

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

You agreed to see a visiting Australian Parliamentary delegation since it is the Bicentennial Year, and they are coming on Wednesday. Full details of the group are attached. They seem to be predominantly Labour supporters. They are here at the invitation of the FCO and are being shown the best aspects of modern Britain - new technology, job creation, privatisation.

The four subjects they want to cover are:

Northern Ireland

You will want to deal both with the importance of combating terrorism and with the longer term prospects opened up by the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Their own approach is likely to be simplistic: one of the Senators was born in Ireland and is said to be a strong Nationalist supporter. It would be helpful if you could get over to them the complexity of the situation in the province.

South Africa

You will want to take them through the case against sanctions and remind them of how much Britain is doing to help black South Africans and neighbouring countries (in contrast to Australia).

Britain's Role in the Pacific and South East Asia

I am not sure what they will want to hear under this general heading. But you might want to explain our objections to New Zealand's non-nuclear policy. If they ask why we have not signed the Protocols to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, the answer is that we do not consider it in our wider security interests to do so, and anyway not all the Pacific countries have signed (e.g. Tonga and Vanuatu).

Fiji

You might give the flavour of your recent meeting with Ratu Mara.

You might ask about the bicentennial celebrations and your own forthcoming visit.

CSP

Charles Powell

11 April 1988

DG2CPR



Background Note

DELEGATION OF AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTARANS

Led by

Mr Leo Boyce McLEAY MP,
Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees,
House of Representatives, Federal Parliament

Canberra

AUSTRALIA

9 - 19 and 29 - 30 April 1988

Seven members of the Federal Parliament of Australia will be visiting Britain and during their stay will be guests of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The Central Office of Information is organising a programme for them.

Mr Leo McLeay, MP has been Deputy Speaker in the House of Representatives since 1986. He is a Labour Party representative for the Constituency of Grayndler, New South Wales. Aged 42, Mr McLeay was a telecom technician for 14 years before being elected to the Federal Parliament. He has been Chairman of the Standing Committee on Expenditure since 1983 and is also a member of the Standing Committee on Procedure, member of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts and member of the New Parliament House Committee.

Mr McLeay is a Catholic. He has been to Britain and has travelled widely. During free time he likes sailing and fishing.

Senator Dominic John Foreman has been a Labour Party Senator representing South Australia since 1980. Aged 54, he is a former General Secretary of the Vehicle Builders' Union, South Australia Branch. Senator Foreman is a Catholic. He made an official visit to Britain in 1984, and has also been recently to Japan. During free time he enjoys golf, tennis, football and walking.

Senator James McKiernan has been a Labour Party Senator representing Western Australia since 1985. Aged 43, his former positions include Education Officer with the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union in Western Australia and an official with the Australian Labour Party.

Mr McKiernan was born in Ireland and lived and worked in various parts of England from 1961-69.

Senator Glenister Sheil is a Nationalist Party Senator representing Queensland. Aged 58, he is a medical doctor and before entering Parliament was a Medical Practitioner, a Specialist Physician and a Hospital Proprietor. Senator Sheil is an Anglican. He spent a year in Britain in 1964 working on Post Graduate Medical Studies. He has also visited France, Austria, Japan and China. During free time, Senator Sheil enjoys tennis.

Mr David Cowan, MP is a Nationalist Member of Parliament for Lyne, New South Wales. Aged 62, he is a farmer and businessman and from 1965 to 1979 was a member of the New South Wales Parliament. Mr Cowan is a member of the Church of England. He has made frequent visits to Britain and has also travelled widely throughout the world. Mr Cowan is still recovering from a serious car accident in which his wife died.

Mr Edward Laurence Grace, JP, MP has been a Labour Party Member of Parliament representing Fowler, New South Wales since 1984. He was in the British Merchant Navy and was a self-employed electrician before becoming a Member of Parliament. Mr Grace was educated in Ireland and lived in Britain till 1960 when he emigrated to Australia.

Mr Philip Ruddock, MP has been a Liberal Party Member of Parliament for Dundas since 1973, and is also Deputy Chairman of Committees in the House of Representatives. He is a solicitor and obtained BA and LLB degrees from Sydney University. Mr Ruddock is an Anglican. He has made two official visits to Britain and has travelled widely throughout the world. He is on a low-cholesterol diet and is also a non-smoker and teetotaler.

