

February 20, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

EPC Ministerial Meeting, Dublin

House of Commons Select Committee on Trade and Industry visit Brussels (to 21 February)

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STATISTICS

BOE: Provisional estimates of monetary aggregates (Jan)

CLSB: London and Scottish banks monthly statement (Jan)

CSO: Finished steel consumption and stock changes (4th qtr-prov)

CSO: Manufacturers' and distributors' stocks (4th qtr-prov)

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PUBLICATIONS

DTp: Detailed roads programme (prov)

NAO: Gibraltar pensions

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Health; Prime Minister

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Unadopted Roads (Mr Barry Field)

Opposition Day (9th Allotted Day) until about 7.00 pm  
Debate on Electricity Prices and their effect on the Environment on an Opposition Motion  
Debate on the Royal Shakespeare Company on an Opposition Motion  
Motion on the Clergy (Ordination Measure)

Adjournment Debates: The case of Mrs Batool Bibi Shah (Mr K Eastham)

Select Committees: COMMITTEES ON PRIVATE BILLS  
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill [Lords]  
King's Cross Railways Bill

Lords: Starred Questions

Courts and Legal Services Bill (HL): Report (1st Day)  
Licensing (Northern Ireland) Order 1990: Motion for Approval  
Horticultural Development Council (Amendment) Order 1990: Motion for Approval  
Data Protection (Regulation of Financial Services etc.) (Subject Access Exemption) (Amendment) Order 1990: Motion for Approval

PRESS DIGESTMain News

A mixture of stories today with the pops and others going for John Browne MP for failing to declare all his business interests; ACAS talks in the ambulance dispute; and the prospects for today's EC Foreign Affairs meeting where we are widely portrayed as being far apart - and in some becoming more distant - from our partners.

IRA offer talks with UK Govt without pre-conditions but will not call ceasefire first (Mirror).

Express says NIO ruled out talks until IRA renounce violence.

MOD deny Commons claims that Northern Ireland generals knew of dirty tricks campaign against MPs (Independent).

Efforts to save EuroTunnel continue.

Telegraph leader says the best news about the Chunnel project is that the British taxpayer has not become encumbered with its ever rising costs.

EuroTunnel shares jump 20p on expectation of a deal (FT).

Guardian leader says it is important for the self confidence of the private sector that the project succeeds. If it proves too much for short term profit horizons, someone will have to seek public finance.

John Browne says he will not quit as MP. Jenny Bland, of Winchester Conservative Assn, explains in Today why they must sack him and says a resolution of no confidence in the MP was delivered yesterday.

UK faces isolation in EC on South Africa at Dublin as Charles Haughey states the great weight of opinion in the Community is for a continuation of sanctions (FT).

Guardian leads with EC split between ourselves and our partners being set to widen in Dublin today.

de Klerk to attend summit in Zaire at weekend with black African leaders.

Mandela expected to telephone you. He will urge you not to lift sanctions (Express).

PRESS DIGEST

Mandela and Buthelezi agree to meet soon in an attempt to halt a savage conflict between their respective organisations which has claimed an estimated 3,000 lives in past three years (Times).

ANC township youths sing Comrade de Klerk's praise, says the Times.

Kaunda has called on ANC to suspend armed struggle but has ruled out an early easing of sanctions against South Africa (FT).

Mail discovers "an extraordinary change of tone" over German unification with Foreign Secy giving it full blessing only 24 hours after you warned of the perils of rushing into it.

Times says that an interview in Die Welt with Mr Hurd has not dispelled the idea of a division between the FCO and Downing Street over German unification.

West German opinion poll follows your lead and demonstrates caution over the pace of unification. Feature inside on attitude of young Germans under heading "Slow down this march to unity".

East Germany's Modrow signals to Kohl that he will not be bullied into merger at any price. He attacks "irresponsibility" of Bonn rumours that East Germany is on the brink of bankruptcy. "Nothing should be allowed to happen too hastily and nothing should arouse feelings of discomfort and mistrust towards Germans" he says (Independent).

Meanwhile West Germany Defence Ministry reluctantly agrees that no German troops will be stationed in the present territory of East Germany after reunification. West Germany also hoping to persuade NATO to allow the Bundeswehr alone to man the defences along the present demarcation line between NATO and Warsaw Pact (Times).

Danish Foreign Minister attacks Britain for antagonising Germans over unity and unwillingness to back EC integration. Risk that we could be sidelined in Europe, he tells journalists (Independent).

