

17/7

Confidential Filing

Released international telephone conversation between the PM and Mr Frazer to mark the 50th anniversary of Australia's first international telephone service.

AUSTRALIA

April 1980.

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
21.4.80							
29.4.80							
<p>PREM 19/141</p>							



(1) p.w. nka ppm

(2) Cumlata

or Gen.

BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION
CANBERRA A C T 2600

21 May 1980

C V Anson Esq
Press Office
10 Downing Street
LONDON

Dear Anson,

PRIME MINISTER'S TELEVISED TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH
MR MALCOLM FRASER

Thank you for your letter dated 2 May enclosing the full transcript of the televised telephone conversation the Prime Minister had with Mr Malcolm Fraser on 30 April.

Overseas Telecoms (Australia) fed the transmission live to both the commercial networks and the Australian Broadcasting Commission. As far as I can ascertain no station actually broadcast the whole conversation, but extracts from it were carried in the evening news later that night. In the case of the ABC they broadcast the short passage on pages 2 and 3 of your transcript starting with the Prime Minister saying "But the main thing is" and ending with the Prime Minister saying "It's not a long way away in terms of personal contacts." There were one or two references to the conversation in the newspapers the next morning.

Overseas Telecoms (Australia) were very pleased with the conversation and are incorporating it in a publicity film, a copy of which they have promised us. It has taken a little time for them to put this together, but I hope to receive it within the next week or so.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Metcalfe

P R Metcalfe

cc. News Dept, FCO; and
South Pacific Dept, FCO.

Australia.

Mr Alexander
Miss Stephens

See Prime Minister 140000

*Cells = minutes → 300 000 Au
The Act can*

PRIME MINISTER

to John Brown

TELEVISED TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH MALCOLM FRASER

You agreed to have a televised telephone conversation with Malcolm Fraser at 0900 tomorrow (1800 Canberra time) to mark the 50th Anniversary of Australia's first international telephone service.

Technical Arrangements:

The conversation will be filmed in the White Drawing Room by the BBC on behalf of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation at this end. It will go out live via satellite in Australia so the BBC will have a large O.B. team here.

We are setting up a desk and special telephone in the White Drawing Room for the conversation. A radio link with Australia will be open from 0830 with suitable back-up facilities. Malcolm Fraser will simulate dialling the call himself at 0900 and the phone will ring on your desk at which point filming starts this end.

It would be helpful if you could take part in a brief rehearsal of the arrangements at 0850.

Length of the Conversation:

Malcolm Fraser suggested that your conversation should last six minutes but we have recommended four minutes as, the longer it lasts, the more difficult it may be to stick to general topics of an uncontroversial nature and still be interesting and spontaneous. It is now accepted that the conversation should last four minutes, unless it seems to be going particularly well and you wish to extend it.

Content:

At Flag A are the points that Malcolm Fraser will make in the order in which he will raise them, together with suggested answers.

You have agreed to let Malcolm Fraser take the lead generally but you will wish to take the opening he will offer you to plug our success in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe.

At Flag B is a brief and points to make prepared by the G.P.O. on telephone links with Australia. Two points you might like to note particularly:

- i Despite inflation, the price of a three-minute call to Australia is less than in 1930;
- ii Our G.P.O. have decided in principle to invest in a new submarine cable linking Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Andy Wood and I will be available for any last-minute briefing you may require before the conversation.

Cherian A

C V ANSON
PRESS OFFICE
29 April 1980.

Neil M Russell

Head of Government
Communications Section

International
Telecommunications

Alder House,
1 Aldersgate Street,
LONDON
EC1A 1AL

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British Post Office Telecommunications

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Telephone 432 5808
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International

Telex
21601 (POETEG)

International Telecommunications

Charles Anson,
Press Office,
10, Downing Street
SW1

Dear Mr Anson,

Here is a version of the brief for the Prime
Minister's conversation with Mr Fraser on Wednesday.

Michael Kirsch IS2.3.2.4

POINTS WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER MAY LIKE TO MAKE DURING HER
CONVERSATION WITH MR FRASER

- The inaugural calls between our predecessors 50 years ago was at the frontier of the day's technology - but today calling Australia is as straightforward as calling someone in Britain.
- Despite inflation, some prices do actually come down. In 1930 a three-minute call to Australia cost £6 (that would be £67.25 in today's money). Today such a call only costs £3.63.
- Business and social ties between our two countries are so close that up to 10,000 telephone calls are made between them every day.
- The growth of telecommunications between our two countries reflects the efforts we are both making in the Commonwealth Telecommunications Council and elsewhere, to encourage good communications between Commonwealth countries all over the world.
- We are glad to hear that planning for a new Pacific Cable linking Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand is going ahead well. We welcome the fact that Australia will be hosting a conference next week to discuss this new cable with the other countries concerned (mainly Commonwealth) and we hope it will have a successful outcome. I understand that only last week the British Post Office decided in principle to invest in this proposed new submarine cable.

/BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND BRIEF FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH
MR FRASER, 09.00 HRS, WEDNESDAY, 30 APRIL 1980

- The call marks the 50th anniversary of the telephone service between Britain and Australia. The service was inaugurated on 30 April 1930 by a call from Australian Premier Mr James Henry Scullin to the British Prime Minister, Mr Ramsay MacDonald.
- There is considerable public interest in the occasion in Australia. It will be seen live on closed-circuit television in the Canberra Press Club, and will be picked up by the Australian television stations to be used shortly afterwards in newscasts. Here, we hope it will feature in the evening news programmes (9 am our time is 6 pm in Canberra).
- Your call and the television pictures will be relayed by a satellite 23,000 miles above the Indian Ocean, through the Post Office's earth station at Madley, near Hereford, and the (Australian) Overseas Telecommunications Commission's earth station at Ceduna, in South Australia.
- In contrast, the inaugural call in 1930 was made over a short-wave radio link.
- In the 1930s calls to Australia were set up by telephone operators over unstable radio circuits. The charge was £6 for three minutes to Australia. International direct dialling (IDD) to Australia was introduced in 1974. Nowadays 94 percent of calls to Australia are dialled direct over high-quality satellite and submarine cable circuits and the cost for three minutes is £3.63.
- At present 96 per cent of telephone customers in Britain can dial direct to some 425 million telephones in 96 countries. International calls are growing at over 20 per cent a year.
- Some 3½ million telephone calls a year are made between Britain and Australia. Two-thirds of these are transmitted by satellite over the Indian Ocean, one-third by submarine cables in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
- Twelve communications satellites, of which the Indian Ocean satellite being used today is one, are owned by an 103 nation consortium called INTELSAT - short for International Telecommunications Satellite - in which the Post Office is the second largest shareholder after the US COMSAT Corporation. The Overseas Telecommunications Commission (Australia) though smaller, is also an active member of the consortium.
- The submarine cables between Britain and Australia are owned by the telecommunications authorities of the Commonwealth countries on the route - principally those of Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.
- The Pacific Ocean cable between Canada and Australia (code-named COMPAC, laid in 1963) will have to be replaced in the next few years. With the support of the Australian Government, the Overseas Telecommunications Commission is next week convening a conference in Sydney to plan for its replacement. The Post Office intends to participate and its Board has just decided in principle to contribute significant investment for the expansion of telephone and other services with Australia.

- Telecommunications between most Commonwealth countries are coordinated by the 26-member Commonwealth Telecommunications Council. Britain and Australia are leading members and, in particular, provide technical and financial support to the developing members.

POINTS WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER MAY LIKE TO MAKE DURING HER
CONVERSATION WITH MR FRASER

- The inaugural calls between our predecessors 50 years ago was at the frontier of the day's technology - but today calling Australia ~~is commonplace and~~ as straightforward as calling someone in Britain.
- Despite inflation, some prices do actually come down. In 1930 a three-minute call to Australia cost £6 (that would be £67.25 in today's money). Today such a call only costs £3.63.
- Business and social ties between our two countries are so close that up to 10,000 telephone calls are made between them every day.
- The growth of telecommunications between our two countries reflects the efforts we are both making in the Commonwealth Telecommunications Council and elsewhere, to encourage good communications between Commonwealth countries all over the world.

-> I understand that only last week the British Post Office decided in principle to invest in ~~a proposed new submarine cable linking Canada with Australia and New Zealand (which will carry calls from Britain to Australia via Canada). It will have about 14 times the capacity of the existing Commonwealth Pacific cable (COMPAC) laid in 1963.~~

Background

We are glad to hear that planning for linking Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand a new Pacific Cable is going ahead well. We welcome the fact that Australia will be hosting a conference next week to discuss this new cable with the other countries concerned (mainly Commonwealth) and we hope it will have a successful outcome.

