

June 22, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

- Trade figures (May)
 - GDP (1st Q)
 - Building Societies monthly figures (May)
 - NHS ancillaries ballot result on 7.8% offer
 - Commons: Debates: Private Members Motions
 - Lords: Debate: Parl. Constituencies Order - Milton Keynes second seat
 - Lord Chancellor visits Manchester Courts/dines with N. lawyers
 - Lord President at Ditchley conf
 - Foreign Secy at 2 + 4 meeting, East Berlin
 - Home Secy and Chancellor address women's conf.
 - Tom King at 50th anniversary, Airborne Forces Service
 - Malcolm Rifkind at Royal Highland Show
 - Chris Patten visits Eurotunnel
 - Norman Lamont speaks in Dundee and Fife
 - Kenneth Clarke at NAHA conf, Scarborough
 - Peter Brooke meets Chairman, Shorts, Belfast
 - Tom King attends 50th anniversary of Airborne Forces Service
 - BBC Radio 4 Any Questions? with Sir John Hoskyns, Hugo Young, Brenda Dean and Sue Goss (Labour Co-ordinating Cttee)
-

PRESS DIGESTMain News

25,000 reported dead in Iranian earthquake.

EC gives £700,000. British Red Cross also donates.

Yeltsin advises Gorbachev to resign. Gorbachev hits back.

Georgia reaffirms its earlier independence declaration swelling the stampede of Soviet nationalists rushing out of the Soviet Union (Independent).

Times leader looks at whether the West should give the Soviet Union tens of billions of dollars in aid to avert an impending economic disaster and thus help secure Gorbachev in office. It predicts that the Houston summit will reach no unanimous agreement. Kohl and Mitterrand, who are in favour of aid, are talking nonsense disguised as good intentions. The momentum of the aid package lobby must be checked. There is no point in hurling the hard-earned cash of Western taxpayers at the Soviet Union.

FT says George Bush has ruled out US participation in direct financial assistance for the Soviet Union but will not stand in the way of any Western European initiative. Bonn has given go-ahead to DM 5 billion loan to Moscow.

The two Germanies take a decisive step on the road to unification when their respective Parliaments overwhelmingly approve the treaty on economic union and a joint declaration on the finality of the Polish border (Independent).

British team attending the two plus four talks confident that a formula has been produced for German unification and membership of NATO that meets the Soviet Union's security concerns (Times).

Press identifies a "rift" between you and Chancellor when you vow never to scrap the pound.

Governor of Bank of England gives his full support to the Govt's alternative proposals. Meanwhile in Europe first reactions suggest that the Govt has received some marks for trying, even if other Community govts will take a lot of persuading (Times).

Delors gives muted welcome to a positive evolution and says they would be studied carefully. Other Commission sources were more enthusiastic.

PRESS DIGEST

Guardian says Europe hailed Britain's "shift" on currency from your hitherto intransigent position.

Nigel Lawson says a single Euro currency would be a grave mistake - Europe is not ready for it.

Andrew Alexander, in Mail, says the more one ponders Chancellor's speech the more one feels it could all have been boiled down to a single sentence: "If people want a common Euro currency they can always use the ECU".

Independent - You are accused of undermining Britain's proposed alternative to EMU by insisting Britain would not surrender any sovereignty with plans for a new European currency outlined by Chancellor. Your comments come as European leaders privately question the workability of the Chancellor's proposals (Independent).

Times says you cast doubt on the depth of the Govt's commitment to ECU scheme by revealing that Britain would not be using ECUs in the way Chancellor outlined and insisting that the plan underlined the Govt's opposition to a single currency.

You tell the Commons Britain intends to contest the European Court of Justice ruling empowering British Courts to suspend Acts of Parliament alleged to infringe citizens rights under EC law (Independent).

Calcutt Report gets its predictable reception from the press - Star, Today, Express, Mail predictably hostile. Telegraph thinks it is a pity it has come to this. Independent and Times accept proposals. Mirror holds its fire. Guardian rues the day.

Hattersley gives unqualified welcome to Calcutt report.

Lord Denning says law at present has got the balance about right and should not be interfered with.

NUJ sees a degree of blackmail in proposals. Assn of British Editors claims it is another turn of the screw against the workings of a free press. Guild of British Newspaper Editors says the aim appears to be to fit the press with a straight-jacket.

One of IRA gunmen found hiding in Dutch wood charged with murder of two Australian tourists.

PRESS DIGEST

One English supporter killed and 23 hurt, 11 seriously, when four coaches ran into each other on way to World Cup match in Sardinia.