Star feature on "March of Fourth Reich" - Europe quakes over rise of a new powerful Germany. Leader says that before we rush to pull out the Rhine Army and go overboard to welcome the new (German) enlightenment, let us take a long look at the risks and put the brakes on.

Sun cartoon on the "Oh What a Lovely War" theme has you looking at hills clustered with crosses above a caption "Hands up those in favour of a united Germany".

PRESS DIGEST

An Independent article says many Tories fear you are out of touch on foreign affairs. An FCO source says Charles Powell is pivotal in the development of foreign policy. You are "in the driving seat" according to one minister. But no-one seems clear about the direction in which you are heading. John Biffen says "There is almost paranoiac isolation in the conduct of policy. But what is the policy? If there is a grand design I would like to know what it is".

Miners travel to Bucharest to demonstrate their support for Govt. President warns Romania could become another Lebanon.

In Romania govt have abandoned soft line on dissent and President has pledged to crack down on demonstrators who stormed govt building on Saturday (FT).

Times leader says that the Romanian Govt's next move must be to abandon its ill-disguised ambitions to be both player and referee, political party and interim govt.

An Independent feature looks at how Jews are getting the blame for the economic ills of the Soviet Union. Anti-Semitic party, Pamyat, continues to gain ground.

Citizens of each of the 15 Soviet republics will be able to vote in a referendum on whether they wish to remain in USSR, according to a law to be presented to the Supreme Soviet (FT).

Times says Mid-Staffs by-election will be on March 22.

The Times lists the 35 MPs who have announced their intention to retire at the end of this Parliament.

Robin Oakley, in the Times, under the heading "Isolation in the party too", records the growing Tory unease over your leadership.

Seven Militant Tendency members face expulsion from Merseyside Labour Party.

Chris Patten accuses local authorities of using community charge to inflate their budgets and blame Govt.

Mail leader on community charge asks what the Govt is going to do to help people hit by both the charge and interest rates. There is a powerful case for taking education out of local authority hands, though it admits you are unlikely to do that.

PRESS DIGEST

Newham Council - dubbed "crackpot" by the Sun - threatens to withdraw £25,000 grant from church if it does not allow hall to be used by homosexuals.

Ford electricians breaking ranks and going back to work.

210 Drexel Burnham Lambert jobs go in City.

Mail says B/Rail is heading back into the red because of last year's strikes and economic turn down. Others say this puts privatisation in jeopardy.

Guardian says cost of improving rail safety may top £1billion.

Cecil Parkinson has indicated that the £13billion road buiding programme proposed for the 1990s would be scaled down (FT).

Mail reports Govt has turned down an offer to be special guest country at Harrow Trade Fair in 1992 - the place was immediately snapped up by French. Nicholas Ridley said we decided benefits did not justify costs.

MAFF say bulls with BSE have sired 1,000 calves, but it's unliekly that disease has been passed on (Independent).

An Independent editorial attacks the Cabinet wrangling over the environment White Paper. The Govt needs to demonstrate that its commitment to the environment is genuine. Only if you impose your personal authority on bickering Ministers can such a result be achieved. It is time you banged some departmental heads together.

John MacGregor suggests student loans scheme might be changed after university management say they will not co-operate in its operation.

Paul Johnson, in Mail, comes out against quickie divorces.

EC proposed a legally binding code of ethics on medical research (Times).

Alastair Burnet resigns from ITN Board to demonstrate his support for Broadcasting Bill and its requirement that ITN should have majority outside ownership.

PRESS DIGEST

Express leader on John Birt's response to its investigation into "Today" programme bias says that whatever qualities Birt may lack one is not cheek in drawing a distinction between impartiality and balance. He seems ignorant of what is happening in the bowels of the organisation.

Centre for Policy Studies to examine future role of BBC and the effect of its values in British broadcasting.

Times leader on problems facing the Crown Prosecution Service says that when its high hopes were not immediately fulfilled after its launch in 1986 the official explanation was "teething troubles". That excuse for what continues to be a pretty miserable performance has by now expired. There can be little expectation of great improvement without a vigorous shake-up.

Norman Tebbit, in the Times, calls for a British lead in fighting drugs and terrorism.

Press say a burglar at Dulwich sparked a security alert on your estate there. Portrayed as a police blunder.

Mail picture of you with cubs from Harrogate who were invited into No 10 for a look round and biscuits.

68 murders in Rio de Janeiro over the weekend.

