

PRIME MINISTER

15 November 1988

MAIN EVENTS

Parliament prorogues

Prime Minister visits Washington (to 17 November)

Third Anniversary of Anglo-Irish Agreement (Tom King interviewed on Today programme

Luxembourg Defence Minister visits UK (to 17 November)

Business in the Community annual conference, Sheffield (to 16 November)

STATISTICS

CSO: Index of output of the production industries (Sept)

OPCS: Surveys of disability in Great Britain. The financial circumstances of disabled adults living in private households

PUBLICATIONS

DES: National Environment Research Council annual report 1987/88

HO: Cable Authority annual report and accounts 1987

DSS: Disability Survey - 2nd report - Financial implications for adults in the Community

PARLIAMENT

Royal Assent and Prorogation

MINISTERS - See attached

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Confusion over whether retail spending fell back or surged ahead in October - and fears of a further interest rate rise if spending has not been damped down.

British Coal makes half yearly operating profit of £190million - but a set back when UDM reject pay offer. Needs a miracle, according to Bob Haslam, to break even this year.

UDM to be the union at the new Margam superpit in South Wales; Scargill snubbed.

Coal industry faces loss of 20,000 jobs - about one-fifth of workforce - and up to 20 collieries are believed to be at risk during the next 18 months in struggle to stay competitive against falling world energy prices (FT).

Nurses select November 28 as protest day.

Trevor Clay, RCN, attacks NUPE and COHSE for misleading nurses in dispute.

Guardian says Palace has blocked privatisation of Crown Suppliers.

Kenneth Clarke escapes injury in car crash.

Two boosts for regions yesterday - 600 jobs to be created at Merthyr Tydfil by toy firm and 500 in County Antrim by Korean video recorder company.

Big row over Government plans to end the gallon as a garage forecourt measure against advice of Select Committee.

Dr Runcie meets P&O chairman Sir Jeffrey Sterling at Lambeth Palace and is believed to have expressed concern at plight of 600 sacked Dover seamen (FT).

Ford recalling 220,000 cars for a brake fault check.

British Airways check-in girls strike at Heathrow over job cuts and cause trouble.

Airbus Industrie has clinched a £1.6billion deal to build 46 jets for American leasing company ILFC (Times).

Air traffic controllers urge CAA to implement recommendation of worst air miss report. Paul Channon has not read it yet (Times).

PRESS DIGEST

Broadcasting White Paper leaves loophole that could allow national newspaper proprietors to own two TV franchises each (FT).

Independent to print in Frankfurt (FT).

Transatlantic jet with 100 British passengers on board hit by mystery object off USA - dents nose and wrecks radar.

Law Commission urges that home owners should be forced to have their properties surveyed and to disclose faults - similar to MOT certificate for car.

Home Secretary announces plans to recruit 1230 more policemen; another 100 civilians to be recruited in London to put more bobbies on beat.

Concern about the award of a contract to supply liquified petroleum gas to Army and Government establishments - IRA may have been handed keys to military bases (Star).

Sun offers £10,000 reward in connection with missing of a Welsh farm labourer after disappearance of 15 year old girl.

Senior police officer appointed to investigate claims that wrong people were convicted of the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings has been made subject of a disciplinary inquiry (Independent).

Inquest on 3 killed by RUC disrupted when lawyers for families walk out in protest over admissibility of evidence. Labour accuses Government of cover-up for banning evidence of intelligence surveillance.

Forensic science service is in a crisis, according to evidence given by senior police officers to Home Affairs Committee (Times).

Jimmy Reid, Sun, says Govan by-election defeat could be a blessing in disguise for Labour if it concentrates its mind and recognises that the Scots feel they have no real say over their destiny.

Jim Sillars, SNP MP, takes his seat and pledges to establish Scotland as independent state within Europe.

Mail exposes on its front page "The New School Bullies" - Andrew Bennett Labour MP and Labour controlled Tameside Council trying to frighten parents into voting against opting out. Leader says this only serves to demonstrate why so many families are anxious to escape Socialist clutches.

