



THE SUNDAY TIMES

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Brighton: Police told of possible attack

Intelligence warnings that were ignored

EVIDENCE emerged last night of a major breakdown in security prior to the bomb explosion in Brighton on Friday morning, in which at least four people died and 32 were injured. It now appears that firm intelligence suggesting a planned IRA attack in Britain was received by those responsible for security at the Conservative party conference.

On Wednesday morning the entire British armed forces had been put on alert Bikini Black Alpha, which is specifically designed to counter a terrorist attack. This followed information from intelligence which indicated an attack "somewhere in Britain" was likely. No target was specified, but security at all bases around the country was tightened, with cars searched and patrols increased. Notices appeared in all the Ministry of Defence buildings saying: "There is an increased risk of attack on government buildings."

"There was an expectation that the IRA might do something," admitted one senior military officer yesterday.

A senior Scotland Yard source also told The Sunday Times last night that police had been on "full alert" before the bomb exploded in the early hours of Friday morning. The source said that this alert had been teleaxed by Special Branch to police around the country, including Sussex police, who were in charge of the security in Brighton. "I know that alerts were sent out to all and sundry," said the Scotland Yard officer. "It went out by telex and letter through the usual net. I think Special Branch handled it."

The Chief Constable of Sussex, Roger Birch, still insisted yesterday that he had no warning of possible terrorist attack at the conference. "There was no warning of any threat at all," said a Sussex police spokesman. Birch said he was determined not to resign unless the inquiry into security at Brighton showed a major defect in his arrangements. "I'm confident it will not, so nothing at this stage could be further from my mind."

Investigations into security in Brighton will have to reconcile the serious differences that have emerged between army, Scotland Yard and intelligence sources on the one hand, and Sussex police on the other.

There is a further problem. It now seems the bomb may have been planted weeks before the conference began and the question is bound to be asked whether the intelligence that led to last week's alert should have persuaded the security forces to undertake immediately a complete new search of the hotel.

Police sources now believe they know precisely where the bomb was planted in the Grand Hotel: in room 629 on the sixth floor, five floors directly above Mrs Thatcher's suite. The room was occupied by Donald McLean, president of the

Man questioned

BRIGHTON police said late last night that a man was being held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act in connection with the Grand Hotel bombing. The man was detained at Liverpool Airport on Friday night as he was about to board a Dublin-bound plane and was brought to Brighton early yesterday for questioning.



The bomb at the Grand: pages 15-18

Scottish Conservative association, and his wife Muriel. Miraculously, both survived and were said to be comfortable in hospital yesterday after undergoing surgery.

Police believe the bomb was concealed underneath the floorboards. William Huckleby, head of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch who has been called in by the Sussex police, said: "It is possible to place the bomb and time it to three weeks, three hours and 30 seconds."

Commander Huckleby discounted IRA claims that 100lb of explosive was used. Bomb-disposal officers reckoned it was 20lb of commercial explosive, possibly Frangex. The IRA, he added, now has the ability to time a device in a far more sophisticated manner than before.

The development of a sophisticated micro-electronic timing device, he said, was most "concerning", because "we are entering a new dimension in the timing of these devices". An IRA arms find at Pangbourne, Berkshire, last year had a timing device capable of detonating a bomb at any time up to 42 days.

A senior minister yesterday insisted that a political decision had been made - "possibly by some official in Conservative Central Office" - to minimise the

use of sniffer dogs at Brighton. "The feeling was that the only threat at Brighton would come from demonstrating miners and we didn't want dogs yapping on television at the miners. It would look bad."

However, the IRA, to undermine the role of the sniffer dogs, may well have wrapped the bomb in cellophane to cut down the distinctive smell of explosive. Police have confirmed that at least one search of the hotel using the dogs was carried out before the delegates arrived. "If the bomb had been gelignite-based, it could have been wrapped in cellophane, so that the smell could not have been detected," he said. "Or possibly the IRA was using explosives which the dogs had not experienced before."

This new attack was logical, given the IRA's tradition of carrying out a spectacular demonstration of its prowess in advance of the annual meeting of its political wing, Sinn Fein, which opens in Dublin at the beginning of November.

There were also other reasons to expect an IRA attack, notably the recent successes of security forces both in Belfast and in the Irish Republic, where there have been two major arms hauls.

Despite these strong indications, neither the police in Brighton nor the Special Branch appears to have taken the threat seriously. One minister said yesterday: "Brighton police are not competent. They were more concerned with stopping miners throwing eggs at us than in stopping the IRA. Once you get inside the outer security ring you could go where you liked."

"I want to know whether there was a catastrophic breakdown in intelligence-gathering, or whether information was not communicated between police forces. This raises the most serious questions about our security operations. I want to know who blundered."

It became clear yesterday that neither British intelligence nor Special Branch had any firm idea about the identities of the IRA terrorists involved.

A team of 50 detectives led by detective chief superintendent Jack Rose is now working through the hotel's register to contact those who have stayed at the hotel in recent months. This investigation, together with other evidence gathered from witnesses, has been fed into the anti-terrorist squad computer in London.

Scotland Yard sources strongly denied reports yesterday that they had received a warning from FBI contacts to expect an IRA bomb attack in mainland Britain. "If they did know, and I doubt it, that intelligence certainly did not reach us."

● Report: James Adams, Patrick Bishop, Simon Freeman, Barrie Penrose and John Witherow.

Prior: Why IRA must not succeed

by Simon Freeman

JAMES PRIOR, until a few weeks ago Northern Ireland secretary, was trying his best to sound positive and optimistic. But the strain, verging on a sense of despair, was almost tangible as he leant across the table in the dining room of his London flat a few hours after watching the horrors of Brighton on his television.

Outside his flat armed police stood guard. As soon as he agreed to take the unenviable Northern Ireland job three years ago Prior forfeited the sort of basic freedoms that most workaday politicians take for granted. He will remain a potential IRA target for years to come.

"I don't want to sound too depressed about this. It is a dreadful thing to have happened. But we must not lose sight of the fact that we have had tremendous intelligence successes. Our intelligence has improved enormously. If people only knew the number of times that clever intelligence has frustrated attacks they would not be anything like as critical as they are."

Having said that, Prior added that no one should pretend that intelligence work can always pre-empt attacks by the IRA. "There will always be a risk. It has to be accepted. All of the people at the conference will live with this for a long time. I don't think it will alter our policies in any way."

Prior talked about the logic behind the IRA attack, arguing forcibly and with the authority that comes after years of handling highly sensitive material.

"The IRA have been driven to this because of the reverses they've suffered. They are worried about having arms shipments intercepted. They don't want to see the Fitz-Gerald-Thatcher summit succeed. They hope that they can put things off, change people's minds."

But Prior said, too, that there was another dimension, more difficult for the British public to understand, and one that made the job of the intelligence services and the police that much harder. "I think that they are just out to get us. Brits. It's very difficult to assess this exactly. It's part desire for revenge, part pathological hatred. They want, too, to show people, their supporters in North America, that they are an army."

What would he do if he were still Northern Ireland secretary? "First, there is simply no easy answer to the Irish problem. I don't believe there is any one act of security that can get this right. I don't believe in any quick solution."

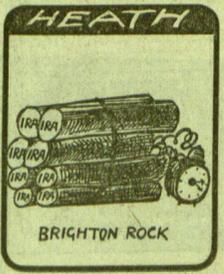
"It will be a slow haul to something rather better. There are signs that people in the Irish Republic want to find a way and everything must be done to hold on to this mood. It is the IRA's intention to destroy this mood. We have to make it clear that we will not be diverted,"

Rescuers find fourth body in hotel rubble

by Kim Fletcher and Adriana Caudrey

FIREMEN sifting the rubble of the Grand Hotel, Brighton, last night recovered the fourth body more than 40 hours after the bomb blast early on Friday morning. Nine out of the 32 people injured were still in hospital, two of them in intensive care. The police said digging would continue until they were satisfied there was no one else in the building.

Confirmed as killed in the blast were Sir Anthony Berry, 59, MP for Enfield Southgate; Eric Taylor, 54, chairman of the north-west area Conservatives; and Roberta Wakeham, 45, the wife of the chief whip, John Wakeham, who was himself badly injured. The fourth body, trapped in rubble on an upper floor, was not formally identified: still unaccounted for was Jeanne Shattock, the wife of Gordon Shattock, the



BRIGHTON ROCK

chairman of the western area Conservatives.

The two victims still in intensive care yesterday at Brighton's Royal Sussex Hospital were Margaret Tebbit, wife of Norman Tebbit, the trade and industry secretary, and John Wakeham, who was trapped in rubble for six hours.

Wakeham, who was conscious and able to drink water, has serious leg injuries.

Norman Tebbit, who was trapped after the blast for four hours, has injured ribs and a badly gashed thigh.

Tebbit's condition was described as "stable and cheerful" and he was able to visit his wife, who was conscious yesterday. She is paralysed from the neck down, apart from a small amount of movement in her left hand. Dr Tony Trafford, consultant physician at the hospital, said: "The degree to which she will recover depends upon how much damage was done to recoverable contusions or swellings. It is too early to give a firm answer."

Also in hospital last night were Donald McLean, the Scottish Tory chairman, his wife Muriel, and Gordon Shattock.

