

THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH TO SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS AT  
THE VICTORIA THEATRE ON THURSDAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER 1965.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I had intended to meet you earlier and in fact two previous meetings had to be adjourned for a diversity of pressing reasons.

First, I would like to assure you that I have not brought you together to bring you bad news. The level of prosperity of Singapore today, 1965 is considerably higher than that in 1959 as the Malaysian delegate in the Security Council himself pointed out. On the contrary, far from bringing you bad news, I would like to tell you this:

I have had memoranda put to me by the judges asking why young advocates should be earning considerable fortunes at the Bar while they who dispense justice live on such miserable pittance.

I have also had a great deal of trouble over the years keeping people of quality -- specialists, whether they are ENT (ear, nose and throat specialists) having served their five years... I myself had to seek a former ENT Government officer now in private practice when I needed his services; because getting an Australian to man our ENT Unit for 3 months at a time and a new man every 3 months is not the best way of solving our problems. And last but not least, it is extremely difficult for me to get good ministers, for there are very few men like my Minister for Law who is prepared to do a job much more onerous than the one he was doing for about a third of what he was getting at the Bar. So, you see, what has happened over the years is first, rectification of the people at the bottom who were depressed and who were inarticulate and ill-organised in the old days when the Governor's word was supreme. That phase had to be done first. That having been done, my job now is to make sure that men of quality are kept in the administration if for no other reason because otherwise, it just would not function.

I will give you a simple illustration. I used to watch this when I was an advocate. You get an income tax case and your Government advocate is

mediocre. The other chap, having half a million dollars at a stake with the tax man, employs the best lawyer in town who sweats a whole month on the case. He presents it succinctly, decisively and convincingly; and you lose half a million dollars in tax collection.

I have been through all that and I can assure you that our intention now is to make quite sure that this is an administration with men of quality.

But, it is not just the administration which must have quality, Singapore has got to live, and its only way of survival is quality. There are landlocked, multiracial, multilingual but they produce some of the best fabrics competing with anything that Lancashire can produce. They produce some of the best patent medicines competing with anything the Americans can produce, and they survive on the basis of human skill, enterprise, effort. I have not the slightest doubts that given the framework in which enterprise and effort is rewarded, this place will blossom forth.

You know, I grieved on the 9th of August, not for Singapore, but for those of our people we had to leave behind; for now we could not help them and we will forge ahead. Every year the gap will widen -- the gap in standards of living, in economic progress; in the performance. They do one programme, we do three

programmes -- per capita of population, their rate of growth is two percent, our rate of growth -- 5, 6, 7, 8% per annum. And so it will be.

I have spent a long time with my colleagues calculating all this. And I would like you to know how I think we can flourish and where, in the end, we must end as a viable nation in a centre of big power conflict.

I have three maps there. You see, if we were Malta or we were just in the South Pacific, Fiji, then we would not have mattered. But we are here -- right in the middle of Nusantara, and the President of the Indonesian Republic said just two days ago, I read it all in our Monitoring Digest -- he said, "God had created all this -- 30,000 islands", of which 3,000 are inhabited. And says the President of Indonesia, "All great civilisations flourished in island Archipelago." And he quoted Greece and Britain. I wondered how it was, that there was an nexus between Indonesia, Greece and Britain; but anyway, that was what he said.

But, whatever it is, we are in the heart of that archipelago which makes our position one of supreme strategic importance and, at the same time, one of grave perils for ourselves if we overplay our hand.

The worst that can happen is what Utusan said the other day. They said that they join people in saying that I am out of my mind and that I lost my head when I said that if the British quit or if the Americans intervened in Malaya, I would seriously have to re-appraise my position and may be, bring the Russians into Singapore. And the analysis by Utusan was -- why should they bring the Americans in to clobber the non-Malays? They would bring the Indonesias in. I didn't say that, Utusan said it.

Now, you see, if we are here and this and this and this and this and this (pointing to the map; Malaya; Borneo and Indonesia) come together, then we will be like West Berlin. The question is: where is our West Germany? You see, West Berlin survives because it has got West Germany and behind West Germany lie big powers. I don't know if that situation will ever arise. But if it does, I am sorry for a lot of people now in positions of comfort and power in Malaya because they, like the President of Indonesia, will also be eating corn. So, before the editor of Utusan Melayu talks blandly of bringing in hungry corn-eaters, he had better consider what happens to his own vitality when he lacks the necessary vitamins as a result of eating corn, and corn only. And if too many people eat corn, there will be a shortage of corn.

