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From the Private Secretary

9 June 1988

AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION ACT

Thank you for your letter of 8 June setting out the Lord Chancellor's views on the Australian request for a permanent loan of one of the two originals of the Australia Constitution Act. The Prime Minister has considered this very carefully and agrees that the points made by the Lord Chancellor are indeed important ones. At the same time she feels that we are not giving enough weight, in our consideration of this difficult problem, to the immense value for Australia of having one of the original copies. Indeed, she thinks we are in danger of being selfish about it. It could be argued that we ought to be prepared to make available one copy of their Constitution Act to any Commonwealth country which sought it, since their Constitution is their most precious inheritance.

BKM
The Prime Minister would like to see further views from the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary. It may be necessary to hold a brief meeting about it in early July.

I am copying this letter to Bob Peirce (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

(C. D. POWELL)

Paul Stockton, Esq.,
Lord Chancellor's Department.

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