

**AA1984/609, Part 2, The Governor-General's periodic confidential reports to the Queen
[Sir John Kerr – correspondence with The Queen – Palace letters] Part 2**

Date of letter	From	To	Contents
3 Dec 1975	Sir Martin Charteris	Sir John Kerr	<p>Response to letters of 24 and 28 Nov 1975:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm conversation with David Smith: would be wise not to make any statements about resignation during the election • Comment on press clippings
5 Dec 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press coverage of constitutional crisis with opinions and polls • Thank you for phone call about possible resignation • Leave plans on hold <p>Attachments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press clippings, 3–6 Dec 1975
25 Nov 1975	Sir Martin Charteris	Sir John Kerr	<p>Response to letters of 17 and 20 Nov 1975:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Queen has read account with close interest • Comments on Sir John's possible resignation • Sir John's leave visit to Paris and Sandringham
28 Nov 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press response to constitutional crisis, opinion polls • Personal mail received in response to crisis • Considering a statement about not intending to resign as Governor-General, but could be regarded as political <p>Attachments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press clippings, 24–29 Nov 1975 [Note: PDF page nos 30–31 relate to Sir John's letter of 24 Nov 1975, but were filed here in error]
24 Nov 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Whitlam's response to his dismissal • Public opinion and the constitutional crisis debate • Your reply to the Speaker, Mr Scholes, delivered and he released the text • Seeks advice on whether he should resign as Governor-General if Mr Whitlam wins election • Security arrangements <p>Attachment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [See PDF page nos 30–31: the pages were misfiled by Sir John's office]

Date of letter	From	To	Contents
17 Nov 1975	Sir Martin Charteris	Sir John Kerr	<p>Response to letter of 11 Nov 1975:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion re 11 Nov 1975 • Mr Whitlam's phone call to Sir Martin on 11 Nov 1975 • Response to Mr Scholes' letter to The Queen – to be despatched to Mr Scholes if Sir John agrees with the text <p>Attachment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of draft letter to Hon G G D Scholes (Speaker of the House of Representatives, Feb 1975–Feb 1976) responding to his letter to The Queen of 12 Nov 1975
20 Nov 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological factors involved on what happened on 11 Nov 1975; reserve powers • Pressure from press to answer questions re his exercise of discretion • Outlines the psychology of the situation in coming to the decision on 11 Nov 1975 <p>Attachments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press clippings, 17–22 Nov 1975 • Letter of support from Sir Robert Menzies to Sir John Kerr, 19 Nov 1975
17 Nov 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir John Kerr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News clippings have been sent by David Smith • Reason for choosing 11 Nov 1975 for action • Opinion polls • Considering resignation options
5 Nov 1975	Sir Martin Charteris	Sir John Kerr	<p>Response to letter of 27 Oct 1975:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re Governor-General's proposed leave plans for January: Sir John and Lady Kerr must visit The Queen in Norfolk • The Queen kept informed, confirmed by palace in response to a call by the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) • Quote on role of the Crown/Governor-General in the Canadian constitution from Arthur Meighen
4 Nov 1975	Sir Martin Charteris	Sir John Kerr	<p>Response to letter of 22–24 Oct 1975:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Queen has read the material • Comments on reserve powers

