

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TO
STUDENTS' UNION AND FACULTY MEMBERS,
UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE ON 24TH JULY, 1965

Mr. President, Faculty Members, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel both happy and honoured to be here tonight at your invitation.

On my way flying down from Kuala Lumpur I had some doubt in my mind as to whether tonight I am supposed to give you an address, a speech or a talk.

I cannot give you an address, at least not an address that would be of any use to the male Members of your Union because it is a long time since I myself was a student, here, at Raffles College, and even if I found my old address book I am sure you would find it already outdated, by which I mean no longer dateable!

Therefore, I cannot give you an address and I am equally reluctant to give you a speech, I merely want to talk to you, because I am beginning to agree with the philosopher who, many years ago, said that "Children should be seen and not heard"; I think the time has come to add to this dictum and apply it also to politicians.

It is my view that politicians should not be judged on their continual utterances, their speeches, their oratory, and their ability to hold the limelight in the same way as film stars!

You cannot possibly run a country the same way as an actor; you cannot possibly govern and hold a country together in unity merely in the same way as an actor on the stage holds his audience, by continually being in the glare of the footlights!

In a nation of sensible people, such as Malaysia, with good government and good political leadership, it is not so much what matters front stage; more important is the hard work, sound thinking and action which is carried out back stage.

Take our neighbour for instance — Soekarno — who since 1945 has been trying to run a country; keep it together, and develop it, without success, on one method alone — on speeches, empty slogans, words, promises; all shallow and hollow, with no action, and no results! — except a reduced standard of living for his people.

I know that the great Greek philosopher, Plato, said that "Rhetoric is the art of ruling men" but you must remember that in the days when Plato was alive there were no universities which produced people who could think for themselves; and it is my view that to rule by rhetoric as suggested by Plato, and as practised by Soekarno, one can only succeed with illiterate, ill-educated and down-trodden masses.

But we as a nation, Malaysia, are fast becoming a highly educated set of people with a first-class educational system, good universities and, with plans to double and treble the output of our university education.

So therefore, we are not a nation that can be misled and misguided merely by words and slogans but we will continually be guided by good sense and logical thinking!

And with the application of this good sense and balanced thinking, with the application of sound principles of democratic Government, time will tell, and with the help of God we will prove that a country like Indonesia cannot be run on a diet merely of megalomania and rhetoric, and most certainly cannot crush us!

Soekarno's irrational rantings and ravings have led his country to starvation with an inadequate diet for the poor Indonesian people.

Let us hope, as we go forward in unity, that the day will come when Soekarno and his colleagues will have to live on an unsavoury staple diet of eating their own words!

But although the people of Indonesia have got to live on words alone, we here in Malaysia, have got to be continually on the alert, and be forever on our guard in listening to, both the spoken and printed words of selfish politicians.

I think it was Kipling who said that "Words are the most powerful drug used by mankind" and drugs in the modern world nowadays are mostly synthetic!

This word synthetic needs no explanation throughout Malaysia, because, it has been repeatedly said by economists and financiers that, one of the greatest threats to Malaysia is the production of synthetic rubber which in time could kill the market for natural rubber.

I think that at this very moment in Malaysia, our new nation, there is another threat not from the production of synthetic rubber but from the production of synthetic racial differences and tension.

Our natural national tendency since the days of Hang Tuah and the days of the old Kapitan China has been a natural tendency towards harmony, unity and goodwill between all races.

Since "Merdeka Malaya" and "Merdeka Malaysia", have gone further, and further forward, towards becoming a united people; with the differences between our racial groups diminishing from day to day.

And I say quite openly, frankly and categorically that anyone who tries to divide us, disrupt our natural national unity is merely creating a synthetic problem, a synthetic separation, a synthetic racial differences which at present does not exist but is a synthetic creation to win popular personal political power.

So, therefore, I say to all of you and to all true citizens of Malaysia, beware and be on your guard.

It is the duty of our soldiers, our airmen and our sailors to guard our boundaries, our shores and our beaches, but it is also the duty of every true citizen of this country to be on his guard, not to be misled by a wanton wedge of words about racial disharmony, words which can only widen the way for Soekarno's subversive schemes to sabotage our sovereignty!

Before coming here recently I spent two days in Malacca and every time I go there I cannot help feeling and believing that Malacca is a "Microcosm of Malaysia".

