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1000-1030  
Tues. 5 July  
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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

22 April, 1988.

**VISIT BY AUSTRALIAN OPPOSITION LEADER**

I have seen a copy of Canberra telegram No.269 about the visit of the Leader of the Australian Liberal Party, Mr. John Howard, in early July. The Prime Minister would like to see him, and I suggest that you get in touch with Mrs. Gaisman to fix a time.

(C.D. Powell)

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., MVO,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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FM CANBERRA  
TO PRIORITY FCO  
TELNO 269  
OF 210630Z APRIL 88

*Agree to see him?*  
*COH*

VISIT TO U K BY AUSTRALIAN OPPOSITION LEADER

1. I PAID MY FIRST CALL TODAY ON MR JOHN HOWARD, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION AND LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY. AS YOU HAD REQUESTED, I CONVEYED YOUR GOOD WISHES, RECALLING THE TIME WHEN YOU WORKED TOGETHER AS MINISTERS OF FINANCE.

2. MR HOWARD EXPRESSED AFFECTION FOR THE UK AND ADMIRATION FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN RECENT YEARS. HE HAS NOT VISITED BRITAIN SINCE 1982 BUT IS PLANNING A VISIT IN JULY. IN THAT CONNECTION, HIS OFFICE HAVE SINCE ASKED WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD BE ABLE TO RECEIVE HIM ON TUESDAY 5 JULY OR, FAILING THAT, WEDNESDAY 6 JULY (HE ARRIVES IN ENGLAND ON 4 JULY AND EXPECTS TO LEAVE TOO EARLY ON 7 JULY FOR AN APPOINTMENT THAT DAY. IN HER LETTER OF 15 FEBRUARY, MRS THATCHER ASKED MR HOWARD TO LET HER KNOW THE PRECISE DATES OF HIS VISIT.

2. I RECOMMEND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER AGREES TO SEE HIM. I SHALL BE COMMENTING SEPARATELY ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN AUSTRALIA. BUT FOLLOWING RECENT BY-ELECTIONS, HOWARD IS NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS THE PRESENT OPPOSITION COALITION HAS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY OF FORMING THE NEXT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. MOREOVER, IF THE PRIME MINISTER IS ABLE TO RECEIVE HIM IN LONDON, IT WILL PERHAPS BE EASIER FOR HER TO DECLINE TO DO ALL THAT THE OPPOSITION MAY SUGGEST WHEN SHE VISITS AUSTRALIA IN AUGUST (WE SHALL HAVE TO SHOW SOME REGARD THEN TO THE SENSITIVITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT).

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