

March 13, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

The Queen holds an Investiture

EC: Industry Council, Brussels

Mr Yennimates, Greek Minister of National Economy visits London

Ambulance workers pay ballot result

Second preliminary hearing of the May Inquiry

Ban on Skoal Bandits takes effect

STATISTICS

BoE: International banking statistics (4th qtr)

CSO: UK balance of payments (4th qtr)

OPCS: Adult dental health 1988

PUBLICATIONS

DES: Education Reform Act bulletin number five (prov)

DES: School Management Task Force report

OAL: Response to Wilding Report on Arts Administration

WO: Government response to Welsh Select Committee report on Channel Tunnel effects

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Employment; Prime Minister

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Political Parties (Income and Expenditure) (Mr. David Winnick).
National Health Service and Community Care Bill: Progress on Remaining stages
Motion on the Rate Support Grant (Scotland) Order

Adjournment Debates: Women's Gynaecological Privacy (Miss E Nicholson)

Select Committees: Committees on Private Bills

Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill [Lords]
King's Cross Railways Bill

Lords: Starred Questions
Coal Industry Bill: Third Reading
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill (HL): Report (2nd Day)
River Tees Barrage and Crossing Bill (HL) Third Reading
Chlorofluorocarbons (Control) Bill (HL): Report
UQ to ask HMG whether they propose to implement the proposals in the 1989 White Paper "The Future of Development Plans" in particular those concerning regional guidance and county structure plans

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Conservatives rally as you repeat your determination to carry on as leader.

You go over on to the attack; speculation against you has united Tories behind you (Mail).

Express leads with "Tories target Kinnock" - Spring offensive against Labour leader because his appearances harm Labour. Labour admit at next election they will put emphasis on team not leader.

Hugo Young, in Guardian, continues to believe you will lead the Tories into the next election.

Michael Heseltine, in Express interview, attacks his own supporters for fuelling speculation that he will challenge you. He rules out "once and for all" on the strongest terms he has ever used any possibility he will stand against you. [NB: Heseltine is being invited to Mid-Staffs].

Times says Heseltine's supporters are blamed for speculation about your position.

Tory hierarchy warn any challenge to your leadership would be damaging, unwise and unpopular in the Party (Independent).

Lord Stevens takes two pages of the Express to explain why "We can't let Maggie go" and a feature takes the lid off the Economist/Independent black propaganda game last weekend and the Sunday paper polls.

John Stradling Thomas announces his decision not to stand at next election.

Express leader says the Mid-Staffs by election looks increasingly like a pointer to the General Election campaign Kinnock wants to fight - long on glitz and personality but short on substance. Public meetings are out and the Labour candidate is under instructions to smile and say nothing. This is probably the Opposition's best tactic since there is nothing there. Under Kinnock Labour have perfected the art of policy free Opposition.

Lord Stevens makes the point that the markets are giving an unambiguous message - no Neil Kinnock, please.

Fears that interest rates could rise again after February sales figures.

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Bank of England intervenes to keep sterling stable.

Conservatives resigned to a tough budget.

Andrew Alexander in Mail says calls for a tough Budget are misguided. The Chancellor is already well in surplus.

Govt hit by third piece of pre-Budget bad news, with record retail sales figures fanning calls for tax rises in the Budget. The City was shocked by the figures, coming in the wake of poor trade figures and sudden weakness of the pound because of fears over your future (Independent).

Telegraph leads with contingency Budget plan to take £500million in taxes out of economy. Neutral Budget scrapped after canvassing City opinion.

Telegraph writer is pleased to see amid all the "flapdoodle" about alleged challenges to your leadership that demands coming out of Downing Street are being expressed in "good old-fashioned hearty languages".

More community charge trouble at Islington where there are some 40 arrests; seven police injured when van is overturned. Council sets charge of £498.

Alarm over rate increases for sports clubs paying unified business rate.

Ambulance workers expected to vote to accept pay deal today by big majority after 4.1 vote for in Scotland.

Idea of independent Lithuania welcomed by several foreign govts, but none has made any immediate moves to recognise it (Independent).

Gorbachev finds Lithuania's declaration of independence "alarming".

Independent says there are signs that Gorbachev and the central govt will stall for as long as possible on the issue.

Times - Amid hints that Lithuania faces economic suicide Gorbachev says their declaration of independence threatened to destroy the structure of the Soviet Union. Leader says that by going it alone, the Lithuanians have virtually invited Gorbachev to make an example of them. He should, however, resist the temptation of

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strong arm tactics. His international reputation would (or should) be damaged by an intemperate spasm of bullying behaviour. He thus faces his first major test of statesmanship as President.

Soviet Parliament goes into a second day considering the idea of an executive president.