Lady Berry and Jennifer Taylor were discharged yesterday. Throughout the day messages of goodwill and flowers from around the world were delivered to the hospital.

The injured were visited yesterday by the deputy prime minister, Lord Whitelaw, who

continued on page 2



The newest Royal: Here is the nation's first sight of Prince Henry of Wales, who is the third in line to the throne, with his mother the Princess of Wales. The month-old prince - "more like a Windsor than a Spencer" - makes his picture debut in the official portraits taken by Snouidon. (The world's most famous family, page 5).

MacGregor told: enough is enough

by Donald Macintyre Labour Editor

IAN MACGREGOR, chairman of the National Coal Board, is under considerable pressure from the government to make no further concessions in talks aimed at ending the pit strike, which resumes tomorrow night. Indeed, some senior ministers are said to feel that he may have gone too far already.

During three days of talks at the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas), which adjourned last night, MacGregor agreed to refer closures to a non-binding independent review body and to adopt a closure policy in line with the "principles" of the Plan for Coal, jointly agreed between the government, unions and the Coal Board in the 1970s. These are two key elements in the formula drawn up for the talks by Pat Lowry, the Acas chairman, which was accepted by the board but rejected by the National Union of Mineworkers.

The sticking point between the two sides now is a modification to the Acas document suggested during yesterday's talks by the NUM and the pit deputies' union, Nacods. An NUM formula tabled earlier yesterday by the union was apparently rejected by the NCB.

MacGregor said as he left the talks: "I am encouraged. I think there is a beginning of an understanding of the realities." Asked whether he had given any ground, he said: "I have no ground to give." Scargill insisted that the union's position had not changed since March, but added that if the board looked at the new proposals "sensibly" it would "see them as providing the basis of negotiations that could lead to a settlement". Tentative plans for

an NUM executive meeting today have been shelved pending tomorrow's talks.

The most hopeful note was sounded by Ken Sampey, the Nacods president, who said he was now "very optimistic". Scargill last night reported the outcome of the talks to Norman Willis, the TUC general secretary.

MacGregor pointed out on Friday that the independent review body left the last word on closure decisions to the board. But the government's worry is that an independent body would carry a moral authority which would be difficult to counter if it came down against a closure proposed by the board. The wording of the formula, accepted by the board, makes it clear that "full weight" will be given by the parties to recommendations by the independent body. After a tough seven-month struggle, Tory leaders are worried that MacGregor has given away too much to have made it worthwhile.

The main point at issue between the miners' union and the board when talks opened yesterday was over the reference to Plan for Coal, the expansionist 1974 and 1977 documents on the future of the industry. When the last round of talks between the two sides broke up last month the board was insisting on a closure policy in line "with its responsibilities", while the union wanted the wording "in line with the Plan for Coal".

In an attempt to bridge the gap, Lowry is understood to have come up with a formula which dropped the reference to "responsibilities" and which promised a policy in line with "the principles of Plan for Coal".

Sunday Times contest for new film writers

THE Sunday Times this week announces an unprecedented opportunity for an aspiring screenwriter to have his or her first script turned into a film by Britain's leading film maker, David Puttnam.

The Sunday Times Movie Competition, launched this week in the screen pages (see page 55), aims to discover and launch a new writing talent.

Anyone who has never had a film or television production made from his work can enter.

The winning script will be made into a 30-minute movie financed by the National Film Finance Corporation. David Puttnam, who won an Oscar for Chariots of Fire, will be personally responsible for its production.

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NEWS DIGEST

Libyan charged

ANTI-TERRORIST police yesterday charged a Libyan student, Salhen Salem, aged 28, with conspiring to cause explosions in London on or about last March 9. A second man, held in Birmingham, was also being questioned last night.

Gulf ship ablaze

A GREEK shipping firm confirmed yesterday that the Gaz Fountain was hit by three rockets in an Iraqi air strike while sailing in the Gulf. The ship was last night still ablaze. All 33 crew were picked up.

Telegraph hit

PRODUCTION of today's Sunday Telegraph was seriously delayed last night when foundry staff stopped work after complaining that asbestos in the department posed a health hazard.

McGuigan wins

BARRY MCGUIGAN, British and European featherweight champion knocked out Philippe Orozco, of Colombia, in the second round in Belfast.

Malta bomb

A BOMB exploded yesterday at a government computer centre near Valletta, Malta. It caused considerable damage but there were no casualties.

Shuttle lands

THE space shuttle Challenger landed on schedule yesterday in Florida.

Times Portfolio

THE TIMES Portfolio game will carry on until well into the autumn. Readers can get their Portfolio card free - or another, if they already have one - in next week's Sunday Times colour magazine.

Scargill urged strike in '83

by Martin Kettle

FRESH evidence of Arthur Scargill's determination to call a national coal strike without balloting his union members has been given to The Sunday Times. It reveals that a year before the present strike began, Scargill pressed unsuccessfully for the miners' executive committee to declare an official national stoppage, in a move which would have been unlawful according to last month's High Court ruling.

The National Union of Mineworkers and Scargill currently face combined fines of £201,000 for contempt of court in defying the ruling that a national strike without a ballot is both unlawful and a breach of the union's rules.

The new evidence in private minutes of a meeting on March 4 last year of the executive committee of the Barnsley-based Colliery Officials and Staffs Association, which has the status of an area within the miners' union. At this meeting, the Cosa secretary, Trevor Bell, gave a report on the meeting of the previous day, March 3, of the full NUM executive, of which Bell is a member. His report covered the executive's response to the local strike in the South Wales area against the closure of Lewis Merthyr colliery.

The minutes of Bell's report say: "An emergency meeting of the national executive committee was convened on Thursday, March 3, and the national president [Scargill] had called the national executive committee together to obtain its endorsement for all-out national action in support of the strike already taking place in the South Wales area. It was felt that there was evidence of enough support in the rest of the coalfields to warrant the national executive committee using Rule 41 to call a national strike without a ballot under Rule 43. However, this view was not supported by a majority of the committee members who, during the debate, clearly indicated fears that a fragmented union would not be united again."

The union's rule 41 gives the national executive power to authorise stoppages at area level. Rule 43 says that a national strike can take place only after a ballot of members. In the event, the union went ahead with a ballot on the Lewis Merthyr closure strike, which was rejected.

Legal experts who have studied the Cosa minutes say that this shows that Scargill's action this year in trying to declare a series of area stoppages as an official national strike was a long-held plan and that the tactic of avoiding a ballot was very much Scargill's.

Knives out in Kremlin

DIPLOMATIC sources in Moscow suggested yesterday that "some kind of power struggle" was taking place in the Kremlin. They pointed to the unexpected appearance in East Berlin of Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, who was replaced a month ago as Soviet chief of staff.

The sources say that Ogarkov, 66, had the support of Mikhail

Gorbachev, one of the defeated contenders for the leadership following the death of Yuri Andropov. Ogarkov and Gorbachev represent an increasingly sharp opposition to Andropov's ailing successor, Konstantin Chernenko.

The diplomats point out that Ogarkov would not have risked the trip unless he had strong support in Moscow.



Sir Walter Clegg, MP for Wyre, and Lady Clegg, who suffered cuts and bruises in the blast, recover in the Royal Sussex hospital. They both returned home yesterday

Brighton search goes on

CONTINUED FROM P.1

paid tribute to the work of the emergency services. He said: "What this hospital has done fills me with the greatest admiration. I would like to express my thanks to them, as well as to the fire service and all the emergency services." Mrs Thatcher was spending the day - her 59th birthday - at Chequers.

By yesterday morning, the hotel basement, ground, first, second and third floors had been searched, but firemen were hampered in attempts to search areas of the fourth, fifth and sixth floors by the state of the building.

A senior fire officer said: "It is dangerous for men working in there, as the movement of any part to try to find persons could involve movement of other parts of the structure. We are doing it

with some trepidation. We fear that if you stand on the rubble you'll just fall down two or three floors."

Work was halted temporarily while structural engineers examined the building. Skips outside the hotel were filled with debris and a telescopic crane was brought in to hoist fallen masonry.

There was strict security at the hospital. Some army bomb-disposal men examined all letters sent to the injured, while others went to inspect the interior of the Grand Hotel for clues to the type of bomb used.

The bombing brought a call yesterday for the restoration of capital punishment for terrorist murder. Peter Bruinvels, Tory MP for Leicester East, said he planned to table a private member's bill.

He said: "This might sound like meeting violence with violence, but it is surely the only thing that terrorists will listen to."

The Pope, in a message to the papal nunciature in Britain, condemned the bombing as "an act of futile hatred". He expressed sympathy for the victims and their families and said he prayed "that God will convert the hearts of all those tempted to use violence in order to gain their ends."

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Habgood, said the attack was the work of "fanatics". Addressing the York diocesan synod, he said: "Our first thought this morning should be to express sympathy with the victims of yesterday's outrage in Brighton, to thank God that the results of it were not worse, and also to give our unqualified condemnation of the act itself and motives which inspired it."

Spain to shut off bolt-hole

by Martin Kettle

BRITAIN and Spain are on the verge of signing a new extradition deal which will close the door on Spanish sanctuaries for criminal suspects. Senior officials from the Foreign and Home Offices are due to meet this month, probably in London, to discuss a deal to swap fugitives. Whitehall is confident that the talks will clinch an early agreement to restore Anglo-Spanish extradition arrangements, which Spain broke off in 1978.

