

ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TO
COUNCIL ON WORLD TENSIONS CONFERENCE DELE-
GATES ON 28TH FEBRUARY, 1964

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am indeed sorry that your Conference coincided with my visit to Thailand, and I do regret very much, that I was not able to be present here in Kuala Lumpur, to take part in your deliberations, and to listen to some of very excellent speeches, which many of you have delivered.

Kuala Lumpur and Malaysia has indeed been honoured by all of you, who comprise this extremely distinguished mixture of eminent people from what I would call the highest level of thought, and leadership, throughout the world.

I should like to repeat the words of welcome expressed by our Prime Minister, and hope that all of you, thoroughly enjoy your stay here in our country, and will go away with happy memories of goodwill and friendship.

It is an absolute coincidence that the Council on World Tensions should hold their annual Conference here in Malaysia at a time of very tenseness between our new Nation Malaysia and our nearby neighbour.

It is also coincidence that the subject to your Conference should be Development and Cooperation, at a time when cooperation between some nations in South East Asia appears to be at its lowest level and when development, apart from development in Malaysia, seems to be concentrated on the development of derogatory dicta, and the detraction and distraction of Malaysia by a dictatorial dictom, from a Government of a people who are, without a doubt, basically our own blood relations.

It is not my intention tonight to discuss or to consider this conflict of confrontation but I do feel as it is the main tension in South Asia at the moment, that you, Ladies and Gentlemen, who have so kindly honoured my country by deciding to hold your Conference here in Malaysia may possibly expect me to make mention of it.

I sincerely hope that during the last three or four days you have spent here in Kuala Lumpur you will have seen, and felt for yourselves,

that we here in Malaysia are a peace-loving, freedom-loving and democratic Nation trying, within all our powers to uphold the principles of Democracy, and we are determined, in spite of Confrontation, in spite of added defence commitments, and in spite of distractions and de-tractions, we are trying our very best to develop Malaysia within a sound and sincere framework of true Democracy.

We have no territorial ambitions; the joining together of Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore with the former Malaya to form Malaysia was not act of self aggrandisement; it was a fact of Democracy.

It was the coming together of free people with a free will; a decision by the people themselves implemented by their own leaders who were chosen by a truly democratic process.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the very fact that I am standing here tonight as Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia is a fact of Democracy; and I can fairly say that this tension which confronts us here today in Malaysia, is not so much a tension of peoples, but really a tension between Democracy Dictatorship.

And we need the support of the entire Free World to make sure that the out-come of this Confrontation will in fact be triumph for Democracy, a triumph for freedom-loving and free-thinking people in this present-day world.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, turning to Development, one of the greatest problems for leadership and Development in a democratic country is that the people are allowed to vote, to vote in privacy and to vote with some real choice of what they want. I think perhaps the most sobering influence that true Democracy has, is the effect of elections of its leaders. This has been summed up very aptly in a quotation in a book by a famous author who honours us here with his presence tonight, Mr. Philip Manson, and with his permission, I shall quote:

".....Do those who live decline,
The step that offers, or their work resign?
Trust me, today's "Most Indispensables",
Five hundred men can take your place or mine"

Democratic leaders are dispensable, whereas Dictators seem to regard themselves as indispensable. This means that a Democratic Government must face the facts as they are rather than be too ideological in a hard and fixed way; it must also be eclectic in choosing from the modern forms of Government. This means that whatever a Democratic Govern-

ment does, however much it works, it must hold its breath while the people vote.

The problem is, on the one hand, to provide the kinds of Development Programme that are active, and forceful, and visible, so that the people have a sense that their Government is vulnerable and sensitive to their wishes, that Government is truly their Government and, at the same time it must be borne in mind that the Government has the problem of laying down the less spectacular, the long run fundamental changes, that have to be made if the people are to experience a real and sustained Political and Economic Development.

This is a tendency, throughout the World, of each and every new nation, once it has thrown off the yoke of colonialism, to waste a lot of time and energy bemoaning the past, and bemoaning the defects of their Colonial Heritage, instead of focussing all their resources on the future and harnessing all their energies towards building up a better country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we cannot change the past — the fact that we in Malaysia were once under a colonial rule is part of history and there is nothing that we can do to erase that from history — but we here believe that we can, as an independent Nation, shape the future and determine our own destiny and speed up our own Development.

If, by chance, in fulfilling this determination we turn to our friends of the Free World, for technical aid and assistance; we do so, in the belief that it is our duty as leaders of this country, to obtain for our own people, the very best that the world can offer.

We reckon that this is a sound, sensible, and sincere approach and if by doing so we are accused of being neo-colonialists then I can say those who talk of neo-colonialist talk about neo-nonsense.

We feel also that although we are multi-racial community with Malays, Chinese, Indians, Ibans, Kadazans and many other races enjoying full citizenship of Malaysia, we do not regard this diversity of races as a handicap but we rather regard it as the main potential of our latent strength.

