

ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT THE
BLUE ROOM, IMPERIAL RESTAURANT, 2ND FLOOR,
CAPITAL BUILDING, SINGAPORE ON 14TH FEBRUARY,
1965

Mr. President¹, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you, Mr. President and members of the Singapore Union of Journalists for your kind invitation to address you all. I wanted to meet you in October last year but I am sorry I was unable to do so because of other commitments. May I say again, Mr. President, that I am indeed very happy and honoured to be your guest at lunch here today.

I have been asked to talk about "Malaysia and Confrontation", and it is probably appropriate that we meet today in the Imperial Restaurant, that gives me my cue because Confrontation is basically a result of Soekarno's ambitious Imperialism.

It would, however, be more appropriate if instead of lunching in the 'Blue Room' of this Restaurant, we could lunch in the 'Green Room', because another reason for Confrontation, is the fact that Soekarno is *green* with envy; — envy of the success of Democracy in Malaysia and the success of our progress in Development and nation-building.

There is no need for me in talking to you learned Members of the Press, to go back and trace the historical background of Confrontation or the historical background of the formation of Malaysia because all of you know the facts.

I would rather, therefore, confine myself more to one or two main points.

I believe that, if after Independence in Malaya, in 1957, we had followed Indonesia's example of continually revolving in revolution; if conditions in Malaya had been chaotic, with no progress, and no Development, then Soekarno and his colleagues would have had no ground for trying to crush us, because, we would already have been a crushed, downtrodden people similar to the majority of Indonesians who are suffering under the domination of Soekarno's dictatorship since the Dutch left Indonesia in 1945.

Mr. Lee Kuan Yew .

But, it is because, after Independence, with unity of purpose and a deep-rooted determination, we made Democracy work, we made Development a success, we gave proof of progress Soekarno then knew that his own people, whom he had misruled since 1945, would eventually become jealous of their well-dressed, well-fed, happy and united neighbours.

In Indonesia the people have not benefitted at all by the Independence that was achieved. Indeed the condition of the people has gone from bad to worse. They are worse off than they were under the Dutch and even worse off than they were during the war. President Soekarno talked of revolution and revolution for 20 years but the people of Indonesia are revolting in hunger and poverty. Obviously Soekarno's efforts to solve Indonesian problems have failed. That is why he is afraid that the stability and success we in Malaya and Malaysia have achieved will win them over, show up his failure and will make the people of Indonesia more and more discontent.

So, therefore, he had to, and still has to continually find *emotional* fuel in order to keep the fire of his dictatorship burning.

I always think, Ladies and Gentlemen, that the difference between a Dictatorship and a Democracy is similar to the difference between driving a bulldozer and piloting a modern jet aeroplane.

In the first few years of the flight of Democracy, it is like sitting at the controls of a large jet airliners; there are many dials instruments and pressure gauges that one has got to watch; even more so in the case of a country like Malaysia where there are extra and more intricate pressure gauges which could almost be labelled as Chinese feeling, Malay feeling, Indian feeling, political feeling; all sorts of feelings and if the jet plane of Democracy is to travel smoothly, all these pressure gauges need constant attention and supervision.

But once it has gained speed and momentum, with a true democratic drive, one can almost switch on to an automatic pilot and travel extremely efficiently and fast towards progress.

On the other hand, a Dictatorship like that of Soekarno's which has only one instrument, the heavy hand on a bulldozer. It is heavy and cumbersome, and if badly handled, may fall backwards. Indonesia has been going backwards since 1945 and it is this jealousy that in the first place stimulated Soekarno to confront us. In other words, the motivating force behind Confrontation is a fear that our way of life and our progress in Malaysia will become the envy of the subjects of this Dictator and they may rise up and denounce his rule.

Although he has a large standing army, it is unlikely that he could put all his troops into the forefront of battle because he needs his best troops — hundreds of them to protect his own life and thousands of them in every kampong and every town to ensure the survival of his own dictatorial Government.

How different is the dictatorship of Indonesia and the democratic freedom of Malaysia.

As you know, last week throughout Malaysia all of us Malaysians, Chinese, Indian and other races celebrated for four days, the two main religious holidays of the year, Hari Raya and Chinese New Year, and never before, in my life, have I been able to sense, see and feel such an expression of good feeling, goodwill and good relationship between our various communities.

And this, Ladies and Gentlemen, is the first essential in dealing with Confrontation: *National unity and harmony.*

However, Ladies and Gentlemen, there are in Malaysia some reckless political leaders who, merely for their own selfish end would like to make use of the present crisis by stepping on racial sentiments. By going this they hope to create among people that there is no unity among the people when, in fact, there is great National Unity.

It has also been both a Communist tactic and a Soekarno technique to stir up racial trouble in Malaysia but I am glad to say that any attempts to do this have so far failed and will continue to fail because the ordinary people in the country, irrespective of their racial origin, realise that the future of our country lies in the unity of our people. They realise that although there are differences in character and characteristics between us - Malays, Chinese, Indians, Dayaks and Kadazans — these differences are very much outnumbered by the tremendous similarities shared by us. All of us, whatever our racial origin may be, have only one aim, that is, to live in peace and progress and to ensure that our children and grandchildren have a secure and happy life in our country.

In order to achieve all these, therefore, we must work together in thought, in world and deed, to make Malaysia a success and if need be, by giving our lives. We, responsible leaders of this country, will see to it that our country will survive whatever dangers there may be in our midst.