I do not seriously contemplate that as a probability. It is a possibility which we always keep at the back of our mind. And in the remote eventuality of that possibility happening, then of course like West Berlin, we must seek West Germany and world powers behind West Germany. I leave the matter at that. Those who can think will know that that opens up this task of real big conflict.

But I do fear this: that if this stupid politicking goes on, now not only language but religion... everyday, it is being worked up in the press.

It would appear that the Christians do nothing but run around looking for Muslims and get nice young Muslim men and give them beautiful Christian girls. And having seduced them, they then give them money and a job and make them into Christians. You know, when there are so many heathens -- 60 to 70% heathens running around with no religious or moral guidance, I wonder why Christians do that. Which leads me to the conclusion that they probably are not doing anything of the kind at all. And the people who write this in Utusan Melayu know that, but are deliberately working things up for a diversity of reasons. One of which is, if there could be a collision.

You see, on language, there is no collision in Singapore. It is not possible: we carry on just as before; Language Month... And in five years, the non-Malays

in Singapore will be more proficient in Malay than a lot of other people in South East Asia, because they will be allowed to keep what they have got, and this is something extra. They say, "If it is extra, well I will take another pen and put it in my pocket. Then I will have a red pen, I will have a blue pen, and I will have a green pen." But if you say, "I am taking your pen and just giving you this one," the chap will say, "But I don't like this kind of pen" -- and there is a lot of resistance.

There is no language issue here. So, this religious issue is worked up. And if there is a collision between Christians and Muslims, my friends in Afro-Asia, and some of them are in very influential positions -- President Nasser, President Sekou Toure of Guinea, Abu Bakar Tafawa Balewa, Prime Minister of Nigeria, Modibo Keita, President of Mali -- they are all Muslims, and I will be hard put explaining to them why although we are a secular state -- multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-religious, we seem to be going for the Muslims. That is one of my difficulties which will crop up if this thing happens; and of course I spend a lot of time making sure it does not happen.

The second objective which is possible -- I don't know what is in the mind of the Utusan editorial writers and the sub-editors who give these big captions -- is working up the Muslim community in other parts of South East Asia. We

never talk about Malaysia now -- it is none of our business -- but other parts of Southeast Asia, I think, that is a fair reference to our neighbours.

So, the Muslims get worked up; and in other parts of South East Asia, the army and the police are largely Muslims and so the non-Muslims gradually get melted away into meek and submissive docility. And if some have got bones that do not melt away so easily, then in 67 or before then, there may be a bit of unhappiness. And what we must watch is to see that we do not suddenly find ourselves growing from a population of 2 million to a population of 7 million.

That, to my mind, is the supreme disaster for us as it is for them. Then you will find skyscrapers up at Pulau Ubin, Pulau Tekong as has happened in Hong Kong because human skill and drive and ingenuity is there. But it will have to throw an umbilical cord somewhere, fraught for the world with grave peril. And this place cannot be butchered. It has got to fight. It is not just I who have got to fight. You know, if only I have got fight, they would have just got rid of me. They went around and found that lots of fellows had fight which meant real trouble, you see?

Our policies must therefore be designed to see that that does not happen in so far as we can influence it. And at the worst, cruel though it may be, if it



became necessary we will not take more people than we can comfortably manage with out comfortable rates of which will be sweated as was done in Hong Kong. That is not the purpose of our policy.

I take back nothing of what I have said over the last ten years. The fundamentals have not altered. And by the time even Mr. Tan Siew Sin in Washington sees that one day Singapore will go back into association with Malaysia, I think it is not impossible that people will eventually learn that however unpalatable it is, geography, history, demography and economics cannot be thwarted by the edict of any Ceasar.

This time it was because this time temporarily, we were confronted with either a reluctant withdrawal, or a real danger of race conflicts recurring in ever increasing dimensions both in intensity and in areas which would have led to an India and Pakistani types of situation. So a reluctant withdrawal in order that the whole can be preserved.

Now, let me put this very frankly to you -- I am vitally interested in Malaya. I am interested in Sabah and Sarawak. In fact, if Sabah and Sarawak never joined Malaysia, we would be quite happy not to be interested at all. But they have; and if the boundary lines are changed, the appetite of the Indonesian expansionists will lead us to even greater perils. Hence, we have an interest to

see that the boundary lines stay put. And hence it is that in spite of the evil things they believe we are doing... We do spend a lot of time in so far as we have influence, with leaders in Sabah and Sarawak to urge them to fight within Malaysia and not fight to get out of Malaysia. For them -- a large area nearly twice the size of Malaya with one-eighth the population of Malaya -- separation would mean 5 years of nominal independence, the next 5 years, they would be reduced to the state of a satellite; the next decade, they would be openly colonised.

