

SPEECH BY: DATO' SERI DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
(PRIME MINISTER)

EVENT: AT THE OFFICIAL DINNER IN HONOUR OF THE RT. HON. PIERRE ELLIOTT
TRUDEAU PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

VENUE: THE BANQUET HALL, PARLIAMENT HOUSE

DATE: 10 JAN 1983

TIME:

The Rt. Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau,
Prime Minister of Canada;
Distinguished Members of the Canadian
Delegation;
Honourable Ministers;
Excellencies;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is indeed with great pleasure that I welcome you, Mr. Prime Minister, and your distinguished delegation to Malaysia. In fact, I should say welcome back, Mr. Prime Minister, as you are no stranger to this country, this being your second official visit. During your first visit in May, 1970, you met Malaysia's first Prime Minister YTM Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj. In October, 1971, you played host to Malaysia's second Prime Minister, the late YAB Tun Abdul Razak, during his official visit to Canada. You have probably also met my immediate predecessor, YAB Tun Hussein Onn, during one of the Commonwealth Summits. You therefore are not only familiar with this country, but with all its Prime Ministers as well. We honour your presence here tonight as a further expression of our high regard for Canada and of the close and friendly ties that have for many years now linked our two countries.

2. I was given to understand that while discussing the programme of your visit to Malaysia, you had sounded out the possibility of finding some time to visit the Campbell eating stalls, which you recalled from your previous visit. I am afraid that the Campbell stalls of the 70's are no longer there, having given way to the process of change. However, let me quickly assure you that while those stalls no longer operate along Campbell Road, renamed Jalan Dang Wangi, such stalls are still plentiful and easily found in Kuala Lumpur.

3. The transition of the Campbell stalls can be said to exemplify the process of change and development. Change and development are integral to any society and nation. The problem that confronts societies and nations, however, is that not all developments are for the better. Nothing illustrates this point more than the recent changes that

have taken place in Malaysia's external environment, both in the political and economic spheres.

4. I am gratified, Mr. Prime Minister, that amidst these developments, our bilateral relations have continued to remain sound, steady and meaningful. We recall with pleasure that Canada was one of the first to establish a resident diplomatic representation in Malaysia following independence in 1957. We are appreciative of your economic and technical assistance and hold in esteem your willingness in providing educational opportunities for Malaysian students. Neither have we forgotten the important and helpful role Canada played in the resettlement of Vietnamese illegal immigrants.

5. Given this secure foundation, we can therefore be confident about the future development of our bilateral relations. This applies particularly to economic, trade and educational fields. Malaysia, within this context, welcomes Canadian participation in our current national development endeavours, as outlined in the Fourth Malaysia Plan. The Fourth Malaysia Plan, in essence, seeks to improve further the standard of living of all Malaysians. It is my sincere hope that Canada will contribute to the success of the Fourth Malaysia Plan through greater investment and joint ventures, especially in the sectors where Canada has the capital, expertise and experience.

6. Our political relations, I must say, have always been characterised by a high degree of concurrence on all important aspects of global and regional affairs. We have always agreed that close political cooperation is needed in order to be able to overcome the increasingly difficult economic problems of the present and the future. Your current visit bears testimony to this continuing process of consultation and cooperation.

Mr. Prime Minister,

7. Canada's interest in this region, particularly in the five ASEAN countries, is not new. This longstanding interest has over recent years taken tangible forms, particularly with the setting up of the ASEAN-Canada Forest Tree Seed Centre as well as the Fisheries Post Harvest Technology Centre. I am convinced that, given the necessary political will, Canada-ASEAN relations can become the model of cooperation between a developed country and a group of developing countries, based on partnership on equal terms and common interest.

