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TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER,

MR.LEE KUAN YEW IN THE LEGISLATIVE

ASSEMBLY ON THURSDAY, JULY 20, 1961.

INTRODUCTION

The events of the past week have been so rapid and dramatic that it takes some time for our minds to grasp their full significance. On Monday, 10 th July, ten days ago, at a forum at the University of Malaya specially organised to discuss "The Basis of Merger", an open collision took place between Mr.Devan Nair who represented the PAP and Mr.Woodhull who represented Mr.Lim Chin Siong and four others in the T.U.C. Mr. Woodhull, Mr.Devan Nair, Mr. Lim Chin Siong, Mr.Fong Swee Suan, Dr. Toh and I and several other members of the Central Executive were old comrades in the PAP. Now an open break has taken place when Mr. Woodhull, Political Secretary in the present Government, in the last week of the Anson by-election, openly attacked Mr. Devan Nair a founder member and PAP stalwart.

On Friday, 14th July, six days ago, eight Assemblymen, came out supporting the Trade Union Six; and, in open breach of party discipline and rules of decency, created public confusion by demanding the PAP's disavowal of Mr. Devan Nair.

What was all this about? Their object in doing this was to make us lose the Anson by-election, and the more heavily our candidate was defeated the more it suited their plot. They have succeeded in making our candidate lose. 1,500 people abstained from voting in Anson, disillusioned by this party dissension brought into the open deliberately on the eve of Polling Day, and we lost to Mr. David Marshall by 546 votes.

What is this all about? We have to explain frankly what is happening and why it is happening. After Hong Lim when we were defeated badly I felt that if the people desired it, there should be a reference back to the people. However, it was decided by a majority opinion of the Party that we should first fight Anson and then reconsider the position. At that time Mr. Lim Chin Siong and all his trade union friends strenuously opposed any talk of our resignation. After losing Anson by a narrow majority and because of this attempt by the six trade unionist and 8 Assemblymen to capture the Government and the Party we are resolved not to abdicate our position in order that the Party and the Government does not

pass into the hands of people who intend to use it to purposes for which the people did not vote the PAP in. The present leadership of the Party was responsible for winning the mandate of the people in the last elections, and it is our duty not to give Mr.Lim Chin Siong any opportunity to take over this Government in order to run it as a Communist front Government.

What is this all about? Their first plan now, since they are unable to capture the Government, is to get me to resign in order that someone whom they believe they can manipulate, could be elected Prime Minister. They hope in this way to force a compromise in the policy of the Government so that they can extend Communist influence in Singapore and prevent us from fulfilling our declared objective of independence through merger with the Federation with or without the Borneo Territories in 1963. This move has now been frustrated by the unanimous decision of the C.E.C. to stand collectively together against any change. And this stand has been endorsed by a majority of P.A.P. Assemblymen.

VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

This motion is one of confidence and the motion will have to be carried as it stands without amendment or the Government must resign and general elections follow. On a motion of confidence, any amendment is tantamount to a vote of no confidence.

As for the Honourable Members on the other side of the House may I say on behalf of my colleagues and I, that if they want general elections they can vote against the Government.

This extraordinary session has become necessary because of the sudden turn of events over the last few weeks. Eight Assemblymen on the PAP side have openly defied the Party leadership. Demands for my resignation as Prime Minister have been made and it has become necessary that the House should clearly give us a mandate to carry on.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that when we last met on 14th June, 1961, the House was adjourned sine die, the reason being that we expected to prorogue the session and re-convene again at the end of October after you have returned from a C.P.A. conference in London. I understand you will be leaving Singapore in September and returning in mid-October. Therefore, before this House goes into recess, we must make it clear that we have the mandate of the Assembly to carry on as the Government.

By this stand I know that we shall face a fresh offensive which will be mounted on labour and industrial sections and on many other fronts. Therefore it

was necessary that I should have a clear mandate from the PAP Central Executive and the PAP Assembly men who are going into the battle with us. This mandate I have been given by the Party, and we now formally ask it of the Assembly.

TRIALS AHEAD

It is now my duty to tell you of the trials and tribulations which lie ahead and of the many unpleasant things that may have to be done in order to maintain the economy of this island and your welfare.

