

FOR PRESS:



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TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF MALAYSIAN INDEPENDENCE.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Holt, today (31st August) sent a message of congratulations to the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman, on the tenth anniversary of Malaysian independence. Mr. Holt also recorded the message on tape for broadcasting over Radio Malaysia.

Here is the text of the Prime Minister's message:-

"It gives me great pleasure on this your tenth anniversary of Independence, to convey congratulations and good wishes from the Australian Government to the Government and people of Malaysia.

Malaysia's achievements in the decade since August, 1957, have been a source of admiration for the world at large, and especially for those of us who live in the region of South East Asia. The Australian Government has particularly admired the political tolerance which marks the Malaysian scene, and the way in which democratic institutions have taken root and developed.

There were those in 1957 who feared that on Independence Malaya would face a period of political instability with intense rivalry and conflict between the various communities which went to make up the Federation's population. The record, however, has proved otherwise. The unfolding story has been one of internal peace and communal harmony.

Over this ten year period you have also been able to withstand the challenges of internal communist insurrection and external pressures. This has required strong government and the development of Malaysia's own machinery for internal security and defence. Your present stability is an eloquent testimony to the energy and skill you have devoted to these tasks.

In the economic field the years of independence have witnessed the greatest progress in your country's history. A scientific approach to rubber planting and tin prospecting has ensured increasing returns from these mainstays of the Malaysian economy. Industrialisation schemes have been proceeding, and significant strides have been made in agricultural diversification. Your land settlement scheme is widely regarded as a model for other developing countries.

I am sure that the progress made in these last ten years has instilled confidence and enthusiasm for tackling the problems which lie ahead. Malaysians and other peoples in South East Asia, and that includes Australians, live in an exciting era. Despite the conflict in Viet Nam and the continuing pressures and tensions to be found within the area, my colleagues and I believe that a new Asia is emerging, in which we can all find hope for a brighter future. My own feeling is that the next century will be the century of Asia. There is, at the very least, the encouraging prospect of spectacular advance. In this our two countries will have a significant part to play. May you continue to prosper in the years ahead, in peace and happiness."

CANBERRA, 31st August, 1967