

## INWARD CABLEGRAM

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TO.  
I CANBERRA/1490  
P ROME/272FP.  
P BONN/194 THE HAGUE/190 ATHENS/269  
P PARIS/348 MOSCOW/234 ISLAMABAD/54RR MALTA/58 KUALA LUMPUR /56 BELGRADE/184  
RR JAKARTA/64

FM. LONDON /

U N C L A S S I F I E D

TRANSCRIPT PM'S NEWS CONFERENCE - 20TH DECEMBER 1974.

HIGH COMMISSIONER: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE PRIME  
MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA. ANY QUESTION?BOB HAUPT (AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW): DID YOU RECEIVE ANY  
FIRM UNDERTAKINGS FROM THE EUROPEANS ABOUT THE PURCHASE OF  
AUSTRALIAN URANIUM AND CAN YOU CONFIRM FIGURES WHICH HAVE APPEARED  
IN THE AUSTRALIAN PRESS ABOUT THE EUROPEAN DEMAND FOR AUSTRALIAN  
URANIUM?PM: I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SEE THE AUSTRALIAN PAPERS FOR THE  
LAST COUPLE OF DAYS. FIGURES WERE GIVEN TO US BY THE COMMISSION  
CONCERNING THE PROJECTED DEMAND FOR URANIUM IN VARIOUS FORMS FOR  
SEVERAL YEARS AHEAD. WE WERE ASKED TO KEEP THE FIGURES  
CONFIDENTIAL.Q: PRIME MINISTER, COULD YOU POSSIBLY SAY WHETHER YOU DISCUSSED  
WITH MR WILSON THE RIGHTS OF THE STATES OF AUSTRALIA TO APPEAL  
TO THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL?PM: THE GENERAL QUESTION OF APPEALS FROM STATE COURTS IN  
AUSTRALIA TO THE PRIVY COUNCIL IS A MATTER OF CONCERN OF COURSE  
TO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT BUT I DO NOT THINK I HAVE ANY MORE  
TO SAY ABOUT IT IN ADDITION TO WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY.MALCOLM STEWART (MACQUARIE RADIO NETWORK): I GATHER YOU HAVE JUST  
HAD LUNCH WITH THE QUEEN. DO YOU ENVISAGE THAT THE STATUS OF THE  
QUEEN IN AUSTRALIA WILL CHANGE FURTHER DURING THE COURSE OF YOUR  
ADMINISTRATION.

PM: (DID NOT REPLY)

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Q: IAN RICHARDSON (RADIO 3DB) YESTERDAY YOU SEEMED TO BE MAKING SOME ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND AUSTRALIA AS YOU WERE AWARE THAT THERE WAS A LOT OF IRRITATION FROM THE BRITISH SIDE AT WHAT THEY SAW WAS YOUR ANTI-BRITISH ATTITUDE. YOU WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO PUT THIS RIGHT. ARE YOU TRYING TO FOLLOW THIS UP, ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE ANY OTHER STEPS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND AUSTRALIA?

PM: THE RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND AUSTRALIA HAVE ALWAYS BEEN GOOD AND CONTINUE TO BE GOOD. THERE IS NOTHING THAT MY GOVERNMENT HAS DONE WHICH WOULD LEND ANY BASIS WHATEVER TO ANY SUGGESTIONS THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND AUSTRALIA WERE IN ANY WAY DIMINISHED, NONE WHATEVER.

Q: YES THAT IS AS YOU SEE IT BUT A LOT OF PEOPLE OVER HERE ARE SAYING THAT YOU WERE THE FIRST ANTI-POM AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER.

PM: WELL LET'S BE A BIT PRECISE. LET'S SPECIFY WHAT I HAVE DONE WHICH COULD BE SAID TO BE IN ANY WAY ANTI-POM. DON'T TALK IN GENERALITIES, LET'S BE PRECISE. LET'S MEET ANY PRECISE OBJECTION OR ALLEGATION.

Q: I AM NOT QUESTIONING WHETHER YOU ARE RIGHT OR WRONG BUT THE FACT IS A LOT OF PEOPLE DO THINK YOU ARE ANTI BRITISH.

PM: WELL, THEY ARE WRONG. LET'S BE PRECISE THERE IS NO BASIS WHATEVER FOR THINKING THAT I AM ANTI-POM, TO USE YOUR WORDS.