Other members of the party are Mr John Porter, Personal Private Secretary to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Mr Michael Talberg, Senior Committee Clerk of the House of Representatives.

All members of the Parliamentary Delegation will be accompanied by their wives, with the exception of Mr Cowan, who may be joined by his daughter. The ladies will, however, not be taking part in official appointments.

The programme will be a familiarisation tour of various aspects of British life and will include visits to the North West of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. A day will be spent in Parliament. It is also hoped to arrange meetings in London with the Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor, the Speaker of the House of Commons, leaders of the political parties, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and the Minister of Agriculture. Requests have been made by the delegation to cover the following subjects:

- New Technology
- Privatisation
- Prospects for the British economy
- Restructuring of industry and job creation
- Trade Unions
- New Towns
- US/Soviet relations

It is also hoped to include a visit to the Australian Studies Centre, Houses of Parliament and a nuclear submarine base.

Programme Organiser:

Moya Willis
Overseas Visitors and Information Studies
Central Office of Information
Hercules Road, London SE1 7DU

Direct Line : 01-261 8748
Switchboard : 01-928 2345 Ext 8748

2 March 1988

BACKGROUND BRIEF

AUSTRALIA

Useful Statistics

Population	15.7m	(1985)
UK Exports to Australia	£1,224 m	(1987)
Australian Exports to UK	£674 m	(1987)
UK visitors to Australia	158,900	(1985)
Australian visitors to UK	379,000	(1985)

POLITICS: INTRODUCTION

1. The Commonwealth of Australia came into being on 1 January 1901 as a federation of the six former colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and West Australia. In broad terms the Commonwealth (Federal) Government is responsible for such matters as defence, foreign affairs, taxation, external trade and immigration; the States are responsible for all other matters not specified in the Constitution. The constitution of Australia, as a federation, provides scope for actions of the Commonwealth and the State Governments in the nation's political life. The tendency of the central Government to expand its activities at the expense of State Governments is an established feature of Australian political life and the tendency is resisted by those who uphold State rights.

2. The Commonwealth Government also administers two internal territories. The Australian Capital Territory was ceded to the Commonwealth Government by New South Wales in 1909 as the site for the nation's capital. The Northern Territory, originally part first of New South Wales and then of South Australia, was taken over by the Commonwealth Government in 1911. It achieved self-government in 1978. Its Chief Minister is Mr Steve Hatton.

POLITICS : THE STATES

3. The State legislatures are independent of the Federal Parliament, and all except Queensland are bicameral. The present administrations are:

New South Wales	:	Liberal Party/National Party Coalition Premier Mr Greiner (Liberal)
Queensland	:	National Party Mr Ahern
South Australia	:	Australian Labor Party (ALP) Premier Mr Bannon
Tasmania	:	Liberal Premier Mr Gray
Victoria	:	ALP Premier Mr Cain
Western Australia	:	ALP Premier Mr Dowding

POLITICS : THE COMMONWEALTH (FEDERAL) GOVERNMENT

4. Members of the House of Representatives are elected for three years and Senators for six. Half the Senators stand for re-election every three years and the intention is that House of Representatives and half-Senate elections should be held simultaneously.

5. The Australian Labor Party, led by Mr Hawke, won a sweeping victory in March 1983. Before that, since 1949, Labor had held office only from 1972 to 1975. Mr Hawke called an early election in December 1984, the widespread expectation being that he would be returned with an increased majority. In the event his majority in the House of Representatives was reduced from 25 to 16. The balance of power in the Senate was held by a small group of 7 Democrats. The ALP held 34 seats and the Liberal/National Party Coalition 33.

6. On 27 May last year, buoyed by favourable poll results, Mr Hawke called an election for 11 July. He said that he had decided on an early poll (it need not have been held until March 1988) because his government needed a fresh mandate to pursue its tough economic policy. The election campaign was rather dull but produced an exciting finish, opinion polls suggesting that Mr Hawke and Liberal leader John Howard were neck-and-neck. In the event Mr Hawke was returned and became the first-ever Labor Prime Minister to enjoy a third term, Labor's majority in the House of Representatives increasing to 24 seats.

