

Our policy is not only to build a united people but also to make them stand on their own feet particularly those in the rural areas so that they will have self-reliance and self-respect necessary for a civilised and progressive nation. The progress of a nation is the sum total of the efforts of all its citizens and we must therefore be able to exhort everyone of our citizens to do his or her best to make this country a happy place for our people and for our children in the years to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen, having posed these various problems facing our country and our people, I have great pleasure in declaring your Conference open and wishing it all the success that it deserves.

TRUE SPIRIT OF THE COMMONWEALTH

MALAYSIA IS A FULL AND EQUAL MEMBER

In opening the 3rd Exhibition in Kuala Lumpur organised by the Malayan Branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society on 24th May, 1965, Tun Abdul Razak said. "Thanks to the initiative and foresight of our beloved Prime Minister. who in 1962 suggested the formation of this branch. we are now able to celebrate as full and equal members of the Commonwealth together with our brothers and sisters in the other Commonwealth countries

One of the main objects of this Society is to bring about a better understanding among the people of the Commonwealth and I think that exhibitions such as this are an excellent way of enhancing the goodwill and understanding that members of the Commonwealth share with one another. When one is studying the Commonwealth, it is useful to be quite clear in our mind what in fact it is. I do not think that one should have a definition of the Commonwealth because in many ways it defies that definition.

One Commonwealth Statesman some time ago described Commonwealth as an unorganised organisation. There is no constitutional or legal tie that binds together countries of the Commonwealth.

Countries that form the Commonwealth are spread throughout the entire world presenting a population of over 750 million people. Among these millions are to be found people of even race and creed all held together by a bond of friendship and goodwill and belief in common ideals of freedom and justice.

As a member of the Commonwealth and as a member of the United Nations, we in Malaysia are proud of the fact that our country symbolises the true spirit of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. Our country is one where men and women of all creeds and colours, men and women of all races live in harmony, in justice and in happiness and goodwill with one another. To those who do not agree with our way of life I say "go somewhere else which is more to your liking and leave us in peace to fashion our own destiny. That is all we ask!"

I repeat Commonwealth defies definition because it is a group of nations out of their own free will with the common ideals of the people. Therefore to strengthen the ties of the Commonwealth we must fashion goodwill and friendship among the people at all levels, in professions, among the business people, among the school children and among people at all levels. All of us realise that if we want to go on in the world today apart from hard work, we have got to live in the spirit of peace, friendship and mutual help with our fellow men. Unfortunately, much as we wish to, Malaysians are not being permitted to live in peace. Our nation is being forced to defend its national integrity and independence against blatant and shameful aggression by Indonesia.

In this hour of our national crisis we have been fortunate as a member of the Commonwealth, to look to our fellow members for assistance. The Commonwealth forces are standing shoulder to shoulder with our own troops along our borders of Sabah and Sarawak, in the air and on the high seas, beating back and defeating every attempt that Indonesia has made to invade and disrupt our country.

Probably the most outstanding example to arise from this desire of the Commonwealth countries to help one another is the Colombo Plan, a scheme which has been so successful that today it extends to others outside the Commonwealth. This great Plan is designed to provide a channel for the "haves" to help the "have-nots". Malaysia is proud to be both a contributor and receiver member of the Plan.