATO. Neutrality would destabilise Europe, he tells the Independent).

You agree to differ with Jesse Jackson over sanctions against South Africa.

Under powerful British lobbying, EC agrees to reconsider South African sanctions.

PRESS DIGEST

South African business community welcomes de Klerk's initiative (FT).

Senior ANC man Mbeki says Mandela is ready to leave prison straight away, without lifting of state of emergency (Independent).

ANC invites coloured Parliamentarians to join broad anti apartheid front.

MPs on both sides of House press for full statement on Wallace. Some Tories call for a Privy Counsellor inquiry.

Much coverage of HMI report on schools - 2million children said to be getting a raw deal. NUT says nation should be ashamed of the plight of children in under-resourced schools.

John MacGregor says there is still a long way to go but Govt is tackling weaknesses.

Express leader says NUT leader believes everyone but his members are responsible for shortcomings. But the main responsibility must be with those standing in front of classrooms five days a week. Teachers are ready enough to stress their crucial role when it comes to pressing pay claim. They cannot sidle away from it whenever another damning report hits the headlines.

NOP survey for National Union of Teachers shows that 9 out of 10 teachers support the Govt's education reforms although they believe more money should be spent on their implementation (Times).

Pound at its highest level for 10 months.

Squeeze on spending proving more effective than first thought.

Housing starts down 20% last year.

Chancellor being urged to scrap tax on savings in building societies.

Bow Group calls on the Chancellor to make radical income tax cuts in next month's budget, financing the cuts, if necessary, by increasing VAT (FT).

Mail says foreign firms are giving Britain's economic performance a vote of confidence - everyone wants to buy a British firm.

PRESS DIGEST

Rolls Royce workers get 10.30% wage rise and 2-hour cut in working week. Deal sets pace for higher pay in car and engineering industries (Independent).

French Airbus partners alarmed at possible loss of orders if 13 week strike at B/Aerospace goes on (Independent).

Nigel Lawson gets second private job - joins Guinness Peat Aviation leasing company board for up to £40,000 per annum (Independent).

Sir Leon Brittan says British will face high mortgages until you decide to join ERM. It would also help to curb pay increases.

EC still split over access to European market for Japanese cars (FT).

Michael Howard presses magistrates to impose big fines on employers who break health and safety laws (Independent).

Ford halts production of its Sierra model in Belgium as effect of strikes by UK workers spreads (FT).

Anthony Beaumont-Dark MP says soaring rail fares are setting Govt on road to defeat. Mail says Cecil Parkinson's attitude is dismissively brusque. Govt should take heed of commuters who are not captive voters.

In an Independent interview, Sir Anthony Meyer says that you are convinced that anyone who disagrees with you is either a fool or a knave.

You are planning to introduce a Minister for London.

Law Centres say they will take legal moves to prevent landlords making £100million windfall profits from community charge (Independent).

Options for Labour alternative to community charge to be published on Friday, with final decision at party conference (Independent).

Guardian says Dick Douglas MP is preparing to leave Labour Party over its refusal to countenance civil disobedience against community charge.

PRESS DIGEST

Times says that there is growing alarm among Ministers that community charge levels will mean up to 0.5% rise in RPI. Chris Patten is said by colleagues to be ready to "charge-cap" a record number of authorities forcing them to reduce planned spending levels.

Latest survey shows that average community charge in England will be £340, £62 more than Govt Ministers said was necessary for councils to provide services (Times).

Mail feature on Kinnock lost for words over Kenneth Baker's 52 questions about Labour Party policy.

Under the heading "Next task for the Tories" Norman Tebbit in the Times urges an intensified attack on dependency.

Women to be allowed to sail in battleships, apart from submarines - sets off some controversy - claims it will cause jealousies among wives left at home and tension on board.

Govt to drop idea of harmonising British time with European (Today).

Virginia Bottomley dismisses 'out of date' report on junior doctors' hours which has been with D/Health since last August (Independent).

UN Environmentalists criticise President Bush for his weak stand on global warming (FT).

President Bush declines opportunity to thrust US into lead of international efforts to combat global warming emphasising the need for a balance between environmental and economic needs (Times).

Row over major, who is one of our candidates for Juno space mission, losing his pension rights during his 2-year training.

You accuse police of giving poor value for money (Today) - their treatment of reports that you want to create an officer class.

Today leader says Govt spending on law and order has risen 67% in last decade and number of police by 14,000. Extra resources on that scale entitle us to expect results. You are entitled to be disappointed.

PRESS DIGEST

Express say senior police officers claim an officer class would be a disaster. Leader says it is a pity Home Office has set its face against the idea. Their attitude seems hopelessly unimaginative.

Senior Met man John Dellow urges caution over creating a police "officer class". In an Independent interview, he says "University education doesn't necessarily make a good policeman".

South Yorkshire Chief Constable retires at 60. He says he finds it difficult to understand Lord Justice Taylor saying that those fans under the influence of drink had no effect on Hillsborough events.

Now 5 month old baby stolen from back of a car while father gets money from cashpoint.

Man being questioned over abduction and assault on 7 year old girl in Brighton.

Several polytechnics have sought Law Society approval to set up courses for non-law graduates wanting to train as solicitors because of the demand for students from outside the legal profession (Times).

