

ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE JOINT SESSION OF THE NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE AND
THE SARAWAK STATE DEVELOPMENT PLAN-
NING COMMITTEE, KUCHING, SARAWAK ON
17TH OCTOBER, 1963

Mr. Chief Minister¹ and Gentlemen,

My colleague, the Minister of Transport², and I are indeed very happy to visit Sarawak for the first time since Sarawak achieved independence through Malaysia. I would therefore like, on behalf of the Government and the people of the old Federation of Malaya, to congratulate you, the Chief Minister, your colleagues and members of your Government and the people of Sarawak on having so successfully achieved independence through Malaysia. Now after almost two years of consultation and negotiations, we are able to reach complete agreement on the terms of Sarawak's entry into Malaysia.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those leaders of the various communities here and members of the Civil Service who took part in the negotiations and who had shown such understanding that we are able to reach such complete agreement. Now indeed these negotiations and consultations have enabled the Ministers and officers of the Federal Government to come to know the leaders of the communities here, as well as members of the Civil Service here. And I have no doubt that this contact, this association that has been made, has enabled us to know each other more intimately and to maintain an understanding and goodwill which will be of great value to us all in facing our tasks ahead of us of governing Malaysia.

¹ Datuk Stephen Kalong Ningkan.

² Dato' Haji Sardon bin Haji Jubir.

Now that Malaysia is a reality, we are faced with the task of maintaining peace, maintaining law and order, and of carrying out administration of the State. Now, gentlemen, I would like to explain that although Malaysia is a federation, government to all intents and purposes is one. Ordinary People in the villages, in the longhouses, would not know what are the responsibilities of the Federal Government and what are the responsibilities of the State Government. They only know there is one government. Both Federal and State Governments are equally responsible for the welfare of the people and they are part of one governmental machinery. Therefore there must be co-ordination between Federal and State Governments in functions and responsibilities so that the whole governmental machinery can work as one cohesive mechanism. Every effort must be made to smooth out any differences of view, any overlapping of functions between State and Federal so that both Governments can serve the people to their complete satisfaction. That is why I am most happy to see that several State officers have been seconded to work in the Federal Secretary's Office and I do hope some of the State officers here would in due course be seconded to Federal Departments in Kuala Lumpur. In the same way, I hope some Federal officers from Kuala Lumpur would be seconded to work in the State Departments. By this way, officers would be able to understand and realise that government, although divided between Federal and State, is one and must appear to the people as such.

I am pleased that some of you expatriate officers have decided to remain to help the people of Sarawak in these early years of its independence. It will be the duty, the intention and the policy of the Central Government as well as the State Government to train local officers as quickly as possible to enable them to shoulder greater responsibilities in administration. I look forward to the expatriate officers who are still here to do all they can to help to train these local officers so that when they leave, these local officers would be ready to take their places. We in the Central Government in Kuala Lumpur always regard efficient, loyal and incorruptible civil service as vital to any country, in particular to a developing country like Malaysia. We must therefore maintain a higher standard of efficiency in our administration and I look

forward to local officers, when they shoulder greater and greater responsibilities, to maintain the high tradition of the civil service. To the local officers, I would like to say that the country needs you, and you must be prepared to place your services for the nation.

It is, gentlemen, a matter of deep regret to all of us that so soon after Sarawak achieved independence through Malaysia, Sarawak has to face a state of emergency, has to meet the challenge posed by our neighbour Indonesia. This state of tension was brought about not by our own doing. We in our part, the Central Government, the former Federation of Malaya, and now of Malaysia, have done all we can to maintain close and friendly relation with our neighbours and to keep peace in this region of South East Asia. We have gone a long way towards endeavouring to achieve this objective. We have had several meetings with leaders of the Philippines and Indonesia, and eventually we signed an agreement in Manila between our Prime Minister and the Heads of States of the Philippines and Indonesia.

In that agreement, it was clearly stated that if the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as an independent authority, could confirm that the people of Sabah and Sarawak support Malaysia then Indonesia and Philippines would welcome Malaysia. That agreement was clear and unequivocal and has no condition attached to it at all. As you know, gentlemen, as you are just as much aware as I am now, the UN³ Secretary-General has put up his report and has confirmed that a great majority of the people of Sarawak and Sabah are in support of Malaysia and despite they have not kept their part of the bargain. They have not carried out the agreement which they so solemnly agreed in Manila. As a result of this our diplomatic relation both with the Philippines and Indonesia were broken off.

As you know we also had to postpone the date of declaration of Malaysia at great inconvenience to all of us in Malaya, and in particular to you here. We have to put off the date for sixteen days in order to enable the Secretary-General of the UN to complete his report and to provide opportunity for our

3 Mr. V. Ramani.

neighbours to join us in welcoming Malaysia. In spite of all this, they have not carried out their part of the bargain with the result that we now have to face this period of tension and Sarawak is now, or has been, subject to raids across the border by terrorists inspired and directed from outside.

