WAS SINGAPORE A NONALIGNED COUNTRY DURING THE PERIOD OF
1965-1971

by

TAK M. LAM

A thesis
presented to the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the
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PREFACE

Singapore had been expelled from the Federation of
Malaysia becoming an independent state in August 1965.
After that time, Singapore had to join the international
community. It faced great pressures from her hostile
neighbours - Malaysia and Indonesia; and from other world
powers such as China and the United Kingdom. Singapore's
first Prime Minister after independence, Mr Lee Kuan Yew,
made several policy announcements calling on the people of
Singapore to stand up and unite for the struggle of national
survival. He declared that Singapore would be friendly to
all nations and would follow a foreign policy of "non-align-
ment" designed to identify itself with the Afro-Asian
nations.

At the time of independence, Singapore had to face a
series of both internal and external problems. Economic
development deserved the main attention. Its industrializa-
tion program had just begun. The problem of unemployment
had long been a primary concern of the Singapore government.
Moreover, communist influence was strong in this tiny island
state of merely 225 square miles, particularly among the
Chinese community which consisted of 76% of the about 2 mil-
lion population.

Singapore is a highly vulnerable state with no natural resources. It has a strategically important position, lying between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, at the Southern tip of the Strait of Malacca. She had no armed force except a battalion infantry commanded initially by the British, and transferred to the Singapore government at the time of independence. Externally, Singapore faced an economically and politically hostile Malaysia to the North and the East, and Indonesia to the South. Both countries were governed by the Malay race, which were highly anti-Chinese racially and politically. The British played a role in maintaining the balance of power during and after the separation of Singapore and Malaysia, so as to maintain political, military and economic stability in this region.

Singapore had been a British Far East military base for several decades, being used by the British to maintain peace and security in this region. Since the early 1960s, it served as British Far Eastern Military Command Headquarters. The contribution of the British military bases to Singapore's defense and domestic economy was far reaching. However, due to economic difficulties at home, the British Labour Government decided to withdraw from its military commitments from areas east of Suez. By October 1971, the Singapore base was completely withdrawn under the new British Conservative Government which suggested a new Five Power Defense System in which Britain, Australia, New

Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore were included as founding members.

The new Defense Arrangement came into being on November 1, 1971. Under this arrangement, an integrated ANZUK (Australian-New Zealand- United Kingdom) defense force was to be established for the maintenance of peace and security in the Malaysian-Singapore area.

Since independence, Singapore advertised it as a non-aligned state. Had the capacity of Singapore to implement and to impress others that it was nonaligned been inhibited by the foreign military presence? Was Singapore really non-aligned during that period of time? If it was not, was Singapore pro-Western or pro-communist? These are the problems which this thesis is going to explore. The reason I choose the period of 1965-1971 is that Singapore gained its independence in 1965. The Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement (AMDA) expired in October 1971, and it was replaced by the Five Power Defense Arrangement in November 1971. Since this thesis mainly deals with the effects of the AMDA on Singapore's foreign policy, I have chosen the period 1965-1971 as the basis of study.

The discussion will be divided into five chapters. Chapter One is the introduction analyzing the dilemma Singapore was facing. It examines the effects of British colonial rule in Singapore and the political, economic and

social developments during that period of time (1819 - 1971). Economic, political and security conditions required Singapore to adopt a non-aligned foreign policy. However, it was a two-edged sword as the same conditions forced Singapore to adopt a policy that was to certain degree a pro-Western one. Chapter Two will discuss the background and the factors which led to the formulation of a 'non-aligned' policy for Singapore, and the definition of non-alignment. Chapter Three will examine the importance of the British bases to Singapore economically and militarily, and the nature of the Five Power Defense Arrangement in which Singapore was a founding member. Chapter Four examines the proposition that Singapore advertised itself as a nonaligned state, but its capacity to implement such policy and to impress others that it was nonaligned have been inhibited by the British military presence during the period of 1965-1971. Chapter Five argues that, in terms of several criteria of nonalignment, Singapore was not a non-aligned state, but was pro-Western during the period of 1965-1971.

CONTENTS

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL INFLUENCES ON
SINGAPORE'S FOREIGN POLICY

This study will attempt to test a proposition that
Singapore had advertised itself as a nonaligned state, but
its capacity to implement, and to impress others that it was
nonaligned, had been inhibited by the foreign military pres-
ence firstly of the British military bases from August 1965
to October 1971, and then through the Five Power Defense
Arrangement which came into force on November 1, 1971. In
this study, nonalignment refers to a policy of a state that
declares itself aloof from bloc conflicts and proclaims
itself free from alliances, notably military entanglements
with any bloc or great power anywhere in the world. It is
not an absolute term, however. A nation may describe its
policy as nonaligned, while in practice it may be aligned
with great powers.

During the last three decades, most of the colonies and
dependencies in Asia and Africa became independent. Many of
them proclaimed a foreign policy of nonalignment. In order
to strengthen their international status within and outside
the U.N., the Afro-Asian nations met to express their common
views on world affairs, and attempted to promote a spirit of
Afro-Asian solidarity. In 1955, 29 top political leaders,

representing nearly one-half of the world population, met in Bandung, Indonesia, to condemn colonialism and to demand that all colonial people should be freed from colonial rule as soon as possible. The second Afro-Asian Conference which was to be held in Algeria in 1964 failed because a military coup d'etat erupted in Algeria on the eve of the Conference. Since then, a number of interstate disputes and internal disorders disrupted several Afro-Asian nations, and no plans were made for another Afro-Asian Conference. As Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore, has pointed out:

> It is no longer true that Afro-Asian solidarity -
> the unity, the sense of togetherness - of all the
> subject peoples who suffered at the hands of White
> European colonizers would last for a long time and
> provide a rallying force on a broad world scale
> against the former colonial powers. In fact,
> there was much feuding, intriguing and a constant
> process of contest for power between tribes,
> between nation groups.[1]

In the 1960s, the task of promoting the solidarity of the Third World was dependent upon the nonaligned countries. In 1961, 25 leaders of nonaligned nations from Africa, Asia, Europe and Central America, met in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. They called for the eradication of colonialism in all its manifestation and for the acceptance and practise of a policy of peaceful coexistence in the world.[2] The Belgrade

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[1] Alex Josey, Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore: Donald Moore Ltd., 1957, P. 484.

[2] "Communique of the Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, 1961", quoted in J.W. Burton (ed.) Nonalignment, London: A. Deutsch Ltd., 1966, P. 20.

Conference, later known as the First Summit Conference of the Nonaligned Countries, had crystallized and articulated the principles of nonalignment.[3] In 1964, the Second Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries was held in Cairo, Egypt. It reaffirmed and elaborated upon the principles enunciated by the Belgrade Conference and declared a program for peace and international cooperation. The Third Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries was held in Lusaka, Zambia, on September 8, 1970. The nonaligned group had doubled its membership since the 1961 Conference. The Lusaka Conference reaffirmed its belief in the principles of peaceful coexistence. It condemned the apartheid policy in Southern Africa and Portuguese colonial rule in Angola and Mozambique. It encouraged economic cooperation and expressed its deep concern with the threats to peace in the Middle East and Indochina.

Singapore was invited to take part in the Third Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries in 1970. This invitation had great significance for Singapore because it was recognized by the majority of nonaligned countries as a nonaligned nation. Indeed, since its independence in 1965, Singapore's leaders had on many occasions declared that Singapore was pursuing a foreign policy of nonalignment. For instance, the Prime Minister declared "a foreign policy

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[3] Comment of T. Razak, Deputy Minister of Malaysia, at the Lusaka Conference on September 9, 1970, in Journal of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, Vol. 3, Dec.1970, p. 82.

of nonalignment, offered to work with all the countries that would recognize her territorial integrity and sovereignty and advertised to trade with any body".[4] Thus it was clear from the outset that Singapore declared a foreign policy of nonalignment officially.

Prime Minister Lee's fundamental belief in foreign policy could be summed up in his remark that "half the problems of international survival is to win friends who understand and sympathize with us".[5] As a new independent state, it was understandable that Singapore wanted to win friends and to gain recognition from as many countries as possible. Besides, at the time of independence, a confrontation with Indonesia, coupled with the hostility of Malaysia and the Philippines, drove Singapore's leaders to seek support from the Afro-Asian nations. Singapore declared a nonaligned foreign policy in as much as most of the Afro-Asian nations were pursuing nonaligned foreign policies. In addition, nationalist feeling against colonialism was strong in Singapore so that its leaders wanted to project an image of being a fully independent state. The pursuit of a nonaligned foreign policy served this function. Moreover, for the sake of its security, it was necessary for Singapore's leaders to declare a nonaligned position in order to wipe out its image as a "third China" due to its majority Chinese

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[4] <u>Strait Times</u>, 20 Aug. 1965, p.12.

[5] <u>Strait Times</u>, 20 Jan. 1964, p.8.

population.

However, the declared foreign policy of a nation does not necessarily mean that it pursues such a policy in practice. In the case of Singapore, there are several background factors that complicate and compromise its nonaligned position. Economically, Singapore has no natural resources except having an excellent harbour located on the strategic Straits of Malacca. Its economic survival was dependent upon entrepot trade and foreign investment. It had to attract foreign inflows of capital and to provide confidence for the foreign investors. The British military had maintained bases in Singapore since the colonial period and their contribution was two-fold. On the one hand, it provided job opportunities for the Singaporeans, and it spent a considerable amount of money in Singapore. Another positive side-effect was that it provided confidence for the foreign investors to invest in Singapore because the political stability was guaranteed. On the other hand, the British military could provide security for Singapore to check communist influence in Singapore and to prevent attacks from Malaysia and Indonesia. Communist influence was strong in Singapore and it posed a serious challenge to the moderate leadership. Indeed the communists had organized several riots in Singapore because they were pursuing the strategy of street democracy. Ethnically, 76% of the Singapore population were Chinese, and the largest minority in Singapore was the

Malays. However, the Malays constituted the main race in the area surrounding Singapore. In other words, the Chinese of Singapore were surrounded by the hostile Malays of Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Singapore had often been accused of being a "third China", and the Chinese were invariably the scapegoats and victims of racial riots. Economic competition and political rivalries were also the causes of strained relations between Singapore and its nearby neighbours: Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Singapore itself had a very small, limited self-defense force. In terms of its security and its domestic economic well-being, Singapore had to depend on external foreign powers.

It is important to look at the historical, political and economic developments of Singapore in order to assess the background factors that influence Singapore's foreign policy. The political developments of Singapore can be divided chronologically into 6 stages: (1) British colonial rule 1819-1941; (2) Japanese occupation 1941-1945; (3) British return 1945-1959; (4) Self-government 1959-1963; (5) Malaysia 1963- 1965; (6) Independence 1965-1971. Each stage has reflected specific features of the political, economic and social developments of Singapore. And most important of all, each stage explains the elements that compromised Singapore's nonaligned position from 1965-1971.

1.1   SINGAPORE UNDER BRITISH COLONIAL RULE 1819-1941

In the 19th century, trade with China became more impor-
tant to the British Indian Empire and was regarded by the
British as a source of wealth.   The privation of the China
trade would provide a more severe calamity to Great Britain
than the loss of India.[6] The gateways to the South China
Sea, to China and its trade, were the Straits of Sunda and
Malacca.   The former was within the Dutch sphere of influ-
ence, but the most direct route by sea between India and
China, the Strait of Malacca between Malaya and Sumatra, was
not yet under Netherlands control.[7] Sensing the potential
threat of the Dutch to British trade and trade routes
through the Strait of Malacca, Sir Raffles was authorized to
establish British influence at the Strait, and to fix upon
some stations that might equally command the southern
entrance.[8] It was in response to this request that Raffles
took up his post at Singapore.

