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**TRANSCRIPT OF SPEECH BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT**  
**OF THE UNITED STATES, MR. SPIRO AGNEW, AT**  
**THE STATE BANQUET GIVEN IN HIS HONOUR AT**  
**THE SINGAPORE CONFERENCE HALL**  
**ON 10TH JANUARY, 1970**

Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Lee,

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since 1819, Singapore has been a haven for the oppressed and possibly an enticement for the adventurous. Over the past 150 years, the confluence of four cultures in this small place has brought about some of the most developmental aspects of human society that can be remembered in recorded history.

I can't tell you how impressed I've been with my visits to the Jurong estates and to the Housing Development, to the forward thinking and the utilisation of the protective and ameliorative aspects of governmental stimulation

of private enterprise that have come about this community through the auspices of your fine government.

Not only did I get a chance to observe first-hand the making of industrial potential, real in the sense that finely-honed products were produced efficiently and at low cost. But I saw that in those places, not just the homes but in the factories, the people were happy and that the process of human development through learning skills and transferring to better paying and more rewarding positions took place as a matter of habit.

In the Housing Development, it was rewarding for me to observe the happiness and the freedom and the outgoing nature of your children who clustered about to give me a welcome that was as warm as any I've received on this trip.

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This does not come about by accident, but it comes about because the people are satisfied with the fact that the government is providing an environment that allows development, that allows freedoms of expression that we find not, unfortunately, all over the world today.

Mr. Prime Minister, I want to say how encouraged I am to learn that in this stimulative atmosphere of business development that has come about in Singapore under your apt administration, the American community is heavily involved and will become even more heavily committed in the future as they seek to involve themselves and profit by this salutary business atmosphere.

I feel that my experiences here have been as encouraging as any that I've had in Asia, and among those experience, I must count foremost my private conversations with your Prime Minister. You've just heard him speak eloquently and forcefully and courageously on a subject that can evoke great emotional response throughout the world: the subject of the war in Vietnam. And I hope that, as I look upon the configurations and machinations, the movements within my own country, that the people of America will harken to the words of a distinguished statesman of Asia who knows a great deal more about what's happening in Vietnam than some of us who carry placards and move with such aplomb and such a lack of dignity in the streets of the United States.

I feel that this observation by a distinguished Asian leader who could never be characterised as reactionary who has brought his people to the heights of social progress through the movements that he has made to overcome forces

that could be repressive to human dignity, should be listened to with great concern in my country.

I feel that any ambitious disengagement by the United States in Vietnam, prior to the time that such can be undertaken with complete safety to the right of the South Vietnamese people to govern and control their own destinies would indeed be a tragedy.

And Mr. Prime Minister, I feel very strongly that my ability to have with me on this trip a distinguished American astronaut, Colonel Tom Stafford and his wife, heightens the force of the American ideal that adventurism and reaching for new horizons needs not concern itself with killing people. This is the American way. We are not interested in developing a posture or a position, an aggressive involvement, an invasion of any Asian soil. But our commitment to our friends here is steadfast and will continue. We have no intention of withdrawing from Southeast Asia. We welcome a lack of personal direction in matters that are best governed by the Asian peoples themselves.

And Mr. Prime Minister, I applaud your forceful leadership in the many Southeast Asia amalgams that have developed - the consultations and the regional co-operations that have come about mainly through the leadership of the

Asian people themselves which Your Excellency has been tremendously involved in a leadership capacity.

And so on leaving Singapore I am most encouraged by its identity with my country: with the idea that government cannot do everything for everybody, but can be a catalyst to stimulate and develop private contribution which heightens the living standard of all the people who come in contact with it.

I know that this small nation, thriving as it is, will be a force far beyond its numerical weight in world affairs in the years to come. I know that, because I have sampled the forcefulness and the fibre of its people. And I hope that my opportunity will come to return on many occasions, to consult with your leaders and to develop new postures of co-operation, not in the sense of being aggressive to any people but simply for the purpose of improving the lot of all mankind.

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As the American astronauts said when they walked on the moon for the first time: "It is a small step but it's a giant leap for all mankind." And that shouldn't just apply - distinguished guests and ladies and gentlemen - to the moon, that should apply to our planet earth, a planet that stands on the verge of self-annihilation unless its leaders learn to conciliate and mediate among themselves.

And so in the hope that this nation, carved out of adversity, offering the greatest possible progress to the free enterprise system, may continue to flourish and to lead in Southeast Asia. May I ask you, at this point, to stand with me and raise your glasses to the health of His Excellency, President Ishak and the Government of Singapore. To the President.

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