Solicitors Journal article says efforts by British & Italian authorities to deal with hooligans at the World Cup may break provisions of EC law (Times).

Reintroduction of War Crimes Bill welcomed by Mirror who says it should be passed by a bigger majority. Others like Today see move as your declaring war on Lords.

Mail leads with: "Nazis: Maggie takes on Lords".

Peter Kellner, writing in the Independent, looks at the media reporting of Mr Kinnock's Panorama interview and concludes that there was no contradiction - merely a doubt, swiftly resolved, over where to place a full stop. If that can lead to such a furore, he says, when the election is at least a year away, goodness knows what the campaign itself will bring.

Top 10% of employers increased their pay by average of 18% last year.

Incomes Data Services highlights problem of rising pay demands and settlements.

Halifax Building Society agrees 15% rise in London weighting.

Bond Corporation could be forced into liquidation unless it wins a series of votes at bondholders meetings in London next week(FT).

Sun calls for firms to provide more creches.

Car mileage allowances to be more heavily taxed and MPs will be among the hardest hit.

US has clashed with Third World over ozone fund at London conference. Developing countries have protested that US conditions for fund were unacceptable (FT).

QC in Court of Appeal accuses Chris Patten of using an iron curtain of official secrecy to prevent councils finding out why they had been charge capped (Times).

Health policy analyst from King's Fund College urges future Labour Govt to hijack main elements of NHS reforms suggesting that they focus on accountability rather than competition (Times).

PRESS DIGEST

NHS Management Executive reprimands health authorities for cutting family planning clinics (Independent).

Cross-party moves to allow abortion on request to women up to the 12th week of pregnancy defeated.

New US study finds smokers who are HIV-positive develop AIDS twice as fast as infected non-smokers (Independent).

Mail states that if Labour wins the next election those who now opt for private pensions will lose out. This is the conclusion to be reached from recent remarks by Michael Meacher.

It claims Kinnock is under pressure to dump Meacher because of this.

George Gale, in Mail, says public provision of hostels will only make sense if the streets are cleared of rough sleepers and young beggars and if the hotels provide a degree of privacy and a letterbox for residents.

Chief Inspector of Prisons describes conditions in Winson Green prison, Birmingham, as "vastly depressing" (Independent).

Workman spots a bomb outside a wooden guardhouse at RAF Stanmore and saves lives. Sun: Bungling IRA blast an empty hut.

MPs on alert after spate of letter bombs, believed to come from Welsh fanatics.

Former prison officer jailed for life after agreeing to work for IRA as a spy after threats against his daughter and grandson.

In dawn raids yesterday people arrest 11 people in connection with the Trafalgar Square anti-community charge riot. Three later charged.

Met Police Commissioner voices concern about the growing administrative burden neighbourhood watch schemes are imposing on the police (Times).

Renewed calls for video recording of child victim's evidence to be allowed in courts after couple are cleared of abuse charges after their 13 year old daughter said she was too shy to describe what had happened (Times).

Relate - former Marriage Guidance Council - calls for £10million to stem surge of family breakdowns.

PRESS DIGEST

Sun calls for scrapping of CRE - it has failed to combat discrimination and hatred and does more harm than good. It has a vested interest in keeping division alive.

South African Govt offers to pardon all political crimes, even those involving bombing and murder, if ANC agrees to abandon armed struggle.

FT feature on South Africa and sanctions says western policy flounders as trade with South Africa flourishes.

6,000 French judges, magistrates and prosecutors go on strike for better pay and conditions.

Brother of Ceaucescu jailed for 15 years on charges of attempted murder and instigating genocide.

Socialists lose their absolute majority in Spanish parliament after Court rules four MPs with links to Basque terrorist organisation, ETA, can take their seats (Independent).

Bush decision to suspend talks with PLO dismays the Arab world. Seen in Cairo as a rebuff to Mubarak (Independent).

UK plans high-level talks with China, with Frances Maude to visit Peking next month (Independent).

CALCUTT

Star p2 - Report threatens more shackles for newsmen. Leader says British press is not perfect. It is wholly in favour of a responsible press and claims it does not invade the privacy of law-abiding citizens. But it believes it should have the right to expose hypocrites in high places and the freedom of the press should not be further eroded.

Sun p2 - Editors face jail in privacy curbs. Press put on year's trial.

Mirror p2 - Minister welcomes press privacy law. Mirror group editors to make "measured not manic" response later.