In 1819, Raffles concluded five "Preliminary Articles of
Agreement" with the Chief of Singapore in which the East
India Company (E.I.C.) was granted the right to set up fac-
tories at Singapore.   In 1824, after few years of pressure
exerted by the British, the E.I.C.   received the island of

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[6] N. J. Ryan, The Making of Modern Malaysia and Singapore,
Singapore: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969, P.10.

[7] Ibid., P.13.

[8] Ibid., P.35.

Singapore in full sovereignty by a treaty in consideration of which the Chief of Singapore received monetary compensation.[9] In the meantime, an Anglo-Dutch Treaty was signed in London. According to the Treaty, Holland ceded to Britain the town and Fort of Malacca and all its dependencies, and Britain on the other hand surrendered Bencoolen to the Dutch.[10] The Malay Peninsula now became a British sphere of influence. The three Strait Settlements, Penang, Malacca and Singapore, became residences under the administration of the E.I.C.. In 1858, the E.I.C. was abolished, and all its territories passed to the control of the India Office. In 1867, the Straits Settlements were transferred from the India Office to the authority of the Colonial Office. The Malay Peninsula became a Crown Colony, with Singapore as its capital.[11]

During this period, Singapore's economic growth was rapid. According to one observer, J. Kennedy, by 1820 the revenues of the port were meeting the cost of administration.[12] It had considerable trade with Siam and the east of Malaya, and also with Java and the islands of Southeast Asia, east of Sumatra. It also had an increasingly impor-

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[9] J. Kennedy, A History of Malaysia, London: Macmillan Ltd., 1970, pp.91-98.

[10] Ibid., P.99.

[11] N. Ryan, The Making of Modern Malaysia and Singapore, Singapore: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969, P. 114.

[12] Kennedy, op cit, P.97.

tant trade with China, especially through the larger vessels which came to use Singapore in preference to Penang.

Singapore's economic as well as communication progress was stimulated by Malaysia's economic development, mainly of mining and agricultural production. During the second half of the 19th century, the main mining products were gold, coal, iron ore, aluminium and tin. However, gold production was exhausted by the end of the 19th century. Coal had not proven to be an export commodity, and its production had gone down. Iron ore had been worked by Japanese enterprise since shortly after the First World War for export to Japan. By 1938, the shipments represented about half of Japan's ore imports. Bauxite mining had a large output and was also originally in Japanese hands, with nearly all production destined for the Japanese market. Tin mining made up nearly 90% of mine industry in Malaysia . In 1904, Malaya was producing about 50,000 tons of tin, more than half the world's output. The repercussions of tin mining and processing, according to Kennedy were many. It was responsible for a very substantial Chinese immigration. It led to improvements in transportation between mining towns and ports. For example, railways were built up to link the two. It was the main reason for the growth of towns which served the many needs of the mining areas, and it became a very important source of government revenue which was derived from licences for prospecting and rents for land, but above all, from a

heavy export duty.[13]

Another successful venture was rubber which was first brought into Singapore in 1877 from Ceylon and was mass produced from the early 1900s. By 1920, the exports of rubber from Malaya had reached an annual total of about 200,000 tons, over half of the world supply at that time. Since then, rubber exports of Malaya made up a large proportion of the world market.[14] As mentioned above, the exports of tin and rubber had contributed considerably to Malaya's annual revenues. More than two thirds of such exports passed through Singapore harbour, which has been run by the authority of the Singapore Harbour Board since 1913. As facilities for storage and shipment had been largely improved and modernized since the early 1900s, the usefulness of the Singapore harbour became more and more apparent. It not only assisted the exports of Malayan tin and rubber, but also contributed in several ways to the economic development of Malaya, and also helped to modernize this small island. For instance, British merchant capital was used directly or indirectly by establishing Singapore merchant-houses for investment in Malayan mining and agriculture. Roads and railways were built up to link Singapore and Malaya. Communication systems were also modernized. Modern processing industries for the milling of rubber, copra oil and palm

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[13] Ibid., pp.195-196.

[14] Ibid., pp.208-209.

oil, the refining of sago, and the smelting of tin, were set up in Singapore for re-export to other parts of the world. Some of these processing industries dealt with raw materials which came from other parts of Southeast Asia. In addition, Singapore had an important trade in the collection and distribution of mineral oil in Southeast Asia. Last but not least, hundreds of thousands of Chinese immigrants were "exported" and "traded" in Singapore to meet the labour demands of Malayan tin mining and rubber farms. This increased the local population and made Singapore a predominantly Chinese island city.

In conclusion, the economic activities during the colonial period had two important implications for Singapore's foreign policies. First, they increased the vulnerability of Singapore's economic development since it traditionally had depended on its neighbours and foreign countries. As a middleman for imports and re-exports, Singapore's economy was stimulated by Malaya. Moreover, it had to attract foreign investment to this tiny island for economic and social developments. Thus, economic factors were very important in the formulation of Singapore's foreign policies. It had to adjust its policies in order to survive economically. Second, Singapore became mainly a Chinese community as a result of the immigration of Chinese to meet the labour demands of Malayan tin mining and rubber farms. Singapore was always regarded as the "third China" or the "lackey of

China" by Malaysia and Indonesia which were composed of mainly the Malay race, and which were highly anti-Chinese. Thus Singapore was surrounded by two hostile, anti-Chinese neighbours. Since Singapore had only small defense forces, its security had to be guaranteed by a foreign power - the British.

On the domestic scene it is commonly said that, up to 1942, Singapore had no politics. But it is not quite true. By the late 1930s, Malay nationalism had arisen, and Indian nationalism and Chinese political activities (either nation- alist or communist) were directly linked with the political movements of their homeland. Malay nationalism was divided into two groups. The first group leaned to the right and was led by the upper class Malays who were English educated. Its main organization was the Pan-Malayan Malay Association. Its ideology was based on the principle of "Malaya for Malays". The second group formed a political party called the League of Malay Youth (KMM). Its main aim was indepen- dence for Malaya but within the framework for Greater Indonesia. Realizing that the aims of the KMM threatened their position and interests, the British colonial govern- ment arrested most of the KMM's leaders in 1940. These leaders were released by the Japanese shortly after the lat- ter occupied Malaya. The Indian nationalist movement led by the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) had little interest in

Malayan and Singapore's local politics during this period.[15]
The MCP, which had an overwhelming Chinese membership and
received directions from the Chinese Communist Party (as
well as from the Communist International), had changed their
aim of struggling for a "People's Republic of Malaya."[16]

The Kuomintan (KMT) of China formed their own school
boards and set up their own school system which was main-
tained until the mid 1950s. In the mid 1920s, several
Chinese schools were infiltrated by Malayan communists who
acted either as teachers or members of the KMT in the school
boards.[17] Between 1924 and 1927, the Malayan Communists
joined the KMT as individual members. Shortly after Chiang
Kai-shek purged the KMT of its communist wing in 1927 on the
mainland, the Malayan communists were also purged by the
Malayan KMT. The communists then formed the Nanyang
Communist Party (NCP) with the help of the Comintern in
1928.[18] In 1930, the NCP changed its name to the Malayan
Communist Party (MCP). Despite several attacks and reverses

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[15] The MIC joined the Malayan Alliance Party, which was
formed in 1952 by the United Malays National Organization
(UMCO, formed in 1946) and the Malayan Chinese
Association (MCA, formed in 1949) in 1955.

[16] L. Clutterbuck, The Long Long War, N.Y.: Praeger, 1966,
PP.13-18.

[17] The Chinese KMT under the leadership of Dr Sun Yat-sun
carried out a policy of allowing the communists to join
the KMT in 1924. Under the instruction of the Chinese
Communist Party, the Malayan Communists also joined the
Malayan branch of the KMT.

[18] G. Means, Malayan Politics, N.Y: N.Y. Univ. Press, 1970,
P. 68.

from the colonial police, the MCP's membership had increased from 1,500 in 1931 to 37,000 on the eve of the Second World War.[19] In the 1930s, the Malayan Communists concentrated their activities on fomenting strikes and political distur- bances against the British and raised funds to support the Chinese government in the mainland. The communists had been active in Singapore. Thus the communist factor is one of the important elements that play an essential role in Singapore's politics.

1.2 SINGAPORE UNDER JAPANESE OCCUPATION 1941-1945

On February 15, 1942, General Percival, the British Commander in Chief in the Far East, surrendered to the Japanese Commander. The Japanese occupied Malaya and Singapore for about 3 three years and eight months. Shortly after the fall of Singapore, at least 5000 Chinese were exe- cuted by the Japanese.[20] Malayan people, mostly Chinese under the leadership of the MCP, organized guerilla and resistance activities against the Japanese military regime. A resistance army called the Malayan People's Army (MPAJA) under communist control was set up and expanded its strength to over 10,000 men in 9 regiments by the end of the war.[21]

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[19] Ibid., P.68.

[20] V. Purcell, Malaya, Communist or Free, Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1954, P. 45.

[21] E. O'Ballance, Malaya: The Communist Insurgent War, London: Faber Ltd., 1966, P. 66.

In order to unify actions against the common enemy, the MPAJA established direct contact with the Allied Forces and received arms and foodstuffs from the British. The MPAJA became the only real force in Malaya, fighting against the Japanese occupation.

There were several immediate effects during the Japanese occupation. First, Japanese military rule had stimulated political awareness of the occupied people. Besides several thousands of Chinese, Europeans and Eurasians having been arrested and executed, there were tens of thousands of people who were sent to the Thailand-Burmese border to build the "Dead Railway", and very few of them survived. Many people began to realize that they had to fight vigorously in order to escape from the ruthlessness of foreign military rule. Many of them, particularly those who were immigrants, realized that Malaya was their land and that they had to struggle for its survival. This change was so important that after the war, many people, indigenous and immigrants, joined together in the struggle for an independent Malaya.

Second, the ruthless rule of the Japanese military administration had given an opportunity to the MCP to expand its influence and strength. Before the Japanese invaded Malaya, the MCP had deeply engaged itself in the communist struggle on the mainland. For instance, it organized activities against the Japanese in Northeastern China beginning in 1931, and launched a series of campaigns such as boycotts of

Japanese goods, and fund-raising in Malaya in support of the Chinese people fighting against the Japanese invasion. The MCP failed several times to get support from communities other than the Chinese society. During the Japanese occupation, the resistance war in Malaya allowed the MCP to absorb new blood from the Malay as well as the Indian communities. At the time of Japanese surrender, the MPAJA, under the leadership of the MCP, set up hundreds of People's Councils to control most of the cities and villages.[22] These became political as well as military centres for the MCP to prepare its armed struggle. Thus, the Japanese invasion had indirect effects on Singapore's foreign policy during the period of 1965-1971 because it increased the strength and influence of the communists.

Third, Malay nationalism was largely encouraged and stimulated by the Japanese. During the occupation period, all those Malay nationalists who had been arrested by the British were released by the Japanese and most of them cooperated with the Japanese military administration. The Malay Sultans had also been used by the Japanese to expand their military rule over the Malay subjects. Moreover, the Japanese had encouraged these Malay leaders to prepare for the establishment of an independent "Greater Indonesia" (including Malaya, Indonesia and Borneo) under the umbrella of the Japanese "Great East Asian Economic Coprosperous

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[22] Ryan, op cit, P.225.

Sphere".[23] After the war, these Malay leaders became politically active in demanding self-government for Malaya from the British.

Finally, as the Japanese executed different policies towards the Malays and the non-Malays, racial differences between racial groups intensified and these effects were felt immediately after the war. Since that time, race has been an important factor in Malayan politics. It also contributed to the racial conflicts between the Chinese in Singapore and the Malays in Malaysia and Indonesia. Part of the reason for the expulsion of Singapore from the Federation of Malaysia were Chinese-Malay racial conflicts. Thus Singapore was constantly threatened by its Malay neighbours - Malaysia and Indonesia.

