

FOR PRESS !

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AUSTRALIAN BALLET TOUR OF ASIA

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton

Under the sponsorship of the Australian Government, the Australian Ballet will leave Australia tomorrow (19th) on a tour of Asian countries. It will give performances in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Cambodia and Indonesia.

The company will include some 64 dancers, and will be accompanied by Sir Robert Helpmann, CBE, and Miss Peggy van Fraagh, OBE.

This tour will be the third which the company has undertaken. It has already played to enthusiastic audiences and been warmly praised by critics in Britain, several European countries, the Lebanon, Canada and eight countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its members won friends in many countries by their enthusiasm and grace, both on and off stage.

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CANBERRA,  
18 February 1968

The Prime Minister has sent the following telegram of good wishes to the Ballet Company's artistic directors, Sir Robert Helpmann and Miss Peggy van Fraagh :

"FROM ALL THAT I HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET'S PERFORMANCES AND RECEPTION IN OTHER COUNTRIES TO DATE I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT ON ITS FORTHCOMING ASIAN TOUR IT WILL FULFIL THE EXPECTATIONS WHICH ITS IMPENDING VISIT HAS AROUSED IN ASIA AND THAT IT WILL IMPRESS NEW AUDIENCES BY ITS ARTISTRY AND VIGOUR. I KNOW THAT THE TOUR WILL BE ARDUOUS. I BELIEVE IT WILL BE REWARDING. I WISH THE BALLET EVERY SUCCESS."