Q: JOHN DICKIE (DAILY MAIL). SINCE YOUR ARRIVAL HERE YOU HAVE BEEN CALLING FOR A STRENGTHENING OF THE COMMONWEALTH. DO YOU SEE A PARTICULAR ROLE FOR THE COMMONWEALTH IN RESOLVING THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM AND DO YOU SEE AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT BEING PREPARED TO TAKE PART IN A CRASH EDUCATION PROGRAMME TO HELP THE AFRICANS AS PART OF A SETTLEMENT.

PM: THE QUESTION OF RHODESIA WAS DISCUSSED AT THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT IN OTTAWA LAST AUGUST AND AUSTRALIA THERE MADE IT PLAIN THAT IT WOULD PARTICIPATE VERY HAPPILY IN ANY COMMONWEALTH INITIATIVES ABOUT RHODESIA., AND NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE IN THE COMMONWEALTH CONTEXT SINCE THEN.

Q: DID YOU GET ANY ASSURANCE FROM MR WILSON ABOUT DIEGO GARCIA, AND COULD YOU TELL US WHAT VIEWS WERE EXCHANGED ON THE SUBJECT.

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PM: MR WILSON AND I DISCUSSED FAIRLY BRIEFLY THE GENERAL QUESTION OF BRITAIN'S INTEREST IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA. MR WILSON ASSURED ME AS I BELIEVE HE HAD ASSURED THE HOUSE OF COMMONS THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT VERY MUCH SUPPORTS THE ATTITUDE OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IN CALLING ON THE TWO SUPER POWERS - THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION TO AVOID ANY ESCALATION OF THEIR FORCES. ANY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THEM IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. I HAVE OF COURSE READ THIS IN ACCOUNTS OF WHAT MR WILSON HAD SAID IN THE COMMONS. I WAS NATURALLY HAPPY TO HAVE IT RAISED BY HIM IN A STRONG CORDIAL TERMS FACE TO FACE THIS MORNING.

Q: DO YOU STILL MAINTAIN OUTRIGHT OPPOSITION TO AN AMERICAN BASE ON DIEGO GARCIA.

PM: I DON'T BELIEVE THERE IS ANY COUNTRY AROUND THE INDIAN OCEAN WHICH WISHES TO HAVE AN INCREASE IN THE INSTALLATIONS ON DIEGO GARCIA. I HAVE SAID THAT BEFORE I HAVE NO REASON TO CHANGE THE VIEW.

Q:.....INSTALLATIONS OF THE AMERICANS IN DIEGO GARCIA CONSIDERING SAY THE HISTORY OF THE LAST WAR SUCH INSTALLATIONS NEARER AUSTRALIA WERE QUITE USEFUL.

PM: THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED GREATLY SINCE THE LAST WAR.

Q: THERE HAS BEEN A CURB IN MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA IN THE LAST TWO OR THREE MONTHS. CAN YOU SEE THIS CURB BEING LIFTED WITH A GREATER NUMBER OF INCREASE IN MIGRANTS IN THE COMING YEAR 1975.

PM: NO I DON'T BELIEVE THERE IS LIKELY TO BE AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF MIGRANTS TO AUSTRALIA IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS. THERE ARE TWO REASONS. THE FIRST IS AT A TIME OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN AUSTRALIA IT DOESN'T HELP TO HAVE A GREAT NUMBER OF MIGRANTS COMING TO AUSTRALIA. THE SECOND REASON IS THAT THE PRESSURE OF MIGRANTS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES HAS DIMINISHED. THE REASONS WHICH PERSUADED A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN EARLIER YEARS TO COME TO AUSTRALIA NO LONGER PREVAILS WITH SUCH FORCE. THE MAIN NUMBER OF MIGRANTS COMING TO AUSTRALIA NOW ARE THOSE SPONSORED BY CLOSE RELATIVES. WE BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE THAT COME TO AUSTRALIA ON THE NOMINATION OF THEIR RELATIVES ARE MOST LIKELY TO BE HAPPY IN AUSTRALIA. THERE HAS BEEN A VERY GREAT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF MIGRANTS TO AUSTRALIA WHO HAVE BECOME NATURALISED. THERE IS, I THINK, TWICE AS MANY PEOPLE BEING NATURALISED THIS YEAR AS TWO YEARS AGO IN AUSTRALIA.

