

February 13, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

? Skills Training Agency Statement

Prime Minister hosts an official dinner for Polish Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mr Tadenz Mazowiecki

Princess of Wales opens the George Thomas Scanner Suite at Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan

Mrs Kullman Five, Norwegian Minister of Trade and Shipping visits London (to 14 February)

EC: Political Committee, Dublin Castle (to 14 February)

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STATISTICS

OPCS: Congenital Malformations 1988

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PUBLICATIONS

HMT: Supplementary estimates

NAO/MOD: Low flying training (prov)

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Employment; Prime Minister

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Fuel and Energy Provision (Mr John Hughes)  
Debate on a Motion to take note of the Government's Expenditure Plans 1990-91 to 1992-93 (Cm 1001-1021)

Adjournment Debates: Consequences of allocation of two quarters to a prison officer, Ashford, Middlesex (Mr D Wiltshire)

Select Committees: COMMITTEE ON A PRIVATE BILL  
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill [Lords]  
King's Cross Railways Bill

Lords: Starred Questions  
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill (HL): Committee (3rd Day)  
London Local Authorities (No 2) Bill (HL): Third Reading

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PRESS DIGESTMain News

Tribal violence mars release of Mandela who returns to Soweto today. Some 50 reported dead in clashes; 200 injured in Soweto crushes awaiting Mandela's return.

Mandela speaks of the importance of getting the right message to the white community.

You are accused of being out of step - indeed in a minority of one - over easing of sanctions - Guardian headline: Thatcher blunder on sanctions. Independent thinks you have shot yourself in the foot.

President Bush explains why law prevents him from lifting sanctions, some of which he believes are counter-productive. This is portrayed as a slap in the face for you.

But Today says US backs Maggie over sanctions.

Commission indicates preference for retaining EC sanctions for time being, heralding a possible row between Britain and her EC partners next week (Independent).

William Waldegrave, in Commons, urges need to support de Klerk lest he be swept away by a white backlash.

Moscow hails Mandela release saying it is a step that should have been taken long ago (Independent).

Mandela confident South African govt and ANC will soon meet (Independent).

Foreign investors begin selling on Johannesburg Stock Exchange following Mandela's call for intensified international economic pressure and his commitment to nationalise key sectors such as mines and banks under a black-dominated Govt (Times).

Mail leads with your attempt to solve Germany's problem by proposing a Big Four conference with two Germanys.

West Germany accuses you of small mindedness over unification (Star).

Newspaper, Bild, says it expects solidarity and strict loyalty not small minded bickering from English friends.



PRESS DIGEST

Foreign Ministers at East-West Conference in Ottawa say agreement is close on a framework for resolving the vexed question of German unification (Times).

Thirteen groups represented at East Germany round-table talks urge Modrow not to accept currency union proposals put by West Germany when he meets Kohl today (Times).

Nazi skinheads terrorise parts of Leipzig and attack foreigners.

Mail leader says German unification is going to be a rush job. Praise be, the Thatcher Govt is now urging a bold initiative by the four powers to mount the bolting horse of German unification.

Bush rejects Soviet proposal that USA should include 30,000 troops in Britain, Italy, Turkey and Greece in 195,000 ceiling.

Keith Hampson writing in the Times urges a cut in arms to match the diminished threat.

Politburo member has said Soviet troops will not leave a united Germany unless NATO troops withdraw (FT).

Calls for a new style executive Soviet president with powers to tackle problems.

Times leader says the Soviet attitude to the accelerating reunification of Germany swims into focus one day and out again the next. This uncertainty is not reassuring but it ought to prompt NATO countries to pull together their own consensus on an issue which has provoked so much division in history.

New unrest in Soviet Union - this time in Tadzikstan over rumour of plans to resettle Armenian refugees there.

Britain is pressing, as part of an agreement on German unification between the Four Powers and the two Germanies, for a guarantee that Poland's borders will not be changed (Times).

Picture in Times of your greeting Poland's Prime Minister on doorstep to No 10.

Real incomes fell by 36% in Poland in January as IMF austerity programme began to take a grip (FT).

Mixed reporting of retail economic indicators, with doubts whether spending is under control while others suggest yesterday's figures eased fears of higher interest rates.



