

April 26, 1990

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

EC: Informal meeting of Social Welfare Ministers, Dublin Castle (to 27 April)

STATISTICS

DEN: Energy trends (Feb)

OPCS; PCA quarterly report 1990 volume two

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PUBLICATIONS

ACAS: Annual Report

TCSC: Report on the 1990 Budget

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Treasury, Prime Minister

Business: Enterprise and New Towns (Scotland) Bill: Remaining Stages  
Motion to take note of EC Document relating to the  
Automobile Industry. Details will be given in the Official  
Report

Adjournment Debates: The enhancement of short-range nuclear missiles in  
West Germany (Mr C D Townsend)

Select Committees: COMMITTEE ON A PRIVATE BILL  
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill [Lords]

Lords: Starred Questions  
National Health Service and Community Care Bill: Committee (3rd  
Day)

European Parliament Electoral Reform Bill (HL)  
Committee

ROYAL ASSENT

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PRESS DIGESTMain News

West German SDP leader survives assassination attempt by woman with knife at Cologne election meeting.

Strangeways seige ends when remaining 5 surrender and inquests into three and a half week incident begin; lowered from roof in basket of an hydraulic hoist.

Sun headline: "What a farce?" POA leader at Strangeways claims 25 day protest could have ended on Day 2. David Waddington wonders what people would have said if five prison officers had been killed. He says the softly, softly style was right (Mail).

Extensive criticism of line taken by authorities.

Some reports put bill at £105million; Manchester ratepayers concerned over who will pay police/fire costs.

Times says defiant rioters dictated the terms for surrender. Lord Justice Woolf startles Home Office by asking the 47,000 prisoners and 20,000 prison officers to submit their personal views on the causes of unrest in jails.

Grandmother of leader of Strangeways rioters, Paul Taylor, says he deserves a good kick up the backside. "He's been an absolute disgrace - they should have thrown him off the roof" (Times).

Second worst set of trade figures. Today says only industry can solve the problem by making the goods Britons want to buy.

Today also tells its readers to grit their teeth for another year of high mortgage rates.

But house prices back on the rise in London, according to latest survey.

Times Business Comment says John Major's blithe response to the second worst trade figures on record can only worsen their psychological impact. He had to search hard to justify optimism. The real problem for the Chancellor is that the perceived improvement in the trade gap has suddenly and unexpectedly stalled this year. He has put himself in a position where he must wait, hope and simply allow economic events to unfold. This increases the chances of a more prolonged economic downturn. The do-nothing image will also prevent the Chancellor from cutting interest rates until the markets are convinced it is absolutely safe to do so. That could well be six months too late for the economy.



PRESS DIGEST

Mail leader says Britain's economic statistics are a mass of contradictions. We might not be wiser but it is possible we would be happier if they didn't exist.

9.3% offered to Underground workers.

Times says that the Franco-German summit could hardly have been better timed and that the signal from it on economic and political union by January 1993 will be specifically directed at you, intended to demolish any hope you may still entertain of exploiting the serious difficulties which were previously caused by Chancellor Kohl's breakneck rush towards German unification.

Leon Brittan advances scheme to save pound and take Britain into ERM - printing on note equivalent value in ECU (Express).

Independent says Brittan warns that new initiative on EC political union would be premature. If it happens, it should not be allowed to slow down progress towards economic and monetary integration.

Michael Heseltine says small businesses could thrive under a Bank of England free from Govt influence; it could have a major impact on keeping down inflation.

Ted Heath says he will not campaign nationally for Conservatives at next election (but later reports say he will). Attacks community charge and your attitude to Europe.

Mirror: Thatcher is the nag of Europe, says Ted.

Sir Geoffrey Howe warns you to match the pace and style of reform to the public mood (Independent).

Telegraph feature calls on Govt to go over on to attack.

Mirror says Prince of Wales yesterday slammed "the unrest, violence and greed of Thatcher's Britain" at launch of his new volunteers scheme.

Kinnock wins strong backing for plan to revolutionise policy making in the Labour Party and to make an historic cut in the trade unions' block vote at annual conference (Times).

Big unions head for left-right clash over Kinnock plan for Labour democracy. Leftwing leaders fear new system will be loaded against them (Independent).



PRESS DIGESTCommunity Charge

Sun says secret Whitehall figures show that millions will be clobbered by Labour's roof tax. Express claims Donald Dewar has let the cat out of the bag on cost of roof tax to single occupants.

Chris Patten hints that the SSA is to be revised, that the transitional relief for small business might be extended and that anomalies such as those affecting people living in sheltered housing will be considered (Times).

16 Liverpool Labour councillors suspended by the party after they refused to set a charge for the city; five barred from standing at local elections. (Campaigner against Militant chosen as Labour candidate in Bootle).

