

26 APRIL 1988

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets President Mugabe of Zimbabwe and New Zealand Premier Lange

EC: Economic and Social Committee Plenary, Brussels (to 28 April)

EC: Meeting of Ministers dealing with Women's Affairs, Berlin

NEDC

House of Commons Defence Committee visit HQ Strike Command at RAF High Wycombe

OPEC and non-OPEC Oil Ministers meet - Price Stabilisation

IBA makes major policy statement

NPG meeting opens in Brussels

STATISTICS

CBI: Industrial Trends Survey (1st Qtr)

HMSO: Population density and concentration in England and Wales 1971 and 1981

OPCS: Infant and perinatal mortality; birth weights 1986

OPCS: Electoral statistics local authorities 1986

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Defence; Employment; Prime Minister

Business: 10 Minute Rule Bill: Armed Forces (Housing)
Finance (No 2) Bill: 2nd Reading
Motion on the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter Range Missiles (Inspections) (Privileges and Immunities) Order.

Adjournment Debate: Hazardous waste disposal in the Greater Manchester area (Mr R Litherland)

Select Committees: EUROPEAN LEGISLATION
Subject: CAP Price proposals
Witnesses: Rt Hon John MacGregor MP, Minister for
Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and officials from
the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS (JOINT COMMITTEE)

TRANSPORT

Subject: Air Traffic Control Safety
Witness: The Civil Aviation Authority
COMMITTEE ON A PRIVATE BILL
Hampshire (Lynchurst Bypass) [Lords]

Lords: Starred Questions

Court of Session Bill (HL): Report
Housing (Scotland) Bill: Committee (2nd Day)
Church Commissioners (Assistance for Priority Areas) Measure:
Motion for Approval
Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure: Motion for
Approval

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGEST

Rates Reform Bill gets Third Reading with majority of 63; 17 Tories vote against.

Concessions worth £100million expected on housing benefit before tomorrow's debate.

Mirror says you proposed at the weekend that John Moore should not defend Government in housing benefit debate because of his poor performances.

National Union of Seamen threatens show of picket power at Dover if P&O try to operate ferries with non union or strike breaking men. But rules out national strike.

P&O say applications for jobs, after yesterday's advertisements, are flooding in for crew places worth £11-17,000 a year.

Sealink to be prosecuted over allegations that ferry set sail from Boulogne with 160 too many passengers.

John Butcher instructs auditors in five cases reported to OFT to look into complaints of holiday firm surcharges and warns of new legislation to permit prosecution for misleading price information (Today).

Mail leads with Manchester head and his two deputies facing the sack after Left wing anti-racist policies led to explosion of racial conflict at school leaving 13 year old Asian boy dead, stabbed by white colleague.

Norman Tebbit, giving Radical Society inaugural lecture, pronounces Socialism 'brain dead' - its 'twitching limbs' remain in Liverpool, Labour Party HQ, some unions and the many backward African states.

US magazine, Fortune, says booming Britain is the example for American businessmen to follow.

Government Statistical Service finds Britons living longer enjoying more prosperity and spending more than 20 years ago.

BBC to reduce staff by further 1,500 over five years; to spend £200million on new programmes.

PRESS DIGEST

Second big fire in 5 years at huge Ordnance Depot in Shropshire causes asbestos fallout - people in Telford area want to know cause of fire.

Defence Select Committee wants checks to ensure blacks get a fairer deal in Armed Forces.

Club owner who wants to open a replica of the Humphrey Bogart bar in Casablanca with black pianist accused of discrimination by CRE for advertising for a black pianist in Warrington.

Home Office pledges emergency measures to clear backlog of immigration applications.

Cleveland County Council starts contempt of court proceedings against Mail on Sunday, Sun and Mirror for naming a family involved in child abuse case.

Irish priest wants to say prayers for 'Birmingham Six' terrorists in the pub where they blew up 21 people.

Demjanjuk sentenced to be hanged for war crimes.

Ron Brown has AEU sponsorship withdrawn for "childish, infantile, immature behaviour." Sun feature on 20 amazing facts about him - his career has earned him more nicknames than any other MP.

Mandy, the heavyweight kissogram girl who is chairman of Tottenham Labour Party, slightly hurt in scuffles at demonstration by 400 homosexual "activists" when Haringey considered Section 28.

Mail says 4 British Servicemen are within 1500 feet of summit of Everest.

Chirac rejects deal with Far Right.