The time has come for the unvarnished truth to be told. For two years the British Government has tried to manipulate the PAP into a position where we will become the successor to Lim Yew Hock's policy, where the C.P. will be attacked not by British imperialism, which is the supreme power in Singapore, but by us the locally elected Government with limited powers. To achieve this end every blandishment and argument has been put forward, and every device and seductive manoeuvre practised.

After two years the British have decided that the PAP is impervious to such blandishment. Perhaps they have decided that we are men who are not influenced by personal considerations of wishing to stay in power. We are

prepared to lay down office at any time at the behest of the people and we are not going to be manipulated by any power.

The big scheme we have only been able to piece completely together after the Anson by-election. The plot, counter-plot and sub-plots that have been going on would make an Oppenheimer thriller read like a simple comic strip cartoon. The diplomacy, skill and cunning of some 300 years of the building and running of the British Empire, and in the manipulation of men and their motivations have in great part led to this curious position, daily going curiouser and curiouser.

TWO BRITISH OBJECTIVES

The British as I see it had two objectives.

The first objective was to engineer a collision between the non-communist left in the PAP and the Communist left. Their second objective is to ensure that the Borneo territories are put into a position where they will come together immediately in a federation under British tutelage, but in a state of readiness if the international situation turns delicate to be transferred to a nationalist government of "Greater Malaysia".

I congratulate the planners of this scheme for having succeeded thus far. Day by day on the basis of British blandishments and manoeuvre, all parties -- the Communists, the PAP, the Federation and the leaders of the Borneo territories have been mounting the stakes at the poker table. To the pro-Communists in Singapore the British say that the British are liberal and democratic, that if they have released men from prisons to be prime ministers, and only recently they have done so again in Nyasaland, why should they want to keep detainees in jail? It is darkly hinted that it is the wicked Singapore Government that wanted to keep them in jail.

PLOT, COUNTER-PLOT AND SUB-PLOT.

These insinuations started slowly. After the Hong Lim by-election they were intensified. The British were unhappy that in Hong Lim the Communist left rallied to the P.A.P. united front. So some plan had to be found to ensure that the P.A.P. would come into collision with the C.P. left. Dinner parties, cocktails, luncheons led to friendly fraternalisation between the British Lion and Messrs. Lim Chin Siong, Woodhull & Co. The pro-communists were led to believe that the P.A.P. were the wicked obstructionists, and the British, wise and statesmanlike people, were prepared even to envisage a new "Left" government emerging in Singapore even more left than the P.A.P. provided their military bases were not touched.

The British have become their own agents-provocateur. How well they have succeeded! Quietly and insidiously they had instigated the pro-Communists to attempt the capture of both the P.A.P. Government and the Party. Young inexperienced revolutionaries were so taken in, that in a crisis, Lim Chin Siong, Woodhull and Fong Swee Suan this trio looked up the U.K. Commissioner for consultations on Tuesday, 18th instant at the Eden Hall home of the U.K. Commissioner. We felt that something curious was going on and we therefore kept observation of the residence of the U.K. Commissioner. Lo and behold! the great anti-colonialists and revolutionaries turned up for secret consultations with the British lion. I am now convinced that some funny things are happening when in a serious crisis this revolutionary trio get into consultation at Eden Hall with the U.K. Commissioner, instead of with the P.A.P.

Having led the pro-Communists into believing that a non-communist Government was no longer necessary and that a pro-Communist Government was possible, obviously these men were going to try and capture the P.A.P. Party and Government. And the British may also have hoped that under attack and threat of capture the P.A.P. would fight back and finally suppress the Communists, something they have so far failed in persuading the P.A.P. to do.

Meanwhile to the P.A.P. the British had suggested that we should take firm action against the mounting subversion. In fact, a plan was to have been drawn up which would have culminated in an act leading to open collision with the Communists in which the P.A.P. either remained in office and so become committed forever to defend British colonialism, or resigned, in which case a non-Communist Government not amenable to British pressure would have been got rid off.

Meanwhile, the Federation began to believe that they could get the Borneo territories, together with Singapore, merged in a larger federation. The Tunku came down on May 27th, a week before National Day, and announced to a group of foreign correspondents that he recognised that there must be closer political and economic ties between the Federation of Malaya, Singapore and the three Borneo territories. I answered on June 3rd, National Day, that on principle we welcomed the Tunku's plan for a larger federation, if thereby merger between Singapore and the Federation was made easier.

