

June 21, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

- Midsummer's Day/Summer Solstice
 - Prime Minister meets M. Chirac, Mayor of Paris and later hosts dinner for Crown Prince of Morocco
 - German Parliaments declare Polish border settlement
 - Voluntary repatriation: Vietnamese boat people
 - OFT report on timeshare
 - Redundant churches fund annual report 1989
 - Church Commissioners annual report 1989
 - Hospital Consultants & Specialists Assn AGM
 - HMI report on special needs in education
 - NAO report on Civil Service clerical recruitment
 - Parole Board annual report
 - Metropolitan Police Fund estimates, 1991
 - Consultation document on changes to Private Bills procedure
 - Edwina Currie's book published
 - Fatality in agriculture statistics
 - World Cup - England v Egypt
 - Mandela continues visit to US
 - Commons statements: Calcutt
 - Commons: Questions: NIO; Prime Minister
Debates: Rmg Stages, Warnock Bill (concludes);
EC scrutiny on poultry, meat and
marketing
 - Lords: Debates: Cttee: Environment Protection Bill;
2nd Rdg, Low Alcohol Drinks Bill
 - Lord Chancellor at reception for British Inter-Parl. Union
 - Foreign Secy addresses Diplomatic banquet
 - Home Secy opens Stoke Newington police station
 - Chris Patten at launch of UK 2000, Braintree; BiC dinner
 - John Gummer addresses UK Wine Guild
 - Richard Luce addresses Children's Theatre reception
 - BBC Radio 4 Analysis - on the underclass
 - BBC TV Question Time with Nigel Lawson, John Smith, Shirley Williams, Lady Antonia Fraser
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PRESS DIGESTMain News

Chancellor launches idea of ECU as alternative Euro currency.

On the whole the idea gets a good press but it is presented as Chancellor and Foreign Secy bringing you round to it!

Plans to bring Britain's time in line with Continent put off until after next election.

Today says with the decision gives the chance to save 160 deaths a year not to mention fuel savings and an £800million boost to tourism. A black day for Britain.

The Speaker reflects anger of both sides of the House in voicing his concern for the continued sovereignty of Parliament after European Court of Justice ruling. His comments put pressure on the Govt for an early debate on the subject (Independent).

Cabinet Ministers to meet today to consider Govt's response to European Court ruling (Guardian). Separate story says that the ruling could have a significant impact on social security, sex discrimination and deportation cases, as well as in the commercial field.

Guardian leader says that the European Court ruling has, in effect, created a UK Supreme Court, capable of striking down Acts of Parliament even though, in practice, the jurisdiction over which it will operate is likely to be narrow.

Independent editorial looks at the European Court of Justice's decision over a dispute over the rights of Spaniards fishing in British waters, and the implications of this decision. It goes on to say that from January 1, 1993 the European Court will ultimately interpret the rules agreed by the 12. It concludes that it is logical, inevitable and right that the law of member states should yield precedence to its decisions.

Gorbachev threatens to quit as General Secy of Communist Party - sick and tired of whingeing.

Independent however presents it as Ligachev, standard bearer of the Politburo conservatives, flinging down the gauntlet to Gorbachev, in effect demanding he step down as party leader.

Yeltsin also says he is thinking of suspending party membership.

PRESS DIGEST

Conditions for financial aid to the Soviet Union now seem likely to be the subject of a battle at the Houston Economic Summit (Times).

Uzbekistan parliament approves declaration of sovereignty, wresting control over internal and foreign policy from the Soviet govt (Independent).

Iliescu sworn in as President of Romania, and while defending use of miners to restore order, apologises for violence in putting down protests.

Express regrets that unlike USA, we danced ambassadorial attendance on Iliescu at his inauguration.

Sir Robert Wade-Grey and other top grade defence experts warn of European military dangers and call for a clear public statement of Britain's intentions (Independent).

Times leader discusses the future of some Army regiments, concluding that the Govt cannot afford to be too squeamish in forging the highly-skilled fighting force required by modern defence needs.

Mail leader says it will not be easy to turn tanks into teachers but after 40 years of the cold war the historic chance is there.

Angry President Bush suspends dialogue with PLO because of their refusal to condemn last month's attack on an Israeli beach.

Letter bomb sent to Nicholas Bennett, Tory MP for Pembrokeshire - believed to come from Welsh Nationalists who send two others, one to a North Wales boatyard, injuring an English businesswoman, and another to an English owned restaurant in North Wales.

Conservative controlled Assn of District Councils claims average community charge must increase sharply unless Treasury increases grant by £4billion.

Two independent surveys conducted for Govt and the Conservative-controlled Assn of District Councils find that almost three-quarters of eligible adults have paid at least the first instalment of their community charge bill (Times).

Allegation that cash cuts in Wandsworth's community charge led to death of 3 year old child because of lack of social worker supervisors.

