### Governor-General’s periodic confidential reports to The Queen

[Sir John Kerr – correspondence with The Queen – Palace letters] Part 4

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| 22 Sep 1976    | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | • Acknowledged need to organise custody arrangements for Sir John’s papers relating to his Governor-Generalship including correspondence with the Palace  
• Recognition that nature of papers is different and will remain under embargo  
• Requesting suggestions for custody and control of papers  
• Consideration of whether papers should be deposited under embargo to the National Library of Australia |
| 21 Sep 1976    | Sir John Kerr | The Queen     | • Personal despatch expressing on Sir John and Lady Kerr’s appreciation of The Queen’s support through Sir Martin  
• Inevitable discussion about constitutional amendment noted  
• Expression of honour to represent The Queen in Australia |
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| 21 Sep 1976   | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | • Mr Menadue appointed Ambassador to Japan  
• Mr Shann appointed High Commissioner in London  
• Mr Carmody appointed Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
• Mr Parkinson appointed as Permanent Head of Foreign Affairs Department  
• Mr Renouf appointed Ambassador to Washington  
• Media reporting of the Governor-General of Papua New Guinea's cancelled visit  
• Political situation in Papua New Guinea  
• Private visit of Mrs Thatcher to Australia  
• Governor-General's visit to North Queensland  
• New intelligence organisation  
• Press interest in the Prince of Wales  
• Polls support Sir John to remain as Governor-General  
• Comments on the Society for Asserting the Constitution over Kerr (SACK) and Ms Harriet Swift's activities |

**Attachments**

• Press clippings  
• ‘The Dismissal of the Whitlam Government’ by Edward St John, QC  
• ‘The Constitutional Consequences of Mr Whitlam: Precedents and prerogative power’ by H V Hodson, The Round Table, Apr 1976 |

