

CLOSING OF EXPO 67

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Holt

Three and a half million people had visited the Australian Pavilion at Expo 67 when the Exposition closed at the weekend.

The Australian Pavilion had been open since April as part of the international Exposition arranged by Canada to mark its Centennial of Confederation.

The number of visitors was more than 50% greater than the most optimistic estimates of the planners and the Pavilion itself received very high ratings from commentators and critics.

On Australia's special day at Expo 67 in June millions of people around the world saw the special programme televised through the satellite Telstar in outer space.

The Australian Government has offered the Australian Pavilion building as a gift to the people of Canada and discussions on its use are in progress with the City of Montreal.

The 20 kangaroos and 13 wallabies, which because of quarantine regulations, cannot be returned to Australia are being donated to six zoos on the North American continent.

The coral exhibits are being given to the Montreal Aquarium.

Several enquiries have been received by the Commonwealth Government about the popular talking chairs and plans for their future use are being considered.

I have sent the following message to the Commissioner-General, Sir Valston Hancock:-

"The great Exposition commemorating the Centennial of Canadian Confederation is now over. It has been a notable success and you have all played your part wonderfully well. You have good cause to be proud of the success of the Montreal Exposition and particularly of the Australian Pavilion.

Many tributes to our Pavilion and staff have reached Australia and have given pleasure to the Government and your fellow countrymen. During my visit last June I found myself delighted with the effectiveness with which Australia's image was being presented.

Now that your work is done, we look forward to having you all at home again.

I send my own warm personal appreciation and thanks to you all for your efforts. I would like to add a tape to those now famous talking chairs in which you could relax a while after your labours and hear them recite, 'Australia sends grateful thanks. Well done!'

HAROLD HOLT
Prime Minister.