Behind the scenes, negotiations between officials have been going on since July, when the home secretary, Leon Brittan, wrote to the Spanish minister of justice, Fernando Ledesma, requesting "urgent" talks. This followed newspaper reports that five men wanted by Scotland Yard for questioning in connection with the huge Security Express and Heathrow bullion robberies were living in luxury on the Costa del Sol, safe from British law.

The five men police wish to interview are Ronald Knight, the estranged husband of the film star Barbara Windsor, Clifford Saxe, Frederick Foreman, John Mason and John Everett. All are living in the Marbella area but the Yard believes they are likely to flee to South America if a new treaty is in prospect.

Spain has been angered at British press coverage of the Knight case. Madrid broke off the 100-year-old Anglo-Spanish extradition deal because of frustration at Britain's apparent

reluctance to give up suspects wanted in Spain. And in July, Spain revealed that it had already offered to swap Knight and his friends for a runaway Spanish sherry magnate, Jose Mateos, who fled to Britain last year after the seizure of his business by the Madrid authorities. Britain refused the offer, a Spanish foreign ministry official disclosed.

When the Knight story broke earlier this year, the press had a field day, suggesting that up to 70 alleged criminals were living it up on the "Costa del Crooks". These tales were greatly exaggerated, police and Whitehall sources say.

Others thought to be in Spain whom British police would like to interview include Peter Dixon, one of three men allegedly involved in a Lloyd's syndicate fraud.

Britain's keenness to secure a new extradition deal with Spain was made clear by Brittan in July. He said then that the picture of wanted men sunning themselves on foreign beaches "outrages the public's sense of justice".

But Whitehall accepts that the key difficulty is the strict legal requirement that before a wanted person is extradited from Britain, a magistrate must be satisfied that there is at least a prima facie case that he would be committed for trial if the offences had been committed in Britain.

Officials now believe that there has been a breakthrough in the exchanges between London and Madrid and that sufficient common ground now exists for a full-scale meeting between senior officials.

Argentina to lift British sanctions

by Maria Laura Avignolo Buenos Aires

BRITISH assets in Argentina, which have been blocked since the opening shots of the Falklands war, will be unfrozen later this month.

The Argentine president, Raul Alfonsín, has bowed to pressure from the country's numerous creditors in lifting the economic sanctions, according to a highly-placed source in Buenos Aires. Debt-ridden Argentina owes nearly \$36 billion to more than 350 banks, many of them British.

British involvements in Argentina are estimated to be worth more than \$318m.

Alfonsín is expected to announce the decision when he flies to France on October 23 for talks with President Fran-

cois Mitterrand. The next step will be for Argentina to lift the embargo on trade between the two countries. Sources in Buenos Aires suggested last week that this could be a prelude to a restoration of diplomatic relations with Britain.

At present, Argentines cannot buy British products nor sell their own to the UK. Britain stopped its own trade embargo with Argentina at the end of the Falklands conflict.

The Alfonsín government did not consult Britain before deciding to unblock the assets.

During the Falkland war, the military junta stopped short of seizing the many prominent British companies in Argentina, whose interests include petrochemical plants, refineries and tobacco.

Berry: devoted to papers and party

SIR ANTHONY BERRY was the sixth and youngest son of the first Lord Kemsley, owner of The Sunday Times until Roy Thomson bought it in 1959. Tony was born in 1925 and educated at Eton. After four years as a lieutenant in the Welsh Guards, he went up to Trinity College, Oxford, where he was a tall, affable, charming, slightly Woosterish figure who was not very academic (he got a fourth in PPE).

However, he early showed his interest in politics by publishing and co-editing a lush one-off collection called Conservative Oxford. Many of the star writers on The Sunday Times at that period were to be found in its handsome pages.

After leaving Oxford, Tony joined The Sunday Times in 1952 and ran the Letters Page for two years, with the title of assistant editor. Then, in a clearly accelerated promotion, he was briefly editor of the doomed Sunday Chronicle in 1954, the year he married his first wife, Mary Roche, daughter of Lord Fermoy.

He was next sent to Cardiff as managing director of the Western Mail, where he spent five years until the Thomson takeover. Here he was very popular. He cared deeply about the paper and lavished money on it as his predecessors had been unable to do. With his three surviving

brothers (Lionel, Denis and Neville), he served briefly under Roy Thomson, but all four brothers, in a typical display of family loyalty, resigned together on the same day in 1959.

By now, in any event, Tony's thoughts were turning to politics and he was elected Conservative MP for Southgate in 1964. He was divorced from Mary in 1966 and married Sarah Clifford-Turner the same year; there were four children by the first marriage, two by the second.

For 20 years, he served the Conservative Party devotedly (he was an opposition whip from 1975-79) and liked to remind Sunday Times reporters who interviewed him that he had once been an assistant editor of their paper. Indeed, it was widely believed during the Kemsley regime that he was being groomed to edit it. The fates decreed otherwise. - GODFREY SMITH

The Sunday Times
The Sunday Times apologises to readers who were unable to obtain their copy of the paper last week. This was due to production problems.

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| 300/4278 | Wimau Home Dart Set | 19.99 | 17.99 |
| 300/5215 | Guinness Brothers '6' Snooker Table | 49.99 | 44.99 |
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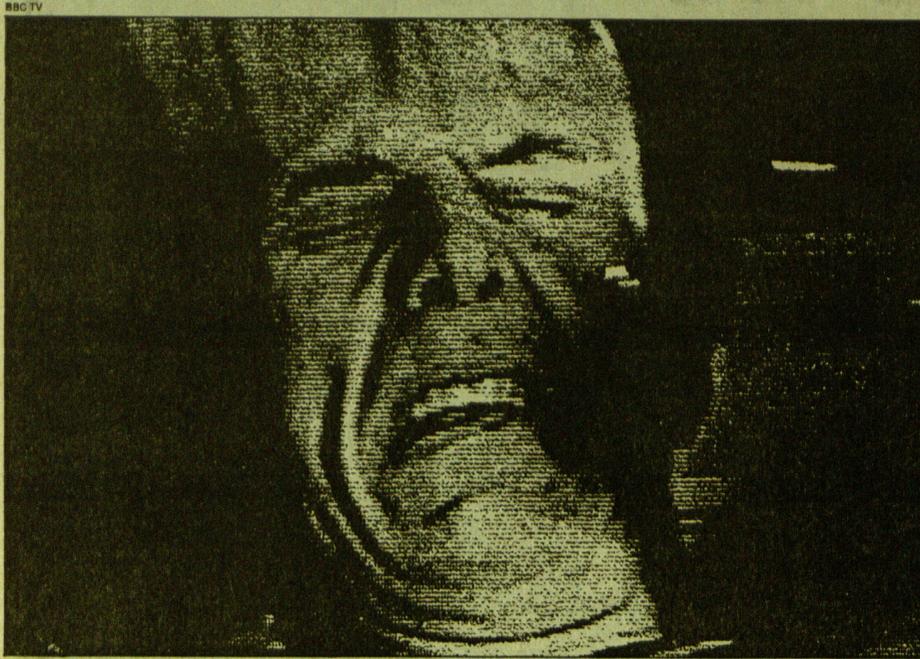
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AIR NEW ZEALAND'S 'RITZ OF THE SKIES' SERVICE TO LOS ANGELES AND NEW ZEALAND ONCE AGAIN CAME TOP IN THE LUNN POLY BUSINESS CLASS SURVEY.

WEEK IN FOCUS: SPECIAL REPORT

BOMB AT THE GRAND



Pain contorts Norman Tebbit's face as he is eased from rubble after a four-hour rescue operation

THE ALLOCATION of hotel rooms to representatives (who are never called delegates) to the annual Tory party conference is subject to elaborate etiquette. By tradition, notables from the constituency associations are given at least their fair share of the best rooms - which at the Grand Hotel in Brighton are the ones overlooking the sea - and the professional politicians, even senior members of the cabinet, who are essentially guests at the conference, can find themselves relegated to rooms with no view.

Thus at the Grand, ministers such as Nigel Lawson, Sir Keith Joseph, Norman Fowler and John Biffen had lesser accommodation than, say, the chairman of the north-western area of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations or his counterpart from the south-west, or the president of the Scottish association. It is thanks to that egalitarianism that several members of Her Majesty's government are not now dead or maimed - and it also explains why several Tory notables are.

Police believe that the bomb, consisting of 20lb of either Fange or a similar nitro-based commercial explosive, was placed in one of the prime seaward bedrooms - room 629 on the sixth floor - in the centre of the hotel. Police believe it was fitted with a timing device and planted, maybe as long as three weeks ago, perhaps under the floorboards. Its placement was highly professional.

The force of the upward blast did the most visible damage to the Grand's elegant facade. It blew out the front wall of the centre bedrooms on the fifth, sixth and seventh floors, wrecked their adjoining bathrooms, and took off the roof. Amazingly, the occupants of room 629 - Donald McLean, president of the Scottish Conservative Association, and his wife, Muriel, survived (although they needed surgery for their injuries).

INSIGHT

● On Friday morning the IRA came within a few feet of assassinating the prime minister and other key members of Her Majesty's government. Inevitably, the terrorists will try again. "Today we were unlucky, but remember we only have to be lucky once. You have to be lucky always," they said. How did it happen? How could it happen? And how will it change the pattern of British political life?

