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TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR.LEE KUAN YEW, AT THE DINNER OF THE SOCIETY OF MALAYAN ARCHITECTS ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 1960.

The most vivid manifestation of a prospering and flourishing people are its buildings. A people can change its style of dress but they cannot easily change the buildings which have been erected for the present, and future generations. The great civilisations in the past were notable for the beautiful buildings and cities that were constructed at the height of their glory and still remain to tell of the skill and artistry of its builders.

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It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Society of Malayan Architects on its second anniversary and to wish its members a busy, constructive, and fruitful new year. For years in the past every important public building, and most of the bigger private buildings, were designed and executed by those who did not spend their lives here. That phase is passing, and as the years go by, more and more of our own people will be acquiring all the skills,

techniques and know-how which are part of the technological age we live in. That our people have the ability and the talent to acquire these skills and techniques is beyond doubt. But unless there is a school in which all the skill and technical knowledge possessed by our architects can be assembled, classified, processed and passed on to new architects, it is hardly likely that Malaya will make any significant contribution to the progress of architecture in the tropical regions of South East Asia.

The Polytechnic's Department of Building and Architecture is a small beginning. If we want to meet the demands of our fast growing society we must train a whole host of architects, not only for the big buildings and the housing schemes executed by the State, but also for every small building that goes up for the private individual. If we take the Medical College that was set up 50 years ago as an example of what is possible if local talent is provided with the opportunity for training, you will readily see that a flourishing school of architecture could well be established. When we establish such a flourishing school, where the senior members of the profession are not only practicing their skills, but are passing on those skills to those who come after them, then we have left the folds of a colonial society and entered the realms of a free, progressive and advanced society.

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One quality required for this advance is an awareness on the part of those of you who have been abroad to acquire these skills, of the need to approach these problems from a national, and not a personal selfish stand point. A Society of Malayan Architects formed for the advancement of architecture, and the training of architects to serve the people is an association to be admired and respected. But, a Society of Malayan Architects trained abroad, formed to protect the interests of those who already are architects to the detriment of those who hope to come after them, is not one that will commend itself to right-thinking men.

It is because my colleagues and I are confident that your society was formed to serve the interests of our people as a whole, and not merely the selfish interests of your profession that we have great pleasure in attending your annual dinner tonight and bring you our good wishes for the future.

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The dinner of the Society of Malayan Architects was held at the ballroom of the Asia Insurance Building.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, was met on arrival by the President of the Society, Mr, Ng Keng Siang, who introduced him to the other Council members.

JANUARY 12,1960. (Time issued: 2000 hours)

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