

April
March 30, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Dr Sussmuth, Speaker of the Federal Republic of Germany Bunderstag visits London (to 3 May)

Princess Margaret visits Glasgow

STATISTICS

CLSB: Quarterly house purchase finance statistics (1st qtr)

DTp: New vehicle registrations (Mar)

HO: The operation of the Prevention of Terrorism legislation statistics (1st Qtr 1990)

HO: Breath tests statistics 1989

PUBLICATIONS

CO: Civil Service Commission annual report

DEN: Development of Offshore Oil and Gas resources in the UK annual report (Brown Book)

HMT: TCSC's report and evidence on the Budget published

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Wales; Arts; Civil Service

Business: Environmental Protection Bill: Progress on Remaining Stages

Adjournment Debates: Transport provisions in the Hexham constituency (Mr A Amos)

Select Committees: PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
Subject: Fire Protection at Main Store depots
Witness: Sir Michael Quinlan, KCB

TELEVISIONING OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE

Subject: Review of the Televising Experiment
Witnesses: Chairman's Panel (at 5 pm);
Commons Committee Television (at 5.30 pm)

Lords: Starred Questions
National Health Service and Community Care Bill: Committee (4th Day)
Aviation and Maritime Security Bill: Committee

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Voters in local elections warned: vote Labour and pay a heavy price - Kenneth Baker.

Mirror, Independent and Guardian predicts a disaster week for you, and (once again) your worst in politics.

Guardian leader says your moment (to depart) has come and feels a true leader would see no alternative.

Gordon Greig, in Mail, says Tories are petrified Labour might throw Kinnock overboard and Labour equally terrified lest Conservative MPs get rid of you. Both believe the existing leader of the opposing party gives them the best chance of success. The Conservatives are very near to blinking first. But all this can change as quickly as the weathervane has swung for Kinnock.

Tony Marlow MP, in an article in the Independent, says that for a Thatcherite like himself the first essential element to the maintenance of Thatcherism is not you yourself, but Conservative Govt. Saying that a challenge to your leadership is probable this autumn, and that you will probably do less well than last time, he adds that the party may be reluctant to make a choice, but their loyalty is to their party, not to its leader. Concluding you may yet pull back and "delight us all", and for the time being you have the initiative, whatever happens when the time comes for battle to commence, the Tories will be united by their leader.

Tories hopeful of holding on to key councils despite polls indicating a resounding victory for Labour (Independent).

Robert Kilroy-Silk, now writing in the Express, says if Kinnock gets to No 10 we shall then discover that today's Labour party has no ideological purpose, no philosophy, no coherent policy and, sadly, no principles. And one of the consequences is that the public will pay a higher price than the community charge.

Express leader on Kinnock's vow to get rid of Downing Street gates, says that in the real world you have seen colleagues and friends killed and maimed by terrorists. If Kinnock had grasped that reality he would see the point of the gates and spare us cheap, macho jeers.

Messrs Waddington, MacGregor and Clarke, to start with, to be given image builders from private sector; but will not be concerned with policy or Govt information.

PRESS DIGEST

Foreign Secy says no blueprint for Euro-unity can be prepared by June.

After Dublin, Kaufman attacks your alleged claim that political union could threaten position of the Queen as "total piffle". Heath accuses you of negative approach and says Queen's role is not an issue.

George Jones, in Telegraph, says Dublin may have been the turning point in your relationship with the EC. You won your argument that the EC should first decide where it was going before embarking on a new round of integration. Kohl and Mitterrand gloriously vague.

George Walden, in Telegraph, says you failed to prevent Europe moving a step closer to unity but you are right to press for caution from inside rather than outside.

Times leader praises you for bringing some long overdue realism to the debate about political union. Given the barrage of abuse to which you were subjected before the Dublin summit, you can be seen to have played a most difficult hand with skill. After last week's advocacy of political union by its chief proponents, France and Germany, neither could come up with a definition that even remotely made sense. It concludes that the harmony of the Dublin summit may not hold as more detailed negotiations proceed towards June.