But it was the downward blast that was more devastating, and deadly. From top to bottom of the hotel, the floors of the centre seaward bedrooms collapsed; it was as though some monstrous drill had bored a vertical shaft from the roof to the basement.

In the seventh-floor centre bedroom, above the blast, Harvey Thomas, the conference organiser - and the organiser of Billy Graham's evangelical missions to Britain - was, fortunately as it turned out, hurled from his bed. That accident saved him: he landed, not in the shaft, but buried in the debris of what had been the fifth-floor bathroom, shaken but not badly hurt. The guests below him were not so lucky.

On the sixth floor, Gordon Shattock, chairman of the western counties, and his wife, Jean, plunged into the void. So, too, from the fifth-floor bedroom, did Eric Taylor, chairman of the north-western region, and his wife, Jennifer. From the fourth-floor bedroom, John Wakeham, Tory chief whip, and his wife, Roberta. From the third-floor bedroom, Sir Anthony Berry, MP for Enfield, Southgate, and his wife, Lady Sarah. From the second-floor bed-

room, Norman Tebbit, the industry secretary, and his wife, Margaret. On the first, Sir Geoffrey Howe, the foreign secretary, was saved only by the fact that his centre room is part of a suite, and serves as the sitting room; he was asleep in the bedroom next door, which was untouched.

Tons of masonry fell into the vertical shaft, crushing some of those who had plunged into it, yet leaving others virtually unscathed. Gordon Shattock suffered only lacerations to the face and body, but his wife was killed. Eric Taylor and Sir Anthony Berry died; their wives escaped with cuts and bruises. And, in that awful lottery, there were other inexplicable events: for example, the Wakehams were sleeping two floors above the Tebbits, yet ended up buried six feet beneath them in the rubble.

In other words, through chance or design, the bomb inflicted the maximum damage on the prime bedrooms on every floor, where anyone unaware of Tory conference etiquette might have expected the most notable VIPs - the cabinet ministers - to be sleeping. The main force of

the blast passed near enough to Mrs Thatcher's suite to have considerable hope of killing her, and very nearly did: her bathroom, a mere wall away from the shaft, was mangled; she had visited it two minutes before the bomb went off.

It is all too clear that the choice of location for the bomb was not chance.

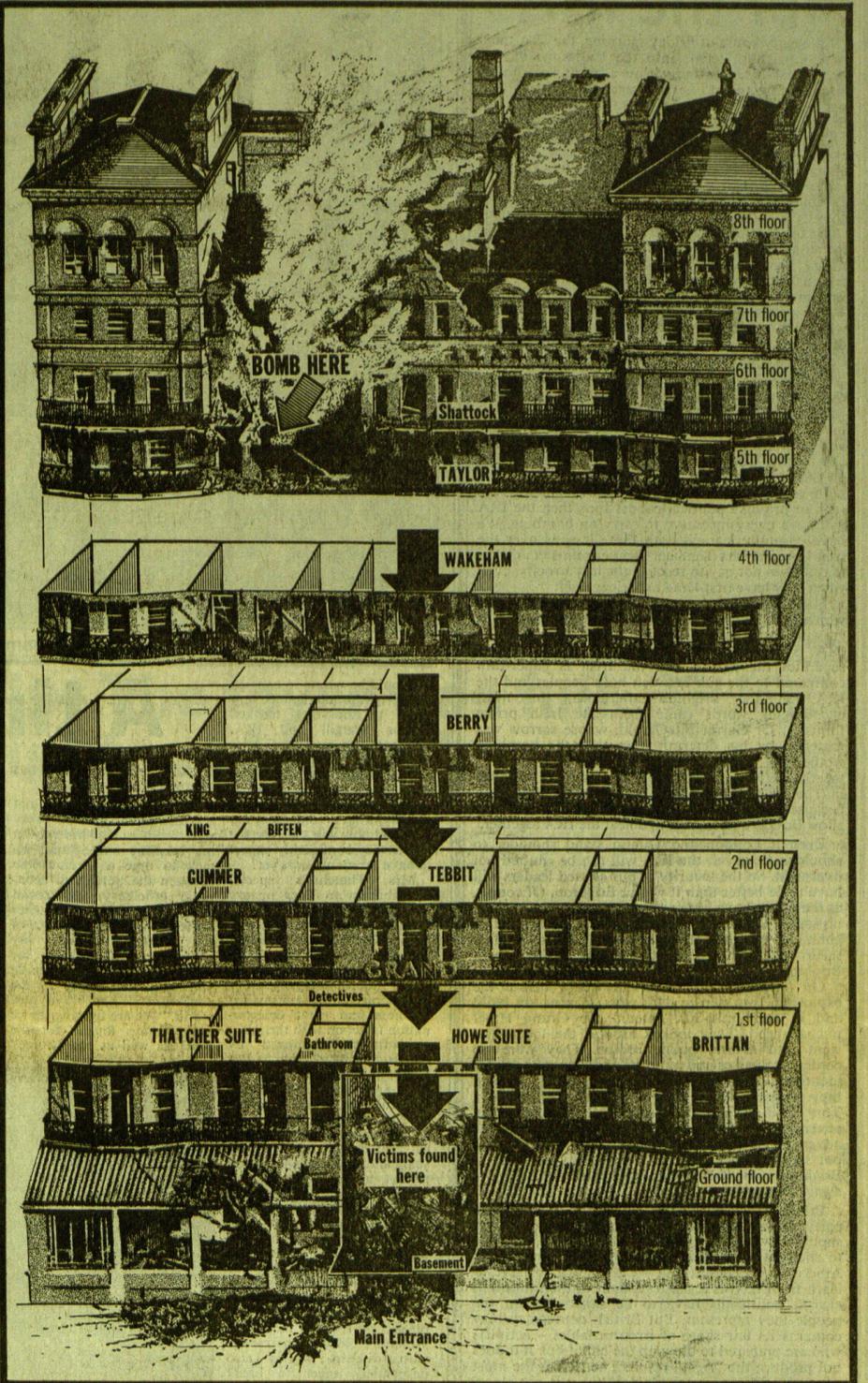
THE Provisional IRA has always believed in the "last push" theory - that if it did something awful enough on the mainland, the British public would demand that Britain wash its hands of Northern Ireland for ever. But in recent months the IRA hawks have been restrained by the so-called "doves", who wanted to pursue political objectives.

In the Northern Ireland assembly elections of 1982, and the general election of 1983, candidates of Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing, increased their share of the vote to the point where they could nearly outstrip the moderate Social Democratic and Labour Party in claiming to be the principal representatives of the Catholic community. So, last Christmas, when rebellious hawks bombed Harrods, the doves felt strong enough to rebuke publicly the terrorists.

But, in the European Parliamentary elections last June, Sinn Fein's Danny Morrison was roused by the SDLP's John Hume. The ballot box was not working quickly enough for the hawks, who demanded a return to violence. The doves resisted and the argument raged throughout the summer. The hawks won.

The first sign of this came on September 4 in Ulster when a car bomb exploded without warning in the border town of Newry, and 65 people were injured. There was also a renewed wave of attacks on members of the Ulster Defence Regiment along the border.

Then, three weeks ago, early on a Saturday morning, Irish police descended on a remote



The upward blast destroyed the hotel facade; the downward blast was internal, but deadly

bungalow at Lusk, just north of Dublin. They uncovered 1,000 timing devices for bombs.

A week later came another clue that something was brewing: the Marita Anne, a trawler from County Kerry, was intercepted by an Irish naval corvette. Aboard were several tons of arms and ammunition.

The IRA had clearly been

planning to renew its campaign of terror. The security forces hoped they had been thwarted at least for the time being. That calculation could not have been more mistaken: the micro-circuitry of the timing device which detonated Friday's bomb at the Grand was, according to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

AS the prime minister said, business as usual, on a topic that it is harder than usual to be urbane about. Neil Kinnock swiftly and sincerely deplored the event as soon as it happened. But a week spent in Tory attacks on left-wing violence had culminated in an atrocious example of Irish violence.

The effect, at the end of the day, is that the government's hold on the electorate has been strengthened. So what does it intend to do with the power?

Maybe it is too much to expect constructive ideas from a conference whose only point is to cheer the party up. But there wasn't much cheer at Brighton either. The only sport was to watch the horses in the succession stakes cantering round the course. This year the bookies were studying not form but "code", the hidden meaning behind the platitudes.

Michael Heseltine jerked a tear or two with his Arromanches peroration - code for "I'm tough but tender", if David Owen hadn't pinched that slogan in advance. Leon Brittan announced several long-prepared and rather libertarian policies, while pretending they were fresh-minted to dish Scargill - code

A lady still not for turning

for "I'm Willie Whitelaw's heir". Peter Walker was heavily into One Nation - code for "I think it's time to risk some more inflation".

Norman Tebbit, before the disaster, did his bony best, free from code, with the trade and industry brief, and proved that you don't have to be an orator for the Tories to love you.

The most significant speech was also uncoded, from Nigel Lawson. The chancellor surprised himself, but nobody else, by winning a non-standing, non-ovation for a dull reading of a Treasury brief. Mr Lawson is an ambitious and inventive politician. If he had hoped to offer, he would have offered them, and got his applause.