PRESS DIGEST

Bryan Gould in the Labour dog house for bungling presentation of Party's alternative to community charge.

Independent editorial says it is not easy to envisage a tax which would be more unpopular than the Govt's Community Charge, but Labour is well on the way towards creating such a bogey. Their proposals give the message to the 60% of voters who own homes that Labour would not only increase income tax, but impose what amounts to an income and property related tax as well.

Peter Jenkins, writing in Independent, criticises the Govt's proposals for community charge, using this as an example of the public's dissatisfaction with public services. He concludes that even if the economy can be patched up in time, unhappiness over community charge, electricity and water privatisation and NHS reform will not be much of a record to run on for re-election.

Mail says a community charge backlash is threatening the Tory heartland of Windsor and Maidenhead.

Express says Labour's willingness to back 16 as homosexual age of consent shows that the party under Kinnock has lost little of its irresponsibility and found little sense of reality.

Times leader says the Church of England and the Labour Party are currently both suffering from sexual embarrassment. Both of them have a constituency which actively lobbies for homosexual equality, causing discomfort to their leaders who know the issue is a pew-emptier or a vote-loser, as well as an awkward question on its own merits.

Ex-Chancellor Lawson accuses critics of his taking two highly paid part-time jobs as "humbug" and the "politics of envy". Interview with Times.

In the interview Lawson refuses to discuss his relationship with you but adds "although we are different in many ways, in fact our political thinking is much more alike than her political thinking is to many of my colleagues, if not in fact most of my colleagues".

Criticism over higher than inflation increases in electricity prices in advance of privatisation.



PRESS DIGEST

FT leader on electricity privatisation says Govt has astutely combined an assurance that domestic electricity prices will not rise by much more than inflation for next few years and that the special levy to finance nuclear energy will be gradually reduced from the initial 10.6%; with an assurance that the special cross subsidies to heavy industry will be continued after privatisation. In the longer term however society may pay a much higher cost resulting from the far from ideal structure imposed on the industry. It is being sold with too many monopoly distributors. The regulator will need great cunning and persistence to overcome the forces of collusion.

Post Office reports a huge success for its plan to recruit people from unemployment blackspots in North for jobs in South (Telegraph).

Guardian says Govt is looking at plans to break up Post Office monopoly; talks being held with TNT for rival delivery service.

Shortage of CAA examiners is preventing more than 200 new pilots from taking examinations to become commercial airline pilots (Times).

Alan Healey, Whitehall's principal information technology expert, is resigning after a year because of dispute with Peter Middleton says Times.

Godfrey Davis car firm in £133million bid for Sketchley cleaners (FT).

Govt defeated in the Lords as peers vote to compensate farmers for wrong imposition of emergency control orders on food (Independent).

UK to back international pact for total ban on PCBs (Times).

Survey suggests 70% of holidaymakers will go by sea rather than Chunnel.

More than 1,000 teachers have applied for 12 vacancies at Bradford City Technology College.

Up to 3000 children under 5 in Bradford could be denied school places because of deterioration of school buildings, local Labour Party say (Independent).



PRESS DIGEST

Mirror continues its campaign against the dumping of patients by doctors who say that under new GP contracts they can't afford to treat them.

Maternity unit at Queen Charlotte's hospital, Hammersmith, may have to close some of its service and merge them with a neighbouring hospital because of cash problems (Times).

Case of woman who died after taking a mixture of common cold remedies which poisoned her.

Case of Birmingham millionaire occupying £25 a week council flat; local authority say they cannot do anything about it because he is a secure tenant.

Labour Councils blocking 22,000 London families from buying their council house homes.

BBC seeking Govt funds to launch a world TV channel - wants £3.4million.

Express in remarkable tribute to Sky TV - its coverage of Mandela's release was by far the best on offer.

Channel 5 launch may be delayed after Ministers decide not to fund its transmitter network (Times).

Fire wrecks Savoy Theatre; will take a year to rebuild.

Attorney-General warns Muslims who threaten Rushdie with death will be prosecuted. Express calls on Rushdie to contribute to the cost of his protection.

Middlesex Poly says fear of crime is rising in London.

London's survey of policing presents a positive picture, but discloses criticisms ranging from a sense of intimidation at visiting stations to a lack of follow-up on cases (Times).