The Communists on the other hand propounded that there was no need for independence through merger and that the next step should be to abolish the Internal Security Council in order that there would be expansion at all levels of human activity on behalf of the Communist cause.

Six trade unionists came out with statements openly supporting the Communist line on 2nd June. Forty-two trade unions also supported this C.P. line and literally put their rubber stamps on the statement without convening any meetings or consulting the rank and file. On 9th June, the PAP Chairman, Dr. Toh Chin Chye announced that the Government would demand complete independence through merger with the Federation, or merger with a larger federation when constitutional talks reopen in 1963. The PAP which was not amenable to manipulation by the British, is not going to be manipulated by the Communists.

We took our stand and the battle then began. Three days later, six trade unionists demanded immediate release of the detainees, implementation of the reunification of trade unions, granting of citizenship rights to all those loyal to the anti-colonial struggle, Communist or non-Communists and more freedom of speech, press, assembly and organisation for the advancement of the anti-colonial struggle.

Meanwhile two Governors and one High Commissioner flew in from the Borneo territories to add impetus and mystery to the vast developing plot. All these events incidentally lent credence to the false rumours that the PAP had sold

out Singapore to an Imperialist plot. The U.K. Commissioner for Singapore left for London, the Tunku and the Yang di-Pertuan Agong went to Brunei.

Everyone started his own analysis and adopted his own counter measures. Mr. Marshall said all this was for the purpose of the Anson by-election. But the Communist left believed differently and decided that this was an evil conspiracy to which the PAP was a party. They mounted the offensive and intensified their campaign. The TUC-6 openly attacked the PAP; 3 political secretaries in receipt of government remuneration flagrantly flouted all rules of decency attacked the Government they had promised to serve. Forty-three unions came out against merger supporting the TUC-6 to make the PAP lose in Anson. Finally, when in spite of everything the PAP looked like winning they engineered the betrayal of the Party by 8 Assemblymen issuing a statement of discord on the eve of polls. These pro-Communists had been duped into believing that the PAP had sold out the rights of the people of Singapore.

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It will take sometime for me to tell you the story right from the beginning.

But I feel the people must know the truth in order that when the mandate is returned to the people they will make their choice in full knowledge of the facts. And the choice will be -- do you want your future to be a Singapore merged with the Federation of Malaya, or do you want to follow people who ask first for the abolition of the Internal Security Council, and full self-government, as a first step

to an independent Communist Singapore. We saw these problems looming over the horizon even whilst the Hong Lim by-election was on, and I stressed over and over again why the PAP does not stand for an independent Singapore and why our future must lie in a merger with the Federation.

Mr. Lim Chin Siong and his friends took fright and alarm when rapid development began regarding merger. They were alarmed because merger is no longer a mirage over the horizon but a reality which will take place in 1963. Two Governors and one High Commissioner in the Borneo territories arrived to hold discussions with Lord Selkirk. Lord Selkirk returned to London to discuss matters with his government in London. The Tunku and the Agong went to Brunei and the Tunku went on to Sarawak. The Tunku made a broadcast on 4th July announcing that he would take Brunei in as a state of the Federation, together with Borneo and Sarawak. The Tunku on 11th July at a Rotary dinner said that he would hold talks with Singapore as to how Singapore should come in.

Why do they oppose this? Why do they want to capture the Government and the Party to prevent this when for years they have always endorsed and supported the PAP plan of independence through merger. Mr. Lim Chin Siong, Mr. Woodhull, Mr. Fong Swee Suan came out from prison because we had won

the elections and had demanded their release as a condition precedent before we assumed office. Although we knew that politically our opinions differed on important points from some of them we were openly comrades in a united front and we did not betray them. Yet in the middle of a by-election, which was crucial to the government, for their own reasons and for the purpose of preventing merger, they betrayed us openly at Anson, causing dissension in the party ranks and confusion in the minds of the people.

