

March 22, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister addresses Royal Society dinner

EC: Environment Council, Brussels

The Princess Royal visits Derbyshire

Mid-Staffordshire by-election

STATISTICS

CSO: Industrial and commercial companies (4th Qtr)

CSO: Balance of payments current account and overseas trade figures (Feb)

HO: Control of immigration statistics (4th Qtr 1989)

PUBLICATIONS

HO: Statement of changes in immigration rules

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Home Office; Prime Minister

Business: Budget Debate (3rd Day)

Adjournment Debates: HMG's relations with India (Mr M Madden)

Select Committees: COURT OF REFEREES

COMMITTEE ON A PRIVATE BILL

King's Cross Railways Bill

Lords: Starred Questions
Gaming (Amendment) Bill (HL): Report
Pensions (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill: Report
Landlord and Tenant (Licensed Premises) Bill: Second Reading
Debate to move that this House takes note of the Report of the
Select Committee on Science and Technology on Overseas Aid (1st
Report)
Chlorofluorocarbons (Control) Bill (HL): Third Reading
Pneumoconiosis etc. (Workers' Compensation) (Payment of Claims)
(Amendment) Regulation 1990: Motion for Approval
Redundancy Payments (Local Government)(Modification)(Amendment)
Order 1990: Motion for Approval
UQ to ask HMG what plans they have for assisting in solving the
fundamental social and economic problems facing South Africa,
particularly in the urban areas

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Gorbachev orders Lithuanians to hand over guns in "fraught and uncertain situation", according to Lord Brabazon.

Wave of race hatred sweeping Romania as ethnic Hungarians flex their muscles. 8 dead and 226 injured.

As he assessed the difficulties of forming a competent East German Govt, Kohl admits that it could take until 1992 to achieve German unity, says Times. He obviously still hopes it can be brought about sooner than that, but he is now seeking "a smooth evolution, not a hectic one".

Mail leader says the responsible course for political leaders is to back Gorbachev in his resolve to refrain from armed force and dissuade Lithuanians from playing Russian roulette once too often.

East German SPD reconsider coalition with Conservatives (times).

Newly elected members of East German Parliament will be vetted for links with the disbanded Stasi state police.

Kinnock claims adverse City reaction to Budget makes them certain to win Mid-Staffs.

MORI poll in Mid-Staffs gives Labour 55/Con 28/SLD 9/SDP 4/Green 3.

ICM poll for FT indicates that nearly half (46%) of Britain's senior businessmen believe the Govt stand a better chance of being re-elected if you ceased to be Prime Minister.

Support for immediate entry to ERM has doubled in same poll.

Evidence on the Mid-Staffs doorsteps suggests that Tory voters may protest in the by-election, but have had no hearts and minds conversion to Labour (Independent).

Today, on evidence of latest poll, predicts a 15,844 Labour majority in Mid-Staffs. Express sees Labour poised for 27% landslide.

Malcolm Rifkind reported to be under increasing pressure to secure backdating of community charge capital relief to Scotland. Express says Mr Rifkind was clearly disappointed after his meeting with you that there was no question of backdating.

PRESS DIGEST

You firmly reject demands for special backdated community charge rebates for Scotland as there is no case for a Scottish concession because it has not been available to English and Welsh ratepayers over the past year (Times).

Teddy Taylor, who calls omission of backdating "an insult to Scotland", and Alick Buchanan-Smith join Labour in attacking Govt.

Express leads with drinks firms are using the Budget to bring in their own price increases and Consumers' Assn denounces "ridiculous" new charges.

John Wakeham to announce today that electricity prices following privatisation will be pegged to rise with inflation - the toughest controls so far imposed on denationalised industries (Express).

Express says banks and building societies have rejected Chancellor's call in Budget to stop sending easy credit offers through the post. Mail says they claim it is good business.

Community charge

Sun gets letter from London Voluntary Service Council complaining about the Sun's disclosure of contributions to bodies by Islington Council under heading "Every one a loony" says the majority have rights, too.

Paul Foot, in Mirror, says collecting community charge costs twice as much as collecting rates and at least five times more will be written off, according to Birmingham City Treasurer.

Today says every pound spent in South of England is worth £1.54 in Scotland, according to Reward Group survey; the cheapest region for quality of life.

Mail leader headed "Crass insensitivity" says the Govt's action was couched with just that to Scottish feelings. Chancellor was totally unprepared for reaction from Scottish Labour MPs. Malcolm Rifkind should have been consulted in advance. This is no way to run a United Kingdom.

Guardian says only 130,000 people will be eligible for the community charge tax concession announced by Chancellor instead of the 250,000 he claimed.

PRESS DIGEST

Sun and Mail says you have told Tory Party "grandees" you will fight to the last drop of your blood to hold on to leadership.

