
BLUEPRINT FOR UNITY



Selected Speeches And Statements
OF

TUN TAN SIEW SIN

National President Of

THE MALAYSIAN CHINESE ASSOCIATION



PERDANA
LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION
YAT SIAN
KEPIMPINAN
PERDANA

BLUEPRINT FOR UNITY

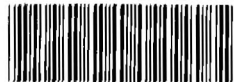
Selected Speeches of
TUN TAN SIEW SIN, J.P.

Edited by J. Victor Morais



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FOREWORD

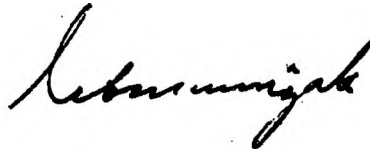
The most urgent task before us today is that of maintaining unity and harmony among the various races. Few leaders in this country have contributed so much towards this as Y.A.B. Tun Tan Siew Sin, the President of the Malaysian Chinese Association and Minister of Finance.

I, therefore, heartily welcome this book “Blueprint For Unity”, which is a collection of speeches he made on our national life during the past few years. This selection of speeches and statements represents the principal expressions of his views in the high offices he has held and is still holding, not only in Government but also in national and international organisations.

Most of the speeches outline the aims and aspirations of the Chinese Community but there are also words of wisdom which emphasise the great need for tolerance and understanding among all Malaysians of all races. Tun Tan has also stressed the crucial role played by the Alliance for the progress and well-being of the Nation.

I have been associated with Tun Tan since he joined the Government in 1957. He is held in high esteem by all his colleagues in the Cabinet for his advice, and, above all, his frankness. The country is indeed indebted to him for his outstanding service to the Nation.

I am sure that “Blueprint For Unity” will be eagerly read both by Malaysians and others interested in this country. Needless to say, we need more leaders of Tun Tan’s calibre, with all his energy, determination and dedication. We all hope that he will continue to serve the Nation for many more years to come.



TUN HAJI ABDUL RAZAK BIN HUSSEIN



INTRODUCTION

This book contains the political biography and nearly one hundred important speeches of Tun Tan Siew Sin, one of Malaysia's foremost leaders, during the past two decades.

In fact, Tun Tan has made numerous speeches on various topics on different occasions both in this country and at international conferences overseas. But we have reproduced here only a fraction of the yield of this well-known political thinker.

The portrait of Tun Tan and the collection of his utterances some of which mark momentous and dramatic events in Malaysia during the past twenty years will, it is hoped, make a notable contribution to the understanding of this man and of his labour of love for his community and his country — Malaysia.

Indeed, the story of Tun Tan is the story of the Malaysian Chinese Association and the role played by the Malaysian Chinese especially during the post-war period.

The speeches chosen for this book show a fine consistency of principle and purpose. They reflect the thoughts and wisdom of Tun Tan on crucial issues affecting the Chinese community in particular and Malaysia in general.

Leaders come and go but their living words often become the heritage of the present and future generations. Today history is in the making in this part of the world. It is, therefore, both timely and necessary to have a permanent record of the speeches and statements of Tun Tan who has played and still is playing no small a part in the shaping of the policies of the Malaysian Government.

The editor is deeply indebted to the senior officials of the M.C.A. Headquarters especially Mr. Ng Chin Hong, the Chief Executive Secretary, Mr. Bernard Lu, the Po-

litical Secretary of Tun Tan and Mr. Lye Peng Chan, the Minister's Press Liaison Officer, for their valuable assistance in the compilation of his speeches.

If this book succeeds in creating a better understanding of Tun Tan and his crusade for national unity and if it helps, even in a small measure, to promote goodwill and harmony among Malaysians of all races it will have served its main purpose.