Meanwhile, the battle lines have already been drawn and forces drawn up each side. A strange twist of events has taken place in Borneo. The people of Sarawak, it appears, do not want merger as a state with the Federation as the Tunku suggested. Neither, it appears, do the people of North Borneo in which no single political party yet exists. The British Governors talked of support for greater Malaysia but only as a long-term plan. The Tunku was angered at this turn of events and now openly attacked British colonialism which has put a stumbling block in the way of the plan for a larger federation. Ten Malayan officers were being intimidated and chased out of Brunei because it is believed and said that British police officers were dilatory in protecting the physical safety of the Malayan officers.

Meanwhile because "Greater Malaysia" had been presented to the people of Brunei, Sarawak and North Borneo as a Federation colonising effort, the three territories have for the first time in the history come together voluntarily on the British plan of a Borneo federation. I congratulate the men who charted this course of events if in fact all these were intended. The British are getting the three Borneo territories together into a new federation now; after they have failed for so long.

Of course the British supported the Tunku's "Greater Malaysia" plan on principle but they had always said that the three Borneo territories must form a federation first before they merge with the Federation of Malaya. As far as the Borneo territories are concerned, therefore, the British have got everyone well and happy except probably the 10 anxious Malayan officers in Brunei.

Meanwhile in Singapore they have succeeded in beguiling the pro-C.P. elements to believe that the PAP had sold them out and encouraged them to openly attack and betray the PAP in Anson. The British were happy for they thought that after this collision the PAP would take strong measures to ensure its own survival.

Day by day the chips on the poker table are mounting. The game as has been played has gone so far now that no side can afford to back out, and that sometime in the near future all cards will be called and seen. Whoever is bluffing will lose bitterly .

I say now on behalf of my colleagues and my Party, that we are not going to fit in with the scheme to beat up the C.P. for the benefit of British colonialism. If we get no independence through merger we will leave the British with the predicament of having to deal with the Communists themselves, even in an elected government.

The Communists, on the other hand, have mounted their offensive in order to capture the P.A.P. party and the P.A.P. Government. We shall resist them.

THE TRUTH MUST BE KNOWN TO THE PEOPLE

We advise them not to try it and not to provoke us into unnecessary collision. If they want to win and take over power in Singapore they may try to do so in the next general elections. We on the other hand must let the people know the truth -- plain, simple and unvarnished truth, so that all will realise the hazardous course they will travel with these men.

Our battle with the Communists must be won by argument. We will prove that the democratic socialist forces in Singapore are honest and sincere to the people and have not and will not sell out their rights to anybody. It will also be shown that the Communists have not only been duped by the British but duped to the extent that they betrayed their P.A.P. comrades in the nationalists left united front.

The battle for man's minds cannot be won by simple smearing of a man being either anti-Communist and reactionary, or a wavering bourgeoisie, social democrat or Communist. Not all those who oppose the British are nationalists. Some anti-colonialists are nationalists and some are Communists.

We must also see this distinction that not all who oppose the PAP are Communists; some are Communists, some reactionaries, some opportunists and some merely confused.

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Therefore, in this battle of ideas it is necessary that we should call a spade a spade and put across truthfully and honestly the respective position of everyone. Our purpose is to build a movement for a united, independent, democratic, non-communist Malaya. Our business is to strengthen the forces that help to create this united Malaya. In the past the Communists may have for their

own reasons assisted us in this task. If so, they did so in the full knowledge that we are non-Communist, not Communist.

We are firmly convinced that the survival of the PAP depends on a strong adherence to this line of non-communism to prevent perversion of our party either by the British into getting the PAP to openly repressing the Communist, or by the Communists but making the PAP the vehicle of their Communist line.

As the game has been played so far, beyond any doubt that the really able and skilful player has been the British. Even we, Mr. Speaker, Sir, were at first puzzled by this development of events. On the one hand we were asked to be tough and to take firm action. On the other hand the British lion was asking the revolutionary Messrs. Lim & Woodhull & Co. to dinner and telling them that all the detainees can be let out. And then their fellow-travelling friends come and tell us that they have a first class pipe-line with the U.K. Commission and are convinced that all that the British wanted in Singapore were their bases and quiet, peace and stability, and even if a Communist government can be popularly elected all is well.

