

PRESS DIGESTPRIME MINISTERMain NewsGulf

Report that an American has been shot by Iraqis in Kuwait trying to avoid capture.

Saddam Hussein calls for Holy War against US and to bring down Saudi and Egyptian Govts - some describe it as hysterical and proof sanctions are hitting.

Tariq Aziz given a frosty reception in Moscow.

More British hostages travel up to Baghdad to Kuwait with hopes of early return to UK.

British media, with exception of Guardian, very solidly behind you.

King Hussein distances himself from Saddam and assures Douglas Hurd that he will press Baghdad to release all Western hostages and end the annexation of Kuwait Times.

EC Commission to urge EC Foreign Ministers in Rome tomorrow to endorse an ambitious aid package for Turkey, Jordan and Egypt worth US\$500million. The move comes as more details emerged in London of a US plan for sharing the political and military cost of the Gulf operation. Brady, after his call on you, says he received a very positive response.

Attention now focussing on the plight and the risks to life and health in camps on Jordan frontier.

Star joins with Branson in launching a public appeal for help.

Today calls for an international task force to run an efficient refugee programme and you should take the lead in demanding UN takes command.

Mail calls for international operation to help refugees.

Independent, which devotes a full page to plight of refugees, says world's reaction to this crisis has been confused, slow and lacking leadership.

PRESS DIGEST

Benn explains in Guardian why Parliament should not give you a free hand.

Opposition MPs win vote on military action at end of two-day Commons debate - a major embarrassment for Kinnock Telegraph.

Friends say Ted Heath intends to sound a warning against early military action in the Gulf in today's debate. He is concerned about hawkish noises from the US military and some American politicians Times.

Sources close to Kinnock says that he believes a peaceful outcome is possible if the world community stays united in acting against Saddam Times.

Speculation you are to send an aircraft carrier to Gulf.

Bush to address Congress on Tuesday.

Foreign Secy notes a change of mood during his tour of Middle East, where it had previously been assumed that Western forces would never again be welcome Times.

Turkey's Parliament grants war powers which allow the Govt to host foreign troops and deploy the Turkish army Independent.

Russia has asked EC to consider joint declaration on Gulf crisis - its content to be agreed between Foreign Ministers at UN later this month. Initiative appears intended to provide a counterpart to declaration expected to emerge from Helsinki this weekend FT.

40 Jordanian journalists walk out of Foreign Secy's press conference in Amman in protest over Britain's role.

Mail alleges Iraqis are systematically murdering and torturing Kuwaitis to root out resistance fighters and track down Westerners.

Guardian finds a slackening of morale in Iraq.

Mirror claims motorists paid £20million extra tax last month because of crisis.

Tom King says that the Gulf confrontation had vindicated his decision to make only limited cuts in defence spending last July Times.

PRESS DIGEST

Star attacks MOD's embargo on itself and other papers in the Gulf for fear of hurting sensibilities of Arab hosts.

A British woman hostage, in a letter to the Times, accuses the FCO and our Embassy in Kuwait of complacency and inefficiency saying the Embassy was advising Britons to remain in their homes when they knew escape was possible.

Kuwait govt in exile has hired PR agency Hill & Knowlton to assist its global PR effort FT.

Gulf Comment

Mirror says there wasn't an inch of retreat in Saddam Hussain yesterday when Bush and Gorbachev meet this weekend their duty to the world is clear: tell Hussain UN must be fully obeyed, free all hostages and any invasion of Jordan will be met with force. Price of appeasement would be too high.

Mail says no-one knows how Hussain will react. There can be only one sane response from rest of world - we must maintain seige and prepare for worst.

George Walden, in Telegraph, asks where is the team spirit in the EC when it is most wanted. There is an inescapable irony in the fact that politicians in a country (France) which is most prone to grand talk about the need for European political union should display themselves in the Gulf crisis at least as something less than team players.

Telegraph leader says today's debate is an important opportunity for Commons to show it can rise above partisanship and bombast to consider great issues. It is important for Govt to emphasise that this is a global issue. There is no early case for considering a major British ground commitment. It would be highly undesirable for this country to emerge as the sole Western co-belligerent. Britain's most important contribution in the weeks ahead will be diplomatic.

Guardian leader says Benn is right to call for explicit assurances that Britain will not agree to hostilities in the Gulf without prior approval of the Security Council. Article 51 does not carry carte blanche.

PRESS DIGEST

Under the heading "The legal right to fight surrendered" Marc Weller, researcher in international law at Queens' College, Cambridge, explains in the Times how the Kuwaiti delegation to the UN shot its country in the foot. He discusses Article 51 saying that since Kuwait has apparently abandoned self-defence in favour of UN action, no other state can rely on the subsidiary right of collective self-defence on its behalf.

Times leader on Article 51 says Opposition should relinquish the temptation to tie the Govt's hands. The spirit of adventurism reigns on neither side of the House and you have been insistent that sanctions must be given every chance, refusing to set any kind of deadline. Kinnock should use today's debate to affirm his party's absolute commitment to seeing that aggression does not pay. The less daylight is glimpsed between the two main political parties today the better the prospects for success in the dangerous weeks ahead.

