

9 February 1989

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Mr Syse, leader of Norway's Opposition party (photocall)

President Bush presents US budget

The Queen holds an Investiture at Buckingham Palace

Jamaican General Election

STATISTICS

BoE: Financing of the CGBR (4th Qtr)

BoE: UK banking sector statistics (4th Qtr)

BoE: Money stock (4th Qtr)

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Northern Ireland; Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Prime Minister

Business: Debate on a Motion to take note of the Government's Expenditure Plans 1989-90 to 1991-92 (CM 601)

Motion to take note of EC Documents on Credit Institutions. Details will be given in the Official Report

Adjournment Debates: The South West London traffic assessment studies (Mr J Hanley)

Select Committees: COMMITTEES ON PRIVATE BILLS

1. Associated British Ports (No 2)
North Killingholme Cargo Terminal

Lords: Starred Questions
Law of Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (HL): Committee (?to be discharged)

Road Traffic (Driver Licensing and Information Systems) Bill (HL): Report

Elected Authorities (Northern Ireland) Bill: Second Reading

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGESTMain News

Pops and Qualities alike think Edwina Currie wiped the floor with the Select Committee and left them with egg over their faces, but some wonder about the effect on her career.

Colin Welch, in Mail, says the hacks' verdict was: "She's got away with it".

Ann Winterton MP says Mrs Currie's appearance was "pure theatre" and "very sad".

Mirror leads with claim that one in 16 convenience foods tested over 3 weeks contained listeria. Leader says the results are frightening.

And a report placed in the Library for Whitehall working party suggests there could be 2million salmonella cases a year.

Share prices reached a new post-crash high yesterday but failed to stay above the 2,100 level (Times).

Minutes leaked from Water Authorities' Association show privatisation of water industry could be thrown into chaos by the EC's insistence on water quality standards being reached (Times).

Government under pressure to write-off most of the water authorities' £5billion debt in order to help make a success of the sale of their shares to the public (Times).

Independent leader says the Government cannot pretend that in the supply of water a natural monopoly, the market is going to be the main determinant of price. The regulators will decide. The public should be consulted: companies could cost the various improvements possible and enclose them with bills. These reforms are going to hurt too many people too much, to be taken on trust.

Guardian leads with water firms urging easing of EC rules - compromise over pollution levels essential to success of flotation.

NHS has widespread recruitment and retention problems and may be losing about 40% of its ancillary and domestic staff each year, according to York University survey (FT).

Shares in AMI, Britain's largest private hospital group have risen sharply following publication of NHS White Paper (Independent).

PRESS DIGEST

AIDS sufferers could be treated with a man-made antibody (Independent).

Government proposals to outlaw closed shop to be outlined in a White Paper within a month, but Telegraph has reservations about doing so in current Employment Bill.

Today claims Queen in speech on 800th anniversary of Mayoralty launched a thinly veiled attack on City skulduggery and insisted on honesty.

Today leader says Government must compel all essential services to recompense public for failure to deliver service after a period of, say, 12 hours grace.

Announcement of 500 redundancies at Cotgrave brings loss of jobs in Notts coalfield to 1,700 in 2 weeks.

1,200 sacked at Charlton Leslie shipyard on Tyneside for breaking a no-strike agreement.

Sun forecasts that by next century only a skeleton staff of Civil Servants will be left in London; 20,000 to be dispersed in next 2 years.

Mr Kamentsev favours the idea of a Sainsbury's in Moscow after visiting one of their stores (Express).

Government offers services of British experts to train Soviet managers in coping with world markets (Times).

CPSA agrees pay deal allowing variations according to skill and location.

MOD angers Select Committee by rejecting its request for details of all senior personnel who have left to take up jobs with private defence contractors (Times).

Times leader discussing Sunday opening says you are often presented, however inaccurately, as a politician who is determined to force through unpopular measures against the will of the majority. On the question of Sunday trading, however, the situation is almost the exact reverse. It looks at the suggested compromises concluding that the only really sensible and consistent reform is to abandon the Sunday trading restrictions altogether.

