

9 June 1983

PRIME MINISTER

PRESS DIGEST

Election

- Theme is a landslide and all over bar the counting. Headlines: Times - "Tories head for Landslide Victory"; Guardian "Labour, Alliance Now Neck in Neck"; Telegraph "Tories Expect Big Victory"; Express "Only One Way for Britain - Maggie is the Man"; Sun "Vote for Maggie"; Mail "Maggie Confident but Fight for Second Place"; Mirror "Stop Waste of our Nation, Vote Labour".

Polls

- MARPLAN for the Guardian Conservatives 46%, Labour and Alliance 26% each.
- MORI for Express and Star - Tories 47%, Labour 26%, Alliance 25%. Maggie heading for 166 majority.
- Gallup for Telegraph - Conservatives 45.5%, Labour 26.5%, Alliance 26%.
- Sun Audience Selection - Conservatives 45%, Alliance 29%, Labour 23%. "It's Maggie by 262 seats".
- Harris Poll shows 3% shift from Labour to Alliance since 2 weeks ago with Alliance now having 1% lead over Labour.
- NOP for the Mail - David Owen tops the poll for most popular politician apart from the Party Leaders with Shirley Williams second and Healey third.

Campaign

- Times notes PM and Foot in agreement on attacking PR.
- Labour protestors in Wiltshire provoke PM's "Most Bitter Outburst" of the campaign. - "How Pathetic You Are".
- Pym accuses Labour of ignoring EEC issue because it is a "Vote Loser".
- Julian Haviland in the Times interviews Roy Jenkins.
- Papers pick up PM's target time for reducing the number of unemployed "Certainly by the Middle of the Next Parliament" in TV interview.
- Harold Wilson brands "SDP Turncoats".

Comment

- Geoffrey Smith in the Times focuses on PM's "personal sway over the political scene" noting that people on doorsteps describe themselves not as Conservatives but as "Thatcherites".
- Bernard Levin warns that "The Fascist Left is just biding its time".

- Times leader writer takes up the theme of "Renewal" and "Individual Responsibility" and agrees with Airey Neaves words "Come, we have work to do".
- Paul Johnson in the Mail considers how the unions will punish Labour and puts his money on Hattersley to succeed as leader. Ladbroke's however tip Shore.
- William Hickey notices Mark Thatcher is back in town.

Media

- NUJ declares Press Association strike official and asks members to "black" PA's election night copy.
- Still no FT as ACAS peace talks break down. The Guardian prints what would have been the FT leader.
- BBC and ITN will predict election result within seconds of polling booths closing basing their forecasts on interviews as electors leave the polls.
- BBC TV cancels coverage of Pope's visit to Poland in protest against Polish authorities refusal to grant visas to their men, Tim Sebastian and Jan Repa.

Defence

- President Reagan states new "flexible" position on disarmament shifting emphasis from missiles to warheads as START talks resume.
- Canon Paul Oestreicher, CND Vice Chairman, joins the Quakers.
- Times says David Owen confirmed rift in the Alliance on defence in a radio interview .
- MOD could face hefty salvage bill as a result of its Harrier landing on a Spanish container ship.

Overseas

- No reprieve for 3 ANC men due for execution today in spite of appeals, including one from FCO.
- OAU Summit convenes but Polisario and Libyan seats are empty.
- Relief workers abducted by Tigre Peoples Liberation Front reported to have crossed into Sudan and expected home soon.
- Norwegian non-Socialist three-Party coalition takes office.
- Guardian notes confirmation that Russia and US have talked on Syrian troop withdrawal from Lebanon.
- Times says Soviet intellectuals fear Tuesday's Soviet Central Committee Plenum will lead to "orthodoxy clampdown".

CPRS

- Peter Hennessey in the Times thinks Mrs T may well disband the CPRS transferring some of its functions plus the Rayner Unit to an enlarged Prime Minister's Office and says the MPO will "almost certainly disappear". Department of Industry could go too.

Conservation

- Prince Charles and assorted "luminaries of greenery" attract coverage for the British response to world conservation strategy - "The conservation and development programme for the UK".

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