8. The international scene, encompassing both political and economic dimensions, appears dismal, a view which I had expressed during my recent address at the United Nations General Assembly. International law and order has truly broken down, giving rise to a situation where might and right is almost synonymous. The international community

watches helplessly while weak countries like Kampuchea, Afghanistan and Lebanon are invaded with impunity and without mercy by those bent on expansionism. The United Nations, where the small and weak countries turn to, especially when confronted with external military aggression, is being deliberately deprived of its powers to prevent and control such aggression. The need to restore faith in the United Nations is very pressing. The United Nations must regain its credibility. I would like to say that countries like Malaysia must help restore the trust and confidence of the international community in this Organisation's role in resolving problems and crises and in maintaining world peace and stability. But this would be mere rhetoric. What is needed is the full backing of the powerful nations. They must revitalise the Organisation which they had created. If the Charter of the United Nations is to have any meaning than the founding nations must be prepared to back the United Nations even though they have lost their ability to manipulate it.

9. On the economic front, the developing nations are reeling from the effects of recession which are the consequences of man-made policies in the powerful commercial and financial centres of the world. The plight of the poor developing countries has only drawn pontifical remarks from the developed countries. Free trade, the hallmark of nations espousing innovation, industry and individuality, is being wrecked by the rising tide of protectionism, as exemplified at the recent GATT meeting, which your colleague and Deputy, Mr. Allan MacEachan, chaired in Geneva recently. At the same time, high interest rates and other unhealthy manipulations of the free enterprise economic system go on unabated by those who claim themselves to be the custodians of this very system.

10. Lately Western economists have been talking gleefully of putting the last nail into the OPEC coffin. The assumption is that with the collapse of OPEC the economy of the world will improve. This may be so but we are quite sure that the prices of all manufactured products that developing countries have to buy will continue to rise even when fuel prices go down. The excuse will then be that fuel does not figure much in the cost of production. Yet when fuel prices go up, prices of all manufactured goods are inflated.

11. As a producer of several primary commodities Malaysia is familiar with this phenomena. The fact that rubber and tin sells at rock-bottom prices now has not helped to reduce prices of products made from these material. For Malaysia and other developing countries it is a case of "heads I lose, tails you win" all the time. It is about time that western economists acknowledge that the present recession is caused primarily by non-productive wage increases in their countries. This has priced their goods out of the market. Faced with foreign competition in their own and foreign

markets they have reacted by raising tariff barriers, thus effectively stifling world trade. Until this is recognised, there will be no real recovery. Killing OPEC is likely to result in more Mexicos, rather than economic recovery.

Mr. Prime Minister,

12. In our discussion on current political developments in Southeast Asia, we dealt at length on the problems resulting from foreign military intervention in Kampuchea. We are agreed that these unhealthy developments pose a grave and direct threat to the peace and stability of this region. The Kampuchea issue, if not resolved peacefully and promptly, will also become a threat to world peace and security as continued foreign occupation of Kampuchea has brought in its wake big power rivalry and involvement. This is a very sad development in a region which has witnessed some of the worst human sufferings and deprivations in recent times. So long as foreign forces remain in Kampuchea preventing the free expression of self-determination by the Kampuchean people and violating the territorial integrity and sovereignty of that nation, Malaysia and its partners in ASEAN will remain steadfast in opposing the situation. A peaceful resolution of the issue must be obtained in accordance with the Declaration of the International Conference on Kampuchea, and all other relevant UN resolutions, which have been endorsed and supported by the international community. Malaysia welcomes the setting up of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea under the Presidency of His Highness Prince Sihanouk as a positive step towards the peaceful resolution of the Kampuchea issue. Malaysia is grateful to Canada for its support over the Kampuchea question.

13. Malaysia and Canada are motivated by the same desire for peace and stability in the world so that all energies can be channelled towards alleviating poverty, hunger and other deprivations and towards establishing a just and equitable new international economic order. Within this context, we look forward to a world characterised by sincere and constructive partnership and cooperation between the developed and more fortunate countries and the developing and less fortunate ones for their mutual benefit.

Mr. Prime Minister,

14. It is our pleasure to have you here again, and I hope your stay here will be both enjoyable and memorable.

15. Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now request you to rise and join me in a toast to the good health of His Excellency the Prime Minister of Canada and to the continuing close and friendly relations between our two countries.

TOAST TO THE QUEEN OF CANADA

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now invite you to rise and join me in a

toast to her Majesty the Queen of Canada.
To the Queen of Canada.