

PRIME MINISTER'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE 1966

New Year's Day, less than five months after 9th August, finds Singapore healthy internally and secure internationally. A robust people enable Singapore to face the problems of sudden change which expulsion and independence brought about. Swift and firm responses were the keys to our survival. That we so quickly adapted ourselves to an unexpected situation, that we so rapidly adjusted our sights and set forth on new goals, will enable those who come after us to inherit what we are building, a sane, stable, tolerant and prosperous society in a region afflicted with poverty, wrecked by intolerance and going mad with xenophobic slogans, taking the place of constructive policies.

For the year 1966, let us concentrate on two targets.

National Archives of Singapore

First, abroad, to strengthen the ties with those closest to us in identity of interests, to expand our trade with all the world, and to establish assured markets for our industries.

Second, at home, to create the pre-condition for rapid industrial growth, namely, a sound stable and predictable political situation. A climate of quiet confidence is the formula for success when there is anxiety all around us.

We believe that a nation can be bound together without coercing all into one race, or one language, or one religion. We defend the right of our people to keep what they consider good in their different past, so that our future will be more enriched. That they speak in their homes in different tongues, that they pray in different forms, that they have different diets, these do not prevent them from coming together to defend what is their collective interest in a tolerant and prosperous society.

This is all we have got. And it helps if we make clear to the world and to our neighbours that we intend to keep it and build on it. Two decades of turmoil and unrest have made us aware of ourselves, what we can do, and what we must do to survive, to be ourselves and to be our own masters. An aroused people is one not easily subdued. We will not fail those who have put their faith in us.

History is a relentless and unending process in which those people who are endowed with stamina and who discipline themselves to be patient are most likely to survive.