

FPA 227/1

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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

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10 DOWNING STREET

22 May 1985

Dear Bob.

Reporting back to P.M.
in box. not today (26/5).
sugg. Sir J. can't quit
on 29/5 - rest to follow.
26/5.

Good.
p.m. 29/5

We are much looking forward to Australia's Bicentenary celebrations, and as you know work is going ahead here on Britain's participation in them.

I wanted to let you know personally that we have now decided to make available £1 million as our financial contribution to the Bicentenary. We shall be discussing with the Britain-Australia Bicentennial Committee how this money should be allocated and my officials will keep in close touch with yours to ensure that we are thinking along the same lines.

In making this contribution, we intend that it should serve to stimulate further funds from the private sector for the Bicentenary. I hope that the total British financial contribution will therefore be significantly greater than £1 million.

You wrote to me on 15 February about the loan of one of the copies of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act. We shall be happy to make available to Australia on temporary loan the Public Records Office copy, which is identical to the copy in the House of Lords library. This loan would be for the duration of any commemorative exhibition which might be planned for 1988. In addition, we should like to offer the Australian Government a fine facsimile of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, authenticated by

CRD for onward transmission
please.

d. PS
SPO

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Parliament, as well as a facsimile of the separate document which is the Royal Commission of Assent to the Act.

I am sorry that we cannot give you an original version of the Act on permanent loan. The rule on such documents has always been that neither the Public Records Office copy, as the national archive record, nor the House of Lords copy, as Parliament's record of its own proceedings, can be allowed to leave Britain permanently.

Added
by PS.
But I am delighted that we are able to contribute to your Bicentenary celebrations on a scale that matches the special closeness of the relations between our two countries.

Yours ever
Rayner

The Honourable R. J. L. Hawke, A.C., M.P.