It has also been alleged by some politician who should have known better but who did this merely in order to create chaos in this country

so that out of this chaos they will come into power, that some of the UMNO leaders of ultra-nationalists and are now trying to turn back the clock and are following the communal policy. Such remarks and such allegations could only be made by people who do not have the interest of the country or our people at heart but are merely bent on stirring up trouble. We in the Alliance have shown by our record over nearly ten years for racial harmony and unity, for cooperation among all the races who make up this country. Our record has shown beyond any doubt that we have been a fair and a liberal Government, that we have endeavoured to look after the sensitivities of the various races and been able to hold them together. It is only recently that we had seen political leaders to upset this balance of races when we heard talk of racial tension and racial trouble, of insecurity and what not. As I said I am sure all these attempts to stir up racial trouble will fail and must fail because our people will see to it that they fail.

We in the Alliance sincerely believe in cooperation among the races in this country. That is why we always talk of racial/cooperation, of harmony, of unity among our people. All sensible political leaders who sincerely have the interests of the country at heart always stress on communal similarities rather than differences because we know even though today there are differences between the different races, we hope and we wish that day by day these differences are slowly disappearing and the more Soekarno confronts us, the more united we become.

Malaysia will survive and succeed because, the ordinary people of this country are practical and have more common sense, the will and the determination than what these chauvinists credit them with.

With regard to defence, and our present defence build up, helped generously by our friends in the Commonwealth, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada[^] history and human nature has proved that the only way to confront a bully is to build up one's strength of Defence.

Bullies as we all know from own school days will only attack and taunt the *weak*.

So, therefore, our answer to Confrontation is to be strong, not only in the military sense, but strong in our unity, strong in our determination to develop, and carry on with our development programme, in spite of the external threat from Soekarno; and strong in safeguarding our sovereignty.

It is the view of some of the more progressive countries in the West that the problem of Confrontation can be resolved by negotiation and diplomacy.

This has already been tried!

Talks in Manila, Bangkok and Tokyo produced nice words and high sounding promises but Soekarno, on his return to Jakarta, does his usual *turn-about-face* and has shown consistently by his actions that he cannot be trusted to keep either verbal or written agreements.

And even at the *very time he sits at the Conference table*, he sends more troops to our shores to violate our sovereignty.

Our stand, the Malaysian viewpoint, is quite clear for the whole World to know.

There are two main points.

Firstly, we have no ill-feeling against the Indonesian people, with when we have everything and we have no wish to go to war with them! Our opposition to Indonesia here in Malaysia is confined only to its present leaders who want to crush us and not opposition to the people and leaders who have no malice towards us and who sincerely want to live in peace.

The second point is that no human being anywhere in the World, can talk peace and goodwill to another human being, *when one of them*, is sticking a bayonet into the other. We will talk, we will negotiate, we will resort to diplomacy *only on one* condition: that Soekarno, in good faith, and in fact, withdraws his bayonets and steps his aggressive nets. That is the only possible condition under which any form of negotiation could take place.

There is also, Ladies and Gentlemen, a tendency throughout the World to regard Malaysia's Confrontation as a crisis which only affects us here, we Malaysians. This is not so.

Soekarno's present Confrontation of Malaysia is in fact the problem of every small, new, emerging developing Nation.

The countries of Africa may think that Malaysia is far off and they only read about Confrontation in newspapers; it does not affect their daily lives, but I say this, that if Soekarno succeeds in his bullying methods to crush Malaysia then every young Afro-Asian Nation will

not be able, in the future, to sleep peacefully at night without the fear of aggression and the fear of being swallowed up by other Soekarno's, called perhaps by a different name.

It is essential, Ladies and Gentlemen, that those countries which are Members of the Afro-Asian group should realise, if they cherish their present freedom, that they must join in, full heartedly, now, in support of the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the Bandung Concept and principles.

May I remind you of the actual words of this Charter:

"WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATION DETERMINE to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small".

What is happening to Malaysia today with Soekarno's Confrontation can also happen quite easily to every newly Independent Afro-Asian country and the best and quickest way of stopping this dictator's disease, which could easily spread throughout the World, is for every free nation, big or small, particularly our Afro-Asian brothers to give us their support.

Those who cannot give material support at least can give moral support as an investment towards their own future security in the World.

Besides military Confrontation the enemies are doing their best to subvert our people by whatever means possible. Recently the Government had to arrest several leading political leaders because they were found to have been working in league with the enemies to overthrow the legally constituted Government of the Country. The Government has clear evidence to show that these leaders had secretly concluded agreement with our enemies to establish a Malaysian Government in exile. These leaders, because of money, committed treasonable acts against their King and their country. Two of the leaders have since made voluntary confessions in no uncertain terms how they were made to carry out these treasonable acts against their mother-land and their own people.

Yesterday the Government made further arrests of political leaders for similar activities. The Government has to take firm action to save the country from these enemy agents. These political leaders have in their speeches pledged to serve the people and claim that they are loyal to this country but we now know that they secretly made agreement with the enemies to destroy Malaysia. They have done this for their own personal interests and because of these they were prepared to hand over the destiny of the nation to alien hands.

These are some of the so-called leaders we have in our country. Ladies and Gentlemen: How can we entrust the destiny of our nation in the hands of these so-called leaders whom we have arrested? The people should now know who are the real leaders of this country and who are prepared to serve and made sacrifices if necessary in defence of our security and freedom. The Alliance Government is responsible for the security of Malaysia and of maintaining its independence and national integrity. We will not hesitate to take any actions and measures we feel necessary to ensure the sustaining of our democratic way of life. We know, if the enemies were to over run the country, there will be no place for true and loyal citizens of Malaysia and subsequently in South-East Asia. Let us all realise the serious threat which is being faced by our country today. Let us all, whatever our racial origin may be, stand solidly behind the Alliance Government in facing Indonesia and Communist threats against our security and independence.

Thank you, Berjaya and Merdeka Malaysia!