For all sides the events of the last two months have been irrevocable ones. Such conflicts as have appeared between the pro-C.P. elements and us cannot

just be laughed off and forgotten. The British are still hoping that we will come to open collision and we will use draconian methods of suppression to establish our position as a government. As I have explained, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are completely unmoved by considerations of staying in office, pomp and power, for these were not the considerations that made us seek office in 1959. We can therefore afford to ignore these blandishments and present to the British the dragon's teeth they have been sowing. But we shall fight to prevent the Government and the party from capture.

In many ways, the events of these last two months bear resemblance to the crisis in the P.A.P. in 1957. There again the pro-C.P. left, whom we had called left-wing adventurers, miscalculated their position and tried to capture the P.A.P. and force us to follow their line. Very prudently we calculated differently and abstained from office, thereby saving the P.A.P. and ourselves a great deal of unnecessary trouble. As a result we were able to survive, grow to greater strength and after succeeding in the last General Elections we were able to rescue Mr.Lim Chin Siong and seven others from prison, before we assumed power.

Now again in 1961 as in 1957 it is believed that the P.A.P. can be captured by Communists and used for Communist policies with impunity. Some of the lesser souls in our Party have decided to take the easy way out -- this short

cut to peace in our time and popularity in our time. Little do they realise that this short cut can only lead to peace only for a time and popularity only for a time.

We have decided to stay in office to prevent this criminal folly from being perpetrated on the P.A.P. for the second time. I only hope these gamblers will not have to pay too bitter and high a price when the cards are down.

We ask these gentlemen of the Communist left to stop and ponder on the adventure they are about to embark on. We the P.A.P. have never betrayed them. Although we never agreed with their ideological position, yet because we were in one anti-colonial front and they landed in jail, the non-Communists in the PAP carried on, won the general elections in 1959 and secured their release.

We were able to do this only because we were wise enough not to fall into a trap in 1957 when some left-wing adventurers tried to capture the Party. On the

other hand, the pro-Communists have been so duped by the British that having wine and dined, with the lion they were convinced that the lion will not eat

them. It is our intention that as long as the constitutional position remains as it is, no riots and violence take place which requires the intervention of British troops and British generals, the PAP will allow them opportunities for free and open debate, leading if necessary to a victory for them in the next election. It is for them to decide what course they are to embark upon.

DETAINEES

On the question of the detainees arrested by the previous Government and still in detention, my colleague, Leader of the House, will be making a statement. We intend to get this irrelevant issue out of the political scene by implementing the memorandum which we submitted to the I.S.C. in August, 1959, for continued releases in batches of all the detainees, arrested in two purges in 1956 and 1957 in which the PAP was involved. As a result of the turn of events, we are convinced that it is in the interest of the country to get this issue out of the way. So that the real issue, merger, is not clouded over.

MERGER

On merger -- let me repeat, Mr. Speaker, what the party Chairman has said -- that we stand for merger in 1963 either direct with the Federation alone or together with the three Borneo states on the terms that there should be local autonomy on education and labour. There have been no details agreed upon, no secret deals. I hope at a convenient time to discuss these matters with the Tunku on the basis for merger. When the terms and conditions are formulated it is our intention not only to get this House to support it, but to get the whole country, to endorse it.

NEW PHASE

The moment of reckoning has come, partly by British design but partly by miscalculation and gullibility of people who are supposed to be politically intelligent revolutionaries. The cards have been dealt out and the game must go. Let me explain how we are going to play this game. First, we intend to win the game not merely for the immediate present but for the long term future. We are concerned not so much with immediately remaining in office, but in preparing the conditions for merger and presenting the issues to the people so that ultimately they can make the right choice on their future in full possession of all the facts. I have stated in October, 1959 that as long as British power is supreme in Singapore, in any conflict between the armed Communists and the armed colonialists we must opt out. We have only limited arms -- a Police Force, a small S.I.R. unit and a couple of riot squads. Violence and unrest which the communists can well mount on a scale that will require the intervention of British troops and the taking over of command by a British general must mean that we must abdicate, otherwise we can be labeled stooges of a colonial regime. It is therefore a matter for the Communist-left to decide whether they want to get us out by bringing about this situation. But since their adversary the British lion has led them to believe that they will be left secure and that they will be given the freedom of the island, obviously some irrevocable decisions must already have

been made by them on the strength of this belief. Obviously nearly three years of meditation in prison have not brought about that maturity of revolutionary judgment which is required of those who embark on perilous schemes for the acquisition even of limited power.