PRESS DIGEST

Sun attacks authorities for keeping death of man from Legionnaire's disease in London secret for 2 weeks.

BMA's ethical committee calls on Government to outlaw sale of all human tissues (Times).

Michael Winner, film director, funds training HQ for Guardian Angels.

MORI claims 1.5million motorists are regularly over the drinks limit.

Douglas Hurd says during Richmond by-election speech that he plans to seek extra Treasury funding to provide another substantial increase in police manpower over the next few years (FT).

Norman Tebbit faces director of North London Polytechnic who employs a convicted IRA terrorist after visit to establishment where he was howled down by students.

Centre for Policy Studies calls on Government to relinquish control of universities by encouraging them to charge full-cost tuition fees (FT).

Chief Executive of Westminster City Council to leave amid suggestions he has been forced out by Lady Porter. Refuses to compromise his integrity. 51st official to leave since Lady Porter became leader.

Sun says David Owen has signalled he is prepared to return to Labour Party if it drops unilateralism - "spells end of Kinnock".

Mirror says Lord Belstead is collecting more than £10,000 a year from Government under set-aside and has sacked a TGWU member with a golden handshake of £2,000. He had to write asking for a reference six times.

Telegraph says Government is considering significant concession. IBA may be given power to reject highest bidder for franchises.

Rupert Murdoch admits that the Sun has been guilty of excesses and he stamps on them.

Lord Rees-Mogg condemns Yorkshire TV's New Statesman programme.

PRESS DIGEST

Launch of Sunday Correspondent newspaper is postponed until autumn because it is taking longer than expected to raise £16.5million in funding (FT).

Changes to the extradition system between Ireland and the UK were proposed by Britain at a generally upbeat meeting of the Anglo-Irish Conference yesterday (Independent).

Royal Opera House reveals in internal documents that its £100million redevelopment project at Covent Garden could leave it with inferior facilities and a financial loss (FT):

English Heritage threaten to block plan (Guardian).

Boeing 707 with 137 Italian holidaymakers and 7 US crew crashes in Azores; no survivors.

Irish Junior Minister forms romantic attachment to Ann Gillespie who served 9 years on IRA explosives charges.

Tom King confirms that the Irish DPP is examining evidence submitted by Britain against Patrick Ryan (FT).

Viraj Mendis granted a visa to visit West Germany; fears he may return to Britain by "back door".

Bruges Group launched amid some publicity. Ted Heath attacks you for your rejection of United States of Europe.

Times leader discusses the Government's plan to have EC Frauds investigated saying the most remarkable aspect of the decision is that it has taken so long. It adds that consumers and taxpayers would benefit by returning farming to the market place where, under the Treaty of Rome, it surely belongs. The CAP's cornucopia of cash should be removed from the shop window.

Times - Evidence confirms that drug barons and terrorists are among those benefiting fraudulently from EC agricultural subsidies.

EC's plan for a minimum 15% tax at source on savings is greeted with hostility by Britain and Luxembourg (FT). Leader says that, apart from not working, the tax would put European financial centres at a disadvantage because European savings would go elsewhere to avoid the tax.

Number killed in run up to Jamaican General Election rises to 11.

PRESS DIGEST

US intelligence agencies believe Ahmed Jebril, leader of a breakaway Palestinian terrorist group under contract to hardliners in Iran, may have bombed Lockerbie crash plane (Times).

Opposition to Senator Tower becoming US Secretary of State for Defence is growing (INdependent).

Independent leaders says the Israeli-Arab dispute remains a running sore in the international body politic. Mr Shamir's refusal to help treat it arouses more and more impatience and less and less sympathy.

EDWINA

Star page 2 - Buy my book Edwina tells MP. She coolly faced her tormentors and left egg on faces of Select Committee.

Sun page 2 - Thanks fans! Cocky Edwina's Commons "trial" is a breeze. She sailed triumphantly through it, cocking a snook at critics. Mocks her tormentors. She emerges with head intact and reputation enhanced.

Mirror page 2 - Edwina leaves 'em with egg on their faces. She's a winner in trial by MPs. Ran rings round MPs and told them nothing new. Curt but courteous.

