

March 8, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister visits Scotland - to March 10

Prime Minister's interview appears in Paris Match

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visit the Royal Overseas League to mark its 80th anniversary

The Princess of Wales visits the West Midlands

TUC: Women's Action Day

Announcement on War Crimes Legislation

STATISTICS

CBI: CBI/FT Survey of distributive trades (Feb)

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Prime Minister

Business: Food Safety Bill (Lords): 2nd Reading, Money and Ways and Means Resolutions

Adjournment Debates: Open space in Liverpool (Mr D Alton)

Select Committees: COURT OF REFEREES

COMMITTEES ON PRIVATE BILLS

Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill [Lords]

King's Cross Railways Bill

Lords:

Starred Questions

Pensions (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill: Committee

Civil Aviation Authority (Borrowing Powers) Bill: Committee

Government Trading Bill: Second Reading

UQ to ask HMG why the proposed Westminster and Chelsea Hospital, costed by the Secretary of State at £135m in December 1988, is now estimated to cost £226m and what effects this will have on capital expenditure for the rest of the North-West Thames Health Region

PRESS DIGESTMain News

More community charge demos in Newbury - where 9 women strip off - Walton on Thames, Bexley, Southampton, Leeds, Wolverhampton, Plymouth, Lewesham, Liverpool, Leicester and Kensington. Militant leader says they will be with you every step of the way in Scotland.

About 40% of Glaswegians have not paid community charge or are in serious arrears, says document leaked to "Anti Poll-Tax Federation" (Independent).

Labour Party embarrassed by association with Militant.

Paul Johnson, in Mail, on Militant returns to haunt Kinnock. Mail says refusal of some Labour MPs to pay charge is stoking up protests.

Sun headline: The naked and the Red. Almost all leaders of demos are members of Militant Tendency. They admit their main aim is to organise mass civil disobedience.

Pat Taaffe, Militant figurehead expelled by Labour Party five years ago, admits organising the protests.

Star says Steve Nally, secy of All Britain Anti Poll Tax Federation and a Militant, has been seen at five demos in Southwark, Newham, Bristol, Gillingham and Haringey.

Southampton Labour councillor resigns over "brutal" police treatment of community charge protestors in worst violence so far (Independent).

Extra relief of £50million to ease introduction of charge this year.

Express gossip column lists upper crust's and others' savings on community charge - Kerry Packer will benefit to tune of £15,000.

Heseltine says he has no intention of challenging you for leadership.

Much controversy over Govt's failure to act on DTI report which calls Al Fayeds liars.

Al Fayeds deny that they lied at all. DTI inspectors prejudiced.

Tiny Rowland wants Queen to remove Royal Warrant from Harrods.

PRESS DIGEST

Edward du Cann wants Queen to boycott store.

Today says Lonrho is to sue Norman Tebbit over his role in the takeover.

Qualities see much damage to City and Establishment over the affair.

John Browne MP suspended for a month after he says he was wrong and is sorry.

His constituency acts in effort to deselect him though he can, if he wishes, seek reselection.

Today wonders if it is MPs' guilty consciences that allowed them to let Browne off with a mild suspension.

You publicly disown him and back his suspension (Express).

John Smith says Labour will make no more pledges on public spending because, as Mirror puts it, of "Britain's worsening economic crisis".

Kinnock flying to Stockholm next week to see Mandela.

14 shot dead in homeland riots in South Africa.

Times reporter in Pretoria says that as the foundations of apartheid crumble, violent unrest is sweeping South Africa's nominally independent tribal homelands and threatening the imminent collapse of the unpopular bantustan system.

NUM split over whether NUM should back a libel action by Scargill against press.

Express says millions of pounds in donations are unaccounted for.

UDM expecting a rush of applications for membership from NUM.

Sun says Peter Heathfield, gen secy of NUM, has ditched his wife and set up with another woman in a £107,000 house, bought from boss of steel firm.

Mirror claims Fire Brigades' union gave Scargill £200,000 from a cardboard box and did not ask for receipt. But NUM's accountant says it never came anywhere near him.

PRESS DIGEST

Ford returns to normal working; craftsmen at Halewood vote to return.

High tech firm GPT cuts out 700 jobs in Coventry because of shrinking orders.

Motorola to build £100million factory to make mobile phones at Easter Inch, West Lothian. Will eventually employ 2,000 people (FT).

British Gas in £565million offer for the Consumers Gas Company of Canada (times).

Up to 14million working days are lost each year because of excessive drinking at a cost to industry of up to £800million (Times).

A boom in inherited wealth from houses is widening the North-South divide, academics say (Independent).

Irish, at North Sea conference, call for closure of Sellafield. Three Scandinavian Ministers call for plans for new reactor at Dounreay to be abandoned.

Scandinavian environment ministers have protested at Britain's announcement that we will cease dumping in the North Sea after 1998 - they want us to do something immediately (FT).

Compromise likely in row between Chris Patten and the Germans over phase out of PCB (Independent).

Many British firms are ignorant about the need to cut use of CFCs. "They are sloshing it around without a care in the world" says DTI-commissioned report (Independent).

