TRANSCRIPT OF SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER

AT THE 4TH MILESTONE BUKIT TIMAH ROAD MASS RALLY

DURING HIS TOUR OF THE ULU PANDAN AND PASIR

PANJANG CONSTITUENCIES ON SUNDAY,

13TH FEBRUARY, 1966.

Friends and Fellow Citizens,

When I last visited Ulu Pandan in June 1963, it was under very different circumstances and what we then wanted to do -- our attitudes, our policies, our plans for solving our economic, social and educational problems -- were based upon very different principles. We wanted a pan-Malaysian solution with one economy, one nation, one society.

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It has not worked. Both you and I know why. But, never mind. The point is: last year on the 9th of August, we were out on our own, and today -- six months afterwards -- we are busy taking steps to first, limit our liability and to put our own house in order.

This is important. Otherwise, if we leave things as they are, our level of prosperity may be affected. People come and go between Malaya and Singapore, but more come from Malaya to Singapore than vice-versa; and if we leave things as they are, then it will only be a matter of one, two, three or four years before our level must go down to the same level as theirs. Or, if they are prosperous, then our level may measure to their prosperity.

Our level of prosperity is higher than theirs -- for the time being. Last year, our average income per person per annum was $1,300 to $1,400, almost double Malaya's average income of $800. We have to have the work permits, the school-fees as a necessary step of protection. Otherwise, we will have abdicated our own responsibilities.

But, this is not the end of the problem. Because the man who comes in cannot get a job, he may become a hawker, a pirate taxi-driver or many other things.... When I was in Bombay last year for four days to attend a conference, there were four or five million people in one city, with <u>one million</u> literally being born and living, cooking, sleeping and dying on the pavements. They had never lived in a house.... These are severe problems which, if we don't anticipate them, will overwhelm us. The limitations of space, geography and of natural resources

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make it necessary that ours must be a highly-organised society. If we are not highly-organised, we must collapse.

And we have to organise ourselves in 1966. We have spent the last six months calculating how to live by ourselves, and we know that we must take certain steps.

Sentiment is one thing. Sentiment says, "Keep the doors open" and, I will be quite frank, there is sentiment present. Half of our Ministers today have families in Malaya. Their sentiments are there. I have relatives there too. But we have to face the realities of our obligations to ourselves. What is my duty, I ask myself. And, it is to ensure that Singapore is not overwhelmed or brought down. It is to look after the people who live here, especially those who are citizens. And that makes it necessary for certain distinctions to be made between citizens and non-citizens; between non-citizens who have been here a long time, and new non-citizens. It is a step-by-step process.

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We are all right for ten, perhaps 15 years. I met the British Defence Minister on the 4th of February, and what he told me -- in more detail than what he has said publicly -- left me with the impression that his government is thinking in terms of carrying on and staying on here until the 1970's. That means till 1979

or 1980. That is for about 14 or 15 years more. But he cannot commit himself beyond that. We will have to wait and see.

So, we have 14 or 15 years if we are sensible -- if we don't rock the boat. If the position becomes untenable, the situation is insecure, there are riots, there is general commotion, unemployment, gangsterism, general anarchy, then the bases become unusable. And, they know this. They are reconciled to that.

But, at the same time they understand that if we are to keep the situation healthy and stable, there must be economic development. There must be, in short, 7,000 to 9,000 additional jobs every year in new industries. They know that because we have given them the broad figures, and they also know what the problem is. And somehow, we will work it out this year.

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But, this is only possible if we limit the problem. If we don't limit the problem and people come in and our population doubles or trebles, the problem becomes unsolved -- unsolvable.

And so, this year, we have first, to settle defence and economic relations; and second, internally, we have to get our house in order.... As the Malays say, "kemas -- make it neat and tidy." Whether it is work permits, hawkers, pirate

taxi-drivers, let us know who are our citizens, who are the people to whom we are most directly responsible.

Our citizen is the person who has a Singapore citizenship card. He is a shareholder in Singapore, and we have got to look after him. He is not an "orang tumpangan". He has rights, and you have to see that he is all right. Step by step, we must put our house in order.

We want to be friends with everybody. We don't want to quarrel either with Indonesia or with Malaysia. There is no point in it. We are a small country. We want to trade. But we demand the right to be masters of our own house. This is the logical consequence of independence. And we will do whatever is necessary for the survival of our own people, always of course bearing in mind that we want to maintain good relations with our neighbours, with everyone.

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So long as our people understand that we must be governed not only be sentiments but also by realities, hard facts, we can succeed.

I cannot answer you if you ask me now what will happen after 1979 or 1980. We thought we found the answer for all time in being in Malaysia. But, we were wrong. They did not want us; not on the terms we wanted. We have

now to spend some time calculating what we have to do after 1980 if the British leave, if they cannot stay. What happens in the area? How is the projection? We have to start thinking about these things now. And why?

First, because all these boys and girls will be growing up and looking for jobs in 1980. They will get married, want to have children, want to have houses. Second, barring accidents, I will also be alive and I have got to know what is going to happen! We live in a very troublesome part of the world though at least we are not living in North or South Vietnam where you do not know when a bomb is going to go off. There, you do not know whether you can get a future at all for anybody. We are not in that position and we should be grateful for that. And our future depends upon whether a world war emerges as a result of Vietnam; depends upon whether the bigger nations in Southeast Asia can eat the smaller ones when the British are forced to withdraw. Our future, in fact, depends upon many things. But half of it depends upon ourselves.

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If we just say, "Oh well, the problems are so big; let's live for today. Never mind," that means sure death, collapse. Our problems will never be solved. You know, that is the way they live in Hong Kong. They say, "Ah well, we can't solve it. So, we carry on and live day by day." And anybody who opens a factory or builds a house in Hong Kong wants to get his money back in four or

five years. They do not calculate what is going to happen in 1970. They say, "Oh, that's too far away. Tomorrow, if the Communists attack from China, all is finished. So we had better calculate for four years -- how to get money back, how to make a profit. If we are still alive, carry on; if not, let's scoot!"

We cannot live like that. If we live like that -- just carrying on, not solving anything, talking softly, making friends and pretending that all is well -- our resources will all run out, our savings will all be finished in four or five years. And, the problem becomes ten times more difficult. You and I will be sorry for ourselves and for the country. So, we must never let that happen.

In 1966 we must resolve to consolidate and identify our liabilities, our responsibilities, take all the steps necessary to ensure continuous progress for Singapore, for those who live in it, in particular, our citizens.

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And I say to the Malays in particular, because they are worried..... They read in the newspapers that some people are saying, "These work permits are aimed at the Malays -- to drive out the Malays....." These are mad people, 2,000 people come into Singapore and change their identify cards every month. Of this, 1,600 to 1,650 are not Malays. If we let them come in, our own Malays will not get jobs!

So, as we progress, let us share our prosperity. We are not going to be selfish. Those who are our citizens, whether they are Chinese, Indians, Eurasians, Ceylonese or Malays, are all equal citizens. We look after them, give them equal opportunities. This is the long term way to survive.

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