PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH TO MALAYSIAN STUDENTS IN LONDON, AT MALAYSIA HALL ON 10TH SEPTEMBER, 1964.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen:

This is almost an annual occasion for me. Once a year, over the last three years, we have had the opportunity to meet succeeding generations of Malaysian students in London. And with every passing year, much to my amazement sometimes, we seem to meet under more urgent circumstances. I thought the last time I was here that if it ever was my good fortune to come to London again, I'd meet you under more relaxed circumstances. But, unfortunately, that is not the nature of things in Malaysia.

I said last year that Malaysia was inevitable: its formation was inevitable.

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I did not say then, nor do I say now, that its success is inevitable. I think it depends very much upon what we make of Malaysia; or, to put it in another way, whether we have the courage, whether we have the imagination, whether we have the tenacity of purpose to go through with what we set out to do last year.

The year since Malaysia has been one of constant stress and strain: economic boycott, military pressures along the borders of Borneo, Sabah and

Sarawak, saboteurs into Singapore; now, paratroopers in Labis. And so it will go on with every increasing virulence until either they step over the mark and it becomes conventional war, in which case it will be over in two weeks; or, as is more likely, that they are sufficiently skilful enough to keep it shout of conventional war, in which case it's a test of our endurance, the capacity to stick together for a common objective.

I would like to, this evening, put to you what I think are the possible developments in Malaysia. I think to withstand this constant squeeze on us -- border raids, sabotage; guerrilla activity, propaganda, subversion -- we have got to ask ourselves, first, whether we have got the will to be a nation -- because, we have not yet become or we have not yet acquired the common attributes of a nation; defined geographical area, homogeneous population with homogenous culture, language, and all the other pulls. You have a multi-racial society in Malaysia -- diversity of cultural backgrounds to the various peoples. Only one thing in common: that we all are agreed that Malaysia gives us a better life than in another country in Asia. Otherwise, the Chinese wouldn't be in Malaysia; nor would the Indians; nor indeed would a great deal of the Malays who have come from Indonesia.

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This is the first fact we begin with: that the cultural pulls of the three main component communities in Malaysia spring from outside. Four million Malays,

40 percent more or less, of the population, look back around them to see a higher civilisation -- Sri Vijaya, Majapahit, Borobodur, encyclopaedias in the Malay language or the Indonesian language -- it's not so very far from the Malay language -- and so on. But they also see want, tribulation, unhappiness. Four million Chinese more or less; 40 percent, look forward to some future in South East Asia; but sometimes, some look backwards to four thousand years of civilisation--great monuments of an ancient past. But more friends and relatives want to get in, not to go back to the ancient past. A very fundamental point: that we are better off in Malaysia.

Similarly, with the Indians, the Pakistanis, the Ceylonese and the others who constitute the 20 percent of the population other than Malays and Chinese. But you see, this material pull that keeps it together is one that cannot always be there. One day, I don't know when -- 10, 15, 20 years--one of these countries will overtake us in terms of material wealth and power; either Indonesia, or China, or India. And if before then, we have not yet jelled the three communities into a new national identity, then I say it must come unscrambled. Must be, because let me put it frankly, if, today, the Pontian villagers whose ancestors have come from Java, can get a better life in Java, and a higher civilisation and greater pride and amour-propre, what is there that makes a separate Malaysia

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more desirable? Or, for that matter, if one day you can have a motor scooter or the other perquisites of a modern civilization in China, why Malaysia?

Therefore, the first problem we must remember is: time is not on our side, as far as this crucial factor is concerned. The raison d'etre for Malaysia today is that it provides a better life to the ten million peoples of diverse origins than any one of the surrounding countries from whence they have come. We must, therefore, anticipate the time when one of these countries would have caught up and outpaced us. Before then, we must become a separate and distinct nations.

What will prevent us from become a separate and distinct nation? Chauvinism, sentimental ties, language, culture, will always tend to preserve distinctiveness between the various communities. But it is inevitable. The French Canadians have been in Canada for over a hundred years, and they are still somewhat different form the English-speaking Canadians. And so it will be a hundred years from now in Malaysia, if it endures. And there is no harm in that, provided, in the last resort, when the final question is put, the Malay, the Chinese, the Indian, the Ceylonese, the Pakistani, the Eurasian, within Malaysia, has got more in common with each other than with the Indonesian in Indonesia, or the Chinese in China, or the Indian in India.

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Our problem now is how to withstand the concentrated pressure of both the political appeals of Indonesia's chauvinism plus the selfish yearnings of the whole of the Malaysian community. Let me put it in another way. For the next one year, maybe for the next 10 years, depending on how long the Indonesians last and how long we last, they are going to keep up this pressure and this appeal: first, the squeeze, then the appeal. The military squeeze, the economic squeeze on us to make Malaysia bring trial and tribulation, not prosperity and development; to make everybody doubt whether their it was a wise thing. Would it not have been better if we in Singapore, for instance, were still a self-government colony, perhaps selling guns both to the Indonesinans and to the Malaysian? Would it not be better for those in Sabah and Sarawak to be still a British colony, merrily selling more pepper and rubber and timber to the rest of the world? No defence commitments, no higher taxes. It is a real psychological pressure-point.

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And second, the appeal made to the Malays: that the great Bung is doing all this because he wants to return the birth-rights of Malaysia to the Malays. "Look around you", he says, and he says it every night via Radio Palembang, Tanjong Pinang, Jakarta, Medan, as clear as if it was broadcast from Kuala Lumpur, every night, that the Tengku and his colleagues have sold out the country to the Chinese. Only the Chinese, because no point fighting both the

Indians and the Chinese. "Look at all the big cars, the big houses", says he. And right at this moment, as luck would have it ... You know, they are doing that for nine months without success, because the Malays in Malaysia knew that they were better off there than across the water.