| 7 Sep 1976   | Sir Martin Charteris, Balmoral Castle | Sir John Kerr | Response to letters of 5 and 31 Aug 1976:  
• Section 57 of the Constitution  
• Governor-General’s Coat of Arms  
• Demonstrations against Prime Minister Fraser  
• Mr Whitlam’s comments on The Queen’s visit and leadership issues  
• Advice sought regarding the Society for Asserting the Constitution over Kerr (SACK) |
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| 9 Sep 1976     | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | • Request by the Papua New Guinea Governor-General to visit Australia and the Department of Foreign Affairs' reluctance  
• Political developments in Papua New Guinea  
• Australian economic situation  
• Continuing demonstrations against Sir John  
• Opinion regarding Instructions from The Queen to the Governor-General and Letters Patent  
• Order of precedence, Privy Councillors and Knights  
• Deputy Official Secretary to be appointed, Mr McElligott                                                                 |
|                |      |               | Attachments                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                |      |               | • Curriculum Vitae of Mr McElligott  
• Letter from Mr John Menadue to Sir John regarding Solicitor-General's opinion on the Governor-General's instructions, 24 Sept 1975  
• Covering note from the Solicitor-General, M H Byers to the Prime Minister Fraser with an opinion on Governor-General's Instructions, 5 Sept 1975                                                                 |
• The Queen's acknowledgement of the budget, possible election dates, demonstrations  
• Reflections on The Queen's visit and demonstrations organised by Mr Whitlam                                                                 |
| 31 Aug 1976    | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | • Monash University demonstrations, Prime Minister Fraser held under stage for an hour  
• Development of ongoing security arrangements for public officials  
• Prime Minister Fraser awarded Father of the Year 1976  
• Mr Whitlam's leadership position  
• Invitation from former Prime Minister Menzies to dinner of Scot's College community in Melbourne                                                                 |
|                |      |               | Attachments                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                |      |               | • COMPOL Report of visit of the Governor-General and the Prime Minister to the Wentworth Hotel, 27 Aug 1976  
• Press clippings                                                                 |
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<td>• Budget delivered to stimulate business and investment, ease unemployment</td>
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<td>• Prime Minister’s considerations regarding the timing of the federal election and timing of Senate by-elections</td>
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<td>• Sir John’s discussion with Prime Minister Fraser regarding the economy and possibility of a referendum</td>
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<td>• Preliminary discussions regarding a draft program for The Queen’s visit</td>
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<td>• Press clippings</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Aug 1976</td>
<td>Sir Martin Charteris</td>
<td>Sir John Kerr</td>
<td>Response to letters of 27 and 29 Jul 1976:</td>
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<td>• Palace view if demonstrations occur during her visit to Australia</td>
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<td>• Governor-General’s reserve powers, security of tenure, the role of The Queen</td>
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<td>• Difficulties for Prince Charles in becoming the Governor-General</td>
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<td>5 Aug 1976</td>
<td>Sir John Kerr</td>
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<td>• Section 57 of the Constitution</td>
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<td>• Circumstances surrounding provision of Supply and double dissolution</td>
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<td>• Coat of Arms design for Governor-General</td>
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<td>• Letter 23 Jul 1976 from Garter King of Arms to David Smith re the Governor-General’s Coat of Arms</td>
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<td>[Note: Attachments referenced in the letter are not enclosed.]</td>
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<td>• The Queen’s successful visit to the USA and Canada</td>
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<td>• Prime Minister Fraser’s audience with The Queen in Canada and consideration of a referendum to amend the Constitution</td>
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<td>• Proposal to appoint Prince of Wales as the Governor-General</td>
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| 29 Jul 1976   | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | • Media reports of Prince Charles and The Queen  
• Conversation with Mr Yeend, acting Permanent Head of Prime Minister’s Department, regarding his views on a referendum and constitutional reform  
**Attachments**  
• Press clippings |
| 27 Jul 1976   | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | • Discussions of options to avoid future constitutional crisis, vice-regal powers, referendum with reference to views of Sir Garfield Barwick and Sir Arthur Tange  
• Demonstrations against Sir John in Sydney  
**Attachments**  
• Text of ABC News Radio News item, 26 Jul 1976  
• Press clippings |
| 17 Jul 1976   | William (Bill) Heseltine | Sir John Kerr | Response to letter of 13 Jul 1976:  
• Reference to meetings of Queensland Premier Joh Bjelke-Peterson in London regarding extension of Sir Colin Hannah’s term as Governor of Queensland  
• Media reports of Mr Whitlam’s audience with The Queen |
| 13 Jul 1976   | Sir Martin Charteris  
HM Yacht Britannia  
Halifax Nova Scotia | David Smith | Response to letter of 1 Jul 1976:  
• Comments on Professor Francis West’s article |
| 22 Jul 1976   | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | • Press coverage of Prime Minister Fraser’s audience with The Queen  
• Demonstrations are subsiding evidenced by visit to Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria  
• Upcoming program of events in Melbourne  
• Gallup poll on the resignation of the Governor-General  
• Media interview by Mr Whitlam  
• Discussion with the Prime Minister regarding referendum to amend the Constitution  
**Attachments**  
• Extract of transcript of ‘This Day Tonight’ television interview Mr Whitlam 20 Jul 1976  
• Extract of letter to Governor-General from Garter King of Arms 13 Jul 1976 |
<p>| 7 Jul 1976    | William (Bill) Heseltine | David Smith | Response to letter of 1 Jul 1976 |</p>
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| 13 Jul 1976   | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | • Proposed extension of Sir Colin Hannah's term as Governor of Queensland  
• Coat of Arms for the Governor-General and use of Royal Crown in insignia  
• 24 hour strike in Australia by Australian Council of Trade Unions in response to the Government's Medibank proposals, Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission decision on full wage indexation  
• The Queen's discussion with Mr Whitlam during his audience  
• Return from visit to North Queensland  
• Impending visit to Victoria  