In other words "a Malaysia in miniature" where all races, Malays, Chinese, Indians and Eurasians have blended over the last 400 years into a very happy peaceful and peace-loving people and I say to anyone who doubts the success, harmony and unity of our Malaysia to go to Malacca and see for themselves.

Given patience, time and tolerance on everyone's part, and with the grace of God, in a few years to come we will all have forgotten our original racial origin and all the true Malaysians.

Let us now look to the future.

My Government is determined, in spite of Confrontation and, in spite of having to spend more money on Defence, that Development will go on ahead with the same speed, the same energy, and the same determination, as has been applied to our present Five Year National Development Plan (1961-65).

As you know, preparations are in hand now, for the launching of the First Malaysia Five Year National Development Plan, which will commence beginning of next year, 1966.

It will be ambitious and realistic in spite of any threats by our neighbour across the Straits.

The target figure of expenditure will be in the region of approximately \$6,000 million.

With the lessons we have learnt, the techniques and skills we have developed, and experience gained, in the implementation of this present Five Year Development Plan, I am sure, and I know, that with the support of the whole nation, the implementation of our first Malaysia Five Year Development Plan will take our country further forward in economic progress so that it may accept its rightful place in the economy of the Free World.

The main aims of the Plan will be to advance on two main roads to progress — intensified agricultural diversification on the one hand, and intensified industrialization on the other.

The underlying principle of our policy is one of levelling up the imbalance of the various sectors of our economy, and of levelling up the standard of living of all our people.

We do not agree with the Communist Socialist system that you rob the rich for the poor; neither do we agree that we deprive individuals of their private property.

One of the mainstays of our Constitution is the protection of the rights and property of every single Malaysian citizen and we stand by our Constitution.

We aim at a property-owning Democracy, and an example of our success so far can be seen from the many land development schemes throughout the Federation where the settlers, on these schemes, of all races, have been given their own land, their own homes and the opportunity of a higher standard of living; with pride in their hearts, pride in their homes, pride in their property and pride in the results of their own efforts to better themselves!

I am sure this way of life is much better and happier existence than living in a Communist Commune or working in a Communist factory, because our development programme not only includes the

development of our economy, and the development of a higher standard of living, but also includes the development of other things essential to the people of a happy nation — the development of a free personality, free to smile, free to worship, free to talk, free to choose one's own way of life, and free to advance by the application of one's own effort and ability!

From my student days I remember a poem answering the question of what is a Communist.

What is a Communist, One who hath yearnings,
For equal division of unequal earnings,
'Bodoh', or bloody fool, or both, he is willing,
To contribute his cent and pocket your shilling!

Have no doubt in your minds, Malaysia is not going to be dominated by Communism, Soekarno-ism, or any other form of dictatorship, as long as we, all of us, loyal Malaysian citizens, have blood flowing in our veins and energy to fight for freedom!

We are a new nation and immediately after our birth we were confronted by aggression from outside.

Let not this deter us, but let us determine to turn the present situation to our own advantage.

Let me explain!

Take for example the modern industrial process of converting iron ore into the strongest metal in the world-high quality steel.

The purest ore, and the highest quality steel, is produced from the hottest furnace.

In other words, adversities and difficulties which face us now as a new nation need not throw us into an attitude of despair or despondency. No.

They present to us a challenge!

We as a Nation can go through the furnace of adversity and come out after the process stronger, more resilient and of a higher quality beyond our greatest expectations!

Who knows, but perhaps the Historians of the future will record in their history books, that Soekarno in disguise, was not an enemy

of Malaysia, but rather a benefactor in so much as, the words of his wrath and anger against Malaysia can be compared to the fires of a furnace producing high quality steel, and that he, by his stupid Confrontation, made us as true Malaysians, steel ourselves; strengthen ourselves; determine to succeed; and develop, in spite of any adversity which besets us whether it be internal or external.

However, if we are to become a Nation of the same quality of a strong resilient metal like steel, the ingredients necessary for the chemical composition of making a strong and united Nation must all be of the very purest quality and it is imperative that this process of nation-building must not be polluted, as we go through, the fires of adversity and Confrontation; it must not be polluted or weakened by the production of synthetic racial differences!

Thank you, — Good night.