But chancellors who make promises are expected to deliver. Mr Lawson spends his time studying the hard figures of the economy, and they don't look good. He said the economy will "bounce back" next year to its growth rate of 1983. Since 1984 is low-growth year (largely, but not entirely, because of the miners' strike), that only means

that we should, with a bit of luck, be back in 12 months' time somewhere around where we were 12 months ago.

That's not good enough. Lots of Tories - especially northern ones, for whom the trip to the south coast is a journey to a barely recognisable world of relative prosperity - genuinely want to believe that all the squalor and sadness of unemployment is going to have been worth it. They want a reward for their consciences. The small businessmen in particular - and their aunts and uncles who work away in Conservative committee rooms - will only believe that things are really getting better when they see their profits going up again.

(That is not just selfish: if they had more money they would employ more people.)

But the profits aren't coming in, nor are the jobs. A delegate insisted - and was cheered for insisting - that there must be an alternative. If a Conservative government cannot offer one, where are such people to turn?

Mr Lawson, as is his habit, suggested we might borrow from the United States. Lightly disregarding President Reagan's massive deficit spending, he attributed America's job-creation triumph to the fact that Americans have been taking wage cuts. But those British who are still in jobs have been doing exactly the opposite.

Tom King, on the same tack, trotted out the paralysing old cliché (originally, I think, James Callaghan's or Denis Healey's, but possibly Selwyn Lloyd's) about people "paying themselves too much". But the Jaguar workers do not want to pay themselves more than the company says it can afford: they want the company to pay it.

With a small c, the British are profoundly conservative people - they like going on behaving as they used to behave. They are obstinate. Nobody could have foretold that the miners would fight as they have. Nobody spotted that if you save labour by using computers but employ the same people to run the machines they will behave exactly as though the machines had not been invented, and strike; that is why there is a drama in the pensions office.

Back in 1979, Mrs Thatcher said she needed two terms in office to make the fundamental changes needed for her vision of Britain to come true. Five and a half years later lots

of institutions have been transformed - the public service, the nationalised industries, private firms, most of them by closure. But the people are the same.

The prime minister, in her closing speech at Brighton, took part of her text from a white paper on employment published at the dawn of the welfare state in the coalition year of 1944. It emphasised, and she re-emphasised, "the citizen's duty to fend for himself". Every government since then has repeated that over and over. But 40 years on, the prime minister still claims it as a uniquely Conservative statement.

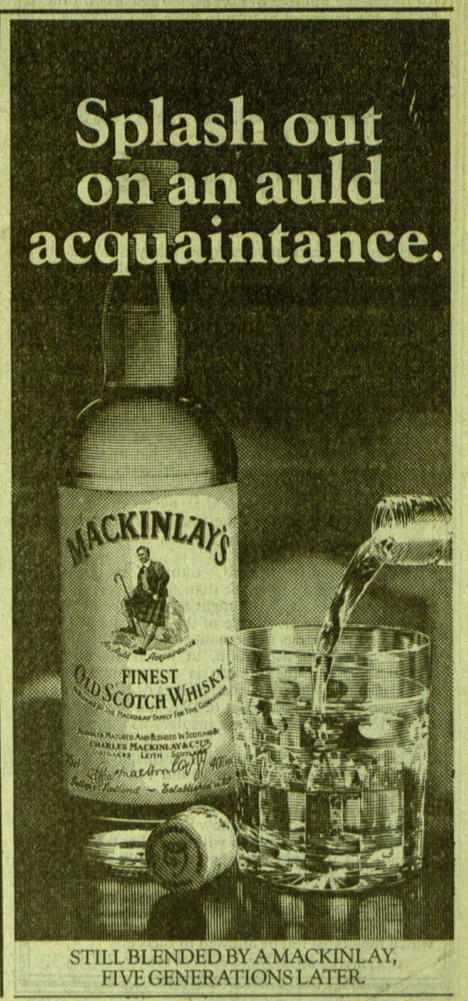
It isn't. It is something all post-war governments have wanted when they took office, only to realise fairly soon that it is no good trying to make the people fit the policies; so they have changed their policies to match the people. That is the U-turn that all we commentators expected Mrs Thatcher to make.

But she didn't make the turn. Like Arthur Scargill, she keeps battling on against the facts long after anyone else would have given up. The bombers have made sure she can go on doing so for a good while yet.

Inside Politics
by NICHOLAS HARMAN



Splash out on an auld acquaintance.



STILL BLENDED BY A MACKINLAY, FIVE GENERATIONS LATER.

WEEK IN FOCUS: BOMB AT THE GRAND 2

Susan Karala

THE SUNDAY TIMES

No comfort for the IRA

IN the early hours of Friday morning, the IRA took its campaign of terror into the bedrooms of the British cabinet. It came within a hair's breadth of assassinating the prime minister and most of her senior ministers - of wiping out the heart of the British government. Since such is the stuff of pulp fiction it is hard - even for those who witnessed the event - to appreciate the full enormity of what almost was. But the inescapable fact is that the IRA came closer than Guy Fawkes or Adolf Hitler to eliminating the elected representatives of this country. No doubt that will give the terrorists much cause for comfort this weekend, as they shrug off the fact that the actual victims of their attack on the "Tory warmongers" turned out to be wives, a regional chairman and a harmless Tory MP. But Britain need not despair.

For a start, no terrorist bomb is going to succeed where the might of the Luftwaffe failed. The oldest democracy in the world will never be brought to its knees by a small band of evil thugs.

Nor can the IRA take any comfort from British over-reaction to its atrocities. In the aftermath of the Brighton bomb, liberals will call for a new political initiative to meet the Ulster problem, while the right will call for a new security offensive to wipe out the IRA. Either would delight the IRA. If the army goes on the rampage in the Falls Road then it will bring more recruits to the terrorist cause. If the bombs are seen to provoke political concessions then the IRA will have every incentive to carry on bombing. We have painfully learned both these lessons over the past 15 years. Mrs Thatcher and her ministers realise that it does not pay to react to the last atrocity, even when they have first-hand experience of it.

But there is another, more important, realisation which should bring no joy to the IRA: there is a growing awareness in London and Dublin that the IRA is the common enemy and that whatever separates the British and the Irish is paper-thin compared to the gulf between both peoples and the IRA. In the Brighton aftermath, the most encouraging words came from the Irish prime minister, Dr Garret FitzGerald, whose sorrow was matched by his determination that the bombing would only serve to bring Britain and Dublin closer together. His sentiments were echoed in an editorial in the Irish Times which we reprint in full today because it illustrates the sort of mood which will allow Britain and Ireland to defeat the IRA together.

Even if London and Dublin stand shoulder to shoulder, however, the IRA will not be snuffed out overnight. So the security of our elected leaders will have to be better than it was at Brighton. Of course, as the police have been anxious to point out, there is no such thing as total security against the bomber or gunman. But there is such a thing as inadequate security, and that seems to have been the case in Brighton.

On Thursday afternoon, 11 hours before the explosion, two men in dark suits, of medium build and in their mid-30s, entered the Grand Hotel unchallenged. They looked around the lobby and went into several public rooms. They wore no conference passes and at no stage did anyone ask for identification. They left after 10 minutes. In fact, they were the editor of the Sunday Times and a Tory MP trying unsuccessfully to find some afternoon tea. They could easily have been the advance guard of an IRA active unit. It is a trivial but significant example of the security breaches at Brighton. Our front page today shows far more significant ones.

Brighton was probably the last of the old-style party conferences, in which the masses get to rub shoulders with their political idols. The British like to sneer at the elaborate security which surrounds American presidents. But we are going to have to learn from it. It is a sad testament of the times that elected politicians have to be shielded from the people they represent. But British democracy now contains its fair share of irreconcilables - activists who are prepared to blow up the ballot box if it does not produce the "right" result. The IRA is the most extreme of these irreconcilables, but it is not alone. An increasing number of groups, particularly on the far left, are prepared to turn to force and violence if they do not get their way. Until they have been seen off we will have to be more vigilant.

THE IRISH TIMES
Steady Britain

● This reaction to the Brighton bombing appeared in *The Irish Times* yesterday.

THE past 15 years have seen so many outrages in Ireland and Britain that the language of condemnation has been all but exhausted. Four human lives have been wantonly snuffed out. All decent people will rejoice at Mr Norman Tebbit's remarkable escape and pity the expression of anguish on his face; but there are, alas, a good many sick-minded enough to gloat over the deaths and injuries. But the event was so remarkable and astonishing and its implications so terrifying that - inevitably though perhaps unfortunately - public reaction has concentrated less on the sufferings of the actual victims than on speculation about what might have happened. The Provisional IRA tried to kill Mrs Thatcher and with her perhaps several members of her cabinet. They believed that by so doing they could provoke a crisis of the first magnitude. They now have the insolence to express regret because they failed.

For nationalist Ireland, outrage is greater, repudiation more indignant than for the rest of the world. The Taoiseach last night aptly spoke of "our deep anger at the arrogance of the Provisional IRA in doing these things in the name of our tradition, in the name of our aspiration, in the name of our legitimacy". But repudiation is not enough. It is important to understand the realities of IRA actions (as opposed to the bombast of IRA statements) and their likely consequences insofar as these are calculable at all.

