

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
ON THE ESTIMATES FOR THE MINISTRY OF  
DEFENCE AND THE FEDERATION ARMED  
FORCES AT DEWAN RAKYAT, ON 16TH  
JANUARY, 1962

Chairman Sir,

In previous years I have presented the Estimates for the Ministry of Defence and the Federation Armed Forces in two separate Heads, but this year I am presenting the Estimates for both the Ministry and the Armed Forces under a single Head, that is, Head 14. This is the result of the process of integration which has taken place in my Ministry which has now succeeded to such an extent that it can be regarded as a fully integrated Ministry in which the civil servants and professional officers of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force work together side by side. As Honourable Members will recall, I have mentioned in previous years how successfully the Federation has succeeded in restricting its expenditure upon Defence to a comparatively small proportion of its total budget. One of the methods of achieving this economy has been by the maximum degree of uniformity and common user service in the Federation Armed Forces and it is in furtherance of this principle that a complete degree of integration has been achieved between the Civilian and Military Divisions of the Ministry. It is my intention, Sir, to perpetuate this system of integration to its fullest extent, and I am extremely happy with the results so far achieved by the combined efforts of the military and civilian officers of all ranks working in my Ministry.

Honourable Members will recall, Sir, that when I introduced the Defence Estimates for 1961 in December 1960, I mentioned that the end of the Emergency in July 1960 had marked the end of a campaign which had engaged the Federation Armed Forces for more than twelve years. I pointed out, however, that even so it was still necessary for units of the Federation Armed Forces to continue to be engaged on border security duties to ensure the integrity of the Northern frontier and to prevent any revival of Communist terrorists activities within the border area. The need

for continual operations has prevailed during 1961, and will continue in 1962 and I am happy to inform Honourable Members that, despite the difficulties and hardships encountered by our troops in containing the everdwindling number of Communist terrorists in the border area, these duties are being performed in the same gallant, determined manner that we have grown accustomed to in the past. I would like at this stage to pay tribute to the close co-operation which has continued to exist between the Federation Armed Forces and the Royal Federation of Malaya Police and the Thai Forces operating in the border area.

Although I forecast last year that the Federation Army would be able as a result of the ending of the Emergency to devote its time to training and to the improvement of its administration, this has not been possible to the extent that I anticipated because the demands from the United Nations Organisation have increased considerable and the Federation Government has met its obligations to the maintenance of world peace by more than doubling the size of its original force which went to the Congo.

Now, the Malayan Special Force is now at a strength of A Brigade Headquarters, and Infantry Battalion and a Reconnaissance Regiment together with certain ancillary troops. The performance of the Malayan Special Force has, Sir, as Honourable Members are doubtless aware, now become a legend and our troops are the most popular members of the United Nations Force. They are accepted not only by their colleagues of the United Nations from other countries but also by all factions of the local population in the Congo. I do not consider that I can do better, Sir, than to read to this House a report which I have received from General MacKeown, the Commander of the United Nations Force in the Congo. The report reads as follows:

"Having now completed twelve months' service with the United Nations Force in the Congo, I consider that I should review the part played by the Malayan contingent in the Congo operation. I do this in order to pay full tribute to the excellence of their achievements in the many places throughout the Congo in which they have served with such distinction. We have employed the Malayan troops in Leopoldville, Bukavu, Goma, Kamina, Elisabethville, Stanley-ville, Kindu and elsewhere. To most of this places they were sent because of the fact that I could always depend upon

them to render a first-class account of themselves and particularly to restore situations which appeared to be getting out of control. In this regard the part played by the Malayan contingent in Kive Province and particularly in the Maniema district deserves special mention. This Maniema district was for a very long time one of the most troublesome areas of the Congo. The perseverance, skill, endurance and friendliness of the Malayan troops soon brought this situation back to normal. This task was accomplished only by the making of tremendous sacrifices on the part of the Malayan troops. Some patrols into this district were of seven or eight days' duration and, in fact, in many cases even longer. During these patrols the troops endured the severest hardships: lack of sleep, lack of water and general fatigue over very rough terrain in very unfriendly surroundings. Their efforts, however, ultimately resulted in establishing excellent relations with the Congolese National Army and the local population alike. This has been characteristic of their achievements everywhere they have gone throughout the Congo.

These resulted from the fine example they have set by their high standards and their readiness to make friends and resolve situations by pacification wherever they go. In this regard they have shown an appreciation and understanding of their role in the United Nations operation in the Congo which has been second to none.

