

TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH GIVEN AT A MASS RALLY AT
SULEIMAN COURT, KUALA LUMPUR ON MONDAY, 22ND MARCH,
1964.

PAP Victory will set off the Social Revolution in Malaysia

A victory for the nine PAP parliamentary candidates -- five in Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital, and one each in Penang, Seremban, Malacca and Johore -- will trigger off the social revolution in Malaya. To have fielded candidates for all the urban seats in Malaya would have upset the Malay leadership and risked misunderstanding with the rural Malay mass base. For our purpose to prove that the urban population in Malaya want social change, want a more just and equal society, the nine candidates are good enough. If Kuala Lumpur supports the policy of the PAP and so does Penang, Seremban, Malacca and Johore, UMNO leaders must adjust their social and economic policy to take into account the wishes of the people in the towns.

There is an absence of excitement in this election. Nobody expects a revolution around the corner. Everybody expects the present Malay leadership to be returned to power. But whether they pursue the old policy of the last nine years, or change, depends on your votes. If you demonstrate positively that you

are in favour of an honest government with a dynamic social and economic policy then the winds of change will begin to sweep through Malaysia. On the 25th of April a new era in our history can begin.

Influence on events of next five years does not depend
on number of seats

The impact of nine constituencies voting PAP will be far beyond its arithmetical significance in Parliament. True, if we have nine seats in Malaya, plus 12 in Singapore, the total of 21 could make PAP the largest single party outside UMNO. But it is not in numbers that we count our influence on the events of the next five years.

There is a myth which is often recounted as an excuse against social and economic change in Malaya, namely that people here are different, that social and economic policies which are suitable for Singapore are not really wanted by the people of Malaya. You can explode this myth on the 25th April. By voting PAP you will serve notice that it is time for a change in the towns of Malaya. And if the change begins in 1964 there will be less of a drastic upheaval than if the change is made in 1969. Everybody knows that the elections this year, 1964, is really the preliminary of the elections in 1969. If it is possible to get the winds

of change to blow in gently this year so much less of an upset it will be all round in 1969.

Singapore's success was made by Malaysians

I do not believe people in Kuala Lumpur are less hard-working, less skillful, have less imagination and drive, than people in Singapore. Nor is there any difference between Penang, Seremban, Malacca or Johore and Singapore. In fact the success story of Singapore, of the last few years, was one achieved to a large extent by men from Malaya. Seven out of nine Singapore Ministers came from Malaya, seven out of nine Permanent Secretaries came from Malaya, four out of six judges are from Malaya. So also most of Singapore's trade union leaders and business executives have come from Malaya. For many years there was a drift of talent to Singapore. These Malaysians helped Singapore succeed.

Now with Malaysia the stage is set for these men to do their duty by Malaya and by the States of their origin. With the wealth of experience gained in the struggle in Singapore they can make the social revolution in Malaya succeed with even fewer mistakes.

People in Malaya are no different from people in Singapore. They want polite and efficient service from Government servants. They resent high-handed

and bureaucratic methods. They hate squeeze. We know it is possible to inspire the civil services with a sense of purpose.

But this cannot be done if the political leadership on top of the civil service, as the MCA, are demoralising it by their easy way of life, making easy money. No Government servant is going to work hard, be more courteous and efficient for the sake of a pension, when he can see men in high positions get rich the easy way. The transformation in Singapore was only possible because Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, right down to messengers, all understood they were working on the same basis of honest reward.

Kuala Lumpur and the other towns can do as well as Singapore

We know that in spite of some drift of talent from Malaya to Singapore there are still many able men in Malaya who would wish to do their duty for their community. But the present system does not encourage them to come forward and do their bit for the country. To come out into politics often meant getting involved with shady characters. Politics has become a field where some men get rich quickly. So, many have preferred to mind their own business and make money the honest way, leaving politics to the less scrupulous.

Socialist Front no hope of ever winning power

On the other side of the political arena are the Communists and their open front men. The dismal performance over the last few years of the Socialist Front as the open front organisation of the MCP is the only reason why they have been allowed to exist. Their futile acts of protest and opposition, often in violent language, have been tolerated by UMNO leaders only because they cannot become an alternative Government. If they were more effective and showed themselves capable of winning power through the ballot box they would have been scratched out long ago. As it is UMNO leaders find it convenient to allow these not so skillful exponents of Communist doctrine to show the world how tolerant and democratic the Government is by their fierce postures. They cannot win power and never will. The MCP knows this. They use the Socialist Front merely as one of the means to expand Communist influence.

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Vote for Socialist Front is vote for Soekarno

But the MCP hopes to help the P.K.I. win. And the P.K.I. hopes that helping Soekarno crush Malaysia will help expand their influence into Malaysia. Every vote for the Socialist Front is a vote that will convince the Americans that Malaysia with 4 million Chinese is too weak to survive Communist pressure.

Therefore, Americans will be persuaded to sacrifice Malaysia's interests to save Soekarno's position in Indonesia. For the Americans may hope that Soekarno and his Army with their anti-Chinese policies may stop Communism in South-East Asia. So the Americans may be prepared to see Indonesia gobbling up Malaysia. Therefore every vote for the Socialist Front is really a vote for Soekarno.

To succeed in Malaysia one must be practical

The PAP has survived all the pressures from both the extreme left and the extreme right because it does not allow theory to dictate policy in disregard of realities. It is the practical approach of what is possible in our society that has been the corner-stone of successful policy. It is because we have been fulfilling a historic role in bringing together the different races in our society and helping to lessen the differences in wealth and opportunity that we have survived and succeeded. To continue to fulfill this role we cannot be subservient. We must be prepared to press a point even if it does not please those in high office.

UMNO leaders not unnaturally may prefer to carry on as before if all can be well. For change is often difficult and painful. But ultimately history is not dependent on whether leaders like or do not like to change their policies. Merger between Singapore and Malaysia was inevitable although UMNO leaders did not

like it. The Tunku faced up to it resolutely when confronted with reality. So too a more forward-looking social and economic policy is inevitable whether some people like it or not. Certain tendencies in condoning greed and graft must be checked or we will all go down the drain. The sooner this change starts the better all round.

If on the 25th April the people of Kuala Lumpur endorse PAP policy, and if this approval is echoed in Penang, Seremban, Malacca and Johore, it will be impossible to go back to the old ways. You can open the windows and let the winds of change blow out the growing evils of greed and graft. Your decision will make it inevitable that there must be policy based on a more equal sharing out of the fruits of economic progress all financed by a taxation policy designed to close the gaps between the "haves" and the "have-nots". That is what the success of our candidates can mean to Malaya and the rest of Malaysia.

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22nd March, 1964.