

TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AT THE CONSULAR  
CORPS LUNCHEON ON THURSDAY, 30TH JULY, 1964, AT  
1 P.M. AT THE ADELPHI HOTEL.

Gentlemen:

One month ago I agreed to be your guest speaker at your monthly luncheon meeting for the last Thursday in July. After the events of last week there were two courses of action open to me. First, to cancel this engagement on account of the prevailing situation or, second, to speak of you honestly but without exacerbating the situation.

You are here as listening posts for your Governments. Your job is the assessment of political intelligence in the wider sense of the phrase. For me to waste your time with platitudes would be an insult. The question you all want to know after last week's riots is: "Will Malaysia Succeed?"

If it is not going to succeed then obviously it will be foolish for your Governments to go on backing Malaysia at the price of Indonesian hostility. Nobody, let alone Governments, backs a loser. If, therefore, Malaysia looks like

a loser then no Government will back it, in which case it will definitely become a loser, even faster than in the ordinary course of events.

Over a year ago, before Malaysia was formed, on the 24th of May 1963, I posed the same question at a luncheon of the Singapore National Union of Journalists. I said then:

"I have said that Malaysia is inevitable. But no one can say that the success of Malaysia as an economic and political unit is inevitable.

#### FOUR FACTORS

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It is dependent upon what we the people and the leaders in Malaysia do in fulfilling the basic pre-conditions for success. I would list some of these pre-conditions:

National unity of all the races comprising Malaysia with undivided loyalty to the elected Central Government of Malaysia;

An effective, honest administration which can extend its writs throughout the length and breadth of Malaysia;

Stable, political leadership that will infuse confidence, bring about capital accumulation and investment in the country, and attract foreign loans and investment capital without political strings for development of industries;

The maintenance of representative system of democratic government in which the interests of all racial and economic groups are fairly balanced by this leadership.

One factor is fundamental to make Malaysia successful economically and politically, and that is, a spirit of tolerance between all races in Malaysia with all their interests reasonably balanced."

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### The First Test

I did not realise then how quickly after its formation, Malaysia would be put to the test. Will Malaysia after the events of the last few weeks leading to

the riots last Tuesday have that spirit of tolerance between all races in Malaysia with all their interests reasonably balanced?

The answer to this depends on whether extremists can be kept out of the leadership of both the Chinese and Malay communities.

If the extremists elements gain dominance on one side, it must lead to the emergence of extremist leadership on the other. For example, if extremist leadership emerges on the Chinese side either by the rational and moderate leadership being displaced or by moderates changing their policies to become extremists, it must lead inevitable to a similar change in the Malay leadership ending also with extremists in control. And vice-versa. To succeed, therefore, rational and moderate leadership must smack down extremist elements on its side and co-operate with rational and moderate leadership on the other side.

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This is what we have tried to do. Having a large Chinese membership because of the composition of Singapore, we have undertaken the burden of keeping down Chinese chauvinists and Communities. Hence, although security is in the hands of the Central Government, we have gone out of our way on issues where security is interwoven with education to identify ourselves with the actions of the Central Government which is largely in the hands of the Malay

leadership. So with the rectification of the Nanyang University, the passing of the Internal Security Act, the revocation of Mr. Tan Lark Sye's citizenship.

Without the support of a leadership which the Chinese accept, such actions would inevitably have brought about a reaction on the Chinese side which would have strengthened the hands of Chinese chauvinists and Communists.

Malay ultra's is counterpart of Chinese chauvinists

What we must not forget is that the Malay leadership in UMNO also faces their extremists, or, for convenience of terminology, their 'ultra's'. The question now is whether rational and moderate leadership on the Malay side can smack down their 'ultra's'. On the 18th of July, three days before the riots, at the opening of the Serangoon Garden Secondary Technical Integrated School I discussed the campaign of the Malay ultra's against the Singapore Government for allegedly oppressing the Malays. I said then :-

"And I say there is no advantages in pretending that these things are not dangerous. We better say publicly how dangerous it is, but in a very calculated way, because we don't want to add more fuel to the fire. My regret is this: that whilst we can deal firmly with the Chinese chauvinists because the majority of my colleagues are Chinese and therefore there is

no accusation that we are keeping the Chinese down, I cannot deal as swiftly with the Malay chauvinist as I can with the Chinese chauvinist. I have got to let him expose himself first. Otherwise, they'll say: 'There you are; he is keeping the Malays down!' But I do suggest that Malay leaders in authority can do that, and if they don't: I say we may well perish by default."

The ball is with the Malay leadership

The following Sunday, the 19th, at a meeting with representatives of Malay organisations, I said :-

"There must be a limit to UMNO's political propaganda because they are in charge of the whole country, as they are the Central

Government. Therefore, if they go beyond the limit the country will break up and collapse. However, I am bewildered when I see that UMNO has formed a 'Malay Action Committee' which includes P.M.I.P. extremists and racists. Worse, it includes the acting secretary of the P.M.U., Isa Zain, who has been publicly identified by the Central Government as a close Indonesian agent."

The Paradox

In the course of your duties you may find it useful to bear this little diagram in mind -

CHINESE - MALAY

Chinese Chauvinists  
and Communists

Ultra's

China

Indonesia

On the left, Chinese.

On the right, Malay.

