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PRESS
STATEMENT

TEXT OF SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.
SIR WILLIAM GOODE, AT THE 21ST ALL-MALAYA
CO-OPERATIVE CONFERENCE 1958, ON JUNE
21, 1958, AT 2.30 P.M.

I am very happy to be with you this afternoon for the opening of the 21st All-Malaya Co-operative Conference because because I am well aware of the steady contribution which the Co-operative Societies, that you represent, are making for the moral and economic welfare of their members. I congratulate this Conference on coming of age and wish you every success in the years to come.

We live in times when much is expected of the citizen in terms of service to his community. The co-operative slogan "Each for All and All for Each" throws out a timely challenge and it puts a responsibility upon you. We live in times when Governments are increasing their efforts to develop and improve the economic and social welfare of their peoples. The co-operative movement by steadily pursuing its objectives, can do a very great deal to ensure success in this struggle for human betterment.

There is no other comparable voluntary organisation - with the independence of the co-operative movement, supported as it is by its special legislation - which is working so successfully for the improvement of the standard of living of the people. There is nothing which offers, as the Co-operative Movement always offers to its members, so much more than any state-run welfare scheme can hope to offer. For co-operative achievements rest upon the deliberate free choice of everyone who joins the movement, and chooses to benefit from the facilities that he and his fellow members between them have developed. As the state takes over increasing responsibility for some of the gravest social problems, providing for instance workmen's compensation schemes and provident funds, the co-operative movement should take upon itself the task of building additional benefits for its members, while at the same time fostering among them a spirit of self-reliance and the good comradeship that grows with shared endeavours.

It was a signal success to your leadership that the International Co-operative Alliance held their First South East Asian Conference in Kuala Lumpur during January this year. I had the pleasure of meeting some of the delegates from overseas and I feel sure that all of you who met them will make certain that the friendships which were made and the contacts which were established will be kept alive and will assist you to expand your movement successfully as well as to organise and develop with confidence the new fields of co-operative housing, banking, life insurance and retail trading upon which you have now entered.

It is a fine feature of your movement that it has now an organisation to enable all members to determine the kind of economic security they wish to enjoy in their old age and also to make provision for their families.

The task before you is as great as you may wish to make it. Certainly the societies in the urban areas, particularly the Thrift and Loan Societies have a proud record. I understand the movement is now of the opinion that co-operative principles should not allow all the benefits to be kept within narrow

circles for an indefinite period. So you are looking around, very rightly, to see where you can spread the message of your movement and also, if necessary, lend a helping hand.

Throughout Malaya there is a growing awareness of the importance of our farmers and fishermen, and the fact that they may find the solutions to many of their pressing needs through co-operation. I think it would be a splendid development if the farmers and the fishermen are included among those who receive from you tangible proof of the co-operative ideals upon which you have built your movement. Co-operation can be a valuable moral stimulus to the poor or improvident, and ways still need to be found whereby you can pass on your experience and knowledge, and even arrange financial aid, to groups among both the rural and urban populations.

Your financial progress and your strict observance of neutrality in religion and politics have amply justified the confidence and the faith which the early founders, Sir George Maxwell and Alexandra Cavendish, had in your movement. A large number of you may still remember the early days and recall how the first co-operatives took shape in order to fight the problem of heavy indebtedness. While the movement has grown in a remarkable manner, I feel that the battle against indebtedness has still to be finally won.

Although many societies are strong and well established, there is possibly still a great deal of work yet that needs to be done in order to eradicate the habit of running into debt as the easiest way out of many urgent human problems. I would suggest this work needs attention perhaps as much among the individual members in certain societies as outside the co-operative movement among those who do not yet realise how the movement can help them with such personal problems. In this field alone there is much that requires to be done.

I am glad to note from the resolutions that you will consider at this conference that you are well aware of the importance of making yourselves and what you stand for as widely known as possible. Also that you appreciate the importance of the work of spreading the knowledge of the co-operative movement being undertaken by the members of that movement, since they can bring a conviction to those among whom they work that is of great value and likely to be extremely effective. The officials are there to help you and to supplement such work, but success must rest to a very great extent upon your individual endeavours.

I wish your conference every success and hope that all your plans and decisions will lead you to give a fresh momentum to economic welfare both in urban and rural areas.

JUNE 21, 1958.

(Time issued 1100 hours.)