SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT GEYLANG SERAI
ON 19TH AUGUST,1964, DURING HIS TOUR WITH
TENGKU ABDUL RAHMAN.

(The tour was made during the first day of the Tengku's two-day visit to Singapore to look into the recent disturbances and to see how best to re-establish confidence among the people)

The Honorable Prime Minister, Tengku Abdul Rahman, Al Haj; the Honourable the Minister for Communications Works, Dato Sambanthan; Friends and Fellow Citizens:

I think I will not want to repeat what I've said in Malay and Chinese, because some understand Malay and some understand Chinese.

National Archives of Singapore

I want to say these few words for the benefit of those who are purely English-speaking, and also for the record.

We stand at the crossroads of Malaysia. One year ago, in London, at the time of the signing of the Malaysia Agreement, I said -- and the Tengku was there, and I said this to him; that we have confidence in his leadership; we have

faith and trust, in his ability to see that justice is done to all. However, whatever guarantees we have in the Constitution, legal documents, and so on, finally, it is faith in the persons who have to translate and implement these documents which is more important that the written word.

And so it is today. If we reply on constitutional and legal rights and obligations, then I say there is very little hope for the eventual success of Malaysia. It has got to rest on more than that: on faith and trust, that we can be fair to each other; we can be just to each other; that we are after the same things for the ten-million people of Malaysia. And that we accept the Tengku's leadership, not just as a leader of the Malays but also as the leader of all the other races in Malaysia. Otherwise, we should not have embarked on Malaysia, if we did not accept.

National Archives of Singapore

The troubles that have arisen have come about largely as a result of misunderstanding. Some people think that we challenge the basic position that was agreed before Malaysia: that, you know, it is Chinese interest that we are seeking to foster. That is nonsense. If it is so, we would never have gone into Malaysia. What for? When we have 75 per cent Chinese in Singapore, and we can play the Chinese line, why go into a Malaysia where the Chinese are only 40 per cent? But we knew the long-term interests of <u>everybody</u> mean adjustment,

giving and taking amongst ourselves. The give-and-take attitude is the only one that can make it succeed.

Malaysia was agreed upon because it was necessary in the interest of the two-million people of Singapore; it was necessary in the interest of seven-million people in Malaya; and it was necessary in the interest of the one-million and a quarter people of Sabah and Sarawak. That was why it was agreed, and all the reason why it was agreed are still valid. And the attack by Indonesia two days ago on both the eastern and western shores of Johore is a reminder of perils that we face -- the reasons why we had Malaysia. We knew troubles were coming from the Communists within the country and outside the country, from people who have intentions to do us in. And our getting together was the best way of survival. And these reasons are valid today.

I would like to point this out. You know there were three parties in the attack on the western coast and eastern coast of Johore -- the Indonesian Army; Malay extremists and racist groups who joined them; and Chinese chauvinists and Communists who joined them. Three groups went in. Each group has a different intention from the other -- different ultimate aim. I do not believe that the Indonesians have the same aim as the Chinese who went in with them -- the extremists and the chauvinists, as the terrorists, probably Communists. Nor do I

National Archives of Singapore

believe the Malays who have betrayed us and gone over to Indonesia to destroy Malaysia have the same aim as the Chinese section; or as the Indonesians. Each has different objectives and aim, but they have pooled together to achieve one common aim: to destroy us. And if we in Malaysia who have so much in common to create a harmonious multi-racial society where we are fair to each other, fair shares for all -- if we can't get together then I say we deserve to be crushed.

I believe we can. And as I said to the Tengku yesterday -- he asked me what proposals I have to solve this -- I said to him quite frankly, "My colleagues and I, who I have spent the last four weeks talking amongst ourselves, talking with Tun Razak, talking with Dato Ismail, talking to Inche Khir Johari; we cannot see a way out." Really it goes back to him, because we haven't got the strength or the capacity to resolve this. This is not a small problem of Singapore. This is a Malaysian problem that has to be solved in a Malaysian context. And I say publicly -- I said to him privately -- I say to him publicly today what I have said to him privately: that really he has the capacity and he can, we trust him. That is the reason for Malaysia, and I hope all of you will patiently act with restraint, because I think it is not an easy job.

National Archives of Singapore

I quite frankly, would not like to be faced with a task which the Tengku is being faced with. He has a problem -- a very big problem and our job is to help

him solve this problem. It is not just a Singapore problem. The Singapore side, I promise him we will give him 100 per cent co-operation, as far as the Singapore side is concerned. But there are bigger problems. I mean, Bukit Mertajam did not take place ten days before Singapore just by accident. There are reasons, underlying reasons And this is a complicated one. And I say, help your leaders to solve this by patience, restraint goodwill to each other; keep the temperature down.

And it is on that note that I would like to end the little I have to say today before we all listen to what the Tengku has to say.

19th August, 1964.

National Archives of Singapore