

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TO  
THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB OF USA IN  
UNITED STATES ON 18TH APRIL, 1963

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

I am very grateful to you for inviting me to this lunch and for giving me the opportunity in speaking to you to-day.

I think it was Mark Twain who advised Journalists in these words:

"Get your facts first and twist them afterwards".

I would like to congratulate you, Gentlemen, because I can see signs that journalism in your country has developed considerably from the day when Mark Twain was alive. I understand that the main item of the programme of this lunch is the questions that you will ask me after I have finished speaking. Therefore I can see now that your journalistic method can be summed up in these words:

"Get your victim first, feed him well, and twist him afterwards"

Therefore, Gentlemen, your method has altered considerably the **text** of my speech because it appears to me that you **are** now going to have the last words. Now in order to enable you to have all the facts first, I have circulated to you the speech I originally intended to give so that you have more time to look at it and be in a better position to put questions to me. Also, it saves me reading that long speech and then you can twist me as much as you like.

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and all Journalists from America for the interest, and understanding that you have shown in my country and in our part of the world. You seem to have understood the problems that we are facing there.

Judging by some of the more recent articles written in papers and magazines, many of you here seem to be as well informed of Malaya and Malaysia as I am. Therefore, really after my talk, it should be for me to ask you questions and not for you to ask me questions. However, I would like to make it quite clear that you are quite free to ask me any question you like and don't regard me as something fragile that must be handled with care.

I should also like to say that the purpose of my visit to this vast and beautiful country of yours, at the invitation of your Government, is to meet and explain to leaders of your Government, Congressmen, business and banking community, political, economic and security problems of Malaya and Malaysia, I had personal talks with your President, with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defence and other senior Ministers, Senators and Congressmen and they received me most courteously and listened with great understanding and interest. I am very grateful to them all not only for the hospitality and kindness they have shown to me but also for the understanding and the support for Malaya and Malaysia and for what we stand for.

My Government and I deeply appreciate the support given by your President, and the State Department, for the formation of Malaysia and for the regarded friendship, and Members of both Houses of Congress and indeed the whole people of the United States have shown for my small country and for my people. These interests and understanding and support would certainly give us great encouragement in the task of forming Malaysia and also in facing whatever difficulties that may lie ahead of us.

As you know we in Malaya achieved Independence in 1957. We achieved it by constitutional means, by power of arguments, power of the pen and by commonsense of constitutional concurrence. The result of this method which we adopted and which we sincerely believed to be correct is that we never really had a battle with, what the Communist called, the British Colonialist or Imperialist. Because of this we had been accused of falling prey to what is termed as neo-colonialism.

I would like to say, Gentlemen, that these slogans and terminologies are now completely out of date. Goodwill, understanding and decent relationship between nations are being completely misinterpreted by using such words as neo-colonialism. I would like to say here, categorically, that people who talk about neo-colonialism are talking neo-nonsense.

Now, Gentlemen, with regard to Malaya and Malaysia there is a great similarity between the concept of Malaysia and the concept of your Country, the United States of America. In Malaya and in Malaysia we are endeavouring to build a united nation of the various racial and cultural groups that are in our midst. We are endeavouring to absorb these various racial and cultural differences into a cohesive unity. Some people may 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 Malaya and Malaysia can be found.

As you know, Gentlemen, even the best whisky or the best cigarettes on the market depends for their quality on the strength of their blend. Also, the strongest structures of the World are not made of one material but of a blend of cement and steel to form reinforced concrete. Therefore, it is the coming together of Malays, Chinese, Indians, Ibans, Kadazan and many other races of our territories, with the spirit of understanding of free will and determine 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 we are given the fullest support from democratic nations of the free world, we feel confident that Malaysia will be a success.

I myself am confident that, in time to come, Malaysia will be regarded as the second Cape Canaveral not because we will launch any rocket or missiles to the moon, or any spaceship to Venus, but because we will be able to claim that we are the real launching pad putting democracy in orbit in South East Asia.

Now, Gentlemen, it is almost certain that some of you will ask me questions about Communism in Malaya. I would therefore like to say a few words on this subject.

As you know, we in Malaya have taken a firm stand against communism in our Country. We have a lot of experience about Communism in Malaya and we have sampled it in practice. For twelve years we experienced active Communist Terrorism in our Country. They drained our resources and delayed our development. We fought them and defeated them and we are now determined that this period of our national history will not repeat itself.

We still have Communist subversive elements in our midst and we will continue to be at our guard against them and will continue to fight. Our experience in the war against the Communists or Emergency<sup>1</sup>, might be regarded as an inoculation with the serum of subversive and overt Communist which has done some good as other inoculation in the medical field towards immunisation of disease. However, we will not sit back in immunity but must be forever on the look out to fight such a contagious disease.

Medical experts say that the greatest prevention of disease is to build up resistance as germs have little hope of surviving in a healthy body.

Now the same principle applies to new and developing nations. Therefore the greatest safeguard against Communism is sound economic development and that is what we are doing in Malaya. Our National Development and particularly our Rural Development has made considerable strides towards our goal of achieving higher standard of living both in the rural and urban areas in South East Asia and towards building a self-reliant and stable nation.

We intend to continue the Development Programme in Malaysia. Indeed the object of Malaysia is to free these territories from Colonialism and also to prevent them from being subverted by the Communists, by safeguarding their interests and by giving them the amenities of life and by carrying out Development Programme to improve their standard of living.

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1 From 1948 to 1960.

We have now established an administrative machinery to undertake this development. Indeed, we, in Malaya, have the administrative machinery which is capable of carrying out development far in excess of what we can afford to finance. With Malaysia we shall need more money for development and also more money for the expansion of our defence forces for the protection of our country.

Now, Gentlemen, I have explained to you in the statement that I have circulated to you, facts and figures of our country about the economic and political situation in Malaya and Malaysia. I do not think that there is any need for me to add any more to that. As I have said I had given you the correct facts and I will leave you now to twist me as, much as you like.