

PRIME MINISTER

AUSTRALIA

I have not bothered you with this up to now because you have had enough to think about. But we have been having problems with Mr. Fraser over the joint communique which the Australians would like to put out at the end of your visit to Canberra. To cut a long story short, the Australians have been pressing for a very long (24 paragraphs) document covering a wide range of subjects. We have told them that this is not the kind of statement which you had envisaged to mark a short informal visit but you will see from the attached telegram that it is proving difficult to achieve as much shrinkage in the draft as we would like.

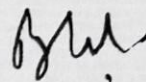
Sir Donald Tebbit and the FCO therefore suggest that you might send a message to Mr. Fraser straightaway in the following terms:

"I am much looking forward to our talks over the weekend. I am sure that these will be extremely thorough and valuable to us both. However, the joint statement as at present drafted by officials is longer and more detailed than I had in mind. I hope your officials and Sir Donald Tebbit can discuss a draft in short and general terms. This would enable us to devote more of the limited time available to the substance of our discussions.

Warm regards,

Margaret Thatcher"

Do you agree to a message in these terms?

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'J.M.', is written over the question 'Do you agree to a message in these terms?'. The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

29 June 1979