

Wednesday, 9 February, 1983

PRIME MINISTER

DIARY

Water strike - occupation of plants.

Prime Minister meets Vice-President Bush for talks and working dinner.

Associated British Ports goes to market.

Ford executives discuss future of Halewood plant with local MPs and councillors.

Informal OPEC Ministers meeting in Caracas.

Launch of National Crime Prevention Campaign.

HM The Queen opens new wing of Arnold House, Cheshire Home.

EC Parliament (part session) Strasbourg.

TUC Economic Committee.

Sir Derek Ezra MBE and Sir Derek Rayner introduced to House of Lords.

Israeli Cabinet meet on 'Massacre' Report.

Statistics:

Central Government transactions (including borrowing requirement) (Dec).
Education Statistics for Wales.

Publications:

Economic Progress Report (Feb).
Jellicoe Report - Review of Prevention of Terrorism Act (2.30pm).

Parliament
Commons

Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Environment.

Business: 10 minute Rule Bill: Publication of Wills.
Debate on the East Midlands (Opposition Motion).
Debate on the Northern Region (Opposition Motion).
Motion on the Draft Education (Assisted Places)
(Amendment) Regulations.

Select Committees: EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND ARTS: The First Scrutiny
Session 1983. (Witness: Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph Bt MF
S/S Education and Science).
ENERGY: Energy Research Development and Demonstration
in the UK. (Witness: Department of Energy).

SOCIAL SERVICES: Children in Care. (Witnesses: National Association of Young People in Care; Family Rights Group).

EMPLOYMENT: Code of Practice on Closed Shop Agreements and Arrangements (Witnesses: TUC; Institute of Directors)

EUROPEAN LEGISLATION: CAP Price Proposals 1983/84. (Witnesses: Rt Hon Peter Walker MBE MP, Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Official WELSH AFFAIRS: The impact of the European Community on Wales. (Witnesses: Welsh Counties Committee; Council for the Principality).

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATED AND BILLS: (To consider the Mental Health Bill (Lords)).

Lords: Debate on HM Government's decision contained in the White Paper "Proposed Fund for the Ordnance Survey: Report of the results of consultations etc." Trade Marks Act 1938 (Amendment) Bill(HL): Report. UQ on Grendson Prison and the Prisons Department.

Ministers - see Annex

PRESS DIGEST

Water - see Annex I

Israel

- Report calls for Sharon's resignation because of refugee camps massacre Government faces crisis.

Comment:

Mirror: speaks of Israel's shame and says Sharon should be sacked.

Express: says multi-national force in Lebanon is exercise of responsibility without power; Israel today runs Lebanon and removal of Sharon won't alter fact.

Mail: says report is shaming - only mitigation is that report would not have been produced in any other country than Middle East.

Telegraph: sees Begin in fight for survival; Sharon defiance after resignation call; leader says report will go far to repair Israel's damaged reputations but massacres were outcome of whole line of thinking personified by Sharon.

Guardian: says much credit flows to Israel for vigour of Kahan inquiry; but in spite of all evidence to Commission, Begin remains a popular figure.

Times: says after this moral case for election is strong; present Government's politics have given world frightening image of Israel.

FT: says report shows democracy is functioning in Israel with usual vigour; must surely now be necessary for Begin to seek fresh mandate.

Defence

- Telegraph Gallup poll shows 2 in 3 reject unilateralism and majority opt for both nuclear weapons and strong conventional forces but majority (54%) don't want Cruise; overall a hardening of opinion against unilateralism.
- Sun says there is growing split in Church of England over bomb - more and more bishops having second thoughts about supporting unilateralism.
- Sun leader says Mr Heseltine is right to refuse to debate with CND - women of Greenham Common tarnishing their cause.
- Mail says if this is how 'Peace Women' seek to promote their cause heaven protect us when they give way to aggression.
- Telegraph suggests, on Gallup evidence, unilateralist sentiment may have reached a peak, but to kick ground from under CND concede dual key but Times says Ministers have decided not to raise issue again.
- Cummings cartoon in Express says if ever party of peace (quarrelling Labour) gets power we'll probably have World War III immediately.
- GLC accused of insulting Queen for wanting to rename Jubilee Gardens outside County Hall, Peace Gardens; Sun says it is an insult to the Queen; Mail asks what is to stop London from becoming Livingstonegrad?
- Roy Jenkins says Trident programme is looking increasingly objectionable
- Guardian says Bush in Paris gave clearest hint US may settle for something less than zero offer.
- 70 year old widow of Battle of Britain VC to sell medal to draw attention to plight of widows.

Industry

- Walter Goldsmith, Institute of Directors, says all jobless workers should be offered £40 a week to help them set up in business (operating only in 5 depressed areas.)
- Peter Parker comes out as wholehearted supporter of rail electrification which he says Serpell did not mention.
- B/Airways proposes to spend £400m on US jets and B/Rail poised to import diesel trains from America if electrification does not go ahead.
- Alcan to shed 1,200 workers at British plants - Commons debate sought.
- EC investigates French Government offer to Timex.
- Ravenscraig workers celebrating new orders from BMW, BL and Ford for strip steel; output per man at Austin Rover plant has nearly doubled in last 5 years.
- Davy McKee gets letter of intent for £129m electric arc furnace plant in Phillipines.
- British Shipbuilders want inquiry into Korean order for ship which CEBG will hire.
- 1 in 4 robots built in Japan last year.

Unions/Pay

- You are warned in House, MacGregor at NCB will mean industrial revolution; Sun feature says if he takes job neither unions nor Britain can expect a quiet life over next few years.
- Scargill aiming to give himself maximum room in pay negotiations; won't tie himself to a figure.
- Mail says Civil Service unions think it bureaucratic madness that members should be given cash to pay income tax on their expenses allowances.