7. Australia plays a full part in Commonwealth and UN affairs. She is particularly concerned with developments in South East Asia and the Pacific, is a party to the ANZUS Defence Treaty, and a member of the South Pacific Forum. Australia gave the original impetus to the South Pacific Forum's Treaty on a Nuclear Free Zone in the South Pacific, which came into force on 11 December 1986. She is fostering her relations with ASEAN and the countries of the Pacific, especially New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. Matters of particular current concern in foreign affairs are the situation in Fiji, Libyan and Soviet interest in the Pacific, South Africa, arms control and disarmament and the future of the ANZUS Treaty following the New Zealand Government's espousal of anti-nuclear policies.

THE ECONOMY

8. The two main pillars of the Australian economy are agriculture (wheat, meat, wool and sugar) and primary industry (vast reserves of practically every known mineral).

9. In May 1986 Treasurer Keating remarked in a radio interview - since given wide publicity - that Australians were living beyond their means and that, if prompt corrective action were not taken, the economy would decline to "banana republic" status. Many consider this an over-reaction, but some commentators believe that the economy is indeed on the brink of recession. Unemployment has risen to around 8.3% while inflation has reached 8.4%. The issue of prime concern is the current account deficit. This was averaging more than A\$1.2 billion (£520 million) per month, but fell suddenly in February last year to A\$750 million (£325 million). This improvement, together with the 1.35% real growth in GDP for 1986, was seized upon by Mr Hawke and Mr Keating as evidence that the government's economic policies were correct. The Federal Budget for 1987/88, brought down on 15 September, was to all intents and purposes balanced; a tiny deficit of Aus\$27m is projected.

10. Australia remains one of the UK's major trading partners. In 1987 our exports to Australia totalled £1,224 million, while Australian exports to the UK were £674 million. We are also a major investor in Australia, providing around 25% of total foreign investment. Some 1500 British companies have a presence there.

BILATERAL ISSUES

Bicentenary

11. This year Australia celebrates the bicentenary of the arrival at Botany Bay of the First Fleet and the founding of Sydney, the colony of New South Wales, and what is now the Commonwealth of Australia. The Britain-Australia Bicentennial Committee was established in 1985 under the Chairmanship of Sir Peter Gadsden, a former Lord Mayor of London, to organise and co-ordinate Britain's part in the Bicentenary. In May 1985, the British Government announced that it had committed £1 million towards this event. The bulk of this will go towards Britain's official gift, the sail training ship Young Endeavour.

British Nuclear Tests in Australia

12. There has long been controversy in Australia over the conduct and consequences of the British atmospheric nuclear test programme in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s. Allegations have been made of inadequate safety precautions and of the deliberate exposure of servicemen and civilians in the test area to the effects of radiation. There have also been many unsubstantiated claims of death and injury resulting from this exposure. In July 1984 the Federal Government set up a Royal Commission to look into the conduct of the test programme. The British Government was represented before the Commission from late 1984 and tabled its own final submission before the Commission on 16 September 1985. This submission bears out the view of the British Government that the tests were carefully and responsibly conducted, with the full knowledge of the Australian Government, and that there is no evidence of any person suffering radiation injury as a result of them. The fullest co-operation was given to the Australian Government in making relevant material available. The Royal Commission's report, which made seven specific recommendations, was published in December 1985. The Australian Government, after consultations with the British Government, set up a Technical Advisory Group (including British and American as well as Australian representatives) to study the technical possibilities further. The

Australian Government has embarked with the help of the British Government on six studies, recommended by the TAG, with the costs being apportioned between the two Governments so that they are broadly similar. The results of the studies are not expected to be available until towards the middle of 1990. A Consultative Group has also been formed to consider the views of the interested parties.

South Pacific Department
March 1988



AUSTRALIA: Melbans pt 2

cc PC
BAP

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 April 1988

Dear Charles,

Visit of Australian Parliamentary Delegation

An Australian Parliamentary Delegation will pay a call on the Prime Minister at 1200 on Wednesday, 13 April (I enclose a list of the Delegation). They will have called on the Foreign Secretary and Lord Glenarthur the previous day.

