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Subject a
Middle East
Pt 7: lit

Text of Letter dated 12 October 1981
from the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser to
the Rt Hon. Margaret Thatcher

CC: [unclear]

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T143A/8

Begins:

My dear Prime Minister,

In the course of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, we discussed Ronald Reagan's message asking us, while we were in Melbourne together, to consider further our participation in the Sinai Multinational Force. We were not able then to bring our discussions to a conclusion and, in any event, they were overtaken by the grievous news of the assassination of President Sadat.

Since then, there have been discussions among our representatives and with Secretary of State Haig at the funeral ceremonies for President Sadat in Cairo and we in Australia have given further consideration to our own attitude towards participation in the Force.

I write now to inform you that I have conveyed our decision to Ronald Reagan. I have told him that Australia will agree to participate in the Sinai Peace-keeping Force subject to Britain and Canada also agreeing to participate. I very much hope that you will.

I have also emphasised that, in participating in the Sinai Peace-keeping Force, we would be concerned that our contribution would have the maximum positive influence in continuing and broadening the peace process in the Middle East. We would be looking to the United States, therefore, to exert and to sustain the strongest pressure to ensure an effective and continuing process in the search for peace.

I do not envisage, for the time being, any public announcement of our decision, which is contingent upon decisions by the Canadian and British Governments. I look forward to keeping in the closest contact with you about developments in your own attitudes towards participation.

I am writing in similar terms to Pierre Trudeau.

Yours sincerely,
(Malcolm Fraser)

The Rt Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON.

Ends.

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