



PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement 24th April, 1975

PRIME MINISTER'S OVERSEAS VISIT

The Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, left Australia on 23rd April to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, and to pay official visits to Peru and the United States.

He will return to Australia on 11th May. His itinerary is attached.

Before leaving Australia, Mr. Whitlam reaffirmed Australia's support for the Commonwealth as a unique multi-racial grouping. He said that the Commonwealth was a voluntary association of 34 independent states, each responsible for its own policies, but consulting and co-operating in the common interests of their peoples to promote international understanding and world peace. He noted also the important non-governmental links which existed between professional and other associations in Commonwealth countries.

The Australian Government, he said, attached particular importance to the development of co-operative international arrangements of this kind which would operate free from special allegiances to power blocs.

He was looking forward to a detailed exchange of views on changing power relationships as well as world trade and financial matters, which would be important subjects for consideration at this meeting.

During his visit to Washington, Mr. Whitlam will meet President Ford and Dr. Kissinger, as well as members of the House International Relations Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

This will be his second meeting with President Ford in just over six months providing a good opportunity for discussion of developments in power relationships, particularly in Indo-China, in the intervening period.

Mr. Whitlam's visit to Peru will be the first by an Australian Prime Minister to South America. In Peru he will hold talks with the President, General Juan Velasco Alvarado and the Prime Minister, General Morales Bermudez. He will also visit historic Machu Picchu.

Mr. Whitlam said that Peru was an important Pacific state which had played a major role in matters concerning the law of the sea and in the non-aligned movement. It was also a member of the Organisation of American States and the Andean Group of States. Australia has observer status with both organisations.

PRIME MINISTER'S ITINERARY

| | |
|------------|------------------------------------|
| 23rd April | Sydney to Tahiti Tahiti to Lima |
| 24th April | Arrive Lima |
| 26th April | Visit Cuzco and Machu Pucchi |
| 27th April | Lima to Kingston |
| 7th May | Kingston to Washington |
| 8th May | Washington to Tahiti |
| 10th May | Tahiti to Canberra |
| 11th May | |
| 8.00 p.m. | Arrive Canberra |

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