

THE TOAST AT ST. DAVID'S DAY—"KUMREE AMBITH"

Humour was the keynote of the following after dinner speech by Tun Razak at St. David's Day Banquet in Kuala Lumpur on 1st March, 1963.

Firstly, I should like to congratulate your President on his speech which, considering that he delivered it in a language which was foreign to him—English—I think he spoke extremely well!

Also. I think he spoke with considerable self-control because I have always understood when Welshmen make speeches, and get warmed up to their subject, they have the greatest difficulty in not bursting into song.

While talking of your President. I would like to congratulate members of your Society in electing a President who resembles both in physical appearance and in many other ways a famous Welshman who, by the application of his particularly Welsh talent, became not only the prime figure of Wales but also the Prime Minister of England.

Both your President and Mr Lloyd George seem to have one noticeable physical feature in common which you will understand when I remind you of how historians love to group everything into an era of time.

For example, we hear about the pre-Edwardian era of English History. So I think with regard to Welsh history the historians of the future will group both Lloyd George and your President in the same era because of their particular Welsh hair-style, they could be grouped into what might be called the PRE-BRYL-CREAM ERA!

It is fortunate, however, that an unruly mop of hair does not signify an unruly speaker and that although your national aim is eventually Independence for WALES. I am sure that your method of achieving Welsh Merdeka will be by extremely peaceful means; with your country's cultural and musical background, it may be that you will be 'the first country in the world to sing your way to Independence.

In fact it appears to me that all Welsh national characteristics are peaceful ones. But I cannot, here to-night, praise these Welsh qualities too strongly because to do so I would have to draw

national comparisons, and this might be dangerous in the presence of the Chieftain of Saint Andrew's Society, the President of the Saint George's Society and the representative of the Saint Patrick's Society.

However. I will say this much that before coming here this evening I tried to find out or tried to remember a few stories about Welsh characteristics and although I could remember many, many stories about the Scots, the Irish and the English, written, no doubt, by Welshmen. I found that very few of your national neighbours had been able to write any derogatory stories about Wales.

This is very much to your national credit and might even mean that history will eventually judge Wales as the superior of the four nations which comprise the British Isles.

There is at least one Welshman who has already endorsed this feeling of superiority. I understand he was born in Cardiff; I have forgotten his name, but he followed a successful career as a psychiatrist in Harley Street.

A patient came to his surgery and asked to be psychoanalysed; this patient was an Englishman, a Member of Parliament, who had recently suffered considerable defeat in debate, defeat at the lashings of the tongue of Lloyd George.

As he lay on the psychiatrist's couch he poured out his heart while the psychiatrist took notes of his origin of birth and background.

It transpired that this Englishman came from a long generation of Englishmen and half way through the interview he suddenly sat up and confessed to the psychiatrist saying. "Doctor. I think I know what is wrong with me. I have an inferiority complex".

The psychiatrist, being a true Welshman got carried away with national emotion and forgot, for a moment, his professional ethics and replied. "My dear chap, you are an Englishman; your father was English; your grandfather was English.—you have no inferiority complex—you are just inferior." fl

I have no wish to stir up racial feeling but in case any of you try to find out who this famous Welsh psychiatrist was you may have difficulty.

The story has it that he adopted the same attitude of Welsh national superiority on a visit to Scotland, and as he was a distinguished name in his own profession, he was invited as the guest of honour at a St. Andrew's dinner, where he had to listen to long speeches on the historical background of Scotland, and, being as he was of superior Welsh intellect, he too had studied the history of Scotland.

In his speech he proved conclusively that the invention of the Kill was originally a necessity because the brawny Scots had feet which were much too large to get into trouser legs!

I believe he now rests in some graveyard near Edinburgh.

I feel it would be very nice if I were able to say a few words to you in Welsh, your national language but I really haven't the courage to try to do so because I remember the story of an American who was touring Wales and had taken considerable trouble to learn a few words of Welsh and he arrived at a hotel and was shown his room by the manager with courtesy, kindness and typical Welsh hospitality.

He saw, on the floor, a small carpet on which was written, in large letters, the words "TAM HTAB".

He studied these words and then turned round to his host with a smile and said. "Ah. "TAM HTAB" how very nice of you to have, in my mom. a carpet with the word "Welcome" written in Welsh".

The hotel manager was slightly embarrassed and said. "No. Sir. I am sorry. That is not Welsh writing; it is merely the "BATH MAT; turned upside down."

Mr President. I was very pleased to be told that the rules of your Society are so drafted that full membership may be enjoyed even by persons who can make no claim to Welsh blood.

This is particularly desirable when I observe Malaysians joining your Society because of their close association with the "PRINCIPALITY" during their student years.

Many of them who are now holding responsible positions in our Government Service look back with affection to their stay in such well known Welsh kampongs as ABERYSTWYTH (ABER-IST-WITH).

Finally, Mr President. I should like to wish your new Society the very best for the future and hope that all your future annual dinners on St. David's Day are as full of such good people and such goodwill as we have here to-night.

Before I ask your honoured guests to be up standing and drink a toast, you will forgive me. Mr President, if I address the guests separately, for a moment, and educate them in the correct words they should say when they toast such an occasion.

Fellow Guests, throughout the world the word "MERDEKA" has many interpretations in many languages.

I think the correct words for the toast this evening are "KUMREE AM BUTT."

The motto of Rotary is service before self. But it is well to remind ourselves that Rotary does not have, or should not have, a monopoly of it. I say so particularly because in the gigantic task of rural development, in which we are engaged today, the whole nation is being asked, to put service before self. I am confident that if we all go ahead together in the spirit of this motto, if we co-operate and work hard together, we in Malaya will be surrounded by a bright horizon of better living and opportunities for all.

— *Tun Razak in reply to the toast of "Our Guests" at Kuala Lumpur Rotary Club dinner on 20th June, 1960.*

The Government does not want the people to expect it to do everything for them; it wants to create among the people a sense of accomplishment, because everyone knows there is always much greater pleasure and pride to be derived from self-effort.

— *Tun Razak's New Year Message on 30th December, 1960.*