Economy

- Telegraph feature says raise personal allowances sharply if there is to be an election in June; if in October keep lid on inflation.
- Money supply growth slows.
- Mr Pym and Mr Shultz will press for expansion at Williamsburgh.
- Guardian thinks fall in interest rates may be on cards before Budget.

Milk

- | Consumer Association accuses Peter Walker of blatant protectionism for keeping out UHT milk after EuroCourt ruling.
- Sun says we did not join EC to give up one precious part of our national life - fresh milk.
- Telegraph describes daily milk round as sacred cow - news that it might be threatened by market prices has caused a loss of bottle among interested parties; let market decide.

Falklands

- Telegraph quotes Sir Anthony Kershaw as saying Falklands are prepared to discuss sharing responsibilities with other nations or organisations - but Argentine sovereignty unacceptable.
- Canavan claims war is glorified by priests like Mons.Spraggon.

Law and Order

- 2 nurses suspended and questioned by police in Durham for picking up 6 cold chips from hospital floor but did not eat them - bonkers, says D/Star.
- Mother kidnaps 21 year old daughter to save her from Hare Krishna cult.
- Second policeman charged with attempted murder of Waldorf; originally charged with attempting to wound.
- Peter Tatchell, Bermondsey, gets live bullet through letter-box.

- Court told crooked rail buffet car attendants making up to £150 a day by selling their own food to passengers.
- Court told social workers in Gloucester smoked cannabis at council home for problem children.

Politics

- Marplan poll shows you 15% in lead and that half people think you are best PM available - state of parties 46/31/22.
- Mail says Foot would clear out as Labour leader is he thought it would help party win election; but says on tv he expects to lead party in election.
- Christopher Patten, Times, says it would be good politics for you to go to Williamsburg to rebuild international partnership and then go to country.

Media

- Easing of Government restrictions on embargoes noted.
- Dalyell's strong attack on Lobby system - and call for Select Committee inquiry into it noted.

Education

- More money for overseas students - Guardian sees it as a reconciliation between No 10 and FCO.
- ILEA to push up London rates by 6p in £ - record £869m budget goes through in face of legal threats from London boroughs.

Local Authorities

- Guardian says GLC needs less than half rate increase ^{it} thought necessary to finance socialist expansion.

Housing

- Town Halls alerted to deterioration in Orbit prefabs.

Welfare

- Government promises review of £25 maternity grants.
- Guardian says Health Minister backs Spastics plan to save Tadworth Court but Chancellor has doubts.

International

France: Red Cross admits that after the war it provided Barbie with a travel pass as humanitarian action.

USA: Express says IRA are planning massive demo, against Queen.

Zimbabwe: MPs call for sacking of their expensive High Commissioner in London.

EC: EuroParliament gives go ahead for our £562m refund.

Russia: Rejects our plea for release of Scharansky.

Eire: Sean Doherty, former Minister at centre of tapping row, resigns from Fianna Fail.

B. INGHAM
9 February 1983

WATER STRIKE - PRESS DIGEST

Summary

- NWC admits it got its sums wrong and offer worth nearly 9% over 16 months to most workers.
- Unions unimpressed, refuse binding arbitration and some workers occupy (100) plants to stop management doing their jobs.
- Craftsmen also reject similar pay offer.

Detail

D/Star: says (page 2) gas men join pay battle rejecting 4.5% and that Government faces dispute with 3 public services - gas, water and electricity.

Sun: Page 2: Water strikers 'invade' plants - fury at strike-breakers; rebel workers' leaders claim to have taken over 100 plants.

Mirror: Front page lead: Invasion by watermen - sit in at 100 plants.

Express: Page 2: Water strikers seize key plants.

Mail: Front Page lead: Union seizes waterworks - fiasco over pay offer as strikers move in on plants; if sit-in succeeds there could be big worker lay-offs.

Telegraph: Page 1: Strikers seize water plants as talks fail - freeze threat to mains; most strikers have now lost £200; Mr Tebbit tells Commons he is getting letters from unemployed anxious to take the waterworkers' jobs; support for strike beginning to crumble in South West and in Lincolnshire.

Times: Page 1: Employers admit "error" in water pay offer - a bizarre turn; 30,000 homes without supply; striking pickets at Feltham got drunk on whisky, Court told.

Guardian: Page 1: Water Board embarrassed by blunder over pay figures - we could kick ourselves for not having presented our offer in a better light"; union disdain at management ineptitude. Leader says Government has been singularly inept in its handling of dispute; strike caught Government on hop as did degree of public support for strikers. But in unions' interest as much as Government's and management's that money tap be turned on a little - there has to be some form of inquiry.

FT: Page 1: Strikers occupy water plants.

Ministers

Mr Whitelaw opens Crime Prevention Exhibition, Barbican and meets All-Party Penal Affairs Group prison overcrowding.

Mr Jenkin addresses members of CBI Southern Region, Maidenhead.

Mr Waldegrave presents Design Council Motions prize.

Mr Gray speaks to the Institute of Petroleum dinner, Grosvenor House.

Lord Avon opens the "Living with Energy" exhibition, Southampton.

Mr Baker visits Glaxo, Greenford.

Mr Wiggin visits RN units, Plymouth area (until 10 February).

Mrs Chalker addresses the All-party Friends of Cycling, House of Commons and attends the Association of Metropolitan Authorities' reception with Mr Eyre.

Mr Gummer speaks on Vredling/5th Directive at Industrial Society Conference, Carlton House Terrace.

Sir George Young visits Manchester.

Mr Blaker visits troops in Germany and attends International Conference in Munich.

TV/Radio

Mr King on "Analysis" - BBC Radio 4.