1.3 SINGAPORE UNDER THE BRITISH COME-BACK: 1945-1959

There was a great opportunity for the MCP to take over immediately after the Japanese surrender as "Peoples Councils", under the control of MPAJA, had control in most of the cities and villages. However, the MCP lost its chance, partly because the Japanese were told by the British to retain their weapons waiting for the British troops' arrival, and partly because the MCP Central Committee decided against taking over immediately.[24] Knowing that the

[23] Means, op cit, pp.88-90.

[24] O'Ballance, op cit, P. 67.

communists were strongly opposed to the Malayan Union Scheme, the British were well prepared this time when they introduced a new plan for establishment of the Federation of Malaya. In February 1948, shortly after the new Federation came into force, the colonial government banned all communist activities and outlawed the MCP. In June 1948, a "state of emergency" was declared by the Federal Government of Malaya. The communists went underground and started their armed struggle.

An insurgent army was formed by the MCP in February 1948. This was known as the Malayan Peoples' Anti-British Army (MPABA). A year later, it changed its name to the Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA). In the beginning, the MPABA was barely 3,000 strong, most of whom were ex-MPAJA veterans. Supporting this army was the clandestine Min Yuen – popular, mass movement – an underground organization that provided money, food, intelligence and communication.[25] In 1948, the number of armed guerillas was 4,000-5,000. It rose to 8,000 by the early 1950s. At the height of the anti-communist campaign, the government forces deployed against them comprised some 40,000 conscript and regular soldiers, supported by aircraft, artillery and naval vessels, some 70,000 police and a quarter of a million village "Home Guards", plus whatever administrative or technical services of the local governments were required. The cost

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[25] Ibid.

of these operations to the Federation government alone was of the order of 20,000 pounds per day for several years.[26] The MCP was finally defeated after a 12-year insurgent war. At the present time, the communist guerillas have been forced to retreat to the Thai-Malaysian border.

There were many factors leading to the communist failure. However, two of them seemed to be of considerable importance. The first factor was that the MCP had failed to receive significant support from the Malay community which was the major mass base in the rural area. The purge of the Malay collaborators shortly after the war had frightened the Malays and most of the Malays considered the insurgent war as a rebellion against Malay interests. The second factor for the MCP's defeat was the effectiveness of government policy which destroyed all the possible communist infiltrated areas by setting up thousands of "new villages", kinds of concentration camps which were to concentrate all rural Chinese into bigger units for the convenience of control. Thus, the communist supply lines were cut off, paving the way for the government forces to destroy the guerilla bases.

Besides armed struggle, the MCP had also organized several united fronts or infiltrated certain "open" organizations such as left-wing political parties, trade unions,

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[26] C. Turnbull, "Constitutional Development, 1819-1968" in Ooi and Chiang (eds.) Modern Singapore, Singapore: Univ. of Singapore Press, 1969, P. 187.

women's associations, peasant associations, cultural organizations, and old boy's associations, to carry out communist propaganda and policies. All these organizations had previously joined with, or supported, other nationalist movements or nationalist political parties in the struggle of national independence. In addition, another underground organization called the Malayan Anti-British League (MABL) was set up to absorb young activists who were to be trained and sent to those open organizations in order to take over their leadership. In these areas, the MCP had much more success in Singapore than it did in Malaya.

Another indication of the communist influence was its refusal of the Malaya Union Scheme. Under the pressure from both the nationalists and the MCP, the British attempted to carry out certain constitutional reforms. In January 1946, the British issued a White Paper on the proposed arrangement for a Malayan Union and for Singapore. It proposed a more unified and centralized government in a union which was to include all the Malay States plus the former settlements of Penang and Malacca. At the same time Singapore was to remain a Crown Colony.[27] The reason for not including Singapore in the new union was that it was the centre of large scale entrepot trade and had economic and social interests distinct from those of the mainland. First, in Malaya itself the Malays constituted just half of the total

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[27] Means, op cit, pp.265-267.

population and outnumbered the Chinese by only a small margin. If Singapore had been incorporated into Malaya, the Chinese would have outnumbered the Malays. The second reason for keeping Singapore separate was undoubtedly Britain's firm intention to retain sovereignty over her base and installations which she then considered vital to her interests. Obviously, it was in Britain's interests to keep Singapore as a primary base from which to safeguard British economic interests in the area. However, the Malayan Union Scheme was strongly opposed by the communists. They rejected the scheme because they considered that it was a colonialist arrangement whose purpose was to restore British colonial rule in Malaya and Singapore by a policy of "divide-and-rule". The Malayan Union Scheme failed, and the British Colonial Office agreed to the substitution of a federal form of government for the Malayan Union. The new constitution was finally approved in 1948. It represented a substantial concession to the communists' demands, while at the same time Singapore was formally separated from Malaya and remained a British Crown Colony.[28]

Constitutionally, the most important innovation in the new arrangement for the Crown Colony of Singapore was the introduction of an unofficial majority into the Legislative Council. The Council was to be composed of 13 unofficial and 10 official members. Of the unofficial members, 6 were

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[28] Kennedy, op cit, pp.267-269.

to be elected directly by all British subjects over the age of 25, 3 were to be recommended by the Chamber of Commerce and appointed by the Governor General, and 4 were to be appointed by the Governor General. In 1953, a Commission led by Sir George Rendal was set up to make recommendations for a new constitution for Singapore. The Report of the Rendal Commission (1954) became the basis of the new Constitution of 1955. The most important content of the Rendal Constitution concerned the enlargement of the size of the electorate and the constitution of the two Councils: the Legislative Assembly and the Council of Ministers. There would also be a considerable increase in the number of voters through automatic registration. There would be a Legislative Assembly of 32 members (25 elected, 3 ex-officio, together with 4 nominated by the Governor who would also nominate the Speaker.) There would be a Council of Ministers composed of the same 3 ex-officio members and 6 members from the majority party in the Assembly. The latter would take charge of particular departments and the Council would be responsible to the Assembly.[29]

The first election was won by the Labour Front led by David Marshall who was asked to form a government and became the first Chief Minister of Singapore. Within a few months after becoming Chief Minister, Marshall faced a series of political and constitutional crises. His failure to deal

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[29] Sin Chew Jit Poh, Singapore, May 13, 1955, p.5.

with the workers' strike in 1955 peacefully, and to demand internal self-government from Britain led to his resignation. The Chief Ministership was now turned to Lim Yew-hock. In September 1956, Lim's government started a series of police operations to suppress the leftist movement. Hundreds of leftist leaders were arrested. Several leftist organizations were banned. A few months later, Lim led a constitutional delegation to London and successfully concluded a new constitutional agreement with the British. Under the new agreement, the British agreed to grant partial self-government to Singapore by 1959. At that time, the Singapore government would have complete power over its internal affairs except internal security which was to be the responsibility of an Internal Security Council composed of 7 members (3 nominated by the British government, 3 by the Singapore government, 1 by the Malayan government.) In addition, a Singapore citizen would be named as the Head of State. The Legislative Assembly would be enlarged from 32 members to 51 completely elected members. The new election was won by the People's Action Party (PAP) led by Lee Kuan Yew who became the first Prime Minister of the self-governing state of Singapore.

1.4   SINGAPORE UNDER SELF-GOVERNMENT: 1959-1963

Facing an increase of communist influence within and out-
side the party, Lee Kuan Yew and his colleagues had to look
for some way to save the moderate regime and also the party.
The chance came when the Tungku, Prime Minister of Malaya,
proposed on May 27, 1961 to build a new Federation of
Malaysia out of Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, British North
Borneo (then Sabah) and Brunei. The PAP welcomed this pro-
posal and on June 2, the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore
issued a statement to support the Malaysian Scheme, and
announced that the PAP government would make every effort to
realize the proposal. However, the communists did not agree
with the new plan as they knew that their influence would be
weakened if the anti-communist, Malay-dominated government
in Kuala Lumpur took over the police power in Singapore.
Thus on June 10, Lim Chin-siong, under the instruction of
the MCP, issued a statement opposing the Malaysian Scheme.
A month later, they withdrew their support of the PAP candi-
date in a by-election.

As a result, the PAP lost the by-election. In mid July,
the cabinet submitted a resolution of confidence in the gov-
ernment to the Assembly.   It won the confidence vote,
although 13 out of 39 PAP members abstained.   In September
1961, those 13 PAP members resigned from party membership
and formed with leftist trade unionists a new party called
the Barison Socialist with Lim Chin-siong as its Secretary

General. At the time of the split of the PAP, nearly 30 out of 51 PAP's branch executive committees were fully control-led by the pro-communists who simply changed the name of the branch from PAP to Barison Socialist.

Facing heavy communist pressure internally, the Lee Kuan Yew Government worked hard to push forward the Malaysian Scheme. Agreements on the establishment of the Federation of Malaysia between the governments of Britain, Malaya and Singapore were reached at the end of 1961. Due to strong opposition from the opposition party (Barison Socialist) over the issues of state autonomy and citizenship, a refer-endum was held in Singapore in September 1962 in order to give a chance to the people of Singapore to choose one of the following alternatives: (a) the government proposal, claiming Malaysian citizenship for all Singapore citizens, and reserving autonomy on matters of education and labour, at the price of reduced representation in the new Federation Parliament; (b) merger on the same terms as any other state in the existing federation; and (c) merger on terms no less favourable than those offered to the Borneo territories. The Barison Socialist rejected all three alternatives and called the people to cast blank ballots for protestation. The first alternative received 71.1% of the vote.[30] The PAP hailed these results as evidence of overwhelming support for its merger policies.

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[30] Means, op cit, P.298.

In December 1962, an armed revolt led by the People's Party of Brunei, erupted against the British domination of Brunei and the Malaysian Scheme. The rebellion received full support from the Indonesian government under Sukarno. However, the British troops crushed the revolt in a few weeks. This incident reminded the Singapore leaders that if there was another communist revolt in Singapore, they would have to rely again on the British forces to curb the communists.

In order to wipe out the communist influence in Singapore, the Internal Security Council decided to carry out a police action to destroy the strong communist bases. On February 2, 1963, more than 300 leftist activists (including Lim Chin-siong) were arrested and several influential leftist trade unions and cultural organizations were dissolved by the government. This police operation cleared the way for Singapore to enter Malaysia. The original date for the establishment of Malaysia was scheduled for August 31, 1963, but it was postponed to September 16 because of strong opposition from both the Philippines and Indonesia. The former claimed that Britain had no right to transfer its authority of North Borneo to Malaya, while Indonesia considered the formation of Malaysia to be a neocolonialist arrangement designed by the British against the nationalist interests of Indonesia.[31] However, the Singapore government

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[31] *Ibid.*, pp.314-322.

declared that from September 1 until September 16, all federal powers over defense and foreign affairs would be reposed in Singapore's Head of State.[32]

On September 21, 1963, a General Election was held in Singapore. The PAP polled 47.4% of the votes and won 37 seats. The Barison Socialist polled 32.1% and won 13 seats. A couple months later, 8 out of 13 Barison's MPs were arrested by the Federal Government, and another two escaped from the police search and went to live in exile in Indonesia.

1.5   SINGAPORE UNDER THE FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA: 1963-1965

During the armed revolt of the People's Party in Brunei, the Sukarno Government had given moral as well as material support to the rebellion. Although British troops had completely suppressed the revolt in Brunei, the guerilla warfare spread to Sarawak and Sabah. Severe armed conflicts broke out along the Indonesian-Malaysian border in Borneo. Shortly after the establishment of Malaysia, hundreds of Indonesian troops landed on the Malay Peninsula and Singapore. All were either captured or killed. In Singapore, several bombs delivered by Indonesian infiltrators exploded and either killed or injured several dozen people. On the international scene, Malaysia seemed to be isolated, while Indonesia's offensive diplomacy had made

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[32] Josey, op cit, pp.307-309.

considerable gains. At the second Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries held in 1964, Malaysia was not invited despite its professed nonalignment policy.[33] It was alleged that Malaysia was a product of neocolonialism. At that time, Singapore was under the threat of Indonesian invasion. It confirmed the Singapore Government in its view that its security was protected by foreign power, namely Britain.

