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PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AT THE STATE BANQUET

I am honoured by the courtesy and warmth of the reception that has been extended to me. The destiny of the peoples of South-East Asia is a common one. Geography ordains that we shall always be neighbours, and but for the accidents of colonial history we might well have been much closer together.

We understand the bitterness of the Indonesian people against colonial exploitation. The Dutch plundered Indonesia. And, to a certain extent, we understand also the feeling that Singapore under the British colonial control may have exploited her trading connections with her neighbours.

In the past, when the Government of Singapore consisted of British colonial officials, it was inevitable that the spirit of mutual co-operation and camaraderie between the two governments was sadly lacking. In June last year, effective control of the internal government of Singapore and of her external trade passed into the hands of a Government elected by the people of Singapore. Our friendship and desire for co-operation spring from the hearts of the people of Singapore. There is nothing that the people of Singapore would like more than to have more friendly and closer relations in cultural and trade matters with our

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second closest neighbour - the Republic of Indonesia. We are a small island at the tip of the Malay Peninsula. To the north is the Federation of Malaya; to the south, east and west lie the myriads of islands of the Republic of Indonesia. And, on a clear day, from my office, I can see across the sea the islands which are part of Indonesia, just a few miles away.

I feel that our relationship has undergone a fundamental change for the better. Our relationship will not be of the nature it was when a colonial power dealt unsympathetically and in purely commercial terms with the Indonesian nation. Co-operation between us will be to our mutual benefit. It is our intention in our trade with Indonesia, not just to make a profit out of her, but to serve her needs for as long as we can perform a useful function as a collecting point for disposal of Indonesian products, and for purchases of finished goods. As your economy develops and our own industries are established, it is inevitable that the pattern of trade between us will change in its complexion. But I am confident that we will always be able to benefit from trade with each other.

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Finally, I give you this assurance from the people of Singapore. That we will not allow anything detrimental to the security of Indonesia to be committed

in any territory over which we have control. This is the basic friendship which we have towards our neighbours the people of Indonesia. May that friendship strengthen and grow in mutual respect and mutual prosperity.

JANUARY 19, 1960.

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