

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE CIVIC RECEPTION IN AUCKLAND TOWN HALL, NEW ZEALAND, ON 14TH OCTOBER, 1975

My Lord Mayor, Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed an honour as well as a real pleasure to be here at this grand Civic Reception which you have so kindly given me this evening. Together with the warm and friendly welcome accorded to us on our arrival in Auckland earlier today, this evening's magnificent hospitality will long remain a happy memory for us. Although our stay here in Auckland is all too brief, nevertheless even in that short time we have been able to sense something of the flavour and tempo of life in this city and to feel the genuine friendship and interest that its people have for Malaysia and her people.

Having spent the week-end in the Rotorua and Lake Taupo area, surely one of nature's most striking wonderlands, it is only to be expected that one's standards of scenic beauty have become very high. Nevertheless Auckland, this bustling metropolis, with its magnificent harbour and great sense of spaciousness, has impressed me tremendously. This afternoon, during our journey from the airport, I was struck by the many delightful and attractive houses around Auckland's bays and beaches and, in the suburbs, by the flowers-beds and shrubs surrounding most homes which give them such a fresh and open character. It made me ponder: what is a "culture" about, after all, but the way its people go about their ordinary lives. Not just the galleries and universities and concert halls, which you also do not lack, but the daily lives of its people—pleasant, stimulating, safe and happy. Surely in the end this is really what matters—and how fortunate you are, here in Auckland!

My Lord Mayor, turning away now from metropolitan concerns, it is heartening to know that New Zealand and Malaysia have enjoyed long and close association, both bilateral and multi-lateral, through our co-operation in many fields, economic, diplomatic and social, and through links within the Commonwealth

and such co-operative endeavours as the Colombo Plan and the Five Power Defence Arrangement. Together with the frequent flow of visits and movements between our two peoples, at all levels, and the close contact and inter-mingling of our students, the geographical distance between our two countries has been narrowed and our two countries bound closer together in friendship and co-operation. It is with the desire to strengthen even more this tradition of friendly relations and deep-rooted understanding that has brought me to this country and it is my earnest hope that this relationship will continue to flourish in the years ahead.

My Lord Mayor, may I once again thank you for this splendid reception and for the warmth and courtesy of your welcome and hospitality. In saying thank you and farewell, let me express to you, my Lord Mayor, and through you to the citizens of Auckland, my best wishes for the continued progress, well-being and prosperity of this fair city and all the people who dwell within her boundary.