Then, unfortunately, over the last few months -- May, June July -- our own political leaders mounted this campaign and outbid the Indonesians, and said, "Look at the Chinese government in Singapore pressing the Malays". Where the Indonesians failed, our own people succeeded. And it will be same again, not quite. And every time it will be that much easier until we resolve that we shall put a stop to this.

Whether we survive as a nation or not depends upon whether the political leadership in Malaysia, amongst the various communities, come together and seek common ground, or begin to take opposing positions. The extreme would be, where the leadership in the Malay world becomes more and more akin to that of Indonesia -- chauvinistic, militant, intolerant -- which is bound, in turn, to provoke a drift in the Chinese side towards more chauvinist and more militant policies; then you have got the stage set for ruin. Or, as the moderates, those who believe in gradual change, in keeping a great deal of what there is in the present society and making adjustments and accommodations on the basis of a

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multi-racial Malaysia. This really is the core to it. Once that happens, then it is possible for leadership in the other sectors to respond.

I put it in that way because, in my opinion, the pace is set by the Malay sector. In one phrase, I would say: Malaysia survives or fails, depending upon whether we set out to create a Malaysian nation or a Malay nation. Malaysia was conceived as a Malaysian nation with special rights reserved for the Malays and the indigenous peoples which was agreed to by everybody, including Singapore, Sabah, Sarawak. But basically, all the rights, duties, obligation of citizens are equal.

Latterly, partly in response to Indonesian pressure and not wishing to be outflanked by the Indonesians, and for other domestic political reasons, this phenomena of a more chauvinistic line than even the Indonesians could put, was mounted. It can only mean more intolerance: the accent less and less on multi-racial and tolerant Malaysia.

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The point I want to make to you tonight is that in my opinion, such a Malaysia must go to Indonesia, because a Malay Malaysia means that it belongs to the biggest Malay Chief in the region, and that is the man who has got a

hundred million chaps. But a Malaysian Malaysia will be impervious to these blandishments and will survive.

I think if we can ride these next twelve months, not lose our-nerve or lose our temper, there is more than a fair chance that a Malaysian Malaysia will triumph. You see, there is a built-in incentive in the composition of Malaysia for ultimate non-communal policies over the years -- 15, 20 years -- so long as we work the one-man one-vote system. To assume office, one has to make an appeal on a non-communal basis. You see, if a Chinese chauvinist were to emerge and make a direct chauvinist appeal, he will only be able to make that appeal to 40 per cent, and the reaction of the other 40 plus the 20 will be fairly immediate and decisive. Similarly, the other way: whoever plays the other 40 per cent blatantly, must congeal that other 40 plus 20.

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And one of the things that enraged some of the people who were doing this was my reminder that there was a built-in incentive in the long run for non-communal policies. But that is in the long run. I think in the short run, what is very important is that the non-Malays in the country who constitute 40 plus 20, about 60 per cent of the population, should assure the Malays that the sprit of the Constitution will be honoured; that, in fact, we are prepared to adjust the imbalance in economic and social development between the communities. Never

mind about special rights. You know, special taxi driver licences, special land reservations, and special jobs, and all. The problem remains that if you have a community under stress, as Malaysia will always be under stress from her neighbour, where one community is lagging behind in development, that community is vulnerable. And therefore, it must always be made manifest that we are prepared to make the adjustments.

You see, the irony of this is that because in Singapore we were so successful, too successful, without special rights and privileges written into the Constitution, nevertheless making that adjustment consciously, that we won all the three pre-dominantly Malay constituencies the last time. That, in turn, triggered off a reaction on the other side that we should never be allowed to do that in Malaya. Hence, the campaign that Malays are being oppressed by Chinese in Singapore. Whether it is true or it is unture is irrelevant in the circumstance. I do not want to justify or to bebunk. All I say is: if we had lost the three Malay constituencies, the problem would not have arisen. We won, and they were determined that we will not win in Malaya.

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Hence, the effort, not realising that by those tactics, you are helping the Indonesians suddenly to unscramble the whole of Malaysia. You unzip Malaysia right down the middle. Believe you me, the anxiety in the minds of both

Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, when the first riots broke out in July, was whether it would spread like the plague; and if it did, you will never put it together again. And so it is the anxiety the second time too. And if the Indonesians succeeded in doing that, then we better think of other alternatives.

There are other alternatives -- I don't want to pretend that the success of Malaysia is inevitable. It is not. It depends upon whether we have enough perserverance, conviction in what we are doing, and wishing to go through with it. It cannot be gone through with -- because it requires co-operation of more than one sector then other solutions will have to be sought. And all of them are very unpleasant ones.

I do not think this is the time or the moment that we should contemplate any other alternatives, because they are extremely unpleasant. How else can you do it? Partition: town and country? Not possible. Eviction: re-drawing the boundary lines like India and Pakistan? Disastrous. Annihilation of the immigrant races? Even Hitler with all the resources of modern civilisation found a great deal of trouble in getting rid of the Jewish problem. There is only one other solution for those who really want to see this ruin, and that is to throw it into the chaos and anarchy of Indonesia. Go with her, into perdition.

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So, you see, all the alternatives are grim, and we cannot go back to status quo ante. We cannot become a Federation of Malaya, the self-governing State of Singapore, the Colony of Sarawak, and the Colony of North Borneo. You cannot put the clock back. It is not possible.

10th September, 1964.

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