

49

TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE MINISTER FOR CULTURE,
MR. S. RAJARATHNAM, AT A FAREWELL DINNER GIVEN
BY FIM FOR MR. ALEX JOSEY AT SRI TEMASEK ON
SUNDAY, JULY 18, 1965.

As this farewell dinner tonight to Alex Josey will sooner or later come to the notice of some Alliance Ministers, I thought it best to invite the Press, both local and foreign, as objective witnesses to what happens here and what was said here. I would also like to state here, for the protection of such foreign correspondents as are present, that this dinner is being given by me and not by the foreign correspondents. It is necessary to make this clear because terms like "interference in domestic politics" and "fomenting racial ill-will" are being somewhat generously applied to anything which displeases certain Alliance leaders.

There is nothing we can do about Alex Josey's expulsion. On Tuesday morning he will make history by being the first foreign correspondent to be expelled from either colonial Malaya or from an independent democratic Malaysia. If he wants to look on the bright side of an otherwise sinister episode he can gather some comfort from the fact that he has an addition to the Order of Merit from the Nile of which, I know, he is proud.

This is the Order of Expulsion recently bestowed on him.

Though there is nothing we can do about Alex Josey's expulsion order there is a great deal we intend to do about other orders that certain politicians in Kuala Lumpur are most anxious to confer on PAP leaders. We know for a fact that certain UMNO extremists have been publicly agitating for the conferral of a detention order on the Prime Minister of Singapore. We also know that certain investigations were set afoot to find out whether Mr. Lee Kuan Yew had all the necessary qualifications.

Fortunately the2/-

Fortunately the Tengku's statement from London has assured us that our Prime Minister has done nothing to merit such an honour.

However, Inche Semu's speech, as reported in today's newspapers is evasive in regard to the agitation for the arrest of Mr. Lee.

According to the Sunday Times:

"Referring to Mr. Johnson's prediction that any action taken against Mr. Lee Kuan Yew could 'perhaps provoke civil war' in Malaysia, Inche Semu asked: Does Mr. Johnson really believe that the Chinese masses are behind Mr. Lee Kuan Yew and that Mr. Lee truly represents the unity of the Chinese. Does Mr. Johnson also believe that the whole issue of the British presence in Malaysia depends solely on one man -- Mr. Lee Kuan Yew."

A less sinister and more straightforward answer to Mr. Johnson, ^{would} I would have thought/have been:

"Mr. Johnson's prognosis is unfounded because we have not the slightest intention of arresting Mr. Lee for, as the Tengku said, there is no evidence to justify his arrest."

As it is, Inche Semu is keeping the cell door and his position open. We know that the expulsion of Mr. Josey was a sort of makan kekil to whet the appetite of the extremists for the main dish -- the arrest of Mr. Lee, the logical outcome of which must be the arrest and detention of other PAP leaders and eventually all those who do not supinely accept the kind of Malaysia the extremists have in mind. Inche Semu has betrayed what is at the back of his mind when he said yesterday that there are two kinds of Malaysians -- those who are in Malaysia "as a right" and those who should be grateful for being allowed to enjoy this right given to them by what Inche Semu calls "the natives."

It is in this context of the battle for a Malaysian Malaysia that Alex Josey's expulsion should be seen. The tongue-in-cheek claim that Alex Josey is being expelled because he has interfered in domestic politics and fomented racial ill-will is explained by the fact that, in the circumstances now prevailing, the cheeks are probably the safest place to keep one's tongue.

First no concrete evidence has been produced by the Government to substantiate the charge of interference in domestic politics. All the evidence produced so far relate to Alex Josey's articles in foreign journals. How telling Australians, Americans and Britons what Alex Josey thinks is happening in Malaysia constitutes interference in domestic politics I don't know.

But one thing I know. Had Alex Josey written articles abroad which pleased Alliance extremists, the fact that he was friendly with PAP Ministers, the fact that he accompanied Mr. Lee Kuan Yew in his tours abroad would all have been adduced as testimony of Alex Josey's non-interference in local politics and of his exemplary impartiality.

Had he gone further and written articles abroad highly uncomplimentary to the PAP and other Opposition parties this would be incontrovertible testimony of his detachment and impartiality.

The Central Government's definition of when a correspondent is or is not interfering in domestic politics is not as vague as it may appear. A foreign correspondent who boosts the Alliance, willingly or unwillingly, will never be expelled on grounds that he is interfering in domestic politics.

But the Central Government has not stated as categorically, that, in the interests of fairplay, it will mete out the Josey treatment to those foreign correspondents who create an unfavourable image of Opposition parties abroad.

Would, for example, the Central Government call up foreign correspondents and reprimand them for sending out unflattering reports about, say, the PAP?

