



DA
44
c.p.

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

2 October 1985

I wrote yesterday about Mr. Hawke's request for Australia to have the permanent loan of the original document containing the Australian Constitution.

I can now confirm that the Prime Minister hopes that a way can be found to agree to this request.

I am copying this letter to Richard Stoate (Lord Chancellor's Office) and David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office).

(Charles Powell)

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

BM



DSG (42)

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 October 1985

I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from the Prime Minister of Australia. As you will see, Mr. Hawke asks the Prime Minister to reconsider his request for a permanent loan of an original copy of the Australian Constitution.

I should be grateful if this matter could be considered very carefully again and a draft reply prepared. I think - but shall check to be certain - that the Prime Minister would be in favour of making an exception to our rule about not letting such documents leave the country permanently.

I am copying this letter to Richard Stoate (Lord Chancellor's Office) and David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office).

Charles Powell

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

ca

DEPARTMENT/SERIES <i>PREM 19</i> PIECE/ITEM <i>1421</i> (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract/Item details: <i>Letter from Powell to Appleyard dated 1 October 1985</i>	
CLOSED FOR YEARS UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
TEMPORARILY RETAINED	<i>2 May 2014 CW Dayland</i>
MISSING AT TRANSFER	
MISSING	
NUMBER NOT USED	

DEPARTMENT/SERIES <i>PREM 19</i> PIECE/ITEM <i>1421</i> (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract/Item details: <i>Canberra telegram no. 670 dated 1 October 1985</i>	
CLOSED FOR YEARS UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
TEMPORARILY RETAINED	<i>2 May 2014 C. Wayland</i>
MISSING AT TRANSFER	
MISSING	
NUMBER NOT USED	

DEPARTMENT/SERIES <i>PREM 19</i> PIECE/ITEM <i>1421</i> (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract/Item details: <i>Canberra telegram no. 669 dated 1 October 1985</i>	
CLOSED FOR YEARS UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
TEMPORARILY RETAINED	<i>2 May 2014 @Wayland</i>
MISSING AT TRANSFER	
MISSING	
NUMBER NOT USED	

DEPARTMENT/SERIES <i>PREM 19</i> PIECE/ITEM <i>1421</i> (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract/Item details: <i>Canberra telegan no. 666 dated 30 September 1985</i>	
CLOSED FOR YEARS UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
TEMPORARILY RETAINED	<i>2 May 2014 M Dayland</i>
MISSING AT TRANSFER	
MISSING	
NUMBER NOT USED	

SUBJECT
cc Ops
Master

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 167 B/85



Prime Minister

PRIME MINISTER
CANBERRA

Mr. Hawke rejects the offer
of a Temporary loan of the original
Australian Constitution: he wants it
on a "permanent loan".

Should I steer officials
towards agreeing to this? - Yes
25 SEP 1985 CDP mb
2/x

Dear Margaret,

Thank you for your letter of 30 May 1985. On behalf of the Government and people of Australia, may I thank you for your Government's decision to contribute one million pounds to our Bicentenary. There are strong ties between our two countries underpinned by history, culture, language, values and human relationships, and significant British participation in our celebrations will be warmly welcomed by the Australian people.

I understand that a number of proposals are currently being examined by the Britain-Australia Bicentennial Committee for inclusion in the British program. In themselves, these projects have the potential to forge new relationships and ties between our countries. Like you, I hope that the private sector will follow and build on the lead of your Government, and help make 1988 a most memorable year for both our countries.

At the present time a matter of particular interest to us is the choice of a project to provide an enduring reminder of Britain's relations with Australia. I hope it will be possible in the near future to make some suggestions for consideration by your Government about a project which will be a suitable and lasting legacy of the great and continuing British contribution to our country.

I am grateful for your offer of a temporary loan of an original copy of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act and a gift of a facsimile of the Act. You will understand however that this does not meet the concern which prompted my enquiry concerning a permanent loan of one of the original documents containing the Australian Constitution.

The Australian Constitution has great significance for the people of this country. It marks our birth as a nation. At the same time it is the fundamental document in the continuing operation and development of our federal system of government. Given the relative youth of our political system, the written Constitution takes on a particular importance.

Permanent possession of the original document containing the Australian Constitution is thus a matter of great consequence for all Australians.

It is against this background that I hope that you will find it possible to reconsider my request for a permanent loan of an original copy of the Act. I might add that Australia's Federal Opposition parties are also of the view that at least one original copy of the Act should be kept in Australia.

Yours sincerely

Bolton

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister