

February 7, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

The Prince and Princess of Wales attend charity premiere of the film "Steel Magnolias", Odeon, Leicester Square, London

Prime Minister meets the Swiss Foreign Minister; Mr Medvedev (Leader of a Soviet Delegation); and the Emir of Qatar. She also attends Child of Achievement Awards Ceremony

STATISTICS

CSO: Family expenditure survey 1988

DEM: Overseas travel and tourism (Nov)

DEM: Details of employment, unemployment, earnings, prices and other indicators

DEN: Advance energy statistics (Dec)

HO: Breath tests, England and Wales statistics (3rd Qtr 1989)

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: One-Parent Families. (Mr Julian Brazier)
(Until 7.00 pm)
Motions on Social Security Benefit Up-rating Orders and Regulations
Motions on other Social Security Regulations. Details will be given in the Official Report

Adjournment Debates: Funding of the East Hertfordshire Health Authority
(Mr D Evans)

Select Committees: FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Subject: The Operation of the Single European Act
Witnesses: Rt Hon Douglas Hurd MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials

AGRICULTURE

Subject: Fish Farming in the UK
Witnesses: Department of the Environment; National Rivers Authority; Scottish River Purification Boards Association; Water Research Centre

DEFENCE

Subject: Physical Security of Military Installations
Witnesses: British Security Industry Association; Defence Police Federation

PARLIAMENT (Cont'd)**ENERGY**

Subject: The Cost of Nuclear Power

Witnesses: Lord Marshall of Goring (at 11.00 am) Mr John Baker, Chief Executive, and Mr Alan Bowen, Financial Controller, National Power (at 12 noon)

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Subject: Company Investigations

Witnesses: Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley MP Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Department of Trade and Industry Officials

EMPLOYMENT

Subject: Tourism

Witnesses: Trades Union Congress

HOME AFFAIRS

Subject: Crown Prosecution Service

Witnesses: Association of Chief Police Officers; Police Federation; Police Superintendents Associations of England and Wales

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Subject: Invalidity Benefit

Witness: Mr M J A Partridge, Department of Social Security

DEFENCE

Subject: Physical Security of Military Installations

Witness: Ministry of Defence

PROCEDURE

Subject: The Working of the Select Committee System

Witnesses: Rt Hon Tom King MP, Secretary of State for Defence, Rt Hon David Waddington QC MP, Secretary of State for the Home Department

COMMITTEES ON PRIVATE BILLS

Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill (Lords)

Kings Cross Railways Bill

Lords:

Starred Questions

Debate to call attention to the role of a free market economy in creating wealth and thus providing prosperity, jobs and better public services for the whole nation

Environment Protection Bill: Second Reading

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Communist Party Central Cttee runs unexpectedly into a third day as Gorbachev clashes with hardliners led by Ligachev.

But Gorbachev is expected to get his way in the end; though he is presented by some as battling to hold on to power.

Mail says hardliners claim his democracy plans are a recipe for anarchy.

FT suggests Gorbachev faces party split.

Mary Dejevsky in the Times says that despite some Soviet sympathy for Gorbachev she sees little chance of the communists surviving in a multi-party system.

FT editorial looks at the dilemma Mr Gorbachev faces, and says there are two sides to him - one who wants to democratise and modernise the Communist Party, and one who knows that neither the Party nor the country can hold together and who is hoping for peaceful dissolution of both. Saying Gorbachev remains the best hope for the country, it hopes the right Gorbachev will stand up.

Douglas Hurd tells Germans to take unification steadily; it won't be in their interests to arouse anxieties in Europe.

Diplomatic sources say you have had a change of heart over German reunification, accepting it as inevitable. Your advisers argue that you only held back because of concern for Gorbachev. Now he has bowed to reunification, Britain had no choice but to join debate on how it would happen (Independent).

In the Independent, Peter Jenkins says Douglas Hurd sought to dispel the impression you have given that Britain is ill-disposed towards German reunification. He has realised the high price of becoming side-lined from European politics. The speech puts Britain back onside, although still as a minor player.

West German Govt puts forward 3-point plan to forge full economic and monetary union with East Germany by 1992 (FT).

Times looks at Kohl's readiness to open immediate negotiations with East Germany over a currency union, saying the decision illustrates the degree to which political pressures in both Germanies are forcing aside councils of prudence at home and abroad. Kohl has also put the Govt on collision course with the president of the Bundesbank.

PRESS DIGEST

You signal that a fundamental review of our defence is underway, according to the Mail. Telegraph leads with rethink on size of Services - only Navy may escape cutbacks. Ministers are studying possibility of women becoming Harrier jump jet pilots.

30,000 Czechs demonstrate, calling on Russian troops to leave.

Czech leader Havel says price of withdrawing Soviet troops from his country could be further US troop withdrawals from West Germany (FT).

Sun leader on German criticism of British and French caution over reunification says this is rich. Our failure in the '30s was to stop Germany before it rampaged all over Europe.

World Bank approves two loans to Poland totalling \$360million (FT).

Mandela will accept freedom even if the state of emergency has not been completely lifted - says Boesak after visiting him in prison.

de Klerk calls on nationalists to back his reforms; and West to encourage dialogue.

Times says south Africa indicates that it is willing to end race classification, the foundation of apartheid. The concession came as Mandela seemed to move away from confrontation over the terms of his release.

Fears that Mandela could fall victim of assassin's bullet following furious reaction of white rightwing over removal of bans (Times).

South Africa expels two British journalists; Today with one of the journalists, says you were furious at their expulsion. It says their reporter never pretended he had witnessed the violence of which he wrote.

Jesse Jackson to lead protest tomorrow against touring English cricketers at the first unofficial Test in South Africa.

Mixed reception for Criminal Justice White Paper - is it practical?

PRESS DIGEST

Queen's Chaplain accuses Nigel Lawson of greed and encouraging inflation for accepting another part-time job for £40,000 a year. Sun headline: "One Lawson for the rich". Express says his earnings are soaring to £300,000.

Sun leader: "What sticks in the Sun's craw is that we know how tough it is for our readers to make ends meet at the moment. Yet one of the blokes most responsible is taking it away in wheelbarrows."

House prices fall for fifth month running, according to Halifax Building Society report.

First ray of hope of improvement on pay front emerges from CBI figures which show growth in settlement in manufacturing slowed slightly to 8.1% at the end of last year (Times).

Kent County Council white collar staff first to opt out of national pay bargaining, and accept local deal worth 10.1% (FT).

Farm incomes showed moderate rise last year, but in real terms are still 40% below what they were six years ago (Times).

At least 200,000 UK households face serious financial difficulties because of increase in use of credit (FT).

Hardline Left-wingers have penetrated the running of the ambulance dispute in London.

Claims that Brighton ambulancemen refused to turn out in case of 7 year-old girl who was abducted and assaulted.

Ford threaten to end future investment at Dagenham unless electricians go back to work.

Poor outlook for settlement of 14-week engineering strike at British Aerospace.

Mail claims number with company cars is increasing by 400 each working day.

Sales of imported cars surged in Japan during January, with Rover showing 140% increase in sales over January 1989 (FT).

On teachers, Sun says NUT's leader should be ashamed of a report criticising standards in schools when year after year they have waged a guerrilla campaign against their pupils.

PRESS DIGEST

Express features general secy of the Professional Assn of Teachers on the scandal of incompetent teachers.

Mirror says you provoked fury in the Commons when you said HMI report was a good one. Its leader lists all the alleged deficiencies in schools and says what is needed from you is less self-satisfaction and more investment.

Times leader describes the HMI report on schools as an austere document, and the light which its 21 unadorned pages cast on some areas of the education service is bleak. The report, however, has sensible things to say about recruiting and retaining good teachers.

Edward Pearce, in Express, says Question Time yesterday demonstrated the strengths and weakness of you and Kinnock. He overflows, you are steady. Colin Welch, in Mail, says Kinnock's furious assaults were own goals.

Row over Conservative Party getting a 2% commission on bookings for party conference at 87 hotels in Bournemouth.

British side of Channel tunnel running 17-21 weeks behind compared to French, who are 12-16 weeks ahead of schedule.

ECGD faces further big losses on loans to Third World countries, as body formally announces a record £441million trading deficit for 1989. To counter its problems, ECGD will scrutinise its export insurance cover more closely (FT).

Academics claim coal privatisation would lead to loss of 100,000 jobs and "utter devastation" of mining communities (Independent).

Kenneth Clarke gives first sign of concessions over NHS bill as he proposes body to oversee clinical care standards. His invitation to royal colleges snubs the BMA (Independent).

Viewers want fewer soap operas and game shows, but more new films and documentaries. Interest in satellite TV declines (Independent).

Survey says viewers think BBC TV is more biased towards the Conservative Party than at any time in the past 20 years (Times).

Yorkshire TV's First Tuesday programme puts all the blame on the police for the Hillsborough disaster - "extraordinary" says Telegraph critic.

PRESS DIGEST

DPP backs scheme to allow Crown Prosecution Service lawyers to plead in Crown Court.

Chief Police Officers' cttee backs compromise fast lane plan in debate over "officer class" (Independent).

Baby, 5 months, abducted from car while his father was at a cashpoint was on council risk list. Parents being questioned.

NERC chairman claims that only a fraction of the man-made chemicals seeping into the water networks are being monitored (Times).

EC Environment Commissioner signals Brussels' determination to press ahead with new curbs on airport noise and engine emissions (FT).

EC to pay a further £200,000 from its disaster fund to victims of last month's storm damage, bringing total aid to £800,000 (FT).

Maori woman throws wet flag at Queen as protests continue in New Zealand.

Man hits Chief Whip with 100-page notebook thrown from gallery in Commons.

Split in ruling Likud party worsens over peace talk proposals (FT).

Aoun gains upper hand in Beirut Christian enclave fighting (FT).

