SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER MR LEE KUAN YEW
AT THE DINNER IN HONOUR OF THE
PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN, MR ZENKO SUZUKI,
AND MRS SACHI SUZUKI AT THE ISTANA
ON TUESDAY, 13 JANUARY 1981

It is my pleasure and honour to extend a warm welcome to Your Excellency and Mrs Suzuki, your Cabinet Ministers, members of the Liberal Democratic Party, and other distinguished members of your delegation.

Your visit symbolises the desire of both sides for closer cooperation to safeguard stability and advance their economic interests. Economic development is the most effective inoculation against subversion and revolution. The greater the growth in per capita GDP in ASEAN, and the more widely the benefits are spread, the better are the prospects of enduring stability in ASEAN and of continuing friendship and cooperation between Japan and ASEAN.

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The economic prospects for the 1980s are far from promising. The economies of America and Western Europe suffer from sluggish growth, high inflation, high oil prices, and high unemployment. In these adverse circumstances, Japan's record of moderate growth and moderate inflation with low unemployment is a tribute to the Japanese people and their government. It is not simply because of high Japanese technology. The West also has high

technology. It is the unique Japanese ethos or team spirit, the work attitudes of Japanese workers, constantly seeking new ways to achieve perfection or zero defect in their work, the close and special relationships between management and labour, between government planners and private sector entrepreneurs, these are special factors for the high growth rates in Japanese productivity. Singaporeans have much to learn from the Japanese, especially in work attitudes, and in cooperative, not adversary, relationships between workers and management.

Japanese-Singapore understanding has deepened in the years since the late Prime Minister Eisaku Sato, first visited Singapore in September 1967. He was the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit Southeast Asia after the war. In 1979, Japan become Singapore's third largest trading partner. In 1980, Japan became Singapore's second largest foreign investor after the US.

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We value Japan's technical assistance. The establishment of the Japan-Singapore Institute of Software Technology, the assistance extended to the Engineering Department and the new Japanese Studies Department in the National University of Singapore, these will germinate new ideas in fresh sectors of high growth. The help your government is rendering Singapore in these fields is more valuable than monetary aid or soft loans. For they are long-lasting transfers of knowledge and value systems, which will enable us to emulate, to

some extent, the way in which Japan anticipates the future, and overcomes or avoids foreseeable problems.

The Japan-Singapore relationship is one of understanding and cooperation. I look forward to a strengthening of this relationship under your leadership.

Now let me ask you all to rise and drink with me a toast to the health and success of the Prime Minister and Mrs Suzuki, and to the security and prosperity of the government and the people of Japan.

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