

PRIME MINISTER

PRESS DIGEST

LABOUR PARTY

- Kinnock orders Labour to attack you and Government for incompetence, dishonesty, destructiveness and extremism.
- Hattersley in row with Left over racism in schools at education conference.
- Labour Party's conference gets little notice in "pops" - much more in qualities.
- Star P8: Kinnock pledge to heal that big divide - emergency programme to create 1.3m jobs with priority for worst hit regions.
- Sun P2: Neil plans to grab Tory cash - billions will be diverted from South to North. Institute of Directors says party's plans are a waste of time and money; leader headed "The Great Patriot" says there is no proper reason about Kinnock's alarm bells about economy than to grub for votes. The economy is in better shape than it has been for 20 years. The only way it can all go wrong is for Labour to win the election.
- Mirror P2: Kinnock's cheer for workless - to take 1m off dole in 2 years.
- Today P2: Kinnock's jobs pledge to heal rift (between North and South).
- Express P2: Kinnock blasts the Tory voters - no one with a conscience would vote for you; leader on the "enticing mirage" before Hattersley - the spectre of an economic crisis. But Labour has chosen to attack the Government over its handling of the economy just as good news arrives almost daily. Nothing would precipitate a financial crisis than the prospect of a Labour victory.
- Mail P2: Labour to hit Tory areas, pledging to deprive South East of resources.
- Telegraph leads with "Labour opts to fight on jobless." £6bn strategy; leader asks if Labour can find a strategy to win, and concludes that the Opposition will need to win the argument over the economy. It says however that an assault on the Government as the party of the overpaid would rally the faithful but not the majority: the prosperous now are the majority.
- Guardian says Kinnock has made Norman Tebbit the target with an attack on Conservative extremism; leader warns, after the Mondale example in the USA, against preaching economic gloom and doom; what Labour and the Alliance need to do is to develop a consistent critique of avarice, fear and complacency which increasingly threatens British society.
- Times: Labour would attempt to halt the growing divide between North and South by targetting its £6bn jobs package at Britain's worst-off areas. Roy Hattersley promised that Labour would eliminate "unacceptable" behaviour by local education authorities.
- FT: The Shadow Cabinet agreed on a firm framework for its programme for creating 1m jobs over two years, which will be the main plank on which it will fight the general election.

LABOUR PARTY (Cont'd)

- Independent leads with "Labour aims £6bn jobs plan at the North". Kinnock puts party on election alert with the economy as central campaign issue. He also attacked Norman Tebbit's alleged remark that no-one with a conscience voted Conservative; and a party source suggested this might become a theme of Labour's campaign.
- Meanwhile SDP/Lib Alliance agrees share out of seats for election campaign.
- Guardian running average of opinion polls for December gives Conservatives 3% lead - 40/Labour 37/Alliance 21.
- The Conservative Party's assault on hard-Left councils was set to receive fresh ammunition last night after the Audit Commission approved the final draft of a report that provides damning new evidence of waste in Labour-run town halls (Times). The Audit Commission is to investigate claims that Brent has awarded a £16,000 contract to a PR company solely on the basis of its Labour Party links.
- David Watt picks up your words: "It may have to be done" in answer to a question about hung Parliaments on the BBC 'phone-in programme. Under headline: "Mrs Thatcher stoops to deal" he says your remark acknowledges the real possibility of a hung Parliament - something you have hardly ever found it necessary or expedient to admit in public.

ECONOMY

- Record established of 12 consecutive days of London share index rises to new peak.
- The BMA says jobless men face a higher death risk.
- FT: The strains on the EMS sparked by the sharp fall in the Franc spread to other currencies yesterday. The lira began to slide and Denmark's banks had to raise interest rates for the second time this week.

INDUSTRY

- Threat of another 10p on petrol.
- Sir Peter Parker launches campaign on behalf of Constitutional Reform Centre for modernisation of machinery of Government.
- Will minimum stake of 400 shares in B/Airways put off private small investor? asks Mail - John Moore says it won't.
- Unipart offering its 4000 workers a golden chance to make amazing fortune by buying shares in their company which is also being privatised.
- Swindon railway works sold to private firm for £9m - venture hopes to create 4000 jobs there in 3-5 years.
- Times: At least 2 top Guinness directors, including Ernes Saunders, the Chairman, are expected to resign at the company's emergency board meeting next Wednesday.
- FT: UK tractor sales fell by 25 per cent last year.
- Engineering Industry Training Board is pressing for changes to training levy exemption system in order to encourage firms to spend more on training.
- Channel Tunnel could siphon off industrial investment from Britain to France, warns chairman of London and South East regional planning conference speaking at Institute of British Geographers.
- FT; Marks and Spencer has been granted a licence by the Bank of England to take deposits. It is the first step to a full Banking licence.