Colleagues believe Kenneth Baker has not made a success of the Chairman's job. "He's being too negative" one Minister says, criticising his attack on Kinnoch for raising the Labour leader's credibility (Independent).

Express diary notes that Labour have passed up the opportunity of squeezing every last drop of political juice out of Michael Mates' consultancies. Why? It suggests it is because it suits Labour's purpose to have Heseltine promoted - by Mates.

Home Secy asks Devon & Cornwall police to look into aspects of Birmingham 6 case.

Times leader says there are good reasons for the Home Secy to proceed cautiously. But it goes on to question the insistence of the Court of Appeal substituting itself for a jury, saying the Home Secy would be right, in consultation with the Lord Chancellor, to look again at the arrangements for criminal appeals in general, and to do so with the Scarman-Devlin objections in mind.

David Waddington stresses that new inquiry into Birmingham Six will be limited - but families see it as paving the way back to Appeal Court (Independent).

Chris Mullin MP says new documents suggest the police had a good deal to hide over the alleged beatings of the Birmingham 6 (Independent).

Law Officers' Dept denies it tried to discredit a police chief by alleging hatred of the Crown Prosecution Service (Independent).

Speaker demands the Treasury Minister Peter Lilley explains himself after suggesting that the Speaker was "less than even handed in your search for the truth" (Times).

Mandela attacks proposed meeting between US Secy of State Baker and de Klerk; it is wrong, he says, to break Pretoria's isolation.

Ship market booms worldwide - but Sunderland yards are about to be bulldozed. Academic says there is no reason why North East Shipbuilders should not have a full order book (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Bob Horton BP makes it clear he will not exercise personal pay restraint after disclosing that his predecessor's salary had doubled in 2 years to £708,722.

More than 8,000 solicitors' firms in England and Wales take part in national launch of a conveyancing scheme devised by Law Society to make house sales quicker and simpler (Times).

Today welcomes Law Society scheme, Trans-Action, to improve conveyancing; for too long solicitors have expected ordinary members of the public to be humbly grateful for the chance to buy their services.

Representatives of family doctors vote narrowly against balloting GPs on whether to take disruptive action over their new, performance-related contract (Times).

Mirror leads with St Thomas's being unable to afford paper and pens; it has run out of cash.

Monopolies Commission warns BUPA not to exploit its domination of the private health market (Independent).

Mail says National Union of Student funds at York University are being used to finance £200 private abortions; all part of service (NUS).

Mail says MPs are demanding tighter control of charities after revelations that only 20% of money collected for Handicapped Children's Trust reached the children for whom it was intended.

Surrey parents survey into teacher shortages calls for £3,000 rise in salaries for teachers (Times).

Scottish detectives return to Sweden next month to question terrorist suspected of being involved in Lockerbie Pan-Am bombing (Times).

Team of 12 detectives investigate a series of incidents in which bogus social workers have examined children for sexual abuse and, on at least one occasion, tried to remove youngsters from their home claiming to have court warrants to take them into care (Times).

Thug takes axe to Derek Hatton's Jaguar after Militant threat to wreck it. Class War states it is "pleased the people have struck against this parasite".

PRESS DIGEST

Mother who lost unborn baby in drink/drive car accident told by judge "the unborn child does not count" - man responsible convicted only of reckless driving. Today wants law changed.

Chris Patten looks likely to be involved in a renewed clash with environment ministers from northern Europe today when the EC attempts to establish a common position on measures to combat the greenhouse effect (Times).

EC officials pressing to make diesel up to 30p a gallon cheaper than petrol in three years (Times).

Mirror claims Somali gangs have resumed ivory hunts in Kenya because you have allowed Hong Kong 6 months' trading grace.

Henley Centre says London's dirty and dangerous image will hold it back in the 90s as foreign and provincial cities achieve greater economic success (Independent).

Electronic road pricing is essential to ease jams and boost Britain's competitiveness and Chartered Institute of Transport claims (Independent).

EC considers plans to "force" Britain and Ireland to observe the same summer time as rest of Europe (Express).

You urge British businessmen to invest in Czechoslovakia in meeting with Havel (Express).

Mail heading: Rothschild the ace of spies dies at 79.

Times leader looks at the formidable tasks facing an independent Namibia but adds that it is an excellent example of a minor country that demands the sympathetic neglect of the rest of the world. It does not want the inflation that massive aid would bring. It does not want lecturing or posturing or patronising. Its future lies in maintaining good relations with its neighbours, particularly South Africa, in that rare phenomenon on the continent, a relatively prosperous region. New nations live in peace most successfully when left in peace.

BUDGET/BY-ELECTION

Star - A Major pounding for City moaners. He tells them they were wrong.

Sun - Budget blues hit shaky pound.

PRESS DIGEST

Mirror makes the most of the City reaction: "Home loans fear as pound is savaged. Thumbs down for Major's Budget". Leader finds the Govt guilty as charged on every count - NHS, education, community charge, mortgage rates, unemployment and trade deficit. The election of Labour in Mid-Staffs will deliver that verdict personally to you.

