

PRIME MINISTER AND PRESIDENT CARTER

THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON

President Carter

...Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser of Australia, who came here a few days ago to consult very closely with me on matters of common interest to our two countries, particularly the late developing events centred around the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Following his visit here, Prime Minister Fraser went to London to meet with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom - Great Britain - then went to meet with the Chancellor of Germany and then the President of France. Following those visits, the leaders of the European countries suggested that because his meetings were so fruitful with them that he might stop by to see me again to give me a report on their consultations in Europe. I am deeply grateful that Prime Minister Fraser has been willing to do this. His report has indeed been helpful. We are grateful also that Australia because of their courageous stand as an ally of ours in condemning the invasion that threatens the peace in South West Asia and the Persian Gulf region, the fact that as a major exporter of grain Australia immediately announced that they would not replace the grain being withheld by our country from the Soviet Union. I am also very pleased at the close military, economic and political alliance that exists among Australia, New Zealand and the United States. There was a meeting of Foreign Ministers scheduled in this alliance in July. At the suggestion of Prime Minister Fraser we have decided to move that meeting up until the last week in February so that we can expedite the common discussions among us about the situation in the Indian Ocean and the regions bordering that sea.

We have had a thorough discussion about the Olympics and what might be done concerning the Olympics if the Soviets do not quickly withdraw all their forces from Afghanistan. Prime Minister Fraser has taken the lead in this discussion and consultation as well. It is with a great deal of pleasure that I have welcomed him back here. I would like to ask him, as an honoured guest, to make a few comments to you.

Prime Minister

Thank you very much Mr. President. I value very greatly indeed the discussions that we had a few days ago, and also today. I had said at the outset that this round of discussions that I have undertaken, that it is important for the development of Australia's own policy in the future to know as well as possible the mind of the President of the United States, the policies of this country, and also of principal countries in Europe. We have no presumptuous view of the influence of 14 million Australians, but we are determined to play what part we can in a cause that is important for free peoples wherever they may be. We are glad indeed, and thankful, that the United States has responded in recent days, that the President made and delivered the statement

Prime Minister (continued)

he did in the State of the Union message which should surely give clear warnings to the Soviets about any further moves beyond Afghanistan and the clear need, as there clearly is, to bring greater reassurance to the world by removing forces from Afghanistan.

There are times when all of us in independent nations have necessarily to depend on the United States for the kind of world in which we live. This is the world's greatest free power, the strongest country in the world. In times of danger, in times of invasion, as there have been - the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan - it is the United States that must set a lead. The United States has done what is necessary in the preservation, as Australia believes, of world peace. Because we strongly believe that what the President has done is right, because we strongly believe that what the President has done is necessary, Australia has moved to support in what ways we can the actions of the United States. We will continue to do so in a cause which is of such great importance for us all.

The United States has also taken a lead over the matter of the Olympics. I have shown, some days ago, that small document that has been handed out by Soviet activists in Moscow giving their view of what the Olympics means and how they are going to exploit it amongst their own people. They have made it - the Soviets themselves - have made it perfectly plain that they regard the Olympic Games being held in Moscow as a great social and political event; not at that moment speaking about a great sporting event which is what it is meant to be. They have also made it perfectly plain in their own writings and documents that they would regard the awarding of the Games to Moscow as a mark of approval of Soviet foreign policy. Against the background of their own statements, and against the background of their invasion of Afghanistan, how can free peoples representatives go to Moscow, and no matter what they themselves might say, allow the Soviets to say of them that their presence there is a mark of approval of Soviet foreign policy. That is plainly, in the current circumstances, what the Soviet Union would in fact be saying.

Mr. President, I welcome very much the discussions that we have been able to have. They have been extraordinarily useful to me. They have given me much - if it was needed - much greater confidence that the United States, together with allies in Europe, is determined to do what must be done, to preserve all those things which the people of the United States and the people of Australia hold most dear.