PRESS DIGEST

Speaking on BBC TV Panorama, Nicholas Ridley said water authorities should not be prosecuted for failing to prevent sewage polluting rivers while they are carrying out a £1billion cleaning programme.

Water bills may rise by up to 12.5%, Nicholas Ridley predicts.

Kinnock "Green" speech yesterday attracts little coverage; he questions Tory commitment to cause.

NUS plans day of protest over student loan proposals (Times).

Obstetricians face a five-fold increase in medical insurance premiums as part of a new system of differential payments to be introduced by the Medical Protection Society. Move condemned by BMA (Times).

Today says you are being treated like Royalty - you and DT feature on a Kenyan stamp marking the opening of the telephone exchange during your visit.

Lots of coverage of Prince Charles' 40th birthday party in Birmingham.

Robert Maxwell gives £500,000 to Prince's Youth Business Trust as special birthday present.

Express says Shamir declares his preference for another Government of national unity rather than deal with rabbis to stay in power.

Cyprus hopes to be in next batch of applicants to join EC.

Death of Takeo Miki, 81, former Japanese Prime Minister.

YOUR SPEECH

Before Gorbachev news came

Guardian - PM admits reporting ban curbs liberty - victory of democracy over terrorism worth some loss of freedom.

Mail - Freedom will be the only winner, pledges Maggie.

PRESS DIGESTGORBACHEV VISIT

Star - Red carpet for Gorbachev.

Sun - Gorby has a date with The Queen; historic meeting. Visit marks you out as most trusted Western leader by Soviets and US.

Mirror - Gorbachev to visit Britain - yes to 3-day trip. Surprise announcement.

Express - Red carpet for Gorbachev. Cheers as Mrs Thatcher reveals surprise visit by Russian leader. One of Whitehall's most closely guarded secrets. Seen as a mark of your stature. Speculation about a visit to Oxford, Cambridge, York and Edinburgh.

FT page 1 - Gorbachev visit to London set for next month. No firm agenda has yet been fixed for the two days of talks; but they are seen as providing an opportunity to strengthen your already significant influence in East/West relations and in arms reduction talks.

Times front page lead - In surprise announcement during Lord Mayor's Banquet you announced that Gorbachev is to visit Britain next month accompanied by wife. Timing could not have been better for you as you fly off to see George Bush today. Within a month you will be meeting the leader and leader-elect of both superpowers. It points up the pivotal role you are playing in East/West relations (Times); Washington later announced Gorbachev is to visit US to address UN session and meet Reagan and Bush.

Times - Andrew McKewan notes that by arriving in Britain after the election but before George Bush moves to the White House he is implicitly emphasising your role as a bridge between the 2 administrations.

Times - New book by Christopher Donnelly "Red Banner" suggests Gorbachev would put his position as Soviet leader at risk if he tried to reduce his country's defence effort "drastically or unilaterally".

Telegraph front page lead: 3 day visit by Gorbachev to Britain. Thatcher promises "to stretch hands across the divide". Another indication of your influential role as West: most experienced leader.

PRESS DIGEST

Guardian page 1 lead - Gorbachev to visit Thatcher - handing you a diplomatic triumph confirming you have the ear of both superpowers.

Independent page 1 lead with photograph - Gorbachev's decision to make Britain his first port of call in Western Europe since becoming President is further evidence of the crucial role he regards Britain, and you in particular, as playing in the Western Alliance. But some tough talking is likely; it is not expected to be the smooth public relations exercise you imply.

YOUR US VISIT

Independent - You will meet Bush on eve of US defence review, finding US defence policy in a significantly different atmosphere from the one which pervaded the Pentagon under Weinberger. Carlucci has indicated he does not wish to stay on and Mr Bush is considering appointing an industrialist to the Pentagon. Leader says there is a strong likelihood you will be able to forge a relationship with Bush which is at least as special as that with Reagan. But it calls on you not to neglect the European pillar of NATO by placing excessive reliance on the US.

FT - Peter Riddell's assessment is that it would be tempting, though mistaken, for the British to see George Bush's election as business as usual. But although his election may result in a less cosy relationship, you are determined to ensure that close relations with Washington remain at centrepiece of your foreign policy.

