

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT THE
ANNUAL DINNER OF THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW
ZEALAND GRADUATES ASSOCIATION ON 15th MAY,
1965

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy indeed to be your guest tonight.

Your invitation was to both dinner and to a ball. The more I speak, the less time you will have for dancing and as I enjoy dancing rather than speaking, I shall only say a few words to you. To those of you who graduated in Australia and in New Zealand, after many pleasant years in both these countries, I am extremely happy that all of you were able to return and still be able to talk not only in the National Language but also English.

English is the language, I understand, spoken in Australia and New Zealand only by diplomats. It was only yesterday that I discovered the difference between the New Zealand and Australian Language.

There was, apparently, a New Zealander who was flying from London back to New Zealand and just before he got on the plane, he went into a barber shop in London to have a haircut.

While the English barber was cutting his hair, he said, "Would you like it cut short enough to last until you get back to Wellington?"

The man, having his haircut said, "Yes, that is a very good idea. But how did you know that I am a New Zealander and not an Australian".

The barber said, "It is quite easy, Sir, to determine". When you came in to my shop and when you sat down on my chair you said, "Haircut, *please*. You must be a New Zealander no Australian ever uses the word "please".

I know that all of you who were sent to universities in either Australia or New Zealand enjoyed yourselves very much. Some of you were on Government scholarships and some of you were financed privately by your parents and in addition to obtaining the necessary qualifications and degree, I know that you thoroughly enjoyed your days as undergraduates.

I overheard a conversation the other day about one of you, who, let us call him "X", was being discussed by two of his friends.

One of his friends said, "Graduate X comes from a very poor family". The other friend said, "No. How can that be possible because his family sent him to a university in Perth in Australia and he enjoyed his student days very much. His family cannot possibly be poor". The other friend said, 'Exactly. It is because he spent so much of his parents' money during his university days that his family is now a very poor family".

However, let us, Gentlemen, get down to more serious matters. One thing tonight I would like to say is that although we are enjoying ourselves at this dinner and the dance that would follow, there is one graduate who qualified in Australia and returned as a fully fledged accountant. He is not with us tonight because he is still recovering from the tragedy of the death of his young child and I think all of you tonight would join me in conveying to him, Encik Mohd Salleh Yusof, and his Australian wife Joan, our deepest heartfelt sympathy on the loss of his young child.

I am glad to see here tonight my two friends, Tom Critchey and Hunter Wade because this gives me an opportunity, in front of you, to convey my own, and the sincere thanks of the Malaysian Government for the tremendous help and assistance that both New Zealand and Australia have given us in making available, sometimes at the expense of their own people, vacancies in their schools, colleges and universities for Malaysian students.

We are a young nation and although we are fairly rich in our natural resources, with our investments in tin and rubber, both your countries, Australia and New Zealand, have helped us tremendously in a much more important investment - an investment in human ability, in human skills and in professional training.

Since independence we have tried our very best to ensure that Malaysia would develop at the maximum possible speed but the requirements of development is not money alone. No country can develop without high-quality human resources in the form of good professional men, doctors, engineers, architects, accountants and a few good politicians. And although we take considerable credit for the success of our development, so far, I think it is only right for me to say tonight that the credit for such success is not entirely a Malaysian credit but part of the share of our success must be given to you Tom and to you Hunter for the tremendous cooperation, help and understanding that

both your countries, as fellow-members of the Commonwealth have given so generously and so freely to Malaysia.

In spite of confrontation, in spite of attempts by the Communist world to dominate and ruin Malaysia as a nation, we are determined that Malaysia will continue to develop and show the world that we can live and progress as a free and democratic nation. This, however, will not be achieved by Government alone. It needs the best use of all the professional and technical skills that we have available in the country.

And perhaps you, all of you sitting round this table tonight are one of the largest gatherings of professionally qualified graduates that have ever sat down to dinner altogether in Malaysia. The future of our country is as much in your hands as it is in the hands of the Cabinet. And I know that with your training, your background and your good sense, not one of you will fail us. You may have problems of your own from time to time. You may have your own frustration of not getting the right job or the right place, but, nevertheless, you must all be grateful because comparing yourselves to the many millions of our population you are all extremely lucky in having had the benefit of a high university education.

It, in moments of depression or frustration, you think you have been unlucky, let me remind you of the story of the man who, during the War, lost all his belongings and even lost his shoes and that he walked along the streets in his bare feet cursing his luck that he had no shoes. He passed on another man who had also suffered from a bomb blast in the War and he noticed that the other men not only had no shoes but had no feet! Then he realised how lucky he was compared to some of his fellow men.

For all of you who are graduates have, by the grace of God, been extremely lucky to have had the opportunity of higher education and with this education and your qualifications you are lucky again in having the opportunity to serve our country; to serve Malaysia and to serve your fellow men. I wish you luck.