Shortly after the formation of Malaysia, differences between the PAP government in Singapore and the Federal Government in Kuala Lumpur became apparent. One of Singapore's objectives for joining Malaysia was to seek the establishment of a "Common Market", free of import-export taxes among member states. However, no agreement was reached, and customary taxation was still imposed by Singapore and other states. Politically, the efforts of the PAP to replace the MCA in the Federation also failed. In 1964, a General Election was held in Malaysia. The PAP sent 9 candidates to take part in the election. However, the MCA as well as the UMNO considered the PAP's move as a confrontation against the Federation since the Federation was contesting in all constituencies. Although the PAP finally withdrew from 9 constituencies, the relationship between the PAP and the Federation became more and more hostile. Many Malay extremists considered that the Chinese dominated government in Singapore was challenging the Malay privileges

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[33] Boyce, op cit, P.42.

and political rights. There was a deterioration in racial relations. On July 10, 1964, racial riots erupted on the island, and spread out to other states. Hundreds of people were killed or wounded. The Singapore Government blamed the Malay racists within the UMNO as resposible for the riots.[34]

In the meantime, disputes between the Federal Government and the state governments of Sarawak and Sabah were no less acute than they were between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. In early 1965, a new organization called the Malaysian National Solidarity Convention (MNSC) was formed, with the PAP and four other Malaysian opposition parties as its founding members. The main objective of the MNSC was to fight for a Malaysian Malaysia.[35] A mass rally was successfully held in Singapore on May 9, 1965 and many other rallies were planned to be held in other cities of Malaysia. Many racial extremists within the UMNO considered that this new alignment of the opposition parties as a potential threat to the Alliance regime in the coming election. Some of them demanded that the Tungku dissolve and take over the Singapore Government and have Lee Kuan Yew and some of his colleagues arrested.[36] However, these demands were rejected by the Tungku. Instead, the Tungku found no other option but to expel Singapore from Malaysia. On August 9, 1965, the Singapore

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[34] Josey, op cit, pp.307-309.

[35] Ibid., P.96.

[36] Ibid., P.415.

government accepted the Tungku's proposal and declared the independence of Singapore. Shortly afterwards, the British government announced recognition of Singapore. In a few weeks, the U.S., and the Commonwealth countries recognized Singapore as an indeppendent state. On September 21, 1965, Singapore became the 117th member of the United Nations.

1.6 SINGAPORE UNDER INDEPENDENCE

Until the last moment, almost none of the Singaporeans had ever expected that Singapore would become an independent state. The PAP, for instance, had from the very beginning committed itself to the merger with Malaya as one of its ultimate aims. The immediate reaction of the main opposition party, the Barison Socialist, was "nonrecognition of Singapore's independence." On December 8, 1965, when the Parliament held its first session since independence, the Barison Socialist Party issued a statement announcing the decision to boycott the Parliament. It considered the "independence" as a phony one and that the separation of Singapore from Malaysia was a neocolonialist plot to divide-and- rule.[37] In October 1966, all Barison's MPs resigned in "protest against undemocratic acts of the government." The accusation of "phony independence" by local leftists had been repeatedly broadcast by Radio Beijing, although the Beijing Government had never formally disclosed its attitude

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[37] Ibid., P.433.

towards Singapore.

The Indonesian Government under the Sukarno regime, too, did not recognize Singapore until 1966 when the Suharto Government withdrew its confrontation policy and signed a peace agreement with the Malaysian Government. Furthermore, the decision of the British Labour Government to withdraw its military commitments East of Suez in 1967 deeply affected Singapore's leaders who had already faced a series of internal and external problems. Singapore's industrialization planning was relatively inexperienced. Although the rate of population growth had fallen sharply from 4.3% for 1956-1957 to 2.2% for 1966-1967, the population increase was still considerable. More significantly, about 60% of the total population were under the age of 21. Obviously, Singapore is a predominant Chinese state and it is surrounded by nearly 120 million people of Malay race from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, where anti- overseas Chinese sentiment is relatively strong. As a country without any raw material resources, Singapore is largely dependent upon its neighbours as an entrepot as well as a service centre. Every effort made by Lee's government is to fight for survival, economically and politically.

In terms of the formulation of its foreign policy, Singapore faced two basic problems. On the one hand, its foreign policy had to serve the demands of economic development, namely, the demands of industrialisation. Of these,

the problems of attracting foreign investment, expanding foreign markets and ensuring raw material supplies were among the main concerns. On the other hand, from the very beginning, Singapore's independence was not recognized by the main opposition party, the Barison Socialist, and some principal Asian nations such as Indonesia and the PRC. It had to show that it was really a sovereign, independent state. As to the first problem, Singapore has sought to establish close relations with the Western countries, particularly with Britain, so as to attract foreign investment. As to the second problem, Singapore declared that it was executing a nonaligned foreign policy.[38] Lee Kuan Yew said that in any competition, or conflict between the power blocs, Singapore should prefer to stay out or be nonaligned.[39] He expressed the view that Singapore wanted to live and trade with Russia and China as well as with Britain and other Western countries. He said:

> I think the Americans now realize that in certain parts of the world, nonalignment may be a good thing for them, because it saves them the cost of involvement. And it is not all that far-fetched that the Russians, and eventually others as well, may decide that nonaligned countries, like Singapore, and even Malaysia, may be in their long term interests. And that will suit us fine.[40]

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[38] P. Boyce, _Malaysia and Singapore_, Sydney: Sydney Univ. Press, 1968, P. 40.

[39] Josey, _op cit_, P.608.

[40] _Ibid._, P.426.

Singapore's Foreign Minister announced in 1966 that Singapore would pursue a policy of nonalignment. He explained that Singapore's policy was to be friendly with all countries. The Singapore government also confirmed its policy of nonalignment in offical documents and publications. For example, one such source included the statement that:

> The Republic seeks to make as many new friends as possible, while pursuing a policy of nonalignment and avoiding entanglement in what are essentially power and conflicts.[41]

In practice, like Malaysia, Singapore was not, and never sought to be, a member of the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). In the U.N., it identified itself with the Afro-Asian group. Moreover, it established close relations with such Afro-Asian nonaligned nations as India, Egypt, Algeria, Ceylon and Cambodia (until Prince Sihanouk was ousted). It was also invited to attend the Third Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries held in Lusaka, Zambia in 1970. From these contacts, it hoped to win sympathy and support from its Afro-Asian friends, although the British military bases were still in this island republic. However, the presence of British bases created difficulties for Singapore's efforts to persuade the Afro-Asian world to believe that Singapore could carry out its nonaligned policy.

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[41] Singapore: Facts and Figures, 1968, (Ministry of Culture, Singapore), P.20.

In the past, the British military bases in Singapore, built in the 1930s, played an important role in preserving British colonial rule in this area. During the period of Indonesian confrontation, from 1963-1966, British soldiers fought actively along with Malaysian troops against the Indonesian military invasion in Eastern Malaysia, and in Brunei against the local rebellion supported by Indonesia. Since 1965, when Singapore was expelled from the Federation of Malaysia and became an independent state, the British bases had helped this small island state maintain its external security. This protected British interests in Southeast Asia and provided a communication link between India and the Far East.

As an important link between the East and the West, it has a strategically important position at the southern tip of the Strait of Malacca. It is also an internationally famous free port, possessing an excellent natural deep water harbour. It has long served as an entrepot for the exchange of industrial products for raw materials between economically advanced countries and Southeast Asian nations, particularly Malaysia and Indonesia. Singapore has no natural resources. Before the industrialization program was launched in the early 1960s, Singapore's national revenue was mainly derived from its import-export trade. More than 20% of its gross national income still came from the entrepot trade which was estimated to be 40% to 50% of its total

trade. About 33% of Malaysia's imports passed through Singapore. Moreover, it had increasingly re-exported a large amount of industrial products which originated from industrially advanced nations for Indonesian consumers. In return, about 50% of Malaysia's raw materials, mainly rubber and tin, and nearly one third of Indonesia's raw products, were exported through the Singapore harbour to other parts of the world.[42] From all these, as a middle man, Singapore made a sufficient profit to maintain a high standard of living for its large population. In the past decade, an industrialization program had been grafted onto Singapore's economic planning so as to reduce its dependence on the entrepot trade and to increase employment. Consequently, the need for foreign investment, the search for foreign markets, and the demand for raw materials were among the crucial issues in the formulation of Singapore's foreign and domestic policies.

Politically, Singapore had long suffered from the turmoil of racial disturbances and communist conspiracy. These were related to the composition of its population and differences among ethnic, cultural and religious groups. With the support of Chinese-educated Chinese, who consisted of approximately one half of the Chinese race (the other half being the English educated), the communists had been a major political force between 1959 and 1963. Although their

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[42] Means, op cit, P.265.

strength had been reduced under the Lee Government, their influence still existed and their front party, the Barison Socialist, was believed to be able to attract at least one third of the electoral vote in an election.[43]

In her recent history, Singapore had suffered at least three times from racial riots. Of its total population, about 76% are Chinese, 12% are Malays, and 8% are Indians. Since they have different religions, languages and cultures, social communications between these three different races are difficult. As the people of Singapore (particularly the 3 main races) are closely related to those of Malaysia racially, racial disturbances in one part have always affected the other part. Singapore obtained its independence because of political conflicts between the Federal Government in Kuala Lumpur and the state government in Singapore, or more correctly, between the Malays in Malaya and the Chinese in Singapore. Under such circumstances, the struggle for political survival emerged as one of main tasks which Singapore had to face in the early years of its independence, as it faced a politically and economically hostile Malaysia to the north, and Indonesia to the south. The British, with preponderant military strength, maintained the balance of power in this region to ensure Singapore's political survival.

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[43] Ibid., P.334.

Singapore had only one infantry battalion, which was originally under the British command, and was transferred to the Singapore government soon after independence when she separated from Malaysia in 1965. After certain efforts at military expansion, Singapore had only several battalions formed into two infantry brigades, an armoured brigade armed with AMX-13 tanks, a small air force with a hundred or so men and a few training aircraft, and a few hundred naval personnel with a few training ships. If military reserves were not taken into account, the defense forces of Singapore consisted of no more than 7,000 men plus another five to six thousand policemen who possessed sufficient strength only to maintain internal order and security. There was apparently no way for such limited forces to deal with an external attack, either from the south, or the north, or from anywhere in the region. In other words, Singapore's external defense had to rely on British forces.

However, the British Labour government (1964-1970) conducted a series of defense policy reviews which were carried out in order to relax the strain imposed on the British economy by the defense program which it had inherited from the past, and to shape a new defense posture for the 1970s.[44] The Labour government pointed out in the Defense White Paper of 1966 that the first purpose of their armed forces would be to defend the freedom of British people and

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[44] Statement on the Defense Estimates, 1966, London: H.M.S.O. 1966, P.1.

that the security of those islands still depended primarily on preventing war in Europe.[45] It considered that the only direct threat to British survival would be a major nuclear war arising from a direct conflict between East and West, and that a direct threat to their survival seemed less likely outside Europe.[46] It came to the conclusion that British military commitments east of Suez were no longer vital to British national interests and it decided to withdraw from Singapore. Upon these assumptions, the Labour government decided in 1966 to carry out the following measures so as to reduce the military expenditures of the nation from 2,400 million pounds for 1965-1966 to 2,000 million pounds for 1969- 1970:[47] (a) to keep the military contribution in Europe at roughly the 1966 level; (b) to make substantial savings in the Mediterranean, but to discharge commitments in the area, including those to Libya and the CENTO; (c) in the Middle East - to give up the base at Aden and disengage themselves from this area when obligations to the states in the Persian Gulf are fulfilled; (d) in the Far East - to play a substantial and constructive role in keeping peace, in collaboration with allies and Commonwealth partners, but limitations were to be applied to the scale and nature of the military effort there.