To the left of the Chinese are Chinese chauvinists. To the right of the Malays are Malay ultras. Behind the Chinese chauvinists are the Communists behind whom in turn is the backing of China. Behind the Malay ultras is the backing of expansionists in Indonesia and behind whom in turn is both President Sukarno and the P.K.I.

If Chinese chauvinists and Communists take over the leadership of the Chinese in Malaysia, then Malay ultra's must emerge in the Malay leadership in reaction, either by rational and moderate Malay leaders being displaced or by moderates changing their policy to accommodate the ultra's and so avoid being displaced. But not being ultra's and not wanting absorption by Indonesia they must in the end be evicted by genuine 'ultra's'.

Similarly, if Malay 'ultra's' take over Malay leadership it is only a matter of time before Chinese chauvinists and Communists take over the leadership of the Chinese side.

It is curious that both the ultra's on the Malay side and the chauvinists and Communists on the Chinese side have one thing in common: they want to destroy Malaysia. But having destroyed Malaysia, a conflict must begin on who is to inherit Malaysia or the component parts thereof. For the backers of the two sides have very divergent and conflicting objectives,

(1) a still non-Communist expansionist Indonesia

(2) a Communist China.



The answer to the question of what happens after Malaysia is crushed varies according to whether the matter is settled internally in Malaysia between only Chinese chauvinists and Malay ultra's, or whether it is settled with the help of their respective backers.

### Key to defeating the Paradox

Indonesia, under an expansionist nationalist racist leadership has agreed with China, under a revolutionary Communist leadership, that Malaysia is neo-colonialist and should be crushed. Obviously, the objectives of the two regimes are so diverse and different that they must have different ideas and objectives of what the end result of the campaign to crush Malaysia should be. To the Bung this crushing Malaysia must mean Greater Indonesia in which the various component territories now constituting Malaysia will slowly but relentlessly be absorbed by Indonesia. Ultimately, such absorption must extend over the whole of the Maphilindo area.

I don't know what the Chinese Communist leadership have in mind. But I would be surprised if in their calculations the ultimate supremacy of the P.K.I. in Indonesia is not fundamental assumption. But whether in fact a P.K.I. Indonesia would make any difference to the equation of national politics.

I don't know what the Chinese Communist leadership have in mind. But I would be surprised if in their calculations the ultimate supremacy of the P.K.I. in Indonesia is not a fundamental assumption. But whether in fact a P.K.I. Indonesia would make any difference to the equation of national politics in South-East Asia is one better left for speculation on some other occasion.

If the Chinese leadership keeps down its chauvinists, then the Malay leadership should find it easier to keep down their ultras. So both can ensure the triumph of rational and moderate leadership in both communities. The answer to whether Malaysia will succeed or not depends upon whether both sides can succeed.

If they do not, let me quote from what I said over a year ago at this luncheon with Singapore Union of Journalists :-

“But if racists and Communalists take over, then we must be prepared for a sudden and dramatic change, for then I have no doubt that whoever succeeds the Tengku as leader of the Malays must, in order to retain supremacy, exercise his authority to govern through the strength of the army, the police and the symbol of the Agong as monarch.

The chain of consequences that such a course of events will set in motion are so gruesome as to make one flinch even to contemplate it.

It is one thing mounting an anti-Chinese campaign where the Chinese are a minority of three to four percent of the population. It is another thing to mount an anti-Chinese campaign where they constitute nearly forty percent of the population as they will in Malaysia.

The alternative to success, which is dependent primarily on communal harmony and firm but wise leadership on non-communal policies, is so terrifying that no government can afford to allow any communalists to get out of hand and trigger into motion communal passions the end result of which nobody can control."

We can make it succeed

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To sum up, may I repeat what I said three ways before the riot :-

"I would like to end on this note: that I believe, given sincerity, good faith, and goodwill, we can make what we have set out to do, succeed. You see, the complex of our society is such that it puts an incentive to non-communal policies.

And the political complexion of our country will undergo a subtle change for the better, and it is this change which some people are afraid to face, that causes this erratic and reckless bit of politicking.

You see, they don't really believe they can convince the Singapore Malays that they are oppressed. Otherwise, I think a riot would have taken place, because facts, the impact of man's daily life, whether he is oppressed or not, he knows. And we can, over six months, one year, two years if necessary, just as we debunked the Communists, so we can debunk the communalists.

But all this is meant for consumption over the Causeway to people who have not come to Singapore, who read all about Malays driven out from the town, and say: 'Oh yes, what a wicked government it is. So, how necessary it is always to make sure that we have our own kind of government our own people in charge; only people of the same race can be trusted to look after our rights. That is one of the objects of this exercise."

You will see, like all other prophets I am not necessarily always right. I have been wrong about the seriousness of the events or the timing of the primer

which led to the rioting on Tuesday afternoon. But the logical consequence of the train of events that have been set into motion cannot but be right.

The question now is: Will this train of events be halted and reversed? On that depends the future of Malaysia and the answer which you will come to in reporting to your Government and on which your Governments will make their decisions whether or not to stand up and support Malaysia.

My personal experience since these riots gives me grounds for believing that over the next few weeks you will observe that the answer is in the affirmative that the train of events will be halted and will be reversed, that men of goodwill and sincerity in both communities will be able to come together on honorable terms and triumph over the forces of evil that seek to destroy Malaysia.

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30th July, 1964.