

PRIME MINISTER'S ENGAGEMENTS

Mrs Thatcher is working at Downing Street this morning: for the rest of the day she will have Constituency engagements in Barnet Finchley.

She will spend the weekend at Chequers. On Sunday afternoon, at Southside, Mrs Thatcher will greet Premier Hua Kuofeng at the start of his visit to Britain.

The White Paper list was distributed.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Mr Molyneaux's response was "negative - rather disappointing". Perhaps the various parties would reconsider their positions after Mr Atkins' promised document had been published. Some drafting work on the document had still to be completed.

SOUTH AFRICA

We had been unable, so far, to verify the report: the Americans had advised us of the report but there was no corroborating evidence.

AW

NORTHERN IRELAND

A heated debate. We acknowledged that it might have been better to have had the document with the announcement. But it was important to take advantage of recent events (eg the Pope, Mountbatten, Warren Point) even if the document would not be ready for a few days yet. The decision had been taken by HMG as a whole and was not a personal initiative of the Secretary of State. The Molyneux reaction was unhelpful and self-defeating and we hoped that there would be a different response at the Conference. We offered the thought that Molyneux etc had misjudged the climate of the popular mood. His was the most nihilistic statement ever heard by HJ in the House of Commons.

EEC: BUDGET

... The arguments were rehearsed yet again.

CUTS

The White Paper was expected next week. This would contain a global approach. The local authorities had yet to hear about the RSG. When they did many of them would have to make hard political judgments. HMG's intention was to open up LA finance to scrutiny.

RHODESIA

The Conference was meeting this week; hence there could be some news out of it (but don't take that as a hint).

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