WASHINGTON

Star - Bush will crack down on IRA arms - determined to eliminate gun running.

Express finds Bush and Quayle are distant cousins.

Guardian - Bush to back stable dollar.

Times - Leading advisers to Bush said yesterday that he was serious about reducing the country's deficit.

PRESS DIGESTWEU

Times - Revitalised WEU set to become voice of Europe on joint security policy. Spain and Portugal yesterday signed documents of accession to WEU. Leader says the bigger WEU grows the more delicate the balancing act it will have to perform in NATO. Any attempt to band together against the US could encourage resentment in long term.

POLITICS

Express attacks Brian Gould for comparing investment in privatised British Steel to Barlow Clowes as a "low piece of scaremongering".

CHANCELLOR'S BRIEFING

This is fast disappearing as an issue.

Independent - Briefing row opens debate on pensioners. Tory MPs are convinced that the Chancellor has put targetting of pensioners' benefits on the political agenda. Peter Jenkins says that the Chancellor went too far, behaved badly and did damage to himself

Britain's poorest pensioners could get as much as £500million in extra benefits following the row over the Chancellor's briefing - Whitehall sources suggested last night the row would make it impossible for the Chancellor to restrict the cost of the benefits package being drawn up by John Moore (Times).

MIDDLE EAST

FT - PLO agrees to recognise Israel's right to existence and proclaims establishment of independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Independent - Despite internal quarrelling, Palestinians vote to declare their own state. PLO calculates at least 65 countries will recognise it, including the Soviet Union. Palestinian leaders expect the development to fuel the 11-month uprising on the West Bank and Gaza strip. Israeli troops brace themselves for big demonstration. Leader says the Palestinian acceptance of UN resolution 242 is ambiguous. And the situation is still too delicate for Arafat to be able to create a government-in-exile.

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PRESS DIGEST

PLO Parliament in exile last night voted 258 to 46 to endorse UN Resolution 242 which implicitly recognises Israel. An independent state of Palestine 'was also created' during a ceremony addressed by Yasser Arafat (Times).

NORTHERN IRELAND

Times leader will not increase its effectivenss if it cannot persuade the majority in Northern Ireland of its usefulness.

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MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

DSS: Mr Moore visits Coventry ILO

WO: Mr Walker opens Delyn Packaging, new pvc factory, Caerphilly; later opens Lesser Town Hall and Market Chambers, Pontypridd; later attends launch of National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux report, Cardiff; later addresses village seminar, Merthyr Tydfil; in the evening attends dinner for launch of Wales Quality Centre, Cardiff

DEM: Mr Lee visits Barnsley; later addresses Yorks and Humberside Regional Association of Chambers of Commerce

DES: Mr Jackson addresses the Cambridge Save British Science Campaign

DH: Mr Mellor, Mr Clark and Mrs Currie attend RHA Chairman dinner; Mr Mellor later launches NAHA report: Health Services for Ethnic Minorities and visits Terence Higgins Trust

DOE: Lord Caithness signs Memorandum of Understanding on Nuclear Accidents

DTI: Mr Clark opens DTI Reigate office

DTI: Mr Maude attends Single Market breakfast conference, Sheffield

DTp: Mr Bottomley visits the Metropolitan Police Driving School, Hendon

DTp: Lord Brabazon hosts a reception for COSPAS/SARSAT (Radio Beacons), London

MAFFMr Ryder attends British Retailers Association reception and luncheon, London

MAFFMr Thompson addresses Animal Protection Industry conference, Stoneleigh

OAL: Mr Luce addresses Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme reception, London

ODA: Mr Patten visits Welsh Centre for International Affairs, Cardiff; later visits Atlantic College, Llantwit Major, South Wales

WO: Mr Roberts visits British Gas Training Centre, Cardiff

WO: Mr Grist attends Society of Great Britain Welsh Executive, Pharmaceutical dinner, Newport

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

DOE: Lord Caithness signs Memorandum of Understanding on Nuclear Accidents, Netherlands

FCO: Mrs Chalker attends European Parliament, Strasbourg (to 16 November)
