



10 DOWNING STREET

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3
2 March, 1983

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Mr. Callaghan.

Thank you for your letter of 24 February and for sending me a copy of the letter you have received from Mr. Vanner. I was appalled by the terrible loss, suffering and devastation inflicted by the bush fires, and I entirely agree with you both that something should be done to help the people of Australia at this difficult time.

Immediately on hearing about the tragedy, I sent a message of sympathy to Mr. Fraser and the people of Australia, and offered our help in any way that was required. The High Commissioner in Canberra has subsequently been in touch with Mr. Fraser's office about what help is needed. The offers of assistance have been greatly appreciated but, for the moment, no requirements have been identified which cannot be met either from Federal or State Government resources. But, to help towards the immediate expenses of those affected by the tragedy, a contribution of £50,000 has been made to the Australian Bush Fire Disaster Fund set up by Mr. Fraser. We shall continue to keep in close touch with the Australians in case there is more we can do to help.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

The Rt. Hon. James Callaghan, M.P.

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