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FROM : Amembassy KUALA LUMPUR

DATE: April 29, 1971

SUBJECT : Malaysian Prime Minister Outlines Vision of SEA in 70's

REF : Kuala Lumpur's A-32, February 25, 1971

POL 1 MALAYSIA

Submitted as an enclosure to this airgram are excerpts of an address by Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak to the German Association for Foreign Policy on April 21 in Bonn. Although Tun Razak has made a number of statements related to the posture of his Government in the field of foreign affairs, the Bonn speech is the broadest gauge public revelation of Razak's foreign policy which has appeared since Tunku Abdul Rahman's retirement last September. A comparison of the attached remarks with the thrust of Minister with Special Functions and Information Tan Sri Ghazali's speech to the Senate (see refair) reveals that the two men are thinking in very similar terms.

Razak opened his address by pointing out the changing dispositions of nations in both Europe and SEA, reflecting the ideological fragmentations in the world and the atrophying of Afro-Asian and non-aligned solidarity over the past decade. Razak noted the acceleration of regional identification. He then outlined the characteristics of SEA at the beginning of the 1970's. He pointed to the indications that the era of confrontation has subsided to a real extent; that new countries are increasingly conscious that their own defense is their own primary responsibility; that internal domestic preoccupations have now captured the attention of SEA nations and are considered more important than ideological concerns; and, fourth, regional cooperation has grown in importance in the region.

Enclosure: Excerpts from speech

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Razak described the need to bring China out of its self-imposed exclusion from the international mainstream. He described China's "legitimate interests" as involving the right to play a role in regional affairs commensurate with her importance and dignity as a major power, and the right to expect that the countries of the region do not act in ways which adversely affect her. Razak described as encouraging recent developments with respect to China's relations with the rest of the world, but emphasized that the attitude of China toward SEA remains the central foreign policy question for the region.

Razak stressed the role which regional bodies such as ASEAN can play in the years ahead, but noted the importance of sound bilateral contacts as a foundation for regional cooperation. Echoing a theme Ghazali touched on, Razak expressed the belief that Malaysia's hope for a guaranteed neutralization of the region would be feasible once the nations of the area had put their own houses in order.

In conclusion, the Prime Minister noted the growing participation of Japan in economic and political activities in the region. After a brief nod in the direction of India, he praised as perhaps the most encouraging development the success of the Indonesian Government since the overthrow of Sukarno.

The Embassy suggests that the excerpts attached may be of sufficient interest to reproduce them for distribution to those attending the forthcoming EA Chiefs of Mission Conference.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA: OUTLOOK FOR THE SEVENTIES

Address by the Honourable Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussein, Prime Minister of Malaysia, to the German Association for Foreign Policy on April 21, 1971, in Bonn.

....We in Southeast Asia like you here in Germany are cursed, as the Chinese sages put it, to live in interesting times. In Germany, the bold foreign-policy initiatives of the German Government have broken the accumulation of years of frozen attitudes and policies. They open up interesting possibilities, pointing the way to new dispositions and arrangements in Europe, which can have constructive and long-term consequences, not only for Europe itself, but also for the rest of the world. We in Southeast Asia are passing through a similar phase in our history. The assumptions and expectations of the last decade, indeed of the last two decades, are now being re-examined with fresh eyes....

Looking back at the past decade, two outstanding features in the international political climate are clearly discernible. First is the fact that the ideological division of the world has become more complete, it is no longer a bi-polar or even a tripolar world of the sixties. Monolithic ideological groupings are no more. Revolutionists pit themselves against Revisionists in the socialist camp. The emergence of a strong Western Europe introduces a forceful new element in the Western Alliance, indeed nationalism in both Eastern and Western Europe has contributed immeasurably to breaking down the orthodoxies and rigidities of the previous decade. Likewise Afro-Asian and non-aligned solidarity are but a shadow of what they were ten years ago.

The second feature is a growing awareness of a regional identity of interest. Speaking more particularly about the developing newly-independent countries, it can be said that their sights are now turned to the regional stage, away from the international stage on the one hand, or from the capitals of the former colonial powers, on the other....

Today, things have changed. The glamour has now gone. The facts of international life are such that states cannot expect, with impunity, to play for very long a role on the international stage out of all proportions to their strength and capacity....

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....a number of features can therefore be said to characterise the Southeast Asian scene at the beginning of this decade.

First is the minimising of the cold-war. The era of confrontation between the major powers has given way, if not exactly to one of conciliation, at least to a period of adjustment of particular points of differences or conflict. This does not imply the giving-up of ideological attitudes and commitments; it means rather that the animosities and antagonisms of the past have given way to a hard-headed realism, that bargains and compromises can be struck on individual issues.....

Second is the increasing consciousness of the newly-independent countries of our primary responsibility for our own defence. This is not to deny that in the face of external encroachment the support and assistance of friendly powers would be useful - and indeed often crucial.....

Third, following the de-emphasis on ideological concerns and from the attitude of increasing self-reliance, is the priority given to internal domestic preoccupations and, in particular, to the question of economic development.....National unity, sound administration, law and order, economic development, defence - these are matters which demand, and which will receive, the highest priorities in the coming years.

Fourth is the decreasing expectations about the effectiveness of international institutions in the quest for economic development. Hence there is the growing emphasis on co-operation with neighbouring countries either bilaterally or multilaterally. The limitations of regional economic co-operation are well recognized.....Regionalism by all indications is growing with ever increasing vigour and it is here to stay.

