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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND
J. MALCOLM FRASER, M.P.
PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

THE SOUTH GROUNDS

10:37 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Prime Minister Fraser, Mrs. Fraser, ladies and gentlemen:

In this Bicentennial year, the United States has been honored to welcome the leaders of many, many friendly nations, and we are especially and particularly pleased that the Prime Minister of Australia has come to Washington, D. C., our Nation's Capital.

Australia is especially close to the hearts of Americans throughout our country. The American and Australian people share common roots, common similarities and the strongest affinities. We hold in common a devotion to the preservation of liberty, not only in our own countries, but throughout the world. We share great responsibilities for assisting the emergence of a more just and stable international order.

Mr. Prime Minister, our countries have long been allies in war as well as in peace. We have worked together to support other free nations and to improve the condition of less fortunate people.

Our two governments have a tradition of close consultation that will be continued in our meetings today. Australia is assuming increased responsibilities on a worldwide basis. Its position on international issues has not been narrowly confined to self-interest, but have taken on a wider view that we share in this country.

We respect this friendly and independent voice across the Pacific. We welcome Australia's important contribution to stability and progress in the Pacific region and in the world at large.

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Mr. Prime Minister, you are deeply conscious of the need to preserve a global balance among the great powers. We sincerely appreciate Australia's support for our foreign policy. We assure you that the United States will remain a strong and faithful ally, worthy of Australia's trust.

Australia -- its government and its citizens -- have done much to celebrate the American Bicentennial. Festivals have been held in Australia; performers have come to the United States and Australia will endow a chair of Australian studies at Harvard University.

We thank you, and all Australians, for those warm expressions of friendship.

Mr. Prime Minister, you are a very welcome visitor to our Nation's Capital. I look forward to my discussions with you and the continuing close relationships with Australia and its people, our natural friends and allies in every sphere of life.

PRIME MINISTER FRASER: Mr. President, my wife and I thank you for your most warm and moving welcome to Washington.

It is now six years since I was last in the United States and it is good to be back in this Bicentennial year.

Mr. President, the Revolution that you are celebrating this year was a great triumph for the then radical idea that man could be free, that a free people could not only survive and work together, but that they could create a better society than had existed in the world before.

It is from your Revolution that we traced the birth of our own nation in 1788. Our two countries have traveled far since that time. We have both demonstrated the vitality and strength of democracy. We have both been able to build societies which are just and which enshrine freedom.

That we have similar ideals is not a matter of mere coincidence. America's independence, and its subsequent development as one of the world's great civilizations, has been an inspiration and an example, especially to younger nations such as my own. In this Bicentennial year, it is a debt to which we are pleased to pay tribute.

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Like you, we value our independence. We do not expect others to assume our responsibilities. Over time, however, our paths have come to run, to an increasing extent, in parallel.

Comradeship in arms, on a number of occasions, has been the basis for a closeness; the sharing of purpose, which has, I feel, been to the benefit and comfort of both our countries.

Over the last 30 years, it has fallen to the United States to provide leadership for the Western world. You have our continuing support in this difficult role. For the sake of world peace and for the ideals we share, it is essential, Mr. President, that this leadership continue and Australia has every confidence and knowledge that it will.

We live in a world that continues to hold many dangers and challenges to human dignity. Many countries are confronted by appalling problems of poverty, hunger, disease. The developed countries face their own problems of inflation and unacceptably high rates of unemployment.

These are challenges to be faced together, contributing wherever we can to their just and practical solution. In responding to them, the world will look, as it has so often in the past, to the United States to play a prominent role.

It is in recognition of this, and the determination that Australia will play its full part, that I make this journey to the United States in this Bicentennial year.

Mr. President, I look forward to my discussions with you and other members of your Government and to the opportunity to be among the American people on this occasion.

Thank you very much, Mr. President, for your hospitality.

END

(AT 10:45 A.M. EDT)