I may be mistaken but I think that is hardly likely.

In any case, let me make it clear that the PAP has not the slightest intention of pressing the Central Government for fair treatment in this matter. For one thing we can take criticisms simply because we are confident that we can meet criticisms in

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any open argument locally or abroad. At this very moment, I think, Television Malaysia (Singapore) is putting out the speech that Mr. Tan Siew Sin made last night and which was highly critical of the PAP. Television Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, has never reciprocated. The Sunday Times headed it: "The SIII in Singapore" which I thought was somewhat wittier than the Finance Minister's dreary complaints about the fiendish things we were up to with "mono-sodium glutamate" among other things.

I was not quite sure whether the reference was to Sin in Singapore or the Sin in Siew Sin. I hope Mr. Tan Siew Sin's well-known sense of humour rises to the occasion.

I think you will now see that Alex Josey did not so much interfere in local politics as local politics interfered with him. The extremists chose him as their first target for three reasons.

1. Because he was a personal friend of long standing of some of the PAP Ministers.
2. Because his reading of the Malaysian situation was not the sort of thing that the ultras liked to read.
3. It was safe to take him on because he was one man and non-citizen to boot.

The object of the exercise was to see what would be the effects of clobbering Alex Josey. Would the PAP leaders duck for cover? What would be the impact on foreign correspondents who will write about Malaysia even after Alex Josey has gone? How would the local newspapers react to this first move towards Inche Jemu's concept of "One Voice"?

It is not for me to answer the last two questions. But it has not succeeded in reducing PAP leaders into fear or silence. And this first experiment of the extremists in the alliance to prove that their tactics can slow down the Malaysian Malaysia movement has been a failure.

It has5/-

It has in fact achieved the opposite of what they expected. It has failed to intimidate the PAP leaders. It has given added impetus to the movement towards a Malaysian Malaysia. People now know that there are ultras who are determined to halt the trend towards a Malaysian Malaysia and this they can do only by eroding democracy.

By heeding the advice of these ultras the more responsible leaders in the Alliance have damaged, if not irretrievably, at least seriously, the image of themselves abroad as tolerant and democratic men. This image of themselves as liberal men has been carefully and quite justifiably built up for over a decade. Now in one foolish act, despite all the frantic attempts to whitewash the whole thing, this image has been badly damaged.

Some of their apologists are trying very hard to present the expulsion of Alex Josey as a victory against desperate odds. Alex Josey has been presented in some Malay journals as the representative of forces bigger and stronger than him. He menaced Islam, the Malay race, language and culture, the integrity and independence of Malaysia and the well-being of Malaysia's 11 million multi-racial population.

This victory over Alex Josey may even go down in our history books, to judge by some articles, as the Day when the Nation was saved from a fate worse than Death.

I look at Alex Josey and wonder whether Malaysia is all that wonky that his articles in journals abroad could have brought it down.

The problem that the extremists must start worrying about on Tuesday morning when Alex Josey takes leave of Malaysia is: Who is to be the next scapegoat? Who is the next scapegoat to be presented as endangering Islam and insulting the Malay race? Who is the scapegoat to be branded as upsetting inter-racial harmony?

They will /-

They will also have to explain away how without Alex Josey the Prime Minister of Singapore still continues to make his voice heard in journals abroad and why the Malaysian Malaysia movement gathers even greater momentum?

This is one thing the ultras will have to learn and will learn -- you cannot still the voice of reason inside Malaysia or outside Malaysia. By the very nature of Malaysia the extremists must be in the minority and their disastrous doctrine will never be accepted by the vast majority of all races who believe in a Malaysian Malaysia because there is no other alternative for our survival.

And now may I, on your behalf, wish Alex Josey well in what must be a heartbreaking effort to start a fresh life. I know that he loved Malaysia and would have liked nothing better than to spend even his declining years in this part of the world. He tried to be objective as a journalist but he was not indifferent to the fate of Malaysia because he believed in Malaysia. In pre-independent Malaysia he was branded by big business and big planters as a Communist. He was branded by some of his fellow Britishers as anti-British. He was branded by pro-Communists as a reactionary.

And now he is being packed off by Alliance extremists as a colonial agent, as anti-Malay, anti-Chinese, a race-monger and an anti-Malaysian.

All this is quite a record for one man. But I think he loves Malaysia, at least as his second home, not to bear any bitterness towards it just because of the desperate acts of a handful of men who don't know what they are doing. Many Central Government Ministers and officials know that without compromising his objectivity as a journalist he has done more than they would care to admit now to help in combatting anti-Malaysia propaganda abroad.

JULY 18, 1965.

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