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11 Nov 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sir John asked David Smith to ring Palace to report that Sir John had terminated the commission of Mr Whitlam and commissioned Mr Fraser as a caretaker Prime Minister upon conditions • Motion of confidence in House of Representatives for Member for Werriwa (former Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam) and the Speaker visited Sir John • Advice received from the Solicitor-General and the Secretary, Attorney-General's Department about reserve powers <p>Attachments All copies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from Sir John Kerr to Mr Whitlam, terminating his appointment, 11 Nov 1975 • Statement by the Governor-General on the constitutional crisis, 11 Nov 1975 • Letter from Garfield Barwick to Sir John Kerr, confirming discussions of 10 Nov re the Governor-General's constitutional rights and duties, 10 Nov 1975 • Letter from Malcolm Fraser to Sir John Kerr, confirming that he will act as his Chief Adviser and Head of Government, will immediately seek to secure the passage of the Appropriation Bills and will recommend the dissolution of both Houses of Parliament, 11 Nov 1975
6 Nov 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Nov 1975: Discussion with Mr Fraser; and with the Prime Minister • 6 Nov 1975: With Prime Minister's approval, had conversations with Mr Fraser, the Attorney-General and the Treasurer to keep upto date • Discussions between Treasury officials and the banks about arrangements to carry on without supply • A decision may have to be made this month
27 Oct 1975	Sir Martin Charteris	Sir John Kerr	<p>Response to letter of 20 Oct 1975:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noting Australian political situation • Sir Colin Hannah's 'dormant commission' to act as Governor-General if necessary, has been revoked on the advice of the Australian Prime Minister <p>Attachment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen issues rebuke, <i>The Guardian</i>, 27 Oct 1975
23 Oct 1975	Sir Martin Charteris	Sir John Kerr	<p>Response to letter of 17 Oct 1975:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Queen is closely following events • Political situation in Australia • Sir Colin Hannah's speech attacking the government and the petition from Mr Burns • Sir Colin Hannah's dormant commission

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27–30 Oct 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign meetings and debates in Parliament • Loans affair/Khemlani returned with documents and he may be called before the Bar of the Senate • Public opinion • Legal right of Senate to reject Supply • Vice-regal role in the situation • Proposed leave plans Christmas/January • Reference in press to The Queen having been kept informed, confirmed by Palace • Princess Margaret in Sydney <p>Attachments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press clippings, 25–30 Oct 1975 • “Office of Governor-General” William Queale Memorial Lecture by Hasluck 24 Oct 1972
22–24 Oct 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival of Princess Margaret in Canberra • Legal opinion sought on Mr Ellicott’s memorandum by the Prime Minister at Sir John’s request • Under pressure to act • Discussions with the Prime Minister and asked him to agree to Sir John talking to the Leader of the Opposition • Discussions with Leader of the Opposition • Press coverage • Appropriation Bills have again passed through the House of Representatives but the Senate has refused to consider them • Dinner for Princess Margaret, 22 Oct 1975 <p>Attachment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press clippings, 21–24 Oct 1975
20 Oct 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional and political problem: outlines developments; Prime Minister’s and Opposition’s positions; press coverage • Sir John’s long friendship with some in the Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet • Will not act at present • Prime Minister’s intention to withdraw Queensland State Governor, Sir Colin Hannah’s dormant commission to act in the Governor-General’s absence. <p>Attachments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press clippings, 18–20 Oct 1975 • Governor-General’s powers, Press statement by Mr R J Ellicott, QC, Opposition Front-Bencher, [16 Oct 1975]

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17 Oct 1975	Sir John Kerr	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines the developments after Mr Kemlani arrived in Australia and released documents on the loans affair; questions in Parliament • Prime Minister's and Leader of the Opposition's positions; state involvement; press coverage etc • Note of conversations in Port Moresby and the possibility of The Queen being asked to recall Sir John • Prime Minister and the Governor-General remain friendly <p>Attachments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hansard: House of Representatives, 16 Oct 1975 • Press clippings, 14–17 Oct 1975
16 Oct 1975	Sir Martin Charteris	Mr David Smith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advised had received phone call from Richard Castleton [Carleton?], ABC, asking if The Queen was being kept informed of the constitutional crisis. Sir Martin confirmed The Queen was being kept informed by her Governor-General
10 Oct 1975	Mr David Smith	Sir Martin Charteris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attaches article Sir John wanted Sir Martin to see <p>Attachment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional Quandary: The options facing the Governor-General, <i>The Canberra Times</i>, 10 Oct 1975