Today page 1 lead - Currie sauce. Edwina dishes up defiance in 30-minute grilling. Treated tormentors with contempt - like a crowd of naughty pupils. Leader headed "Edwina has blown it now" says her Select Committee appearance had the sad air of a political farewell.

Express page 1 - Egg row Edwina refuses to crack. In a grand stand, stonewalling performance. Vintage performance. But Edward Pearce says it was a poor performance, generally defensive and brazen by turns.

Mail page 1 lead - Egg all over their faces. Edwina leaves salmonella committee floundering. Openly ridiculed Agriculture Committee's fumbling efforts to get her to elaborate on salmonella in eggs scare. Leader says she told the Committee just what they and you would have expected: nothing. Plenty of time to get back into office. But on yesterday's showing she needs to cultivate more Parliamentary grace.

Telegraph page 1 lead - Studied defiance by Currie of eggs interrogation. Ann Winterton says on TV: "She stonewalled every question and acted like a grand dame".

PRESS DIGEST

Times page 1 - Edwina Currie treats Select Committee with barely-concealed contempt that drew gasps from MPs, journalists and members of the public. During 30 minutes of questioning she made a series of stonewalling replies which seemed to MPs to justify her earlier refusals to attend.

Currie fails to crack over eggs (FT).

Guardian page 1 with picture - Currie avoids more egg on her face. A composed performance before a committee she at times treated with disdain. Little new learned. Sketch headline: "Britain's wildest brunette leaves them speechless".

Independent - Edwina Currie fails to clear up central mystery of the salmonella affair - why it took more than 7 weeks to clarify her remark that most egg production was infected.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Mr Fowler addresses and Mr Lee attends "Meetings and Incentive Travel" awards dinner, QEII Conference Centre, London
- MAFF: Mr MacGregor presents prizes of 1988 National Forage Competition, London
- DEM: Mr Lee visits Nelson and Colne College Hotel, London
- DEM: Mr Nicholls attends Ministerial group on drug abuse, Home Office
- DH: Mr Mellor meets Eric Morley re Kings College Hospital Appeal: later tastes alcohol-free wines for "She" magazine, London
- DOE: Mr Gummer visits West Country and meets Taunton and Somerset District Councils
- DOE: Mr Chope addresses Town and Country Planning Institute annual seminar on planning, London
- DOE: Mr Tripper attends opening of new headquarters of Balfour Betty Construction company, Nottingham
- DTI: Mr Maude addresses launch of Doncaster Business Shop
- DTp: Mr Portillo addresses the Bus and Coach Council annual dinner, Kensington
- DTp: Mr Bottomley launches Road Safety video for the Association of British Insurers, London
- HO: Mr Renton addresses Radio Academy luncheon, London
- MAFF: Mr Thompson visits the Isle of Wight
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington attends launch of new varieties, PBI International, London; later addresses Institute of Professional Civil Servants branch at Agricultural Food Research Council conference, London; in the evening attends Company of Fruiterers annual livery banquet, London
- OAL: Mr Luce addresses Royal Geographical Society lunch; later speaks at opening of the "US-UK Print Connection" exhibition, Barbican Centre, London
- ODA: Mr Patten makes speech on European Community/African Caribbean and Pacific Countries Lome renegotiations, London
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- FCO: Mr Eggar addresses UN Commission for Human Rights, Geneva (to 10 February)
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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

DES: Mrs Rumbold records interview for BBC1's "On the Record"

FCO: Mr Waldegrave interviewed by Sally Morris from Peace Through NATO.
London

TV AND RADIO

"9-2-5": BBC 2 (20.00). A look at company salesmen

"The North Sea": BBC 2 (20.30). "Norway - Our Common Future". The Prime Minister of Norway, Mrs Brundtland, talks about the need for the industrialised world to face up to its responsibilities on pollution

"This Week": Thames (20.30)

"Question Time": BBC 1 (22.15). With Baroness Ewart-Biggs, Menzies Campbell MP, Douglas Hurd MP

"The City Programme": Thames (22.35)
