



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

28 July 1988

Dear Charles

*CDP
20/7.*

Australia Constitution Act

In his letter of 25th July, Paul Stockton suggested that it might be consistent with the Public Records Act for one of the originals of the Australia Constitution Act to be "held" by the Australians at the Australian High Commission in London.

We do not think that this would satisfy the Australians. Mr Hawke clearly hoped that one of the originals could remain in Australia on permanent loan, and it seems difficult to believe that he would regard having it "lodged" in one building in London, albeit an Australian one, rather than another as a serious answer to his request.

We still owe a reply to Mr McLeay, the Leader of the Australian Parliamentary Delegation who raised the question of the Constitution Act with the Prime Minister on 13 April (your letter of 13 April to Robert Culshaw). We recommend that we should not say anything to him until after the Prime Minister has seen Mr Hawke in Canberra. You will have noted from Canberra telno 622 that Mr Coles has told the Australian Cabinet Secretary that the conclusion has been reached that we could not meet the Australian request for an original of the Constitution Act.

I am copying this letter to Alison Smith (Lord President's Office), Nick Gibbons (Lord Privy Seal's Office), Brian Hawtin (MOD), Michael Saunders (Law Officers Dept) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office), and Paul Stockton (Lord Chancellor's Department).

Yours ever

R N Peirce

(R N Peirce)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/No 10 Downing Street

FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



cc ~~AC~~
HOUSE OF LORDS,
LONDON SW1A 0PW

RESTRICTED

25 July 1988

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1A 2AA

C D P
20/7

Dear Charles,

AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION ACT

Thank you for your letter of 20 July.

We shall certainly see that the Prime Minister's suggestion will be considered, so that one of the originals could be "held" by Australia, or "lodged" with them, in a way which is consistent with the Public Records Act. Holding it at the Australian High Commission in London might be a possibility.

I am copying this letter to Stephen Wall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Alison Smith (Lord President's Office), Nick Gibbons (Lord Privy Seal's Office), Brian Hawtin (Ministry of Defence), Michael Saunders (Law Officers Department) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Paul Stockton

AUSTRALIA: *Wabrom*

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CONDENSATOR

