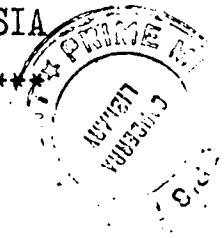


PRIME MINISTER'S TOUR OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA



Statement issued by the Prime Minister, Mr.
Harold Holt, on arrival in Singapore

29TH APRIL, 1966

As I explained when I passed through Singapore last week, my visit here is part of a comprehensive tour to the countries of South-East Asia where Australian Forces are stationed - Viet Nam, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore.

Australia, as a fellow member of the Commonwealth, has been following with interest the developments here since Singapore became an independent member. This is the first occasion on which the Prime Minister of Australia has officially visited Singapore since it assumed its new status.

The Singapore Government has recently announced that it will send a senior official as High Commissioner to Canberra. It is gratifying that Canberra should be included in the initial overseas appointments made by the Singapore Government. This is a recognition of the friendship and the many mutual interests between our two countries in defence and security and in economic and other affairs. Australia, of course, has maintained a substantial official representation in Singapore for many years.

I look forward to discussions with Singapore Ministers. As was done in Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur, I expect to give them an account of my visit to Viet Nam. There will also be exchanges of views on the various regional questions of concern to both Governments.

Australia has observed with close attention the systematic and constructive efforts of Singapore to develop its economy and to create new employment opportunities through industrialisation and expanding trade. This requires peace, stability and assured security. If these conditions exist, sound forward planning and the efficient and rational use of resources can be accomplished.

Through the combined arrangements in the defence field, Australia is able to add its efforts to those of other Commonwealth countries to preserve the conditions of security and stability.

Australia and Singapore enjoy positive benefits as good neighbours.

Increasingly useful relationships are growing in trade and business, in education and in professional and technical training.

Contacts between our two people in these and other fields, such as tourism, are multiplying with the development of rapid communications.

Australia is a country with an expanding industrial base and an increasing technology.

Further areas of co-operation will undoubtedly arise between our two countries as Singapore develops along similar paths.
