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LIAISON COMMITTEE

21 February 1984

AGENDA

1. Apologies: Sir Christopher Lawson (Buckingham Palace Investiture)  
Mr Anthony Shrimley (unwell)
2. Current issues: Bernard Ingham's programme

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL



This note sets out the highlights of the next two weeks so far as they can be established. This paper should be read in conjunction with the diary for 1984, and especially to Easter, circulated on February 13.

THE FORTNIGHT AHEAD: HIGHLIGHTS

The main events of the next fortnight of political significance are:

1. Argentine/Falklands.
2. Lebanon/Iran-Iraq.
3. GCHQ (Prime Minister meets unions; debate; deadline for acceptance, March 1).
4. EC Foreign Affairs Council - progress on Budget reform and rebate payments.
5. Scott Lithgow.
6. Chesterfield by-election (March 1).
7. Liverpool City Council facing bankruptcy.
8. Jaguar, Airbus announcements.
9. Mark Thatcher.



DIARY

February

- 21 EC Foreign Affairs Council.  
President Mitterrand visits Dublin.  
Institute of Director's annual convention (Mr Brittan).  
Sir Keith Joseph before Select Committee on Education and Science.  
DHSS Pensions Inquiry.  
Cyclical indicators.  
Local Authority manual workers' pay talks.
- 22 Visit of President Pertini, Italy (lunch at No 10).  
Prime Minister's dinner for Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.  
Talks on future of Hong Kong (to February 23), Peking.  
Commons Debate on Opposition motions on problem of young unemployed and need for improved care of elderly.  
TUC General Council (political levy proposals); Labour Party NEC.  
*Cooper*  
*by hand*  
Launch of organ donor card campaign.  
New construction orders (December).  
? Consultative paper on legislation on payment of wages.  
Mr Heseltine in Chesterfield.  
\*Liverpool City Council meets Mr Jenkins on impending bankruptcy
- 23 Civil Service Unions lobby Parliament over GCHQ.  
Prince of Wales in Brunei for independence celebrations.  
Premier Craxi visits Bonn.  
NHS ambulancemen pay talks.  
BBC TV Question Time - panel includes Mr Brittan.  
Employment Gazette - earnings and hours, manual workers, October 1983.  
Capital expenditure by manufacturing and service industries; manufacturers and distributors' stocks - both for 1983 as a whole.  
British Library annual report.  
Priestley Scrutiny of Royal Opera House and Royal Shakespeare Company.  
Aid for India for helicopters.



- 24 Prime Minister visits West Midlands.  
TUC Youth Congress, London.  
Sales and orders in engineering (November); steel production (1983).
- 25 National Freight Corporation AGM.
- 27 Prime Minister meets Caspar Weinberger.  
Commons debates GCHQ.  
EC Agriculture Council (price-fixing - to February 28).  
Foreign Ministers' political co-operation meeting, Paris.  
EC Research Council.  
Argentine Foreign Minister visits Berne.  
CBI Industrial Trends.  
Public Accounts Committee report on fraud and corruption in PSA.  
National Conference on selection of head teachers (Mr Dunn presides).  
DHSS pensions' inquiry.
- 28 Prime Minister meets Chancellor Kohl.  
Civil Service day of protest over GCHQ.  
Insolvency Law reform White Paper.  
Mr Brittan at FT conference on Broadcasting and Cable TV.  
Foreign Secretary addresses Institute of Development Studies.  
BBC World Service interview with Prime Minister on "Women in Power".  
EC Research and Development Councils.  
New vehicle registrations (January).
- 29 National No-smoking day.  
Prime Minister's reception for Winter Olympics competitors.  
TUC General Council; Labour Party NEC.  
Trade figures/balance of payments.  
National conference on Careers Service and YTS.  
Schoolteachers' pay talks.  
DHSS pensions' inquiry.



