



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

7 NOVEMBER 1984

I have sent the following message to President Reagan:

Please accept my warmest congratulations on your success in the elections.

When we met in June last year, I emphasised the fundamental importance that we in the Australian Government attached to the relationship with the United States and the constructive approach that Australia would take to our alliance.

During your first term of office, the relationship between our countries has been close and productive. Indeed, I am firmly of the view that it has never been better. Although, as thriving democracies and old friends, we will necessarily have differences on some matters, I am confident that our partnership will remain strong during your continued Presidency of the United States.

I know from recent correspondence between us of the close personal attention you are giving to the vital issues of peace, arms control and disarmament. I believe that your re-election to a second term provides an historic opportunity for reaching agreement with the Soviet Union, in order to rid the world of the threat of nuclear war.

The central challenge is to get under way an enduring process of balanced and verifiable reductions in the US-Soviet nuclear arsenals. It is only too clear from the history of the postwar period that stable and constructive relations between the superpowers cannot be sustained in the atmosphere generated by mutual threats of mass destruction.

Nor can we afford to presume the perpetual efficacy of this deterrent relationship. With confidence in the strength and credibility of the US deterrent posture restored, the imperative now is to look beyond a deterrent relationship based on massive nuclear arsenals.

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You have my unequivocal support and best wishes for success in this enterprise, which is fervently desired by the peoples of the world, and certainly by the people of Australia. The Australian Government for its part will do everything in its power to assist.

Among the many common aspirations we share is a concern for, and belief in, the future of the Western Pacific. The Australian Government has been delighted to see the importance which your Administration attaches to the countries of this region. I believe in the great potential of the Asia-Pacific region and intend to maintain and develop further the productive involvement of Australia in it as one of the major goals of my Government.

The immediate future is a period of great challenges, and potentially, corresponding rewards. I am confident that, under your leadership, the United States will meet these challenges boldly and creatively. And, building on the friendship we have developed in the last 18 months, I look forward to working closely and constructively with you in the interests of both our peoples.