Elitist image of private schools is being broken by new breed of manual worker parents sending their children to them (Express).

One million waiting to go into hospital - and nearly half of them for more than a year, according to College of Health.

Times - Social Services Correspondent says the rise in waiting lists is because cuts in NHS have led to falling bed numbers and shortages of doctors and nurses.

Express says BBC and Govt are locked in another row over terrorists - because of radio and TV interviews with two of Birmingham 6 in prison in which they pleaded their innocence.

PRESS DIGEST

Prominent Sinn Fein member, who had served time for terrorist offences and had been warned of a threat on his life, shot dead in Lurgan.

Crooks buying new cross breeds of killer dogs.

Kohl to spell out today his timetable for German unification (Times).

Czechs admit that "tons of Semtex" were exported despite assurances to Britain that trade had stopped (Independent).

Rapid pace of Eastern Europe economic change forces G7 finance ministers to meet early in April, with German monetary union high on the agenda (Independent).

Poles continue to press for binding treaty to guarantee border with Germany. Kohl's changes of position have heightened Poles' mistrust (Independent).

Modrow attacks Bonn's ambiguity over Polish border and says he would be prepared to guarantee Oder-Neisse Line (Independent).

Poles to encourage Soviet Army to stay in country; they feel safer that way against threat of German claims for territory.

Moscow News claims Cuba is an impoverished police state full of hidden discontent.

Reports that Russia has put a price of £21 billion on Lithuania's independence - compensation for Soviet investment in the republic.

Govt to announce today that legislation is to be pushed through to bring Nazis to trial (Times).

White House appeals to nations to stop supplying Libya with chemicals to make lethal weapons at its Rabta plant.

Some reports suggest USA is ready to attack and destroy the plant.

Prince Charles criticised for not going on holiday with wife and family to Caribbean and instead going fishing in Scotland.

Lord Kennet leaves SDP to rejoin Labour Party.

Govt establishes overall control in Kabul, but street fighting continues and rebel planes bomb city (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Appointment of "free market" finance minister in Brazil completes South America's conversion to liberal economics (Independent).

AL FAYED

Star - Al Fayed fury at biased report. We misled no-one.

Sun - Kick 'em out. MPs' fury as Harrods bosses are branded as liars, cheats, crooks and conmen.

Mirror - House of Lies. Al Fayed's "cheated" in £615million Harrods takeover. Leader says if the brothers are dishonest, liars and deceivers the place for them to be arraigned is in the High Court not in DTI findings. There is no natural justice in these inquiries as Maxwell says, among others, he has deserved. The Al Fayed's stand condemned without trial.

Today Harrods. Pyramid of lies by Egypt store chiefs. Leader says it is one of the most damning tales of business intrigue and deception ever told. Yet Nicholas Ridley has decided to do damn all about it. He could take new measures to prosecute company directors who deceive shareholders. Justice has not been done.

Express - Lies, Lies, Lies. MPs' outrage after report brands Fayed's as cheats. Leader headed "Shame of Harrods' deceit" says most people will not greatly worry about who owns Harrods but they will certainly care that a Govt Dept has had the wool so comprehensively pulled over its eyes. Harrods was gained by false pretence and it is all the more distressing that the Govt appears to have connived at this shabby deceit.

Mail - The Cheats of Harrods. Outrage as lying brothers keep control of store. Leader headed "Taken for a ride down the Nile" says the Al Fayed's pretensions were fake but their cash was good. They get away with it and Tiny Rowland has vindication without victory. At the end of the day the greatest scandal is that so many of Britain's establishment were so easily taken in.

Telegraph - Commons uproar as Ridley refuses to bar the Fayed's. Two pages devoted to report. Lader says none of the principals gains any cause for self congratulation from report.

PRESS DIGEST

Independent editorial attacks everyone involved in the House of Fraser affair. The Fayeds' reputation is in tatters, Tiny Rowland looks like a bully with an irrational streak, and the City's image as a centre of casino capitalism has been reinforced. DTI and the City's regulators must tighten the rules to make it less easy for liars to become winners.

Times - "Lying Fayeds" keep Harrods. Report dismisses \$1billion wealth claim and anger as Nicholas Ridley says disqualification is not in public interest.

Headline in Times Business Section says "Advisers put under scrutiny" as DTI inspectors criticise Kleinwort's role in Fraser takeover.

Times leader under heading "Economies with the truth" says the report exposes an astonishing web of lies and deception. That they could have taken in a great City merchant bank, a senior law firm, and two most commercially experienced arms of Govt (OFT and DTI) goes almost beyond belief. If only half of what the inspectors claim is true there would be grounds enough to declare that the Fayeds were not fit to be directors of a public limited liability company, concluding that it is indeed curious that no further action is to be taken by Nicholas Ridley.

Guardian - Fayeds lied over Harrods. Inspectors' report condemns Egyptian brothers. Two pages on report. Leader headed "How lies bring their own reward" says the Govt is fighting defensively on enough fronts not to want another one opened. But that is what is going to happen if justice is not seen to be done quickly.