PRESS DIGEST

Today p1 - Jail editors to protect Royals. Leader headed "Freedom at stake" welcomes proposal to replace old Press Council. It says it (Today) is constantly striving to improve its own standards. Ang Govt must be extremely cautious before passing laws based on Calcutt approach. It risks throwing the baby of press freedom out with the bathwater of gutter journalism.

Express p4 - Clean up your act or else, newspapers told. A year to get it right. Leader headed "Last chance saloon" says fair's fair. British press ought to be grateful to Govt for blocking right of reply and privacy Bills. But Calcutt is an alarming report, all the more so because the Home Secy appeared to be giving it an unqualified blessing. A sledgehammer for the entire press to crack a tabloid nut.

Mail p17 - Tough curbs on the press are backed by Waddington. Leader headed "Calcutt's charter for hypocrites" says having admitted it "found no reliable evidence to show whether unwarranted intrusion has or has not risen over last 20 years" Calcutt was not prevented from drawing the conclusion the press needs drastically tougher restraints to protect privacy. While some sections of the press have abused their position, newspapers have responded to public concern. The alarming prospect looms of the British press increasingly being at the mercy of a hypocrites' charter.

Independent p1 - Waddington gives Press "one last chance". It welcomes Calcutt calling it a new blueprint for the self regulation of national newspapers, and has added valuable urgency to the work papers have already begun. However, in a number of respects it needs substantial changes: it gives too little weight to public interest in publishing news the persons concerned do not wish to see published; and it recommends complainants should no longer have to waive their legal rights. Newspapers must stand their ground on these issues.

Simon Jenkins, who served on the Calcutt cttee, explains in the Times its findings under the heading "Framework for press freedom on offer" concluding that the press should seize it.

Times p1 - British press given a year to improve.

Telegraph p1 lead - Press given "one last chance" to reform itself. Privacy law to protect individuals.

Max Hastings, believes few responsible journalists will find very much to argue with in its findings (Telegraph).

PRESS DIGEST

Ferdy Mount, in Telegraph, says Calcutt has produced welcome and (with a bit of revision) workable proposals for the protection of privacy. It is a pity he has strayed beyond his brief to threaten the introduction of a brand of legal censorship of the press not seen since early 19th century.

Telegraph leader says it is hard to recall how many times since 1945 the British Press has been warned to mend its ways. Calcutt has produced a measured report. A consequence of the proposals is unquestionably to diminish press freedom. This seems a bitter price to pay for the behaviour of certain irresponsible newspaper proprietors.

Guardian p1 - Press to get last chance before legal clampdown. Leader sees the exercise as a breach of the Govt's free market principles. But the Govt felt something had to be done and this report tries to square too many circles, beyond which still heavier costs to freedom will have to be borne.

FT back page - Call for new press watch dog approved. Govt backs Calcutt reforms on privacy and the press.

EMU

Independent reviews Chancellor's path to monetary union, saying that it is an elegant bridge between those of his colleagues who argue for a single currency at the earliest opportunity, and those who like to see ideas tested before committing themselves. In domestic political terms it is convenient as it allows you to approve the scheme - almost - as it increases the consumer's choice, while in reality accepting a move towards the ECU eventually replacing the pound. The irony is that, were it adapted, it might result in very rapid monetary union. Britons would surely be among the first in Europe to want to exchange their inflationary pounds for more stable ECUs. Presumably Mr Major has not stressed this point in discussion with you.

Telegraph leader says EC partners will not leap to embrace the Chancellor's thoughts. But his proposals are not without purpose. And they are consistent with eventual monetary union. But it is improbable they will divert the EC from the route laid down in Delors.

Comment in Times Business Section says the Govt is selling its policies a little better in Europe. Softened by the Chancellor's "charm offensive" around the EC capitals, the first reaction to his proposals for a hard ECU was relief that Britain was at least entering into the debate on European monetary union.

PRESS DIGEST

FT leader says Chancellor's new proposals are too little too late although a revision of the proposals could prove useful in the transition to EMU and deserves serious discussion. Leader calls for the establishment of a Eurofed at the forthcoming IGC - its members would be those countries prepared to move direct to Stage III of Delors.

FT - You rule out ECU as a replacement for sterling, emphasising that the new EMU proposals do not mark any retreat from your implacable opposition to the single currency favoured by most EC partners. Your comments dismayed European MPs who favour a more positive approach and prompted concern in Whitehall that they would undercut the credibility of the British scheme at next week's Dublin summit. Proposals have drawn luke warm response from EC partners.