

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE LUNCHEON ON THE INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF THE SEMINAR OF
TAMIL STUDIES ON 19TH APRIL, 1966.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen;

I am happy to be here this afternoon and to have this opportunity of meeting you all. I would like to associate with the Honourable the Prime Minister¹ and my colleague, the Minister of Works, Posts and Telecommunications, Tan Sri Sambanthan, in extending our very sincere welcome to you all to our country. We consider that this Seminar which you are now holding on Tamil Studies is important and useful not only to you all who are participating in the Seminar but also to us in Malaysia, and for the development of our Nation and our country. As you know, Malaysia is a multi-racial country with citizens from different racial origins. The most vital task which faces the Government and the people of this country is the task of welding together people of various races to one united Nation. We are endeavouring to build a united people out of the various racial and cultural groups that are in our midst. We also endeavouring to absorb these various racial and cultural differences into a cohesive unity. Some people think that in this multi-racial society may lie our weakness but we ourselves are convinced that in this blend of races the real strength of Malaysia can be found.

As you know, gentlemen, even the best cigarettes on the market depend for their quality on their blend. Also the strongest structure or structures of the world are not made of one material but on a blend of cement and steel to form reinforced concrete. Therefore, it is the coming together of our various races, of Malays, Chinese, Indians, Ibans, Kadazans and many other races in our territories, will the spirit of understanding of freewill and determination to work together in the task of building a united and a democratic nationhood that has given us the real strength; and this also has given us untapped human resources and provided that we can be

left alone undisturbed to shape our destiny and provided we are given the fullest support from democratic nations of the free world, we feel confident that Malaysia will be a success.

The reason why we regard your study research and Seminar as important is because we are endeavouring to mould a national culture out of the cultures of the various races and also while we encourage the study of the National Language as a medium of communication or a bridge of communication so that our people of the races - Chinese can talk freely to Malays, Malays can talk freely to Indians, and Indians to others and so forth. We also encourage the growth of other languages and cultures. We not only would like our people to be able to talk to one another but also to understand each other; and the best method of achieving this complete understanding is to have one common language while other languages can also be used. It is in this blending together of various cultures and languages that our real strength lie.

Also, gentlemen, in our efforts to build a united people while at the same time upholding and encouraging the growth of democratic institutions, we must prevent our people from being subverted by ideas and ideologies which are foreign to them and we shall be contrary to our belief in freedom and democracy. As you know, we have to fight militant communism for 12 years and although militant communism was defeated in our midst we must continue to be vigilant and be forever on the look out to fight this contagious disease is to build up resistance of the body as germs have little hope on surviving in a healthy body. The same principle applies to a new and developing Nation. Therefore, in my view, the greatest safeguard against communist subversion is sound economic development and that is what we are doing in Malaysia.

Immediately after the defeat of militant communism, we turned our attention and geared the whole machinery of Government towards development, towards fighting diseases of illiteracy and poverty, particularly in the rural areas. We launched a massive Rural Development Programme immediately after the end of the Emergency, at the end of 1960. I am pleased to say that Programme was met with great success. We set a target of expenditure in the tune of \$2,250 million in the public sector in our Second Five Year Development Plan and at the end of the period of that Plan in

1965, we found that we spent about \$2,600 million. We were able to develop methods and techniques of implementation of the Development Programme which had given useful results and we had been able, during the last five years, to make considerable stride towards our goal of achieving a higher standard of living for our peoples both in the rural and urban areas and towards building a stable and a self-reliant Nation. We carried out our Development Plan in phases. In the first phase, the Government carried out its responsibility of bringing amenities of life such as roads, health, facilities, schools, community centres and the like in order to give the people, particularly those in outlying areas the minimum facilities that are required for a decent standard of living. Having done this, we moved to the next phase of calling the people to action, that is to say, we had to gear the people to contribute their own efforts towards the improvement of their standard of living. We made it clear to the people that they can only achieve happiness and prosperity if both the Government and the people do make a united effort to carry out development and that the degree of progress the country makes is the sum total of the efforts made by each and everyone of the citizens. We also made it clear to the people that the progress that they can achieve depended on the amount of efforts they are prepared to put in their daily work. Both these two phases go hand in hand and then we moved to the next phase of helping the people to increase their income, of helping them with marketing facilities and of establishing small industries, improvement in their methods of agricultural cultivation and so on and so forth. We do this through what we call the extension services, that is a team of Government officers at District levels go to the villages to give demonstrations on how to improve the method of cultivation, how to live a healthy and hygienic life, how to maintain a clean home and so on. Then we come to the fourth phase and that is of helping the people, of those who have had no opportunity to take part in the business and the commercial life of the country. This we are doing through various training and assistance and we hope while doing this to correct the economic imbalance between the people of the rural and the urban areas.

Our Development Programme is closely interrelated with our efforts of Nation building. I have always said that development is a mosaic; a combination of the various parts; you cannot separate development from politics or from day to day administration. The

scientists have as yet not answered the question asked by children: which came first, the chicken or the egg? There is a similar question to be asked with regard to National Development: which come first, political stability and economic stability? I would like to answer this question by saying that both come first and they come together; they come together because without political stability you cannot have economic development and without economic development you cannot have political stability. The two are synonymous and inseparable.

Therefore, gentlemen, the first basis for economic development is the type of political leadership which will not waste national emotion and non-essential rabble-rousing and unnecessary over-production of national pride without anything to be proud of. We in Malaysia are proud of our Development Programme, proud of our Development Projects planned, executed and implemented; proud of our higher standard of living.

Our last Five Year Development Plan would not have achieved the success it did if the political leadership of our country mis-spent the Nation's time and energy and fed our people on a diet of empty emotionalism. The basic thinking behind the implementation of our last National Development Plan was to channel our national emotion into action and use emotion as an essential vitamin in the wholesome diet of development, rather than wasting time, be-moaning the defects of the past, beating the corpse of colonialism and wasting our reservoir of national emotion in the fruitless aim of trying to compete with some other Nations who try to gain international stature of hallow words alone, without any development results to back them up. We are happy with success of our Development Programme and the political and economic stability that we have so far achieved. That is why, as I have said, the greatest safeguard of our sovereignty is not only defence, but even more so development. But in any development, the most important part is implementation and action.

¹ Y.T.M. Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj.