

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT THE
DEBATING UNION, UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA, PANTAI
VALLEY, KUALA LUMPUR ON 20TH JULY, 1965

Mr. President, Faculty Members, Ladies & Gentlemen:

I am extremely happy to have this opportunity of meeting you all here tonight. I have always welcomed the opportunity to address our students wherever they may be. Whenever I went to London I never failed to take the opportunity of addressing our students there. Next week I shall be addressing the Students' Union of the University of Singapore. I would therefore like to thank the President and Committee Members of the Debating Union of the University of Malaya for this invitation to speak to you tonight.

Ladies and Gentlemen, standing here, looking at you and talking to you, makes me feel many years younger, not only because you have a rejuvenating effect on me, particularly the girl students, but also it brings back to my mind the student days when I led a similar life and under similar circumstances that you are experiencing today. The only difference between my days as a student and your days is that during my student days we were under British Colonial Government and our country was not independent. Therefore the main topic of conversation during any time, both at Raffles, Singapore and the Inns of Court at London, apart from talks on work and games, was that of Merdeka or the independence movement of our country.

We are now in a much happier position in that our country is now a free and independent sovereign nation, day by day gaining in strength, in spite of attempts by President Soekarno and the Jakarta regime, assisted by the agents inside our country, to crush us. I am happy that at this time, when our very existence is being challenged by enemies from without, our people of all races have shown the will and determination to face the enemies and to defend our independence. Despite everything that Indonesia does or say about confrontation, our people, even those living in far away places on the Sabah and Sarawak border, have shown high spirit, courage and determination to stand up against the enemy. For the last two years both in the economic and political fields, we have got the better of the enemies in this confrontation. Every attempt by the enemies to invade us, either by land, by sea or by air, our soldiers, assisted by our friends in the Commonwealth, have been able to eliminate or capture them, or drive them back to their country. So long as our people show a

united will to fight and defend their country and show a determination to survive, then no force or power can break or crush us.

Tonight, I propose to talk to you all on matters affecting our country, in particular on development and defence - two principal subjects for which I am ministerially responsible. I have always compared a country to a river. The two banks of the river are economic development and defence and security. If these two banks are strong the water of the river flows easily, the country marches forward and prosper.

Since we achieved independence in 1957, Malaya and now Malaysia, had made tremendous progress in the field of development. Independence has acted as a vitamin for the rejuvenation of our whole nation. In seven years as an independent and free nation we have achieved more and developed more than would be attained in seventy years or rule by a colonial power. In each and every corner of our country today, there is on the land in our kampongs, in our new villages, in our towns and in our cities, hundreds of projects.

We can rightly be proud of what, as a new and young nation, we have achieved in the years since independence. All of you will remember the period before independence when critics and doubters said that we were not yet ready to govern ourselves and that independence would probably be the beginning of the end of prosperity and stability in Malaysia. Men are born to succeed not to fail.

Merdeka to all of us have meant the beginning of the beginning of bigger and better days, the foundations and furthering of our stability and security within our shores; steady progress towards a better way of life in both the rural and the urban areas. All these things have amazed and brought praise from every other free nation in the world today. The countless visitors to our country have been warm in their appreciation and admiration of what we have achieved in the years since independence.

In Malaya our Second Five Year Development Plan has been implemented with complete success. Indeed when we launched this Plan in 1961, most people than thought that the target as set for ourselves, that is \$2,100 million expenditure on the public sector was too great to be implemented. However we were able to gear the machinery or Government and coordinate the work of Government departments and offices in all its branches. Today even before our fifth year of the plan comes to an end we have already exceeded our target. At the end of this year, that is the last year of the Plan,

we shall have spent in the region of \$2,600 million or \$2,700 million. It is clear that in implementing our development programme, the Alliance Government has successfully applied the right principles and followed the right methods. We have now applied these principles and methods to Sabah and Sarawak and it is hoped that in the next few years our people in Sabah and Sarawak will be able to obtain the same benefits from development as our people in Malaya.

Now what are these principles which we apply in the implementation of our national development, particularly our rural development programme. The foundation for positive action was based on the principle of partnership between the Government and the rural people themselves. If you look at the map of Malaya and on it compare the distance separating the Federal capital from the remote village and kampungs in our rural areas, we remember that many kampungs are far away and that a journey to them by road, by rail or by river would take many, many hours. However, in keeping with the tempo of modern travel the Alliance Government made it possible to make a journey into the heart and soul of the development needs of any kampung in record time; this journey takes less than one minute: it is a mental journey made possible by the use of "Red Book". The Red Book was conceived, designed and put into practice by the Alliance Government for the purpose of ensuring that, no matter how far away any kampung or village may be, nevertheless the hopes and needs of its people are forever near to the heart of Government. Similarly, let us look at a map of Malaysia and I feel with confidence, in the future, that what the Government had already done in Malaya, not only can they do in the development of Malaysia but can do so even better, from the experience in practice which we have already gained.