March

- 1 Chesterfield by-election.  
Deadline for GCHQ staff to accept new terms and conditions of employment.  
EC Environment Council.  
St. David's Day.  
Unemployment figures.  
Tom King at Association of Further and Higher Education conference.  
Mr Fowler at National Pensions Convention, House of Commons.
- 2 Prime Minister meets Prime Minister Lubbers, Netherlands.  
Nominations close for new TGWU general secretary.  
Official reserves; company liquidity.
- 3 Chancellor Kohl begins visit to Washington (to March 6).  
National meeting of supporters of Campaign Against the Arms' Trade.
- 4 US Presidential Election: Democrat caucus, Maine.  
International RFU meeting, London, to discuss proposals for Rugby Union "world cup".  
Elections to Supreme Soviet of the USSR.  
European Commission President, Gaston Thorn, visits Egypt.
- 5 EC Fisheries Council, Paris.  
EC Foreign Affairs Council, Brussels (to March 6).  
Retail sales (January); Credit business (January); Housing starts and completions (January).  
AUEW Women's conference opens, Eastbourne (to March 6).  
Mr Jopling with Mr MacGregor attends EC Fisheries Council.  
Mr Raison visits Bangladesh (to March 13).
- 6 AUEW Youth conference opens, Eastbourne (to March 7).  
Monetary aggregates (February-provisional).  
Shrove Tuesday.  
Prescription charges go up.

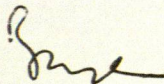


This note gives a perspective of issues confronting Government in 1984, with particular reference to the period up to Easter, so far as they can be established from returns from Departments.

For convenience, these are set out in Annexes:

Annex I - General

Annex II - The Fortnight Ahead



B. INGHAM

13 February 1984



DIARY 1984

This note sets out the issues confronting the Government over 1984.

We are likely to be most concerned in 1984 with:

- New Soviet leadership;
- US Presidential election (November 6);
- East/West relations and disarmament talks, plus deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles;
- Middle East - whither West after Lebanon?;
- EC Budget reform (Euro Councils March 19-20 and June 25-26), with possibility of withholding after March 31;
- Euro Assembly elections (June 14);
- Local Government reform and rates control; (local elections May 3);
- Economy - Public Expenditure White Paper (February 16); Budget Day (March 13); Economic Summit (June 7-9).

In summary the Government's main presentational concerns in 1984 will be with:

- developing a dialogue with the Soviet Union;
- keeping the initiative in the defence/disarmament debate;
- promoting peace and security in the Middle East;
- holding fast to the objective of effective and lasting reform of the European Community;
- prosecuting a successful campaign in support of rate capping and local government reform;
- maintaining the momentum of industrial/commercial reform (privatisation/liberalisation) with the objective of increasing competition and efficiency;
- restoring the economy; and
- demonstrating that the NHS is safe in the Government's hands.

In more detail, issues which will or may arise in the period up to Easter are:

General

- GCHQ;
- Mark Thatcher.



Industry

- Miners' overtime ban - NCB loss of (?) £500m (March);
- Future of:
  - Scott Lithgow;
  - Ravenscraig/Llanwern steel plants;
  - BL Bathgate;
  - Direct Broadcasting by Satellite.
- Launch aid for Airbus/Rolls Royce V2500 engine;
- British Shipbuilders and BL corporate plans (and part privatisation)
- Future of Crown Agents;
- Sale of British Gas Corporation's Wytch Farm field;
- Increase in ECGD premiums (and ECGD going into red);
- Independent review of ECGD;
- Statement on merger/competition policy;
- White Paper on investor law reform (February);
- Fraud investigation group announcement (April);
- Government proposals for legislation on payment of wages (February);
- White Paper on reform of consumer safety legislation (April);
- CRE Code of Practice on Employment (March);
- Film policy announcement (March);
- France to impose hormone testing of meat (April);
- ? Home Defence and the Farmer (publication planned March 12).

Transport

- Laker bankruptcy (implications for B/Airways);
- Channel fixed link banking group report (February);
- Heavy lorry policy statement (GLC decision on ban) (February);
- Port of London Authority Finance and Dock Labour Scheme.

Economic

- Pay negotiations;
- Public Expenditure White Paper (February 16);
- Budget (March 13);
- Nigeria ECGD loan rescheduling.



Law and Order

- CRE report on Immigration Service's application of rules (February);
- Dogs Consultative document (February);
- Green Paper on intermittent custody (March);
- ? Removal of Greenham Common women;
- No passport excursions - talks with France;
- Criminal Justice Working Paper (April);
- Action on drug abuse.

European Community

- Foreign Affairs Council (February 21-22);
- Agriculture Council (February 28-29 - price fixing; arrangements for New Zealand butter);
- Fisheries Council (March 5);
- European Council (March 19-20);
- ? UK withholds contribution (April).