BBC tv

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

KENSINGTON HOUSE RICHMOND WAY LONDON W14 0AX

Ext. 6478 TELEPHONE 01-743 1272 TELEX: 265781

TELEGRAMS AND CABLES: TELECASTS LONDON TELEX

28th April 1980

Mr. A. Wood
Press Office
10 Downing Street
London

Dear Mr. Wood,

I enclose a list of all staff who will be involved
in the Outside Broadcast from 10 Downing Street
on Wednesday 30th April 1980.

Yours sincerely,

S. Clark

Sandra Clark
Asst. to Don Sayer

*Cable crew: 6.00 pm to-day
Tuesday 29 April.*

*Wednesday 30 April: arrive at
6.15.*

*C.c. Frank Doon.
M. Rylands
M. Taylor.*

BBC OUTSIDE BROADCAST - 30th APRIL 1980

Staff List

DON SAYER - Producer

SANDRA CLARK - Producer's Assistant

HELEN WEINHOLT - Stage Manager

DAWN ALCOCK - Make-up Artist

GEORGINA LAMBERT - Production Assistant

Technical Crew

A.J. WILSON

J.W. KEMP

J.A. BAKER

D. JENNINGS

D. HUME

B. MILNE

D.C. OLIVER

R. EVERITT

D. WHITTAKER

I.R. FURNESS

T. RICHARDS

J. PRICE

C. TUPLIN

Lighting Crew

G. COLE

B. PAINTER

F. ASHBY

Vehicles

BBC Mobile Control Room - LVV 366P

BBC Tender - VYL 9095

Lees Lighting Van - LOK 421P

MICHAEL

R. Anson

The Prime Minister
did not actually say
"agree" on this, but the
Canberra telegram needs
to go off today.

M A P

28 4 30



File KB

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

28 April 1980

The Prime Minister has seen your letter of 25 April to Michael Alexander about her telephone conversation with Mr. Malcolm Fraser on 30 April.

She is content with the draft telegram enclosed with the letter.

M. A. PATTISON

R. M. J. Lyne, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

RESTRICTED



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

RESTRICTED

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.

File No. FPA 020/6
 Department SPD
 Drafted by D R UPTON
 (Block Capitals)
 Tel. Extn. 233 4956

OUTWARD
 TELEGRAM

Security Classification
RESTRICTED
Precedence
IMMEDIATE
DESKBY Z

FOR COMMS. DEPT. USE	Despatched (Date) Z	POSTBY Z
	(Time) Z	

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin) Z (G.M.T.) (Restrictive Prefix)
 (Security Class.) RESTRICTED (Caveat/ Privacy marking)
 (Codeword) (Deskby) Z

TO IMMEDIATE CANBERRA Tel. No. of
 (precedence) (post)

AND TO (precedence/post)

AND SAVING TO

REPEATED TO (for info)

SAVING TO (for info)

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- MR MURRAY
- NEWS DEPT

Copies to:-

[TEXT]

Your TEL 273.

PM'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH MR FRASER: 30 APRIL

1. Please thank Australians for this helpful list of points Mr Fraser wishes to raise. The Prime Minister is content to follow his lead and respond in appropriate terms under each heading. She will also, if opportunity arises, speak as in your paragraph 3.
2. Please add that Mrs Thatcher feels six minutes, short though it sounds, may be a surprisingly long time if the conversation is to remain on general lines. She would be happier if it could be shortened, say to four minutes, unless it seems to be going particularly well.

CHARLES

Australian phone call: the following points emerged at this afternoon's meeting:

1. It will after all (say the PO) be shown live on the Australian domestic network;
2. make-up will be laid on by the BEEB from 0830 Wednesday;
3. the BEEB would like to test their gear in the garden on Tuesday evening (they can't come into the building because of the reception). Charlie Rylands is happy for the crew to be restricted to the garden between, say, 1830 and 2100. They will need to get into the building from 0630 the following morning. I have not mentioned either time or place to Peter Taylor (you, after all, are the diplomat in the Press Office);
4. there will be about 20 bodies involved: Sandra Clark who is the PA to Don Sayer (743 1272) will let you have a list on Tuesday afternoon;
5. the Post Office will be replacing the 'phone in the White Drawing Room with a hand set of their own for the duration of the broadcast;
6. I have not mentioned to Taylor that we would like a desk and book case, blotter and so forth in the White Drawing Room (again, your Foreign Office experience will come in useful);
7. Charlie Rylands is his usual relaxed self about the whole business;
8. will you let Sandra Clark know that Tuesday evening will be OK for a test on their gear.