**Attachments**

- Extract of letter from Garter Principal King of Arms, dated 11 May 1976  
- Press clippings  
- Letter from Barwick to Sir John Kerr, 2 Jul 1976, regarding fears for events happening during The Queen's visit and consideration of need for change to the constitution regarding tenure of the Governor-General |

| 2 Jul 1976     | William (Bill) Heseltine | David Smith | Response to letter of 29 Jun 1976:  
• Letter shown to The Queen  
• Impact of Mr Whitlam’s audience with The Queen and Mr Whitlam’s repose to media questions |

• Reference to Sir John’s discussions with Archbishop Woods in Melbourne  
• Sir Martin’s, the Bunting’s and the Whitlam’s dinner and Sir Martin’s discussion with Mr Whitlam  
• Mr Whitlam’s audience with The Queen  
• The Queen’s interest in the Task Group  
• Continued support from Sir Martin  
• The Queen’s impending visit to America |

| 1 Jul 1976     | David Smith | Sir Martin Charteris | • Professor Francis West’s article  
• Mr Whitlam’s press conference  
• Mr Hawke’s attempt to refocus the Labor Party  
• Public support for the Sir John received by Government House  

**Attachments**

- Press cartoons |
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| 29 Jun 1976   | David Smith | Sir Martin Charteris | - Sir John and Lady Kerr on leave on Heron Island  
- Melbourne visit including three functions occurred without disturbance  
- Further calls for Sir John's resignation by Reverend Allan Walker; defence of Sir John by Sir Allan Watt in the media  
- Media reports of Mr Whitlam’s audience with The Queen |

**Attachments**
- Press clippings

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| 17 Jun 1976   | Sir John Kerr | Sir Martin Charteris | - Prime Minister Fraser's overseas visits to China and Japan and foreign policy  
- Political allegiances in the union movement and Labor Party, mention of Mr Bob Hawke  
- Prime Minister Fraser’s support of Governor-General, development of a counter strategy to protect Sir John and the office |

**Attachments**
- Aide memoir including Commonwealth/State police cooperation, Defence of the Monarchy Governor-Generalship; The Queen and political advice through Australian Prime Minister; Knighthood of the Order of Australia; mid-term leave  
- Task Group paper on security of the Governor General, PJL [Sir Peter Lawler?], 16 Jun 1976

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- Prime Minister Fraser’s visit to China and Japan  
- Mr Whitlam’s overseas tour  
- Tension outlined between Sir John Egerton and trade unions and the Labor Party  
- Visit to Brisbane and Gold Coast peaceful following police numbers and tactics employed  
- Fiji-Australia Ruby Union Test and visit from His Excellency Ratu Sir George Cakobau  
- Upcoming legal dinner in Melbourne  
- Mr Whitlam’s proposed audience with The Queen  
- Ongoing campaign against Sir John as Governor-General, increasing pressure for his resignation prior to The Queen’s visit |

**Attachments**
- Press clippings  
- Telegram received 10 Jun 1976 by Sir John from supporters against organisers of demonstrations
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  - The Queen expresses concern regarding demonstrations in Melbourne and injury received by Aide  
  - The Queen and Royal household express delight that Mr Menzies will accept the first knighthood in the Order of Australia as part of revised Australian honours system |
| 9 Jun 1976    | Sir Martin Charteris | Sir John Kerr | Response to two letters of 27 May 1976:  
  - Comparison between Australian and UK economic situation  
  - Noting Mr Neville Wran as Premier of New South Wales  
  - Noting Sir John and Lady Kerr’s successful visit to Western Australia  
  - Mr Whitlam’s proposed audience with The Queen to occur on advice from Prime Minister Fraser and Sir John |
  - Demonstrations in Melbourne after return to Australia from Norfolk Island  
  - Injury of Aide in demonstrations  
  - Australian League of Rights  
  - Economic policy, Commonwealth/State bargaining  
  **Attachments**  
  - Press clippings  
  - Paper on the Australian League of Rights |
| 8 Jun 1976    | David Smith | Sir Martin Charteris | On behalf of Sir John enclosing document on constitutional crisis  
  **Attachments**  
  - Constitutional Crisis, draft article by Professor Francis West  
  - Constitutional Crisis from the Australian Current Law Digest, December |