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Econ (D): Pt 3: Venice
Econ Summit

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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T60/80

Tokyo,
March 18, 1980

Dear Prime Minister,

With the pleasure of meeting you at the Summit Meeting in Tokyo last June still fresh in my memory, I am now looking forward to seeing you again at the next Meeting in Venice.

The situation in Afghanistan continues to be serious. I believe it is necessary and useful for me to inform you of Japan's view on this problem, in order to maintain and promote mutual understanding and co-operative relations among the industrialized democracies as well as close relations between our two countries.

The military intervention into Afghanistan by the Soviet Union since last December is not simply a violation of the independence and sovereignty of that non-aligned Islamic country, but also a serious threat to the peace and security of the world, menacing as it is the peace and security of the region around the country and jeopardizing East-West relations. With this recognition, Japan is calling for a prompt withdrawal of the Soviet forces from the country and the realization of a situation in which the people of Afghanistan can freely determine their internal affairs for themselves. It is essentially important that we, the industrialized democracies, while maintaining their respective positions, should continue their efforts to achieve such purpose in the spirit of harmony.

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The thrust of Japan's efforts is as follows :

The Government of Japan believes that the concept of a neutral Afghanistan, which, I understand, was proposed by your Government at the European Political Co-operation, deserves a serious deliberation, as a measure to realize an early withdrawal of the Soviet forces and to help the people of Afghanistan to exercise self-determination without outside interference in their internal affairs and bring about a solution to their problems. We hope to maintain close contacts and continue full exchange of views with you on this matter.

On the economic and trade relations with the Soviet Union in general, we are making a continued study as to how best we can deal with the question. In this regard, the overall solidarity of the West is of primary importance. Measures taken by one country alone will have only a limited effect, and it will be difficult to obtain an adequate support at home. I believe it essential, therefore, that the major industrialized democracies of the West, including yours, maintain close contacts and consultations to co-ordinate their positions. We would spare no efforts to obtain a consensus through such consultations. In the meantime, I wish to make it clear that we will do nothing that may undermine or take advantage of the measures taken by your country and other friendly countries. I am confident that it is the position taken also by your country. With respect to the export of high-technology items to the Soviet Union, we have decided to co-operate towards tightening of the export controls in COCOM.

As regards the Moscow Olympic Games, the Japanese Government communicated its view to the

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Japanese Olympic Committee on February 1 that it had to pay a serious attention to the Soviet military invasion of Afghanistan and the severe international public opinion against it and that therefore it was desirable that the Japanese Olympic Committee duly consider this situation and take appropriate measures by maintaining close contacts with the Olympic Committees of other countries.

With respect to the policy for the region around Afghanistan, I dispatched from late February to mid-March former Foreign Minister Mr. Sunao Sonoda as my Special Envoy to the countries in the Middle-East and in South-West Asia. This was to explore, through exchanges of views with the leaders of these countries, how best Japan could contribute to maintaining stability in these regions.

In order to maintain stability in South-West Asia, it is vital that the mutual suspicion between India and Pakistan should be minimized and recurrence of tensions between China and India avoided. Through Mr. Sonoda, I stressed these points to the leaders of the Governments of India and Pakistan. India is an important non-aligned country, and we will continue to promote a close dialogue with her.

We will inform you of our assessment of Mr. Sonoda's trip through diplomatic channels in due course.

As for our aid to Pakistan, in light of the vulnerable position in which she now finds herself, we have decided to increase our economic aid to her, particularly for the enhancement of her welfare, to 32,000 Million Yen, more than double the current amount, and informed the Government of

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Pakistan of this decision.

We fully recognize the importance of economic aid to Turkey on a governmental basis. The extent of our contributions (Yen Credits) to Turkish Aid Programme, however, must take into account the present circumstances under which we have to give more emphasis in our aid efforts on Pakistan and Thailand.

As we look into the international relations of 1980's, including the Afghan problem, I have further strengthened my confirmed conviction that the concerted efforts among the industrialized democracies, Western Europe, the United States and Japan, are now increasingly important to ensure the peace and stability of the world. I hope to maintain full communication and understanding with you through continuous dialogue not only on the Afghan problem but on the world situation in general.

Looking forward to seeing you again,

Yours sincerely,

MASAYOSHI OHIRA

Prime Minister

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher, MP,
Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury,
London.