Lazy Labour MPs desert Commons in Opposition attack on charge last night.

Express political editor says there is a growing belief among senior Ministers that there is simply no purpose in throwing billions of pounds at the problem. You are considering plans to reshape local govt at the next election.

Magistrates courts have expressed concern to the Home Office over the lack of provision by the Govt for enforcing penalties against what could be large numbers of community charge defaulters (Times).

Tory Redbridge council undermines the party's efforts to blame local authorities for high community charges, calling on Govt to accept its "overriding share of responsibility" (Independent).

Head teachers warn they will not cover for staff cuts caused by charge capping (Independent).

Fizzy drinks business to be investigated by MMC.

OFT question the legality of Barclays Bank imposing an annual charge of £8 on its 9 million Barclaycard holders (Times).

Surrey police to prosecute Associated Asphalt for causing a traffic jam by carrying out repairs in breach of contract, in rush hour near Woking - Express delighted.



PRESS DIGEST

Gasmen who fail to call will be liable to pay compensation to householders (Express).

Mirror claims Basuto Medical Centre in Fulham, with 4,000 patients, is leaving the NHS rather than work under the new GPs' contract.

Charing Cross and Westminster teaching hospitals likely to lose 102 beds and at least 62 nursing posts if a package of measures to save £6.8million is approved by Riverside Health Authority tonight (Times).

MPs campaigning for tighter abortion laws are to seek to salvage something from the wreckage of the votes in the Commons by pressing for the loophole in abortion up to birth to be closed (Times).

Campaigners against abortion admit they have suffered a crushing defeat.

An Independent editorial says abortion on demand within the first 12 weeks would be the logical final step in the present debate. All abortion is distressing, but early abortion is a great deal less painful for all concerned.

Mirror commenting on Soviet Education Minister's being impressed with Cambridgeshire school he visited, says this new and modern school is no more typical of British schools than Russian showpiece flats, factories and schools shown to gullible foreign visitors to USSR.

Ministers accused of letting down opt-out schools by not protecting them from the effects of charge capping (Times).

Mother to make legal history by challenging RE syllabus imposed on schools by Ealing - over lessons which do not mention God.

Scientist charged with attempted illegal export of equipment in connection with Iraqi's gun.

Nicholas Ridley to be questioned by Commons Cttee over his handling of Iraqi gun affair.

£30million worth of cocaine found in engine room of Liberian freighter in Liverpool - Britain's biggest drugs haul.



PRESS DIGEST

Times leader expresses concern over the fact that Scotland Yard received more than 500,000 inquiries from other govt agencies in 1989 saying that is prima facie shocking. The public is entitled to a more convincing explanation of this grotesque figure than it has so far received. It concludes that the law should impose stiff penalties on employers and others who attempt to circumvent reasonable limits on the right to know.

Times leader supports BBC's claim for more money for their World Service programmes saying it has earned the right of ministerial respect. Its grant should reflect the real, and modest, cost of securing one of Britain's most famous exports.

ITV's This Week will claim tonight MI5 twice tried to smear Harold Wilson in two '70s election campaigns - in programme about Colin Wallace affair.

Poles shelve joint UK venture which would have given British investors a 30% share in Poland's second TV channel (FT).

Policeman accepts £15,000 in settlement of a libel action against Stewart Steven, Editor, Mail on Sunday, who claimed officer was guilty of serious misconduct when he arrested him for minor traffic offence.

Commons Energy Cttee accuses Govt of renegeing on its EC commitment to reduce acid rain by fitting filters to coal-fired power stations (Times).

Bonn is seeking to calm Soviet fears about German unity. It believes that the Kremlin is wrongly suspicious that a reunited nation will seek to use its economic and potential military power (Times).

East German Govt responds cautiously to Bonn's offer of a limited one-to-one exchange rate for savers in the July currency union saying that it will pursue a better deal to compensate for the abolition of subsidies (Times).

Peres gives up attempt to form Israeli Govt.

US vote declaring Jerusalem to be the united capital of Israel shatters hopes for the early release of other Western hostages (Times).

Defiant Lithuanians dig in for long hard economic siege, announcing special law to combat Moscow's sanctions (Independent).



PRESS DIGEST

Chamorro's plan to assume Defence Minister role greeted by boos from her own supporters at inauguration (Independent).

GALLIPOLI

Star - Maggie weeps for war dead - "As our people march past I get tears in my eyes, too" you tell a veteran.

Express devotes a page from Cape Helles to "Memories of Gallipoli's killing fields".

Mail "The final farewell" - after 75 years veterans pay tearful salute to 300,000 who fell in slaughter of Gallipoli.