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[45] Ibid., P.5.

[46] Ibid., P.6.

[47] Ibid., P.14.

Following the end of Indonesia's confrontation against Malaysia and Singapore in 1966, the Labour government decided to speed up the process of withdrawing its armed forces from the Malaysia-Singapore area. This policy was announced in the 1967 Supplementary Statement on Defense Policy. According to the new plan, it was decided to make a reduction of about one half of the forces deployed in Singapore and Malaysia during 1970-1971. It was expected that by that time, the number in this area would drop to 40,000 from 80,000. The reductions would be phased so that by the 1970s, British forces still stationed in this area would consist largely of naval and air forces, and there would still be some Gurkha units in Malaysia. Corresponding cuts would be made in base facilities. It also indicated that the British planned to withdraw altogether from their bases in Singapore and Malaysia by the middle 1970s. The precise timing of their withdrawal would depend on progress made in achieving a new basis for stability in Southeast Asia and in resolving other problems in the Far East. In 1968, the Labour government decided to put forward the date of complete withdrawal to mid-1970, but later on postponed it to the end of 1971 at the request of, and under pressure from, the Singapore government.

Immediately after the British Conservative Party came to power in June 1970, the new government announced that the date of complete withdrawal from the Malaysia-Singapore area

would be extended to 1975. At the same time, it decided that Britain would not take sole responsibility for defending this area. The government suggested that the defense of this region in the future should be undertaken collectively by five nations: Britain, New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia and Singapore. After an effort of several months, a Five Power Defense Arrangement was announced in a Communique signed by these five nations on April 15, 1971. It declared that "in the event of any armed attack externally organized or supported or the threat of such attack against Malaysia and Singapore, their governments would immediately consult together for the purpose of deciding what measures would be taken jointly or separately in relation to such attack or threat."[48]

There is no doubt that the Labour policy of military withdrawal from east of Suez deeply affected Singapore's internal and external affairs. Although the Conservative government had decided to allow British troops to stay on Singapore for a longer period, the impact of withdrawal had already made itself felt, as nearly one third of British military expenditures in Singapore had already been cut under the original schedule of withdrawal before 1970. The presence of British bases was very important to Singapore for domestic and foreign policy reasons, particularly after Singapore's independence. Their contribution to Singapore's

[48] "New Five Power Defense Arrangement" in _Mirror_, May 3, 1970, p.12.

national welfare was far-reaching. Politically, they pro-
vided a close link between Britain and Singapore, which
helped the latter to maintain its political stability.
Financially, a complete withdrawal of British armed forces
would mean a loss of S $450 million a year in Singapore's
annual income. The S $450 million revenue not only helped
Singapore financially, but also provided tens of thousands
of jobs for Singaporeans. Furthermore, the British military
presence ensured that foreign investment would come in with
confidence to help the economic development of Singapore.
Moreover, the British withdrawal would force Singapore to
spend a large amount of money on its own military forces.
For example, after 1967, Singapore's defense expenditures
increased rapidly and in the 1971-1972 budget, it consisted
of approximately 37% of the total governmental expendi-
tures.[49]

In terms of foreign policy, the British military presence
had also caused a series of debates. As a member of
Afro-Asian developing nations, Singapore's desire to carry
out an independent, nonaligned foreign policy might be
understandable. Nevertheless, several historical influ-
ences, namely, its need for economic development, its pre-
dominantly Chinese immigrant society, its communist insur-
gencies and historical Malaysian and Indonesian hostilities,
made Singapore compromise its foreign policies. It was also

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[49] Sin Chew Jit Poh, March 9, 1971, p.8.

hard to justify a nonaligned policy, given the presence of British military bases.

Chapter II

NONALIGNMENT: THE DECLARED FOREIGN POLICY OF SINGAPORE

2.1   NONALIGNMENT: ITS DEFINITONS AND MEANINGS

The term "nonalignment" has been used since 1950s to describe an attitude to international politics. Today, there are more than 90 nations which have identified their foreign policies as "nonaligned". However, the term itself lacks a single, coherent definition. Sometimes it is defined in a negative sense and sometimes in a positive sense. In the former case, nonalignment is thought to be the expressed desire to remain aloof from bloc conflict. In the latter case, it is sometimes replaced by the term "neutralism" or "positive neutralism" which involves a positive attitude towards bloc conflicts.[50] In this chapter, the discussion will deal with Singapore's declared policy of nonalignment.

In his study of nonalignment in Southeast Asia, M. Caldwell suggests that nonalignment is simply the name appropriated to describe the foreign policy of any power which tries to preserve its independence and secure its

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[50] M. Brecher, The New States of Asia, a political analysis, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, P.112.

internal stability without adhering to a military bloc and without relying upon the armed intervention, at need and by prior agreement, of one of the major powers.[51] Although this definition reflects the general characteristics of nonalignment, it does not differentiate clearly the specific features of nonalignment from those of neutrality. As another student of the subject, R. Ogley, suggests: "contemporary neutralism or nonalignment is a peculiar form of neutrality. It is neutral solely with respect to the Cold War."[52] K.J. Holsti has made clear the distinction between the terms "neutrality" and "nonalignment". In one sense, he contends, they all signify the same type of foreign policy orientation, one in which a state will not commit its military capabilities, and sometimes its diplomatic support, to the purpose of another state. Nevertheless, differences are still apparent, since

> Neutrality refers to the "legal" status during armed hostility. Under the international laws of neutrality, a nonbelligerent in war time has certain rights and obligations not extended to the belligerents. A neutralized state is one which must observe these rules during armed conflict but which , during peace, must also refrain from making military alliances with other states. The major difference between a neutralized state and a nonaligned state is that the former has achieved its position by virtue of the actions of others; while the latter chooses its orientation by itself and has no guarantees that its position will be honoured by others.[53]

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[51] M. Caldwell, 'Nonalignment in S.E. Asia', in J. Burton (ed.) Nonalignment, London: Deutsch Ltd., 1966, P. 38.

[52] R. Ogley, The Theory and Practice of Neutrality in the 20th Century, N.Y: B. Nobles Inc., 1970, P.22.

Usually, a state is neutralized when the great powers agree to guarantee its nonaligned position through a multi-lateral treaty. Under neutralization treaties,

> the state in question binds itself not to allow foreign troops on its soil or in any way to compromise its status by making military agreements or giving military privileges to other states on its territory. In return, the guaranteeing powers undertake not to violate the territorial integrity or rights of the neutral in both wartime and peace time.[54]

For instance, the neutrality of Switzerland has been a part of the national tradition of that country for hundreds of years. It first gained international recognition at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and was reaffirmed by the Treaty of Peace of Versailles in 1919. As a consequence of these legal developments and from continuous practice, Switzerland accepts the duty to observe the legal rules of neutrality in all wars between other states. Even during peace-time it may not accept obligations which might land it in a war. In return, the other Powers guarantee the integrity of its territory. Nonalignment, on the other hand, is quite different. It is not based on international, legal treaties. It instead is a foreign policy strategy of those states which "on their own initiative and without the guarantee of other states, refuse to commit themselves militarily to the goals and objectives of other states."[55] Although they lend diplo-

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[53] K.J. Holsti, <u>International Politics</u>, N.J.: Prentice Hll Inc., 1967, P.103.

[54] <u>Ibid</u>.

[55] <u>Ibid</u>.

matic support to bloc leaders on particular issues, they refrain from siding diplomatically with any bloc on all issues.

Brecher considers nonalignment to be a political status. He contends that

> Nonalignment refers to a state that declares itself aloof from bloc conflicts; nothing more. It proclaims itself free ·from alliances, notably military entanglements with any bloc or Great Power anywhere in the world. It asserts that it will judge all policy issues on their merits.[56]

However, he argues that this is not neutralism. It is, rather, the passive, first stage of neutralism. Neutralism, according to him, assumes an obligation to help reduce tensions between blocs with a view to maintaining peace or bringing about peace, and more particularly to prevent the outbreak of war. Hence, nonalignment is the policy guide of the neutralist state, but neutralism represents an attitude and a policy which are much more activist than nonalignment as such.[57] Neutralism not only means an absence of alliance with either of the major power groups in a cold war context, but also involves a further commitment not to participate in war issues, to play leading roles in neutralist conferences, to offer advice to the great powers, and to exert influence, diplomatic, psychological and especially moral.[58]

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[56] Brecher, op cit, pp.111-112.

[57] Ibid., P.112.

[58] T.L. Shay, "Nonalignment Si, Neutralism No", in The Review of Politics, April 1968, P.228.

Although there had been several summit conferences of the nonaligned countries in the past, policies agreed upon by the Conferences did not bind the individual nations' actions. As a matter of fact, nonalignment was considered merely as a "moral force" and as an instrument of world peace.[59] Historically, the origins of Asian neutralism or nonalignment could be traced back to the bipolar configuration of international politics after 1947. Multilateral and bilateral military alliances were eventually formed by both the United States and the Soviet Union, each seeking to outpace the other through the acquisition of new allies. Thus, the new states were faced with the choice of joining one of the blocs, or to stand aside, express friendship with each bloc, and attempt to prevent both blocs from interfering in one's domestic and foreign policy. From the first, nonalignment involved the delicate balancing of the weight of one bloc against the weight of another.

Perhaps the most striking event in the 1950s, from the perspective of the development of nonalignment, was the Afro-Asian Summit Conference held at Bandung, Indonesia in April, 1955. The Bandung Conference was sponsored by India, Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon and Pakistan. With the exception of Pakistan, all of those states were at the time carrying out official nonaligned foreign policies. More significantly, the main theme of Bandung - peaceful coexistence -

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[59] M. Brecher, _India and World Peace_, N.Y.: Praeger, 1968, P.7.

was first enunciated in the Trade Agreement on Tibet signed by the Prime Ministers of India and the People's Republic of China on April 28, 1954. Appended to the Sino-Indian Agreement, five principles were laid down as the basis of peaceful coexistence. These were: (a) mutual respect for each other's territory; (b) nonaggression; (c) noninterference in internal affairs; (d) equality and mutual benefits; and (e) peaceful coexistence. At the Bandung Conference, these principles were expanded to ten and were included in the final communique.[60] The five principles of peaceful coexistence thereafter became the basic principles of nonalignment.

Although the majority of participants were nonaligned nations, the 1955 Bandung Conference was obviously not exclusively a conference of nonaligned nations, as there were also aligned countries attending the conference.[61] Until the end of the 1950s, "nonalignment" had not yet been established as an umbrella term to describe the policies among the Afro-Asian nations. For instance, Sukarno of Indonesia, Nasser of Egypt, and Nkrumah of Ghana often preferred to use the phase "independent, positive neutralism" to describe their nations' foreign policies. It was not

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[60] See the Final Communique of the Bandung Conference, 1955, in C. Romulo, The Meaning of Bandung, Chapel Hill: Univ. of N. Carolina Press, 1956, pp.101-102.

[61] Thailand, Pakistan and the Philippines were members of the SEATO; China and Japan were bilaterally aligned with the USSR and the USA respectively; Iraq, Pakistan and Turkey were members of the Baghdad Treaty Organization.

until the first Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries held in 1961 at Belgrade, Yugoslavia, that the term "nonalignment" became established.

