

## SECRET DOCUMENT

# Tengku Razaleigh: I read Tunku's letter on Kuan Yew

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Then prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj had written a letter to his deputy to express his “deep concerns about Lee Kuan Yew”, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said in his memoirs.

Tunku Abdul Rahman, who is also called Tunku, was undergoing treatment for shingles at a hospital in London. He later returned to Malaysia to chair a pivotal meeting on Singapore, Tengku Razaleigh said in his memoirs *Ku Li: Memoir 205*, launched here on Tuesday.

Tunku Abdul Rahman had penned the letter on his hospital

bed to convey his intentions concerning Singapore to Tun Abdul Razak Hussein.

At that time, Tengku Razaleigh, or Ku Li, was deputy chairman of Kelantan Umno. Razak was the chairman, having succeeded Tunku Abdul Rahman.

Upon receiving the diplomatic pouch from London, Razak summoned Tengku Razaleigh and said: “I have another matter to discuss with you, but first, I want to show you Tunku’s letter. This is a major secret. I am showing it only to you.”

Tengku Razaleigh, a former Umno vice-president and finance

minister, said Tunku Abdul Rahman viewed Lee as “a potential threat to Malaysia’s stability”.

“Tunku said: ‘We must get rid of Singapore.’”

The letter was written in a mix of Roman and Jawi scripts, recounted Tengku Razaleigh.

“Not many regarded Tunku as a Malay nationalist. However, his decision revealed his true stance. The letter was never disclosed.

“I happened to be in Tun Razak’s office, making me the second person to read it, and only the three of us knew about it.

“The letter was sealed at the hospital (in London) and sent di-

rectly by plane to Razak.”

Tunku Abdul Rahman believed Lee’s political methods could have led to the erosion of the Malay position.

“Kuan Yew and the Chinese residents of Singapore were reluctant to accept the special status of Malays, whereas Malays, as original citizens, were willing to sacrifice by granting citizenship and accepting them as fellow citizens — not as second class, but same class,” Tengku Razaleigh wrote.

In August 1965, Lee was summoned to Kuala Lumpur for a meeting, where Tunku Abdul Rahman told Lee that due to his

racial stance, Singapore could no longer remain in Malaysia.

Tunku Abdul Rahman spoke candidly, choosing MCA over Lee’s People’s Action Party.

“I choose MCA, and they are our friends. You are not our friend, and so we cannot have you,” Tunku Abdul Rahman told Lee, as related by Tengku Razaleigh.

Tengku Razaleigh said Lee had pleaded to keep Singapore in Malaysia, but Tunku Abdul Rahman remained firm.

“Kuan Yew cried on television while announcing Singapore’s separation from Malaysia,” said Razaleigh.