Conor Cruise O'Brien, writing in the Times under the heading "Thatcher calls their bluff", sees no substance in the Paris-Bonn enthusiasm for Euro-unity. He says the Franco-German alliance on political unity cannot have a long life. Its maximum duration will be the same as that of the two-plus-four talks on German unity. Once those talks have resulted in agreement, the usefulness of political unity will be at an end as far as Germany is concerned. And then the clever jockey in the tricolour silks will find that he is riding for a fall.

FT says resplendent in Royal Blue you were in your element in Dublin. You set out to confound your critics by proposing a simply revolutionary formula for building the new Europe. Since the others were patently talking metaphysical nonsense about political union, the procedures of international negotiations should be completely turned upside down. Instead of discussing what they meant to do, which they appeared to find so difficult, Community leaders should proceed by setting out what they do not mean by political union and by a process of elimination discover what policies they really wanted to pursue (FT).

PRESS DIGEST

FT leader says the ball has been set rolling for possible extensive political reform as well as economic over the next couple of years. But the fundamental division of opinion between the majority led by France and Germany and the minority of Britain produced at Dublin as even a compromise as the weak can ever wrest from the strong (FT).

Mirror says the only future for Britain lies in a united and federal Europe which is on the way. You can only delay it. You should make way for a Prime Minister who looks forward to the 21st century, not back to the 19th.

Sun leader asks who says you aren't still the Iron Lady? We were told that the new Franco-German axis would dominate Dublin but you took them on and won. Talk about a European Superstate remains just talk and will stay that way so long as you are in Downing Street. If Kinnock had gone to Dublin he would have been shaking the clenched fist of Europower and warbling "Deutschland uber Alles".

Express leader on Dublin says waffle and broad, airy phrases are all that have been produced by the wonderful folk who gave us CAP. Chefs Helmut and Francois can't say what's in the dish, how it is prepared or how much it cost. You have aired the central question: What is it? - that can't be ignored.

Mail leader, on the surprisingly sunny Summit, says your perfectly reasonable challenge to the 11 is to shrug off the ringing rhetoric and get down to the nitty gritty. But you must come up with positive suggestions, too, and your quest for the nitty gritty must not degenerate into negative nitpicking.

Independent says the Foreign Secy has signalled Britain could be ready to concede some powers to the EC on environment and drugs policies as part of proposals on political union, with Ministers now believing it would be better to put forward areas in which the EC could determine policy. Although you succeeded in Dublin in delaying a decision on an IGC, Ministers expect Britain to be outvoted at the next meeting in June.

City welcomes prospect of EBRD being sited here as negotiations continue to ensure London is chosen while making Attali its first President (FT).

Gorbachev tells East German leader there could be no question of a unified Germany within NATO (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Moscow said to have eased gas blockage on Lithuania; Express reports Gorbachev's victory over Lithuania, which, it says, is ready to make peace after 6 weeks of psychological pressure.

Turkish Customs seize two more truckloads of steel pipes apparently intended for Iraqi gun.

Father of lorry driver detained in Greece appeals for his release.

Lucas alleged to have broken an arms embargo against Iran by signing a £300million deal to overhaul 16 Boeing 747s, including six used for military transport.

Oxfam drops a campaign in favour of sanctions against South Africa after Charity Commissioners voice fears of illegal political activity. But Mail says it is still selling a book which says economic measures are vital for peace and democracy in Southern Africa.

Express says if Oxfam wants to campaign against apartheid it must forego the status and financial privileges of being a charity. And Mail welcomes the news it is dropping the campaign. Too often Oxfam appears to have got itself into a moral muddle.

Telegraph says benefactors of charities expect their money to be used to alleviate suffering.

Sun claims that IRA have planted a timebomb in the Brighton area which could go off next year.

Lord Denning in a letter to the Times indignantly denies the charge of contempt of court over Winchester 3 and protests at being found guilty in his absence and without right of defence.

Times leader discusses the release of the Winchester Three saying that the Court of Appeal has show, once again, how ridiculous is the mythology which surrounds contempt of court.