If they want to do that, we can do nothing about it. But if the boundary lines get shifted, the temptation would be great to complete "what God had created" said Soekarno -- "this group of islands which straddles the northern and the southern hemispheres, the east and the west, the Pacific and the Indian oceans."... no airline, no sea line can get through except when they pay toll to him. Now, you see how important Singapore is.

For many other reasons, this is one of the crucial points of conflict, power conflict, in the world today. And we hold that nerve centre, literally a nerve centre .... Kuala Lumpur says they want to hold our Cable and Wireless because it is vital to them. They should have thought about these things before they asked us to quit. Well, we shall always be polite. We shall always be accommodating because we want them to survive. But what is ours is ours. And from now

onwards, we start off from this basis, gentlemen: the world does not owe us a living and the corollary is also true: that we do not owe the world a living.

I said this to ten British MPs who recently passed through and they saw the point very quickly; that I do not owe the world a living since the world does not owe me a living. And I am quite sure 8,000 miles away in London, a group of men amongst whom are people with very intimate knowledge not only of this region but of the persons involved in the administration of this new nation -- they are working the sums out, working the options that are open to us; which are the more attractive and which are the less attractive ways out. But, also considering that in extremis we may have to choose the less attractive ways out. And therefore, I am quite confident that they will never put us into that extreme.

I told a group of men I met one day at the Pyramid Club, I think 6 months, 8 months ago, I told them that if I had a few million dollars-- this was then the thing was mounting after the riots, and I saw no subsidence of the politicking and the agitprop: race, religion, language -- I said then, (I think this must have been February this year) that if I had a few million dollars, I would think of putting more than half of it away and keep the rest of it in fairly liquid form quickly to liquidate it if necessary.

Today, I can tell you -- and some of those people that I spoke to are here today -- that if I have half a million dollars, which I may have if and prices go up the way I expect it to go up within 2 years, I would borrow a few millions and build a factory after having made a careful study of what the EFTA countries would buy: what New Zealand and Australia -- the new free trade area between New Zealand and Australia -- would buy: and last but not least, the powerful consuming power of the world's richest, if not the world's wisest nation, the Americans. I am not interested in just selling them water for their Seventh Fleet every time they pass by. And they have got to pass by Singapore, between the Indian and the Pacific Ocean.

We have worked out the options very carefully; and I say to you that even if Malaysia does not want to trade with us, this place will prosper and flourish provided there is no sudden exodus from other parts of South East Asia and an "insodus" into Singapore: and suddenly from 2 million we become 7 million and skyscrapers go up in Blakang Mati, Pulau Tekong, Tekong Kechil and the rest of it and pipelines are laid. Because, that is the real end of the road, cornered there, you must throw West Germany. And we do not want to be pushed or to allow that situation to happen.

Hence, the importance, in so far as we can, to exercise either by persuasion or by other means a moderating influence to make sure that eventually -- as Dato Ismail said in Canberra recently and as even Mr. Tan Siew Sin has admitted recently in Washington -- a multi-racial society will emerge in this part of the world.

I see no diminution in the impetus of our advance ... In fact, I see an acceleration and with it, higher standards of living. But with it, of course, problems of attracting labour faster than we want from the areas around us. And that problem must be carefully looked into and the rate of inflow regulated. We don't want to be selfish. But it is not our duty to solve the economic and social problems of our neighbours.

You know, people used to give birth in Kandang Kerbau. They take a taxi, dash down, give birth there -- free of charge. And not only that. Having been born in Singapore, the child is entitled to free education and all kinds of other things because he has got a Singapore birth certificate. And I had it seriously put to me by a senior Medical Officer-in-charge of Kandang Kerbau recently -- he said, "But what can we do? They have arrived and the baby is about to be delivered."

Naturally we are all human beings; we can't be cruel. But Mr. Barker has assured me that by a quirk -- by our laws being abolished and their citizenship laws being implemented in Singapore, nobody is a Singapore citizen now, unless his parents are Singapore citizens, not even if he is born here. So that has solved part of the problem. They made this amendment just before Malaysia and so that this was going to be no good in the long run with Malaysia and so on. So they changed it: only if you are born there and your parents are and when we separated, we carried that clause.

And I think it will be a very foolish Government that goes and gets rid of a clause which somebody else has so kindly done for us.

But apart from checking that inflow and regulating it, because, the flow must continue, half of Singapore, probably more, are people with roots, with families in Malaya. And some, like Dr. Toh, have wives born in Sarawak; the family is there. So, this is quite a delicate problem in human relations. But somehow, we cannot take more than a certain rate because otherwise, we will get bogged down.