Eminent Persons Group says human rights abuses in USSR still too serious for British Govt to attend conference on the subject in Moscow next year (Independent).

Times says that NATO officials are beginning to address one of the most complex questions facing Europe: What do do with the 250,000 troops stationed in a unified Germany.

Kohl believes all-German elections will be held next year as a precursor to unification. His priority is to slow the pace of events so the internal drive towards unity does not place too great a strain on 4 + 2 talks about external aspects of unification. Genscher tells Mr Hurd 4 + 2 talks should be completed before unity comes about (Independent).

Britain foresees tough discussions on protecting EC members from subsidised East German govts after unification - Douglas Hurd in Bonn says he was sure Germany was now making "orderly progress" towards unification. He was satisfied with undertaking on validity of Polish borders but stressed Poland's right to participate in international negotiations touching on Poland's wester border (FT).

ECOFIN agreed £1.5billion new aid for Eastern Europe over next 3 years but cut back Commission plans to spend extra money on other regions of the world andn internal EC policies (FT).

IISS has warned a Western alliance wtihout US would be donminated by Germany which would be seen by peoples of central Eruope and Soviet Union as a threat (FT).

Mongolian politburo resigns en masse - major victory for pro democracy groups.

Prof. Michael Howard proposes that former East European communist countries should be linked as closely as possible with EC.

Labour Party advocates replacing YTS with 4 year traineeships.

Prospect of higher fares and poorer rail services as Govt cut B/Rail's subsidy by £150million.

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Central Transport Consultation Cttee reveals worsening conditions for travellers.

Fayeds throw champagne party to celebrate 5 years' control over Harrods.

Times leader warns British chocolate makers that their dominance of the market is less secure than it was and urges them to build a closer relationship with retailers who will otherwise increasingly look abroad.

Computer virus has led to production 20million shortfall of Cadbury's Easter eggs.

Navy scraps Nimrod plane after high levels of corrosion detected.

Lord Justice Watkins, senior High Court judge, critical of the burden placed on local authorities by homelessness legislation (Independent).

First challenge to Govt's plans to hand over financial running of schools to governing bodies is being mounted in Avon, where Governors at a primary school refusing to take on management of their school (Independent).

Controversy over decision to allow a nurse who killed her two children to go free; judge gives suspended sentence.

Policeman jailed for 7 years for raping woman in cell.

Star says Britain has become a paradise for sex perverts who prey on innocent young children - police have list of 3,000 molesters. Leader appeals for public help in notifying suspect cases. Mirror wants a Minister for Children.

NSPCC claims that children as young as 5 are being forced by devil worshipers into sex orgies; Mail describes them as the perversions of decadence.

Sir Robin Butler denies he and other senior civil servants held meetings on withholding details of Wallace (Independent).

Whitehall is considering a merger of MI5 and MI6.

Labour criticises Lords ruling exempting security forces from giving evidence to Northern Ireland inquiries (Independent).

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Lord Mackay urges women and members of ethnic minorities to qualify themselves for appointment as judges (Times).

Top officials from Home Office, Lord Chancellor's Dept and Crown Prosecution Service are examining statutory time limits for each stage of the prosecution process up to trial as a way of reducing delays (Times).

Guardian says Govt is to take Tory Backbench rebellion over Hong Kong immigrants head on.

MPs call for a break in relations with Iraq unless death sentence is lifted on Iranian journalist working for Observer. Iraq rejects world wide calls for mercy.

Independent says that despite warning from Britain of damage to its international standing Iraq insists condemned Bazoft had fair trial, and outcry over his sentence was blatant interference.

You are expected to announce today Foreign Secy will go to Baghdad to plead for his release. Mail leader says Douglas Hurd must go even though Observer was irresponsible in sending journalist.

Independent editorial argues that President Hussein of Iraq must be persuaded that an act of clemency in the Bazoft case would be humane and wise. Adding that the way is open for a most civilised Iraq to forge a new relationship with the West, this would not be more convincingly ushered in than with the pardon and release of Bazoft and Parish.

Times says Whitehall sources believe that neither trade nor diplomatic sanctions are likely to prove effective and threats could jeopardise the chances of clemency.

Second rebel cricket tour of South Africa next year has been called off.

10 Liverpool supporters who failed to appear in court in Brussels for the start of the Heysel disaster appeal hearing may face warrants for arrest and extradition (Times).

Mandela meets Tambo, in Stockholm, after 30 year gap (Independent).

Ayatollah Khomeini's son says US wasting its time in approaches to Tehran over hostages (Independent).

Israeli Labour Party gives Likud until Thursday to accept US plans

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for peace talks or face a defeat in Parliament (Independent).

President Bush frustrated that his policy of discrete rapprochement with China is not working (Independent).

