

15 May 1987

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister attends Party Conference in Perth (returns Saturday, attends FA Cup Final at Wembley)

The Prince and Princess of Wales attend British Day at the Cannes Film Festival, France

EC: Public Health Council, Brussels

MRC conference on Inequalities in Morality in Britain

STATISTICS

BSC/BISPA: Usable steel production (Apr)

CSO: Tax and price index (Apr)

DEM: Retail prices index (Apr)

PAY

National Health Service: Non-review body groups; 414,400: 1 April

PUBLICATIONS

DES: HMI report: Survey of careers education in Oxfordshire

DES: HMI report: The Hill Junior School, Hereford and Worcs

DES: HMI report: West Sussex Institute of Higher Education, initial teacher training

MINISTERS - See Annex

PPRESS DIGESTMAIN NEWS

- More polls put you well ahead: MARPLAN 41/30/26; Times survey of marginals - 41/33/24. Sun: Neil poll-axed; Daily News: Two polls predict a landslide; Express leads with 81% say Maggie will win.

- You give a rousing battle cry to the troops at the 1922 Committee.
- Bank of England says economy is performing even better than expected.

- Another fall in unemployment for 10th month running; and Chancellor promises at least another 2p off income tax if Government is returned - Sun points out that since Labour plans to grab back 2p cut in March, voters would be 4p worse off under Labour.

- Michael Meacher promises to spend extra £500m on the NHS.

- Alliance says it will increase numbers of police by 4000.

- Healey gets very personal - about you and Owen - in his first campaign speech after Labour's warning, according to Today, to Tories to stay clear of dirty tricks - otherwise you will be matched smear for smear.

- Clare Short accuses Government of gloating over deaths of 8 IRA men.

- Mail leads with Tories going for the jugular - a poster attacking the hard Left's corruption of schoolchildren with one of the most emotive political posters yet seen highlighting 3 gay publications.
- Speculation that the two main teaching unions, meeting on Monday, will call off strikes. Mail features Tulse Hill head who is having to look after 300 children a day single-handed because of teacher disruption.

- Some reports suggest Harvey Proctor, in court next Wednesday, is about to resign.

- AUEW cuts its election contribution to Labour by half to £250,000; NUM donates £350,000.

- Express, relying on the OPCS, says a major upsurge in the nation's health is transforming people's prospects of living longer; death rate is plummeting.

MAIN NEWS (Cont'd)

- British Aerospace gets £450m launch aid for new Airbus - jobs for 20,000.
- Land Rover follows Jaguar into world wide sales boom.
- Two British TV reporters - BBC and ITN - are being expelled from South Africa - work permits not renewed.
- Britain clarifies its position on arms control - and sets a new pace (Today). PM backs deal to get rid of Cruise (Express) which isn't surprised that Labour is angry at SACEUR's comments on its defence policy. Mail: Maggie takes reins on Soviet nuclear offer. Guardian: Thatcher backs Russia's double zero option and spikes Opposition's guns.
- Prison Officers accept "Fresh Start" deal - Telegraph describes it as one of the Government's more significant victories in field of industrial realism.
- 4 people arrested in London after an alleged £9m blackmail threat to release poisonous gas over Cyprus.
- CPSA moving to affiliate to Labour Party.
- Mail says tobacco companies are to withdraw support for sport, resulting in a loss of £11m because they are convinced they are being squeezed off TV by fanatics.
- Heart transplants with live donors carried out at Harefield Hospital.
- Mail leader on Alfonsin's amnesty - after army revolts - for all bar the most senior military officers responsible for kidnap, murder and torture, records how wise you were to ignore siren voices and avoid rushing into a settlement with a regime that may not outlast the summer.
- Prince Charles spends 3 days crofting in Berneray.
- Star says some clerics, including Bishop of London, believe Terry Waite is dead.