BBC outraging Tory MPs by filming a drama series about a plot to depose your successor inside the Grand Hotel, Brighton which the IRA blew up - "sick" says Andrew Bowden.

Community charge

MORI poll for the Times says 35% want rates brought back; 29% local income tax.

PRESS DIGEST

Sun headline: £100 on poll tax if you vote Labour - warning by David Hunt.

Mirror leader says Tory civil war is waging over the community charge - proof that Govt is in terminal decline.

Independent says Cabinet Cttee to oversee changes is expected to be appointed as you face a renewed political crisis.

Jack Straw says Tory councils split and confused over how to implement poll tax and keep within Govt spending levels on education (Independent).

British Synod of Methodist Church calls on better off charge payers who have benefited to help worst off.

Reigate magistrate quits in protest against community charge law

FT leader on community charge says the argument against a U-turn, permitting a proper reconsideration of local govt structure is that it would be humiliating for you and damaging for the Govt. But it remains the best option on policy grounds. How you face up to the challenge will indicate whether you are the person to lead the Conservatives into the next election.

Today claims company directors are awarding themselves 30-50% pay rises - with heads of High Street stores, big banks, insurance companies and top industries "heading list of shame" - it describes it as greed.

Rail unions thought likely to accept 9.3%.

Rover to lay off 1,500 workers because of flagging car sales.

British Airways expected to announce 1,000 new jobs at a flight reservation centre in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Ambitious plans for 190mph trains from London to Scotland being drawn up by Labour Party as part of its response to the controversy raging over the high speed links to the Channel Tunnel (times).

National Union of Civil and Public Servants expected to fall under hard Left control in executive elections.

Mirror claims Govt is to rob victims of injury and disease of £55million from September by denying them State benefits if they receive compensation above a certain level.

PRESS DIGEST

Parents to press Mr MacGregor for a ruling on whether school in West Yorkshire is breaking the law by not offering a mainly Christian act of worship (Independent).

Star continuing its campaign to close Sellafield, sees Chernobyl and the deformations which have followed, as a warning to us all.

Britain may have to make "green" reports to the UN under idea to be put forward at Bergen conference in May (Times).

CPRE says the forthcoming Environment White Paper must transform the balance of policy in favour of the environment right across Whitehall (Times).

Claims that Worldwide Fund for Nature, of which Prince Philip is president, was penetrated by South African spies who used it as a cover.

IRA's new approach to bombing: "pregnant" girl arrested on way to Belfast airport with Semtex strapped to her stomach.

Home Secy ready to give go-ahead for privatised prisons - first one likely to be at Everthorpe in Humberside due to open next year.

Probation officers say Govt plans to abolish remission and cut parole would boost prison population by 3,000 (Independent).

Inquiry by Independent shows a sharp rise in police assaults corruption figures with at least 40 cases being investigated.

Independent, in its editorial, reviews the loss in public trust the police are experiencing (as detailed in extensive coverage elsewhere in the paper) and says blame must be shared between the Home Office, Ministers, judges, chief constables, police committees, CPS and other bodies. Concluding the police cannot put their house in order without help, it adds that reforms will only have enough momentum when they have political backing. Mr Waddington is well suited to the task but if he fails to take the initiative he will go down as a second rate politician under whom the rot spread.

Home Office sources indicate that it could be two years before Strangeways rioters come for trial (times).

PRESS DIGEST

Sun wishes Salman Rushdie would go to Switzerland (where he says he isn't living) so that we, among other things, could save the cost of his protection.

Govt considering late changes to Broadcasting Bill after discovering that the rules on religion broadcasting could stop the Church of England broadcasting its normal services (Times).

Speculation that another American hostage is to be released this week.

Top level Soviet Syrian talks in Moscow at the weekend brought strong condemnation of US policy in the Middle East, but no agreement by Moscow to curb the emigration of Soviet Jews to Isreal (Times).

More than 200 Britons airlifted out of Liberia as civil war nears capital.

