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Speech by Inche Hussein Onn, Minister of Education, at the Annual Dinner of the Malaysian Association of Certified Public Accountants, at the Lake Club, on 16th June, 1972 at 8.00 pm.

Mr, President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Thank you very much for inviting my wife and I to your Association's Annual Dinner this evening. As you have said, Mr. President, this is the first time that I have been given the honour to attend a dinner given by Accountants.

2. I belong to another profession, the legal profession. At the moment, however, I also belong to ^{yet} another profession, the politicians profession.

I wonder which is the better of the two. When I was ~~in the legal practice~~ ^{practising law,} I had few clients and always hoped that many ~~people~~ would come to see and consult me. In my present ~~practice~~ ^{occupation}, I have much too many clients and am hoping that fewer ~~people~~ will come to see me. However, I find both professions very challenging; both professions deal with problems ----- human and down-to-earth problems. The only difference, in my experience, between the two professions, is the variety and magnitude of the problems. A Minister naturally shoulders a great and heavy responsibility. All crowns are more or less crowns of thorns. The better and more conscientious the wearer, the more heavily do the responsibilities of power weigh on him. It is impossible not to feel anxious when an error of judgment may bring misery to thousands.

3. Be you an accountant, a lawyer, a doctor, an engineer or an architect, your basic education starts in the school. The education system of our country is comparable to those of the developed countries. ~~I say this with humility.~~ This does not come about as a matter of course. It has come about through conscious efforts, through toil, tears, and sweat of our people and government. Indeed, we ~~the citizens of the country,~~ can and should rightly be proud of our endeavours and achievements in all fields of development since our country's independence.

4. The Second Malaysia Plan is our country's fourth development plan. The first was the 1956 - 1960, the second was the 1961 - 1965, the third was the 1966 - 1970 and the fourth is the current Development Plan for 1971 - 1975. Each plan has brought about improvements in the economic, educational and social conditions in our country.

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5. Despite the substantial progress which we have made so far, the tasks ahead of us are very challenging, and much remains to be done. Poverty, unemployment and racial economic imbalance continue to be serious problems. These problems demand our urgent attention. Their resolution is vital for national unity.

6. Since our country's independence, we have made a tremendous advance in education. Our people, our Parliament and our Government have spared neither efforts nor money for education. This is because of the realisation that education is the key to our country's development, prosperity, peace and harmony.

7. Under the Second Malaysia Plan, ^a ~~the~~ sum of \$537.26 million has been allocated for the development of education and training. This represents 7.3 per cent of the total sum of \$7,250 million earmarked for public development expenditure. Out of the sum of \$537.26 million, \$448.48 million are for the Ministry of Education, and the balance of \$88.78 million is for other training agencies such as MARA, Tunku Abdul Rahman College, The National Productivity Centre, The Government Staff Training Centre, The Industrial Training Institute of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower and the National Youth Pioneer Corps.

8. Out of the Education Ministry's allocation, a large part is for Secondary education (\$197.18 million), Technical and Vocational education (\$51.19 million), University education (\$87.5 million) and Primary education (\$73.91million).

9. As regards the Education Ministry's Annual Operating Expenses, the estimated operating expenditure for this year is \$606.508 million. The total operating budget for the year is \$2,735.1^{million}. The Education Ministry's allocation, therefore, represents ^{about 22.15%} ~~almost 22%~~ of the whole operating budget. Out of this sum of \$606.508 million, the biggest part is for Primary and Secondary Education (\$479.8 million) and Post-Secondary and Higher Education (\$64.9 million). \$15 million have been allocated for scholarships, bursaries and training awards.

10. As regards enrolment in our primary and secondary schools, the number for last year was 1,977,456. This year, it is 2,096,372 which is an increase of 118,916. The number of students in our Technical and Vocational Schools this year is 7,690 compared to 5,900 last year. This year, the total number of undergraduates in the Universiti Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan and Universiti Sains Malaysia is over 10,000.

11. I cite all these statistics to give you all some *importance ~~was~~ which ^{has} been given to and the ~~been~~* idea of the *our country's* tremendous advance which ~~our country~~ has *been* made in education since independence. This, however, is not the end of our efforts and endeavours. This is only the beginning. Much has still to be done. More primary and secondary schools are needed, especially secondary schools in the rural areas. We are still short of technical and vocational schools. The standard of education in our primary and secondary schools has to be raised still further. We need more and better qualified teachers. We need more technical and other specialist teachers. Our universities and colleges are still short of teaching staff.

12. It is not that we are totally devoid of all these ~~personnel~~ from among the citizens of our country. The tragedy is that these citizens of our country, who in the majority of cases, have been educated at ~~our~~ *great* public expense, prefer to serve and work in foreign countries. If ever there is a country for which a man may work with pride, surely it is his own. The first and highest ambition a man can have is to do his duty to his country. To work then for one's country at whatever cost, or risk, is a solemn duty, and he is not worthy to live at all, who for fear of material loss, personal inconvenience, danger or death, shuns his country's service or his own honour, since death is inevitable, and the fame of virtue immortal.

13. ~~Coming to your Association,~~ I have listened with great interest the review which your President has just given with regard to the growth and activities of your Association. Since the establishment of your Association in 1958, it has steadily been growing in membership and the number of students registered for the Association's examinations. Your Association, through its own examinations, has so far produced 24 CPA graduates. May I congratulate your Association for its excellent efforts, dedication and service in this regard as well as for the other activities, endeavours and achievements which your President mentions in his address.

14. The success of the Second Malaysia Plan, and indeed all future development plans, on which the happiness of our people and the peace, stability and prosperity of our country so much depend, requires the joint, concerted and sustained efforts of both the public and ~~the~~ private sectors. The accountants, no less than the doctors, engineers, architects, lawyers, scientists, technologists and other professionals, have an equally important and vital part to play. We know and have every confidence that the accountants of this country will uphold and unceasingly maintain the highest tradition of professional competence and integrity of their profession. We know and have every confidence that the accountants of this country will serve the nation and the country well.

15. I am glad, Mr. President, to hear that there has been co-operation between your Association and the University of Malaya, the MARA Institute of Technology and the Ungku Omar Polytechnic. The Education Ministry has and will always co-operate with your Association. The Education Ministry's philosophy is " Knock and the door shall be opened; ask and it shall be given."

16. ~~Provisions for~~ Higher education generally, and the development of our universities in particular, have reached quite a critical stage. Consequently, there is an urgent need to revive a body for higher education or universities^y development to advise the Government. I am giving urgent attention to this and hope to make an announcement regarding it soon. There will no doubt be a place for a representative of your Association, if not on the main body, at least on one of the professional committees.

17. Mr. President, I have noted your observations with regard to your Association never being consulted or being asked to participate in discussions on matters which it is competent to express views and give advice. I shall bring it to the attention of the authorities concerned.

18. Lastly, may I once again express my wife's and my sincere thanks for the kind invitation to to-night's annual dinner which your Association has extended to us. It is indeed a great honour to us.

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