The assassination of the prime minister would be a very terrible event, but it would not provoke a major crisis in Britain. The governance of Britain would have gone on much the same; anybody who thinks otherwise does not know Britain. It would not have brought about British withdrawal and a united Ireland; but it might have helped greatly to add to the woes of Ireland, north and south, and it very certainly would have impeded hopes of constitutional political progress. And that of course is the real aim of the Provisional IRA. That is an aim in which they must not be allowed to succeed.

Reprinted from *The Irish Times*, October 13



In the shadow of the Brighton bombers: a policeman surveys the damage to the Grand's blasted upper storeys and roof

IT would be wrong to consign the Brighton conference entirely to the files marked Arthur Scargill and IRA. Brighton also gave the Tories time to address questions that do not usually bother parties with large majorities in parliament and the opinion polls - namely, what kind of party are they and how will they use the power they confidently expect to have for many years yet?

Mrs Thatcher's special contribution to Tory history will not be properly assessed for some years yet. Contrary to all the speculation about her succession, she showed no sign last week of quitting the stage. Indeed, she gave every indication of much unfinished business and great determination to get on with the job, a commitment enhanced by efforts to kill her. But Brighton showed clearly, and rank and file speeches from the rostrum offered ample evidence, that the Tories have become infected with ideological zeal during the Thatcher years and that the lady herself is not averse to calling it Thatcherite.

It is militantly market-orientated, fuelled by a zeal for privatisation quite unmatched by any corresponding Labour enthusiasm for state ownership. It is passionately classless, as befits a leadership which prides itself on success through merit and views the old Tory patronage with disdain. It is also desperately eager to break Britain's endemic resistance to the pursuit of top-league prosperity and inflation-free economic growth.

Even the most spirited Thatcherite efforts to break out of a long spiral of national decline, however, do not exempt the Tories from the problems involved, as last week showed. John Biffen, the cabinet's most eloquent sceptic, warned against calling

crusades in the cause of all but the gravest national crisis.

Peter Walker, sole cabinet representative of the Tory wets, went out of his way in his bristling anti-Scargill attack to urge a median line between the pursuit of economic efficiency and social compassion. Mrs Thatcher herself recognised the force of the complaints that her government is uncaring for the needs of ordinary people who may not be up to the challenge of her brave new world. "We are fighting, as we have always fought, for the weak as well as the strong,"

MICHAEL JONES analyses the political significance of the Brighton conference

she said on Friday. That was her answer to Walker. "We are fighting for great and good causes," she added. That was her answer to Biffen.

Neither is likely to be satisfied with that. Walker's analysis of long-term Tory objectives is as rooted in a competitive, classless, decline-breaking credo as Mrs Thatcher's. Biffen's Thatcherite credentials are even more impeccable. She may be

suspicious of the Walker brand of "creative Conservatism", which derives from Iain Macleod and the Macmillan school of One Nation Toryism. It refutes the view of the perfection of market forces, even with state safeguards against abuse, and calls instead for wider freedom. Freedom from poverty and slum housing; a society "undivided by class, race or generation gaps".

To many Thatcherites, such talk smacks of left-wing social engineering. Walker also strikes at the view, often encouraged by Mrs Thatcher, that Britain's future lies in the service industries. "We will not achieve that if there is nothing to service," he told the Tory Reform Group. A high-wage, high-productivity economy depended on a mix of manufacturing and service industries.

Norman Tebbit, the most assertive hero of the Thatcherite revolution, showed none of the qualms of Walker and Biffen when he faced a

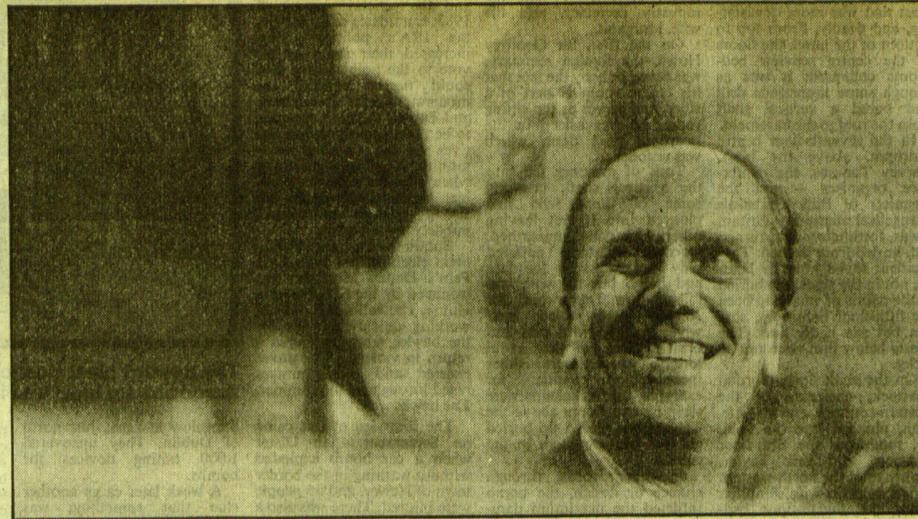
Sally Soames

rapturous conference on Thursday. His reception showed that he has the party in his pocket whenever Mrs Thatcher decides to go. He was by far the most active ministerial broadcaster last week. His ordeal at the hands of the IRA will only add to his credentials as the most likely to succeed, should he so wish.

Aware of the need to expand his policy base, he called for a union of capital and labour, citing his forerunners as Churchill, Eden and Macmillan, a sure sign of his awareness of the Tory love of historical continuity. The jibe that he is no more than the Chingford Skinhead is unlikely to stick ever again. Tebbit showed last week, in his confident, unemotional approach to the challenge that faces him that he is more politically astute than his detractors realise. He needs a major departmental success to crown his transition.

Walker on the left and Tebbit on the right now offer a fascinating contrast in Tory styles within a developing Thatcherite consensus. Michael Heseltine showed once more last week that he can bring the Tory faithful to their feet by playing, almost shamelessly, on their yearning for the Churchillian touch. But he has no definable constituency inside the party and has largely avoided the ideological tussle confronting the post-Thatcher generation. Of the rest of the younger set, only Leon Brittan shows ambition to enter the argument seriously.

Nigel Lawson's off-hand conference speech reinforced the impression that he is not a contender in the leadership stakes. But at least he has the satisfaction of knowing that unless he succeeds at the Treasury all the new Tory philosophers are wasting their time.



Norman Tebbit: "His reception showed that he has the party in his pocket"

Knowing the enemy

PETER SHIPLEY on the urgent need for a cabinet anti-terrorist arm

THE traditional order of historical events - tragedy repeated as farce - was reversed in Brighton on Friday morning. The Grand Hotel bomb almost succeeded, where the Cato Street conspiracy of 1820 to assassinate Lord Liverpool's cabinet was a laughable failure.

Here was not just another terrorist outrage, different only in its scale and audacity from previous attacks, but an event unique in modern times: an attempt to wipe out the British government. Mrs Thatcher's response needs to match the challenge and to translate her "icy calm" into considered action.

Efforts to improve defensive security are not enough, although there is surely scope for improvement on last week's arrangements.

Just one flaw or omission in a security screen undermines the whole operation. And if ministers concede the inadequacy of a purely physical approach to counter terrorism, they must begin a more fundamental reassessment of their methods by understanding what they are up against.

Violence has its own logic and rationale even when to reasonable people it appears "mindless" and "senseless". And the pattern of political violence suggests further intensification.

Terrorism contains an inherent tendency to escalation. Each incident must be more shocking than the last. If it is not it loses the power to terrorise, which as Lenin noted is its primary purpose. It fails also as propaganda if it does not capture the headlines.

Each new level of violence relegates previous horrors to the commonplace. This has happened already in the way the London media treat the daily sufferings of the people of Northern Ireland. But the terrorist cannot lose because the acceptance of violence is as debilitating and destructive to society as the violence itself.

In today's climate of pervasive, endemic violence a revolutionary minority can be at its most dangerous. And the IRA is such a movement. No longer is it based on a primitive nationalism. It possesses an ideology which aims at total social and political revolution in the whole of Ireland. If, as at present, the political outlook is mixed, then the armed struggle takes over. Short-term political disadvantages do not affect the strategy, and such a

movement cannot be brought to a compromise or a negotiated settlement. A revolutionary movement like the IRA learns from the methods and experience of comrades overseas. It has kept foreign links since the 1920s when its leaders visited Bolshevik Russia. Today's technical leaders in revolutionary violence come from the middle east and in the 1970s the IRA had links with the PLO and Colonel Gaddafi.

The Brighton outrage echoes the new wave of middle eastern terror - Iranian, Syrian, and the fanatics of the Islamic Jihad who bomb western embassies in Beirut. And the attack on the Grand Hotel seemed to emulate this new terrorism, the politics of massacre. Was it mere imitation or were there more concrete connections? Will these basic questions on the pattern of terrorist activity be studied and taken into account in Whitehall?

It is in this sphere that action is most glaringly and urgently needed. And yet something holds Whitehall back. First it is the belief that any positive steps to defeat terrorism will increase support

among the nationalist community for the IRA. But Mr Prior himself demolished this theory on Friday evening. Then it is argued that firmness is tantamount to repression, through which democracy does the terrorists' work for them by destroying itself.