Hundreds of mostly West German neo-Nazis skinheads went on the rampage in East Germany at the weekend. 150 arrested (FT).

de Maiziere seeks to reassure Moscow that his country's new Conservative govt will not rush into the embrace of NATO without substantial changes to the western alliance's structure and strategies (FT).

FT leader headed "Perestroika in peril" says Gorbachev seems to be hesitating over getting down to creating a full blooded domestic market and may be doomed to preside over rapidly increasing disarray. Economic breakdown may have to occur before the needed courage or desperation is found quite possibly in other hands.

Kremlin due within a fortnight to present a detailed programme for a quasi-market economy (Independent).

Tens of thousand of Romanians demand resignation of acting President Iliescu (Independent).

Chinese official admits police torture and killings of prisoners (Independent).

Stephen Hendry new world snooker champion.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Howard meets Patrick Sawyer of Training Personnel
- DEN: Mr Wakeham visits Thoresby Colliery, South Yorkshire
- DES: Mr MacGregor visits the London Docklands Development Corporation
- DTI: Mr Ridley meets Mme Cresson re Japanese cars
- DTp: Mr Parkinson addresses and Mrs Rumbold (DES) attends World Wildlife Fund for Nature, Vehicle Emissions and Greenhouse Effect conference; later presents Seatrade annual awards, Guildhall
- HO: Mr Waddington addresses Victims Support conference on "Crime at work", Commonwealth Institute
- CO: Mr Luce addresses National Heritage Memorial Fund 10th anniversary dinner, Eton College
- DEM: Mr Eggar attends Cumbria TEC launch, Carlisle
- DEN: Mr Baldry visits Coal Research Establishment, Cheltenham
- DES: Mr Jackson visits Marketing Pickup to Business in Newcastle
- DH: Mrs Bottomley meets the Society of Family Practitioner Committees; later meets the Patients Association, London
- DH: Mr Freeman attends Mindweek 1990 "People First" meeting, Friends Meeting House, London
- DOE: Mr Heathcoat-Amory addresses West Sussex County Council conference on "recycling," Chichester
- DOE: Mr Chope attends foundation stone laying ceremony, Royal Citadel, Plymouth
- DOE: Mr Moynihan attends Sand and Gravel Association 60th Anniversary lunch, Grand Hotel, Brighton
- DOE: Mr Trippier visits Countryside Commission Community Forest Initiative, Tyne and Wear and Seaton Holme, Easington
- DOE: Lord Hesketh attends National Heritage Memorial Fund dinner, Eton College
- DTp: Mr Atkins addresses Chartered Institute of Transport, London; later attends Freight Transport Association centenary dinner, London
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington attends reception to celebrate 42nd anniversary of Israel, London

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)(Cont'd)

- SO: Lord Sanderson opens new farm buildings for North West Fife Rural Initiative, Scottish Deer Centre, Cupar, Fife
- SO: Mr Lang addresses International Paperbox and Packaging Congress, Gleneagles Hotel, Gleneagles
- WO: Mr Roberts and Mr Grist attend reception to mark retirement of Sir Hugh Cubitt, Chairman of the Housing Corporation, London; Mr Roberts later attends Freight Transport Association centenary dinner, Hilton Hotel, London
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- FCO: Mr Hurd visits Poland (to 2 May)
- HMT: Mr Major visits Rome
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DEM: Mr Howard interviewed on YTS's "Money Programme"
- MOD: Mr Neubert interviewed by BBC's "Newsnight" programme on AWE Contractorisation
- WO: Mr Roberts interviewed for Hungarian television programme on the identity of Wales
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TV AND RADIO

- Local Government Election Broadcast BBC Radio 4 (1.35 pm) Liberal Democrats
- "World in Action" ITV (8.30 pm) Problems in dealing with vicious dogs
- "Cutting Edge - No Home for Barry" Ch 4 (9.00 pm) Looks at the plight of the young homeless
- "Panorama" BBC 1 (9.35) Looks at NHS reforms
- "The Struggle for Democracy" ITV (11.25 pm) Patrick Watson looks at Mexico where 40 journalists have been murdered
- "Advice Shop" BBC 1 (11.25 pm): War disablement pensions
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