They can always come and enjoy the scenery, the food festival; and take a trip around the harbour. But if they want to stay here and work here and

undercut our union rates on contract labour and so on ... You know, some of them are working at \$1.20. As our former representative on the Tariff Board will tell you, in Petaling Jaya some people wash bottles for \$1.20 a day. And our chaps wander around sweeping leaves for \$4.55 with treble pay on public holidays.

So the temptation is very great. The other day, four of us were playing golf, and we asked the four caddies, and three of them came from the Peninsula. Which rather worried me. They were doing nothing. They were 'tumpang' with relatives and hoping to get permanent jobs. But whilst they are waiting for the permanent jobs, they earn \$3 a day for carrying a golf bag around, one and a half miles. That is not too onerous a duty -- instead of wandering around twiddling your thumbs. One came from Muar; another came from Malacca, and the third came from Kedah. I thought it was a long way to come down to Singapore.

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But I tell you now about our problems. First, there is a real mutation in the quality of this problem.

Before, if the batsman misses the ball, there is the wicket keeper. If the wicket keeper misses the ball, there is the long stop. Those of you who play

cricket will know. And any way, if it goes to the boundary, you just take the ball back and throw it back and start all over again with one batsman out.

But now we are sovereign, independent. There is no British army and much as the Malaysians think that they can step in, I think they will find that this is a real hornets' nest if they do step in. If this place goes wrong and goes Communist, that is the end of the works. Before, you could always reshuffle the pack of cards. Of course, mind you, it is a very painful operation -- like British Guiana: you know, recurring riots, economy collapses; but any way no independence, almost complete independence, but sovereignty lies with the British Parliament; reshuffles the cards; deal out a new hand. And every time you reshuffle the cards, the cards get more dirty and crumpled and so on. But any way, you can reshuffle. This time, you can't.

Hence, remember we are playing this for keeps. This is no longer an insured position. The insurance lies in our capacity to to maintain a Government that can command the support of the majority, and to ensure that the Communists can never get the support of the majority in free and secret elections. A free and secret ballot; if they can get the majority, then that is real trouble for all of us.



Now fortunately for us, they have put themselves beyond the pale. They are identified with the Indonesians as traitors to the nation. They are the people who are breaking the rice bowl of the workers, causing this confrontation. You know, they are foolish enough. They say, "Well, you want to end confrontation, release all political detainees; restore freedom of association for Communist groups, this that and the other." In other words, admitting implicitly that they are in cahoots with the Indonesians. If we do all this they will tell their friends, "Okay, call it off." So, it is they who are doing this and we keep them on that hook. And so long as Dr. Lee Siew Choh just talks wildly and stays on that hook, I say all is well -- provided that the integrity of this administration and the economic impetus continues. Today, we have got them isolated.

We know what they are saying amongst themselves. It is our job to know. The thing that they are most fearful of is a snap election because they may lose the few seats that they still have. They call this "bogus" independence. Malaysia, they said, was a neo-colonialist plot. Singapore's expulsion from Malaysia -- this also is a neo-colonialist plot. How mad can they be?

I know that Dr. Lee is having an argument with his chaps to say that they should boycott all future elections because this is an undemocratic country; because he fears that he may lose his deposit after the foolish things he has said

and done. But what is important is this that we keep them there. And the question is: how do we keep them there?

Now the political side, you leave to us. We know them well. The only disadvantage, of course, is that having known them so well, watched them and their operations at close quarters, they have the advantage of also knowing us. So this because quite a delicate game of "I think I know what you think" and "I think he knows what I am thinking". So you have got to make suitable adjustments for it.

However, I am reasonably confident that with their leadership versus us, there is no recovery unless the administration becomes corrupt, effete, inefficient and the economic impetus is lost.

I don't see that happening. Therefore, the real danger of them wanting to scrub out this leadership.

You know, one thing that worries me more than anything else is not the fear of my dying, but the fear of my leaving this place without somebody else with all the lines still open.

The lines with Afro-Asia, with the British Labour Party, the British Conservative Party, Australia, New Zealand were all with me. I was the exchange. And there was a reason why they wanted to get this Cabinet. Because, if they could get us out, me of course -- playing captain and centre forward, well the lines are finished.

It is very difficult, you know, to write to a chap: "Your Excellency, so on, so on, so on." Then, "highest esteem and acknowledgement" and so on, and you put your chop and sign. It is a very different proposition when you say, "My dear so and so" and the man replies "cher ami" --(dear friend). And, if it was necessary, a government in exile would have been set up somewhere in Southeast Asia and in Africa. And those were the reasons which made repressions -- which the Tengku mentioned -- a very expensive business. Hence, expulsion.

