

EMBARGOED UNTIL AND SUBJECT TO DELIVERY.

Speech by Mr. L. P. Rodrigo, M.P. for Serangoon Gardens on the 12th Anniversary Dinner of the P.A.P. Serangoon Garden Branch, on Thursday, 17th June, 1971, at the Serangoon Garden Circus.

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We meet here to celebrate the 12th Anniversary of the Party's Serangoon Gardens Branch.

In its 12 years the Serangoon Gardens Branch has served the Constituency by assisting the residents with their problems and by working co-operatively with the C.C.C. on community development projects. Many major projects in the Constituency have been completed. Sewerage has come into the Constituency and we now have a decent bus bay. Soon we will have a hawking-centre.

We hope to be able to build our own Branch premises soon with your support.

With a spacious Branch premises of our own, we will be able to extend our organisation to serve the residents of the Serangoon Gardens Constituency. Most of you have contributed generously to our fund and I am very thankful and grateful to you, especially to our donors.

Tonight I am indeed glad to see so many members and supporters present. What makes it more pleasing still is that the membership of the Branch continues to increase, as more young residents become convinced that the Party is only concerned with the security of the country and welfare of our people.

The Party is on record as wanting to do just that and nothing to the contrary.

Some people who claim to support us also claim to be disturbed by the way we go about doing things to ensure the security of our country and the prosperity of the nation. The Party has always faced an adverse situation squarely and taken a swift decision, if it is necessary to preserve the peace and stability of our society. The Party has not refrained from taking any unpopular decision, if that decision is necessary and urgent in the interests of the people.

To fall short of doing so is not Government of the people by the people or for the people. It is manipulation of the political leadership by subversive interests.

Some of us view issues in our country as detached from events of power politics outside our country. This is because we tend to be looking at ourselves all the time without wanting at the same time to appreciate and understand the world outside and the conditions and realities of our place in it. It is a kind of introversion which is dangerous because it may develop into a political myopia in us and become characteristic of our insularity.

We must not allow the environment or rising affluence in our country to blunt our alertness to the fact that ours is a situation which demands continual vigilance and firm government if our country is to continue to progress and bring peace and plenty to all.

We do not live in isolation. How we live and what we do are of interest to forces outside us. It may be their business to do something about it. But it is the business of our Government to know the intentions of these forces and to act promptly, if necessary.

Many decisions taken in our country are often related to situations in the world outside. So, to appreciate our own affairs, we need to be alive to the foreign affairs of foreign powers. In other words, sometimes we have to look outside to see inside clearly.

This advice I would give to our younger members in particular. Our senior members and elder supporters have followed the Party since its formation in 1954 and know what kind of messy situation this place could be if our Party had not been governing the country since 1959. Since that time they have been looking at countries around and today they have a past-situation with which they can compare the present Singapore. They understand and are able to give ideals of freedom their proper values.

To our younger generation, the recent past has not been very real yet. With independence there is the danger of our becoming insular in conception and action.

It should therefore be the responsibility of senior Party members and supporters to continually bring to the awareness of our young the course of our recent history and the realities of our situation in the present world.

We must look outside to see inside clearly.

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16th June, 1971.