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SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT A
DINNER IN HONOUR OF THE HON'BLE
MR LEE KUAN YEW, PRIME MINISTER OF
SINGAPORE, AT SRI TAMAN, KUALA LUMPUR
ON 23RD MARCH, 1972

I should like to extend to you, Mr Prime Minister, to Mrs Lee and to Members of your Delegation, a cordial welcome to Malaysia.

This is your first Official Visit to Kuala Lumpur since the Separation.

Mr Prime Minister, I once said that Singapore and Malaysia are like Siamese twins which have been separated by careful and intricate surgery but which still retain close ties of history, geography and common interest.

It is true that for several years after Separation, we both face difficulties of adjustment to the new situation. But I feel that so long as we both realise that Singapore and Malaysia are two independent sovereign States which must carry out their dealings with one another on these basis, and so long as we both are genuinely desirous of working together for our common interest and mutual benefit, we will be able to resolve whatever difficulties or differences we may have.

I must say that by being close neighbours, who have dealings in many matters, we are faced with difficulties and irritations from time to time. With a genuine spirit of goodwill and friendship, I am confident that we can resolve all these problems.

Today as a result of your visit here we have resolved one important matter which has been outstanding for so long, that is the distribution of residual assets and profits of the Currency Board.

I am very grateful to Mr Lee for his understanding on this matter. I have no doubt that the two countries will work together in future. I am sure, Mr Prime Minister, you will agree

with me that this co-operation and friendship must continuously be sustained and refreshed by frankness and sincerity in all our dealings.

I hope that your short visit here will mark a new period of sincere co-operation between our two countries.

I wish to say here that we would like you to come again to Kuala Lumpur or anywhere in Malaysia either privately or officially and that you are always welcome.

I now invite all guests present to join me in a toast to the good health of the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, and Mrs Lee and to the Government and people of Singapore.