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And right at this moment, my colleagues are duplicating and triplicating the lines. And every line will have four or five connections to make sure if one is served, another is on. All that will be done and within one year, there is no line that can be broken without it being picked up.

But at this moment, it is sad for my family but is sadder for all of you if the exchange is blown -- because there are no duplicate exchanges. We are now duplicating them. But there is a further risk -- and this is that this group that went to the Rhio Islands and got training and came back with plastic bombs and all were after -- they were after the whole Cabinet. Then, you have got the whole of the first team.... Then, you take on a whole host of second league players. Then, they have got a chance to come back.

I am sure the course of the Burmese history was changed. Aung San and his whole Cabinet went down in one spray of a machine gun, and then the rot set in because there was no time to build up another leadership.

This is a very serious business: to build up an alternative leadership. For one thing: the more alternative leaderships there are, the better for me because the less it is worthwhile getting me. As long as there is no alternative leadership, then it is worth getting me, which makes life a bit uncomfortable for me.

Hence, it is our business to ensure that there are effective alternative leaderships; and that in any case, whatever happens, it is never possible to scrub out the whole leadership, and I will ensure that it does not happen.... It is like the Berlin Symphony Orchestra in one aircraft; suddenly double bass, trumpets, everything went down in one aircraft. That will not happen; cannot be allowed to

happen. And as long as there are others there, if double bass goes, we look for another one. And if he is not as good, it won't be noticeable for some time. Meanwhile, he learns how to keep in time with the others.

Assuming that we are not scrubbed out -- which, I think, is a fair one provided we are careful -- as you will see, adequate precautions were taken even today ... what is the danger? Economic sluggishness. Our boys grow up, more chaps come down because of the higher standard of living: unemployment. Chaps get mingled up, get hungry, angry; get worked up. Worse, administration gets sluggish, corrupt, impolite.

You know, I had occasion one day to call up the whole of the Telecoms, the supervisor, the superintendent and the telephone operator. Two years in the Federal Department and she was just impertinent on the telephone. I picked up the phone, it was radio call. I said, "Give me this number." She said "Yes" lackadaisically. She didn't know who was at the other end, of course. But that was not the point. The point was that they must be doing this to all customers. And I say we just put a cold shower down, and everybody braced up again.

Let us have none of this -- because this will not do. I was angry not because they were insulting me, but because this was going on and it is less than

two years and the thing has happened like that; Nobody with the pitchfork, and so they pick up the phone and say, "Yes, hold on." When I finally said, "Look, this is an urgent call. My name is so and so. Please get me my officer so and so. " Then she perked up, by which time I had also decided to ask her who she was in order that I could meet her and explain to her superintendent that this is not the way.

You know, if we have a police force, that goes about throwing tear gas at people who sing carols, then I say sure to lose, sure to lose. And for that reason, we are asking them to leave as expeditiously as possible because we cannot afford this kind of thing.

I know the Communists and I know how they work on people's discontent and grievances. You lose nothing by being polite. The answer is "No", but please say it politely and give the reasons. They came to see me. They lobby the Assemblymen; they lobby the Minister. In my meet-the-people sessions, chaps from other constituencies come, and I politely tell them, "No, you look for your Assemblyman." And if they happen to be my constituents, I listen to them; I get a note sent, and I give instructions. Explain to me why "No". Don't change "No" to "Yes". Don't to be a fool. If there was a good reason why it is "No", it must remain "No", but the man must be told politely.

And sometimes even after that, he is not satisfied. He has put up an unlawful structure in Duxton Road. He spent one thousand dollars with one of these "build-by-night" builders. And now it has got to come down; he is going to lose a thousand dollars, apart from the inconvenience of looking for somewhere else to live. But the answer is "No." And I annoyed him. But I make quite sure that the others in the neighbourhood also hear this. I say, "What will happen if you all start doing this? These structures will be proliferated, and it becomes a slum because this is where a clinic is going to be built and where you will get treatment". So I lose one chap, he is sour any way. But I win the others.

But if you treat him rough; no explanation is given, you lose the whole lot. The chap goes around saying, "What a wicked stupid Government, this, that and the other." His friends all join in, in the coffee shop, and say, "Yes, I heard of that if you give the clerk \$500 he will forget it." And by the time the story is repeated in the seventh coffee shop it has become \$5,000. And you've had it, and I've had it. But I don't want to have had it. I want to hold this situation.