Today - Bank staff to be the first to cash in Budget boost for creches. Express says Midland Bank hopes to have 300 workplace nurseries in 3-4 years.

Express leader under heading "Blind blunders of the City's Budget bashers" says the City's watchword yesterday seemed to be "No patriotism please, we're British". Up came the calls that a Labour Govt wouldn't be such a bad thing after all. But it would be bad for the City and catastrophic for Britain and to suggest otherwise bespeaks a breathtaking lack of concern for the country's economic well-being.

Times p1 lead - Conservative Budget euphoria rapidly punctured as pound slumps, prompting fears of further interest rate rise that could take inflation into double figures in the summer.

Mail p1 - Major fights to avoid interest rate rise to 16%. Only words from him during a Treasury briefing that he would not shrink from a further interest rate rise if it was necessary stop a rout.

Under the heading "Growth: the elusive target", Peter Jay in the Times looks at the problem that defies every Chancellor.

Times business page comment says that John Major has faced the test of the teenage scribblers - and those that fund them - and has not been found wanting. With the Bank of England by his side, he stood firm yesterday morning when sterling was unloaded to see whether he would cave in to pressure to lift base rates. He gave no ground. Let us all hope that he can continue to keep his nerve.

Telegraph p 1 lead - Ministers defend the Budget as sterling slides. Leader says those who are merely bored or angry with this Govt might ask themselves whether they are worthy sentiments to decide an election.

Sara Hogg, in Telegraph, says it was a well crafted Budget. The monetary element, however, remains vulnerable.

PRESS DIGEST

FT leader on Budget says Chancellor needs to think harder about the overall structure of taxes before making further ad hoc changes. If he does not the tax code will grow steadily more complex in the 90s.

Guardian advocating entry into the ERM, says the fact of our non entry is made no easier to bear by the stark fact that this Chancellor, as the previous two, is an ardent advocate of early entry.

City interest rates rise nervously as Budget fails to convince the markets. BP's chairman says John Major has not been tough enough (Independent).

ANNEX

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEN: Mr Wakeham gives opening address to the University of Surrey's "25 years of the North Sea" conference, Guildford
- DES: Mr MacGregor gives a short speech at Grant Maintained Schools Trust reception, House of Commons
- FCO: Mr Hurd meets Mr O'Neill, International Maritime Organisation General Secretary, London
- LPC: Sir Geoffrey Howe addresses Special Forces Club annual dinner, London
- WO: Mr Walker hosts Garden Festival reception, Royal Westminster Hotel, London
- DES: Mrs Rumbold visits the National Association of Women's Organisations, Whitechapel, London
- DH: Mrs Bottomley visits Maudsley Hospital, London; later launches Masters Degree Course in Inter Professional Health and Welfare Studies, South Bank Polytechnic; also meets Tristan Garel-Jones MP and delegation re Watford General Hospital
- DH: Mr Freeman addresses Colindale press launch re nurses accommodation; later attends launch of initiative on clothing for long stay patients in NHS, London
- DH: Lady Hooper meets Mr Stanton from Western Provident Association Health Insurance, London
- DSS: Lord Henley addresses Payroll Managers Association in Birmingham
- DTI: Lord Trefgarne addresses conference on "Developing Business Links with Eastern Europe"; later addresses User Panel for Better Made in Britain
- DTI: Mr Hogg visits North Peckham Task Force
- DTp: Mr Atkins visits Porsche Cars Great Britain Ltd
- FCO: Mr Waldegrave hosts farewell lunch for Polish Ambassador, Dr Zbigniew Gertyck, Lancaster House, London
- FCO: Mr Sainsbury hosts lunch for Mr Mervyn Assam, Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner
- FCO/
ODA: Mrs Chalker addresses Festival of Europe, Roedean School; later addresses Chartered Association of Certificated Accountants, London; later attends lunch for President of Czechoslovakia, Mansion House, London
- OAL: Mr Luce addresses topping out ceremony at Russell-Cotes art gallery, Bournemouth
-

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

DTp: Mr Portillo has talks on cabotage with Sr Barrionuevo, Madrid

MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

HMT: Mr Lilley briefs financial editions of the weekend papers

TV AND RADIO

"Yes Minister" BBC 2 (8.00pm)

"This Week" ITN (8.30pm) 'Not Militant, Just Angry' - programme about the Community Charge

"Liberal Democrats Budget Broadcast" BBC 1 (9.30pm); BBC 2 (10.30pm); BBC Radio 4 (10.35pm); ITN (10.35pm)

"Question Time" BBC 1 (10.pm) With Nicholas Ridley, John Smith, Sarah Hogg and Lord Bonham - Carter

"The Mid-Staffs By-election" ITN (12.40am)
