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TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. LEE KUAN YEW AT A DINNER GIVEN BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA SOCIETY IN HONOUR OF THEIR GRADUATES ELECTED TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ON SATURDAY, JULY 25, 1959.

Merdeka! I must confess that it is with a certain amount of trepidation that I looked forward to this evening's jubilations. My colleagues and I have been somewhat more occupied with the mundane business of telling blunt truths to simple people and the business of sugar-coating the blunt truths for not so simple people. And therefore you should forgive me for the less desirable and less better parts of the pill this evening.

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First, may I say that it has been a long time since I have been referred as an honoured guest. For my colleagues and myself are more accustomed to blunt people with blunt thoughts and blunt words. We are anything less but honoured. If we are to be honoured at all then it is when we are dead and gone and when we have left the world to honour us. I hate to believe that when I am still alive my colleagues and I should be emulated.

There has been a very good practice in other parts of the Western democracy and that is never to be honoured either by the emoluments or anything that can be raised therefore I and my colleagues ask you not to honour us until we are dead. But do give us at present by all means the courtesy and respect that is due to us as representatives of the people.

We were never more confident as we were when winning the elections and again tonight.

I knew the groups of English-speaking of the University of Malaya, the King Edward VII College and former Raffles College. And, tonight, we are here because we succeeded and no one is more aware of it than we are ourselves.

May I in conclusion say a few words of understanding on an occasion such as this. Let us never forget, that we, the English educated elite merit our place in society so long as we are able to do a service to that society.

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I can assure you, Mr. President Sir, despite the somewhat panoramic background noises that if I were to stand for Presidency perhaps I would stand as good a chance as you do, but in more serious vein, you and I as members of an English-educated elite have this one lesson to learn. That we exist because of

special conditions in the past which threw out our forebears. That I had the good fortune of having Permanent Secretaries who have come from the same portals as you to do a job with basic reasonableness and do that in an orderly and efficient and quiet manner.

If, as you say, in between bouts of swallowing beer and whiskey, we can develop culture, let us never forget that all those who belong to our generation are here because of an accident of history. The British Raj has, in the first place, transferred power. It is always those whom the British Raj has nurtured and the English educated class.

My colleagues were specially educated on this theme. They went on full pay leave - one to Oxford and the other to London at the expense of the British Raj. One went at the expense of the University of Malaya. Despite the fact that it was in their power to slide into the system and make the world for themselves, they had not only the courage and strength of their convictions and a social conscience that made them discard the privileges that were theirs for the asking for those privileges to be shared amongst the bulk of the population. Colleagues like Dr Goh and Dr Toh.

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Let us remember this because they had the strength in not only the place they occupied vis-a-vis the University of Malaya, the King Edward VII College and its elite, not only the University of Malaya vis-a-vis the whole of the society, but in the place, the time, the situation, the suddenness of the revolution that is sweeping the whole of Asia.

And if there is one thing the elite can learn from us it's this. That they were ready to discard all positive personal advantage for a cause. And tonight I have come here too with a cause: the cause is to sell you an independent, non-Communist, Socialist Malaya.

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