- J. VICTOR MORAIS



Y.B. Tun Tan Siew Sin

TUN TAN SIEW SIN

Portrait Of The Man

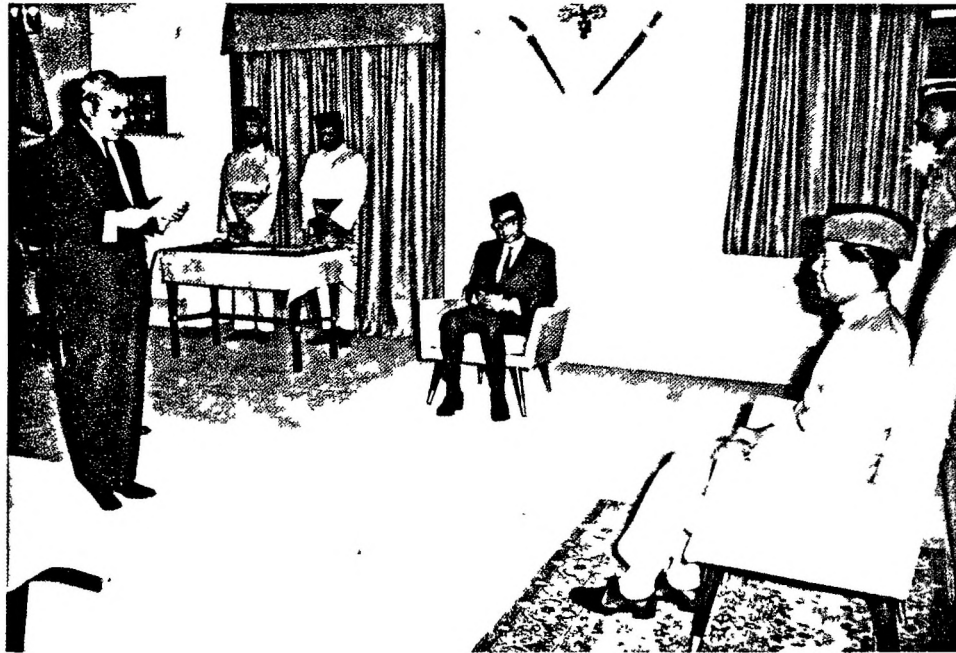
by J. VICTOR MORAIS

*God give us men. A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands:
Men whom the lust of office does not kill
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will,
Men who love honour, Men who cannot lie.*

These words of J.S. Holland came to my mind as I recall the splendid record of service of Tun Tan Siew Sin, the undisputed leader of the Malaysian Chinese because he is one of those few men who possess most, if not all the qualities outlined above. Not only as the President of the Malaysian Chinese Association but as the zealous guardian of Malaysia's finance, Tun Tan has earned a reputation unequalled by any other Chinese leader.

But to understand Siew Sin, one must know something about his illustrious father, the late Tun Tan Cheng Lock whose life-long service to this nation has had a tremendous influence on his equally illustrious son. As one who had known the late Tun Tan Cheng Lock I must say the penumbra of a celebrated father has upheld Siew Sin and inspired him but it has not overshadowed him.

Let us, to begin with, look back a little to study the origin and progress of the M.C.A. for which and through which both father and son have done much not only for the Chinese community but also for the nation.



Tun Tan takes oath as Minister on Nov. 11, 1970 before Yang Di-Pertuan Agong. In the centre is Y.B. Tun Abdul Razak the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

During the difficult days after the reoccupation of Malaya, there were many problems confronting the leaders of the various races. There was confusion and there was only one leader who was capable of leading the Chinese community then. It was Tun Tan Cheng Lock of Malacca.

To Tun Tan Cheng Lock there was then no need more urgent than the need for unity among the Chinese as a racial group and Malaysians as a nation. It was he who conceived the idea of forming the Malayan Chinese Association of which he became the founder president.

It was indeed a most crucial period in the history of Malaya but the old warrior never flinched or faltered in his task of protecting the interests of more than three million Chinese in Malaya. He did this at great hazard to his own health and life. At an M.C.A. meeting in Ipoh, a hand-grenade was thrown at the platform where he and other leaders were seated. Tun Tan Cheng Lock and several of his colleagues were seriously injured.

Undaunted by incidents such as this Tun Tan Cheng Lock travelled all over the country to speak to his people and to consolidate the position of the community. Through years of storm and tumult he was the master of the scene. However owing to ill-health he later gave way to a younger man — Dr. Cheah Toon Lock of Kedah.

The M.C.A. continued to face more and more problems which led to another change in the leadership with Dr. Lim Chong Eu of Penang becoming the president. But before long Dr. Lim too had to resign owing to serious differences of opinion with other leaders including Tun Tan Siew Sin.

The Malayan Chinese Association was at the cross-roads. A new leader had to be found. And it was to Siew Sin

that the community turned for guidance. He was persuaded to accept the office of President which, in his own words, was then "a mission with a crown of thorns."

From the inception of the M.C.A. Siew Sin had maintained a touching loyalty to his father whose life and career left an indelible imprint on his memory. Siew Sin knew full well that the high office of President called for high standards of self-discipline.

