

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER IN REPLY
TO SPEECH BY THE THAI PRIME MINISTER AT
THE RETURN DINNER AT DEWAN TUNKU
ABDUL RAHMAN, KUALA LUMPUR ON 15TH
JUNE, 1971

I wish to thank you most sincerely, Mr Prime Minister, for the kind and generous words which you have just said about me and my country.

During the last two days, we in Malaysia have had the privilege of having you with us and the friendly manner and ease with which you have moved in our midst have given us great pleasure indeed.

The warmth and informality that you have shown and the grace and charm with which Toh Puan Kittikachorn has always carried herself have won our people's admiration and affection entirely. It has indeed been a pleasure to have had you with us.

Mr Prime Minister, personal contacts between us such as this have, I am sure, renewed and refreshed the close and cordial ties between our two countries and peoples. For my part, I have found our discussions this morning to be most rewarding and enlightening. As befits friends who have nothing to hide from one another, we have conducted our discussions in an atmosphere of complete cordiality and frankness. You have provided us with a better insight of your country's latest thinking on a number of issues and these will certainly assist us to understand and appreciate your views and attitude on these matters. We have in turn sought to explain as fully as possible our thinking on these current matters of mutual interest to us both. I am also happy that we have agreed to further intensify our efforts in bilateral co-operation in various fields for the mutual benefit of our respective countries and peoples.

Mr Prime Minister, both you and I are conscious that our region is passing through a period of great challenge as well as of great opportunity. The next few years will test us to the utmost whether we have the patience, the firmness and the courage to face

the dangers as well as to utilise the opportunities ahead of us. In the past, our peoples have not shown a lack of courage in times of change or of initiative in times of opportunity. Constant exchanges of visits such as this and of visits at all levels between our two Governments will help us to keep abreast of each other's thinking and thereby forge a more united stand to meet whatever dangers that lie ahead.

In unity lies our strength and I am sure that with close understanding and co-operation between us, and also among the countries in our region, we shall be able to work even more purposefully and successfully to ensure the stability and prosperity of our respective countries and peoples.

Mr Prime Minister, your stay with us has been all too brief, and perhaps also all too busy. But, I hope, nevertheless, that you and Toh Puan Kittikachorn and other members of your party have had the opportunity to get to know our people and to carry back with you happy memories of your visit and of the great affection and esteem we have for you, Mr Prime Minister, and for the Thai nation and the Thai people. We thank you for coming to visit us. I assure you that we are always ready and happy to welcome you again to Kuala Lumpur at any time in the future.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now ask you to rise and join me in a toast to His Excellency Tun Thanom Kittikachorn, Prime Minister of Thailand, and to wish him good health and continued success in his important and high office.