Plan to re-enact building of the bridge over the River Kwai as a tourist attraction blocked by Thai authorities after angry protests from 2nd World War veterans (Independent).

INdependent editorial looks at some of the lessons to be learnt from the Chilean nightmare, in light of the country's return to democracy. For superpowers the lesson of the late 1980s is that they can control client states if they want to. For the countries themselves, do not seek to purify the nation, only nurture it.

Guardian claims Ethiopia has bombed food dumps - hitting back at rebels. Britain adds £8.5million to emergency aid.

COMMUNITY CHARGE, ECONOMY AND POLITICS

Sun - Labour MPs urging families not to pay the charge show either a callous lack of concern for the people they profess to champion or plain stupidity. Thousands with council jobs could lose their jobs - human sacrifices to the burning political ambitions of the lunatic Left. The paper is running a community charge advice hotline.

Today commenting on the gloom and doom merchants says the retail figures show that Britain is not in recession and not apparently heading for one. Some mortgage holders are suffering but elsewhere there is plenty of money around. This does not mean there are not fundamental economic problems - inflation is too high, trade deficit is too large and pay settlements too great.

Mail leader offers prizes for working out this conundrum: riots, ashen faced Tory MPs tongue lashed by constituents; a nation in revolt against poll tax and mercilessly squeezed by record interest rates. But people still spending in shops until there is no tomorrow.

INdependent says amendments to poll tax registers in Scotland reveal a much more mobile population than imagined, with 40% of the entries altered over the last year.

Independent - Farmworkers to seek 42.8% rise to help pay community charge.

Woodrow Wyatt in the Times under the heading "Why this obsession

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with political hara-kiri?" scoffs at the Sunday paper polls of Tory MPs. He concludes that MPs should resist the temptation to answer openly every mischevius question asked them by the media with its intention to destroy public confidence in their own Govt.

Telegraph leader headed "Kinnocky rejected" says the currency markets have been paying you a bakchanded complement you can well do without. Prospect of an economy run by Kinnock is deeply unattractive to outside world. It advocates a rise in base rates.

Guardian "Tories rally to Thatcher standard" Baker and Whitelaw discourage Heseltine challenge.

Peter Jenkins writing in the Independent says the worst news for the Govt is that its luck has run out, and we shall now see how good you are at handling misfortune. The general election is not yet lost or won, but the outcome may depend on political skill and in playing adversity. He asks if the embattled Govt can afford the luxury of Mr Ridley, or indeed if it can afford you. In this context, he says you will be asking yourself over the coming weeks, as the crisis deepens, if it is in the best interests of your country or party whether you continue.

ANNEX

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Howard addresses Lloyds Merchant Bank reception, London
- FCO: Mr Hurd meets Bahrainian Ambassador, Mr Sulman Abdul Wahab Al Sabbagh for a farewell call; later meets Friends of Hong Kong delegation led by Dame Jill Knight
- WO: Mr Walker visits Pontymoile Primary School, Pontypool; later visits Brohome Ltd, Bedwas, Pontypool; also meets Gwent District Councils Association, Newport and presents Cherrington Agricultural Award, London
- DEM: Lord Strathclyde addresses British Holiday and Holiday Home Park Association annual convention, Brighton
- DEN: Mr Baldry makes presentation to British Electric International, Albert Embankment
- DH: Mr Freeman visits Chinese Health Resource Centre
- DOE: Mr Hunt visits Langbaugh
- DOE: Mr Spicer addresses British Construction Steelwork Association annual dinner, London
- DOE: Mr Chope visits Scotland (to 15 March)
- DSS: Mrs Shephard meets Jim Lester MP to discuss Community Care grants from the Social Fund
- DTp: Mr Atkins attends sale of registration marks auction, Harrogate
- DTp: Mr Portillo visits Glasgow Central Station and addresses Scottish Section of Chartered Institute of Transport
- FCO: Mr Maude meets Mr Austin Gatt, Secretary General Maltese Nationalist Party, later meets Mr Peter Montegriffo, Gibraltar House of Assembly
- HO: Mr Patten visits Regional Secure Unit, Norfolk
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- DEN: Mr Morrison attends Oil and Gas Seminar, Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia
- DH: Lady Hooper attends Plenary Session of European Parliament, Strasbourg
- DTI: Mr Hogg visits Industry Council, Brussels
- MAFF: Mr Maclean visits European Parliament, Strasbourg (to 15 March)
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DES: Mr Howarth interviewed by "Woman's Hour" and "Update Education" both BBC
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TV AND RADIO

"Open Space" BBC 2 (8.00pm) Programme made by the National Black Caucus expresses concern about the conduct of the police towards members of the ethnic minorities