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Q: YOU WERE SAYING IN BRUSSELS ON THE COMMON MARKET THAT YOU WANTED TO SEE THE END OF SHILLY SHALLYING ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WE STAY IN THE MARKET. SINCE YOUR TALKS WITH MR WILSON, DO YOU FORM THE IMPRESSION THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WANTS BRITAIN TO STAY IN THE MARKET.

PM: THE CONVERSATIONS I HAD WITH MR WILSON OF COURSE WERE PRIVATE AND IT WOULD BE QUITE WRONG FOR ME TO GIVE ANY IMPRESSION OF WHAT WAS SAID BY EITHER OF US IN THOSE TALKS. IT'S NOT FOR ME REALLY TO EXPRESS A VIEW AS TO WHAT BRITAIN SHOULD DO ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF THE EEC. IT IS RATHER FOR ME TO EXPRESS THE VIEW OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT. PREVIOUS AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS HAD UNDOUBTEDLY GIVEN THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY DIDN'T WANT BRITAIN TO JOIN THE COMMUNITY. THEY CRITICISED THE EFFORTS OF THE CONSERVATIVE AND LABOUR GOVERNMENTS IN BRITAIN TO JOIN THE COMMUNITY. THEY FREQUENTLY APPEARED INTENT ON FRUSTRATING BRITAIN'S ATTEMPTS TO JOIN THE COMMUNITY. THE PRESENT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS DONE NOTHING TO FRUSTRATE THESE ATTEMPTS. IN OUR VIEW THERE IS NO ADVANTAGE WHATEVER TO AUSTRALIA IN BRITAIN LEAVING THE COMMUNITY.

Q: (RUSSELL SCHNEIDER, THE AUSTRALIAN): FOLLOWING YOUR DISCUSSIONS WITH HER MAJESTY AND MR WILSON, HAVE YOU ANY INTENTION OF INTRODUCING A PURELY AUSTRALIAN FORM OF HONOURS.

PM: THIS IS A MATTER WE HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT FOR SOME TIME. ALL I CAN SAY IS THE GENERAL IDEA IS TO DO WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN CANADA. I BELIEVE IT WOULD HELP PEOPLE IN BRITAIN TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IS ABOUT IN CONSTITUTIONAL TERMS IN GENERAL IF YOU WERE TO EQUATE OUR ASPIRATIONS WITH THE CANADIAN PRACTICE.

Q: (BILL NORMAN, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD): THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT GMH MAY SACK ANOTHER 5000 WORKERS. DID YOU GET ANY IDEAS FROM MR WILSON WHEN YOU TALKED TO MR WILSON WHICH MIGHT BE APPLIED IN AUSTRALIA.

PM: WE DIDN'T DISCUSS THE MOTOR INDUSTRY. MY GENERAL IMPRESSION IS THE MOTOR INDUSTRY IS IN TROUBLE THROUGHOUT THE WESTERN WORLD. THE MONSTROUS AND INTOLERABLE SITUATION IN AUSTRALIA IS THAT GENERAL MOTORS SUBSIDIARY THERE HAS ATTEMPTED TO STAND OVER THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT. IT HAS AVOIDED USING THE MACHINERY AVAILABLE TO ANY AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY WHICH BELIEVES IT NEEDS ASSISTANCE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT. IT HAS PRESENTED DEMANDS THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD ELIMINATE COMPETITION FOR ITS PRODUCTS AND SHOULD SUBSIDISE THOSE PRODUCTS. I NEVER THOUGHT EVEN GENERAL MOTORS WOULD HAVE THE GALL TO BE SO OVERT ABOUT IT. THESE UGLY AMERICAN COMPANIES.

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Q: ... APPLICABLE TO AUSTRALIA.

PM: I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND YOU TO ASK A QUESTION IN SUCH GENERAL TERMS. YOU MENTION GENERAL MOTORS AND I ANSWERED IN THAT CONTEXT. OF COURSE, MY COLLEAGUE AND OUR ADVISORS, AND I, SOUGHT AND GAINED A NUMBER OF IMPRESSIONS ON THE ECONOMIC SITUATION DURING OUR TALKS IN LONDON AND IN BRUSSELS. OF COURSE WE DID.

Q: ON THE GENERAL MOTORS THING, PRIME MINISTER. AFTER THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED ITS MOTOR INDUSTRY POLICY. GENERAL MOTORS CAME OUT AND VIRTUALLY SUPPORTED THE GOVERNMENT AND THAT POLICY.