This danger is surely illusory. The government has all the legal powers and executive authority it needs. Public opinion would eagerly welcome a concrete sign of determination. What we are talking about is not responding to terrorism as mere propaganda or theatre but an act of war on the British constitution and people.

The government's resolve should take life in the creation of an anti-terrorist unit in the cabinet office, under a non-departmental minister of state reporting directly to the prime minister and answerable to parliament. The unit should comprise a planning and analytical section, with outsiders brought in to inject fresh thinking into policy, plus an operational arm made up of members of all the relevant government departments, police and security agencies. The material and resources are there now; they need galvanising into action.

● Until last month Peter Shipley was a special adviser in the prime minister's policy unit.

ISSUES OF GOVERNMENT STOCK

The Bank of England announces that Her Majesty's Treasury has created on 12th October 1984 and has issued to the Bank, additional amounts as indicated of each of the Stocks listed below:

£100 million 2½ per cent INDEX-LINKED TREASURY STOCK, 2003
£200 million 2½ per cent INDEX-LINKED TREASURY STOCK, 2016

The price paid by the Bank on issue was in each case the middle market closing price of the relevant Stock on 12th October 1984 as certified by the Government Broker.

In each case, the amount issued on 12th October 1984 represents a further tranche of the relevant Stock, ranking in all respects *pari passu* with that Stock and subject to the terms and conditions of its prospectus, save as to the particulars therein which related solely to the initial sale of the Stock. Copies of the prospectuses for the Stocks listed above, dated 22nd October 1982 and 14th January 1983 respectively, may be obtained at the Bank of England, New Issues, Watling Street, London, EC4M 9AA.

Application has been made to the Council of The Stock Exchange for each further tranche of stock to be admitted to the Official List.

The Stocks are repayable and interest is payable half-yearly, on the dates shown below (provision is made in the prospectuses for stockholders to be offered the right of early redemption under certain circumstances):

| Stock | Redemption date | Interest payment dates |
|---|-----------------|--|
| 2½ per cent Index-Linked Treasury Stock, 2003 | 20th May 2003 | 20th May |
| 2½ per cent Index-Linked Treasury Stock, 2016 | 26th July 2016 | 20th November 26th January 26th July |

Both the principal of and the interest on the Stocks are indexed to the General Index of Retail Prices. The Index figure relevant to any month is that published seven months previously and relating to the month before the month of publication. The Index figure relevant to the month of issue of 2½ per cent Index-Linked Treasury Stock, 2003 is that relating to February 1982 (310.7); the equivalent Index figure for 2½ per cent Index-Linked Treasury Stock, 2016 is that relating to May 1982 (322.0). These Index figures will be used for the purposes of calculating payments of principal and interest due in respect of the relevant further tranches of Stock.

The relevant Index figures for the half-yearly interest payments on the Stocks are as follows:

| Interest payable | Published in | Relevant Index figure | Relating to |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| May | October of the previous year | | September |
| November | April of the same year | | March |
| January | June of the previous year | | May |
| July | December of the previous year | | November |

Dealings in the further tranche of 2½ per cent Index-Linked Treasury Stock, 2003 for settlement prior to 20th November 1984 will, in common with the existing Stock, be effected on an ex-dividend basis. The further tranche of 2½ per cent Index-Linked Treasury Stock, 2016 will rank for a full six months' interest on 26th January 1985.

BANK OF ENGLAND
LONDON

12th October 1984

WEEK IN FOCUS: BOMB AT THE GRAND 3



Covered in dust, his face bloodied, Tory MP Sir Walter Clegg and other victims huddle in blankets, comforted by delegates in evening dress. (Right) A stunned Sir Keith Joseph.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

the police, identical to those uncovered at Lusk.

AS IT HAPPENED, the Brighton police and the conference organisers were expecting trouble - but not from the IRA. As Sussex's Chief Constable, Roger Birch, told reporters on Friday afternoon: "If you were asked to give an intelligent projection of the most likely trouble, for obvious reasons it would have to be demonstrations or public disorder."

In short, they expected striking miners to turn up. Reinforcements from nearby forces and support units from the Metropolitan Police were drafted in. The London men were billeted at Butlin's holiday camp at Bognor. When no miners had turned up by Tuesday evening, the police breathed a huge sigh of relief.

Birch was responsible for the overall security of the conference. At 53, he is a shy, polite, old-fashioned sort of policeman who started his career 29 years ago on the beat in Devon. Married with one son, he became deputy Chief Constable of Kent and Chief Constable of Warwickshire before taking over Sussex a year ago last June.

He agreed that security inside the conference hall - next door to the Grand - should be the responsibility of several hundred volunteer

stewards from the Conservatives' south-eastern area, but front-door checks should be made by professionals, from Inter Globe Security Services, a firm hired by Conservative Central Office.

Security at the Grand was largely in the hands of the police. However, the prime minister's personal safety, and the safety of "vulnerable" ministers, such as the home secretary, was the job of personal protection officers from the Special Branch, who were on 24-hour watch.

So, how good was the security? At the conference hall delegates remarked at the beginning of the week on its tightness compared with previous years. But it eased as the week went on. At the Grand things were pretty easy-going from the start. It was easy to enter the public rooms on the ground floor either through the main entrance or through several side entrances. Cabinet ministers wandered around openly, with only the more senior men escorted by bodyguards, identified by their bright red lapel badges.

In addition, the lobby of the Grand - just one floor below Thatcher's suite - was awash with non-resident conference

delegates attending receptions, drinking and simply hanging about. "Security was extremely lax," said 28-year-old Bob Bailey, a Liberal county councillor who was employed as a temporary barman by the Grand. He was one of 25 extra staff taken on by the hotel for conference week. "I walked in every day with a bag," he said. "Nobody asked to see the contents."

Security on Mrs Thatcher's floor was much tighter - although one member of the prime minister's policy unit said he was surprised he could walk into her corridor without having to show any identification or reveal the contents of his briefcase. A Special Branch officer told him: "It's OK, we know your face."

But on the upper floors of the hotel there were few, if any, precautions. On Wednesday Roy Bradford, former Unionist Stormont MP who had a sixth-floor room, had been casting envious eyes on a room opposite his with a sea view. "It was open all morning," he said, "and I thought about trying to move into it and went to have a look. It was all made up. I looked in the morning and then at

lunchtime and the door was still open."

In theory it should be simple to protect any potential target of terrorists. Several experienced security specialists - including one former Special Branch officer - gave The Sunday Times these guidelines (though admitting that the need for public accessibility at a party political conference makes the more extreme measures impractical):

- Ideally, VIPs should have been scattered among hotels throughout Brighton, reducing the chance of a mass attack. Assuming that this was not a realistic option, there are still precautions which could and should have been taken.
- There should have been constant checks for bombs, using electronic equipment and police sniffer dogs. Entrances to key buildings like the Grand should have been guarded and everyone entering checked. Ideally this would mean a body and baggage search but, at the very least, it should have included identification checks.
- There should have been a well-planned procedure in the event of a terrorist attack. In

the aftermath of the blast, cabinet ministers wandered the promenade aimlessly, unprotected and apparently unaware of what they should do. Before Friday's attack one Scotland Yard officer had, in a joking aside, dismissed the scenario in the television thriller, The Glory Boys, in which a hit squad of an IRA man and a PLO assassin pumped bullets for several minutes into an Israeli scientist. The Yard officer said: "It could not happen like that. The police would have dropped the hit team immediately." Yet in Brighton in the early hours of Friday morning the IRA could have made a second assassination attempt with a few marksmen.

The police say that British politicians traditionally reject

the sort of heavy-handed, high-visibility protection favoured by, say, American leaders. "And even the Americans, despite all their secret servicemen and guns, lose leaders like Kennedy," said one senior Yard source.

This argument is accepted by diplomatic and VIP protection specialists. But they insist that the inquiry into the bombing at the Grand must probe the sort of measures taken by police before the conference. Did police vet all hotel employees? Did police check any hotel staff with Irish connections? Had police checked the backgrounds of building workers who, until two weeks ago, were employed on renovating the Grand's lobby and bar?

Inevitably on Friday com-

parisons were being made with the stringent security that surrounds other world leaders - particularly the American president. The day President Reagan arrived at the US equivalent of Brighton - the Republican party convention in Dallas last August - all the guests at his hotel were cleared from their rooms at 7am and kept out for three hours while a bomb search was completed. From then on, the hotel was like a fortress (see panel).

The British political scene will now, almost certainly, become more like this, and the seaside conference season will never be the same again. It will be a dramatic - and sad - change of style.

ON THURSDAY night, for the last time at a Tory

conference, security took a poor second place to personal contact, and the grassroots activists mingled freely with the mighty.

As the 101st Conservative conference approached its end, young Tory dandies stood nonchalantly outside the Grand, some sporting white ties and tails, while the last evening of traditional celebration got under way. Just along the promenade, there was dancing to the sound of the Zochi Band and the Cyril Leppard Disco at the conference ball. Alec Pickersgill, agent for Tony Speller, said: "I'd never miss it. It's the highlight of the conference." At about 10.30pm, Mrs Thatcher arrived for half an hour there, taking "a couple of twirls" on the dance floor as she left.