Second Islington crime survey concludes £7billion spent on controlling crime largely futile, and police need to concentrate on tackling the offences the public take most seriously (Independent).

Attorney General says CPS crisis claims "sensationalist and alarmist nonsense" (Independent).



PRESS DIGEST

West Ham soccer manager fined £1,000 and censured for betting his former team would lose. Chairman of former Club, Swindon, banned for game for 6 months. Mirror wants to know where's the justice in this leniency.

Drafting Cttee on Hong Kong's basic law meets today. Soundings in Whitehall suggest Mr Hurd will decide only on number of seats to be elected in 1991 only, with increasing signs Hong Kong will accept compromise (Independent).

MANDELA

Star features say we are surrounded by hypocrisy and humbug over the release of Mandela. But will he be the black leader when it all dies away? Buthelezi, it is suggested, might be preferred.

Mail says you seem to be prepared to take on rest of the world over sanctions to ease de Klerk's task in selling the end of white power to his countrymen. Leader says when Mandela made his first hardline remarks you cancelled a press conference and kept your cool. By contrast Kinnock invited the cameras to depict him as moist eyed with emotion. So who would you rather have in charge of the show here? The Steel Magnolia or the Welsh Leek.

Independent editorial says you appear to have shot yourself in the foot with your moves to ease sanctions against South Africa. As so often, it is not the nature of your convictions which is objectionable, but the way you express them. Adding that it is extraordinary you have acted unilaterally on sanctions, it concludes you have again failed to read the signs of the times and to think through the consequences of your actions.

Times - You are willing to act unilaterally in removing a number of voluntary sanctions to demonstrate the West's support for de Klerk's initiative.

Times says Major-General Bantu Holomisa, the military ruler of Transkei since a coup in 1987, has emerged as one of the most intriguing new actors on the South African political scene. He sees himself playing a significant part in negotiations on the country's future and is described as a wild card of some importance.

Telegraph leader says your performance on South Africa over the years has been impressive. But henceforward it is important that we should as far as possible keep in step with our European partners. It would be rash of Britain to take an over-assertive line when our power to influence unfolding events is very limited.



PRESS DIGEST

FT - Britain isolated over stance on South Africa. You anger EC over decision to ease sanctions and give encouragement to Pretoria. But you are unrepentant.

Guardian says you lack any natural sympathy with Mandela's cause.



MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Howard addresses the Industrial Society, London
- DH: Mr Clarke attends an informal dinner with District Health Authority Chairmen and General Managers
- DOE: Mr Patten receives courtesy call from Dutch Minister of Transport and Public Works
- LPC: Sir Geoffrey Howe addresses Industry and Parliament Trust's Parliamentary Study Programme for Industrialists, London
- DEM: Mr Eggar attends National Council Industrial Training Association conference, London
- DEM: Lord Strathclyde addresses Federation of Chinese Associations' annual dinner
- DES: Mrs Rumbold visits Islington Local Education Authority
- DH: Mrs Bottomley meets the Consumers Association re the NHS Bill, London
- DOE: Mr Hunt addresses "Countdown through the Nineties" conference, London; later addresses GLA Women's Committee AGM on the Community Charge and attends Electrical Contractors' Association dinner
- DOE: Mr Chope attends RICS lunch, London
- DOE: Mr Spicer launches West Kent Housing Association transfer ceremony; later opens Darthomes Advice Centre
- DSS: Lord Henley visits Southampton Resettlement Unit
- DTp: Mr Atkins attends South West Regional Annual Consultative Committee, Avon; later visits Muirhead Quarry
- FCO: Mr Maude attends lunch given by the Irish Ambassador, Mr Andrew O'Rourke, London; later meets Mr Yennimates, Greek Foreign Minister
- HO: Mr Patten attends a Muslim meeting "On Being British", Brent Town Hall
- SO: Lord Sanderson addresses Fish Farming conference, Ingleston, Edinburgh
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- FCO: Mr Sainsbury attends Commission on Human Rights, Geneva
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DES: Mr MacGregor interviewed by Michael Prowse, Financial Times
- DEM: Mr Eggar interviewed by Capital Account Magazine
- DOE: Mr Moynihan interviewed by Susan Young, Daily Express
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