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From the Private Secretary

1 September 1988

AUSTRALIA

Thank you for your letter in response to mine of 7 August about the Prime Minister's visit to Australia.

I agree that we must start to think about the arrangements for Mr Hawke's visit next year and try to settle dates. I have discussed these with the Prime Minister; she is slightly anxious about committing herself to dates in late June which tends to be an exceptionally busy period. Before finally settling on them, I think we need to have a very clear idea of the exact format we envisage for the visit and the Prime Minister's own involvement in it. The main official items would presumably be a private talk between the Prime Minister and Mr Hawke (and no doubt between other Ministers and their Australian colleagues), a full session of talks between the two Ministerial teams, an official dinner and the Trade Conference. In addition, the Prime Minister would no doubt feel she should meet Mr Hawke on arrival, which would mean his being helicoptered into the centre of London. Apart from these engagements, I imagine that Mr Hawke would see The Queen and attend a lunch or dinner at the Guildhall. There should at some point in the programme be a Guard of Honour ceremony, given that this was a courtesy extended to the Prime Minister in Australia.

The day which would suit the Prime Minister best for the talks would be Wednesday 21 June and she could probably also manage a working lunch that day. But it would not be a good day for a dinner at Number 10, since there is Cabinet and Questions on Thursday. The official dinner might better be on Thursday 22 June. Perhaps the Lord Mayor could be encouraged to give a dinner at the Guildhall on the Wednesday. If this pattern were followed, presumably the meeting with The Queen would be on Tuesday 20 June. The Trade Conference would be held on Thursday 22 June or Friday 23 June. I should be grateful if you could draw up a programme on these lines so that I can go back to the Prime Minister with a firm proposal and we can then agree dates.

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As regards the other aspects, I am sure the Prime Minister would be content with the participation proposed in your letter and also with the idea that the wives of Australian Ministers should be invited to come to London.

I am copying this letter to Alex Allan (HM Treasury), Brian Hawtin (Ministry of Defence) and Neil Thornton (Department of Trade and Industry).

C. D. POWELL

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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