

**SPEECH BY THE CHIEF MINISTER FOR
FUNDS IN CONNECTION WITH THE
MERDEKA CELEBRATIONS OVER RADIO
MALAYA ON 9TH FEBRUARY, 1957**

August 31st, 1957, will be a day which all Malaysians will regard as the greatest day in the history of their country as it is on that occasion that Malaya will emerge into the world as an Independent Nation. It is natural, therefore, that we should wish to celebrate the occasion fittingly and on a scale hitherto unknown in this country. In the past, we have had important events such as the installations of Crowned Heads of States or their Jubilees which we celebrated with pomp and grandeur, but on the occasion of Independence Day the celebrations should be of greater magnitude as befitting such an auspicious and unique event.

Many suggestions have come forth from all over the country as to what form these celebrations should take. In so far as Government is concerned it is not its intention in this matter to impose its will on the people, but rather to accord with their wishes, and to allow them to acclaim the day in the manner they think best. It is to be a day of public rejoicing and a day that will be remembered, and it is only when the people feel that the festivities are of their own planning and choice, that the celebrations will be spontaneous and genuine.

The Government will be making certain financial provision for these celebrations, but how much this provision will be is a question which concerns us all. I would like to tell you now that the total amount which the Government might possibly afford for the whole celebration will be in the region of a million dollars. A certain portion of this sum will be required by Government itself for the entertainment of foreign guests who will be invited to our celebrations. The Government would also need part of the money to decorate its public buildings and roads. It is also proposed that part of the money will be spent to feed the poor at mosques, churches, temples and at the homes of the old and destitute. A certain amount will also be spent in

organising a PESTA and various sporting events. Apart from this, money will be allotted to the States and Settlements to be spent by them on similar lines.

It is obvious that with the commitments I have outlined, this financial provision is unlikely to be sufficient to meet all the expenses of the celebration. It is therefore necessary that members of the public should contribute to swell this fund. Indeed, I appeal to all of you to be generous in your donations as it is only with your contributions that we can ever hope to celebrate the occasion on the scale we would wish. Moreover, I would like to emphasize that donations however small will be gratefully received by the Committee.

I have given you an indication of what the Government proposes regarding these celebrations. The public will no doubt have its own ideas on how to celebrate the event. It is customary for them to put up shows for public entertainments. But on this great day the public might also like to erect memorials to commemorate the occasion. My suggestion to you, therefore, is that such memorials instead of being of a temporary nature should take the form of something practical and permanent.

In speaking to you of Independence Day, I must emphasize that we have become a free nation solely through the efforts and support of the public themselves. You will recall that the Alliance took the political field on the paramount issue of Independence, and in the National Election the fact that Alliance candidates swept the board with a majority hitherto unknown in any country in the world indicates that the public decided in no uncertain terms that they want Independence. When the Delegation went to England in 1956, we made known to the British Government the wishes of the people. The British Government accepted these wishes with good grace. They agreed to the date proposed by us for the granting of Independence. But while the achievement of our Independence is a matter of which we can be justly proud, the greatest source of our pride has been the manner in which it has been achieved. It has been won by the spontaneous support of all communities in this country—Malays, Chinese, Indians and others who regard Malaya as their home. Throughout our campaign not one outbreak of violence occurred and, true to the pledge I gave, not one drop of blood was spilt in our

constitutional struggle for Independence. The Independence of Malaya has therefore been won by the measure of goodwill which exists among the various peoples of this country as much as by their united efforts and patriotism and love for this land. Finally, the good understanding between Great Britain and Malaya has enabled Great Britain to appreciate fully our national aspirations.

All of us should remember our Independence Day with a feeling of thankfulness and gratitude. We must thank God for our achievement and at the same time I would like to thank all of you for your support. The occasion we are to celebrate is the birth of a New Nation. Let us make this event unforgettable. At the same time, it is my hope that while all of you will not forget that just as our Independence is made possible by your loyalty and support, so our ability to carry out the full programme of our celebrations must depend on the same support in the form of generous contributions towards our funds.

CATITAN:

Donations to State or Settlement Merdeka Celebrations Funds should be sent to the Chairman of the State or Settlement Celebrations Committee, c/o the State or Settlement Secretariat. Donations to the Federal Capital Celebrations Fund should be sent to the Honourable Mr. C. Thornton, c.s.g., c/o Guthrie & Co. Ltd., Mountbatten Road, Kuala Lumpur.

All contributions whether large or small will be welcomed and gratefully acknowledged. Contributions to the funds are subject to remission of Income Tax. Give generously to make the Independence Celebrations a success.