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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 April 1980

(1)

Prime Minister

Dear Michael,

*Content with the line
+ the draft?*

Telephone Conversation with Mr Fraser

Paul

/ I attach as requested a note for the Prime Minister's conversation on 30 April at 09.00. This is on a broad basis as discussed directly with Mr Anson. We have not taken in any technical points about the telephone link itself, as I understand you have commissioned a separate brief from the Post Office.

/ I also attach a draft telegram to Canberra, returning Mr Fraser's courtesy in telling us of what he intends to say. I understand that you think the six minutes Mr Fraser suggested for the conversation might be too long. We have therefore added a paragraph to the telegram to make this point.

yours ever

Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street

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PRIME MINISTER'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH MR FRASER:
30 APRIL

(A) Mr Fraser will refer to occasion of phone call. Anniversary of 30 April 1930 inaugural call between Ramsay MacDonald and then Australian Prime Minister James Scullin (Labour: 1929-31: Trade Unionist from Victoria). Will say that ties of tradition and family no longer as close as in 1930 but regular and swift communications enable us to maintain and strengthen our bilateral relationship.

PRIME MINISTER MAY WISH TO SAY:

- i) Agree importance of strong links at personal level.
- ii) telephone circuits UK/Australia now carry 140,000 calls per month, and over 300,000 Australians come here each year. Links therefore still strong.

(B) Mr Fraser will refer to UK/Australian relations generally; importance of both countries taking positive steps to maintain and build on traditional relationships

PRIME MINISTER MAY WISH TO SAY:

- i) agree
- ii) The closeness of the relationship is axiomatic but it must not be taken for granted. Over the years since the War it has changed and these changes need careful attention.
- iii) One important way to do this is for members of our two governments to maintain close personal contact through visits whenever possible!

(C) Mr Fraser will then refer to interest shown in Australia by British government, with visits by both Mrs Thatcher and Mr Whitelaw in less than a year.

PRIME MINISTER MAY WISH TO SAY

- i) How much she enjoyed her own visit, and that

*Co-ordination
Ramsay MacDonald*

Mr Whitelaw has told her how much he appreciated the warmth of Australian hospitality during his recent visit. Useful opportunity to talk to Mr Fraser and his colleagues. (PM's visit 30 June/ 1 July 1979; Mr Whitelaw's in early April 1980)

ii) Many Australian Ministers visit UK each year (EG both Mr Fraser and Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock, in February 1980). Are always welcome. Look forward to visits from other Australian Ministers in the near future.

(D) Mr Fraser will refer to role of Commonwealth of Nations in modern world; its continuing value;

PRIME MINISTER MAY WISH TO SAY

- i) agree
- ii) unique association of value not only to its members but to the whole community of nations;
- iii) note especially the initiative of Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional meetings (CHGRM) (first was CHGRM in Sydney in 1978, to be repeated this year in Delhi).

(E) Mr Fraser will refer to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (to be held in Melbourne in September/October next year).

PRIME MINISTER MAY WISH TO SAY

- i) Looking forward to attending this meeting. A welcome opportunity to meet again with our Commonwealth partners, and also to re-visit Australia.
- ii) We shall moreover be welcoming Zimbabwe there for the first time

(F) Mr Fraser would like an opening to make complimentary remarks about Britain's role in the Zimbabwe settlement (and the PM's and Lord Carrington's personal achievements). (The PM could say that the Melbourne conference will welcome at least one new Commonwealth member - Zimbabwe - see above.)

PRIME MINISTER MAY WISH TO SAY

- i) Grateful for Mr Fraser's own help, especially his prompt agreement to provide troops for monitoring

force.

ii) Note Australia's generous aid offer (Rhodesia A\$4 million over 2 years; preferential trade terms) to Zimbabwe.

(G) PM may wish to congratulate Mr Fraser on two personal milestones - his 50th birthday (21 May) and his 25th year as a Member of Parliament (constituency Wannon, Victoria)

(H) PM may wish to express hope that recent rains have effectively ended the drought in Australia.

(I) Background points

i) Sir Donald Tebbit retired as British High Commissioner in Canberra in early April. Sir John Mason will have arrived on 29 April and will have seen Mr Fraser on day of telephone call. (And Sir James Plimsoll arrived on 17 March to replace Sir Gordon Freeth as Australian High Commissioner in London.)

ii) 0900 BST is 6:00 pm in Canberra.

iii) Australian General Election due later this year: no date yet announced.