SPEECH BY MR. LEE KUAN YEW, PRIME MINISTER OF SINGAPORE, AT A DINNER BY YAB TUN HAJI ABDUL RAZAK BIN DATO HUSSEIN AL-HAJ, PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA, AT SERI TAMAN, THURSDAY, 23RD MARCH 1972

I would like to thank you, Prime Minister, for having arranged this dinner in my honour. This is not the first time I have enjoyed your hospitality in your gracious home. But this is a special occasion for it is the first time I am here since you assumed the office of Prime Minister.

We are not strangers. We have known each other well, as students from way back in 1940, and we have had a lot to do with each other in the early 1960's. In more recent years, because of the different circumstances we were placed in, our policies, on which our expectations rest, have developed differently.

National Archives of Singapore

The different experiences we have gone through have left their different imprints on us and our peoples. So much, also, has altered in the surrounding circumstances. The background of world power and politics has altered. Many old familiar landmarks, we used to take for granted, have disappeared.

But some things have not changed -- the geography and the close ties of families on both sides of the Causeway. There is a continuing inter-dependence on security and stability, which is unlikely to change.

It will be too good to be true to suppose that there have not been differences of interests, or misunderstandings between two governments. However, these differences have been kept within their proper proportions. Both of us have overriding interests in stability and confidence, so essential for development and progress. Much of our economic and social plans for our peoples, depends upon our ability to see these difficulties and differences in the perspective of the greater issues at stake.

We shall have to live with an ever more complex and complicated interplay of forces of the super and major powers. We owe it to ourselves and to our peoples not to be taken unawares. What we seek is peace and stability, in order that development and progress can bring about the better life for our peoples.

National Archives of Singapore

So it is valuable to meet from time to time to exchange our views on matters of common interest and concern. Our own minds have not remained static. Imperceptibly, like our signatures, our attitudes and thoughts have

changed with the years. There is a need to review and revise assessments and expectations, plans and policies. Even though it was just over a year ago since we last met, several of the unspoken premises on which we based our projections have been overtaken by events.

Finally, my colleagues, my wife and I would like to thank you and your wife, Toh Puan Raha, for the warm and friendly welcome you have extended to us.

National Archives of Singapore