The Delegation are visiting Britain from 9-19 April as guests of the FCO for a programme organised by the CCI. They will see key aspects of modern Britain including new technology, privatisation, industrial restructuring and job creation schemes. They will be calling on the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and on the Minister of Agriculture. On 19 April, the Delegation will travel to the Irish Republic but return to the UK for a visit to Northern Ireland (22-23 April), organised by the CCI and NIO.

The Delegation have said that they would like to hear the Prime Minister's views on:

- (a) Northern Ireland;
- (b) South Africa;
- (c) Britain's role in the Pacific and S E Asia;
- (d) The chances for Fiji rejoining the Commonwealth.

We assume you do not require detailed briefing on these subjects for the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister should, however, be aware that several of the members of the Delegation have Irish connections and that in particular Senator James McKiernan, who was born in the Republic, is a fervent Irish Nationalist. She may therefore wish to underline how valuable the Delegation's visit to the Province should be in giving them a clearer understanding of the complexities of the issues with which HMG's policies are designed to deal.

The Delegation may ask why Britain has declined to sign the Protocols to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. As well as recalling that it would not, in our view, be in our wider security interests to acceded to the Treaty's

/Protocols



Protocols (although we intend in practice to abide by the Treaty's provisions), the Prime Minister might wish to mention that not all the eligible South Pacific states have so far signed the Treaty. (Vanuatu and Tonga have not.)

The Prime Minister may wish to refer to the Australian Bicentenary including Britain's gift, the sail training ship "Young Endeavour" (handed over to Prime Minister Hawke by our High Commissioner on 25 January), and to Britain's participation in EXPO 88 at Brisbane. The Delegation may obviously raise the Prime Minister's own proposed visit.

I attach a background brief on Australia. This includes details of one potential irritant to UK/Australian bilateral relations, the consequences of the British atmospheric nuclear test programme in Australia in the 1950's and 1960's, although there has been no indication that the Delegation intend to raise this.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L. Parker'.

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

MR. POWELL

Pl. bag forward
with the bag
OK

Visit of Australian Parliamentarians
Wednesday, 13 April

The Australian Parliamentarians
will present the Prime Minister with
a gold and opal brooch when they see her
on 13 April.

The Parliamentarians will be
accompanied by the Australian High Commissioner.

Sue

Charles

* At the end of the
meeting.

5 April 1988

Derek

12/4



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

23 February 1988

Thank you for your letter of 23 February proposing that the Prime Minister should see six visiting Australian Parliamentarians. My own view is frankly that it is a bit much to ask the Prime Minister to take on this sort of meeting. She has nonetheless agreed to see the Parliamentarians given that it is the bicentennial year. We have put them in the diary at 1100 on 13 April for half an hour.

Charles Powell

Robert Culshaw, Esq., MVO.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



Prime Minister
I really don't

see why you
should see them.

Surely the Lord Privy Seal

and the Lord Chamberlain

can do so. Agree not to

see them?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

23 February 1988

Six Australian Parliamentarians are visiting the UK from 9-19 April (list enclosed). They will go on to the Republic of Ireland and then return to the UK for a visit to Northern Ireland. Whilst in the UK they will be the guests of HMG. This is not a CPA sponsored visit.

CDP
23/2

The Foreign Secretary would not normally suggest that the Prime Minister should see a delegation of this kind. But as they are coming here during Australia's bicentenary year, when the Prime Minister herself plans to visit Australia and the CPA Annual Conference will take place in Canberra, he believes that exceptionally it would be appropriate for the Prime Minister to receive them.

I had
better see
them in i.
is
Bicentennial
year
not

If the Prime Minister agreed to do so, we would make clear to the Australians that this should not be regarded as setting a precedent for future visiting parliamentary delegations from Australia.

The delegation will be in London and available to make a call from 11-13 April.

Yours ever

(Signature)

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

Wals 13/4

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

1100

AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

VISIT TO THE UK 9 - 19 APRIL

Mr L McLEARY MP,
Labour Party, (Constituency in New South Wales)
Deputy Speaker.
Leader of Delegation.

Senator D FOREMAN
Labour Party, (South Australia)

Senator J McKIERNAN
Labour Party, (Western Australia)

Mr E GRACE MP
Labour Party, (New South Wales)

Senator G SHEIL
National Party, (Queensland)

Mr P RUDDOCK MP
Liberal Party, (New South Wales)