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PRIME MINISTER

MELBOURNE DECLARATION

I read with interest and some alarm the draft Melbourne Declaration which Malcolm Fraser left with you on 30 July, and which he foreshadowed in the speech about the Commonwealth Meeting in Melbourne read for him in London 27 July.

This was precisely the sort of move I had in mind when I sent you my earlier warning minute of 30 July 1981 on the global negotiations. I noted also what you said to him about aid, the redistribution of wealth, responsibility for poverty in developing countries and the prospects of results from global negotiations.

2. The draft Declaration, if it saw the light of day, could be dismissed as mere rhetoric but some of it is distasteful, damaging and not very honest rhetoric, as your comments to Malcolm Fraser implied. On the other hand you and the Foreign Secretary may find little support in Melbourne for changing (or suppressing) the Fraser draft, which has already been shown to Ramphal.

3. In the circumstances I wonder whether you would think it useful to send Malcolm Fraser a counter-draft, reflecting the points you made to him; and saying that you would see considerable difficulty about the draft as it stood. It may even be that his reference to "bureaucratic mauling" meant ... he was resigned to something of the sort. I attach a revised draft intended to reproduce with greater safety the style of generalisation in the original. If you thought it useful to send such a counter-draft, you might care to copy it to Sonny Ramphal. If the final result were no draft at all,

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there would be no harm in that but I think Malcolm Fraser is too committed to the idea for that to happen.

4. I am copying this minute to the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Trade and Sir Robert Armstrong.

(G.H.)

5 August 1981

MELBOURNE DECLARATION - TREASURY REDRAFT

(Changes from Australian version underlined)

We, the Heads of Government here assembled, drawn from five continents representing a quarter of the world's entire population:

(1) Affirm our strong and unanimous conviction that all men and women have the right to live in ways that sustain and nourish human dignity.

(2) Assert that this right imposes obligations on all governments, great and small, not only in respect to their own people but in their dealings with all other nations.

(3) Believe that this requires mutual tolerance among governments who must respect one another's freedom of action in the political and economic fields.

(4) Believe that this freedom should be used by each government to develop its own economic potential to the maximum for the good of its own people, taking full advantage of the mutual benefits which international trade and investment and the free flow of international finance can bring to developed and less developed nations alike;

(5) Assert that such freedom is the surest way of ensuring economic development and reducing poverty for the world at large.

(6) Recognise that this will not be sufficient by itself to promote the prosperity of the poorest countries, on whom the

available resources of official development aid should largely be concentrated;

(7) Believe that to secure these mutual benefits it is imperative to maintain the dialogue between developed and developing countries in many different institutions and groupings, of which the Commonwealth itself is one.

(8) Declare that this will require the high degree of commitment vision and intellectual realism which has always distinguished the Commonwealth in the past and must inspire the rest of the world in future.

(9) Recognise that the continuing dialogue will require real and significant change on the part of all countries if disruptive and damaging conflict is to be avoided.

(10) Maintain that success will only be achieved as governments recognise and give due weight to the essential interdependence of peoples and of states.

(11) Declare that while the most urgent humanitarian considerations demand action, self-interest alone warrants a constructive and positive approach to these great human problems by all governments.

(12) Recognise that in the process of negotiations nations must cast aside dogmas and habits which have thwarted progress in the past and find new ways of talking to each other and reaching agreement.

(13) Note that the dialogue requires a concerted and consistent approach to moral, political, strategic and economic problems alike

(14) Maintain that while the problems are formidable, they are not of such weight that they will defeat our purpose, given political will and an understanding of the needs of different countries and groups.

(15) Assert that the issues at stake are so large that they require the personal commitment of political leaders, who alone have the power to advance the common cause of mankind.

(16) Attaching the highest importance to the principles and objectives of this document, declare our common resolve: to maintain and develop the present dialogue; to give it an increased sense of urgency; to recognise the mutual interests and interdependence of all nations whatever their present state of development; and solemnly call on all leaders of all countries to join us in a commitment to taking prompt, practical and effective action to that end.