ELECTION

- Sun feature on Kinnock's plan to strip our defences and give back the Falklands.
- Sun leader on how Labour plans to create 1m jobs at a cost of £3bn points out their policies will actually destroy 1,040,000 jobs.
- Today, pursuing its support for the Alliance, says it is right to blow the dust off constitutional reform.
- Ivor Crewe, Professor of Politics, Essex, says tactical voting and a small swing against Tories could beat you.
- Joe Haines, in Mirror, records his support for requiring union leaders to undergo periodic re-election but his opposition to unelected Lord Young bringing in the legislation.
- Daily News profile of Bryan Gould, the man who plans to put Kinnock into No 10.
- Express: It's fighting talk as Maggie puts poll troops on alert; leader says Kinnock's wheeze over jobs won't work: adding 50,000 more civil servants to the deadweight with which the economy is already burdened.
- Charles Moore has rather a good column in the Express in which he argues against a TV debate between the party leaders; and describes Denis Healey as the Labour menace. He says it would be a terrible mistake to drop John Biffen after the election.
- Paul Johnson, in Mail, says that even if you had not come to office, Labour would have a long term problem of survival based on socialist ideology because its assumptions are ceasing to exist - eg the down-trodden proletariat. Only burying the Marxist hatchet can make them a mainstream party with a future.
- Telegraph leads with Jobless drop boost for Tories - fight every hour - Thatcher tells MPs. Ferdy Mount says much of Labour and Alliance new found financial prudence is baloney - both are overcommitted. You are in a curious way Kinnock's tutor on this.
- Times: Party standings echo 1983 election result as key seats poll gives Tories victory by 140; poll reveals that the Conservatives have a considerable advantage over other parties in terms of leadership, team image and popularity of their policies.
- Times: Healey responds to General Rogers' criticism of him by saying he's demob happy.
- Times: In 30-minute recorded interview on Soviet TV, Healey pointedly avoided any mention of claim that Kremlin leaders were "praying" for Labour election victory.
- Times looks at changes you could make to Departments if you were back for third term. Lord Young to head Department of Enterprise with changes at Department of Environment, MAFF, DHSS and Energy.
- Independent: You warn Tories of over-confidence; group of Bishops will announce anti-Thatcherite guidelines for the general election tomorrow. They criticise the Government for its insensitivity to racism and unemployment.

ELECTION (Cont'd)

- Independent says John Biffen expects to be among the victims of a Cabinet clear-out if you win the election; Peter Walker may also be forced out. Biffen's job could go to Norman Tebbit who has overcome strains in his working relationship with you.
- FT editorial says that if you win the next election the present low level of expenditure on building council houses is likely to persist. Solution lies with the Housing Corporations and Housing Associations. Edward Mortimer examines the future of the Left. Socialism a victim of past successes faces the dilemma of how to attract newly affluent voters without abandoning those who are falling behind.
- Times: Alliance campaign roadshow gets under way with Owen and Steel visiting 10 cities in three days.
- Times: Alliance pledges include creating ministry of justice, recruiting 4,000 extra policemen and ending overcrowding in prisons.
- Times: Philip Howard looks at Kinnock's comments saying that his Celtic delight in oratory, never using one word when five will do, has earned him the nickname of the Welsh windbag.
- T E Utley in Times discusses the IRA threat to the election and says he hopes the safety precautions being taken for British politicians are more elaborate than ever before. But protection during next few weeks is the immense efficiency of our police and the fact that there are very few safe havens for IRA terrorists in this country.
- Guardian leader's analysis of polls says Conservatives must be favourite to win. Labour's ratings are dismal and starts in 1987 where it finished in 1983. The Alliance is happier in third place than Labour is in second. But the election is anything but a foregone conclusion.

UNEMPLOYMENT/ECONOMY

- Lord Young claims that the number of people out of work has fallen well below 3m taking account women who have had babies and the mid-50s on occupational pensions.
- Star: Jobless is under 3m, say Tories.
- Star: Joy as dole queue falls again.
- Mirror: Tories can't fiddle jobless total below 3m in spite of 18 different attempts.
- Today: Thatcher misses dole queue target - ie because figures stayed above 3m.
- Daily News leader on "cooking the headlines" finds no consolation in unemployment rising in other countries while falling here - what about their spending power's effect on demand for our goods?
- Mail leader says Lord Young announced latest batch of economic statistics with understandable satisfaction. Whatever the Opposition says, all the evidence points to the economy being in a vigorous state of health: the present recovery is for real.
- Telegraph makes the point that unemployment is at its lowest level for 5 years but still over 3m.
- Independent: Total of unemployed goes down and Bank gives optimistic view of growth - statistics on economy boost Conservatives; John Prescott said the Government had failed to meet Tebbit's 1983 pledge of unemployment below 3m by this election; Steel said figure showed Government making progress in massaging the unemployment figures.
- FT: Bank hints that weaker pound would be welcome.
- FT: OFT to refer credit card monopoly to MMC.
- FT: Japan has economic structural reasons which make it difficult to respond to demands for domestic economic expansion - no amount of arm twisting will work.
- Yeutter optimistic on world farm trade reform.
- Guardian leader says if Britain is really set on sustainable, non-inflationary growth, maybe the cold bath we have endured was necessary. But hardly anyone outside the party faithful takes these figures seriously. And it is a tragic reflection of the distance travelled in 8 years that move to have reduced unemployment to around 3m can be hailed as some sort of political triumph.

