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## PRIME MINISTER

### MACQUARIE NETWORK WEEKLY BROADCAST

By the Prime Minister,  
The Rt Hon. William McMahon, C.H., M.P.

7 June 1972

### VISIT TO SOUTH EAST ASIA

This report is recorded in Djakarta, the capital of Indonesia.

Indonesia is the first of our three nearest neighbours I am visiting during my ten-day South East Asian journey which started on Monday. Indonesia is not only our nearest neighbour; she is the fifth largest nation in the world and the only one with which we share a boundary. A boundary based on lasting Australian/Indonesian relationship is of the greatest importance to us, both now and in the future.

Australia's friendship with Indonesia goes back to the beginnings of Indonesian nationhood, when we supported and sympathised with the struggles of Indonesian patriots. We were among the first to establish diplomatic relations with Indonesia as a newly independent nation. This long friendship was reflected very vividly indeed in the welcome my party received on arrival in Djakarta. Many thousands of schoolchildren lined the road from the airport, waving and cheering. This gave a youthful and human touch to a generous official welcome at the airport, given my President and Madame Soeharto and leading Indonesian Minister.

It was a tribute to Australia by a good neighbour and friend. And I was proud to receive it as an Australian on your behalf.

I have come on this journey to Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia because I want to emphasise Australia's growing and continuing interest in the South East Asian region. As Australians we should be, and I believe the very great majority of you are, deeply interested in the wellbeing of our Asian friends. We are anxious to help them in their search for increased economic growth and regional security.

Another purpose of this journey is to widen my own personal understanding of each of these neighbour nations, and those matters which affect both them and us. These include the whole range of our security, economic, trade and social ties and relationships.

In my visit to Indonesia I am returning the visit to Australia earlier this year by President Soeharto. I believe our exchange of visits has given a powerful stimulus to the friendship between Australia and Indonesia. And I think it is true to say that 1972 has been a year of enlightened co-operation between Australia and Indonesia. This is true in trade, in development, in our civil aid, in our cultural exchanges, and in our defence co-operation.

Australia and Indonesia have quite different cultural, ethnic, geographic and religious backgrounds. If we can, as we have been able to, build bridges of co-operation and goodwill, then we have set an example to other nations of ways in which to build a unique, intimate and mutually rewarding relationship between nations. I want to build these bridges to be strong and to last.

In Djakarta yesterday morning, I met and exchanged gifts with the Governor of this expanding and fascinating city. Later I consulted in private with the President and this was followed by talks with his Senior Ministers. Following these discussions I was able to touch on a number of important new initiatives during my official speech here last night.

I was able to tell my Indonesian hosts that there would be a substantial increase in Australian civil aid to Indonesia over the next three years. I also announced, with the agreement of the Indonesian Government, we had decided to establish here in Djakarta an Australian financed and conducted cultural and language centre. This centre is the natural development of the cultural agreement signed by Australia and Indonesia four years ago, an agreement which has led to a welcome increase in cultural contacts between us.

I also spoke about the growing defence co-operation between Australia and Indonesia. I said that while neither country wanted a military pact or alliance of any kind, there was much we could do in a practical way by sharing our experience and knowledge. We are going to provide Indonesia with sabre jet fighters and the accompanying necessary equipment and flight training. We are also going to help substantially in equipping an important military airfield in Indonesia at which the sabres will be based. Indonesian airmen and technicians arrived in Australia to begin this training period just a few days ago.

In another aspect of defence co-operation we will be helping Indonesia to strengthen its coastal surveillance capability. I took the opportunity in my speech last night to announce that my Government last week approved an increased financial provision for defence aid to Indonesia to enable this type of assistance to go ahead.

Tomorrow I go to Singapore until Sunday, and then on to Malaysia before returning to Australia on 15th June. I will be reporting to you on my journey again next Wednesday.

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