The Belgrade Conference was the first international meeting which brought together a large group of heads of states from those nonaligned countries to deal with current international issues ranging from anti- colonialism to economic and social cooperation. Twenty five states sent delegations to attend the Conference. Regarding the membership qualification, Burton made the following observations:

> Membership was on the basis that the participant belonged to neither the communist nor the Western military bloc; that it had no bilateral military arrangement with a bloc country; that it either had no foreign military base on its soil or was opposed to those which were there; that it supported liberation and independence movements; and that it pursued an independent policy based on "peaceful coexistence."[62]

In addition to these features, internal policies and political systems were not considered to be a relevant consideration - they could be communist, capitalist or something between.[63] However, it seemed that the Conference was mainly a nonaligned conference of Afro-Asian countries as only Yugoslavia and Cuba were invited from outside Africa and Asia.[64] The final communique strongly condemned coloni-

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[62] Burton, op cit, P.21.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Countries which attended this Conference were: India, Indonesia, Burma, Afghanistan, Nepal, Ceylon, Egypt, Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Ghana, Algeria, Ethiopia, Sudan,

alism, imperialism and neo-colonialism as the prime sources of the threat of world peace. It declared that all people and nations had to solve the problem of their own political, economic, social and cultural systems in accordance with their own conditions, needs and potentialities.[65]

The Second Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries was held in 1964 in Cairo, Egypt. This time the representation was greatly expanded as 47 states sent delegations. This Conference reaffirmed and elaborated the principles enunciated by the Belgrade Conference and declared a program for peace and international cooperation. Again, colonialism, imperialism and neocolonialism were regarded as the main threats to world peace.

The Third Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries was held on September 8 to 10, 1970 in Lusaka, Zambia. The Conference was attended by heads-of-state from 53 countries. By this time, many leading figures of the nonaligned nations had departed. Sukarno, Nehru, Sihanouk and Nkrumah were either dead or ousted. Malaysia and Singapore were for the first time invited and sent delegations to attend the Conference. The international situation had also changed. The cold war had greatly abated as it was succeeded by a growing detente between the two superpowers – the United

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Yemen, Lebanon, Congo, Iraq, Cambodia, Cyprus, Mali, Morocco, Somalia, Tunisia and Yugoslavia.

[65] Burton, op cit, P.121.

States and the Soviet Union. The world was no longer bipolar. It was multipolar with the rise of China and Japan to the rank of major powers onto the international stage. Colonialism had receded as a primary concern of international politics as more countries attained their independence. South African apartheid policy still remained, but it was more isolated diplomatically. Liberation movements in South Africa, Rhodesia, Mozambique and Angola received attention from the Conference. The Lusaka Conference, however, was more concerned about the wars in Indochina and in the Middle East. Its final communique urged all parties involved to seek immediate, more effective, and peaceful ways to end these wars so as to prevent further disasters for mankind. Perhaps the most significant development at the Lusaka Conference was that most of the conferees had paid more attention to the struggle to liberate man from poverty, illiteracy, and disease. They saw an urgent need for economic, social and technical cooperation among themselves. By and large, world peace and international cooperation were the main themes that dominated the 1970 Lusaka Conference.

2.2 PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF SINGAPORE'S FOREIGN POLICY

There were two basic principles which guided Singapore's foreign policy decisions. The first was the principle of "adaptation and adjustment". Policy makers of Singapore often emphasized the changing nature of the world and stated that the Singapore government would adjust its policy from time to time in order to adapt to new realities. In a speech on Singapore's foreign policy at the University of Singapore on October 9, 1966, Mr Lee Kuan Yew observed that certain factors of a nation's foreign policy changed over time and some did not. He said:

> First, nothing is pre-destined. The second is – whilst your geographic and natural resources and other factors are by and large unchanging, your human factor is capable of change and it does change with very important and significant consequences.[66]

In a review of recent development in Beijing-Washington relations, Mr Rajaratnam, the Foreign Minister of Singapore, observed that facts changed because the world had changed at an even more rapid pace than ever before. He warned that this had a disturbing and upsetting effect, but far more disturbing and upsetting than if we did not make the effort to adjust ourselves to new realities.[67] He said it was because Singapore could adapt to new realities that she had achieved tremendous progress in the past decades

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[66] Josey, op cit, P.510.

[67] The Mirror, August 30, 1970, P.5.

(1959-1971).[68] He then cited the fact that Singapore had achieved the highest living standard country in Southeast Asia, with a real GDP growth of 8.9% - the highest in the region during this period.[69]

The second principle in the formulation of Singapore's foreign policy was to secure the long term national interests of Singapore and at the same time, to promote the specific and special interests of the PAP regime.[70] Mr Lee Kuan Yew once said:

> Two things which had to be kept in mind when talking about the foreign policy of a particular country: first that the foreign policy pursued at any time is designed primarily for the long term national interests of a group of people organized into a nation; and second that the policy is designed for the specific and special interests of the type of regime, or the type of political leadership which for the time being is in charge of the destiny of that country.[71]

While the term "national interest" was a vague concept, it was frequently regarded as an element in the making of foreign policy to which, however it might be defined, statesmen profess to attach great importance.[72] Generally, racial harmony, economic prosperity, political and social stability constituted the main contents of Singapore's national inter-

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[68] <u>Sin Chew Jit Poh</u>, August 23, 1970, P.12.

[69] <u>Ibid</u>.

[70] Josey, <u>op cit</u>, P.508.

[71] <u>Ibid</u>., P.508.

[72] J. Frankel, <u>National Interest</u>, London: Pall Mall Press Ltd., 1970, PP.20-24.

ests.

Based on these two principles, two basic objectives were laid down by Singapore's policy makers. The first was to create and promote "the right political climate". The second was "power".[73] In the first case, the Prime Minister of Singapore explained:

> A foreign policy for Singapore must be one as to encourage first, the major powers in the world to find it - if not in their interests to help us - at least in their interests not to have us get worse. The second point is: we must always offer to the rest of the world a continuing interest in the type of society we project.[74]

Perhaps the following example illustrates what he means by "right political climate". Decision makers of Singapore had long perceived that the possible threat to Singapore's survival would probably come from her neighbours, the PAP leaders considered that if the threat of Singapore's survival came from the great powers, then it would not only be faced by Singapore alone but every country in this region. They maintained that Singapore had to make every effort to avoid such danger. As Lee Kuan Yew put it:

> When you talk about foreign policy, unless you are a big power like the United States and the Soviet Union, you are really talking about your neighbours. Your neighbours are not your best friends, wherever you are.[75]

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[73] Power here means not only military, economic but also political and moral strength. See Josey, op cit, P.509.

[74] Josey, op cit, P.510.

[75] Ibid.

Thus, besides establishing friendly relations with her neighbours, decision makers of Singapore had sought foreign capital from the big powers such as the United States, Britain and Japan so as to make Singapore an "interest area" and at the same time create the right "political climate" in preventing any possible threat from her neighbours. They hoped that Singapore's security would be ensured by these countries which had vital interests in Singapore, and that Singapore would be able to ask for military assistance from them when necessary.

Moreover, by professing a foreign policy of nonalignment, Singapore's leaders hoped to get moral and political support from other nonaligned nations. Mr Lee Kuan Yew had said:

> If we can identify ourselves with the mass of new nations, then the risk we run of being used as a pawn and destroyed is that much diminished. But, in the last resort, it is "power" which decides what happens, and therefore it behoves us to ensure that we always have overwhelming power in our side.[76]

In addition to economic and foreign policies which were designed to increase Singapore's economic and political power, Singapore had also maintained a close military link with Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia so as to increase her military power.

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[76] Ibid., P.511.

2.3   SINGAPORE'S EXTERNAL POLICIES: 1959-1965

Singapore's commitment to nonalignment had been gradually developed since 1959 when the PAP came to power. Constitutionally, the government of Singapore between 1959 and 1963 had no authority over external affairs, nor did the state government in Singapore possess such authority during the period 1963-1965 while Singapore still remained a part of Malaysia. Nevertheless, because of the following three factors, the Singapore government did enjoy, and sometimes skillfully exercised, certain powers on external affairs during this 6-year period. The three factors, according to P. Boyce, were (1) the specific circumstances of Singapore; (2) the political techniques of Singapore's political leaders; and (3) the constitutional and administrative channels during the self-government and Malaysian periods, specifically, there were certain ambiguous provisions of the constitutions and governmental media through which the government claimed its power on external affairs.[77]

In terms of specific circumstances, the ethnic background of its citizenry, the island's strategic location for both defense and commerce, the high literacy rate and ease of political communications were factors which had predisposed Singapore politicians, trade unionists and students to be sensitive to the currents of international politics. Even

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[77] P. Boyce, "Policy without Authority: Singapore's External Affairs Power", in Journal of Southeast Asian History, September 1965, pp.87-103.

during the 1930s and 1940s, long before Singapore became self-governing, external affairs were the particular concern of at least 3 political organizations - in as much as the KMT and MCP were each trying to cultivate Nanyang loyalties to the Chinese homeland, and the Peninsula Malay Union was advocating merger with all or part of Indonesia.[78] According to Boyce, Singapore had assumed a special importance for foreign governments as a centre for intelligence services and as a diplomatic window on the Southeast Asian region as a whole on the eve of the merger with Malaya. There were over 30 consular offices with senior diplomatic personnel functioning on the island.[79] In addition, Singapore was the headquarters of the British Far East Military Command and the British Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, and of other Commonwealth Commissioners with similar areas of jurisdiction. Singapore was also a frequent place for foreign political leaders to stop over during their visits to other countries in Southeast Asia.

As far as political techniques were concerned, Singapore's political leaders had skillfully utilized every opportunity to meet foreign political visitors or they had paid friendly visits to several foreign countries so as to promote better understanding and establish closer relations. On several occasions, the Singapore government expressed

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[78] Ibid., P.88.

[79] Ibid., P.87.

sympathy and support to certain independence and liberation movements so as to identify itself with the mass of the newly independent nations.

Constitutional ambiguity also provided Singapore opportunities to utilize its power to the advantage of relationships with some countries over others. During the period of self-government (1959-1963), Singapore possessed powers over trade and culture. Based on this authority, the PAP government often used the weapons of parliamentary debate, official tours and receptions and the nuance of public statements to support favourite causes.[80] In addition, the Singapore government was also provided with two constitutional instruments to exert influence on the British Office of Commonwealth Affairs in relation to Singapore affairs. The first was the Singapore Internal Security Council in which three members were appointed by the British government, three from Singapore and one from Malaya. The other was an intergovernmental committee for continuous consultation and discussion between the British and Singapore governments on any matter affecting Singapore. During the Malaysian period (1963-1965), Singapore retained autonomy with respect to labour and education, and a limited power over trade.[81] These had given Singapore opportunities to

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[80] Ibid., P.88.

[81] Because of the difficulty for the Singapore and Malaysian Federal governments to reach agreement on future economic relations, the Singapore government inferred that the authority of trade was in the hands of Singapore.

extend its activities in external affairs, such as the control over the technical assistance program, participation in international conferences on economic, educational and labour matters. In addition to utilizing cautiously and skillfully all these limited powers, Singapore's political leaders exercised even more external affairs powers than they had been provided in the Constitution.

From the time when the PAP took power in 1959, the PAP leaders had shown their political activities in many fields, internally and externally. One of the striking examples which reflected skillful political techniques was in the very early days of the PAP in office. Immediately after the election results revealed that the PAP had won the election, the British Governor General invited Mr Lee Kuan Yew to form the next government. Lee promptly made his request the release of eight political detainees, failing which he would refuse to form the government. This would probably have led to a constitutional crisis if the British government had rejected Lee's request. Reluctant to face a crisis, the Governor agreed on June 2 that the detainees would be released on June 4. With a victory in the first constitutional fight with the British, Lee formed his government on June 3. Immediately after forming a government, Lee quickly turned his attention to Singapore's relations with other governments.