Andy.

24 April 1980

International
Telecommunications

Alder House
1 Aldersgate Street
London EC1A 1AL

Telephone 432 5808
National
International

Telex
21601 (POETEG)

Date

In any reply please quote

Your reference

Mr Charles Anson,
Press Office,
No. 10 Downing Street,
London, W.1

24/4/80

Dear Mr Anson,

The photographer we would like to take some pictures of Mrs Thatcher talking to Mr Frazer at 9 am on Wednesday April 30 is

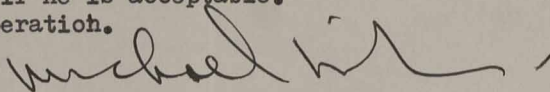
Mark Harrison, of 78. a , Lexham Gardens, London W.8.
He is an ex-patriot Australian who has lived in London some 20 years. He took the photographs for Felix Topolski's Buckingham Palace Panorama in 1976, published in book form in 1977. He's also known to the Buckingham Palace Press Office. He has worked for us before, and is very good.

I think he may have contacted you by now to try and prepare himself for the assignment.

Will you let me know if he is acceptable.

Thanks for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Kirsch, IS2.3.2.4
Room G01, Alder House.

Robinson

RESTRICTED

Mr. Alexander

RS 350

RESTRICTED

FM CANBERRA 240555Z APR 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 273 OF 24 APRIL

YOUR TELNO 206 AND MY TELNO 271

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRIME MINISTERS

Yes: 4/5 minutes should be enough.

Paul

Any comments? Subjects look OK. except perhaps for X. I think six minutes is too long. I suggest it should be more than 4 mins. Do you agree? Alexander

1. MR FRASER IS EXPECTED TO OPEN THE CONVERSATION WHICH HIS OFFICE SUGGEST SHOULD LAST NO LONGER THAN SIX MINUTES. *24/4*

2. THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE IS PROPOSED:

A) REFERENCE TO THE OCCASION. HOW THE TELEPHONE CALL IN 1930 TOOK PLACE (WE UNDERSTAND THE POST OFFICE WILL PRODUCE A BRIEF ON THIS). WHILE TIES OF TRADITION AND FAMILY ARE NOT AS CLOSE AS IN 1930, REGULAR AND SWIFT COMMUNICATIONS ENABLE US TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

B) AUSTRALIAN/BRITISH RELATIONS GENERALLY - THE IMPORTANCE OF BOTH COUNTRIES TAKING POSITIVE STEPS TO MAINTAIN AND BUILD ON TRADITIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

C) THE INTEREST SHOWN BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT - WITH VISITS BY BOTH MRS THATCHER AND MR WHITELAW IN LESS THAN A YEAR:

D) THE CONTINUING VALUE OF THE COMMONWEALTH - THE ROLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS IN THE MODERN WORLD:

E) THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING TO BE HELD IN MELBOURNE NEXT YEAR:

F) THE ZIMBABWE SETTLEMENT MR FRASER'S ATTENDANCE AT THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS.

3. MRS THATCHER MIGHT WISH TO INJECT A PERSONAL NOTE BY MENTIONING THAT 1980 REPRESENTS A PERSONAL MILESTONE FOR MR FRASER (HIS 50TH BIRTHDAY WILL BE ON 21 MAY) AND HIS 25TH YEAR AS A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. SHE MIGHT ALSO NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE A FEDERAL ELECTION IN THE SECOND HALF OF THIS YEAR.

X

RESTRICTED

14

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4. UNDER PARAGRAPH 1(F) ABOVE, MR FRASER HAS SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO BE GIVEN AN OPENING TO MAKE COMPLIMENTARY COMMENTS ABOUT BRITAIN'S ROLE IN THE ZIMBABWE SETTLEMENT AND YOUR OWN VERY SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION. MRS THATCHER MIGHT WISH TO RESPOND BY SAYING HOW MUCH SHE VALUED THE OPPORTUNITY, SO SOON AFTER TAKING OFFICE, OF TALKING OVER WITH MR FRASER A WHOLE RANGE OF PROBLEMS, INCLUDING RHODESIA, AND TO THANK HIM AND HIS COLLEAGUES FOR AUSTRALIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SETTLEMENT.