Soviet Union to shut down some of its oldest nuclear plants.

P&O FERRY DISPUTE

Star on the "almighty confrontation" building up at Dover, appeals for compromise. It appeals to union to consider P&O's case for manning levels and P&O to think again about the actual levels.

Sun - P&O fly in 100 "pirates" to bust ferry strike.

Mirror reports growing fears of violence in Dover.

PRESS DIGEST

Today says P&O pickets trying to stop the company breaking the strike were dealt a blow by Dutch seamen who refused to prevent ships returning to Dover from Rotterdam.

Express - NUS sends hit list of strikebreakers - threats have been made to those who have signed up though union says it does not condone violence.

Mail - Seamen queue up for strikers' ferry jobs; leader sees NUS's very survival at stake. If no quarter is to be given Chief Constable of Kent and Paul Channon must ensure that such an industrial fight to a finish does not degenerate into buccaneering.

Telegraph - Police on alert as P&O strikers plan mass picket.

NHS

Express - John Moore pledges that medical treatment in Britain will never depend on ability to pay as he launches campaign to assure public "NHS is safe with us".

Times - John Moore says that review of NHS will protect right to free health and not lead to US-style system based on private health insurance.

Independent - The Government plans to introduce a system to calculate the cost of hospital treatment in the NHS from the end of next year, if six experimental projects go well said John Moore yesterday.

Independent - Outdated hospital X-ray machines every year expose the population of Britain to a higher dose of radiation than it received from the Chernobyl accident physicists warned yesterday.

T E Utley in the Times discusses the IEA's pamphlet "Acceptable Inequalities" linking it to the PQs about health and benefits you get each Tuesday and Thursday and the answers you give about the Government's record. Intellectually you and your colleagues get the better of the exchanges in the House but he suspects that as time goes on more and more of the public will come to the conclusion that this Government consists of hard-faced businessmen with whom it is not seemly to be seen associating.

EUROPEAN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT

Star says "Super Spitfire" for RAF greeted with delight at Warton, Lancs, where project was developed.

PRESS DIGEST

Sun - Fighter jet deal makes 20,000 jobs safe.

Express - Top gun is cleared for take off.

Mail - Britain to lead way in building world's most advanced jet fighter.

Telegraph - Britain to spend £7billion on Euro project.

ECONOMY

Sun continuing its assault on your Ministers, has a leader headed "The price of Nigel Lawson"; says Chancellor is an imaginative and skilful head of Treasury but you created the conditions which have allowed the economy to flourish. You also happen to be head of the Treasury, are boss and right. The country should not be made to go on paying the price - the cost of intervention - because Mr Lawson is too stubborn and too arrogant to admit he was wrong.

Express leader on Treasury Select Committee report on Budget, says the Chancellor seems unperturbed by the lack of progress in reducing inflation. The Treasury thinks warning is timely. There is no room for complacency.

Andrew Alexander, in Mail, says that after generations of Chancellors trying to talk the pound up it is difficult to adjust to Mr Lawson trying to talk it down.

Times - Fortune magazine tells American managers to go to Britain for a lesson in efficiency and economic prowess. Hailing "Maggie and a band of aggressive new managers", Fortune reels off a catalogue of British industrial success.

Times - Commons Committee says you were right to call a halt to large-scale currency intervention to hold down sterling.

Independent - Roger Bootle writes on the painful consequences of your wish to reach zero inflation and the high cost of low inflation; at the bottom of the recent public row between you and Nigel Lawson lies a dispute about inflation.

RON BROWN

Mirror leader says Brown's fling with the Mace is costing him more with every day that passes. But it is also costing the Labour Party dear. Banning persistent delinquents from Parliament are

PRESS DIGEST

only temporary sanctions. Labour's own re-selection rules are a much more effective and permanent solution. It was supported by the Left but it might have been mounted for cases like Brown's.

Today says AEU set a trail blazing example by withdrawing its support. Other unions should follow suit. If they are going to go on claiming power in the Labour Party they should also start taking responsibility for the "daffy" MPs they put in Commons.

DEMJANJUK

Today says Israel should not repeat the Eichmann mistake by hanging Demjanjuk. It is less than he deserves but more than Israel needs. By hanging him Israel would endorse State murder and risk lowering itself to same moral level of its enemies, old and new.

