

PRESS DIGESTMain News

France comes in for severe press criticism for trading 3 Mirage fighters in return for release of hostages and praising Gaddafi for his intervention.

Tom King, visiting Paris, welcomes a certain rapprochement in Anglo/French relations in light of changing defence needs (Independent).

New trouble in prison: warder held hostage at Shotts prison in Scotland. 4 warders at Strangeways injured when 19 inmates still holding out as seige enters 11th day, throw missiles at them.

Today calls on Govt to end the incident by force.

Independent says senior prison staff at Strangeways resigned to use of force against remaining inmates still inside the prison. Scope of Lord Justice Woolf's inquiry extended to cover other prison riots.

Sun commenting on Archbishop Runcie's shame at there being so many prisoners in our jails, says it is shameful Britain produces so many criminals. One reason for this is the decline in spiritual and moral values.

Mirror calls for a sufficient show of force at Strangeways to force those holding out there is no alternative to surrender.

Express also wants an end to "this gruesome pantomime".

Lambeth becomes the 21st local authority to be charge capped.

Sun says Tory researchers have discovered that Labour's roof tax could cost up to four times community charge.

Lynda Lee Potter in Mail wants you to find the strength to admit you were wrong over the community charge.

Telegraph leader comes out in favour of retaining the system but introducing banding according to income.

Sir Alan Walters launches a stinging attack on EMS and rejects full membership. He blames Nigel Lawson for high interest rates for following D/Mark.

House prices slump across Britain.

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Halifax Building Society say it is too early to say if bottom of housing market reached, but predict price rises next year (Independent).

NUR reject 8.5% as unacceptable; ask for 10%.

Michael Howard, in Express, commenting on Ford withdrawal from South Wales, says Labour would destroy confidence of foreign investors in Britain.

Mail says Dagenham workers have rejected an efficiency plan because it would mean the end of the traditional tea trolley.

Next store group fall £4.7million into red.

Telegraph says EC leaders are ready to steam ahead to full scale political union regardless of your agreement.

A change in 6th form courses is expected after recommendation, in a Govt commissioned report, that all students should be taught practical skills.

Times calls for legislation of cannabis after Princess Anne, at international drugs conference, outlined the pitiful legacy of drug abuse. Local drug prevention teams to be set up in seven of worst drug areas in Britain.

Ministers to examine a special child care allowance for single mothers to help them return to work, according to Express.

Haughey to visit Belfast today amid Loyalist anger and likelihood of demos - substantial security operation.

Independent editorial is critical of Mr Haughey's comments that court decisions have no effect on the IRA, saying his position is cynical and contemptible. Meanwhile, the British Govt is hamstrung: until it scraps the Anglo-Irish agreement it will prolong the uncertainty about the province's future which feeds IRA hopes. Concluding that if you cannot understand the IRA's motives, it is no wonder you fail to appreciate the constitutional framework needed for their defeat.

Star calls for Channel 4 to be shut down for using actor husband of IRA bomber to get round ban on televising Sinn Fein; he will speak words of Gerry Adams in 16 minute interview.

Channel 4 says it has stuck to the law and the programme is a serious piece of journalism.

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Sun says no doubt Channel 4 thinks it a neat trick. In truth their behaviour is outrageous.

Today says the sight of Adams mouthing to camera while an actor does a voice over would be hilarious if it were not so stupid. The law should be changed so that Sinn Fein/IRA can condemn themselves out of their own mouths.

Mail heading: TV 'dirty trick' show to go ahead.

Adams, in interview, says talks with British Govt would bring end to terror campaign.

Telegraph leads with IRA being told by Govt that an end to violence is a precondition for talks.

Peter Jenkins, writing in the Independent, previews the talks in Bermuda saying that since President Bush's inauguration the balance of Atlantic and European power has shifted dramatically with Germany the dominant European power, and Britain looking increasingly isolated. He concludes that you will slowly and reluctantly come to terms with the realities of your power position.

Chairman of Reed Employment said to be about to mount a rescue of charity War on Want.

British Allies offer to take up to 225,000 Hong Kong people. Express headline - "West to rescue Maggie on Hong Kong". Its leader describes it as an encouraging breakthrough.

Gibraltar scrapping military governor - civil replacement.

Gorbachev threatens to impose direct personal rule on Lithuania; Foreign Secy urges USSR not to use force.

Independent says likelihood of economic sanctions against Lithuania grows, with possibility of emergency presidential rule to restore Moscow's authority.

Soviet Union accepts your version of "a great alliance for democracy from Atlantic to Urals" (FT).

Walesa says he will run for President of Poland.

9 die as black violence flares in Johannesburg.

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ANC announce Mandela to visit nine countries, but Britain not on list (Independent).

BBC cricket correspondent to be sued for libel by West Indian Test umpire.

HOSTAGE RELEASE

Star - Freedom at a price. Cost was 3 jets. Leader says that while the release is wonderful news the price is too high and it backs the British stand.

Sun - The lot swapped for 3 jets.

Mirror - Free! Baby born a hostage. France rapped over jets deal.

Today - Libya hostage Sophie is swapped for jets.

Express - Free at last. Toddler who was born a hostage.

Mail - Gaddafi's price over hostages was return of his warplanes. Leader finds no joy in the deal that oiled the key in the lock. The gratitude of the French Foreign Minister to Gaddafi is sufficiently cloying to turn all but the strongest stomachs. The odd woman out in this shabby world is Britain's Prime Minister. We would not have our Prime Minister act in any other way.

Independent - Paris praises Gaddafi's role as couple return to France with daughter born in captivity. Editorial comments that hostage deals are wrong and erode the credibility of the legal system. It concludes the balance of arguments lie on the side of principled reluctance to deal with terrorists, agonising though this must be to hostages and their families.

Telegraph - Hostage-born baby free.

Times - Hostage deal gave Gaddafi Mirage jets.

FT - French praise Libyan role in hostage deal.

Guardian - Hostages fly to freedom from Beirut.