PM: INDEED, THEY TOOK FULL PAGE ADVERTISEMENTS IN YOUR OWN VALUED JOURNALS.

Q: COULD YOU TELL US WHAT DISCUSSIONS THEY HAD WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN AN ATTEMPT TO GET THE CHANGE TO THE MOTOR INDUSTRY POLICY BEFORE THEY ANNOUNCED THAT WORKERS WOULD BE SACKED.

PM: NONE WHATEVER. THEY DELIVERED AN ULTIMATUM.

Q: ... (NOT HEARD)

PM: BY THEIR SILENCE, YES. I ACCEPTED WHAT THEY SAID OPENLY. I DON'T ACCEPT THAT ANY COMPANY HOWEVER LARGE - EVEN IF IT IS AN AMERICAN COMPANY - IS ENTITLED TO STAND OVER THE GOVERNMENT OF A COUNTRY WHERE IT HAS OPERATED SO PROFITABLY FOR 20 YEARS AND MORE. GENERAL MOTORS' CONDUCT IN THIS CASE WAS ABOMINABLE. IT IS NOT THE FAULT OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IF GENERAL MOTORS IN AUSTRALIA CAN'T PRODUCE AN ACCEPTABLE VEHICLE. IT CAN'T FACE COMPETITION, IF IT SEEKS ILLEGAL ASSISTANCE, PROTECTION AND UNJUSTIFIED SUBSIDIES.

Q: (JOHN JACKSON, DAILY MIRROR). MAY I JUST CHANGE THE SUBJECT. COULD I ASK WHETHER THE DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF CRICKET WAS BROUGHT UP AT NO. 10 OR BUCKINGHAM PALACE. DID HER MAJESTY OR MR WILSON OFFER TO OPEN THE INNINGS AT MELBOURNE.

PM: I CAN'T DESCRIBE ACTUALLY THE CONVERSATIONS THAT HER MAJESTY HAD, ANY MORE THAN I CAN THE CONVERSATIONS WITH THE P.M. HOWEVER, AT THE RISK OF INDISCRETION I WOULD SAY THAT MR. WILSON CONSTANTLY REFERRED TO MATTERS IN CRICKETING TERMS YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, LAST NIGHT, THIS MORNING, AND I HAVE NO DOUBT TONIGHT AND TOMORROW NIGHT. AS I SAID YESTERDAY, WE ARE PREPARED TO FLY THE MCC FIRST ELEVEN WHEN WE GO BACK IF THAT'S DESIRED.

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Q: DID YOU DISCUSS WITH MR. WILSON YOUR PROPOSAL ON THE INDIAN OCEAN. AND IF SO WHAT HAS BEEN THE REACTION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. YOU SAID THAT THERE MUST BE SOME UNDERSTANDING BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE GREAT POWERS ABOUT ARMS LIMITATION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. DID YOU DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH MR. WILSON. WHAT HAS BEEN HIS REACTION.

PM: I HAVE ALREADY STATED ALL I THINK I SHOULD SAY ABOUT WHAT MR. WILSON HAD SAID ABOUT THE INDIAN OCEAN. I OBVIOUSLY DON'T MIND IF YOU ASK ME MY ATTITUDE TOWARD IT, BUT REALLY I CAN'T GO INTO DETAILS ABOUT WHAT MR. WILSON AND I HAVE SAID IN OUR CONFIDENTIAL TALKS. MR. WILSON HAS STATED SOME THINGS PUBLICLY. HE REPEATED THEM TO ME AND I AM HAPPY TO STATE THEM HERE.

Q: DOES THE FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTING IN THE PACIFIC STILL WORRY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT. AND IF THEY EVER DECIDED TO RESUME IT WOULD YOU EXPECT A MORE SYMPATHETIC, RATHER MORE SYMPATHY, FROM A BRITISH LABOUR GOVERNMENT THAN YOU GOT FROM A PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION.

PM: A COMPLETELY SPECULATIVE QUESTION. I WON'T ANSWER IT.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE ON SALES OF SUGAR.