INDUSTRY

- Independent: British Rail has imposed a new salary structure on its 10,000 middle managers in the latest example of a new hard-line policy for dealing with the unions.
- Times: BPs strong profits could mean new Conservative Government would sell off its 32% holding in the company.

EDUCATION

- Times: Government offers £10m loan to University College Cardiff, but only if its principal goes.
- Times: New ILEA leader warns London teachers that their pay will be docked from 1 September if they refuse to cover for absent colleagues.
- Times leader discusses the education system saying Britain has something that was cobbled together in the 1960s, found wanting in the 1970s and still waiting real reform in the 1980s. It looks at where it is failing and what might be done. Conservatives' proposals are plainly radical (if late in the day). Alliance and Labour would tinker with what exists, while spending a lot more money. If ever there were a time for radical solutions, it is now.

POLICY

- Star leader, referring to MSC's "disturbing" report that many youngsters without jobs can't read and write or count properly says getting back to basics - teaching the 3Ps properly - must be top priority for whichever party wins on June 11.

- FT: Tories pledge to 'push boundaries of capitalism'.

MEDIA

- Claims that Kate Adie, of Libyan bombing fame, is being exiled to Washington for the duration of the election campaign.

- Star leader says that it seems TV bosses intend to make the election more boring than usual by scrapping "sensitive" programmes and exiling Adie.

- George Gale, having departed from Mirror, now joining the Mail.

LAW AND ORDER

- Times: Solicitors act over limiting their liability to clients over negligence claims.
- Times: Provincial chambers being threatened by shortage of High Court judges outside London.

DEFENCE

- Times: NATO Defence Ministers under great pressure by military advisers to plan for introduction of new nuclear systems in Europe to compensate for weapons eliminated under deal with Russia.

IRA

- Times: PIRA claims several of its men escaped SAS ambush at Loughgall.

FIJI

- Times: Fiji ends first day under military rule in a state of confusion and shock.

BERNARD INGHAM

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

DEM: Lord Young visits Scunthorpe

DTI: Mr Channon visits West Midlands

HO: Mr Hurd visits East Midlands

MAFF: Mr Jopling visits Eskdalemuir Forest

DES: Mr Walden visits Willesden College and attends Hi-Tech Mobile launch

DHSS: Mr Newton speaks at the College of Occupational Therapists Annual Seminar, Bournemouth

DHSS: Baroness Trumpington guest speaker at Annual Dinner of Sheffield Branch of British Medical Association, Sheffield; later visits Lewisham Social Services

DOE: Mr Patten speaks at the Institute of Rent Officers AGM, London

DOE: Lord Skelmersdale attends Construction Industry Conference, Berlin

DTI: Mr Butcher visits Vanderhoff Communications, Nuneaton

DTp: Mr Mitchell visits LRT's Westminster Dial-a-Ride service

HO: Lord Caithness visits Dartmoor prison

MAFF: Mr Gummer tours Belfast

MAFF: Lord Belstead attends lunch with Andrew Buxton, Vice Chairman of Barclays Bank

WO: Mr Robinson visits Dyfed Social Services

TV AND RADIO

DTI Minister Mr Butcher interviewed by BBC Midlands, Birmingham

"Passage to Britain"; Channel 4 (14.30): This programme looks at the Bangladeshis' reasons for leaving their country at the British High Commission and at the role of Bangladeshi women in Britain. Narrated by Miriam Margolyes

"The Education Programme"; BBC 2 (19.30): In this week's programme Sarah Kennedy looks at the provisions of the 1981 Education Act which gave children with special needs the right to be educated in "ordinary schools" and asks why so little integration has taken place so far

"What the Papers Say"; Channel 4 (20.00): Freelance journalist Peter McKay casts a critical eye over the week's papers

"A Week in Politics"; Channel 4 (20.15)

"Any Questions?"; BBC Radio 4 (20.20): Magnus Magnusson, Austin Mitchell MP, the Rt Hon Norman St John-Stevas MP and Baroness Seear. Broadcast from Douglas in the Isle of Man and chaired by John Timpson (re-broadcast tomorrow at 13.10)
