

*Australia*

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 March 1981

*Dear Michael,*Call by Australian High Commissioner

In her letter of 9 March Caroline Stephens requested briefing for Sir James Plimsoll's call on the Prime Minister on 16 March at 1115.

Sir J Plimsoll leaves London this month and will become Ambassador in Tokyo. His replacement by Mr Garland (LPR also attached) attracted some controversy in Australia at the time of its announcement, largely because it was suggested that Sir James had not been given long enough in his position in London, and that Mr Garland's appointment was for purely political reasons.

There are no major outstanding issues in Anglo/Australian relations. Problems over the EC's 'balance sheet' figures for entry of frozen beef into the Community have now been almost resolved to Australian satisfaction. The Australians have therefore not taken the threatened retaliatory measures in respect of Government purchases from EC countries. The only problem is an Italian reserve on a completely unrelated element in the same package: we are bringing pressure to bear on the Italians. The Australian authorities have, however, expressed concern at suggestions that the UK may be considering taking action to limit its coal imports. (We import approximately three million tonnes of coal a year from Australia). The Australian High Commission are in direct touch about this with the Department of Energy.

Mr Fraser will be visiting the UK in October to speak at the Conservative Party Conference, and to stay on for a few days afterwards as a guest of the Government. We hope that the new Foreign Minister, Mr Tony Street, will be able to visit the UK in June. There may however be problems about dates for Mr Street's visit, which we are looking into now.

*Yours ever*  
*Roderic Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing St

**CONFIDENTIAL**

PLIMSOLL, HE SIR JAMES, Kt AC CBE

Australian High Commissioner designate to Japan. His replacement in London (by Mr Garland, due in April 1981) announced in November 1980.

Born Sydney 1917.

Educated Sydney High School and the University of Sydney, BA, B.Econ. From graduation until 1942 he served as a professional economist with the Bank of New South Wales. In 1942 he enlisted in the AIF and finished his military service as a Staff Officer with the Australian Military Missions in Washington and Tokyo. He entered the Department of External Affairs as a First Secretary in 1948 and was promoted Counsellor in 1951 after service in the Department, at the United Nations, in Washington and in Korea. His first major appointment, as Australian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, came at the age of 42 in 1959. He held this post until 1962 when he was transferred as High Commissioner to New Delhi. In 1965 he returned to become Secretary of the Department until 1970. Ambassador in Washington 1970-74, and in Moscow 1974-77. Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Communities 1977-80. High Commissioner to UK from March 1980-March 1981.

His rise to high rank in the Australian Diplomatic Service was notably rapid. He has the reputation of being particularly expert on United Nations affairs. His succession to the Secretaryship brought obvious changes in the outlook of the Department which became less defensive and insular in its thinking. Plimsoll sought to turn attention outwards, particularly towards South-East Asia, and publicly stressed the need for Australians to be far better informed about Asia. Whilst fully aware of Australia's ultimate dependence on the United States for her security, he also attaches considerable value to the British connection.

A bachelor, wrapped up in his job. A man of high character, sound judgement and great professional ability, who can also be an agreeable and humorous companion. Made no secret of his annoyance at the abrupt announcement of his replacement after only a short period in London.

**GARLAND, THE HON (RANSLEY) VICTOR**

High Commissioner-designate to the UK.

Born Perth, WA 1934.

Educated Hale School and University of Western Australia, Perth. A chartered accountant by profession. Senior Vice-President, WA Division of Liberal Party 1965-69; Federal Councillor of Liberal Party 1966-71. Liberal Member of the House of Representatives for Curtin, WA (former seat of Sir Paul Hasluck) since 1969. Federal Minister for Supply 1971-72 (and Minister assisting the Treasurer 1972). Chief Opposition Whip 1974-75. Federal Minister for Posts and Telecommunications November 1975 - February 1976. Resigned as Minister for Posts and Telecommunications in February 1976 following a request by the Attorney-General to the Police to investigate allegations of bribery of ACT independent Senate candidate during 1975 elections, which implicated him. (Although case was dismissed, presiding magistrate considered that a prima facie case had been established against him.) Reappointed to the Government as Minister for Veterans' Affairs (1977-78). Minister for Special Trade Representations and Minister assisting the Minister for Trade and Resources 1977-9. Minister for Business and Consumer Affairs and Minister assisting the Minister for Industry and Commerce December 1979-November 1980.

Intensely ambitious, sometimes devious, but with a pleasant urbane and easy manner. Quiet rather than flamboyant. Personally well-off the pressures of commuting between Perth and Canberra are known to have contributed to his decision to decline a Ministerial promotion in favour of his present appointment.

Married, 1960, Lynette Jamieson, a musician of professional standard. 2 sons, 1 daughter.

Recreation: reading.

*Australia*

9 March, 1981

~~BF 13.3.81~~

Sir James Plimsoll, the retiring High Commissioner from Australia, is coming to say farewell to the Prime Minister next Monday, 16 March at 1115 hrs. Could you kindly send us a short brief, to reach us here by close of play on Friday, 13 March.

CAROLINE STEPHENS

C Jebb, Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

*JS*

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PRIME MINISTER

Sir James Plimsoll  
the Australian High  
Commissioner would like to  
come and say farewell to  
you. Michael Alexander  
says that we ought to fit  
him in so he is coming  
next Monday.

CAROLINE STEPHENS

9 March, 1981

File

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Australia

6 March 1981

AF27.3.81

VISIT TO THE UK OF RETIRING GOVERNOR OF  
NEW SOUTH WALES

The Prime Minister is happy to see Sir Roden Cutler and I have arranged with the New South Wales Agent General's Office for him to come in on Tuesday 31 March at 0945 for fifteen minutes. Could we please have a brief to reach us by close of play on Friday 27 March.

CAROLINE STEPHENS

Roderic Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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