PAP'S POLITICAL PURPOSE

It is strange that both the British colonialists and the Communists should have come to a common conclusion, that the PAP no longer serves any political purpose. What they mean is that PAP is no longer of any value from their respective points of view for purposes of manipulation, either by the British or by the Communist. Hence the British talked of liberal democratic rights to Mr. Lim Chin Siong, Woodhull & Co. and others of the British being in favour of releasing the detainees and encouraged the pro-Communist left to make more and more demands on the PAP leading to a bid to take over the Government and the Party by them and knowing that in that event the PAP would have to fight the Communists for its survival.

We would like to repeat quite clearly that the only way to independence is through merger. We do not intend to take repressive measures against the C.P. just for the benefit of the colonialists. It is our business to try under absolute conditions of safety for the life and limb of every political contestant to win the

argument for the political future of Singapore in the hearts and minds of the people.

For the PAP we are only concerned with two things -- the interest of the people of Singapore and of the Federation of Malaya whom we consider to be one people, and next the interest of the PAP as a means to bring about our democratic socialist society. The British having been unable to manipulate the PAP, naturally wanted to destroy it and they have decided with diabolical cynicism to use the Communist Party as their tool. Their objective now is to put the PAP in a spot where it either has to suppress the C.P., or be devoured and captured by it peacefully by the technique of smear and silent intimidation. However, I believe the Party and its stalwarts are sufficiently stout at heart and mind, and fortunately have foreseen such eventualities. We have our safeguards and defenses. The question of suppression of the C.P. we shall leave to the wisdom of the Communists as a matter between them and the British. Since they have apparently become good friends I wish them well in their new fraternalisation. However, I fear that in due course of time both parties will end up in mutual humiliation and betrayal.

COMMUNIST FEARS OF SUPER-MERGER TRAP

From the very moment the Communists decided that super-merger was a plot of the British imperialist in conjunction with the "feudalists" in the Federation aided and abetted by the "wavering bourgeois" PAP in Singapore they decided to destroy support for it. Their fear is that this was a trap to keep them permanently in a state of constant suppression. And they have been led to believe not least by the British that a colonial Singapore without an I.S.C. is preferable to an independent greater Malaya or Malaysia. With British blandishments they believe that under colonialism and without the I.S.C. they will have more freedom than under an independent united Malayan government. It is not for me to fathom the tortuous depths of their minds. But I say that those who believe in the proposition that more freedom is available for the advancement of the Communist cause by having a colonial self-governing Singapore than having Singapore as part of the greater Malaysia or of the Federation are men whose political maturity is very much to be doubted, and whose claim to be revolutionaries will be disproved and discarded by the harsh test of time. Good revolutionaries are not men who fall into traps set by their enemies and get excited when they see British governors arriving in Singapore to discuss super-merger and the United Kingdom Commissioner leaving Singapore for London to discuss it with the Imperial Government.

Perhaps the democratic socialists with less dogma and theoretical blinkers were better able to see through all this maze of events and were less agitated and jumpy.

Young socialists in the University of Malaya thought super-merger a trap. I think in the next few months it is likely to be proved that they had in fact fallen into a trap, a British trap to get them to oppose both super-merger and merger. From this trap they will find great difficulty in extricating themselves.

THE DENOUNCEMENT

There is so much to tell on so many things that I think it is better we take things step by step. The drama of the last few weeks which has led to this new phase in the political life of Singapore will move with ever-increasing rapidity to a crescendo. As it unfolds, itself, the people of Singapore and of Malaya will see the under-current forces for themselves and will have to decide what they wish to make of their own country, their homes and their lives. Our duty is to preserve the PAP beacon in the midst of zig-zagging policies and opportunists manoeuvring by the right as well as from the Communist left.

It is the beacon which lights up the road to an independent democratic non-Communist Malaya in which the races will live in peace and harmony with

each other and build out of our multi-racial and multi-linguistic peoples one Malayan nation, one common destiny for us all in this part of the world. Perhaps at some future date the Borneo territories will find themselves drawn towards us by the very logistics of the political situation in South East Asia. These events may take place faster than have been envisaged even a year ago. It is our duty as a political party to hasten tendencies which are to the benefit of our people.

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