

SPEECH BY THE Y.A.B. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT THE  
TWENTIETH ANNUAL DINNER OF THE TECHNICAL  
ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIA ON 10TH JUNE 1967

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Mr. President, Hon'ble Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to be here with you tonight.

As you Mr. President have said, this is the fifth time, during the past ten years that I have been a guest at your annual dinner; however, there is a big difference tonight!

At the last four annual dinners I have attended, you only gave me food to eat, but tonight, with the advance of technology in your Association, you have gone very much further.

Not only have you given me food to eat, but also, in your very kind presentation of these bound volumes of your journals, you have also given me food for thought!

To read these volumes from time to time will for me be a pleasant change and relief from my usual *diet of reading* which at the moment seems to be a monotonous diet of Cabinet's papers, minutes on files and petitions.

I see that your Menu tonight is written in French, and, as usual in a French Menu, the best and sweetest food always comes last.

Let me, therefore, on the lines of your Menu, tell you what will be my daily reading Menu in the office.

These volumes you have given me tonight are my "Eclairs"!

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I should like to say how pleasant it is to see your technical association thriving in Malaysia, and it is significant tonight that we here in Malaysia can celebrate in *peace and happiness* the advance of our technicians, whereas in other parts of the world, countries are *misusing their technical skill and knowledge* to fight each other, and to disturb the peace of the Universe.

Technical advance and technical knowledge is of little value to us unless we have the *atmosphere*, the *conditions* and the ingredients of peace within our own country, so that we can advance and use those skills for their own *rightful purpose*.

Last weekend, on my tour of Johore, I visited many new established factories in the industrial site at Tampoi, and this industrial site, combined with Petaling Jaya, the new industrial complex at Batu Tiga, and many other industrial sites included in our First Malaysia Plan, mark the advance of our country towards a

modern type of development which, hand in hand with development in our agricultural sector is what all of us so ardently desire.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, such development is not automatic.

The ingredients of industrial development lie in the *first essential* of political stability, the *second essential* of good government, and the *third essential* of producing enough technicians to enable our country to advance *technically*.

With unrest in so many other parts of the world, investors both foreign and local are looking towards Malaysia because of its *political stability* and its ideal conditions, for setting up factories and industries, and yet, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sorry to say that, *still within our midst*, exist a certain element of people who, for selfish gains, are trying to do everything in their way to *retard our progress!*

The proof of this is the fact that in the last ten days, our efficient Police Riot Squads have had to be called out to deal with a hooligan-headed organisation that wish to disrupt the peace and prosperity of our nation.

There will be no advance in technology; there will be no advance in peaceful prosperity if action, and strong action, is not taken to suppress such destructive activities.

We will not have our development successes subverted by a *muschivious* minority, and I feel that it is the duty of every citizen; it is the duty of the Press and the duty of public opinion to so isolate these mischief makers, that their deeds will stand out clearly, as an act of *dishonour* and disloyalty to such a degree, that eventually there will be no such place in Malaysia for such people.

In other words, it is not entirely the duty of the Police and Riot Squads to suppress such anti-social activities; public opinion and the attitude of contempt by each and every loyal citizen towards them is an equally important weapon, and insecticide to kill these anti-social insects who molest the peace of Malaysia.

The foundation and prime purpose of our Malaysian Constitution is to safeguard ourselves against falling under the rule of dictators and hooligans, so that everything that we do, and achieve, will be done by constitutional and peaceful methods.

Malaysia, our country, already has a reputation throughout the world for being one of the most stable and progressive nation in this present restless and war-stricken world.

Anyone, therefore, who, by illegal and non-constitutional means tries to create civil disturbance, thus disrupting the peace and stability of our country, is guilty as a "traitor" to our prosperity, because, by their irresponsible actions, they are really stabbing Malaysia in the back; they are turning away from our shores, potential prosperity,

potential progress and potential investment in the industrial sector of our economy.

I ask you, Ladies and Gentlemen, are we going to allow an irresponsible minority to spoil future prospects and prosperity?

I am sure that all of you here tonight and all other loyal citizens of Malaysia, will support any strong measures that the Government take to teach these disloyal elements that in Malaysia, “*un-constitutional*” and irresponsible methods do not, and will never pay democratic or development dividends.

Talking of development dividends, as you know, on the 31st of August, we will not only celebrate Malaysia Day, but we will also celebrate *ten* years of independence, which have been in fact the “*greatest development decade*” in the history of our country, and I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating all of you tonight who represent the technical skills of our country, for the great contribution that you have made to our development both in the rural and urban sectors of our economy.

The part played by the Technical College, of which most of you are graduates, has been a very *large* part, and a very *important part*, in the development *success* Malaysia has so far achieved.

Most of our Engineers at present working throughout the country who made a major contribution towards the construction of new roads, new drainage schemes, new water supplies, new bridges and the opening up of new land and new factories, and many other projects, are *former* graduates of our Technical College who after graduation, obtained further education and *higher* qualifications.

This brings me back, Mr. President, to my “Reading Menu”, “Mint-Tea” or the “Per-min-tea-an” A’ la President”.

The request in your speech “that Government should urgently consider the recognition of the *standard* obtained by students completing professional courses at the Technical College.”

I have *received* and *registered* your message. It will be included in our Cabinet Cocktail in the near future, and although tonight is not the correct time and place to make any formal statement, I can assure you that I and my Cabinet colleagues are fully aware of the changes you wish to be made including the *transition* of the present Technical College into an “*Institute of Technology*.”

This, and many other matters affecting Technical Education is at present receiving our active consideration, and I hope that in the near future, my Government will produce the correct formula, which will not only *satisfy* the aspirations of *already qualified technicians*, but will also *satisfy*, all aspects of technical education, in order to supply *future development needs* of our country.

Our national needs in the field of technical education go further than an Institute of Technology. The University, in the faculty of Engineering, has already increased its intake from 70 to 100 engineering students per year.

But engineers in themselves are not enough. For every single qualified engineer, we must have ready to work under him 4 to 5 technicians, and 20 to 25 trained craftsmen. Otherwise, we will be producing an *engineering* army of Generals with no troops for them to lead into the battle for development!

So, therefore, we have to produce more and more technically trained people at all levels from engineer to craftsman, and I am glad to say that under our new system of education already being implemented with our present secondary school programme, much greater emphasis than ever before, is being put on technical education.

As a modern aeroplane, fast gaining speed, breaks through the "sound barrier," I am glad to say tonight that Malaysia, our country, in this present decade of development, is gaining speed and fast breaking the "*technical barrier*" which retarded our progress in the past.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to thank you for the food you gave me to eat, and also these fine books, my *food for thought*, which will always remain in my office as a reminder of the good work that you, the technicians of our country, have contributed, and I know, will continue to contribute, to our development progress.