TRANSLATIONS OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH
IN HOKKIEN AT THE 1ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF
THE UPPER SERANGOON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON 26TH
SEPTEMBER 1965.

It is indeed an honour for me to attend the first anniversary celebrations of your Community Centre, tonight.

We have, on the one hand, to look after the international relations for our country, and on the other, we have to look after the livelihood of our people.

It would be a great advantage to us if we get the support of the Afro-Asian, Commonwealth and other friendly countries, because it will do us no good if we are to remain isolated.

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What would be the harm to us if we are isolated? Many people would say we are stooges of the British, and we would then face difficulties in our commerce, find it hard to raise the livelihood of our people, and carry out our industrial development plan.

I have repeatedly said that internally, relations betweeen all the races should be good and that we must do away with all frictions amongst us.

There have been some stories in the Utusan Melayu in the past few days which I think it is unwise to publish. But Utusan Melayu has been deliberately doing this every day for the purpose of inciting others. The paper publishes stories that Christians are trying to get Muslims to change their faith. This is very dangerous. Their purpose is to create racial and religious conflict. This will jeopardise our future.

Many Afro-Asian countries such as the UAR, Algeria and Guinea are Muslim countries. If Utusan Melayu succeeds in its attempt to cause friction, we will be in trouble. Therefore, we have to be patient and yet watchful in all things which affect us.

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Our position internationally is, I think, quite good, now that we have become a member of the United Nations. But the important point is that we must maintain good relations with the Afro-Asian countries economically, culturally, and in the matter of trade.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Toh Chin Chye and our Foreign Minister, Mr. Rajaratnam will be visiting Afro-Asian countries. And the Minister of State for Education, Inche Rahim Ishak, will leave Singapore tomorrow (27.9.65) to visit the Afro-Asian countries with them.

We are a multi-racial country. And our delegation to visit the Afro-Asian countries includes a Chinese, that is Dr. Toh, an Indian, Mr. Rajaratnam; and a Malay, Inche Rahim Ishak. Our delegation is a multi-racial delegation, and it proves that our country is a multi-racial country. We are not deceiving ourselves or others in this.

The Parliament will meet in November this year. Many countries will send their delegations to attend it. If our position internationally is secure, then we will not be faced with difficulties in our economy.

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Many people -- you know who these people are, they are always attacking us, their leaders do not like us -- they think that we will come to a dead end. But this is stupidity. They do not know that our will and determination is so strong that we will never let ourselves be overcome by any difficulties.

If we can maintain good relations internally and externally, if we can make our industrial development plan proceed smoothly, then you can take my word

that we are playing chess and not dam (draughts). It is foolish to eat one by one as you do in dam (draughts). Ejecting Singapore from Malaysia and forcing Singapore to leave Malaysia was a great mistake. It does not matter much if they want to do that. We will accept separation reluctantly in the present circumstances. We always plan for the next 10 or 20 years. We may give in this one step, but in the next few years, we will move forward two steps.

Singapore cannot be easily swallowed up by others. We want to co-operate with everybody, but some just refuse. We have therefore, to think of other alternatives. We want a common market but some don't want it. It does not matter too much to us. In Malaysia, we can put aside the question of size of population and just talk about money. There are a few million people living in the kampongs, but if they don't have the money, they cannot buy anything. As a contrast, you have Singapore where even the children have money to spend. A Singapore worker earns $4.50 or $5 -- or $6/- a day. Our purchasing power amounts to 43% or 44% in the Malaysian market. If they do not want our 43% to 44% purchasing power, it is up to them. It is not a problem that is going to defeat us.

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We can think of new ways. I think I have mentioned this before. Take our friends, New Zealand and Australia, for example. We help them they must

help us: we can trade with one another. As regards the British, they must buy some textile goods from us. If they help us, we can help them in the same way. The United States is not a wise country. But they have a lot of money with which they think they can buy over the leaders of other countries. This is very unwise. It would be better for them to buy our goods.

