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MC.JN.69/64(PM)

PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AT A DINNER GIVEN
BY THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, SINGAPORE,
ON 25TH JUNE, 1964.

Mr. President, the Honourable the Minister of Finance,
Mr. Tan Siew Sin, the Honourable the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Dr. Lim Swee Aun, and Gentlemen:

It is more than nine months since Malaysia was established and my colleague, Dr. Goh and I are happy to be able to join in welcoming the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Central Government to Singapore.

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The contribution that Singapore can make in Malaysia to add to the financial, commercial and industrial strength of our new nation will depend on sincere co-operation between the Central Government and the State Government on these matters.

I read in today's English language newspapers the Honourable Minister of Finance refers to Singapore's absorption into the Common Market. He was reported as saying that it would involve "painful adjustment" and that a lot depended upon the people of Singapore and how they could adjust to these changes. I would like to assure him, on behalf of the Government and the people of Singapore, that we are prepared to go all the way to make adjustments, however painful they may be. However, the painfulness of some of these adjustments were envisaged in our constitutional arrangements and it is within the constitutional provisions of the common market arrangements to make these adjustments less painful.

The future of Malaysia is very much what we make of it. Whether we survive and emerge as a strong, coherent, multi-racial nation enjoying the highest standards of life in South East Asia will depend upon tolerance and understanding; tolerance and understanding between our racial groups, between the State governments that have just joined Malaysia and the Central Government, and between the different political philosophies and interests as represented in the various racial and philosophies and interests as represented in the various racial and political groupings both at Central and State government levels.

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We have gone into Malaysia after long and careful deliberation and reached agreement after thorough and exhaustive argument tempered by the spirit of compromise. Both sides then had the will and patience to reach agreement. Surely it is within both our capacities to make the agreement succeed.

The future is what we all together make of it. We do not have to agree on all things to make Malaysia succeed. All that is required is that we are in agreement on the fundamentals of a tolerant multi-racial society with fairplay and fair shares on the prosperity all help to create.

It is in this spirit that I join you Mr. President in welcoming our two Central Government Ministers to Singapore, and hope that more such visits will lead to better understanding.

25th June, 1964

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