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AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION · LONDON

18 April 1980

Dear Mr Alexander

Yes Mr

Prime Minister

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Shall we go ahead with the arrangements?

Ans

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

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