



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION · LONDON

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THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

3 October, 1980

Dear Mr Alexander,

I have been asked by the Australian Prime Minister, The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Fraser, to convey the enclosed letter from him dated 25 September, 1980 to your Prime Minister, The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher.

It is the original of the letter on Five-Power Defence Arrangements of which I sent you a telegraphed text on 24 September.

Yours sincerely,

(J. Plimsoll)

Mr Michael Alexander,
Private Secretary (Overseas Affairs)
to the Prime Minister,
Prime Minister's Office,
10 Downing Street,
London, SW1.

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T181/80



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PRIME MINISTER

CANBERRA

25 SEP 1980

By Lee Razent

Thank you for your message of 11 September 1980 in reply to my letter about multi-national exercises under the auspices of the Five Power Defence Arrangements. I was most encouraged to receive such a prompt and positive response.

I also received a similarly positive reaction from our colleagues, the Prime Ministers of Malaysia and Singapore, and the Acting Prime Minister of New Zealand, as a result of which I was able to inform the House of Representatives last week about the agreement that the Five Power partners had reached to resume exercises. I imagine that you will have received the text of my statement from your High Commissioner here.

I am delighted that you wish to have the United Kingdom join with us and the other Five Power members in revitalising the Arrangements and that you agree in principle that combined exercises be developed. Your willingness to have the United Kingdom participate in officials' talks to prepare for the exercises is also very welcome. Perhaps these talks could be held after the Secretaries of the Australian Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs and the Chief of the Australian Defence Force Staff return from discussions that they will shortly be having with Malaysia and Singapore.

I quite understand the difficulties that the United Kingdom might have in making a commitment of forces to participation in the exercises, but I should also say that any substantive support you might be able to provide would be warmly appreciated, not only by Australia but also by our other Five Power partners.

You Sir

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
Prime Minister of Great Britain,
LONDON
UNITED KINGDOM

Margaret Thatcher