Our inquiries into the recent tragic events at Kindu have clearly indicated that the Malayan company stationed there did not have information in sufficient time to intervene to prevent the killing of the thirteen airmen. Had they had the time or opportunity to intervene, I am satisfied beyond any possible doubt that, despite their inferiority in numbers, they would have taken instant and vigorous action to save the lives of the airmen. No contingent in the Congo would have been quicker to come to the rescue of lives in danger, whether Congolese or other nationality. This they demonstrated to us time and time again.

May I conclude by congratulating your Government, your people and your army on the excellence of the units they have provided for the Congo operation and I sincerely hope

that the Malayan Government can see its way to continue to provide a Malayan contingent until the Congo operation is brought to a successful conclusion".

Mr Chairman, Sir, after that tribute by the Commander of the United Nations Force in the Congo it would be superfluous for me to say anything further. I would merely add that as Honourable Members are aware, the work of the Malayan Special Force has not been achieved without sacrifice of lives and I am sure that all Honourable Members would join with me in expressing sympathy to the families of those members of the Force who have lost their lives while on duty with the United Nations.

Despite these overseas commitments, Sir, the Federation Armed Forces have, however, continued with their training and the rationalisation of the administration and indeed they have even taken on additional responsibilities in Malaya particularly in undertaking the training of the 1st Battalion of the Brunei Malay Regiment. It has given me great pleasure to welcome to Malaya the first recruits of this Battalion and I am happy to know that the Federation Army has been able to assist one of its neighbouring countries in the raising of its own army particularly since that country has such strong ties of friendship with Malaya which, I feel sure, will become even closer in the near future.

Within the Federation Armed Forces Malayanisation has progressed according to plan but Honourable Members will appreciate that the process of Malayanisation must be effected without loss of operational or administrative efficiency. On the 1st of January, 1962 there were 564 Malayan Officers in the Armed Forces and 197 Seconded Officers as compared with 490 Malayan and 210 Seconded Officers respectively on the 1st of January, 1961. There are now only 107 Seconded other ranks compared with 11,559 Malaysians. The Malayanisation progress, I can assure this House, will continue during 1962.

Now Sir, before going into the Estimates in detail I would like to say a few words on the general form of the Estimates. Under the Headquarters Division are shown details of the Personal Emoluments for the staff of the civil divisions of the Ministry. Details of the military staff divisions of the Ministry are included within the individual Services. The Volunteer Forces of the Navy and the Air Force are combined with their Regular parent Services

but the Territorial Army and the Civil Defence have been shown separately. In respect of Other Charges Annually Recurrent, these are grouped together with the exception of the Territorial Army and the Civil Defence which are shown separately. In respect of Other Charges Special Expenditure all Services are shown.

In respect of the Headquarters Division, because of the new format, it would appear that there is a substantial increase in expenditure but this is not in fact the case since a large number of apparently additional posts are in fact transfers of posts from former Armed Forces Head of the Estimates; thus, for example the whole of the Treasury Accountant's staff has been transferred from the Army to the Headquarters Division. There has, however, been an increase of one Principal Assistant Secretary which has been found necessary to deal with the increased burden of work on the civil side of the Headquarters Division. Apart from the increased administrative and planning work entailed as a result of overseas commitments, it has been thought desirable to divorce the control of the large number of civilian personnel in the Armed Forces from the Finance Division in order that more attention may be given to the important aspect of the control and management of the civilian personnel. With regard to the Army I am happy with the progress of Malayanisation in the light of the figures which I gave earlier, and I would point out that the administration of the Army is now quite independent of the British Army which it was not before and some time after Independence because of the needs of supply. However, the development of local sources of supply wherever practical has progressed well. In general it has been possible to reduce maintenance costs in certain respects but these have of necessity been offset by increases elsewhere. In particular, the Government have thought it prudent to expand the Artillery element of the Army from one battery to a regiment and it has also been considered necessary to increase some of the Maintenance Services which serve not only the Army but the Navy and Air Force as well. These increases are all reflected in the Estimates before Honourable Members.

Turning to the Royal Malayan Navy, during 1961 this has been reorganised and placed on a sound basis for its expansion programme. The major advances have been the design and placing of a contract for six Fast Patrol Craft, the commissioning of the Dispatch and Survey Vessel and the bringing of our five Mine Sweepers to full operational efficiency.