On June 13, Lee and four of his colleagues paid an official visit to Kuala Lumpur. They met the Tungku, Prime Minister of Malaya, and his colleagues. They finally issued an official communique which gave special emphasis to the need for communal harmony.[82] Returning to Singapore, Lee declared on June 18 that "we moved forward into the future confident that we would advance the cause we all stood for, a more just and equal society in an independent, democratic, noncommunist, socialist Malaya". He considered that the "merger with Malaya" would be Singapore's only hope of complete freedom from colonial ties.[83]

After establishing good relations with Malaya, Mr Lee turned his attention to Indonesia. In January 1960, he visited Jakarta to show Singapore's goodwill to the Indonesians. During his visit, Lee assured Sukarno that Singapore would not allow anything detrimental to the security of Indonesia to be committed in any territory over which it had control. He also tendered Singapore's support for Indonesian claim to west Irian. Following Lee's visit, the Indonesian government sent a cultural mission to Singapore in early 1960. Within a few months, the Chief of Staff of Indonesian army and the Indonesian Foreign Minister also paid a brief visit to Singapore.

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[82] Josey, op cit, P.105.

[83] Ibid., P.118.

During the early years in office, Singapore had close relations with other Commonwealth countries. Lee's personal reputation among them was high as the following examples illustrate. On April 8, 1960, the Prime Minister of New Zealand visited Singapore and was accorded a state banquet by Mr Lee. In his speech of welcome, Lee expressed the view that New Zealand was an example of "the successful working of the system of parliamentary democracy". He hoped that the two countries would have better and cooperative relationships in the future.[84] On July 21, 1961, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference of Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, British North Borneo and Brunei met in Singapore. The conference set up a Malaysia Solidarity Consultative committee to promote the establishment of Malaysia. Singapore had played an active part in the committee.[85] In September 1962, Mr Lee was invited to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference held in London as an "advisor". During the conference, Lee was well received by the other participants.

In its early years in office, the PAP government seemed to strive for an identification with the nonalignment policies of Afro-Asian states.[86] The PAP's emphasis on anti-colonialism provided a framework for the government to iden-

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[84] Ibid., P.144.

[85] Ibid., P.210.

[86] H. Chan, "Singapore's Foreign Policy, 1965-1968", in Journal of Southeast Asian History, March 1969, P.179.

tify itself with two African nationalist movements through 1960 and 1961. It supported the leftist government of Lumumba in the newly independent Congo Republic and blamed Western conspirators for the Prime Minister's death in April 1961. In the Assembly, the Prime Minister moved a resolution expressing adhorrence at the "cold-blooded murder", called upon the U.N. to bring the murderers to justice, condemned the presence of Belgian troops and agents in Congo, and supported the proposal to expel from the Congo all foreign troops not under United Nations command.[87]

Giant rallies denouncing intervention in the Congo by Western governments were organized by the trade unions supporting the PAP and were attended and addressed by Cabinet ministers. In March of the same year, despite the protest of the British Commissioner, the PAP government organized a mass rally on the Singapore Padang to welcome the Prime Minister of the Provisional government of Algeria, and a relief fund was collected to support the struggle of the people of Algeria for national independence.[88]

In order to promote better understandings among, and to gain moral support from, the nonaligned nations for the Malaysian Scheme, Mr Lee went to Burma, India, Egypt and Yugoslavia in April and May 1962. He met the leaders of these countries and explained to them why Singapore had no

[87] The U.N. Year Book, 1961, Vol. 1, p.76.

[88] Boyce, op cit, P. 98.

other alternative but to merge with Malaya so as to be free from colonial rule. In September, Lee visited Cambodia and renewed his acquaintance with Prince Sihanouk and until 1970, when Sihanouk was ousted, he maintained close relations with the Cambodian Head of State. These trips were all made independently of consultation with Kuala Lumpur.[89]

Although Singapore's autonomy was limited during this period, the personal political skill of the PAP leaders allowed the government to play an active part in increasing their control over external affairs. The same skill and the new federal constitution which vested more power in the state government of Singapore during the Malaysian period made the Lee Kuan Yew government more active in external affairs than it was during the self-government period.

In this respect, perhaps one of the most dramatic Singaporean appearances in international politics was Mr Lee's statement that total responsibility for Singapore's external affairs, defense and internal security reposed in the Head of State for safe keeping until Malaysia Day (September 16, 1963).[90] According to the Malaysian Agreement signed by the governments of Britain, Malaya and Singapore in London on July 8, 1963, Malaysia was to have come into being on August 31, 1963. Due to Indonesian interference and opposition by the Philippines, the date was postponed

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[89] Ibid., pp.97-98.

[90] Josey, op cit, pp.264-265.

to September 16, 1963. To mark the occasion, the PAP government organized a Malaysia Solidarity Day Mass Rally on the Padang on September 1, 1963. In the rally, Mr Lee announced:

> All Federal powers over defense and external affairs will, as from today and until September 16, be reposed in our Head of State. We look upon ourselves as trustees for the Central Government of Malaysia during these 15 days. We will exercise these powers in the interests of Malaysia.[91]

This action was apparently designed to strengthen Singapore's bargaining position in the final round of tense negotiations with Kuala Lumpur on the financial terms of merger. Thus it was strongly opposed by the Malayan government. On the other hand, the Singapore government had no wish to act further. No attempt was made to interfere with the British military command or to enshrine the declaration of independence in legal process or ceremonial.[92]

Immediately after the Malaysia came into being, Singapore sent its representatives to join with the Malaysian delegation to take part in the 1963 U.N. General Assembly and thus had officially established a precedent for Singapore to take up partial responsibilities in Malaysian external affairs. Since independence in 1957, the Malayan government had rarely paid attention to external affairs, and little effort had been made to establish close relations with other

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[91] Ibid., P.264.

[92] Ibid., P.91.

Afro-Asian nonaligned nations. In order to promote better understanding of Malaysia, Mr Lee, on behalf of the Malaysian government, led a delegation from Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah to visit 17 African countries. After Lee's return from abroad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia considered the trip successful and asked Lee to go to the U.N. at the next General Assembly. However, due to the political conflicts between the Federal Government and the Singapore government, Tungku cancelled his invitation to Mr Lee to lead the Malaysian delegation to the U.N. General Assembly a few months later.[93]

Mr Lee also actively took part in several international socialist conferences during the Malaysian period. In August 1964, Mr Lee attended the Centenary of the Socialist International in Brussels. As a representative of Asian socialism, he delivered two speeches at the Council's debate on East-West Relations on September 3 and at the Socialist International Congress on September 5, 1964. In his speeches, he drew the attention of European socialists to the difficulties and achievements of Afro-Asian socialism.[94] In April - May 1965, during an official visit to New Zealand and Australia, he conferred with the Australian Labour Party which already had plans to liaise with Asian socialist parties. Basic agreement on the future cooperation among

[93] Ibid., P.293.

[94] Lee Kuan Yew, Socialist Solution for Asia, Singapore: Ministry of Culture, P. 25-29.

Australian-Asian socialist parties was reached during their meetings.[95] On May 6, 1965, Mr Lee attended the Asian Socialist Conference in Bombay at which he analyzed certain current problems facing Asian socialists in the context of the current international and domestic situation. Shortly after the conference, it was planned that a permanent secretariat of Asian socialist parties was to be set up and Mr K.C. Lee, then Organizing Secretary of the PAP, was sent to Tokyo to confer with the leading officers of the Japanese Socialist Party in connection with this matter.[96] Although Singapore was a state of the Federation of Malaysia for less than two years, its activities in external affairs were significantly active.

2.4 NONALIGNMENT: A THEORETICAL COMMITMENT AFTER INDEPENDENCE (1965-1971)

During the battle for merger with Malaya, PAP leaders had repeatedly insisted that Singapore could not survive as an independent state. Once independence became a reality, leaders of this tiny state immediately realized the difficulties which they were going to face and decided that their primary task ahead was to safeguard the national survival of Singapore. They realized that separation would not eliminate basic differences between the governments in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. On the contrary, they had reasons to

[95] Ibid., P.53.

[96] Nanyang Siang Pu, February 29, 1972, p.6.

believe that racial extremists within the Malaysian Alliance would not like to see an independent Singapore survive and succeed.[97] Moreover, Indonesia still remained a threat to Singapore's survival. Thus, according to Singapore's leaders, the successful conduct of external affairs was a matter of national survival. The fundamental economic and defense needs demanded a major thrust on the foreign front. The PAP leaders looked upon foreign policy as an instrument to safeguard and promote the state's territorial and economic interest.[98]

During the Malaysian period, the PAP leaders had often criticized the Alliance government for lack of initiative in foreign diplomacy and lack of sympathetic identification with the Afro-Asian world. As Mr Lee had once declared to the Malaysian Parliament,

> External affairs are a matter of life and death. Isolation from the growing body of Afro-Asian opinion and identification with imperialist and colonialist nations must in the end mean death. For us, life must mean a growing identification with the hopes and aspirations of the political attitudes of Afro-Asian countries.[99]

He also argued that "half the problems of international survival was to win friends who understood and sympathized with us".[100]

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[97] For detail, see Chapter 3, Section B.

[98] Chan, op cit, P.178.

[99] Ibid., P.178.

[100] Ibid.,

Immediately after separation, these arguments were put into practice. The Singapore government declared a foreign policy of nonalignment and stressed that Singapore would make friends with all the countries that would recognize her territorial integrity and sovereignty. The Prime Minister announced that Singapore desired to trade with anybody, including the Soviet Union, China and Indonesia.[101] On many occasions, before and after independence, Mr Lee had expressed his admiration for Cambodia's foreign policy of neutrality. He told Prince Sihanouk during his offical visit to Cambodia on April 12, 1966 that

> I have always held the policy pursued by the Royal Government of Cambodia as laudable in its objectives and admirable in its methods. In a very difficult situation you have been able to uphold the integrity, the honour and independence, both of the thinking and action of your government. I now find myself placed in a position not dissimilar to yours.[102]

Singapore's policy of friendship, cooperation and expanding trade with all countries soon received noticeable reactions from other nations. Singapore's commitment to nonalignment was grounded in her desire to further trade interests. The Finance Minister of Singapore told in the Parliament on December 13, 1965 that

> Our policy of neutrality, nonalignment between the two power blocs together with an active identification with the Afro-Asian world gives us a good start with the growing consumers' world in Afro-Asia. Trade missions will soon be sent to

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[101] Josey, op cit, P.424.

[102] Ibid., P.460.

these markets.[103]

In the first month of independence, however, less than half of the Afro-Asian nations recognized Singapore.[104] There were 2 basic factors which caused many of the Afro-Asian nations to take a longer period to recognize the island state. The first was based on the ambiguity of Article V of the Separation Agreement signed by the Malaysian and Singapore governments on August 7, 1965. According to this Article, both governments would enter into a treaty on external defense and mutual assistance providing that: (a) a joint defense council would be established for purposes of external defense and mutual assistance; (b) Malaysia would accord to Singapore such assistance as may be considered reasonable and adequate for external defense; (c) Malaysia would have the right to maintain the bases and other facilities used by its military forces within Singapore and to make such use of these bases and facilities as the government of Malaysia may consider necessary for the purpose of external defense; (d) each party would undertake not to enter into any treaty or agreement with a foreign country which may detrimental to the independence and defense of the territory of the other party.[105] Although the Agreement did not mention the future of the British military

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[103] Chan, op cit, P.179.

[104] Ibid., P.182.

[105] Boyce, op cit, P.32.

bases stationed in Singapore, it was soon clear that the Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement also covered the Singapore area, and that the separation of Singapore from Malaysia did not affect British bases in Singapore.[106] This gave the false impression to other countries that Singapore was not really separated from Malaysia, because Singapore still had considerable military links with Malaysia.