Telegraph says the trial has seemed unsatisfactory and the evidence on which he has been convicted uncertain. Sentence of death should be commuted.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Express says the £6,000 threshold is unrealistically low; £10,000 is more appropriate. The objective of the Government's reforms is beyond criticism but Ministers can afford some flexibility when anomalies and unfairnesses are thrown up.

Times - Ministers still struggling to find formula to avoid a further damaging Tory rebellion on social security benefit changes.

Mail says John Moore will launch his fight for political survival today.

Telegraph - says Tory MPs kept up the pressure for Government concessions after returning from their constituencies.

Guardian - Rebel Tories fight for benefits concession.

Independent - Senior Ministers last night accepted the need for concessions on social security benefits but were still arguing about the extent of the climbdown which they will recommend to you today to avert a renewed Tory rebellion in the Commons. DHSS Ministers are pressing for a package of concessions costing more than £150million. Treasury are trying to limit the cost.

PRESS DIGEST

FT - Ministers consider concessions on housing benefit changes. Treasury and social security ministers were last night engaged in intensive discussions which will today involve you. Discussions have centred on whether any concession should be aimed primarily at dealing with unforeseen anomalies or whether they should go further and raise the £6,000 ceiling to, say, £10,000.

COMMUNITY CHARGE

Times leads with 17 Tory MPs in new revolt. Lords warned by Nicholas Ridley against altering the fixed rate charge. Leaders of the Conservative campaign to change the community charge are to meet on Thursday to plan their strategy to defeat the Government in the Lords.

Times - New dates for some councils to introduce community charge.

Independent - Bill sent to Lords last night hailed by Ministers as a "new era" for local government and bitterly denounced by Tory dissidents as politically damaging and anti-conservative. Sir Barney Hayhoe said the Bill was not a Conservative measure. It is a product of Thatcherism.

INDUSTRY

Times - Air Europe jet order will secure jobs for Rolls-Royce workers.

Times - Virgin Atlantic named best long-haul carrier for businessmen by Executive Travel magazine.

Times - Independent survey shows most trade unions are signing up to rule out strikes.

Times - Labour accuses Government of making 24th adjustment to way unemployment figures are calculated - latest move expected to reduce this year's total by about 40,000.

FT - TUC defers decision of adult training scheme and seeks a meeting with Mr Fowler.

FT - Stricter tests of the unemployed's availability for work, introduced nationally yesterday, could reduce registered unemployment by up to 40,000 according to Unemployment Unit pressure group.

PRESS DIGESTPOLITICAL

Independent - Your Government has "blitzed" its way out of the political battlegrounds in which every post-war Tory Prime Minister got bogged down, Norman Tebbit said last night.

Times - Lord Young taking steps to counter complaints that he pays scant attention to the House of Lords. His dilapidated office near the chamber is being redecorated and he plans too use it more for afternoon and evening meetings instead of working almost exclusively at DTI.

Times - "Red Robbo" (Derek Robinson formerly of Leyland) is to be leader of new group of communists.

Times - Scottish Tories to debate devolution for 80 minutes, twice the normal length, at Perth Conference.

EDUCATION

Times - Education Ministers draw up propaganda campaign to boost GCSE in face of expected accusations of administrative blundering, a decline in standards, increasing stress among pupils and parents and lack of fairness in new exam papers.

Independent - Nearly a quarter of teachers in secondary schools have had no training for the GCSE while another quarter have had only one day or less, according to survey.

LAW & ORDER

Times - PAC MPs outraged by Customs & Excise Chairman's revelation that people caught committing VAT and other frauds up to £75,000 are often let-off because of time and cost.

Times - Senior hospital consultant from Sussex accused of making thousands of pounds by putting in bogus claims through NHS.

Times - DIY chain B&Q wins support from Shrewsbury Crown Court in taking a case against it for Sunday trading to the European Court.

Independent - The use of non-lawyers in the Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether the vast majority of criminal cases should be prosecuted is unlawful, a civil service union alleged yesterday.

PRESS DIGESTMEDIA

Times - BBC programmes and personalities win 22 of this year's 28 Sony Radio Awards.

Times - Central TV to submit to you radical plan to reduce substantially ITV's network of 15 regional stations.

FT - Leslie Hill of Central TV says he told you that number of ITV companies should be considerably reduced in the 1990s. The worst thing that could be included in a new Broadcasting Bill, he believes, would be competitive tendering.