In the Starlight room of the Metropole Hotel, John Wakeham and his wife enjoyed a jovial dinner in the company of Edward du Cann, chairman

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'We heard cries for help. The foyer was full of smoke and frightened faces'

How they protect the president

● Jon Connell reports from America on the ultra-tight security cordon that surrounds the president away from home



Body guarding: the Service keeps its eye on Reagan

ON THE day that Ronald Reagan arrived in Dallas for the August Republican convention, all the guests in the \$100-a-night Loews Anatole hotel were cleared from their rooms for three hours.

The guests were awoken at 7am and told they had to be out of the hotel by 11am. Police, Secret Service agents and a special unit from the US army then moved in with metal detectors and bomb-sniffing dogs to scour the hotel's 1,620 bedrooms from top to bottom. Only at 2pm were guests allowed back in.

This meticulous search shows the tightness of the security cordon around the president when he travels. Never was it tighter than at the emotionally charged and highly publicised Dallas convention.

The Secret Service is primarily responsible for guarding him. It had begun planning for Dallas weeks in advance: it has worked out the safest routes for the motorcades between the hotel and convention centre, a different route for each trip; it ran a computer check on all local "nuts" who had previously issued threats against the president; it even infiltrated the hotel's staff, putting in a female bartender for a few weeks beforehand.

Before Reagan arrived, all conceivable places for bombs in or near the hotel and the convention centre were checked, down to storm drains and air-conditioning ducts. A chain-link fence was put up around the convention centre, and a 4ft high concrete barrier protected the Anatole and other key public buildings.

In all, between 600 and 800 Secret Service and some 200 FBI agents came to Dallas to reinforce the thousands of local police.

The Anatole itself was turned into the fortress that, from the outside, it resembles. No one without a special pass was allowed in, and those who were sent through metal detectors so sensitive that they even reacted to the thin under-wire in some women's bras.

There were more metal detectors and X-ray machines on the floor of the wing for Reagan and his entourage. The Secret Service took over the floors immediately above and below him for the two nights Reagan stayed in the hotel.

All this may seem obsessive, even unnecessary - it certainly did to many journalists covering the convention. But in a country where political assassination is now an ever-present possibility, the Secret Service takes no chances. Four American presidents have already died by the bullet, and Reagan himself has already been shot at.

Despite everything that was done in Dallas, however, it is doubtful - as one expert acknowledged on Friday - that even this security apparatus could deal with a determined and clever terrorist attack.

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WEEK IN FOCUS: BOMB AT THE GRAND 4



A rescue truck among the debris and a defiant Mrs Thatcher on the last day of the conference: the show went on . . .

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of the Tory backbenchers.

At the Grand, Lord McAlpine, the joint party treasurer, and bon viveur, later hosted a party in his room, attended by both John Wakeham and the Tebbits. The few not enjoying themselves included Mrs Thatcher's staff, who prepared for yet another burst of exhaustive effort on her big speech to be delivered to the conference the following afternoon.

At 1am, when the conference ball ended, Alec Pickersgill moved along the seafront for a birthday party in the bar of the Grand. "It was jam-packed at that time," he said, "but at 2am the bar closed and slowly people began to drift away. It was a typical end of conference evening. People were chatting about anything and everything - talking to contacts, seeing the people we only see at conferences. There were about 70 people there and we were just ordering coffee when we heard a noise that sounded like thunder."

The bomb that was intended to assassinate the prime minister and her cabinet would have fitted into an average sized suitcase. The explosive would have been packed tightly but would have been useless without the primer (the explosive material that explodes the bulk of the bomb), the detonator (which sends impulses triggering the primer) and finally, and most crucially, the timer. It is this mechanism - which can be crudely made from an alarm clock or ordinary wrist watch - which appears from the evidence at the Grand to have been highly sophisticated. It is even possible that it was set to go off *three weeks* after being set and the bomb planted at the hotel.

George Styles, the legendary bomb disposal expert who won the George Cross in 1974 for his work in Northern Ireland, has no doubt that the IRA's so-called "ammunition

technical officer" in the Brighton cell was an accomplished bomber. The men involved in gathering the explosives, scouting the Grand, and arranging accommodation, may well have been in the town for weeks or months but it is unlikely, thinks Styles, that the bomb expert himself - highly valued by his superiors - would have risked travelling to Brighton before absolutely necessary.

There is no possibility - according to Styles, and confirmed to The Sunday Times by senior police sources - of the kind of remote control device used by the IRA when it murdered Lord Mountbatten. "There is too much static and interference in a hotel to risk using that sort of device. You couldn't be sure it would go off when you wanted," says Styles.

As for those responsible for planting it police and security experts say that the IRA cell

could have been made up of as many as eight or nine men or women, and the team could have moved into Brighton a week, a month or a year ago. It could have worked independently of the IRA command, perhaps having been told only to select a key target. It may have infiltrated itself into the Grand hotel, in the constantly shifting casual staff in, say, the kitchens. The killers could have set up home in Brighton, working in the town for some time. They may not even have fled.

Yard officers admit that the days are gone when IRA terrorists got drunk and bragged about their exploits or immediately tried to return to

Belfast after an attack. "They've learnt from their mistakes," said one anti-terrorist officer - as the government, the Tory party and the country now well know.

Fred Bishop, station officer at Brighton fire brigade, was on the scene within minutes. When the firemen heard that an alarm had gone off at the Grand they joked that it was another false alarm - something that the Grand's fire alarm system had become notorious for. When they arrived they could see the gaping hole in the facade but there was no one at the windows. "It was uncanny," said Bishop. "Normally you get people crowding every

window, but there was no sign of life."

Dave Norris, a leading fireman, was one of the first men into the building. He came upon Mrs Thatcher surrounded by Special Branch officers. All held handguns pointing slightly in the air and were obviously edgy and worried for her safety. She was wearing a dark suit and was being hustled along, although she managed to say to Norris: "Good morning. I'm delighted to see you."

Other occupants viewed the disaster with similar British phlegm. Asked how he was, John Biffen, leader of the Commons, replied: "I've had a disturbed night."

But some people were in no condition to be calm. Sir Walter Clegg, 64-year-old MP for the North Fylde seat of Wyre, was led down the corridors by his wife, blood streaming down his face. Lady Clegg summed up many people's experience that night: "We left the excitement of the foyer, and the bright lights to go up to bed. When we

came down, three hours later, there was smoke everywhere, and frightened faces."

Tom McKinley, a fireman who arrived with Bishop, quickly moved into the mound of rubble on the ground floor. He heard a woman screaming, "get me out!" The fireman smashed the alarm bells off the walls so they could hear the cries of the other injured. Just below the first floor ceiling, in the column of rubble that went down to the basement, they spotted the feet of Norman Tebbit.

He was lying in a foetal position, partially wrapped in his mattress. He had a beam across the small of his back and another one trapping his legs. They held his left hand and talked to him continuously, cracking jokes to try and keep him conscious. Although in a great deal of pain, Tebbit remained calm. "He's got a lot of guts," said McKinley. "There was never a whimper out of him, even though we soon realised he

had a broken femur." The only complaint came when Bishop accidentally trod on his feet. "Get off my bloody feet, Fred," Tebbit shouted. At 5.44am another team of firemen managed to extract Mrs Tebbit from the wreckage. "She seemed OK but she said she had no feeling below her neck," McKinley said.

Shortly before 6.53am, when they had finally removed most of the debris from around Tebbit, Bishop tried to wrench him free. He reached to grab him and found a large gaping wound in his leg "like a damp pocket." By this time Tebbit was beginning to show the strain and asked for frequent rests from the fireman's work. Just before they got him out they moistened his lips with water and he swilled some around his mouth. Forcing a smile on his face, he said: "That was bloody marvellous."

Compared with the other victims who fell down that awful void behind the Grand Hotel's imposing facade he was, as it turned out, one of the lucky ones.

'Good morning, I'm delighted to see you'

Report by Patrick Bishop, Muriel Bowen, Adriana Caudrey, Jon Connell, Simon Freeman, Michael Jones, Barrie Penrose, Chris Ryder and John Witherow. Research by Carol Baker and Sara Walden.

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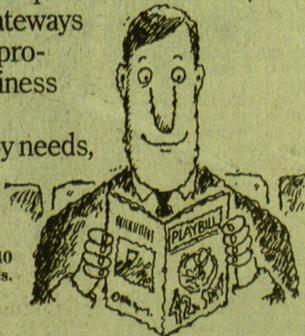
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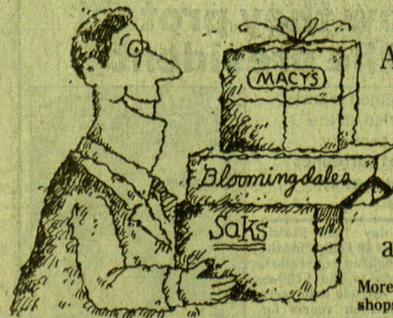
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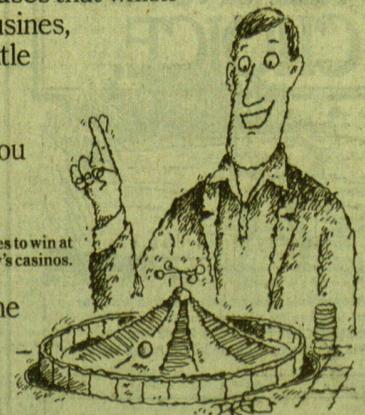
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