PM: WE ARE VERY HAPPY TO SELL SUGAR OR ANY OF OUR OTHER PRIMARY PRODUCTS, OR MINERAL PRODUCTS OVERSEAS. WE HAVE IN MANY CASES SUPPLIES SURPLUS TO OUR REQUIREMENTS. WE HAVEN'T GOT SUPPLIES OF SUGAR SURPLUS TO OUR OWN REQUIREMENTS, OR OUR OWN COMMITMENTS THIS YEAR. THE CROP IS FULLY COMMITTED. WE ARE HAPPY IN RESPECT OF SUGAR, OTHER PRIMARY OR MINERAL PRODUCTS, TO INCREASE OUR PRODUCTION TO MEET DEMANDS OR SALES FROM OVERSEAS .. PURCHASERS FROM OVERSEAS. WE WISH TO HAVE THESE ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR A TERM OF YEARS. IN RESPECT OF SUGAR WE HAVE ENTERED INTO SEVERAL AGREEMENTS FOR FIVE YEAR TERMS. THERE IS SOME SUGGESTION IN THE NEWSPAPERS THAT WE HAVE JUST ENTERED INTO SUCH AN AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN. WE HAVE ALREADY DONE SO WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. THE ONLY COUNTRY WITH WHICH WE HAVE ENTERED INTO A SHORTER AGREEMENT IS THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, AND THAT IS FOR THREE YEARS. QUITE OBVIOUSLY WE WANT TO ENTER INTO COMMITMENTS TO SELL OUR PRODUCTS OVER A TERM OF YEARS BECAUSE OTHERWISE IT DOESN'T SUIT US - IT DOESN'T PAY US TO INCREASE OUR INVESTMENTS IN PRODUCING SURPLUSES TO OUR REQUIREMENTS IF WE CAN'T RECOVER THOSE INVESTMENTS. WE CLEARLY ARE EXPECTING ANY SALES OF SUGAR OR SUCH PRIMARY PRODUCTS IN WESTERN EUROPE TO BE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE EEC. WE ARE PROBABLY THE MOST EFFICIENT PRODUCERS OF SUGAR IN THE WORLD. WE EXPORT MORE THAN ANY COUNTRY OTHER THAN CUBA. YOU MIGHT NOT REALISE IN BRITAIN THAT AUSTRALIA IS THE SECOND LARGEST TROPICAL COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. BRAZIL IS THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD WHICH HAS A LARGER LAND SPACE IN THE TROPICS.

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Q: WHAT IS THE STATE OF PLAY ON YOUR PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS ON SALES OF SUGAR TO THE COMMUNITY.

PM: THERE AREN'T ANY.

Q: WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, THEN, THIS QUESTION OF SUGAR SUPPLIES WAS IT RAISED BY EITHER SIDE.

PM: IT HAS BEEN RAISED IN GENERAL TERMS WITH SOME OF OUR ADVISERS BOTH HERE AND IN BRUSSELS, BUT I DON'T BELIEVE THERE ARE ANY PRECISE PROPOSALS. THE HEAD OF THE AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF OVERSEAS TRADE IS WITH ME. VERY OBVIOUSLY WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT THE OPPORTUNITIES TO SELL SUGAR AND OTHER PRODUCTS WHILE WE HAVE BEEN IN BRUSSELS AND LONDON.

Q: (HIGHFIELD, ABC) HAVE YOU HAD DISCUSSIONS ON THE CONTINUING FULL DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE STATE'S AGENTS-GENERAL IN LONDON.

PM: NONE WHATEVER. IT WAS NEVER PROPOSED TO. I NOTICED THAT EVEN THE TIMES ITSELF SUGGESTED IN THEIR EDITORIAL YESTERDAY THAT MR. WILSON AND I MIGHT BE DISCUSSING THE POSITION OF THE AGENTS-GENERAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN STATES. WE HAVE NEVER DISCUSSED IT, WE HAVE NEVER CORRESPONDED ABOUT IT. THIS WAS SUGGESTED IN AUSTRALIA ABOUT EIGHT DAYS AGO. I ISSUED A DENIAL. I AM SURPRISED THAT THE TIMES ITSELF SHOULD FALL INTO THIS ERROR.

Q: THERE HAS BEEN WORD THAT YOU RAISED CERTAIN CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS - NOW YOU HAVE BEEN ASKED ABOUT THIS IN A ROUND-ABOUT WAY ALREADY - BUT PERHAPS YOU COULD TELL US SOMETHING OF WHAT THESE MATTERS ARE, TO AVOID THE TIMES ITSELF, OR OTHER PEOPLE FROM GETTING IT WRONG.

PM: YOU ASK A QUESTION WHAT I THINK ABOUT IT. I DID SAY SOMETHING AT THE MANSION HOUSE AT THE LUNCH YESTERDAY. SO I AM QUITE HAPPY TO MAKE PRONOUNCEMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT. BUT ASK ME MY VIEWS. DON'T ASK ME WHAT I HAVE SAID IN CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSIONS WITH MY COUNTERPART OR MY MONARCH.

