

SPEECH BY HON'BLE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
AT STATE LUNCHEON IN MELBOURNE, VICTORIA  
ON 20TH APRIL 1967

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**Mr. Deputy Premier, Mrs. Rylah, Ladies & Gentlemen,**

**O**n behalf of my wife and members of my delegation I would like to thank you and your Government and the people of this great State of Victoria for the welcome that you have extended to us and for your hospitality in giving this luncheon party today.

For my wife and myself this is our first visit to Australia, to this beautiful city of Melbourne and to your State of Victoria. We have heard so much of your great country of Australia, of its vast resources, of its rich and varied life. We have also heard much of this city of yours, Melbourne, where hundreds of\* our students studied here in your schools and in your Universities, and many of them have come back to our country and not a few are holding high posts in the Government of our country.

Mr. Deputy Premier, although our two countries Australia and Malaysia are thousands of miles apart there is a strong bond existing between us. This bond of friendship between our two peoples for the past many years in really born out of common similarities resulting from numerous experince and common aspirations.

Our two peoples of Australia and Malaysia have benefitted and have flourished under a Parliamentary system of democracy which we have cherished dearly. Like Australian we Malaysians are proud of our ways of life in which our individuals freedom and liberty are fully guaranteed. Both you and I firmly believe in the rule of law, the dignity of the individual and the common brotherhood of mankind irrespective of race, colour and creed. There is undoubtedly a very strong tie of friendship between our two peoples.

Mr. Deputy Premier I would be failing in my duty if I did not mention your contribution and that of your Government towards the educational advances of my people. Thousands of our young men and women are now in the various educational institutions in your country imbibing whatever knowledge and know-how you can offer. Our students enjoy their stay in your country. Many of you have been very kind to them, looking after them at great personal sacrifice and inconvenience.

Our country Malaysia is a young country and our Malaysian society is a young society, and more than 2 million of our population

of 10 million are still in the school going category. More than 20% of our annual budget is devoted to providing them with education. Still this is by no means sufficient to meet the educational needs of our growing population, and for this reason every parent in my country is sincerely grateful to you for your warm care and hospitality in looking after the growth and developing in the most formative years in the lives of our young children. Most of these young men and women return home zealous and determined to uphold the ideals and aspirations which they have come to respect and admire in the course of their stay here.

In these young men and women who become the fibre of my nation lies the future of my country and the continuous happy relations between Australia and Malaysia.

Mr. Deputy Premier, the bond of friendship between our two peoples is further strengthened by the fact that both your country and mine belong to the same turbulent region of the world of Southeast Asia. We are therefore bound by common ideals and confronted by common problems. Whether we are big or small, events in the neighbouring countries of ours are bound to effect us directly or indirectly. As you know our parts of the world is continuously confronted by threats from the north which could only be effectively eliminated or conyained by all of us, all our friends and neighbours acting in concert and in unity.

In the brief history of my country, and we are celebrating our 10th anniversary of our Independence this year, we have become victims of militant communist insurrection. The first was the twelve year emergency in which the communist elements took up arms to topple the national Government. The second was the Indonesian confrontation which was inspired directly by the Communist Party of Indonesian and Peking. On both occasions your country and New Zealand and a few other Commonwealth countries have made enormous military contributions in the defence of the right of small countries to lead their own ways of life, to protect and preserve their liberty and freedom from coercion and subversion by totalitarian forces. They had come together not only in the defence of my country but also in the defence of a principles that each country, however small, has the right to be left alone to pursue its own way of life.

During this period of stress and strain we in Malaysia have come to know your soldiers, your officers and your technicians and others. Besides defending our country you also helped in our economic development.

Mr. Deputy Premier, your country has therefore in the course of year gone a long way to prove the effectiveness of our co-operative endeavour to protect our common ideals and aspirations. Although

the battles against militant communism in Malaysia are by no means over and there are still remnants of communist terrorists on the border between us and Thailand and in Sarawak in Eastern Malaysia, I am confident that the close co-operation between our two countries and our readiness to fight for the common cause will in the end doom the militant communist activities to failure.

I am sure, Mr. Deputy Premier, you are interested to know we tackle this onslaught of communist propaganda and subversion in my country. Our efforts to counter this menace is based on the strong belief that the most effective way of fighting the appeal of communism is by ensuring the smooth and effective functioning of democracy and of fulfilling the expectations of our masses. The life of our people must be meaningful through realistic and effective rural and industrial development projects designed to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. We know from bitter experience that totalitarianism would only breed in chaos and poverty. Therefore the major task of my country is to fight in equally militant and determined manner poverty in all its form and manifestation and all those on which Communists thrive. In this respect we are grateful to you and your Government in providing us aid in various forms, in participating actively in our development programme. These positive contributions from your country and your people will go a long way in facing our common threat in making not only Malaysia but also the region in which we all live, a more prosperous and stable part of the world.

Mr. Deputy Premier, I am confident that the happy and friendly relations between your country and mine in the form and context which I have describe to you will grow in the years to come and that our two peoples will continue to work together for our co-operativw endeavour to determine our future in this part of the world.

Once again I thank very much for your kindness and for your hospitality, I would like to extend to you and your colleagues and the people of the State of Victoria the sincere thanks and good wishes of the people and Government of Malaysia.