

8 June 1983

PRIME MINISTER

PRESS DIGEST



Election

- MORI poll in 114 marginals suggest 408 seats for Conservatives; Labour 201; Alliance 19. NOP gives you lead of 18% (46/28/Alliance 24).
- You see it as landmark election and ask for decisive mandate; Mail says "It's Maggie by a Mile".
- Foot and Healey say polls have got it all wrong and Healey claims late surge for Labour; Labour's national agent says they will have a majority if poll is a 78% poll.
- All papers apart from Mirror and Guardian - and of course Morning Star - urge readers to vote Conservative, including FT which circulates leader which would have appeared.
- Peter Walker calls on voters to wipe out Labour forever and not to vote for Mr Jenkins and get Dr Hyde.
- Foot warns of explosions - attack on Social Services, rising unemployment and collapse of recovery if you win; Kinnock says your return will mean pain, ignorance and poverty.
- Steel says a landslide victory for you would bring disaster; Steel and Jenkins said to be at odds over nuclear defence - more especially over retention of Polaris.
- Apart from Party adverts, one from Animal Protection Alliance supporting Labour Party's pledge to ban blood sports; and from National League of the Blind and Disabled, in association with B/Telecoms unions, identifying policies against privatisation of B/Telecom.
- Telegraph says a win by you tomorrow will be welcomed in the EC in the belief it will spell the end of British withdrawal as a serious political issue.
- Guardian says your resolute leadership has swayed the voters.
- Mr Heseltine holds out to Labour heartlands prospect of a share in power by voting Tory.
- Labour release letter which Guardian says suggests Chancellor wants to encourage private landlords by reducing security of tenure.
- Kinnock, who in the eyes of the Sun stands convicted and condemned, writes to families of Welsh Guards to explain his remark about your proving you have guts. Healey visits Huddersfield firm which made equipment for Argentine ships.
- Ratepayers in Hackney to foot bill for union meeting today at which those attending will be told to vote Labour.
- Youth on Mirror scrapheap picture left a job because hours did not fit in with social life; Mirror says he left because it wasn't a proper job.
- Ulster on election alert for terrorism.

Comment

- D/Star - a breath of fresh air began to blow amongst Labour Party yesterday - moderate trade union leaders preparing for drastic new look at its policies.
- Sun under heading "Don't waste your vote on these no hopers" says it is a one horse race; and undecided question is who finishes second. Don't waste your vote on Socialists or Alliance. Nothing constructive to offer a Britain that needs positive leadership. Labour have ruined themselves. Voting for Alliance like swimming through treacle - you get nowhere fast; Professor John Vincent lists 7 reasons why Labour is wrong bet - higher income tax, fewer jobs, less defence, more international sell outs, more police bashing, less safety from war, more immigrants.
- Mirror - front page features extracts from advice of other papers; on page 2 it advises people to vote Labour because it is "only Party that offers a realistic programme, a genuine hope for the future"; "a programme for the nation as a whole and not a privileged Party".
- Express issues a warning about voting Labour in the form of what has happened to France under Socialism - legacy of 23 years of sound and sensible leadership cast away in 23 months. Remember France's fate; it could be ours. George Gale says only you and your Party are fit to govern.
- Mail - Nothing has changed in 4 weeks of electioneering. It comes down to one issue - you. Campaign has proved Labour's unfitness to govern and its inadequacy even to oppose. Beneath the Alliance's thin crust of experience there are unplumbed depths of mushy inexperience. So it all comes down to leadership and for first time in 20 years country has a real leader; in centre pages publishes messages from all 4 leaders.
- Telegraph examines "key unanswered questions" about Conservative economic policy - future monetary and fiscal policy and its attitude to exchange rates; Charles Moore in leader page piece suggests Labour's collapse as a popular party is the most likely outcome of the election.
- Guardian feels that this Conservative Government masks a profound stupidity but reality of matter is that you are heading for an absurd dominance of new Parliament. It wants to see Labour men of stature returned and its heartlands hold firm to provide bricks for rebuilders. But Alliance only hope of denying your a landslide.
- Times has a woolly leader on the Alliance which David Watt elsewhere, seems to say "God preserve". On the Falklands factor the Times says this national experience has put you beyond reach of your adversaries in this election and persists to smother those who would wound you on account of it.

Economy

- Good economic news in the form of wholesale price index and retail sales but Guardian raises spectre of a squeeze on account of money supply.
- Fears of rise in mortgage rates because Building Society difficulty in attracting money; Express says they are set to rise whoever wins election.

- Road hauliers say exports are showing 19% increase - further evidence of recovery.
- Patrick Jenkin forecasts post election fall in interest rates.
- Julian Haviland's interview with you in The Times.

Industry

- Nissan after talks with Mr Nakasone, says it has not yet reached a decision on investing here.
- National Film Finance Corporation wants its minimum guaranteed income quadrupled to £6m.
- Government writes to water authorities asking for larger cuts in manpower because of effects of strike.

Unions/Pay

- NUR and ASLEF join forces to fight rail cuts.
- Bakers' union declines to invite Frank Chapple, ex Chairman of TUC, to address annual conference because he backed an SDP candidate.
- Only 25% of practising barristers respond to Bar Council survey of earnings.

Media

- No FT again as ACAS tries to resolve dispute.
- More people turning their backs on TV because of poor programmes.

Education

- Higher fees blamed on fall of 3,000 in number of pupils attending private schools.

Local Authority

- Islington Council, condemned by Ombudsman for preventing a tenant from buying his home - allows former Housing Chairman to buy empty house - row.

Defence

- £45m to be spent on improving and extending US base at Upper Heyford.
- Navy jump jet pilot, running out of fuel, lands on Spanish freighter in Atlantic.
- Cheysson says nuclear weapon is weapon of peace; who can dare say peace will be guaranteed by pacifism?
- Telegraph says Quakers have praised Soviet peace campaign; Soviet peace protestor goes to gaol for 3 years.

Law and Order

- Another (minor) scandal hits Lloyds again - but no intention to deceive.

USA - expels 24 Nicaraguan diplomats for spying.

Russia - 170 feared dead in Volga boat accident; Andropov reported to be ill - kidney complaint, or is it Parkinson's Disease? Times says his health declining rapidly.

Yugoslavia - 128 coal miners trapped underground by gas explosion.