Q: INDISTINCT.

PM: I WAS ASKED IF I THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE ANY CHANGE. AND I SAID NO.

Q: DO YOU THINK THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL LEGISLATE TO ABOLISH APPEALS TO THE PRIVY COUNCIL FROM STATE SUPREME COURTS.

PM: I WON'T SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

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Q: CAN I ASK YOU WHAT YOUR OWN VIEWS ARE THEN, ABOUT CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES THAT ARE NECESSARY, WITH RELATION TO THE POSITION OF THE QUEEN, THE TITLE ROYAL.

PM: THE ANSWER TO THE FIRST ONE WAS NONE.

Q: TO THE USE OF THE TITLE ROYAL TO VARIOUS AUSTRALIAN BODIES - LIKE THE RAAF AND SO ON.

PM: I HAVE NO VIEW ON IT AT ALL. WHY DO YOU ASK THIS.

Q: IT'S BEEN REPORTED THAT POSSIBLY CHANGES ARE ON THE WAY.

PM: WELL THERE ARE NOT.

Q. AND YOU ARE NOT CONTEMPLATING ANY.

PM: NO, IT HAS NEVER BEEN SUGGESTED. WHY DO YOU.. I PRESUME YOU ARE ASKING THIS QUESTION ON THE BASIS OF SOME STORY SOMEWHERE. I HAVE NOT SEEN ANY SUCH STORY. IT'S THE FIRST TIME THE SUGGESTION HAS EVER BEEN MADE TO ME. WE HAVE A ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY AND A ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE. NOBODY HAS SUGGESTED CHANGING THE TITLE.

Q: MAY I SAY THIS STEMS FROM A CABLE WHICH HAS COME FROM MELBOURNE FROM A BRIGADIER EASON, AND A BRIGADIER SIR WILLIAM HALL, WHICH READS, ACCORDING TO OUR CORRESPONDENT IN MELBOURNE: "YOUR MAJESTY THE FOLLOWING CABLEGRAMS HAVE BEEN SENT TO YOUR PRIME MINISTER, MR WILSON: WE WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT ANY CHANGES IN THE COMMONWEALTH CONSTITUTION, IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE MONARCH, QUEEN ELIZABETH II, SHOULD BE MADE IN AUSTRALIA BY AUSTRALIANS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM REFRAIN FROM INTERFERENCE. MR. WHITLAM HAS NEVER SPOKEN FOR THE VAST MAJORITY OF AUSTRALIANS ON THIS MATTER". AND IT WAS THEN MENTIONED ABOUT THE ROYAL BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

PM: THIS IS SHEAR SPECULATION. THESE OLD BRIGADIERS NEVER DIE. NO, REALLY IT'S THE FIRST SUGGESTION OF THIS KIND THAT I HAVE EVER HEARD.

Q: (PATRICK KEATLEY, THE GUARDIAN) : I WONDER IF I COULD ASK A SUPPLEMENTARY TO WHAT YOU RAISED AT THE MANSION HOUSE ON THIS CONSTITUTIONAL POINT WHERE YOU REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS - I AM PARAPHRASING - TO THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION WITHIN AUSTRALIA. I HOPE I AM PUTTING THAT CORRECTLY. I WONDERED IF YOU COULD FILL THAT OUT A BIT AND EXPLAIN TO US WHAT THE STEPS WOULD BE, OR WHAT THE SCOPE IS THAT YOU COULD ACHIEVE WITHOUT HAVING TO REFER TO BRITAIN.