Michael Howard, Professor of Modern History at Yale University, writing in the Times, believes victory in the Gulf will go to the side best able to play a waiting game - and that the US and allies must refrain from force because time is with them.

Independent says there is still time to avert a wholly man-made disaster from happening over refugees. What is needed is a collective act of humanitarian will. The world may need policemen. It also needs prompt and effective samaritans.

Independent says James Baker has bolstered confidence in his country's leadership of the world's response to the invasion of Kuwait with his testimony to Congressional committees. But the sternest test of American diplomacy may yet be to come. It will involve persuading both the Arabs and a wider circle of allies that if, after a short period of time, Saddam has not relinquished Kuwait, sterner measures will have to be used.

Peter Jenkins in Independent says that the trouble with insisting that war should be waged against Saddam Hussein only with the express authority of the UN is that it might encourage him to believe war will not be waged at all. Moreover, a diplomatic wrangle at the UN would sound early warning to Baghdad. Reviewing Labour's likely position and yours on this during today's debate, he concludes there is not a great deal of difference between the two front benches. Everyone prefers diplomacy to war. But no-one has great confidence that sanctions will be sufficient. "Walk softly but carry a big stick" was Roosevelt's maxim and, Jenkins says, that is the only way to proceed for the moment.

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FT says there is nothing improper about the manner in which you have managed events to date. Any active Prime Minister would have done the same. Nevertheless today's debate is important. It gives you the opportunity to set out the rationale behind your unequivocal support of US. If Saddam Hussain is to be defeated then the use of force "not ruled out" must include a broad reading of Article 51. Kinnock should stand firm with the Govt.

Economy

ERM frenzy - speculation that Britain will join the ERM at the weekend reaches new heights Independent.

Britain's building industry going through worst post-war slump.

Andrew Alexander, in Mail, says if the Treasury and Bank have still not got the message about the harshness of the squeeze they should study yesterday's grim series of company results.

FT says UK economy is less vulnerable than most to Gulf events - braced for oil price "shockette".

Politics

Michael Forsyth's position now untenable as chairman of Scottish Tory party, according to reports. He is to have a showdown meeting with you today - reshuffle expected.

Allen Adams, Opposition whip, dies suddenly, 44.

Paddy Ashdown hires an American firm to polish up SLD's image - and splits his party in process.

Industry

Welsh farmers call for a boycott on French food in retaliation for attacks in consignments of British meat in France.

Sun alleges French police and customs are in on the conspiracy while French break every rule in EC book. It supports a boycott of French food.

Allegations by Which? that garages give a poor service; it wants spot checks on servicing.

Car insurance premiums to rise 10%.

PRESS DIGEST

PAC says £3billion inner city programme is spoiled by poor liaison between Departments.

Developers planning a £1billion urban regeneration scheme in Bishopsgate area of east London have offered £50million towards estimated £121million net cost of extending East London line FT.

Rolls Royce poised to win \$100million order from Indonesian airline FT.

Unions

Fraud squad to question Soviet miners' leaders in UK about disputed £1.5million donated by Russians during coal strike.

International Mineworkers' Organisation says money was intended for international purposes.

Express says whatever else may be doubtful in this murky episode, none of the money reached the families for whom it was intended. It is high time Scargill was helping with enquiries.

TUC calls for "new agenda" for wage deals in 1990s with negotiations concentrated in first three months of year and a national minimum wage.

Mail says they voted to ditch the annual wage round and seek rises the economy can afford.

John Smith welcomes TUC approval for a national economic assessment each year.

Health

Warning to cancer patients who choose alternative therapy at centre backed by Prince Charles that they are twice as likely to die as those receiving conventional treatment.

Education

Huge recruitment drive fills most vacant teaching jobs Times.

Guardian leads with two of Britain's universities - Keele and Surrey - on verge of bankruptcy. Another 13 will be in red this year. Its leader says there are only three ways out of this: industrial contributions but industry has ruled itself out; an increase in taxation which would be unacceptable to you; or tuition fees.

PRESS DIGESTIreland

Loughgall police station in Armagh devastated by IRA bomb.

Fair Employment Commission says religious bias continues on Ulster Councils, with Roman Catholics still under-represented
Independent.

Media

Britons watching less TV - down an hour a week since 1985.

Express wants licence fee abolished.

ITN employees reject 7%; threat of strikes.

Foreign

Death squads said to be murdering a child a day in streets of Brazil.

Final round of talks on international aspects of German unification hit last minute hitch over details of Soviet troop withdrawal from East Germany Times.

Gorbachev orders republican leaders to take immediate measures to ensure state procurement quotas for grain are met, as queues at Soviet bakeries grow.

Hungarian Govt dismisses the country's two most senior intelligence chiefs in a move which may signal a purge of the predominantly communist secret police.

New measures introduced in Czechoslovakia to rid factories and enterprises of former Party appointed managers, who are blamed for holding up economic reform.

De Klerk has said South Africa's first post-apartheid govt will be a multi-party coalition, including blacks and whites, if talks with ANC end in free elections. A professional defence force, bill of rights and free market system were essential minimum conditions before the National Party would approve a new constitution FT.

People

Lord Caradon, Michael Foot's brother, dies.