I want to make this point: I have told you just now about the adjustments which we will have to make in the higher tiers. We survive on the basis of the

quality, not on quantity. I don't want quantity, because there is an optimum number that this place can hold to give an optimum standard of living.

So, insofar as is in keeping with human sentiment, the inflow must be regulated. And you know, I have some very painful problems because I have got comrades, branch secretaries, cabinet colleagues who have got brothers and sisters, an so on, all living in neighbouring countries, who all want to get a Singapore identity card and a Singapore citizenship. Then they can go to Social Welfare, and then very delicate problem. If we say no completely, it is bad; it is against human feelings, and in any case, they are one people. So it has to be carefully regulated, machinery for that regulation is being set up, and we shall quietly watch that flow.

Day by day, we shall take a test dip and see just how many more have come in. This is of the utmost importance: quality. And your Division IV and Division III workers,..you know, slacking and shirking and I have seen them.

When I pass by, I look at them from the corner of my eye. And the moment they see me, they start working again. In other words, they are having a cup of tea and having a chit-chat, sometimes.



I caught a whole Work Brigade group. There was a slight drizzle and they all went into a house and disappeared. One hour after the drizzle, I looked around; I couldn't find them. I summoned them. Commander came out.

Commander called the chaps out. They were all angry with the commander, not knowing what it was all about. Why were they disturbed in this way? Probably they were having a quiet game of cards. Finally, they took a count after a very leisurely line-up; six more missing. So chaps went looking around for them.

The next day, the Director of the Work Brigade and that camp commandant turned up. And I put one big douche of cold water. So they woke up.

I am all for trade unions, and they are my friends. In fact, they were the basis upon which we built our political movement. But we have given them a fair deal and will continue to give them a fair deal. In spite of what some people say in Kuala Lumpur about Singapore, I would say to them if they think Kuala Lumpur is a nicer place, I wouldn't mind at all their leaving Singapore and taking up union activities in Kuala Lumpur. I wish them all the best. And in fact, I am extremely anxious about my own very good friend Mr. Devan Nair, because I have grave forebodings as to what ultimately happen when he gets organised.

But we have some people like that. They just belly ache. And I say, "Look, whether it is Public Daily Rated Employees Union; or AUPE, there are two things on which I am going to stand firm. Fair wages, fair job. Fair wages; but if you are stand firm, I represent Singapore - anybody wants to quarrel with me because I smack a man down for cheating the people of Singapore, he can take me on in the political arena. And I am prepared to take him on whether he is Mr. Suppiah or Mr. Kandasamy.

Sometimes, it has been my misfortune to have colleagues who went off line. I put Jamit Singh in the Singapore Harbour Board Workers Union. He build it up, organised the workers, then he went wrong. 1961, he went with the communists; and that is a very sensitive area and a communist-controlled union in the harbour would paralyse the whole economy. And I spent 1961, 1962, 1963. It took time, but in the end Mr. Jamit Singh was reduced to size.

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Now, you don't worry about this. Don't let any unionist go into your office, and I tell this to all. Tell this to all your supervisors. Never be overbearing; always be polite. But when the other guy thumps the table and says "I will bring a strike", and so on and so forth: just say "Yes, yes, I'll take note". Make a note. Politely say "yes, what did you say? Let me please make sure that I have got it correctly, because I want to report this to my superior," and it will

come eventually to the Cabinet and to me. And I like to have good and faithful account of what took place. What did the great man say? What did he threaten to do? And for what reasons? Then I will look after that.

Your job is to see discipline and efficiency is maintained. My job is to see that the establishment when it negotiates gives a fair wage; a wage which our prosperity can carry.

One of the first things I learned in economics is, the more evenly wealth is distributed, the more prosperous the economy. I spent some years in Raffles College doing economics, apart from other things. And it is true, and that is one of the reasons why you will find although we are one-fifth the population of Malaysia, when it comes to reading newspapers we buy nearly half the circulation of almost all the newspapers because the money is well-distributed.

The rich man can't buy more than two copies. All right, he buys one for his house; he buys one for his office. Or he buys one for his second wife's house; three copies! That is more than enough. And the chances are he has only one copy and he carries it from his office to the house, to his second wife's house. But we have got our money spread; and because it is spread so television sets spread, so transistors spread, so good shoes, good clothes. I see Sanatogen being

advertised on TV now; it must be worth their while, each centre has about 100 to 200 viewers.

But in Singapore, with \$4.55 a day minimum basic wage; and you know the man who cuts grass gets \$6 -- six dollars for just cutting grass; and the lawnmower has a machine on it and it goes chugging, and all he has got to do is to direct the machine. That is \$18 on a public holiday. And he can buy Sanatogen; provided you keep the family down.

