

PRESS DIGESTPRIME MINISTERMain NewsGulf

Extensive coverage of debate and a very good press for you.

Difference between yourself and Kinnock over use of force brought out. Mail leads with "Split grows over Gulf".

Britain to send more forces - troops it is assumed - to the Gulf. Today says Paras are on standby.

Britain considers dispatch of 2,000 troops to the Gulf Independent.

Archbishop of Canterbury, in Lords, says Britain must not put hostages' safety before military action against Iraq - they cannot be allowed to determine policy.

Lord Callaghan, in Lords, says Benn's self-righteousness exceeds his intellectual ability.

Today says 150 MPs gave the debate a miss.

BP increase price of petrol by 6.8p to 230.9p a gallon. MPs severely critical of profiteering.

Oil at \$31.025 for October delivery FT.

Impact of higher oil prices likely to be savage on developing countries and Eastern Europe FT.

Iraq calls up reservists as food queues lengthen Mail.

Moscow rejects Baghdad attempt to link resolution of conflict over Kuwait to progress on other questions in Middle East FT.

British companies with existing contracts in Iraq have been told to carry on working by the Foreign Office lest their employees are taken hostage FT.

President Bush to give Iraq State TV an interview.

Soviet ship ready to take US military equipment to Saudi in unprecedented move to be agreed at Helsinki Independent.

PRESS DIGEST

UN frustrate Indian efforts to send food to Kuwait in return for hostages Independent.

Bitter controversy in Tehran at suggestions that Iran will provide food and medicine to Iraq Independent.

China and Iran dismay the West by strongly hinting they might consider providing Iraq with food and medicine Times.

Star reports on good response to its appeal for goods to help refugees on Jordanian border.

Consignments of food for Asian refugees in Jordanian desert camps were trapped in a bureaucratic limbo yesterday despite an international campaign to help the 160,000 or more refugees Times.

Mirror says greatest airlift since Berlin is needed now if hundreds of thousands of refugees are not to suffer. UN has much more to do.

In a letter to the Times William Waldegrave denies that the Govt and our Embassy in Kuwait have lacked care for the hostages.

US tells Israelis that Gulf crisis makes it even more important that they make peace with Palestinians Independent.

Reports that British hostages in Lebanon will be freed this month.

Gulf Comment

Sun says Benn wants to tie the Govt's hands in today's vote. He would rob the country of its right to intervene when lives are at stake. Every vote for him will be an encouragement for Saddam Hussein - a sign that all he has to do is to hold out. It hopes Benn is the loneliest man in Britain in the voting lobby.

Today says the Commons was at its best yesterday. Why can't the Commons be like this more often, talking seriously about the country's common good?

Express says the only difference between you and Kinnock hinged on military action without specific UN authorisation - a difference which is crucial. You are far more realistic. Putting Hussein into his box would provoke more cheering than booing in the Middle East.

PRESS DIGEST

Mail on "a nearly united Commons" says a division between Govt and Opposition is starting to show. The difficulty with Kinnock's need for UN endorsement of military action may mean that it closes the option.

Colin Welch, in Mail, says it is difficult to see Kinnock authorising or endorsing any action whatever. Like Ramsay MacDonald he is fully at home in these shadowy cloud cuckoo lands.

Telegraph, continuing its line of yesterday, says you will be justified if you decide to study the development of the diplomatic situation and of the blockade for some time longer before placing a major force of British troops in a full combat role.

Guardian presents you as boxed in by Kinnock, Healey, Heath and Ashdown demanding UN backing for use of force. Leader says the Parliamentary retribution will be fierce if you break the international consensus by using force without UN endorsement.

Times says yesterday's debate decisively aligned Labour's policies on the conflict in the Gulf with those of the Govt. Nuances of disagreement aside, you could have asked for no clearer an affirmation of bipartisan support. It goes on to say that the command of the forces in the Gulf, should military action not be under the UN flag, must be clear: the present confusion between commanders is dangerous. A new security framework for the region is no less urgent.

FT - You appeared calm and commanding at the Dispatch Box. Neil Kinnock's robust speech much more restrained both in rhetoric and demeanour, was the more effective for it. Judgment last night on the quality of debate was that it was worth coming back for.

An Independent editorial says you were at your best yesterday: resolute without being aggressive or melodramatic. Your speech was matched in quality by Kinnock's. He looked genuinely Prime Ministerial. On military action, these were nuances rather than real differences between the Labour and Tory leaders.

Peter Jenkins, in the Independent, says you gave no opportunities to any who might brand you a warmonger. The logic of events has driven both sides of the House to essentially the same measured conclusions. Country was put before party. Kinnock's skilful performance will earn Labour credit for responsible opposition in a time of crisis. You seem well aware of the political hazards of seeming too eager to commit forces to action.

PRESS DIGEST

Francis Fukuyama in Independent says there will always be countries like Iraq where military power dominates, even as liberal democracy triumphs in the rest of the world.

Politics

Reports that Michael Forsyth has quit both as chairman of Scottish Tory Party and as a Minister.

Mail says categorically that you have sacked him as party chairman.

Economy

Bank of England lets money markets know it wants 15% interest rates to stick.

EC

British farmers plan a day of protests today against attacks by French farmers on consignments of British food. In one attack 386 sheep were slaughtered.

Today leads with "spoiled brutes of Europe at it again". To see farmers slaughtering our sheep was revolting but to see French police standing idly by while they did so was even worse. If we are to be partners in a Common market the laws of free trade have got to be enforced everywhere.

Unions

NUM-sponsored Euro MP agrees to authorise release of £1million of International Miners' money, as a signatory to bank account, to NUM.

Russian miners' leader says Scargill is a liar and a cheat if all the allegations against him are confirmed.

Telegraph says Russian miners may demand return of disputed £1million.

Sun says rail union members threatening to strike over jailing of Purley crash driver must be off their heads. The law must be left to courts.

PRESS DIGESTIndustry

John Wakeham gives planning, as distinct from financial, go-ahead for Hinckley Point PWR.

Sun attacks CBI's idea of raising taxes to combat inflation as "stupid".

Threat of all out strike in North Sea oil production industry.

Ford tightens vetting of recruits to weed out militants.

B&Q offering jobs to women with the attraction that they can have all 12 weeks of school holidays off.

Which? report says 40million travellers are put at risk each year on ferries by confusing signs, old fashioned equipment and slow evacuation procedures.

Education

Express says Britain is sitting on a time-bomb of illiteracy because of a dramatic rise in number of 7-8 year olds who can't read. It adds that the major cause is teaching methods.

Case of woman, 42, with Cambridge degree, a love of literature and a long experience of education who was not accepted for teacher training. Today says it goes a long way to explain the abysmal slump in reading standards.

John MacGregor orders inquiry into state of reading ability.

Internatinal

Poll suggests Yeltsin is three times more popular than Gorbachev with Russians - 34% to 10% when asked who is your favourite politician.

Kohl to negotiate directly with Gorbachev over cost of withdrawing Soviet troops from East Germany during next 4 years, following the breakdown of talks between the two countries' officials Times.

Cambodia peace talks on course again as Hun Sen and Sihanouk agree to go to Jakarta Independent.

PRESS DIGESTIreland

Bob Geldof attacks supporters of the IRA in America. He says in New York "There's no difference between IRA and Abu Nidal. They think killing humans is cool".

Undercover soldiers shot unarmed Belfast criminal from less than two feet, post mortem shows Independent.

Austin Currie to stand for Irish presidency in November.

Media

BSB spends £50million to promote programmes in battle with Sky TV
Independent