

February 23, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Anglo-Italian Summit, London

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visit Leeds

TUC Youth Conference, National Education Centre (to 25 February)

STATISTICS

BSA: Building Societies monthly figures (Jan)

CSO: Engineering sales and orders at current and constant prices (Dec)

Law Commission: 24th Annual Report

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Business: Private Members' Bills

Rights of Way (Agricultural Land) Bill: 2nd Reading:

Mr Edward Leigh

Access to Health Records Bill: 2nd Reading:

Mr D Henderson

Elimination of Poverty in Retirement Bill: 2nd Reading:

Mr J Corbyn

Adjournment Debates: Relations between the UK and Romania
(Mr N Thorne)

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Ambulance negotiations end this morning; proposed settlement to be put out to ballot. Merseyside ambulance crews vote for all out strike from Monday if a pay formula is not conceded. Times p1 lead reports Militants saying anything that did not include a pay formula for the future would be a sell-out.

Mirror hails "victory" for ambulancemen at 16.9% over 2 years.

Express foreshadows up to 21% for paramedics.

Modrow stuns comrades by saying he will not stand in the elections.

East German Defence Minister calls for creation of a combined army for a united Germany with strictly limited fire power (FT).

Express leader on Germany says Kohl should have no illusions - you are voicing widely held misgivings about the unification of Germany and he should end the propaganda campaign being run from his London Embassy against you.

Hundreds of thousands of Muscovites expected to demonstrate this weekend for faster reforms.

Soviet Communists urge people to defend perestroika against civil conflict caused by "demagogues and militants".

Soviets suggest cutting Europe troop levels below 195,000 as Democrats attack Bush for haste in trying to reach CFE agreement (Independent).

World Bank will lend \$5billion to East Europe over next 3 years (FT).

Canada joins Hungarian telecom venture; Swedes creating £25million property company to acquire and build commercial and properties in East Europe; Aer Lingus about to agree joint venture with Aeroflot (FT).

Soviet authorities act to stamp out anti-Semitism by charging Pamyat group with "race hatred" (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Robert Kilroy Silk argues in the Times that strong defence was never more important. You are right - this is not the time for NATO to be reducing its armed forces in Europe. It is naive and irresponsible to call for cuts in military expenditure and to suggest that the saving be squandered on a domestic spending spree.

FT leader on the competition for arms contracts at a time of a perceived diminishing threat of large-scale conflict, says European defence ministers want better value which only freer international competition can provide - yet as industrial sponsors and custodians of national security they wish to protect national champion supplier industries. Yet the 2 objectives are irreconcilable. Exempting defence manufacturers from the sanctions of the EC's single market appears anomalous and likely to provoke economic distortion. By 1993 budgetary pressures may have made that obvious.

Heseltine calls for closer ties with Europe - seen as throwing down gauntlet to you. And Heath renews his attack on your foreign policy in Commons. Mail: Gang of Two attack.

Sun leader on "Grouser Heath" says that before the port glasses were cleared away for his celebratory lunch he was savaging the Govt. In the charm stakes the old grouser is running a close second to an ill-tempered spider.

Series of pictures of Alan Walters in Times Business Section chairing a London conference where he repeated his criticisms of EMS saying "I suppose it's possible to think up ~~more~~ systems, but it would take some time". ^{worse}

Joe Haines, in Mirror, unsurprisingly says Tory Party's best hope now is to get rid of you.

Charles Moore, in Express, complains Conservative politicians are not justifying their policies. Your battling style can be very successful but only if people know what they are battling for.

Gloom is the order of pre-Budget Cabinet reporting - prudence and caution the watchwords.

Halifax and Woolwich raise mortgage rates by 1%.

Gas prices to rise 7.5%.