On the economic aspect of our development I feel we must be cautious in accepting theories and practices which apply in other countries, and although our main aim is better growth and better prosperity, let us remember that prosperity in both the rural and urban areas should not always be judged by the same material gains which are the yardstick of progress in the more advanced nations of the world. Economic growth is a necessary goal for Malaysia, but it must not be considered to out-weight all others, nor should it be assumed that every action that increases wealth is necessarily right. The increase of wealth, the raising of our overall standard of living, is an essential factor in our economic development. But such economic development will only be satisfactory if it acts to preserve the meaning of life, not destroy it.

So therefore our development should have a focus not entirely on material gain, but a focus also on the human, social, cultural and religious aspects of our lives, so that we can build up a Malaysia which is not only economically stable, but which is also a nation of people who are happy within themselves, self-reliant and secure within their own sincerity of purpose.

Our objective is to level up, that is to help the less fortunate of our people to enjoy better amenities of life, indeed to get full benefits in all that a civilised society can give.

It is not my intention to go into detail of our development programme. As has often been stated, the emphasis in that programme has been to help the less fortunate of our people or what are commonly known as "have-nots". Our rural development programme is planned and implemented with zeal and enthusiasm. One important aspect of our rural development plan is land development. We have now throughout the country sixty-two land schemes of 4,000 acres each and each scheme land is alienated, jungle trees felled, roads built, water supply laid on, houses built for settlers and each family is alienated with 10 acres of land of which seven acres are planted with either high yielding rubber or oil palm and the rest is utilised for residential purpose as well as for the planting of fruits and vegetables. A monthly subsidy is given to each family by Government on loan. Amenities such as schools and health clinics are also provided. On each lot it is estimated that a family will earn a basic income of about \$350 per month at a fairly conservative estimate of price of rubber or oil palm. A few of these schemes have now produced income. As and when the land produces income a settler is expected to pay the Government loan by easy instalments. In one instance, where Government has asked the settlers to pay about \$40 a month, the settlers themselves volunteered to pay double that amount because they are earning such a good income. The settlers are given permanent titles to their land.

In addition to the sixty land schemes I have mentioned we propose to start our biggest land scheme in the centre of Pahang which is known as "Jengka Triangle", and here it is hoped to develop about 200,000 acres of land to be given to our people who need land in the same way as our other land schemes.

Now what can be more socialistic than these land development schemes of ours. In the communist countries people are made to work on the land. Our emphasis will be, on the one hand, to help the rural people to increase their income and to give them greater share in the

economic and business life of the country, and on the other, to build houses and homes for people in the urban areas, who are without homes. We will also assist the less fortunate of our people in the urban areas with amenities in the same way we are doing for the rural people. In this way, as I have always stated, our national development plan is national in scope and character, designed to help our people of all races, whoever they may be so that the "have-nots" in our society will have a share in the progress and development of our country and will enjoy a standard of living compatible with life in a decent and civilised society.

In my view the great thing we must remember in development and the future problem of Malaysia is that there is also a law which we can apply, a law which has not been drafted or made by mankind, it is a law of nature of what we can call the law of cause and effect. The law of cause and effect is roughly this - in the world nothing really happens automatically, even crops do not grow automatically; if a farmer wants to grow a crop he has got to clear the land, sow the seed and work hard in tending the crop, to get results. So it is with development. Just talking about development, just making development plans, just hoping for development will never in fact result in development. To achieve development, to achieve economic growth, to achieve a happy and highly developed Malaysia, means hard work, harnessing of all our energies and the ability of our leaders to convert emotion and plans into motion and action towards sound economic development of a happy and stable Malaysia.

Now coming to the subject of defence. As a small developing nation quite obviously⁷ we are in no position to have armed forces, that is Army, Navy and Air Force, of sufficient strength to defend ourselves adequately against external threat or aggression. That is why since independence in 1957 we decided to maintain our defence expenditure at a low level so that we could devote our resources to economic development, to give the people a better and higher standard of living and better amenities of life they have wanted for so long. Until the establishment of Malaysia in 1963 our defence expenditure was only eight percent of our total budget. However with the establishment of Malaysia, with a bigger territory to defend and a longer coastline to protect, we have to increase our defence forces. The establishment of Malaysia brought with it confrontation by Indonesia and we have to expand our armed forces further. With the result that in the last two years our expenditure on defence and security had more than doubled and it will continue to increase. It is, I must say, regrettable that for a developing country like ours where so much can be done in the field of economic development, we have to divert certain of

our resources to defence and security. However, if we value our independence and integrity, our freedom and our way of life, then we must take appropriate measures to defend ourselves.