COMMUNITY CHARGE

Sun says it takes a special kind of moron to believe that kicking a policeman unconscious will stop the introduction of the community charge. We've seen the tactics before.

Mirror says the just campaign against the charge is being hijacked by Militan and other extremist things. It is a lie for Kenneth Baker to try to pin the blame on Labour. It is as true as saying the National Front is an area of the Conservative Party.

Today exposes "ringleaders of poll tax rent a mob". Steve Nally, Sheridan, thrown out of Labour Party for trying to deselect his local MP, Richard Venton, friend of Derek Hatton, and Cheryl Varley, NU Students. Leader says the rentamob gypsies are doing worst violence and their own cause. No matter how good the cause violence cannot be allowed to win arguments.

PRESS DIGEST

Express also reveals "Militants who travel all over the country to raise their red battle flag of revolution against poll tax they hate". Leader says no-one will be fooled by the demos. They are merely a sudden and cynical revival of rentamob. Opposition leaders are not blameless - Kinnock would help prove his fitness to govern if he responded to Kenneth Baker's invitation and denounced all poll tax law breaking.

Independent editorial calls the community charge protests the only good news for the Govt in a bad month. Labour is in danger from guilt by association, and Neil Kinnock should condemn the violence firmly and without equivocation. Gould's weasel words on the subject yesterday do the party no good at all.

Meanwhile Independent says senior Conservatives are increasingly concerned that community charge is prompting an exodus of party members. Leaked letter shows Devon Tory MPs pleading with their County Council to set a low charge.

Times looks at the Militant connection and says that according to Militant insiders, Militant supporters have been ordered to concentrate on organising marches against labour councils rather than Conservative ones and to use the agitation to recruit new members into the Trotskyite organisation.

Times leader says the sight of mobs besieging town halls is a sharp reminder that the Militant Tendency was never killed off by Kinnock. It merely went to ground, awaiting its opportunity to emerge again as soon as it identified a cause for discontent which seemed to promise an opportunity for manipulating public disorder for long-term political ends. It looks at the 28 Labour MPs who are refusing to pay saying that Kinnock should censure them and that he would be wise to accept the Tory challenge formally to do so.

Ronald Butt in the Times discusses the community charge warnings that went unheeded under the heading "Tories' rough-shod error".

Paul Johnson in Mail says the spectacle of Militant demos provides an opportunity for all sensible people in Britain to think long and hard before they decide to go Kinnock's way.

Telegraph which also draws attention to Militant involvement, says there is not much comfort for Kinnock and his freshly modelled Labour Party in this violence. There are other members of the Labour Party who, if the occasion arose, would not oppose direct action.

PRESS DIGEST

Guardian - Baker condemns protests as Militant plot. Inside - Spectre of militant casts ambiguous shadow over protests at town halls. Leader admits that the losers for the violence could well be Labour for the Militants are trying to destabilise Labour's constitutional leadership.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEN: Mr Wakeham addresses the Royal Institute of International Affairs dinner on "Iraq in the 1990s", Hotel Meridien, London
- DH: Mr Clarke addresses Basildon Business Club dinner, House of Commons
- DES: Mr MacGregor addresses All Souls Seminar, Oxford
- FCO: Mr Hurd meets Sir David Wilson, Governor of Hong Kong, London
- HMT: Mr Major presents London Community Cricket Association awards
- LPC: Sir Geoffrey Howe attends National Portrait Gallery Trustees annual dinner, London
- DEM: Lord Strathclyde addresses IS(PE)MA conference, London; later addresses and presents awards at Nestle Food Service Gala luncheon
- DEN: Mr Baldry visits open cast coal mine, North West, Leicestershire
- DES: Mrs Rumbold speaks at the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
- DH: Mrs Bottomley meets Dame Mary Warnock, London
- DH: Mr Freeman meets Hambros re Microbiology Centre; later meets MPs re West Essex Hospital and meets Mr Jerry Wade re the homeless, London
- DTI: Mr Redwood visits London International Futures Exchange
- DH: Lady Hooper visits City Roads Hostel, London
- DTI: Mr Hogg opens Design to Win conference, London
- FCO: Mr Waldegrave and Lord Brabazon attend farewell reception for Spanish Ambassador, Senor Don Jose J Puig de La Bellacasa, London
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington visits National Light Horse Breeding Society annual show, Newmarket
- SO: Lord Sanderson addresses Scottish National Farmers Union dinner and AGM, Oban
- WO: Mr Grist addresses conference on National Use of Energy in Urban Regeneration, Cardiff

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- FCO: Mr Sainsbury visits Brazil (to 18 March)
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

DES: Mr MacGregor interviewed by Tony Austin of the Liverpool Daily Post

DH: Mrs Bottomley interviewed by Jill Sherman of The Times

TV AND RADIO

"Analysis" BBC Radio 4 (8.00pm) Assessment of the implications of the boom in owner occupation

"This Week" ITV (8.30pm)

"Question Time" BBC 1 (10.00pm) with Michael Howard, Joan Ruddock, Jane Grant (Director of the National Alliance of Women's Organisations) and Mary Kenny (writer and journalist)