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PM: I THINK THERE WERE TWO PARTICULAR MATTERS I MENTIONED AT THE MANSION HOUSE YESTERDAY. ONE WAS THE FACT THAT THE GOVERNORS OF THE AUSTRALIAN STATES RECEIVE COMMISSION NOT FROM THE QUEEN OF AUSTRALIA, BUT FROM THE QUEEN OF THE U.K. THE COMMISSIONS ARE COUNTERSIGNED NOT BY ANY AUSTRALIAN MINISTER, BUT BY THE BRITISH MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS. I ALSO MENTIONED THAT APPEALS COULD COME FROM THE AUSTRALIAN STATE COURTS IN RESPECT TO STATE LAWS DIRECTLY TO THE BRITISH PRIVY COUNCIL. NOW IN RESPECT TO THOSE TWO MATTERS I EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE FOR THE GOVERNORS OF THE AUSTRALIAN STATES TO BE COMMISSIONED BY THE QUEEN OF AUSTRALIA. I ALSO EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT APPEALS FROM ALL AUSTRALIAN COURTS SHOULD END WITH THE HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA. I WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT ANY LEGAL DISPUTES BETWEEN, SAY THE FEDERAL AND THE STATE GOVERNMENTS OF AUSTRALIA, ENDS WITH THE HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA. ALSO ANY DISPUTES BETWEEN AUSTRALIAN CITIZENS CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL LAWS END WITH THE HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA. THERE IS, HOWEVER, THIS SINGLE ANOMOLY THAT APPEALS FROM STATE COURTS UNDER STATE LAWS CAN GO TO THE BRITISH PRIVY COUNCIL. IT SEEMS IN THESE DAYS QUITE ANOMOLOUS AND - ONE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT WOULD ALWAYS HAVE BEEN OBJECTIONABLE FOR LITIGATION TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN CITIZENS OF ANY COUNTRY BEFORE THE COURTS OF ANOTHER COUNTRY, SITTING IN ANOTHER COUNTRY, AND COMPOSED OF JUDGES APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THAT OTHER COUNTRY. IT IS NO PART, SURELY, OF THE ENGLISH LAW IN ENGLAND, OR IN ANY ENGLISH SETTLEMENT, SUCH AS AUSTRALIA, THAT HERE SHOULD BE LITIGATION IN ANOTHER COUNTRY - EVEN IF IT IS THE OTHER COUNTRY. IT IS HERE, AGAIN SURELY, THE SITUATION SHOULD BE AS IN CANADA.

: ON THAT POINT, AS INDEED YOU MENTIONED CANADA. AND AS YOU KNOW THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT HAD THE DILEMMA OF WHETHER OR NOT TO HAVE THE BNA ACT REVISED IN LONDON. WOULD YOU SAY THEN THE PARALLEL THEN OBTAINS THAT AUSTRALIA DOES NOT NEED TO HAVE HER ORIGINAL ACT OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE WESTMINISTER PARLIAMENT AMENDED FOR AUSTRALIAN PURPOSES.

M: OH, THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT IS MORE ARCHAIC THAN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTIONAL ACT. IT IS, AS YOU KNOW, 4 YEARS OLDER. THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTIONAL WOULD BE A MORE CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENT IF IT HAD BEEN PASSED AFTER THE PARLIAMENT ACT WERE, INSTEAD OF, YOU KNOW, IF IT HAD BEEN PASSED UNDER GEORGE V, INSTEAD OF UNDER VICTORIA. BUT THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION CAN BE CHANGED WITHIN AUSTRALIA. THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION REQUIRES AMENDMENT BY THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT. SO IN THAT RESPECT AUSTRALIA IS MORE FORTUNATELY SITUATED THAN CANADA. THERE HAS BEEN SOME ATTEMPT, LAST YEAR AND THIS YEAR, TO BYPASS THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION OF 1900 BY RELYING ON A BRITISH ACT OF 1833.

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Q: THE OPPOSITION HAS SAID THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT IS THE WORST IN AUSTRALIA'S HISTORY ... (PARTLY INAUDIBLE)

PM: HE IS AN EXPERT IN BAD GOVERNMENTS.

ENDS

A/PRIME MINISTER  
 FOREIGN MINISTER  
 FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
 MIN AND DEPT DEFENCE  
 JIO  
 MIN AND DEPT LABOR AND IMMIGRATION (C)  
 MIN AND DEPT OVERSEAS TRADE  
 MIN AND DEPT MINERALS AND ENERGY  
 TREASURER AND TREASURY  
 PM'S PRESS OFFICE  
 PM'S PRIVATE OFFICE  
 AIS (C)  
 PM AND C  
 MR B. JOHNS (PM AND C)  
 MR MENADUE  
 ADAA (C)  
 MIN AND DEPT AGRICULTURE

MISS BOWTELL (PM'S PRESS OFFICE) ADVISED 21/0830

23 DEC 1974

SEC		MR. GRIFFITH	/
DEP SECY	/	Press Office	/
EEP			
EXT REL	/		
PROT DIV			
DEV DIV		CABLES	/
No. OF P/C RECD			