TCSC BUDGET REPORT

FT - Committee backs Chancellor for policy of seeking to stabilise the pound but criticises him over the scale of official currency intervention. Leader says committee had a chance to back Chancellor's policy and to rebuke you for your unhelpful interference, but instead wasted space detailing the chameleon nature of the medium term financial strategy. Lex column finds the report a model of how to be even-handedly critical: the anti-inflation programme is three years behind schedule, Mr Lawson is blamed for his obsolete economic policy and yet inflation is best fought through a stable exchange rate policy.

HIJACKING

Independent - Reports from Beirut last night linked the man responsible for the hijacking of the Kuwait airliner with the Soviet Union, Iran and the PLO in a complete web which has at its centre the western hostages in Lebanon.

ZOLA BUDD

Independent - leader says if Miss Budd did not break the IAAF rules she merits the support of the British sporting community - even if that entails the exclusion of this country from the

Olympics. She might however, pause to consider her own, unhappy part in all this. It behoves her to act with discretion, in order not to embarrass the nation which has given her its citizenship.

MIDDLE EAST

Times - Arafat and Assad meet in Syria for talks to end their 5 year rift.

PRESS DIGESTFRANCE

Times - Chirac and Mitterrand agree to TV showdown.

NATO

Times - Alarm in NATO over signal about Denmark's nuclear dilemma. Shultz calls on Copenhagen to "measure up to its responsibilities" within the Western Alliance.

SOVIET UNION

Times - Disastrous slump in Soviet economy last year may jeopardise Gorbachev's economic reforms and pose grave political and social problems for Soviet leadership.

JAPAN

Times - Takeshita's visit to London marks the start of a new emphasis in Tokyo on relations with Europe.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEN: Mr Parkinson addresses the Institute of Engineers lunch, Inn on the Park, London
- DES: Mr Baker visits Brunel University
- DOE: Mr Ridley addresses Building Materials Producers' lunch, London
- DTI: Lord Young addresses British Electronics Week lunch, Olympia; later, with Mr Clark, receives visit from the New Zealand Prime Minister
- DTI: Mr Clarke and Mr Atkins attend Action for Cities working breakfast, Leeds
- FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe addresses Lord Mayor of London's Easter Banquet
- MAFF: Mr MacGregor visits Covent Garden Market and Sainsbury's, Nine Elms; later lunches with David Lange, New Zealand Prime Minister, New Zealand High Commission
- WO: Mr Walker attends "Better Made in Britain" promotion, B and Q Stores, Pontypridd; later addresses Building Employers' Confederation, Cardiff and opens Wales and West Housing Association offices, St Mellons, Cardiff
- DEM: Mr Lee attends 150th anniversary celebrations of Bolton Chartered Borough
- DEN: Mr Morrison presents the Energy Management in Lighting award scheme, Cafe Royal, London
- DES: Mrs Rumbold addresses the Adam Smith Institute at the St James Court Hotel; later tours the London Business School
- DHSS: Mrs Currie attends Fun Run press launch, House of Commons
- DHSS: Mr Newton addresses All Party Parliamentary Group on AIDS
- DOE: Mr Trippier visits Action for Cities Roadsnow, Leeds
- DOE: Mr Chope and Mr Moynihan visit Brixton Recreation Centre
- DTI: Mr Maude addresses Takeovers Now conference, Institute of Chartered Accountants
- DTP: Lord Brabazon opens Safety at Sea and Marine Electronics Exhibition, Royal Horticultural Halls, Westminster, London
- HMT: Mr Lamont addresses the Institute for International Research conference on project finance
- HO: Mr Patten addresses Central Council of Probation Committees national conference on the Home Office view of criminal justice policy with specific reference to the probation service
- HO: Mr Hogg attends the opening of the Volatile Substance Symposium, London
- OAL: Mr Luce holds Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme reception, London
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

MOD: Mr Younger attends Nuclear Planning Group meeting at Kolding, Denmark (to 28 April)

DEN: Mr Spicer visits the Chicago Coal Show, Chicago

ODA: Mr Patten visits Ethiopia (to 1 May)

TV AND RADIO

'Today': BBC Radio 4 (6.30)

'Business Daily': C4 (12.30)

'The Parliament Programme: C4 (14.00)

'The Cook Report': ITV (20.00)

'Ruth's Story': BBC 2 (22.25) church of scientology

'The World Tonight': BBC Radio 4 (22.30) followed by 'The Financial World Tonight' and 'Today in Parliament'

'Newsnight': BBC 2 (22.55)