The wine that some of you have drunk tonight and the tobacco which some of you are smoking now are of high quality because of their blend and we here in Malaysia firmly believe that our future ability to contribute towards a peaceful, and stable world, lies in this mixture

and blend of peoples and the coming together of their various cultures giving us a broader foundation and a broader base in this task of nation-building.

I do not deny that from time to time tensions within our shores can exist but we believe —

"No horse can go anywhere until it is harnessed,
No steam or gas ever drives anything until it is confined,
No falls is ever turned into light and power until it is tunnelled".

Therefore, no nation will ever develop until it is focussed, dedicated and self-disciplined into a common loyalty of nationhood.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the basic thinking behind our Development planning and implementation since Independence has been to highlight the focus on Development so that all of us here in Malaysia we be in the town, in the urban areas, or in the most remote villages feel and believe that our nation is moving ahead towards a bigger and better goal and that petty prejudices have no place in our Development Plan.

If each and every citizen is focussed on a main national goal which is above the pettiness of minor groups or selfish individuals, it is amazing the results which can be achieved over a short period of a few years in the path of progress in National Development.

However, to go back once more to Democracy, when we started our present Development Plan the first step we took was to harness the energies of Government executives effort to ensure that the whole machinery of Government was geared completely into a singularity of purpose and action in order to achieve the maximum impact on the implementation of our National Development Plan.

Having done this, we then launched the first phase of the implemented of our Development Programme, namely, by laying down the foundation of the framework of development and by Government shouldering what we regarded as Government responsibility, such as the making of roads, the construction of schools, health centres, water supplies and such other projects. Our people have been under Colonial rule for hundreds of years and as soon as we achieved independence, we had the Emergency in our hands and it was not possible to carry out development with the energy and the resource we require. Now having started our National Development Programme, we must as a first step show to the people that we are really earnest to improve their standard of living, to provide them with amenities of life, so as to create con-

confidence and enthusiasm in them. Having done this for just over a year - Government having shouldered these responsibilities - we launched our Second Phase and turned to the people with a clear conscience and they must do their bit. This Second Phase is known as the "call to action" on the people to give their maximum cooperation to the Government and to carry out their responsibilities in improving their own standard of living.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the main objective in National Development Plan must be to make the people self-reliant. To instil in them the pioneering spirit, the initiative, enthusiasm and enterprise so that they can on their own exert their efforts to improve their standard of living and their way of life. Indeed, our whole Programme is geared with this objective in mind. With the Second Phase in full swing, assisted by our National Adult Education Programme and extension services programme carried out by the various Ministries, to help the people to improve their methods of earning livelihood, we now preparing for the next phase and, that is, to assist the people in getting better marketing facilities and better prices for the goods they produce. So you see, Ladies and Gentlemen, we implement our Development Programme phase by phase in order to give a real impact on the people, but behind all this, the main thing that we endeavour to drive home to the people is that they must stand on their own feet; they must exert their own efforts and it is only the sum total of the efforts of all the citizens that a nation can prosper and can call itself a happy and contented people.

I understand that many of you have already paid a visit to our National Development Operations Room and that you are to be supplied with a copy of the Interim Review of our present Five-Year Plan and a copy of our "Red Book" Rural Development Plan.

Therefore, Ladies and Gentlemen, I shall not go into the details of our present Development Programme here in Malaysia but I would like to mention my own particular feeling on the implementation of a Development Programme.

My own view regarding the present day thinking on Development, particularly thinking at an academic expert level and within the range of academic research — there appears to me a tremendous tendency towards specialisation; and in the foreground of the World Development Scene, today, events are usually discussed under the various headings: "Political", "Economic", and "Social"; these classifications are frequently treated separately by Political Scientists, Economists and Sociologists.

But, as many of you will agree with me, when Development thinking comes to the stage that it has got to be implemented, and put into action through Government machinery, there is a definite need for every one concerned to think of Development, and every aspect of Development, as a "mosaic" because the tendency in this modern world is one of technical tangents and over specialisation, and Development is often delayed by the inability of specialists to marry each aspect of their speciality into a cohesive whole.

We have found, in our experience in Malaysia, that it is perfectly easy for any country to have a magnificent Five-Year Plan, well written by theoretical economists, and other Professionals, but what is so much more difficult is the process of putting life into the Plan; translating theory into practice and practice into results.

Also many plans and good theories will remain on paper, in books, and on files, unless ways and means are devised for the correct interpretation of the Plan to be broken down, and spelt out in clear-cut directives which can be easily implemented by the existing machinery of Government.

I think I can say with due modesty that we here in Malaysia have acquired and implemented a technique of our own which enables us to translate our Development Plans from paper to tangible projects on the ground without delay.

Nevertheless, we still have many lessons to learn regarding Development and I look forward to the final product of this Conference and shall read with tremendous interest the result of your many discussion and deliberations when they are eventually published.

Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to say once again that I regard it as a great honour indeed that you have invited me to address you this evening and I do hope that you have enjoyed your stay in Malaysia and in our national capital and that all of you will come back and visit us again.