

SUMMER BOY'S SUCCESS DON HENLEY CONCERT

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05135003 SUMMER BOY'S SUCCESS DON HENLEY CONCERT Times of London (TL)
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TEXT: Don Henley may or may not be slightly ahead of his old partner Glenn Frey in the race for solo career honours since the demise of the Eagles in 1980. It has, in any case, been a leisurely contest, with Henley's The End of the Innocence being only his third solo album. A solid but not spectacular seller since its release last summer, it showcased his tough, versatile voice being applied to an imaginative range of adult rock'n'roll, and was a collection not dissimilar in spirit to last year's comeback album by Robbie Robertson. Henley was the drummer and co-lead vocalist of the Eagles, the group with the papier mache cowboy look whose music reflected the sun-kissed, laid-back Californian lifestyle.

Reviled by a British critical establishment besotted at the time by punk, they cruised to multi-platinum glory with Hotel California and The Long Run, albums which between them spent longer than four months at number one in the American chart. As a solo act Henley has allowed a liberal humanist streak to surface in his lyrics, although musically he remains a bulwark of the American rock mainstream. His first hit "Dirty Laundry" was a massive seller abroad, but he is still best known in Britain for his 1985 success "The Boys of the Summer". It is something of a surprise, therefore, to find him playing such huge venues on this brief visit. Perhaps the memory of the Eagles lives on more strongly than was hitherto suspected. Tonight, Wembley Arena, Empire Way (01-902 1234) 7.30pm, Pounds 11-Pounds 13; Wednesday, NEC, Birmingham (021 780 4133).