5. PRIME MINISTER MIGHT SAY THAT SHE HOPES RECENT RAINS IN AUSTRALIA MARK AN EFFECTIVE END TO THE DROUGHT.

6. MR FRASER MAY REFER TO RECEIVING SIR JOHN MASON'S FIRST CALL THAT MORNING AND MENTION SIR DONALD TEBBIT'S ACHIEVEMENT HERE.

DUDGEON

FILES
SPD
NEWS D
PS
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PS/PUS
SIR D. MAITLAND
MR MURRAY

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10 DOWNING STREET,

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23/14397

OO FCO

GRS 40

RESTRICTED

FM CANBERRA 230700Z APR 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 271 OF 23 APRIL

YOUR TELNO 206.

1. EXPECT TO SEND PROPOSED BROAD OUTLINE OF CONVERSATION TOMORROW.
2. IT WILL NOT GO OUT LIVE. IT WILL BE SHOWN LIVE ONLY TO A SMALL CLOSED CIRCUIT AUDIENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AND THE MEDIA. RECORDED CLIPS LIKELY TO BE USED ON TV NEWS PROGRAMMES.

DUDGEON

NNNN

rec Anson

RESTRICTED

25082 - 1

K. h. Anson 23/4

OO CANBERRA DESKBY 222300Z
RESTRICTED
DESKBY 222300Z
FROM FCO 221300Z APR 80
TO IMMEDIATE CANBERRA
TELEGRAM NUMBER 206 OF 22 APRIL

1. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS AGREED TO HAVE A SHORT TELEVISED TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH MR FRASER ON 30 APRIL AT 0900 BST. (0800Z). THIS IS TO MARK THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE SERVICE.
2. NO 10 ARE ANXIOUS THAT BROAD OUTLINE OF CONVERSATION SHOULD BE AGREED BEFOREHAND, TO PREVENT MISUNDERSTANDINGS OR AWKWARD SILENCES. PLEASE THEREFORE APPROACH AUSTRALIANS TO ASK WHAT MR FRASER PROPOSES TO SAY AND IN WHAT ORDER, AND TELEGRAPH IMMEDIATELY TOGETHER WITH ANY SUGGESTIONS YOU HAVE AS TO WHAT PM MIGHT SAY (E.G. SYMPATHY OVER DROUGHT?).
3. WILL CONVERSATION GO OUT LIVE? WHEN WILL IT BE SHOWN?

CARRINGTON

NNNN
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HS

Australia

21 April 1980

BF 28.4.80

Telephone conversation with Mr. Fraser

You will wish to be aware that the Prime Minister has agreed to an Australian request that she should have a televised telephone conversation with Mr. Fraser on 30 April, at 0900. This will be to mark the 50th anniversary of Australia's first international telephone service. The arrangements are being made between the Australian High Commission and the Press Office here. The telephone conversation will, no doubt, be brief. Nonetheless, the Prime Minister is anxious that there should be a clear understanding in advance as to what is going to be said. I should be glad to know if there are any particular points which you would wish the Prime Minister to cover.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

SP

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

fcc Press

HS

21 April 1980

As I have already told you on the telephone, the Prime Minister would be happy to speak to Mr. Fraser on the telephone at 0900 on Wednesday 30 April.

We agreed that you would pursue the detailed arrangements with Charles Anson of the Press Office here.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

M.S.G. Curtin, Esq.

210



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION · LONDON

18 April 1980

Dear Mr Alexander

Yes Mr

Prime Minister

Shall we go ahead with the arrangements?

①

Further to our telephone conversation of yesterday afternoon, I have been asked to explore with you the possibility of a televised international telephone conversation between the British and Australian Prime Ministers to mark the 50th anniversary of Australia's first international telephone service. The opening of this service, in 1930, was marked by a telephone conversation between the British and Australian Prime Ministers of the day and Mr Fraser would very much like this procedure to be repeated on 30 April 1980.

In the hope that Mrs Thatcher would be able to take part, an examination of available satellite times has already been made. It appears that the only times during which a call could be arranged on 30 April would be between 6 pm and 8 pm Australian time (9 am and 11 am London time) or between 8.55 pm and 9.10 pm Australian time (11.55 am and 12.10 pm London time). Given that two hours are available to play with, the first time slot would seem preferable.

We apologise for putting this proposal to you at such short notice, but I have been asked to convey the Prime Minister's keen interest in the project and his hope that Mrs Thatcher will be able to take part. If she can, we will move ahead quickly with the various arrangements.

We must decide what we are going to say will be repeated

Michael Curtin

(M.S. Curtin)
Minister

Mr Michael Alexander
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