Times says that strong doubts have surfaced over whether the Govt will press ahead with legislation recommended in the Taylor report.

Extreme Loyalists fear that inquiry has found a Protestant supergrass. Concern led to attempt to discredit Stevens by displaying secret RUC documents on Belfast walls (Independent).

Labour split over whether "Satanic Verses" should be published in paperback. Arts spokesman Mark Fisher calls for publication, but Roy Hattersley is against (Independent).

Telegraph leader says we may all wish Rushdie had not written his book but he has done so. And we should continue to defend his rights, as the Govt has done to its credit. And British publishers should encourage Penguin to proceed with the paperback. To flinch now would be to surrender to forces of fanaticism.

PRESS DIGEST

Times - Relatives of British hostages held in Lebanon appeal to Rushdie not to publish paperback version. Leader says that the Satanic Verses affair has caused serious damage to community relations. No group has more to lose than the immigrant Muslim community which came to Britain. Before the Ayatollah injected his poison into their relationship with the majority they wanted nothing more than quiet acceptance and the right to build themselves a decent British life.

Appointment of John Chilcot as Perm Sec at NIO shows that "Thatcherisation of Whitehall" is a myth. He is by no means "one of us".

Sir Hugh Rossi receives substantial libel damages from Private Eye after it accused him of hypocrisy (FT).

Britain and Argentina on brink of restoring diplomatic relations.

Tension rises between India and Pakistan over crisis in Kashmir (FT).

Cost Rican ruling party narrowly defeated by Social Christian Unity party (FT).

SCHOOLS

Star - Bottom of the class. School kids are getting a shoddy deal. We don't have enough teachers. Many schools tumbling down.

Sun - Scandal of 2million pupils who get raw deal. Damning report.

Mirror - Caning for schools - State pupils are getting a raw deal.

Today - Teachers flop in 3 out of 10 lessons.

Express - Bad teaching scandal of our rotten schools. Devastating attack on standards.

Independent - Damning indictment of state of English schools as HMI Report says 30% of work is poor or worse.

Mail - Inspectors blast "raw deal" for school children. Leader says the HMI's latest report is a shocker. It is to be hoped the Govt's reforms relating to core curriculum and teacher training will in time remedy some of the deficiencies. But there must be more effective assessment of teachers.

PRESS DIGEST

FT - Schools Inspectors criticise poor state of school buildings and facilities, and finds teacher shortages continue.

Times - HMI report says schools are giving a raw deal to 30% of children.

Guardian - Pupils get raw deal, say inspectors.

Telegraph - Poor schools blighting prospects of 2 million.

EAST-WEST etc

Star salutes two very brave Statesmen - Gorbachev and de Klerk. They deserve to succeed.

Sun: Gorbachev has discovered it is impossible to build an efficient structure on Communism's rotten bureaucratic foundation. The struggle for the momentous changes he has proposed has only just begun. But there can be no going back. Russians deserve a place in the sunshine.

Today says the Queen should go to Russia to give Gorbachev a helping hand.

FT editorial says European security can no longer be based on the two alliances because the Warsaw Pact is virtually disintegrating, and the unification of Germany is now proceeding ever faster. Looking at alternatives, the paper concludes that while economic unity is urgently needed, it is also sensible to maintain NATO, including a united Germany where in the East German soldiers could be assigned. It is desirable for West European states to form a closely integrated defence community capable of acting as an equal partner to the US.

Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky, in an interview in the Times, says Gorbachev knows he cannot save both the economy and the empire. He will have to abandon this dream or draw the line with blood.

ANNEX

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DES: Mr MacGregor visits Staffordshire Local Education Authority
- DTI: Mr Ridley and Mr Redwood tour "Better made in Britain" challenge exhibition, QEII Conference Centre, London; Mr Ridley later gives bi-centennial lecture to Adam Smith Institute, QEII Conference Centre, London
- DTP: Mr Parkinson visits Merry Hill Centre, Brierley Hill, West Midlands
- LPC: Sir Geoffrey Howe attends Guardian editorial conference, London
- MAFF: Mr Gummer opens Caterer and Hotel Keeper Chef's conference, London; later visits Cargill's Glucose Plant, London
- CO: Mr Luce addresses Public Policy Consultants, London; later addresses presentation of hunting art prizes, London
- DEM: Lord Strathclyde visits Gateshead and Cleveland for the launch of Cleveland TDAP
- DES: Mr Jackson attends Treaty Watangei commemorative service, Westminster Abbey, London
- DH: Mr Freeman meets the Iraqi Minister for Health, London
- DSS: Mrs Shephard visits the West End Co-ordinated Voluntary Services for Homeless Single People, London
- DTI: Mr Forth launches Higher Education/Enterprise Link booklets, London
- FCO: Mr Waldegrave meets Mr Ben Yahya, Tunisian Foreign Minister, London
- FCO: Lord Brabazon attends reception given by New Zealand High Commissioner, Bryce Harland, London
- HMT: Lord Caithness visits Customs and Excise, Southend

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- FCO: Mr Hurd addresses Konrad Adanauer Institute, Bonn
- ODA: Mrs Chalker visits Bangladesh and Thailand (to 12 February)
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