

TRANSCRIPT OF SPEECH MADE BY THE  
PRIME MINISTER, MR LEE KUAN YEW, AT THE KAMPONG  
GLAM BRANCH OF THE PAP ON 2ND JANUARY, 1966.

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1966, our first full year of independence will be a year in which we should prepare ourselves for the kind of problems which, we know, are going to crop up. We must consolidate and stabilize our independence in many directions: internally build up the strength of the people to meet all contingencies; build up the economy, build up the sense of national consciousness, solidarity and understanding that survival cannot be sought individually; cannot be sought for by looking for individual escape routes.

You know, you can be the world's biggest millionaire. But if the country collapses you are in trouble.

So I say most important that we all understand: there is no going back; always go forward and we have learnt for nearly 20 years now since the Japanese were defeated, politics means your life and if it goes wrong it means your death and worse, your children's death; no way out for them. Just shouting slogans is not enough.

So I say it is a good sign when a Barisan Sosialis leader resigns because he has decided that mere slogan shouting is a waste of time.

Believe you, me, I say everybody had better start off on that major premise that it is not our intention to let this country go down the drain. And anybody who wants to play ducks and drakes better go back to his little back garden and he can make a speech to himself. But anybody who comes out to bedevil, to confuse, to create trouble, he takes the consequences.

This is a very serious phase in our history, 1966. I say we consolidate every aspect wherever we can, whether it is in our trade and industry, our international connections in Afro-Asia, our People's Defence Force and our Vigilante Corps; every section which mobilises, guards, organises the people, and there is a growing consciousness that this country, if you don't look after it, nobody else will.

You know, in the old days we didn't care whether the drain is repaired and so on; it didn't belong to us; the British were in charge. But now this does belong to us, you know. I sit down here; I worry when I see that there are flies. When I hear that the market next door is very dirty I say, "Yes, all right. Well,

this year, we are going to get a big labour force, expand the Cleansing Department, keep this place clean." This place matters to us and we have got to care. And I say in the end we will show our neighbours. We cannot be downgraded, confined, conscribed into a little island. The human spirit and the ideas which the human mind generates cannot be conscribed in that way. Ideas are not confined by national boundaries. And our ideas of a multi-racial and a just and equal society will win our policies must be designed to consolidate such a society in Southeast Asia. That is what this is all about.

I say 1966, one big step forward towards greater strength, greater security, greater trade, greater industries and greater preparation for the problems ahead. And you know, one of the big dates in history already befixed by the Constitution is the 31st of August, 1967. So we all watch intently. Sometimes moments of anxiety as we watch all this political churning going on, and we say "well, we hope all will be well." But whilst we hope that all will be well we also prepare on the basis that if all is not well we must be ready to meet every eventuality.

Hence, you know, all the problems of identifying our own citizens, Identity Cards, Work Permits and so on. But actually in the long run, I tell you frankly, you cannot divide the peoples; they are one. This is in the short term. You know, there are some people who may be toying with the idea of pushing out all those who are prepared to stand up and speak up. They say, "All right, get out, go to

Singapore." I mean, if they start doing that we will become over crowded. So we say, "well please let us go slow. Find out who are our citizens and who are not."

But in the event of a major catastrophe I say all this goes by the wayside. We are one people; we've got to sink or swim together. And I say Singapore being out gives a better chance for all swimming rather than sinking. And on the basis that we shall all be swimming, I say today we learn how to take that a deep breath, get into the water and come out on top. All that needs is training and preparation. And from our past performance, I would say that Singapore has got what is required.

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