Now, gentlemen, we have therefore to face this challenge to the sovereignty, dignity and honour of our country. The Central Government is determined to meet the challenge with all the resources at our command. I therefore look forward to all of you to play your full part in facing this state of preparedness, this state of emergency. I look forward to you, Mr. Chief Minister, and to your colleagues to bring the people around—to rally them around—to stand solidly behind the Government to meet this confrontation. This battle must be fought on all fronts, by the military, by the police, as well as on the economic and social front. Therefore, all organs of Government must be geared towards meeting this challenge. Defence and internal security, economic and social development and normal administration are all intimately connected. There is no question of them being put in separate watertight compartments. They form part of the whole Government machinery and they, therefore, all of them, must be geared to deal with this emergency.

That is why I am happy that there should be here at this meeting with you all, members of the National Development Planning Committee who have come all the way from Kuala Lumpur to help Sarawak finalising their Development Plan for the period 1964-68. It is significant, and I am sure you will agree with me, that so soon after achieving independence and in the face of this challenge from outside, Sarawak has been able to complete the formulation of the new and, as your Chief Minister has said, ambitious and bold programme of economic and social development to meet the needs of the people and to meet their aspiration for a better and higher standard of living. As I said, despite the state of emergency at present, we are determined not only to meet this challenge but also to build up a strong and viable economy through a process of economic and social development.

The very presence here of the whole National Development Planning Committee in Kuching and the visit of Federal Ministers is, I am sure, a testimony of the desire of the Central Government to accelerate development in these new territories of Malaysia. We in Malaya, the old Malaya, have successfully overcome militant communism and we have achieved success in our rural development programme in recent years. And I am sure that if the whole machinery of Government here in Sarawak is fully and properly geared and with dedicated officials and the support of the people we will be equally successful in Sarawak.

I should like here to pay my compliments to the members of the civil service of Sarawak and also to the elected members of the Supreme Council for the hardwork they have given in preparing the Development Plan. I am sure you will agree with me that the rewards of your efforts are not measured in terms of dollars and cents, but they will be measured in the satisfaction that you will get in the knowledge that the work has been well done and that the people whom we are serving will enjoy a higher level of income and better amenities of life with additional social and economic facilities, such as medical facilities, educational facilities, water supply, electricity and such other things.

Now I would like to say here that the ultimate objective of Malaysia must be peace, to achieve peace, freedom and happiness. We want peace and freedom to develop our country so that our people can enjoy a measure of peace and prosperity. That is why I consider the meeting here this afternoon with you all of great significance. It marks the beginning in Sarawak of an era of intensive programme for social and economic development as made out in the draft Development Plan which I am told will shortly be debated and I hope adopted by the Sarawak Council Negeri.

The draft Development Plan will provide the base for promoting prosperous and democratic society giving the people the necessary amenities and developing the potential of the country, but I am sure you will agree with me that the drafting of a plan alone or its adoption by the Council Negeri will not mean that this objective

will be achieved. The plan must be implemented. Now implementation requires hard work, requires the support of the people at grass root levels and also perseverance and efforts to achieve the objective of the plan. One must therefore expect that Ministers and officials will continuously check on the progress made and will evaluate that the programme is being carried out properly. As I have said, you have a bold and ambitious programme, a public investment in the order of about \$300 million spread over a five year period, but I am confident that with the necessary capacity, man and material, you will be able to achieve this target.

Now to ensure that the necessary targets are achieved perhaps some of the experience that we have gained in Malaya might be adopted here in this State. Ministers and officials will not only make frequent visits to districts and divisions to see for themselves the progress made but that there should also be established organisation operations room—at state and divisional levels where this progress could be cheked and re-checked from time to time.

Also apart from this operational and technical evaluation of progress, I do hope that members of the Sarawak Development Planning Committee would direct their whole attention and energy to see that the plan is satisfactorily carried out from time to time, and that there is a high degree of consistency in the implementation of the Plan within the General framework of the Plan as adopted.

By this I mean that there should not be undue rigidities, and account from time to time, from year to year, should be taken of prevailing circumstances and conditions and necessary changes may have to be made. I am also advised that the National Development Planning Committee, in consultation with the State Development Planning Committee, will reconsider the order of priorities of the Plan from year to year as they are being brought up for approval by Council Negeri. In addition, when the Central Government prepares the third five-year plan, or what will be known as the First Malaysian Development Plan, for the period

1966-70, proposals for revision and changes will, I hope, be considered so that your Plan can in some way be integrated into the Malaysian Development Plan as a whole.

You have a bold Development Plan costing \$300 million in five years. In any Development Plan, one has to take account of technical capacity and financial limitation, but as you have agreed this is the objective which you would like to aim at. We in the Central Government will do our best to try to help you to achieve this objective. But I am confident that this new and bold Plan of yours will succeed whatever difficulties may lie ahead. Our progress in Malaya since we achieved independence has been satisfactory. Our democratic system of Government has shown that with the public support and with effective leadership, a democratic government can raise the living standard of the people and can overcome difficulties in any form that they may arise. It has shown that a democratic form of government is a government that can serve the people, that can deliver them the goods they require. Here, I am sure that, in due course, the people in Sarawak—particularly those who live in the rural areas—will be able to feel the impact and see the feasible evidence of the progress from your effort in the implementation of your Plan. Therefore, Mr. Chief Minister and gentlemen, I wish you all good luck and let us all look forward ahead with confidence and determination and may God give us His blessing so that we would be able to establish a united, strong and happy Malaysia not only for us all here today, but for our children and our grandchildren in the years to come.