

PRIME MINISTER

DIARY

Your talks with Chancellor Schmidt.

State visit of Sultan Qaboos of Oman.

OPEC emergency meeting, Vienna.

International Tin Council discusses possible imposition of export controls.

Test and County Cricket Board meets on cricketers in South Africa.

BL 1981 preliminary results.

TUC Women's conference, Bournemouth.

Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition, Earls Court.

National Association of Local Councils conference, Harrogate.

Statistics:

Retail price index (Feb).

Tax and price index (Feb).

Publications:

British Business - Funds for Businessmen (ICFC profile).

Research Study; Contested Trials in Magistrate's Courts.

Ministers - see Annex

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PRESS DIGEST

Law and Order

- Wide coverage of yesterday's debate and Prime Minister's comments on corporal punishment. Also references to Prime Minister's "muddle" over statistics.
- Express welcomes chance for further debate on capital punishment. Says that they will support pro-hangers if they can prove their case. Sun again emphasises that a life sentence should be for life.
- The retirement of McNee splashed in several papers. Suggestions that the leak to "Labour Weekly" was a "dirty trick". Generally accepted that retirement has nothing to do with current debate. Sir K Newman expected to succeed.

(7)

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Box

19/3

- Home Office attracted to idea of curfew for young offenders.
- Police creating "instant response units".
- Aldenham criticises Anderton: says it would lead to creation of police along "Oliver Cromwell lines".
- Guardian says there is simply no justification for the uproar of the last ten days. Call for capital punishment is an irrational gut reaction. If anything the experience of the last three years shows that a tough law and order stance does nothing to reduce crime.
- Times says it is necessary that police should be responsible to community but the jurisdiction of committees should be defined more precisely. Desirable for London Boroughs to be represented.
- Heath says there is direct link between crime and unemployment.
- Defence lawyer opposes legal aid for Glasgow rape victim.

#### Economy

- Cyclical indicators show recovery ahead.
- Today's RPI will show fall in inflation rate.
- French franc fell to lowest level against dollar. European central banks moved on interest rates to avoid devaluation within EMS.
- Failure of Stone-Platt widely reported. Mirror splashes story as "banks torpedo Maggie" and talk of fears of domino effect.

#### European Community

- Tour of Thorn and Tindemans fail to break deadlock on Budget reform.
- Ivor Richard pressing for more EC aid to pockets of high unemployment.
- Guardian says UK Government has to take firm line. Longer the French delay the greater the pressure on the faint-hearts at the Foreign Office. No British administration can accept implications of uncorrected Budget position.

#### Anglo-German Summit

- Schmidt will seek to allay fears about Bonn-Paris axis - he seeks to limit West German payments to the Community.

#### Unions/Pay

- Employers refuse to go to arbitration on teachers' pay. Likely to cause further industrial action.
- White collar section of EEPTU to co-operate in new group to challenge left-wing influence in professional and white collar union.
- Sit-in of workers at Plessey, Bathgate, called off after eight weeks.
- Civil Service agree on two-year deal for new computer technology.
- AFLEF and BR board would oppose secret ballot of ASLEF members on flexible rostering.

#### Nationalised Industries

- Ezra says NCB requires Government grants until at least 1988.

- Ezra to get "record" £100,000 golden handshake and £30,000 a year pension.
- National Consumer Council wants ombudsman to settle dispute <sup>consumers</sup> between/ and state industries.
- Ravenscraig productivity scheme agreed.

#### Civil Service

- Treasury evidence to Megaw show that Department of Employment and DHSS staff levels above Government targets - imply need for cuts.

#### Taxation

- Treasury confirm that "typical" taxpayer would get no reduction in tax burden this year and in some cases would face an increase.
- Inland Revenue staff switch to reduce tax evasion.

#### Politics

- Thirteen Conservative backbenchers rebel on making good 5% abatement to unemployment benefit.
- Labour Party chiefs worried about Foot's pledge on unemployment.
- Lib/SDP announce share-out of two-thirds of Parliamentary seats.
- NOP suggests SDP marginally ahead in Hillhead.
- Benn presents detailed plan for abolition of the House of Lords.

#### Cables

- Whitelaw to announce on Monday formal inquiry into impact of cable and satellite broadcasting on standards. The report from the Advisory Panel outlining the new systems' potential will also be published on Monday.

#### Council Houses

- Liverpool City Council to consider private property management taking over responsibility for Council housing.

#### Defence

- Weinburger hopes that SALT talks will begin soon - warns that US will stop any Soviet missiles going into Cuba.

#### Reagan Visit

- David Watt concludes that the Prime Minister is not absolutely obliged to offer him Westminster Hall.

#### International

- Reagan claims US economy on verge of up-turn.
- Dutch film crew killed in El Salvador (main item on 7 am news).

ANNEX

Ministers

Mr Whitelaw addresses Manchester Community Relations Council (6.00pm).

Mr Heseltine addresses Bradford Chamber of Commerce Annual luncheon.

Mr Whitelaw visits Chorley Forensic Science Service.

Mr Tebbit visits ASTMS college, Bishops Stortford. (10.30am - 2.30pm).

Sir Keith Joseph opens the Blackwood Hodge Management Centre, Nene College, Northants. (10.30am).

Mr Morrison visits MSC HQ, Moorfoot, Sheffield, to discuss ITBs. (10.00am - 3.00pm).

Lord Mansfield visits fish market and Chamber of Commerce, Aberdeen.

Mr Stewart meets Scottish Council for Racial Equality, Edinburgh.

Mr Rossi opens new unit and attends meeting of Sheltered Housing Assistance for the Disabled. (10.30am).

Lord Elton visits Warwickshire.

Sir George Young visits Taunton Dene Joint Venture Scheme.

Mr Rees visits British Aerospace, Hatfield.

Mr Mellor visits the North West Electricity Consultative Council, Manchester, and the North West Electricity Board, Manchester.

TV/Radio

Mr Fowler, BBC Local Radio phone-in, Pebble Mill Studios, Birmingham (11.00am).

Mr Howell, LBC, Brian Hayes interview and phone-in programme. (10.30am).