International

- Falklands:
  - Progress towards talks with the Argentines;
  - Return of Falkland Islands documents to Public Record Office (February/March);
  - Daily Express poll of Falkland Islands opinion (February);
  - BBC Panorama interviews Alfonsin (probably for February 20).
- Hong Kong negotiations (February 22-23);
- Presidential election, El Salvador (March 25 - ? UK observers);
- Queen visits Jordan (March 26-30);
- Rugby Football Union decision on South African tour (end March);
- Gibraltar - Spain.

Defence

- Resumption of MBFR talks (March 16);
- Peace News demonstration in City of London (March 29);
- New surface-to-surface guided weapon for Royal Navy (March);



- Nato Ministerial (April 2-5);
- NATO 35th anniversary (April 5);
- Defence White Paper (April);
- Outline planning document, Trident base, Scotland (April).

Northern Ireland

- New Ireland Forum Report (? March 17);
- Review of Emergency Provisions Act (March).

Environment/Local Government/Housing

- London Dumping Convention on waste disposal in international waters (February 20-24);
- Housing Defects Bill published (February);
- Select Committee hearings on Green Belt (February);
- Paving Bill (MCC/GLC abolition) (March);
- Select Committee hearings on acid rain (March);
- Launch of Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Commission (April 2);
- Calke Abbey and Kedleston Hall - decisions with implications for heritage.

Health and Social Security

- Health Service charges (soon);
- Decisions on deputising services (March);
- New National Insurance rates come into effect (April 6);
- Implementation of Griffiths Report (from April);
- Private nursing homes registration and inspection guidelines (February);
- Departmental report on helping mentally handicapped people (February);
- Medical Manpower Planning report.



Education

- Re-organisation Roman Catholic Schools in South London (soon);
- National Conference on selection of Head teachers (February 27);
- Secretary of State for Education speech on Peace Studies (early March);
- Corporal punishment policy decision (March);
- Policy statement on records of achievements (March);
- New Council for Accreditation of Teachers (March);
- HMI Report on local authority expenditure on education (March);
- Policy statement on science education (April);
- Liverpool re-organisation scheme (end March);
- Decision on Gloucestershire proposal to turn grammar school into comprehensive (soon).

Arts

- Revised proposals for arts - abolition of MCCs and GLC (March/April)
- Future of local museums' purchase and grant scheme (March);
- Launch of business sponsorship expansion scheme (April).



THE FORTNIGHT AHEAD - HIGHLIGHTS

The following sets out the main events of the next fortnight with a political significance.

General

- Andropov funeral - and succession;
- Lebanon/Middle East;
- GCHQ;
- Scott Lithgow;
- Mark Thatcher;
- Public Expenditure White Paper (Thursday, February 16).

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DIARY

February

- 15 Opposition motion on low pay.  
Prime Minister at National Union dinner.  
Inquest, Harrods bomb victims.  
TUC Employment Committee considers political levy proposals.  
New electoral register comes into effect.  
Average earnings index.  
Foreign Secretary before Select Committee on future financing of EC.
- 16 Public Expenditure White Paper.  
TUC Lobby of Parliament on GCHQ.  
Prime Minister hosts reception for entrepreneurs.  
Prime Minister meets Secretary General, Arab League.  
Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Bill, 2nd Reading, Commons.



- BBC TV Question Time - Kenneth Baker, Len Murray, David Penhaligon, Elizabeth Rees.
- Major NATO exercise United Effort opens (to March 5).
- 17 Sir Keith Joseph to address National Association of Small Schools.  
Bank employees' pay negotiations.  
BBC Radio 4 Any Questions? - Claire Rayner, John Pardoe, Clare Short, Angela Rumbold.
- 18 Informal meeting of EC Foreign Ministers, Paris (to February 19).  
Neil Kinnock at International Labour Festival, Glasgow.
- 19 Last day of Winter Olympic Games.
- 20 EC Foreign Affairs Council (to February 21).  
Commons Debate on European Community documents on draft general budget, 1984.  
GDP for 1983.  
CBI/FT survey of distributive trades.  
BBC Panorama: ? interview with Alfonsin; interview with Home Secretary on broadcasting policy.  
London Dumping Convention on waste disposal in international waters (to February 24).
- 21 President Mitterrand visits Dublin.  
Institute of Directors' annual convention (Mr Brittan).  
Cyclical indicators.
- 22 Visit of President Pertini, Italy.  
Talks on future of Hong Kong (to February 23).  
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