

KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF ST. JOHN

HONOUR ALSO SHARED BY 19.000 MEMBERS

"As a knight of an order of chivalry I will try in my daily work, in my daily duty to vindicate myself in the battle which faces all of us today in this present turbulent world—the battle against poverty" This pledge was made by Tun Razak at a dinner in Kuala Lumpur on 23rd March, 1968 to celebrate the conferment of the Insignia of the Knighthood of the Order of St. John by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Among those who heard Tun Razak's speech were H.R.H. Sultan and Tengku Ampuan of Selangor, Tunku Abdul Rahman and Sir Michael Walker, the British High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur.

Admittedly, this is an honour conferred on me personally, but it is in real fact an honour on our St. John Ambulance Association, which is shared equally by the 19.000 members of the Association in Malaysia, because it is in fact by their hard work, their enthusiasm, and their dedicated service that has made the conferment of this honour a reality.

Therefore. Ladies and Gentlemen, let me first thank and congratulate you here to-night, you who are members of this Association for the great work and unselfish voluntary service which you have given to our country and for our people; and to you. Mr High Commissioner (turning to the British High Commissioner)- I would like you as Her Majesty the Queen's representative to convey to Her Majesty how deeply grateful and appreciative we are for the interest which she has taken in the welfare of our country.

However, my dear Sir. you have just said in your speech that I was informed on Merdeka Day when we were celebrating ten years of independence. I was informed personally that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth had appointed me a Knight of the Order of St. John.

I then turned, as I do on many occasions, to my reference books and refreshed my memory of the history of such Orders of Chivalry realized that correctly a Knight should go about his business correctly mounted with the *reins of a horse* in one hand and a knee in the other!

I thought it would be appropriate if I learnt to ride a horse correctly. Although to-night. I am so happy to receive this Knighthood. I am *disappointed*. to say the least, that you did not give me a *horse* to go with it; or perhaps your Prime Minister. Mr Harold Wilson, would not approve a horse because of the effects of the devaluation of the pound, and the British austerity drive; but nevertheless a *little pony* would be able to get around!

You imply. Sir. in your speech that if I had been gi\en this Knighthood some centuries ago. I would have had to vindicate my Knighthood by some special feat of arms by going to war!

Eleven years ago, in fact I did. with the Tunku and my other political colleagues. in fact go to war with the British—not mounted on a horse, hut sailing the high seas to London to fi?h not with horses and lances, hut with pen and persuasion to obtain from the Realm of England our independence as a \ation!

And I am glad to say that since that fight finished in 1957. our relationship with Britain and other Commonwealth countries has been one of friendliness, co-opcration and mutual respect whidi I hope will continue for a long time to come.

Further. Your Excellency, in your speech you say that there is no need for a knight of an Order of chivalry to vindicate himself on the field of battle.

Nevertheless, I will try and will continually try in my daily work, in my daily duty, to vindicate myself in the battle which faces all of us to-day in this present rather turbulent world, the *battle against poverty*, the battle for a higher standard of living for our people and the battle to save our country, and the free world from the slavery of the dictatorship of Communism so that we can continue our democratic way of life in our way of free expression

Lastly, Ladies and Gentlemen, to-night's occasion to me is really one of gratitude.

Having been conferred with this great honour, unfortunately my wife is not on the speech-making programme. I would like to say one word on her behalf!

She has been a woman and a wife to me for so many years. She has produced five sons, but she has always been regarded either as a wife or a woman. To-night she is different; by virtue of my

Knighthood she has been *transformed* into the female equivalent of a Knighthood—a "Lady" I hope when we get home she will always behave as a lady!

Your Highness. Your Excellency. Ladies and Gentlemen, this is not an occasion on which I should make a long speech. In fact, the appropriate theme of my speech on such an occasion could in fact be condensed to a very few words—I am grateful to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth for Her graciousness, and I thank all the members of the St. John Ambulance Association for their hard work and dedication which has made this occasion possible.

Thank you.

THE NATIONAL MOSQUE

PERMANENT TRIBUTE TO TUNKU ABDUL
RAHMAN PUTRA AL-HAJ

Masjid Negara—the National Mosque—was described by Tun Abdul Razak as "an everlasting tribute to our great national leader, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj. the father of the nation. and a monument of our national independence. He said this at the official opening of the Mosque by His Majesty The Yang di-Pertuan Agong on 27th August. 1967.

On this holly day. that is Friday, when all Muslims throughout the world forget their differences and enmity and assemble in mosques to perform the "Friday Prayer", we the people of Malaysia offer our thanks to God the Almighty for having blessed us with a majestic and historic National Mosque. We are also thankful for Duli Yang Maha Mulia Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertuan Agong to have graciously consented to perform the opening ceremony of this Mosque.

The desire to build this big Mosque for this country was first footed after our country achieved its independence on 31st