As I said, as a small nation we have no means to defend ourselves adequately against external threat or aggression, particularly against a bigger and stronger neighbour, such as Indonesia. Therefore, on the day we achieved independence in 1957 we signed a Defence Treaty with the United Kingdom and the United Kingdom supported by Australia and New Zealand undertook to defend us against external aggression. This Treaty was entered into by us voluntarily and freely and it could be reviewed at any time. With the present confrontation, of course we are grateful to our friends, Britain, Australia and New Zealand for assisting us not only in the expansion of our armed forces, but also with men, ships and planes to help defend our territorial integrity. This defence arrangement can only be temporary and the time must come when we have to provide for the defence of our country and ourselves.

Indonesia started this confrontation against us because she said Malaysia constituted a threat to her security. Now how can a small nation like ourselves, with a population of just under eleven million be a threat to a big country with a population of more than one hundred million and a strong standing army, such as Indonesia? But what constitutes a threat to Indonesia is not our size and strength, but the ideals for which we stand. Now we in Malaysia stand for freedom, democracy and justice. Malaysia carries with it ideals which are dynamic and positive providing for our people democracy, freedom and justice and economic stability, and these ideals provide great contrast to Indonesia's so-called guided democracy, which has only empty slogans and has provided nothing for the people. Indeed Indonesia's so-called guided democracy means that the people have to suffer more and more.

These ideals that I have mentioned are enshrined in our Constitution. Our Constitution has been so drafted so as to make Malaysia a meaningful and purposeful concept within the needs of our people of all races, in order to make them all happy and contented. The whole concept in our Constitution is based on the idea of "give" rather than "take". To give to those who have not without taking from those who have.

Many of you must have heard lately of allegations against the Alliance Government, that we believe in the supremacy of one race over the other and that we have not provided for equal rights to all our citizens. I would like to rebutt these allegations because clearly our

Constitution does not provide the supremacy of any single race or community. All Malaysians of all races are equal under the Constitution and their rights and privileges are zealously guarded. The Constitution however provides for the safeguard of the special position of the natives. This does not mean supremacy or privilege but rather a special position which requires special attention. The Constitution recognises that where there is disparity, a system of parity is provided in order to make everybody happy. It is known to everybody that the natives are economically backward and therefore in order to give them a fair chance to compete with other races they are given this special attention in the Constitution or in plain language handicap. This handicap gives the natives a chance to have a share in the economic and business life of the country.

As I said, by giving this special attention to this particular section of our community, the Constitution will not take away the rights and privileges of others and this arrangement serves to unite and promote solidarity between the natives and the other Malaysians.

Therefore, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is clear under our Constitution which the Alliance Government formulated and which it has repeatedly pledged to uphold there is a fair place for every Malaysian in our country. The Constitution is so formulated as to be fair and just to all sections of our people so that they can move forward together in harmony, goodwill and friendship. The Alliance Government has always believed in the unity and harmony among our people of various races so that ultimately they can be welded together into one united nation. Of course the process of bringing this unity may take time because only a small section of our people, i.e. those who were educated in English schools are able to know and understand each other. The great majority of the people have lived under colonial rule in separate communities and therefore we have to give them time to understand each other, to feel that they are friends and brothers. But the ultimate objective is clear. It is the firm intention of the Alliance Government whatever others may say, to move forward bringing our people of various races together in harmony and friendship, so that ultimately they will regard themselves not as members of different communities but as members of one nation. We have said this is the cardinal principle of our policy many, many a time and it does seem hardly worth repeating but there are some people who for reason of their own refuse to understand what we said. Therefore it is necessary for us to continue repeating this vitally important policy of our Government.

I have no doubt that the majority of our people have a deep sense of loyalty to our country and know that they must live together in harmony, friendship and unity because on this alone can we look forward to the future with real hope and confidence.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have spoken to you at great length on various matters affecting our country and our people. Despite what a few politicians have said about tension or division which have no basis and do not exist, I am happy and proud at the way in which our people of all races have stood together solidly in the face of the present national crisis. I have no doubt that if we continue to show our determination to live together and exist as a nation we shall come through the present Emergency and confrontation triumphantly and that Malaysia will emerge as a happy and prosperous country in which its citizens of all races will have a just and proud place.



Tun Abdul Razak bin' Hussein ketika berucap kepada Persatuan Bahas (Debating Union) Universiti Malaya di Kuala Lumpur pada 20 Julai, 1965.