PRESS DIGEST

Ladbrokes offer 7-4 on General Election in autumn 1991.

You give Conservative MPs at a private dinner a clear indication that you will decide against calling a general election early next summer (Times).

Edwina Currie presented by Mirror as attacking you in her book for appointing only one woman to Cabinet in 11 years.

Hugo Young in the Guardian says that Kinnock's failure to live down to the Tories caricature of him on Panorama drove them and their tabloid friends to another tactic, hysterically misrepresenting what happened. This is a foretaste of what will probably be the most abrasive 18 months in modern politics.

Michael Meacher warns thousands of workers will lose a fortune on private pension schemes if party gains power. Labour will turn pensions market on its head.

Guardian says Labour has gone out of its way to rebuild a coherent tax strategy since the debacle of the 1987 election and that despite City scepticism, it believes the scrapping of the NIC ceiling and the increase in top-rate tax would cover the £3.5 billion cost of its commitment on pensions and child benefit.

Petrol prices falling 3.6p to below £2 a gallon - sparks another price war.

Ford threatens to close Dagenham plant if efficiency does not improve.

Japanese car makers and govt officials have criticised plans by EC to restrict car imports from Japan as "transplant" production in the community increases - claiming it is a violation of GATT.

British Steel, losing £3 million a day 10 years ago, buys a West German steel plant for £105 million - the turnaround, Sun says, could never have been achieved under State control.

British Airways to invest £70 million in aircraft base at Cardiff creating 1,200 skilled engineering jobs (FT).

British Rail to announce plans to pump up to £800 million into building up its Inter-City services in an effort to slash journey times (Guardian).

Mr Major to close car tax perk loophole today (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

Plans by Sir Leon Brittan to abandon action over alleged 'undervalued' sale of Rover fails to avert the threat of a row with senior ministers, as DTI ministers are bitterly critical of his decision to order BAe to pay £44million (Independent).

Commons Select Cttee told that the British beef industry is threatened with bankruptcy as BSE scare has cut sales by 20% (Guardian).

Times says that following agreement between EC Ministers, pensioners, students and the idle rich will be free to live where they chose in the EC after 1992, so long as they can support themselves.

Prison Officers vote overwhelmingly for industrial action over staffing levels - further turmoil in jails feared. Star says they should give negotiation a better chance.

Times leader says that from any point of view the Prison Officers' vote could hardly be worse timed and wrong in every sense. It says that if the Home Office has erred, the fault has probably been over-ambition rather than duplicity.

Express says warders will win no friends as a result of this. Their demands with menaces could not be more brazen.

French seamen on strike blockade port of Calais.

Employers face a shortage of top quality graduates (Times).

Kenneth Clarke, in Independent, insists NHS plans are on course, but with the Govt yet to make a decision on plans to make local authorities responsible for community care of the old and handicapped from next April. He nevertheless repeats your words that it remains the Govt's intention to introduce the changes and is unwavering in defence of NHS changes.

National Consumer Council Chairman says NHS reforms have ignored the consumer by failing to allow the public to choose the services they want (Times).

Law Society dismisses the moves to empower courts to make order docking absent fathers' pay as inadequate (Times).

Today reports 2 surveys yesterday revealed that 800,000 women want to return to work but can't because of lack of child care facilities.

PRESS DIGEST

Govt to seek to counter the growing epidemic of domestic violence by urging police to maintain registers of women at risk in the same way that local authority social services clerks keep registers of children at risk (Times).

John MacGregor criticises teachers and parents (for allowing children to watch too much TV) after it is revealed nearly 1 in 8 adults have difficulty reading.

The representative of scientists driven to work abroad by decline in British science calls on Robert Jackson to resign, describing him as the "rottweiler of British academia" (Independent).

In an interview in the Times Cecil Parkinson explains the case for postponing the Chunnel high-speed rail link proposals.

Concern over unmanned pedestrian rail crossings after mother and two children killed on one near Doncaster. B/Rail to review their safety. Star says we must get rid of all of them.

Mirror attacks Cecil Parkinson who, it says, has blamed the accident on the mother. "Just how heartless can you be? it asks in its front page lead. Leader says nobody could have been more insensitive and callous.

Select Cttee attacks "appalling delays" in processing applications for British citizenship.

Allegations that Prince Andrew moved a no-entry sign and went down a one-way street at Ascot in order not to be late for lunch with Queen; Sun, which leads on this, accuses him of having a big head and bad manners.

More than 100 mid-ranking Metropolitan police officers expected to resign as a result of a programme to check they are doing their jobs properly (Independent).

Audit Commission report says the system of financing the police fuels rather than curbs spending pressures and breeds inefficiency and has seriously eroded the accountability of chief constables and local authorities (Times).

