

PRIME MINISTER'S BROADCAST SPEECH

OVER RADIO SARAWAK

ON 19TH DECEMBER, 1961.

The last time I had the pleasure to visit Kuching and talk over Radio Sarawak was in August 1960. On that occasion I spoke of the political features you in the Borneo territories have in common with us in Singapore and the Federation, of the same administrative system that we had under the Colonial Office, of our similar basic problems of building a united people from three main racial, cultural and linguistic groups, of our close economic ties, our trading links, and of the strength that we gather from each other in sharing one currency. Singapore is no stranger to most of you. Many of you have friends or relatives who have been to school or University there. So I suggested then that as the British Colonial power withdrew we should get together, for it is more likely that we shall survive well and prosperous in a united group than by going our lonely and separate ways.

A month ago in a joint statement the British and Malayan Governments said that they were convinced that the creation of a Federation of Malaysia which would embrace North Borneo, Sarawak and Brunei was a desirable aim, and they have accordingly decided to set up a Commission to ascertain the views of the

people of North Borneo and Sarawak and to make recommendations. They also said the views of the Sultan of Brunei were being sought. Recently the Sultan of Brunei in a speech to his Executive Council said that he welcomed and supported the proposal that Brunei should join the new Federation of Malaysia.

And so the second meeting of the Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee which was formed by North Borneo and Sarawak delegates after the C.P.A Conference in Singapore in July this year has acquired an importance which few could have foreseen, when the first meeting was held in Jesselton in September this year. The deliberations of this meeting of the Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee will no doubt be closely studied by the Commission that will soon be set up.

The speed of political development of these last few months is a reflection of the speed with which ideas travel in our world of jets, rockets and sputniks. The three territories of Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo are the last of the colonial possessions in Southeast Asia. Of course there is also West Irian, part of the old Dutch Empire which is now the Republic of Indonesia, and it is a toss up whether colonialism is ended first in West Irian or in the Borneo territories. You have read in the newspapers that today 19th December President Soekarno

will be giving orders to the Indonesian Armed Forces for the liberation of West Irian. Such is the changing pattern of national boundaries in Asia and Africa.

Colonialism is on its way out and the sooner it is out the sooner we begin to grapple with our real problems of social change, of building a more just and equal society. The longer Colonialism goes on, the more will we accumulate these problems and the more intractable they will be, because in the process of the anti-colonial struggle, in the name of freedom, the Communists in Singapore and in Sarawak, and later no doubt in North Borneo, will expand and increase their strength.

People everywhere in all colonial territories want freedom. It is easier for the communists to get the people to fight with them for freedom than to fight with them for communism. The Communists are the only people who profit by having colonial territories malingering in a state of semi-independence.

As Singapore, Sarawak, and later North Borneo, and may be even Brunei, continues under colonial rule, so will the discontent grow, and in this discontent the organisations of the Communist party will grow and thrive. Malaysia is simply the nationalist answer of cutting short the period of gestation from colonialism to independence in order to deny the Communists the use of the time

spent in a protracted struggle to build up not our forces of democracy, but their forces of Communism. The communists have seen what happened in the Federation of Malaya. Once independence was achieved in August, 1957, the Communists had to face a local nationalist elected government, and not a colonial government. Then their armed revolt collapsed and their organisation was broken up. From time to time as they expanded their front organisations and created discontent, a nationalist Federation Government punctured it. So the relentless process of struggle goes on; but now not for freedom, for independence has already been won, but for what we should do with the freedom that we have won for ourselves.

Some of you may fear the prospect of unequal competition with the peoples from the Federation of Malaya and Singapore. We in Singapore and Malaya have had the advantage of better and higher educational facilities. We have more local graduates and professional men. We have become more sophisticated and competitive. If there were no safeguards, you may perhaps find competition with the city people of Singapore and the Federation harder and more exacting. But that is what we are here to talk about, to find out how your legitimate local interests can be protected, how you can have control over your own local destiny in the Borneo territories after merger in the Federation of Malaysia. There can be safeguards by your own State control over immigration

(or migration) and by restricting voting rights in the Borneo territories. There can be safeguards by your own reserve powers over Borneonisation of your side of the Civil Service.

Constitution making is the art of making forms of government practicable by taking into consideration the practical realities of a given situation. Those of you who have read our agreement between the Singapore and the Federation can see how we have been able to resolve our problems to our mutual satisfaction, fairly and reasonably. But at the end of it all, we have one mutual interest which overrides everything else, namely the need to survive together in a troubled and changing world, and to create prosperity and stability despite the rapid changes of our social order.

As one who is a descendant of a Chinese immigrant and who firmly believes that the future of all our people in Malaysia depends upon our being united in one nation, I would like to see a fair balance of interests maintained between the indigenous people, the Dayaks, Dusuns, Muruts, the Malays and the immigrant Chinese and Indians. Naturally I would be most unhappy to see any of the discrimination which is practised against the Chinese in almost every country in Southeast Asia except our five territories of Malaysia. And Malaysia

offers us this hope of finding a just balance of interest between the descendants of the immigrant people and the indigenous people.

If we remain fragmented and in isolation then surely survival will be a dangerous business. But if we come together to form a strong Federation of Malaysia with our record of reasonableness and tolerance between Dayaks, Dusuns, Muruts, Malays, Chinese, Indians and others, there is every reason, for our multi-racial society with stable and happy relationships between its many races to survive and continue to prosper. If we had the time, perhaps Malaysia could take 5 or 6 years for formulation, re-formulation and final creation. But the second half of the 20th century is the age of rapid change and advance. Ideas and ideologies move with fantastic rapidity. We have to move as fast as events around us are moving. We have to ensure that we are not overtaken by events, and that our future is what we wish it to be.

The days of the protecting British Raj are over. We, the people of Malaysia, must provide the Leadership to solve our own problems before they become intractable, and this is what the Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee is doing, to sort our own thoughts, to educate ourselves on each other's problems, and to inform our people where the road to peace, stability and prosperity lies.

19th DECEMBER, 1961.