UNIONS/PAY

- Top police officers get 7.5%.
- E/Telecom pay talks break down at just over 5%.

HOUSING

- Eric Heffer describes Government's idea of breaking up council estates, under tenant control, as "scandalous".
- Express commends the Government's idea of breaking up large council housing estates and putting them into the hands of housing associations or tenants' cooperatives.
- Mail hopes the Government's plans will be swiftly put into effect after the election.

EDUCATION

- NUT suspends inner London leadership to try to halt a strike on Tuesday to coincide with Lords 2nd Reading of teachers' pay Bill.
- Times: The deputy general secretary of the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association has challenged Mr Baker to attend a full meeting of teachers and local authority employers to discuss ideas for a compromise on pay and conditions.
- FT: The door has been left open for further moves to amend the teachers' pay and conditions agreement to make it acceptable to the Government. The Burnham Committee will meet again on January 22 after the expected rejection of the deal by Mr Baker.

HEALTH/WELFARE

- 19 out of 20 nurses think they are underpaid, according to NUPE/Low Pay survey; Mirror leader says no one seeking power every promised more to nurses than you; nobody in power has delivered so little.
- Times: The Childline telephone service which helps children who are sexually or physically abused, has undergone a management shake-up to deal with the growing number of calls for help. Estimates of the annual cost of the service have risen from £500,000 to £2m.

AIDS

- New round of campaign launched with statement by Norman Fowler that 4000 are likely to die from disease over next 4 years.
- Today leads with a report that a senior public health statistician has warned that 25,000 people will have AIDS within 5 years; leader advocates mass screening.
- Pow over education adviser who wants condoms to be available in school toilets; says we are in a crisis and don't have time to discuss morality.
- MoD confirm that a number of Servicemen have been found to be AIDS carriers; Mail says Forces will throw out troops who get the disease.
- The MoD is considering compulsory screening for AIDS for all military personnel; leader says if the Government is to win the battle against AIDS it cannot remain neutral on sexual morality. Sexual prudence depends on moral consensus.
- FT leader says it has always been left to the individual to decide his or her behaviour provided it is within the law. That is how it should remain. The Government is issuing a health warning - not telling people how to run their private lives.

DRUGS

- Britain is winning the war against heroin; size of trade diminishing. But Express says a tidal wave of speed - poor man's cocaine - is flooding into Britain.
- Times says there has been a 42 per cent rise in seizures of amphetamines - known as the "poor man's cocaine".

PRISON

- One of 3 warders held hostage at Barlinnie released; one prisoner gives himself up.
- Star is prepared for a storm-troops end to the seize but says there is something seriously wrong with criminal law and prison system in Scotland. A full independent inquiry is required.
- Mail also calls for an independent inquiry and says reaction of Scottish Office to the demands is remarkably complacent.

LAW AND ORDER

- Times: Mounting opposition to the Government's proposal to end the defence right to challenge jurors looks certain to strengthen with the publication of research which shows there is no link between the use of challenge on the lower likelihood of a conviction.

NORTHERN IRELAND

- DUP councillor shot and wounded in Craigavon.

USA

- Reagan leaves hospital feeling great.
- Times: Lt Col Oliver North kept a hoard of cash in his office to pay expenses for the Nicaraguan Contras, according to sources.

AFGHANISTAN

- Sun says Russia is not pulling out of Afghanistan because it wants freedom for the masses, it is because it has failed to subdue the Afghans.

RUSSIA

- KGB official sacked for trying to silence a journalist campaigning against corruption. "KGB loses untouchable label" - Guardian.

EC

- FT: The Community is expected to produce detailed proposals within the next week for punitive levies on US imports.
- Independent: EC milk and beef package has caused "confusion, dismay and annoyance" among UK producers, according to survey in 'Farmers Weekly'.

LAST NIGHT'S DINNER

- 50 join Maggie at No 10 hen party.

FASHION

- Independent: Feature on the way political women dress says that PM looks good in suits, giving a tough masculine impression of someone in charge - but always adds a disarming feminine touch with necklaces, pearls and flattering hats.