

SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER EISAKU SATO
AT THE DINNER GIVEN BY PRIME MINISTER LEE

Your Excellency Mr. Lee Kuan Yew.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am very grateful for the kind words of welcome extended just now by your Excellency, and for the warm hospitality accorded to my party and myself at this splendid banquet this evening.

Although this is my first visit to Singapore, I feel as if I had been here before, since I have had the pleasure of meeting and talking personally with Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew earlier this year when he visited Tokyo.

Geographically speaking, Singapore is located in a key position in Southeast Asia. The people are gifted as well as industrious and are striving hard in unison in the task of building a new nation under the able leadership of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

Looking back on the history of Japan, it can be seen that Japan also took the same course that Singapore is following today.

Both Singapore and Japan have large populations in a relatively narrow territory, scarce in natural resources. The only assets both of us have in common are the diligence, ability and determination of the people.

It has taken the Japanese people 100 years since the Meiji Restoration to make Japan what it is today. However, with the great advances in science and technology, and the increased determination of the people today, I have no doubt that Singapore will achieve her objective in a much shorter time than it took Japan. I have heard that Singapore has already achieved great successes in housing and in other social development programmes. I am looking forward to seeing for myself the results of these achievements and to gain from Singapore's experiences in this area.

In considering future developments in the world situation, I believe that without prosperity and stability in Asia, there can be no prosperity and stability in the world.

There were times in the history of Asia when we had a number of unhappy incidents. After the end of World War II, however, all the Asian

nations, through their own initiative, have attained their independence, and have since then been striving for prosperity and security.

Unfortunately, the situation in Asia today is still in a state of flux and the road to stable growth has not yet been laid out.

However, there are welcome signs of a growing awareness of the need for a sound and realistic approach to nation-building and an increasing trend towards regional co-operation.

As I have said on many occasions, the basic principles of Japan's foreign policy are to devote every effort to maintain friendly relations with all countries, defend freedom, and to follow a course towards peace and prosperity in the world. In this connection, we believe that Asia is by far the most important region for Japan and that peace and prosperity in Asia is indispensable to Japan's own peace and prosperity.

One of the basic aims of my present visit to Southeast Asia is to seek ways and means to achieve this peace and prosperity in Asia.

Let us co-operate and work together for our peace, security and a better future.

Thank you.

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National Archives of Singapore