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Source: ABC 20th July 2004

## Minister weighs in to artefacts stoush

Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Minister Gavin Jennings says he is still deciding whether to force the acquisition of Indigenous artworks from the Mallee in the state's west, on loan from the British Museum.

Aboriginal groups have put another emergency declaration over the emu figurehead and three bark etchings, preventing them from being returned to Britain.

But Mr Jennings says he needs to have talks with new Federal Aboriginal Affairs Minister Ian Campbell before making a final decision.

He says he wants to elevate the discussion with British authorities to many other Indigenous remains and artefacts being held by the British Museum.

"We think that they are matters that should be part of the discussion to see what access can be provided for local Aboriginal people in years to come, for these precious relics that relate very much to their own precious cultural heritage," he said.

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