

ASIAN TOUR 1967

VISIT TO CAMBODIA

ARRIVAL PRESS STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER  
OF AUSTRALIA, THE RT. HON. HAROLD HOLT MP.

It is my privilege to be the first Australian Prime Minister to visit Cambodia. I do this in response to the gracious invitation of your eminent Head of State, Prince Norodom Sihanouk. That invitation was extended to me through the intermediary of His Excellency Mr. Son Sann during his visit to Australia in February. I have taken the first opportunity open to me to respond to such a welcome invitation.

I have come here to see your country with my own eyes and to meet in person your Head of State, your leaders and the people of Cambodia. My desire to visit Cambodia has been encouraged by all that I have heard about your country including happy accounts from my Minister for External Affairs who has twice been your guest in the last three years. I am delighted that with the comprehensive programme that has been arranged for my visit I shall have an opportunity to see so much of Cambodia, both the splendour of the past and the achievements of the present.

I hope that my visit will be viewed by you as a gesture of goodwill designed to improve and strengthen the ties between us.

Cambodia is one of Australia's close neighbours. Our people are becoming increasingly aware of each other. Both our countries are concerned in the welfare of this area of the world in which we live. We share, I am convinced, a common desire to contribute to the independence, stability, progress and prosperity of the peoples of South-East Asia and to the growth of friendly and co-operative relations within the region.

Relations between Cambodia and Australia are close, cordial and co-operative. In the words of Cambodia's distinguished Head of State, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, they offer "an eloquent example of successful co-existence, not merely peaceful but friendly, between nations which have made different options in their external policies". The friendship between our two countries, which has grown steadily over the years, is firmly based on mutual confidence, understanding and respect.

Australians see Cambodia as a singularly peaceful, united stable and happy country, intent on developing its own characteristic way.

I would hope that Cambodians will increasingly regard Australia as a friend, sympathetic and willing to co-operate in furthering the aspirations for peaceful progress of the peoples of the South-East Asian region.

It is my pleasure and honour to bring to the people of Cambodia the greetings and best wishes of the people of Australia.

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March 29, 1967