

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY KAKUEI TANAKA, PRIME MINISTER OF
JAPAN, AT THE DINNER HOSTED BY HIS EXCELLENCY LEE KUAN
YEW, PRIME MINISTER OF SINGAPORE.

Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Lee, Distinguished Guests,

It is a very great pleasure for me to have fulfilled my long-cherished desire to visit Singapore at the kind invitation of His Excellency Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. I am deeply grateful to you for the thoughtful hospitality extended to us and for this marvellous dinner.

Today I have the opportunity to admire the beauty of this 'Garden City', where the abundant green and the spotless and well-organized streets combine to give a true picture of well-being. I have been most impressed to see at first-hand the vigour and dynamism of Singapore advancing steadily towards prosperity in an atmosphere of stability and comfort.

I wish to pay my sincere tribute to you, Mr. Prime Minister, for the superb leadership which has brought about the Singapore of today. We in Japan have long admired your fifteen years of continued devotion to nation-building through industrial development and improvement of the life of the people, since this

valuable task was entrusted to you as Prime Minister at the remarkably young age of thirty-five back in 1959.

I understand that the Japanese Garden 'Seiwa-an', built in Jurong by the Government of Singapore, is the largest Japanese Garden ever built outside Japan. I have been gratified personally to hear that the garden has in its pond 5,000 fancy carps originally sent from Niigata, my native prefecture, which have acclimatized well under the care of the carp experts in Singapore and have grown more rapidly than they would have in Japan to provide valuable visual pleasure to the visitors to the Garden. The very fact that this Japanese Garden is located within the Jurong Industrial Estate, which is known to be the largest and most active of its kind in Southeast Asia, is an eloquent testimony to the efforts of the Government of Singapore to bring a harmony between the beauty of nature and industrial development, and I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for such efforts.

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I have come here to Singapore at your kind invitation, Mr. Prime Minister, to convey to you personally the ardent desire of our country to build and strengthen further the friendly relations between the peoples of Japan and Singapore as good neighbours sharing the benefits of peace and prosperity.

Both Japan and Singapore make it the basis of their national policies to seek to improve the welfare of their peoples through industrialization. They also both depend on trade with the outside world for the bulk of their economic life. I have no doubt whatsoever that, upon such common grounds, Japan and Singapore can prosper together in their co-operative endeavours as good partners in the years to come.

I note, however, that we live in a world today where we cannot remain contented with simply seeking to further our friendly bilateral relations. The fact of international life is such that what happens in one area of the world reverberates immediately to the rest of the world. The unresolved conflict in the Middle East and the global oil crisis triggered by the latest war in the Middle East have caused far-reaching repercussions on the economics not only of Singapore and Japan but also of the whole of Asia. Japan, for one, earnestly wishes that a just and lasting settlement will be brought to the Middle Eastern conflict at the earliest possible opportunity in the interest of peace and prosperity of the world.

In such a testing period for us all, it has been most useful and rewarding for me to meet again with you, Mr. Prime Minister, and through the frank

exchange of views, to have the benefit of your superb wisdom and judgement and penetrating insight on many problems now confronting Asia and the world.

I am convinced that there should be ever-increasing contacts and exchanges between Japan and Singapore in all fields and at all levels. In particular, it is most desirable and necessary for the youths of the two countries to have the opportunities to meet each other and develop common perceptions and ideas in shouldering the world of tomorrow, I am pleased to note the success of the "Japanese Youth Goodwill Cruise" which has been received warmly by your people a number of times. I wish to expand further upon this programme and inaugurate the programme of the "Ship for Southeast Asian Youth" which would provide the opportunity for the youths of Singapore and other Southeast Asian countries to visit Japan and engage in friendly exchanges with the youth of Japan. I am happy to announce that Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew gave his blessing to this programme when I proposed this to him. The experience of communal life aboard the ship would enable the youths of Asia to learn the true value of friendship and mutual understanding through frank discussions, thereby developing the spirit of mutual trust and co-operation which will sustain the world of tomorrow. I wish to offer this as a modest present to our succeeding generations.

Mr. Prime Minister:

Although my present visit in Singapore is very brief, I am fully convinced that my frank exchange of views with Your Excellency and other distinguished people of your country will help to cement further the existing foundation of close friendship between Japan and Singapore.

In concluding, I wish to propose a toast to the health and happiness of His Excellency Mr. Prime Minister and Mrs. Lee Kuan Yew and also to the continued prosperity and happiness of the people of Singapore.

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