So things are all inter-related. If he has 15 children to feed; he can't buy Sanatogen. And in fact, I don't think he ought to be given Sanatogen!

I hope I have made my position clear to you.

These are more attitudes than policies. The policies will be formulated when Parliament meets, and Dr. Toh and Mr. Rajaratnam and Inche Rahim Ishak return, probably end of November or maybe, beginning of December. It gives you time; we will define the short term targets; short term meaning five years, or three years. In 1968 will be the next election -- anywhere between now and December 1968. And we keep the Communists on the run guessing and fearing and wondering whether they should boycott or should contest and loose deposits.

But if you don't do your job, then will be demanding election. Now there is not a squawk from them! They denounce and so on, but nobody says. "Let us have an election;" because, supposing we agreed and said, "Yes, all right, here you are, with my compliments" as we did in 1963, then they would be very sorry for themselves.

But you have got to do your job, and your job is to ensure an effective, polite machine. It must work. When you press button "A", some light must flicker somewhere.

You know, I will not tolerate this. I went to a Government bungalow the other day and I pressed the button and nothing happened. And I went to the kitchen and I told my son, "Press the button now" and he pressed and nothing happened. And I wondered how it was. Succeeding families had been living there -- prominent Government Ministers and officers -- without that being put right. I just don't understand. And the following day, all buttons worked.

Now, If I may explain that to you in a graphic way. When you have a button, there must be a purpose. When you click out, the light goes off. So that

is what it is for. When you want the light on you make sure you click it and it is on.

I have now, perforce -- because I am travelling from place to place, looking after more than just my own Ministry -- to have a telephone in my car which is something I dislike intensely. In my office, there is only one telephone, and I don't like three telephones to be buzzing around. And I don't allow them to buzz because it drives you crackers to have four, five telephones buzzing. And my telephones only show one light and a dull thud, and at any one time, I talk to only one person, and I flick on and off at will, which chap is priority, which chap waits.

But you know, every morning the driver has instructions to take that telephone and to test dial it. I want to make sure that when I want it and I pick it up, it is working. And that is what I want this Government to do.

I have been to other places. I have visited about 50 different countries and been a guest of about 50 different Governments. And you form impressions of these places. Some of them you leave with an abiding impression that this place is going to hum and spin like a top. I have been to such places, and I say "Well, this works".

Now, I can't tell you the places where it hasn't worked because I want to be friends with all countries. But I'll tell you about what happened in Jakarta since anyway, they are not my friends at the moment. But I wish them well and I hope one day, all will be well.

I was put in a VIP bungalow which had just been put right for another Prime Minister who had just visited the place. And that night, it rained. And you know, I heard tong tong, tong, The servants, of which there were an abundance -- knew exactly where the pails should be put. And there were five pails. And I felt very sad, because it occurred to me that perhaps there were no more people who found it worthwhile -- with the rupiah soaring like that --to learn how to climb roofs and put tiles in place. It is not worth the while. The best thing is to buy this and sell that and do this and cut that and do something else; probably to steal the wire off the telephone and sell it.

And I wanted to close the door and I did not know it was hinged..... You know these old Dutch doors; they have a hinge so that they stay in place even if the wind blows. And the hinge came off and with it plaster from the wall. So I was gravely embarrassed and I said, "I am very sorry." The man said, "No, no, no trouble at all. We will put it right," So we went out that morning and I came back that evening. And I went to look at it, to see whether it was all right. From a distance I thought "Oh, it seems all right". But there was no knob for the hinge

any more. It was just wall. I went closer... They had put a piece of white paper, pasted it and white washed the white paper. No, no. Those who accompanied me on that mission will remember that that was true. And we sat down and we said, "My God, this is trouble."

Now, this place will never be like that if for no other reason than because the people have got a habit of working. But I tell you: I don't want just that. I want to make sure that every button works. And even if you are using it only once in a while, please make sure every morning that it works. And even if you are using it only once in a while, please make sure every morning that it works. And if it doesn't when I happen to be around, then somebody is going to be in for a rough time because I do not want sloppiness.

I do not ask of you more than I am prepared to give myself. And I say, it does you no harm whatsoever just to make sure that the thing works. And don't be too kind. If you want to be kind to your people, to our people, then you have got to be firm; and at times, stern to those who have a duty to perform, to see that the duty is performed.

I have not the slightest doubt that this Civil Service, having gone through what it has in the last seven years, will be more than equal to the task. And what is more every year, we are going to take the best in.