Times says that two Soviet cosmonauts landed yesterday in a world utterly changed from that which they left on September 6.

Kaifu determined to stay on as Japan's PM (Times).

JOHN BROWNE - HEADLINES AND COMMENT

Star - Guilty. Tory MP failed to tell Commons about pay out. And he was "bought" by Arab bosses.

Sun p1 lead - A right B'Stard. Cover up Tory faces sack over Arab cash. Leader says Commons report comes close to calling Browne a liar and says Commons should expel him if he does not resign.

Mirror p2 - Ex-wife gloats over Tory MP's downfall. Tory grass roots angry. Leader says if there is any decency in Browne he will resign today. Many MPs make money acting for others, but not in secret. If he won't resign he must be expelled.

PRESS DIGEST

Today p1 lead - "Harlot of the House", MP represents you, but takes secret backhanders from Arabs. Inside - "Downfall of the Brylcreem Cad". Leader headed "This guilty man must go" says if he refuses to go the Commons must kick him out. It also believes MPs should pay themselves a big enough salary to keep them from the temptation of seeking outside jobs.

Express p1 lead - Guilty MP faces axe. Leader contrasts his performance with his advocacy of a Privacy Bill. It says he seems to have confused the public's interest with his own.

Mail p1 lead - Disgraced MP: I won't resign. But Labour and Tory MPs want him suspended, expelled or forced to leave. Leader says Mother of Parliaments is cheapened by worrying number of MPs willing to become the paid promoters of prowling entrepreneurs. Browne should resign before his constituency kicks him out.

Times p1 - "Tory MP comes under pressure to step down". Tory Whips hope he will voluntarily stand down before the next General Election.

Telegraph p1 lead - I will not resign, says Tory MP in disclosure row. John Browne to face house over business interests rule. Leader, trying to get some perspective into the matter, says it is a mistake to conclude from Browne's fall from grace that this is a singularly corrupt Commons. The right lesson is that secrecy in these matters is always objectionable.

Guardian p1 - MP will not quit over interests. Leader says suspension should be the minimum penalty. It would be better still if Browne recognised importance of this matter for Parliament's reputation and went of his own accord.

FT - John Browne declines to resign.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEN: Mr Wakeham attends opening of the continuous catalytic reformer for Mobil, Corston Refinery, followed by lunch; later attends the New Zealand High Commissioner's reception
- DOE: Mr Patten addresses Chartered Institute of Building annual dinner
- DSS: Mr Newton and Lord Henley meet Lord Stallard and group on ageing
- DTp: Mr Parkinson tours Manchester Airport
- HO: Mr Waddington addresses the London Europe Society
- LPC: Sir Geoffrey Howe addresses Engineering Employers' Federation biennial dinner, London
- MAFF: Mr Gummer opens and addresses Agra-Europe outlook conference, London
- MOD: Mr King hosts Independent European Programme meeting, Gleneagles (to 21 February)
- DEM: Lord Strathclyde visits Stratford-on-Avon
- DEM: Mr Nicholls launches regional training centre, Docklands
- DES: Mrs Rumbold attends 1990 Sir Peter Parker Awards for Spoken Business Japanese, School of Oriental and African Studies
- DES: Mr Jackson visits City University Business School
- DH: Mr Freeman gives opening address at Food Poisoning conference, New Connaught Rooms, London
- DOE: Lord Hesketh visits the Banqueting House, London
- DOE: Mr Spicer lays foundation stone, Stroud and Swindon Building Society, Stroud
- DOE: Mr Heathcote-Amory addresses SAGA seminar on Waste Disposal, RICS, London
- DTI: Mr Hogg addresses joint press conference to announce Koyo Seiko inward investment project
- FCO/  
ODA: Mrs Chalker meets the Ecuadorean Foreign Minister, Mr Diego Cordovez-Zegers, London; later launches Action Aid Ship for Mozambique, St Katherine's Dock, London
- HO: Mr Patten chairs Ministerial Group on Women's Issues
- HO: Lord Ferrers visits Gwent Police, Cwmbran
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ANNEX

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- FCO: Mr Hurd visits Dublin to attend meeting of EC Ministers; later visits New York to attend the UN Special Session on Drugs (to 22 February)
- WO: Mr Walker visits West Germany on a Trade Mission (to 21 February)
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DES: Mrs Rumbold attends recording of "Kilroy" for BBC
- FCO: Mrs Chalker gives an interview to Rosemary Brown of Save the Children Fund
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