Seldom has anyone, so well placed in life, taken on a job which seemed to promise never ending toil, tears and troubles. In fact he literally walked into a morass of problems. But few men were better qualified for this task than Siew Sin, for though comparatively young, he had already gained vast experience in various organisations. By then he had become the "Father of Malaysian Parliament" by virtue of the fact that he had been a member of the Federal Legislative Council since 1948 when he was only 31. In his home is a group photograph of the Federal Councillors taken in 1948. Directing my attention to that picture he said, "Of those 75 members only three, of whom I was one, survived the 1955 election. And by 1959 I was the only one left."

To mention only a few of the important positions he has held, he has been the Chairman of the Malacca Branch of the M.C.A. from 1957-61, National Vice-President of the M.C.A. from 1957—61, a Member of the Central Working Committee and Central General Assembly of the M.C.A. since 1949, Chairman of the Central Publicity Committee of the M.C.A. from 1948—58, a Trustee of the M.C.A., Honorary Treasurer of the M.C.A. in 1953, a member of the Finance Committee 1949-55, member of Federal Ports Committee, President of the Malacca Chamber of Commerce from 1950-51; a member of the Council of the University of Malaya as a Representative of the High Commissioner and the Rulers and of its Finance Com-

mittee and of various select committees of the Legislative Council including those which considered Municipal Elections, Federal Citizenship, Employment Bill and several others.

He was also President of the Malayan Estates Owners' Association in 1956 and 1957 and a member of its Council from 1948—57; a member of the Rubber Producers' Council from 1951—57, a member of the Rubber Industry (Re-planting) Board 1952—57, and Vice-Chairman of both in 1957. He served as a member of the Council of Malayan Planting Industries Employers' Association and its Wages Committee from 1952—57. He was a member of the Joint Consultative Council for the Planting Industries from 1956—57; a member of the Central Advisory Council on Education from 1953—57. He represented Malaysia at several meetings of the International Rubber Study Group and the International Monetary Fund.

Foremost among the positions he now holds are those as Chairman of the Malaysian Inter-Parliamentary Group, of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and of the Malaysian National Group of the Asian Parliamentarians' Union; President of the National Shooting Association of Malaysia; Patron of the South-East Asia Shooting Association and President of the Asian Shooting Confederation.

With interests so many and so varied how did Siew Sin manage to retain his seat for so long in the former Federal Council and the Malaysian Parliament? He says: "In public mind most of the unofficial members of the old legislature bore the stigma of association with British rule. I think people knew I was no yes-man. As a matter of fact I was regarded as rather a fire-brand in those days."

Yes, Siew Sin is a man of principles with the courage of his conviction. The truth of this is illustrated by a Parliamentary incident in 1953. He moved a motion of

THE RURAL PEOPLE ARE NOT FORGOTTEN



Rural folk from Batu Pahat, Johore, are being entertained at the residence of Tun Tan In Kuala Lumpur on April 15, 1971.

censure on Dato Onn for remarks he had made outside the House that were, in his opinion, calculated to upset racial harmony.

This caused quite a sensation because a censure motion was an unheard of thing in those days of non-elective government.

The motion was defeated in division but Sir Gerald Templer, the then High Commissioner, called Siew Sin into his office and said: "There should be more men like you in this country. I hope to live to see the time when you have a say in the destinies of Malaya."

Siew Sin is a sixth generation Straits Chinese whose family has considerable rubber interests. His great-grandfather, Tan Choon Bock, was a founder of the first line of steamships to ply the ports of the Straits Settlements in the 1870's and a pioneer in the planting of tapioca and sugar cane.

"There are those," he says, "who hold it against me that I have never known want, as if it were impossible for me to have a feeling for the poor. I have great sympathy with poverty and have always devoted my political energies towards the social and economic progress of our people." Though born with the figurative silver spoon in his mouth he has shown an abiding interest in the welfare of the poor and needy.

Says Siew Sin: "As far back as 1939, when in my twenties I remember discussing social welfare schemes with Creech-Jones who after the war became Labour Party's Colonial Secretary."

Siew Sin has always had the interests of all sections of the population at heart. He is specially concerned about the welfare of small-scale businessmen.

Speaking at the opening of the head office of Chung Khiaw Finance (M) Bhd, a subsidiary of Chung Khiaw

