

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE ROTARY CLUB DINNER IN IPOH
ON 1ST JULY 1967

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am greatly honoured to be your guest here to-night and must thank you for this excellent dinner in the company of so many nice and charming people.

This is the second gathering of Rotary International this week at which I have been given the task on inflicting my fellow-guests with yet another speech!

However, Gentlemen, I will not inflict on you a very long speech.

I have been told that a certain tribe in Africa had a very fine method of dealing with public speakers; the method which you might like to adopt as a Rotary principle.

This African tribe considers long speeches injurious both to the speaker and the audience, and in order to protect both, there is an un-written law that every public speaker must stand on one foot while addressing his audience; as soon as the other foot touches the ground, his speech must stop!

Also, I understand other people say that an after-dinner speech is like a baby because it is easy to conceive, but difficult to deliver, and even more difficult, standing on one foot!

Would you like me, Mr. President, to stand on one foot? I can, if you want me to!

However, Ladies and Gentlemen, taking of "feet", I think our country, Malaysia, which is becoming more stable and firmly established in the world, owes its stability to the fact that we stand not on one foot or on two feet; with the unity of our three main races, the Malays, Chinese and Indians, we have three strong feet, firmly on the ground, provided that we can nurture and strengthen, from day to day, the unity of our three peoples of different origin!

Anyone who does anything to break this unity is in fact, like the un-written law of the African tribe I mentioned, asking us to try and progress as a nation by standing on one foot alone.

I have no wish to bore you with a political speech, but, as you know, on 31st August, this year, we will not only celebrate our annual Merdeka Day, but also celebrate ten years of progress as an independent nation; and we can look back with pride and pleasure, that in the ten years since 1957, we have achieved a tremendous lot, particularly, in the field of Development, and we have many plans for the future, so that in the next decade ahead of us, Malaysia will achieve more and more and achieve our goal of becoming a really prosperous and thriving nation.

But, development plans, development projects and an increased standard of living are not enough in themselves, neither can they be achieved in Malaysia

without the application of the basic philosophy of the Alliance Government of which our main aim, first and foremost, is to achieve national unity, and make each one of us, whether we be of Chinese, Indian or Malay origin, feel in fact that they are real citizens of our country, and are all one hundred per-cent Malaysian.

As I have said so many times before, our policy is not ever to accentuate the differences of the racial origin of our people, but are to accentuate and focus on our similarities so that we can work, live and strive together as one unified people - the people of Malaysia.

You Rotarians, not only, here in Ipoh, but throughout every city and town in which there is a Rotary group, are already helping tremendously in fostering this spirit of national unity, and I would like to thank you who are here tonight and all your other fellow-Rotarians throughout Malaysia, for the good work and the contribution that you are giving to our country. Keep up this spirit, not only in words, but also in deeds, and you will help push Malaysia forward on the path of progress.

In fact, I was thinking the other day, it would be a good thing if the General Assembly of the United Nations could adopt the principles of "Rotary International" and apply them, because if they did, perhaps there would be more peace in this strife-stricken world of today.

To go back to this word Unity, there seems to be, in this area of Perak, a, what I might call, misunderstanding by a small section of the people here whether intentional or otherwise of our constitutional condition of applying and of adopting the National Language.

The introduction of the National Language should worry no one because it does not in fact discredit or discourage any other language in Malaysia, which may be used by various groups day-to-day, but when the day comes that all of us can communicate with each other, irrespective of our original native tongue; then, I believe, that the good-will which is already evident and abundant in our relationship with each other; that good-will will increase ten-fold because language is the main means of human communication and I would like you to regard the national language as a common denominator of discourse and good-will amongst us.

It is not difficult to acquire a working knowledge of it, but I am sure that anyone who takes the trouble to acquire this working knowledge will find that his horizon of human friendship will be very much broadened and brightened, while at the same time, he can still use, to his heart's content, English, Tamil, Cantonese or any other dialect in which he is accustomed to speak.

We have been independent for ten years, and this liberty of independence must be protected if we are to survive, in the future, as an independent nation for ever, and not allow our sovereignty to be subjugated to other evil influences such as the main threat to-day, the influence of Communism.

In a Democracy, everyone talks about freedom of speech and freedom of expression. This we already have firmly established in Malaysia.

I am not so much concerned with the right of everyone to say anything he pleases, as I am about our need, as a self-governing people, to hear and to understand and to absorb everything, the right things which are relevant to

our progress in unity as a nation.

And this is the type of democracy that we must build; it is a democracy in which the listeners must have the ability and choice of **determination and discrimination** whereby they can **weigh the words of speakers** and then **decide for themselves** the direction in which they want their own nation to progress; and, therefore, *not be misled* by mischief-makers!

Let me give you an example from the world of ship-building.

I understand that every ship which sails the high seas is fitted with an instrument, which keeps it steady on its course, no matter how rough the seas may be, or how strong a storm may be, and that instrument is called a Gyroscope (pronounced Jiroskope).

The dictionary definition of this Gyroscope is "a heavy fly-wheel rotated at very high speed and supported at right angles to the direction of the steering wheel. It keeps the ship on a steady course".

There is a definite connection between the rotating movement of a Gyroscope and the movement of Rotary International in Malaysia.

They both have the same effect except that one stabilises a ship and the other helps to stabilise the community.

Because, as I foresee the development of Malaysia in the future within the frame-work of our democratic way of life, the more stabilising institutions we have, and the more stabilised are our **electorate** who can judge for themselves sound commonsense approaches to progress, then the less will be the chances of our country falling into the cold-blooded hands of Communist leadership on the one hand, or on the other, of falling into the hot-headed hands of irresponsible leadership!

Now, Mr. President, I promised you that I will not make a political speech.

You, Sir, are an Accountant by profession, and I, am a lawyer.

I do not agree with the definition I heard the other day regarding both our professions because it must have been said by a dis-satisfied client!

He said, "A lawyer is a man who is willing to go out and spend your last cent to prove that he is right; A lawyer is a learned man who rescues your property from your creditors, pays ten per-cent of it to an Accountant and keeps the rest for himself!"

However, talking as a lawyer, although I am not in private practice myself, I paid particular attention when I was studying law, to the laws of copy-right, and before coming to Ipoh, I read in an Encyclopedia, the definition of the objects of Rotary.

And, I have a very serious accusation to make on the law copy-right to all Rotarians, but let me, first re-read to you the aims of Rotary:-

to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and in particular, to encourage and foster -

- (1) the development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
- (2) high ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations and the dignifying by each Rotarian of his occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
- (3) the application of the ideal of service by every Rotarian to his personal,

- business and community life; and
- (4) the advancement of international understanding, good-will and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional men united in the ideal of service.

This is a definite breach of copy-right, and I remind you that I am not making a political speech, but, everytime I read your aims, I feel certain that they have been copied word for word, from the political manifesto of the Alliance Government, because, these also are our aims.

Now, speaking as a lawyer, I am put into a dilemma, it would not be nice if we took all Rotarians in Malaysia to Court and claim a large sum in damages for breach of copy-right, because as a lawyer, I know that many civil cases like this can be easily settled amicably out of court, and we will give you the option as Rotarians, either of going to Court and settling our claim on copy-right, or, on the other hand, I think we will get our claims settled by your ensuring that every Rotarian gives full support and pays regularly his subscription to the Alliance Party, in which case, no future claim will be brought to Court.

Thank you.