

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT
THE OPENING OF THE FOURTH ANNUAL
DELEGATES' CONFERENCE OF THE FEDERATION ARMED FORCES CIVILIAN STAFF UNION
IN KUALA LUMPUR ON 4TH AUGUST, 1963

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am most grateful to you, Mr. President, and to the Executive Council of your Union for having invited me to address this Fourth Annual Delegates' Conference particularly because it gives me the opportunity of meeting the civilian personnel in my Ministry and to express on behalf of the Government, my colleagues and myself, our gratitude to them for the magnificent work they have put in during the past year. It may perhaps be true that to the general public, mention of defence will, more often than not, conjure primarily images of armed troops. As Minister of Defence, however, I am deeply conscious of the contributions made by the silent civilian employees in the running of the Ministry and I am sure that the military members of the Armed Forces appreciate these contributions just as well.

Our country is entering into a new and challenging phase. God willing, Malaysia will be formed on the 31st of this month and the formation of this new Nation demands sacrifice and hard work from every loyal citizen. On your part, the expansion of the Armed Forces which must inevitably follow the formation of the new Nation, means added responsibilities. I am glad to have received recently a resolution unanimously passed by the Executive Council of your Union pledging your Union's full support to the formation of this new Nation and calling upon the civilian staff of the Ministry to prepare themselves to accept the added responsibilities and to play their part as loyal citizens in helping to build the Nation into a happy and prosperous one. I am most appreciative of this expression of loyalty and support for it helps to make the task of the

Government considerably easier. I am touched that your Union, whose prime duty is to look after the welfare of its members, is also alive to its responsibilities towards the Nation.

Coming to the matter of your Union, I am glad that it has grown from year to year not only in strength but also in maturity. I have been informed that the manner in which your Union approaches problems has been very responsible, stressing on cooperation rather than confrontation. For this reason, your relationship with the official side in the Departmental Whitley Council and its General Purposes Committee has been cordial and much has been achieved as a result of this laudable spirit and correct use of the joint consultative machinery. I hope that this spirit of understanding and cooperation between your Union and the official side will continue for the good of the Department and the country as a whole.

I am sure there are still several matters about which you are not completely happy. This, I feel, is very human and very natural. To be contented and satisfied with things as they are is not expected of anyone who is alive and thinking, least of all a Trade Union. Without the desire to improve oneself, there is no growth and no development. Given the spirit of cooperation and understanding, and providing the requests are fair and reasonable, I have no doubt that all problems can be solved.

You will no doubt be discussing these matters at this Delegates' Conference. As a responsible Trade Union, you will, I am sure, discuss them rationally, mindful of the welfare of the department as well. I wish you success in your deliberations.