Li Peng tells vsiting Lord Sharp China attaches importance to Sino-British relations, which is seen as a relaxation of Chinese anti-UK stance (FT).

Brazil's President-elect, Mr Collor de Mello, reaping substantial domestic political benefit from his world tour. He arrives here today (FT).

CRIMINAL JUSTICE WHITE PAPER

Star - An iron hand to shackle violence.

Sun - Thieves get jailbreak in shake-up - feature headed "Waddington playing all the right games - shaking up the jails".

Mirror - Blitz on parents of louts.

PRESS DIGEST

Today - Jail let off for thugs in shake up.

Express - Burglars will be spared from jail. But it's war on rapists and thugs. Leader says the professionals' response to the Home Secy's White Paper is most reassuring - they hate it.

Mail - Clear our cramped prisons of petty villains. Leader says that having been elected three times on the law and order ticket Tories have thrown money at the police and pumped funds into prison building. It hasn't worked, so they are now sensibly modifying their approach. It supports the main thrust of the reforms but worries they will go off half cock.

FT - Govt signals, in its "just deserts" package, its intention to confine custodial sentencing to those who genuinely require such punishment, leading to fewer offenders being sent to overcrowded prisons.

Independent - Criminal justice reforms appear to win support from left and right of Tory Party as well as Opposition. But implementation will need a sea-change in attitudes of conservative judiciary.

FT editorial sees two problems: the Govt remains committed to a policy it knows does not work, that of retribution as a rationale for punishment; the Govt has rejected any form of sentencing body. On the latter, it remains to be seen if the judges will pay much attention to Mr Waddington's recommendations on sentencing.

Telegraph devotes a page to White Paper - more fines but longer jail terms promised for thugs. Leader has doubts whether some of the ideas can be made to work. Mr Waddington will have his work cut out to persuade judges and magistrates that the new ideas are not mere soft options.

Independent editorial calls the White Paper a gamble. It represents a victory for Home Office values and the prison reform lobby, but the judiciary could ignore its recommendations and the probation service could be unable or unwilling to meet the heavy demands placed upon it.

PRESS DIGEST

Times p1 lead - Reforms aim to cut jail for petty crime. Prison sentences for serious offences only. Meanwhile Lord Whitelaw says conditions and overcrowding in prisons are endangering society. Leader says the Govt's package has more of an Old Testament flavour than a New but at the same time provide a new sense of purpose to the penal system. But if the pendulum of penological fashion is not to swing too fast and too far, it would also be wise not to neglect too much the emphasis on the offender which has provided a sense of reforming moral purpose in the last 100 or more years.

Lord Windlesham writing in the Times under the heading "More than just deserts" welcomes the White Paper, saying it maintains the thrust of punishment in the community, potentially an historic turning point in penal policy, taking it forward in a way that is capable of attracting support from sentences and the wider public.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Howard addresses lunch at Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce
- DES: Mr MacGregor visits Imperial College, University of London
- DSS: Mr Newton visits Lytham St Annes Social Security Office
- DTI: Mr Ridley and Mr Hogg host English Estates presentation, London
- DTp: Mr Parkinson addresses Bus and Coach Council
- FCO: Mr Hurd meets and hosts dinner for M Rene Felber, Swiss Federal Councillor for Foreign Affairs and Mme Felber; later meets the Brazilian President, Snr Collor, London
- LPC: Sir Geoffrey Howe chairs Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse
- MAFF: Mr Gummer addresses Agriculture forum meeting, London
- DEM: Lord Strathclyde visits Manchester; later addresses the North West Tourist Board's Industrial Tourism seminar
- DH: Mrs Bottomley opens new Renal Unit at the Lister Hospital, Stevenage; later, with Lady Hooper, meets the BMA about junior doctors hours, London; Lady Hooper later meets Professor Holland; Mrs Bottomley later meets the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee on dispensing, London
- DH: Mr Freeman visits the National Community Health Resource Centre
- DSS: Lord Henley visits Walthamstow local office
- DTI: Mr Redwood addresses Enterprise Education conference on the British Economy, Central Hall, Westminster, London
- DTI: Mr Hogg visits Salford Information Technology Institute's open day
- DTp: Mr Atkins visits Salford for Inner Cities Campaign
- FCO: Mr Maude meets Mr Duffy, Australian Minister of EC Affairs
- HO: Mr Mellor addresses London Magistrates' Association, Crown Court Inner London Sessions House on "Drugs in the 1990s"
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DH: Mr Clarke interviewed by Professor Klein of Bath University, London
- DES: Mrs Rumbold interviewed about music education on Channel 4's signals programme
- DH: Mr Freeman appears on BBC TV's "Open Air"; later interviewed by Alison Boulton of the Medical Monitor

TV AND RADIO

"Dispatches" CH4 (8.30pm)

"Signals" CH4 (9.15pm) Looks at effect of Government's education changes on music in schools. Education Minister, Angela Rumbold defends Government policies
