

**ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE¹
AT THE CHIEF OF STAFF'S CONFERENCE ON
23RD FEBRUARY, 1960**

I greatly welcome the opportunity provided by the Chief of Staffs Conference to say a few words to you. First and foremost I would like to thank you for the services rendered during the past year, particularly on Emergency operations. Except for the Border,² the whole country will be a "White" area by the end of this week and, even in the Border area, the great majority of the remaining Communist terrorists are sulking in the jungles of Thailand. This lack of terrorists has meant that your operations have often been fruitless and frustrating but every dead terrorist is a good one and we must not relax until this treat to our security has been completely eliminated.

Even though the Emergency itself may be declared officially over this year and operations confined entirely to the border area, we must expect Communist subversion to continue unabated.

In these circumstances the stabilising influence of the Armed Forces is most important.

I think I can make this importance clear if I say what is all too often forgotten that the two main corner-stones of Government policy are (i) the maintenance of law and order and (ii) the economic and financial stability of the country. On these two foundations all our hopes for future peace and prosperity, and the policies to achieve them, must rest.

It is upon the efficiency of the Armed Forces and the Police that the Government depends for ensuring that essential law and order without which no progress can be achieved. This brings me to the first point which I wish to stress to you today and that is the vital necessity of maintaining the full co-operation between the Police and the Armed Forces which has been built up, as comrades in arms, over the many years of the Emergency.

¹ Date when Tun was Minister of Defence—3rd September, 1957.

² Malayan-Thai Border.

I look to you as the Senior Officers of the Armed Forces to ensure that there should be no suspicion or jealousy as between the two Forces, other than friendly competition. Any rift in this relationship would be absolutely disastrous to the future of the country and would undo in weeks what it has taken years to achieve during the Emergency.

In these next few years we need to make enormous strides in the social and economic development of the country, particularly in the rural areas, if we are to maintain and improve the standard of living of our increasing population. That development will require all the country's energy and resources. For that reason we must be economical with regard to the funds which can be allocated to both the Armed Forces and the Police. In this respect priority will be given to the building of permanent accommodation and quarters and then to new equipment and a very limited expansion. That is all we can afford for the time being and I look to you to see that the Government gets good value for its money.

I know that you are discussing today professional service and administrative matters which are your direct concern and I wish to touch on two which are related to what I have already said. These are Malayanisation and resettlement of soldiers in civilian life.

At the Budget Session of the Dewan Rakyat³ I made the Government's Malayanisation policy for the Armed Forces quite clear. It is to Malayanise as rapidly as possible consistent with the maintenance of the present high standards of efficiency and training. We all know that it can be done faster if we shorten the period of officer training, increase the intake of young officers and grant a greater number of short service commissions. The effect of this would, however, be a lowering of standards and such a block in the promotion structure in five or ten years time that the prospects of a career in the Armed Forces for the great majority of Malayan officers would be negligible. This, in turn, would lead to uncertainty, disappointment and instability.

³ First Session of the First Dewan Rakyat, 11th September, 1959— 24th February, 1960.

To put it briefly it is not the Government's intention to achieve Malayanisation by a surgical operation, which would only cripple the patient, but by what might be called a steady digestive process, which will achieve exactly the same results as far as Malayanisation is concerned but will, at the same time, allow officers to have the full benefit of both time and training to gain the necessary experience required for the various stages in their careers. Naturally the pace will be a bit slower in the technical arms and services, the Royal Malayan Navy and the Royal Malayan Air Force than in the Infantry battalions.

As Minister of Defence I am very satisfied with the present rate of Malayanisation and at the manner in which Malayan officers are both achieving positions of higher command and carrying out heavier responsibilities.

I come now to my final point which is that, while the Government's first consideration must be to maintain the efficiency and morale of the present members of the Armed Forces, its second consideration must be the well-being and welfare of ex-members of the Armed Forces.

By the very nature of their work and their purpose the Armed Forces, as compared with other Government service, must be young. It is not easy therefore to provide full career prospects for either officers or other ranks and the Government is now giving a great deal of thought to this problem.

In the first instance we are trying to ensure that there is a reasonable career prospect for nearly all officers and, at the same time, we are intending to extend the terms of enlistment so that the other rank has, at least, ten years with the Colours instead of seven. I understand that fuller details regarding this proposal have already been given to you earlier in the Conference.

Coupled with these proposals the Government is intending to increase both the pension and gratuities payable to officers and other ranks on the completion of their service and this increase will take effect from the 1st January this year. The exact details are now being worked out in conjunction with the Treasury and will be announced as soon as possible.

Both the Armed Forces Council and you, as their Commanding Officers have an obligation to assist Servicemen to obtain employment in civil life when they have completed their Colour service. Much has already been done in building up contacts with Government departments and civilian firms but a great deal depends on personal contact and this is a field in which Commanding Officers, and indeed all officers in Units, should lose no opportunity to seek the goodwill of both the administration and industry to give employment to men who have served their country well in the Armed Forces.

You will already have seen the announcement that ex-Servicemen will be allocated 20% of the vacancies in all Federal Land Development Schemes and 15% in all State Schemes. It has been a surprise and disappointment to me that so few have so far volunteered for the vacancies offered in the Bilut Valley Scheme. Much more sustained propaganda is required and I particularly call upon Malayan officers, in cases where ex-Servicemen do not have a definite job or land in their own kampong to which they can return, to use all possible persuasion to encourage soldiers to take up land in these resettlement schemes.

Pioneering in this way is not a soft and easy job but, if a man really gets down to it, he has every prospect of earning a very adequate livelihood and, at the same time, contributing to the production and wealth of the country.

His prospects in such a venture will be greatly enhanced if, during his service, he is encouraged both to save money and to take an interest in the opportunities which will be available to him. For that purpose courses will be run before his discharge so that he is fully conversant with the subject of resettlement and can play his part in the civil life of the community after discharge.

Again, on behalf of the Government, I thank you for your hard work and loyal service during the year and I wish you all the best of luck this year.



Tun Abdul Razak sebagai Menteri Pertahanan sedang melihat patung seorang pegawai berpakaian seragam (uniform) di Majlis Pembukaan Muzium Angkatan Tentera Persekutuan. Malayan Command. Gurney Road. Kuala Lumpur pada 23hb Februari, 1960.