Gallipoli veteran says "I never wanted to come back. I felt bulldozed into coming". But as you approach him he breaks down in tears saying "It was all worth it after all" (Independent).

Guardian, having set him up to do so, finds one of the veterans didn't after all raise the community charge with you!.

STRANGEWAYS

Star calls them 25 'shameful' days ended but only when the prisoners were "good and ready". Day after day we have seen prison service, Govt and even Britain itself made a laughing stock. Director of prison service must take responsibility. The wimpish policy has handed power to the prisoners.

Sun leader headed "Never again" says it lasted 25 days too long. You got it right when you said action to stamp out the riot should have been taken the day after it started. In future the authorities must not hesitate to use force, including SAS.

Today leader "Epitaph for jail vermin" says the real blame lies with the prisoners who rioted. The aftermath must be swift and very harsh and all involved must be made to pay and the leaders dealt with ruthlessly. Any attempts to espouse their pathetic cause must be crushed.

Express leader on "Strange ways to run a jail" complains that a handful of addlebrained thugs were allowed to thumb their noses at authority and made Britain a laughing stock. The manner of the ending added insult to considerable inquiry. What needs investigating is the mind set of those running the prison service. Lord Justice Woolf must require those responsible to explain why they took their misguided time instead of crushing the rebels quickly.



PRESS DIGEST

Mail on "The fiasco at Strangeways" says Home Office, its Ministers and Prison Service have been humiliated repeatedly and publicly. It must never happen again. Whoever is responsible has dealt the Govt a damaging, perhaps, fatal, blow. The exhibition of incompetence looks like a symbol of an administration which has lost its nerve.

An Independent editorial says the Strangeways seige was nasty, brutal and far too long. The authorities should have moved firmly at least 2 weeks ago. The siege encouraged copycat riots and made the forces of law and order look ridiculous. But as long as such prisons exist and this country continues to lock up an unduly large proportion of offenders, the likelihood of vicious but incoherent protests will remain.

Guardian says one measure of the present shortfall is that Strangeways recognised as the fastest improving prisons, was aiming to achieve 11 hours a week of free association for its inmates. Prisons which leave their inmates brooding so long in their cells breed trouble.



MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- LPC: Sir Geoffrey Howe attends Printers Charitable Corporation boxing dinner, London
- DEM: Lord Strathclyde visits East Midlands Tourist Board, Leicester
- DEM: Mr Nicholls addresses HSE Development Course for Managers
- DEN: Mr Morrison addresses Petroleum Group Geological Society dinner, Intercontinental Hotel, London
- DES: Mr Howarth attends reception for Friends for the Young Deaf, House of Commons
- DES: Mrs Rumbold visits Glynn School, Surrey
- DES: Mr Jackson visits Replan, London
- DH: Mr Freeman gives the opening address on "The Nurse as Team Leader" at the International Psychiatric Nursing conference, Newcastle; later meets Brian Sedgemore MP re City and Hackney Health Authority
- DH: Mrs Bottomley meets the Medical Advisory Service, London
- DTI: Mr Hogg visits East Birmingham Task Force
- DTI: Mr Redwood addresses sixth form economics conference, Methodist Central Hall, Westminster
- DTp: Mr McLoughlin addresses Royal Institute of Naval Architects seminar on RoRo Research, London
- MAFF: Baroness Trumpington attends Grain and Food Trade Associations annual dinner, London
- WO: Mr Grist addresses joint AGM and annual conference of Welsh Association of Health Authorities and Welsh Division of Family Practitioner Committees

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MINISTERS OVERSEAS VISITS

- DSS: Mrs Shephard attends EC Social Affairs Council, Dublin (to 27 April)

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MINISTERS (PRESS INTERVIEWS)

- DEM: Mr Howard interviewed by Oxford Association
- DEM: Lord Strathclyde visits East Midlands Tourist Board, Leicester
- DEM: Mr Nicholls addresses HSE Development Course for Managers
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TV AND RADIO

"9 II 5". BBC 2 (7.30 pm) Examines the post war economic miracle in Japan and how successfully it is grafting onto British industry

"Public Affairs" - the Poulson affair. Radio 4 (7.20 pm)

"Nature". BBC 2 (8.00 pm) looks at the effects of plastics on marine life

"This Week". ITV (8.30 pm)

Party Political Broadcast - Green party. BBC 1 (9.00 pm) ITV (10.00 pm) BBC 2 (10.35 pm)

"Forty Minutes". BBC 2 (9.30 pm) Karl's Kidney - For Sale

"Question Time". BBC 1 (10.05 pm) Panellists are: Baroness Blackstone, David Montgomery, Roger Poole and Rt Hon Norman Tebbit MP

"Fragile Earth: Halting the Fires". Ch 4 (11.20 pm)

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