The de-emphasis on ideology, increasing self-reliance, priority on domestic concerns and regional co-operation - these are the characteristic features of the Southeast Asian scene today. The first flush of independence has come and gone as we now embark on the very serious business of making that independence meaningful.

International society today is a world of sovereign states who act and adjust with one another as they each try to find or maintain their role on the international stage. However, the most striking absence from the international society is not those states which are not yet independent; but a state, large, powerful, ancient, and

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undoubtedly independent - I refer of course, to the Peoples' Republic of China. It is sometimes said that China's exclusion from the international mainstream is self-imposed.....We accept the world as it is, not as we would like it to be. But it is a fact that as a result, the international status quo, or more specifically, the regional status quo, must undergo profound re-adjustment before a regional order can emerge which is in the interest of all countries, including China, to support and sustain. The question we face, therefore, is this: on the one hand is China, and on the other are the countries of the region, (and with them I link the other major powers who exercise various forms of pressure and persuasion on them) - are all these countries ready for a period of adjustment and accommodation of each other's legitimate interest? And what at bottom are those legitimate interests? For China surely it is the right to play a role in regional affairs commensurate with her importance and dignity as a major power and the right to expect that the countries of the region do not act in ways which adversely affect her. For the countries of the region, it is the right to expect that their sovereignty and territorial integrity be scrupulously respected and the right to pursue their own policies and their own ways of life as independent sovereign states. And for the other powers, it is the right to play a role in the region commensurate with their own legitimate interests.

.....

In so far as China is concerned, it is perhaps too early to predict the future course of events. Chinese foreign policy in the closing years of the sixties was erratic, if indeed it can be said that she had followed a foreign policy which was anything more than a reflection of her domestic intra-party squabbles.

Recent developments, however, have been most encouraging. Chinese attitudes as can be seen from various statements and actions are premised upon a more sober and realistic acceptance of the international order. As for the other major powers, one can estimate a similarly realistic reappraisal. The price of maintaining the present status quo is too high: in any case they can, I think, conceive an international order which meets their national interests at a much lower price.

.....

Having shown a willingness to re-appraise and re-adjust, it must be emphasized that the attitude of the countries of Southeast Asia

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to China will depend in the final analysis on her attitude to them. This therefore is the central foreign-policy question for the countries of Southeast Asia: - does China agree that inter-state relations must be based on the acceptance of the fact of their independence and hence on the sanctity of existing international boundaries and on non-interference in the internal affairs of other states?

.....we should devote ourselves to planning and implementing projects and programmes which are realistic, imaginative and forward-looking. I would also expect that countries of the region would play an increasingly important role in resolving intra-regional conflicts.

Regional co-operation in various fields aided in some cases by powers external to the region, principally the United States and Japan, has been gaining momentum since the closing years of the sixties.....

I wish to draw particular attention to the extraordinary growth of a sense of regional identity and regional interest as a result of these activities in ASEAN and the other regional bodies in the last few years. It would be true to say that in the early sixties, the capital cities of London, Washington, Paris, Bonn and Moscow were more familiar to us than those of our neighbouring countries. Today as a result of our regional activities, and also of visits and meetings of Heads of State or Government and of Ministers and officials, journalists, businessmen, students and tourists, we have become more aware of one another and of the problems and interests which bind us together.

This growing sense of regional identity and regional solidarity should be encouraged and fostered. It is not directed against any state outside the region nor does it adversely affect their interests.....

How should this growing regional consciousness be cultivated?..... bilateral contacts on any subject and at whatever level which may be mutually acceptable should be pursued as far as possible. In this way a criss-crossing network of bilateral links would be established which would contribute to an atmosphere of regional understanding and harmony.

Having put our own houses in order and minimised the possibility of intra-regional conflicts, the countries of the region would then be in a better position to seek an undertaking from the major powers - China, the Soviet Union and the United States - to guarantee their independence, neutrality and integrity. Southeast Asia would then become a neutral region, free from the entanglement of big-power

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rivalries and free from external threats as well as from external political subversion. This, I believe, should be high on the regional agenda for the nineteen seventies.

.....Some of the factors which will go into the equation of Southeast Asia are:.....

..first..the increasing interest of Japan in the affairs of the region. After a long period of a "low-posture" foreign policy, Japan has taken several initiatives in Southeast Asian affairs, notably in the realm of economic co-operation and in her bilateral relations with countries of the region, particularly Indonesia. Japan also played an important role at the Djakarta Conference last year and it is a role which she may be increasingly expected to play. As a major power, however, there is a danger that Japan's own interests and alliance may sometimes be at variance with the views and policies which Southeast Asian countries wish to pursue.....

Next there is also the increasing interest of India in regional affairs.....She is perhaps a late starter in the field but I am confident that with persistence and goodwill she can make up this lee-way and contribute by her own political experience and technological expertise to the development and welfare of the region.

Perhaps most encouraging of all, there is a development within the region itself, namely, the success of the Indonesian Government in overcoming the back-log of problems left behind as a result of the dangerous and sterile policies of the Sukarno/Subandrio regime. Indonesia's potential in political, economic and military terms, towers above that of any other country in the region and the stability of Southeast Asia is intimately linked with the stability of Indonesia.
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