I am tired of having first class honours graduates coming out, doing a bit of dabbling in the SAG'S chambers... They get a bit of money, then they learn a bit of the law and learn how to practise and after three years, they go out into private practice leaving the 2nd Class Honours man to defend.

The 2nd Class Honours man goes to court to prosecute a case and the man defending is a 1st Class Honours man. Now if the law of evidence is loaded against the prosecution plus brains of the defendant being loaded against the prosecution, then thieves, rogues and vagabonds get away. That is not my idea of good Government.

You know, the British ran this place with top men. But then they ran a different system. They recruited from Britain and they offered rich rewards when they retired. A fellow retires at the early age of 50 -- and some of them live till 85 and we are still paying them pensions, big pensions.

We meet a different situation now, I am working out with my colleagues the Minister for Finance and the other officers a scheme which will keep good men in the service. I don't want second raters and the third raters in, and first class men out fighting us, because that is a stupid way of running the country. I want first class men prosecuting. I don't mind a first class man defending

because if you have got a first class man prosecuting and a good officer who has prepared -- his IPs, Investigation Papers -- you will get a conviction..

Particularly if you have also have a good Magistrate on the bench. If you have got a dud Magistrate, a dud prosecutor and a bright defender and the Magistrate is thinking of his career and he says if he convicts and he doesn't know how to write his judgment then this fellow appeals and it goes up to the High court judge will write a stinging judgement upsetting him.. he says the best thing is to acquit!

I have watched all this, and this will not do. I watched specialists leave the hospital until finally my wife had to go to Mount Alvernia Hospital to get a former Government surgeon to do an operation. It is stupid. I want them inside - - better than those outside. That way, this place will hum. And I want those who believe that joining the Government Service means automatically you are going up the ladder, to forget it. Not with this Government.

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Those who have got the vitality and the grit and the drive and can climb up the rope, well, he goes up. Those who are sluggish and worse, those who have got ability but think that they have done their life's work by just passing an examination and getting a good degree and now they have got in through the PSC and they are sitting back and not blotting their copy book and so by affluxion of time they will become head of the Ministry -- I say forget it. Because the rules are

going to be changed, AUPE notwithstanding, and a man can be sacked for shirking and inefficiency. And he can be dispensed with.

You know, at this moment, he can be retired. But I have got to pay him a pension, Why should I put this burden on the public purse? A man is shirking. I know he has got ability; I know he is not making the effort. I say such a man should leave the Government service with a polite discharge. We don't have to besmirch his whole career; just say, "Your services are no longer required under Section so and so; there is a new Section which says those who are not putting on their efforts... And mean this, because there is no other way, and not responsible for, and I don't want this place to go down hill and go into the hands of the Communists. Because that is what they are waiting for.

We have got a straight bat. You try any fancy strokes, you miss, the ball goes to the boundary; finish; out. No wicket keeper; no long stop; and we are that straight bat; you the admin. machinery; my colleagues and I, the political leadership. And of course, as I have said, as quickly as possible, more alternative leaderships for our own happiness and our equanimity of mind.

But remember this: the straight bat. Don't take chances. I am prepared to take chances with my life. That is one thing. Only I will be sorry for it and may

be immediate family. But I am not prepared to take chances with the lives of two million people. And the future of that two million must inevitably affect the lives of this and this. (Malaysia).

And if you look at that map which shows you the whole world, you will see that... I am not President Sukarno and I am not saying that God created that... But somehow, as this planet cools down at uneven levels... this is the southernmost tip of Asia, and we are linked with that continent by that Causeway and it cannot be destroyed. Half of it belong to us. Even if the other half they want to destroy, our half will remain our half. We are at once in a most commanding and, at the same time, a most hazardous position.

True, if there is a nuclear war and this is a key centre, then one rocket will be sent here -- if there is a nuclear war. In which case, then the whole of mankind is finished. Although there are some people who believe that some of mankind will be left behind and they will inherit the world. Well, I am not sure. But I am only interested in my part of mankind, and that is in this region as I have told you. And because of that, I say the world does not owe us a living; we don't owe the world a living. We owe those who are nice and friendly to us a living.

So you see gentlemen, our position is very far from weak. Every passing day, as our position consolidates internationally ... you know, the muscles are rippling. And by the end of the year, all biceps will have developed. By the end of one complete year, or at the most by the end of the second year, August 9, 1967 -- which will be quite a few days before August 31, 1967 which is another momentous day, we shall be in a position, internally and internationally, to discharge our obligations not just to two million people -- never forget that -- but to the people who are one; two million Singapore, nine million around us.

And we intend to see that we and they will be here a thousand years from now. And that is your duty and mine.

Thank you.

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30th September, 1965.