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SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE OPENING OF THE PACIFIC MILK
INDUSTRIES (M) LTD. FACTORY IN
PETALING JAYA
ON FRIDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1966.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Board, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am indeed happy to be here today and declare open the Pacific Milk Factory Ltd.

The Chairman of the Board said just now that this is a Dutch-Malaysian joint-venture. I do hope that more Dutch-Malaysian joint ventures would be started in this country, not necessarily confined to milk but other industries as well. The history of the association and cooperation between Holland and Malaysia is well-known to all of us. There are many people of Dutch origin who have made Malaysia their home and I can assure everyone, especially those who have money to invest in this country or those with technical know-how and can assist in the establishment of industries are always welcome to Malaysia.

It is our policy here to open up manufacturing and industrial opportunities for businessmen and industrialists. We are doing everything possible to encourage the investment of capital in industry and manufacturing in Malaysia. We have been and will always continue to be realistic and responsible in our approach to problems especially industrial and labour problems and therefore will do everything possible to maintain and enhance the confidence of foreign or local investors in our country — confidence which has been built up over the years. It is our policy in Malaysia to have closer economic and trade relations with all other countries and we welcome foreign investors to invest their money in our country. Gentlemen, your investment in this factory is the testimony of your confidence in the present Government and I would like to see more and more industrial joint ventures in Malaysia so that these industries will provide employment for our people.

I note that the Pacific Milk Factory is using multi-racial workers. This is indeed praiseworthy and I would like to congratulate the management of this factory for their far-sightedness and understanding of political situation in Malaysia today. I would like to see more industries to employ people of various races so that they reflect the racial composition of our population and thus help reduce potential communal suspicion or disharmony.

The Pacific Milk Factory, according to your Chairman, has a well-equipped Research Section and competent staff running it. It seems that their job is to improve the milk product and at the same time to do research in nutritional problems of countries with warm climate. Malaysia will provide a lot of research opportunities in this field. Talking about the benefit of drinking milk for good health, I always try to take milk daily but not always successful. Among all drinks I like milk better. But despite that and its nutritious value, I must confess I still find it difficult to drink milk everyday. You all know why. But I do encourage my children and I urge all Malaysians to drink as much milk as possible. Although, by and large, our country enjoys a far higher standard of living than most other Asian countries I have been told that our diet could be better-balanced than it is now. Animal protein in Malaysian diet should be greatly improved. According to nutrition experts, milk contains protein in large quantities so in this context I am very pleased indeed that I am opening a milk factory today. I hope that the Pacific Milk Factory will be able to supply milk in plenty and proteins as well so as to make Malaysians healthier people.

The Government alone cannot provide healthy climate for investments and industrial growth. It takes more than just this to ensure the success of each industrial undertaking. The labour problems play an important part. However, I am very glad that in our country we have comparative industrial peace; the workers, I am proud, are responsible because they are led by sincere Trade Union leaders. I urge all workers and employers to exercise greater discipline and ensure that their efficiency and productivity reach its peak so that Malaysia would be able to compete successfully in overseas markets and to encourage our people choose home products rather than foreign goods. I notice that a lot of people buy Malaysian-made products because they are comparatively cheap. I hope Malaysian consumers would buy more local products not because they are

cheap but because they are of good quality if not better than foreign goods. The industrialists and manufacturers I hope, will do everything possible to improve and make their products more attractive.

The reasons why people are sometimes prejudiced against locally-produced goods are numerous but I feel that with increased publicity and advertisement locally-produced goods will be able to attract the necessary markets.

I know of instances where people are surprised to know that such and such products are now in fact being produced in this country. Some of them hardly believe that we can do such things. My other observation why some people prefer foreign food is, of course, they are "status symbol" – but this should not be the case among Malaysians. Perhaps, they are indeed "status symbol" in Indonesia.

It is important we improve our manufactured products if we are to secure market overseas and at home and we can only do this if the quality of our products and the price are competitive.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have much pleasure in declaring this Factory open.