In accordance with this development plan an increase in the number of officers and men in the Royal Malayan Navy has taken place, and I am particularly pleased with the progress of our own Malayan officers of whom nine have been in command of ships during the year.

In 1962 the Naval Programme is based on preparing to bring the new patrol craft into service, raising the technical training standards, increasing the officer strength by Short Service Commissions both from other ranks and direct entry, reorganising the Navy to conform to the common user Service administration and providing the necessary backing of stores and equipment. The Navy will thus become less dependent on outside resources during the year.

Much of the preliminary planning to establish the Federation's main Naval Base has been completed and it is anticipated that this project will go forward in 1962 as the concept of Malaysia comes nearer to realisation.

In the Royal Malayan Air Force, in 1961, eleven new aircraft were acquired. Three Doves and two Cessnas were obtained for communications and photographic reconnaissance and six Provosts for Pilots' basic training. The first four Pilots to be trained in flying standard by the Royal Malayan Air Force received their training on these Provosts. A technical training school was also established in which basic technical training was given to seventy eight Malayan airmen.

In 1962, the expansion programme will be completed with the acquisition of ten new Twin Pioneers of modified designs and better performance than our present Pioneers. The first five are due in early February and the balance during July 1962. The existing four Twin Pioneers will be modified to the latest and improved standards during the year. The 1962 Estimates, Sir, reflect the increases in personnel required to meet this expansion programme.

Honourable Members will recall with regret that the Royal Malayan Air Force sustained its first loss of an aircraft with the tragic death of two Pilots and other crew members during the year. Such crashes are, it must be accepted, inevitable in any Service and it is a credit to our young Air Force that the incidence

of accidents has been so low. In replacing the aircraft which was lost it has been decided to buy a total of four such aircrafts, which we are able to obtain at greatly reduced cost and these will provide a reserve insurance against the future.

It should also be noted that in respect of the Territorial Army, the expenditure proposed for 1962 shows a decrease on the provision made for 1961. It is a fact that the financial burden of maintaining a standing regular army in peacetime to meet all the requirements which might arise in war would be too heavy for the economy of our country to bear. The difference between what could be maintained in peace and what is required in war must be met by the Territorial Army. Thus in 1961, the expansion of the Territorial Army was slowed down pending a review of its organisation. When this review is completed, the Territorial Army will become a true reserve of the Army supporting and supplementing the strength of the regular forces. The Territorial Army will have its own fighting units as well as units providing for necessary ancilliary services. This, therefore, explains the reduced expenditure proposed in 1962. Thereafter, however, once the re-organisation has taken place, it will move forward and expand year by year and it will also be equipped with new weapons and equipment in accordance with the provisions being made in the Development Estimates.

Sir, I am sure that Honourable Members will appreciate the fact that although there has been no reduction in the size of the Armed Forces and although in fact expansion is forecast and planned, the total provision sought in 1962 is less than that voted for last year to the extent of just over one million dollars. This reduction is indicative of the continuous efforts being made to keep expenditure on Defence as low as possible. Honourable Members will recall Sir, that when presenting the Estimates for 1961. I mentioned that Defence expenditure was less than 10% of the country's total budget. It gives me great pleasure to announce that this year Defence expenditure is still restricted to less than that figure. It would, however, be unwise and unethical for me to promise that it would always be possible to achieve this economy of expenditure in the future. There is bound to be some increase and to illustrate this I would like to mention the Government's general policy on Defence. Hitherto, our Armed Forces have been designed for a primary role of prosecuting the Emergency and supporting the Police Force in the maintenance of law and order. This policy

must be reviewed in the light of developments in South-East Asia and because as an Independent Nation, we must be prepared to bear a greater share of the burden of the defence of our country.

Provision has already been made in the Second Five Year Development Plan to re-equip our Forces with the most modern conventional type of equipment. This process will continue. Nevertheless some expansion of our Armed Forces must take place in the next few years and this must inevitably mean an increase in Defence expenditure. I believe this is a burden which every Independent country that values its integrity and independence must be prepared to make. It is well to remember that the increased burden would be the greater if we did not enjoy the benefits of the Defence Agreement with the United Kingdom.

Thus, while I am happy to be able to submit Estimates for my Ministry for 1962, which show a decrease over the provision for 1961, I must utter this word of warning that in future years such decreases must be regarded as unlikely and, as our young nation grows in stature and assumes greater responsibility in the external defence of our country, our Budget on defence must inevitably increase.

Sir, I beg to move that Head 14 stands part of the Schedule.