Govt's troubled pollution inspectorate to gain new measure of independence by leaving the Dept of Environment and becoming a Govt agency (Independnet).

Dispute over presence of British Nuclear Fuels breaks out at opening of the Green Show (Times).

PRESS DIGEST

Survey reveals one third of children attacked by dogs
(Independent).

Sun says Italian riot police fired 15 warning shots into the air as 25 British drunks battled with 400 Sardinians celebrating an Italian World Cup win over Czechoslovakia.

Mirror says the fans were arrested to save them from a massacre by Italians.

Mandela given a ticker tape welcome to New York - with confetti. He lands a £1.6million publishing deal for his life story.

Only 35 envoys greet Mandela on arrival in New York as protocol concerns cool UN's Mandela reception (Independent).

North Korea agrees to resume talks with South Korea (Independent).

YOUR TRIP

Star - Maggie to the rescue at sea, with picture.

Sun - Maggie joins in lifeboat rescue.

Mirror p1 with picture of you in heavy raincoat - Just who'd want to be rescued by Thatcher.

Today - Maggie rescue is all at sea.

Times - You found yourself caught up in coastal rescue operation yesterday when visiting Fowey lifeboat station.

Express - PM makes a splash at rescue.

Mail - Maggie lifeboat to rescue.

Telegraph - Thatcher sails to rescue.

HARD ECU

Independent - Britain warms to European monetary union with the Chancellor firmly shifting Govt policy towards constructive negotiation on the subject, bringing the ECU in the pocket nearer. His speech last night raises a gradualist approach to monetary integration and is the culmination of a campaign by him and Mr Hurd to persuade you to modify your outright opposition to later stages of the Delors plan.

PRESS DIGEST

Today leads with Chancellor paving the way for death of the pound. Leader says we would be constantly asking ourselves whether a week's shopping will cost more in pounds than ECUs. It looks like a desperate attempt to keep the pound alive.

Express says you have seized the Euro initiative. It is exactly what is needed, giving 322million citizens of EC greater choice.

Guardian p1 lead says that the Chancellor's Euro currency plan will be seen politically as a victory for the Major/Hurd camp in Cabinet. It also has the attraction for the Tories of outflanking Labour and of allowing you to present yourself as a "good European" at next week's Dublin summit. Leader says that the whole notion clearly needs considerable scrutiny and debate; but it does appear to be a positive improvement on the "competing currencies" proposal of Nigel Lawson.

FT Front page lead on Chancellor's speech: Chancellor presents alternative route to EMU. It is Britain's riposte to growing pressure on the continent for a Federal Europe. Announcement timed to coincide with Dublin meeting and enable you to appear as a good European. Proposals will broaden economic debate in advance of December's igc.

Andrew Alexander, in Mail, says any plan that frustrated Delors has something to be said for it. But it is far from clear John Major's plan will add much to the debate.

Sarah Hogg, writing in the Telegraph, says that the latest British proposals on monetary union, including those for "hard ecus", are likely to sound tough enough for (say) the Bundesbank, but Europeans have still to be convinced it is preferable to the Delors plan for totally fixed rates. It is plainly a way in which the British Govt could hope to finesse its way through the conference in December on monetary union, and is a proposal that deserves to be taken seriously by the rest of the EC.

Philip Stephens in FT writes that Ministers hope the Chancellor's proposals will inject some much needed Europeanism into Govt's credentials in Dublin. Mr Major's proposals described by one relatively unbiased insider as "technically brilliant" - the latest political compromise since Madrid.

Independent says Cabinet battles end in victory for the Chancellor with shift in Govt policy agreed at Downing Street meeting on Tuesday. Mr Major's speech the culmination of weeks of fighting behind the scenes.

PRESS DIGEST

Peter Jenkins, writing in the Independent, looks at the pressure for monetary union in Europe, saying Britain will have to choose when a decision on this is taken in December. The strongly held view in Europe, is that you will squirm but sign. He concludes, however, that the political reality may be that you would like to see all decisions about moving to monetary union on the Delors model postponed until after the General Election, but Europe may not wait.

Times describes the Chancellor's proposals as a radical plan, the aim being to take a practical step towards a common European currency. Leader says that Major's extraordinary sally into the realm of European monetary reform must have left his European counterparts puzzled. It goes on to say that Mr Major's speech was a classic case of jaw-jaw being better than war-war, concluding that when it comes to Europe, Britain is right to trawl under its patron saint, Mr Micawber.

Comment in the Times Business Section says that we would be wrong to doubt the honesty of the Chancellor's proposals, but they are unlikely to do more than slow the pace. Wholehearted acceptance by the Community is unlikely and like the unfortunate camel, the ecu could end up with the attributes of a horse designed by cttee, but less useful.

Mail - At last Britain is making a constructive contribution to the next stage of European union.