TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER,

MR. LEE KUAN YEW, AT THE MAY DAY RALLY ON

1ST MAY, 1961.

This is the second May Day rally since the PAP came into power in 1959. I do not believe there is anybody here or anybody in Singapore who is a worker who can honestly stand up and say that after two years of government by the PAP his condition has become worse. Everyone of you must know that never in the history of Singapore has there been a government more sympathetic, more actively sincere in trying to better the working class. However, over the last 22 months not unnaturally many people have tried to get the best of both worlds. On the one hand, they are quietly pleased, if not grateful, that there is a government which is prepared to hold the fort against those who would like to see the old order continue. They are pleased that there is a government working definitely on fixed principles in the interests of the working class, a government which keeps the predatory instincts of the employer, be he a local or a foreign one, keeps his avarice and his greed in check, a government which ensures within the limits of its power the maximum amount of political freedom amongst the working class, the maximum amount of political exercise, of mass cohesion of workers in the interests of the working class.

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But, on the other hand, there has been constant and carping back-biting and criticism. Whilst acknowledging to themselves that the government was generally trying to better the interests of the working class, they publicly tell the rank and file half-truths designed to maintain an atmosphere of discontent, an atmosphere that all could be better if only things were different, if only fiercer men were in the saddle, if only the British colonialists were wiped out, if only independence were obtained, if only the Government did a 1,001 dreamy, starry-eyed impracticable things, the results of which we were unable to reverse in the seven weeks of the Hong Lim by-election.

The position has undergone a definite change. And it is now a moment of decision for not only the workers but all the people of Singapore to decide whether they stand for or against the PAP. Nobody can have it both ways. And it is quite clear that the moment of decision must come early. We are of use to you, the working class of Singapore, insofar as we can establish conditions of certainty to ensure not only the maintenance of living standards, but the sufficiency of industrial expansion which will ensure your jobs, better working conditions, more work for more people with more pay and better surroundings and better terms of service. Uncertainty, a state of stagnation in which no expansion takes place, means we will face disaster, no expansion of industry, no more employment opportunities being created, and a gradual worsening of the

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present position for the workers -- all these must come back to roost, whoever is in Government. Therefore, for you, as it is for everybody in Singapore, including us, I think a careful reappraisal of where we stand and where we are going has to be made. It's no use just saying 'support the anti-colonial movement'. Those are obvious things. Tun Lim Yew Hock says he represents the anti-colonial movement, Marshall says he represents an anti-colonial movement, Mr.Ong Eng Guan says he represents an anti-colonial movement. The PAP also represents the anti-colonial movement. Positions must be taken in which those who believe they can lead the people better than the PAP must come forward and lead.

It is not possible to tell the PAP 'do this, do that, do the other', knowing full well that the objective and realistic conditions have to be faced by any government in power with the interests of the people at heart. Therefore to those who say 'seek concord amidst or whilst maintaining differences,' I say to them and to their supporters, 'the PAP has clearly stated where it stands. Seek concord if you will with the PAP on the PAP stand. Maintain your differences and seek no concord if you find that the PAP stand is against your stand. But I say this, that it is our duty to convince the people that the PAP stand is in their interests, in the long-term future it is the best road that they can travel to a peaceful and prosperous, a happy and a united society. We had believed that perhaps decisions of principle, of grave political policy, could be left open till 1963 when

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the constitutional position has to be reviewed. But developments that have taken place make it necessary that decisions have to be taken earlier and not later, for the interests of everybody. Those who say they stand for outright independence, let them seek concord whilst maintaining differences with Tun Lim Yew Hock, David Marshall, Ong Eng Guan and all the others who say 'Indpendent Singapore'. Those who genuinely believe that that is the road to perdition and who know that our political future lies in merger into a larger entity, into a Malayan whole, then it is their business, as it is the business of the PAP, to convince the people, whatever the temporary setbacks, whatever the temporary misunderstandings, that this is the road ahead. Anti-colonialism as a slogan is a necessary slogan. But the direction of that anti-colonialism, the road that we are to travel to independence, are objectives which must be clarified in no uncertain terms.

In the coming weeks, it is not unlikely that events will unravel themselves with greater lucidity in order that everybody should know where everybody stands. We should be honest to ourselves and to our people. It is my hope that when that moment of decision comes, when the lines which are at present being blurred have to be drawn, that we shall be able to convince the majority of the people to stand on that side of the line which stands for sanity, for national unity, for independence through merger in a larger political whole. On the other side of

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the line is the easy way out -- the easy appeal to impatience and frustrations, the slogans that for years have always aroused an atmosphere of excitement and, in some quarters, of hysteria; slogans which appeal to the different communities, different slogans in different wavelengths, bringing about different results, the results of all of which must mean national disunity, unhappiness and chaos. It is, therefore, your duty as members of the working class to take up your stand. For us, as those who are supposed to guide your destinies in the government, it is our business to see that you are brought along a road which leads to national happiness, national unity and national independence.

The history of a people is not decided in one or two election defeats or election victories. It is a long and relentless process not dependent on persons and personalities but on the political and social and national forces at work within a given milieu. And it is only a question of whether one can analyse and decipher and discern the forces in play and calculate the resultant direction of all these forces. They are factors more enduring, more decisive than all the slogans that men or politicians or trade unionists can coin.

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So let us therefore, if we are to survive the test of history, regardless of temporary setbacks, coin slogans which will stand the test of time. That is our business and we hope that is also your business.