We can be sure that if we carry out our plans, a multi-racial society will emerge in Southeast Asia, ten or fifteen years from now.

I am not going to say anything about Malaysia because we cannot say anything about her, now. They say that we must not interfere in their affairs. But they must not interfere in our affairs too.

The important thing is to have the courage to do things; to have determination; to be hardworking; and to have solidarity. At the same time, we must not be communal in outlook, for this would be unwise. Short-term, a Chinese Singapore is workable, but not wise. If we had been chauvinistically Chinese, we would not have been ejected from Malaysia, as ejection would not have been necessary. They could then have accused us for being communal. What they are afraid of is that we might, in the course of time, come out on top of them.

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Many people have, in recent years, attempted to buy over our Ministers; for instance, Othman Wok, Rahim Ishak and Yaacob. They have tried to persuade them to resign from the PAP, and to attack the PAP Government, publicly. But all the three of them have rejected these attempts.

The people who tried to buy over our Ministers have a lot of money. We gave to our present Ministers only one thousand and five hundred dollars a month each when they were Parliamentary Secretaries. But the people who want to buy them over can offer three or four thousand dollars, even thirty thousand dollars. But they cannot succeed, because these three Ministers of ours are men of conviction. They understand that what we do is for the good of the Malays; that we do not buy over the Malays but help them to improve their standard of living, by raising their educational level, by improving their livelihood. Then they visited the Southern islands, therefore, they saw that there was no hope for them.

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They wanted to test the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. But, you know, our Chamber is not like theirs. Our Chamber invited them first to a dinner; then speeches followed openly attacking the so-called turnover tax and payroll tax, and so on. When they read the newspapers the next day, they discovered they had been put in a very awkward position.

They wanted to know the reaction of the Malays, so they went to the Southern Islands, and they found out that there was no prospect for them there. So the ejection of Singapore from Malaysia.

Never mind: we will withdraw one step now, but in the next year or two, we will advance two steps. And we will surely succeed.

Finally, I would like to say that if we want success and want it quickly, we must always remember that this is a game of chess not dam.

We cannot say that we will start trading with Indonesia tomorrow. The conditions for this are very important.

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I tell you frankly -- and the KL Government also knows this - Indonesian representatives have made several overtures to negotiate with us. But the most important thing is, the matter of conditions. They may send their men to talk with us in the next two months. We, too, want to talk with them. In fact, we wanted to co-operate with them. But "co-operation" means, we mind our own business and you mind your own business: not that you interfere in our internal affairs. We welcome the visit of a cultural mission. But we do not invite

interference in our internal affairs. This is important I am confident in the end things can be honourably and amicably settled between Indonesia and us.

I hope everyone of you will remember that is a game of chess, not dam (draughts).

For whose benefit is this? It would be unwise if this was only for the good of the two-million Singaporeans. It should be for the good of two-millions Singaporeans plus the good of Malaysians. This is the only wise and possible policy.

Not long ago, I held a press conference in Hokkien. The result was the hold-up of some Chinese newspapers for several hours by the Federal Government. This is not wise. I would like to state frankly that if all the non-Malays were to flock to Singapore, it would lead to the collapse of Singapore.

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Just imagine what would happen if all of a sudden, six or seven million people were to flock into Singapore. Singapore would immediately become a city like Hong Kong. The islands of Pulau Ubin and Pulau Tekong would be packed with twenty-storey flats. Such a situation would be without any prospects for us.

We must think in terms not of a temporary but of a permanent solution. And this will depend on our firmness, patience and perseverance.

We must always remember that it is for the benefit of two million people in Singapore plus several million people in Malaysia that we are working for. By progressing slowly -- one step backward but two steps forward -- we will surely succeed.

Finally, I would like to thank the management committee of this community centre for providing me with this opportunity to say a few words to you.

Thank you again.

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