The second reason for the delay in recognition was the hostile attitude of Indonesia towards Singapore's independence. An early recognition of Singapore might be considered as an unfriendly action against Indonesia which regarded Singapore's independence as another neocolonialist move against Indonesia. Since Indonesia under President Sukarno still maintained high prestige among many of the Afro-Asian nations, some of these countries preferred not to take the risk of damaging their relations with Indonesia and decided to delay their recognition of Singapore.

However, the clouds cleared both after a series of friendly policy announcements made by Lee who clarified Singapore's attitude towards British bases, and more significantly, after the failure of the communist coup d'etat in Indonesia on September 30, 1965. The coup attempt accelerated the downfall of Sukarno and paved the way for the new Indonesian government to end its confrontation policy in

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[106] Mr Lee Kuan Yew had clarified this point on Aug. 30, 1965. See Josey, op cit, p. 417.

August 1966. Regarding the British bases, Mr Lee said that Singapore was in fact the owner of the bases. He added that he could give the British 24 hours' notice to quit. If they did not do so, they would be committing an act of aggression. He stressed that the British would have to consult him before they could use the bases for any purpose. This seemed to imply that the presence of British bases did not affect Singapore's sovereignty over her territory.[107]

In order to identify more closely with the Afro-Asian world, Mr Lee made an angry statement directed against the British and the Americans on August 30, 1965, 3 weeks after independence. First, he accused the British government of not putting pressure on the Malaysian leaders to stop their racist policy against Singapore. Then he accused the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of trying to subvert his government in 1960. At the end, Lee commented that the Americans lacked the experience and wisdom to understand Asian leaders and warned that he would not tolerate an American foothold on the island if the British withdrew their forces.[108]

Although Lee's accusation did not affect Singapore's relations with Britain and the United States, it was designed to prove to the world, particularly to the Third

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[107] Josey, op cit, P.427.

[108] Lee accused the CIA of having attempted in 1960 to bribe a Singapore government officer for secret information. See Josey, op cit, pp. 416-418.

World, that the leaders of this tiny island state were not
committed as allies of the West. As one study observed, the
verbal attack seemed to have been prompted by Lee's concern
about the slow response from the African nations to
Singapore's independence.[109]

Although many of the Afro-Asian nations held a "wait-and-
see" attitude towards the problem of granting diplomatic
recognition to Singapore, they did not attempt to block
Singapore's application for the U.N. membership.[110] On
September 21, 1965, Singapore became the 117th member of the
world organization. A month later, it was admitted as the
22nd member of the Commonwealth.

During the early months of independence, Singapore had
undertaken several diplomatic actions to show its professed
nonaligned position, which on some occasions also indicated
its independence from Malaysia in foreign affairs. The
first was marked by its support in 1965 of seating the
Beijing representation in the U.N. by the expulsion of
Taiwan. This action was in contrast to the Malaysian posi-
tion, which voted against Beijing's representation. On
October 14 and November 12, 1965, during the General
Assembly Plenary Session, Singapore's U.N. Ambassador
expressed his government's view that the Beijing government

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[109] Chan, op cit, P.182.

[110] In fact, Indonesia had withdrawn its representatives
from the U.N. in 1964 in protesting the election of
Malaysia to the U.N. Security Council.

was the lawful government of China.   He considered that the
U.N.   should be composed of all the sovereign nations, large
and small,   whatever the colour of their peoples.   He con-
cluded that there were many problems which could not really
be solved without the participation of the P.R.C. in such
discussions.[111]

Efforts to promote trade and diplomatic relations with
communist states (except China,   Albania and North Vietnam)
and non-communist Afro-Asian countries also illustrated a
nonaligned stance.   Some of these actions, in dealing with
the communist states, for example,   were in constrast with
Malaysian foreign policy.   During the early years of inde-
pendence, the PAP leaders continued to apply their past tac-
tics in utilizing personal contacts with leaders of other
nations in order to dispel "any false image of Singapore as
an anti-communist bastion and armed stronghold of British
imperialism".[112] In mid-1966, Mr Lee visited Cambodia,
Thailand, the United Arab Republic, Britain and Sweden,
where he expressed the view that the best way to maintain
peace and security in Southeast Asia would be for the major
powers to agree to leave Southeast Asia as a neutral area.
No major power would be allowed to use any of the smaller
countries in the area as an extension of its own might.   It

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[111] Speeches in the U.N. General Assembly, the 1962nd meet-
ing (Oct. 14, 1965) and the 1376th meeting (Nov. 12,
1965), The United Nations General Assembly Plenary
Session, 1965. p.86.

[112] Josey, op cit, P.440.

was also necessary to guarantee the integrity of each of
these smaller nations against encroachments by the oth-
ers.[113]

Later, he paid official visits to the Soviet Union,
Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary and Romania and signed trade pacts
with these communist countries. In September 1966, he vis-
ited India on his way to London for the Commonwealth Prime
Minister's Conference. The main objective of this visit was
to enlist India's support for a regional defense organiza-
tion for the maintenance of peace in this area.[114] Though no
agreement on defense was reached at this meeting, the two
Prime Ministers reiterated in their final communique their
faith in nonalignment and agreed that the countries of South
and Southeast Asia had to increase their economic coopera-
tion in order to raise their living standards and give
greater substance to their political independence.[115]

Perhaps the most striking example which might identify
Singapore as a nonaligned country was the invitation of
Singapore to the Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries
in Lusaka, Zambia, on September 8 to 10, 1970. This was the
first international conference of this kind to which
Singapore had ever been invited. To be invited to such an
international conference meant a recognition of a nation's

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[113] Ibid., P.476.

[114] Chan, op cit, P.189.

[115] Josey, op cit, P.502.

nonaligned status by other nonaligned nations. Thus, despite the British military presence on the island state, Singapore had been recognized by the majority of the Third World as a nonaligned nation.

In the U.N., besides supporting Beijing's representation, Singapore joined with many other Afro-Asian nonaligned countries to vote for such resolutions as anti-colonialism and anti-South African racial discrimination and apartheid policies. The delegation also voted for resolutions supporting the struggle of national liberation and independence in the developing areas. For instance, Singpore voted in 1965 for the resolution which condemned the policies of racial discrimination and segregation practised in Southern Rhodesia. Official policy also called on all states to refrain from rendering any assistance whatsoever to the minority regime and urged the member states to use all their powers against a unilateral declaration of independence made by the Smith regime.[116] In the same year, Singapore voted with 90 other countries for a resolution to extend until June 30, 1969, the mandate of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East.[117] She also joined with 29 other nations in a draft resolution expressing deep concern at the serious situation arising from colonial policies and foreign intervention by the U.K. in Oman. The resolu-

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[116] The U.N. Year Book, 1965, pp.130-131.

[117] Ibid., P.226.

tion, passed by the General Assembly on December 17, 1965, recognized the inalienable right of the people of the territory and called on the British to cease all repressive actions against the people, to withdraw its troops, to release political prisoners, to allow the return of political exiles, and to eliminate British domination in any form.[118]

In 1966, Singapore and 54 Afro-Asian nations submitted a draft resolution to the General Assembly, reaffirming the inalienable right of the people of Southwest Africa to self determination, freedom and independence, declaring that South Africa had failed to fulfill its obligation and that its mandate was therefore terminated, and recommending that a U.N. Administrating Authority should be set up to assume direct responsibility for the mandated territory.[119] Moreover, Singapore's representatives also took part in the U.N. debates on such issues as economic development and cooperation in the developing countries, the Middle Eastern situation, and Vietnam as well as such other issues as social, cultural and technological cooperation. Generally, they expressed their deep concern with international tensions and urged that all disputes should be solved by peaceful means. They urged all states to work for world peace

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[118] Ibid.

[119] U.N. General Assembly, 21st Session, Offical Records Annexes, Vol. 11, p.562.

through international cooperation.[120]

Mostly, Singapore's position in the U.N. was in line with that of the large nonaligned nations. However, she did not follow them in all issues. For example, Singapore was absent when the General Assembly voted on December 21, 1965 on the Resolution of economic sanction against South Africa's policies of apartheid.[121] She abstained on December 18, 1965 on the Resolution denouncing the violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the People of Tibet.[122] Another example was demonstrated on the Indo-Pakistan War in 1971. Singapore abstained on the resolution which called on India and Pakistan to bring about a ceasefire and withdraw their troops to their own borders.[123]

In his maiden speech in the 1962nd plenary meeting of the General Assembly on October 14, 1965, Singapore's permanent representative to the U.N. declared that Singapore's policy was one of nonalignment. He reiterated on November 12, 1965 that

> We do not wish to be drawn into alliances. But it does not mean that my country's nonalignment pol- icy will make it indifferent to basic issues of what is right and what is wrong.[124]

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[120] U.N. General Assembly, Official Records, 1965, Vol. 1, p.90.

[121] U.N. Year Book, 1965, Vol. 1, P.105.

[122] Ibid., pp.193-194.

[123] The Globe and Mail, Dec. 18, 1971, p.3.

[124] U.N. General Assembly, Official Records, 1965. Vol. 1,

Singapore's desire to pursue a policy of nonalignment was understandable. As Burton has suggested, post-war nationalism and anti-colonialism, and the pressing problems of economic underdevelopment, were the background circumstances in which nonalignment flourished.[125] Singapore had gone through the struggle of anti-colonialism and independence during the 1940s and 1950s. Nationalism was strong during this period. Since the economy of Singapore relied heavily upon her entrepot trade, it made Singapore dependent more upon her neighbours than other countries in Southeast Asia. The geographical position of Singapore as a centre between the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean had also great impact on Singapore in pursuing a policy of nonalignment. As the 1955 Afro-Asian Summit Conference was held in nearby Bandung, the Bandung Spirit had had a strong impact on the peoples of Singapore, since many of the Afro-Asian leaders had stopped over in this tiny island before or after the Conference. Moreover, Singapore recognized that those countries which decided to enter into alliances with the West or the East, had been facing increasingly a series of internal and external troubles and had to seek foreign assistance in order to maintain internal security. Singapore's leaders, who were quite familiar with these phenomena, had frequently maintained that a small country like Singapore should stay aside

P.68.

[125] For a detailed discussion, see J. Burton, International Relations, A General Theory, Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1965, pp.186-194.

from power conflicts so as to save the cost of involvement. Moreover, communist influence was still strong in Singapore, and as the majority of the population were sensitive to alignment, the persuasive alternative in foreign affairs was to pursue, at least at a declaratory level, a policy of nonalignment. This was why the Singapore government was in the past so keen to commit to such a policy.

However, such commitment had been demonstrated more in theory than in practice. In the next chapter, we shall discuss the role of the British military bases and the nature of the Five Power Defense Arrangement so as to assess Singapore's military link with its Western allies.

Chapter III

THE ROLE OF THE BRITISH MILITARY BASES AND THE
FIVE POWER DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT

British bases in Singapore were constructed in the 1930's. They suffered heavy damage during the Second World War and were subsequently reconstructed by the British. By the end of October 1971, Britain completed her military withdrawal and all of the base sites were transferred to the Singapore government. Since November 1, 1971, the external defense of Singapore has been covered by the Five Power Defense Arrangement. This chapter will discuss the role of the British bases in the past and the nature of the new Defense Arrangement so as to examine the military and economic contributions of the British bases to Singapore and the significance of the new Defense Arrangement.

3.1   THE ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL ROLE OF THE BRITISH BASES

The strategic importance of this small island became obvious shortly after the British signed the Naval Treaties with the United States and Japan in Washingon in 1922. The main treaty limited the building of battleships by Britain, the United States, and Japan to a ratio of 5:5:3. This Treaty was regarded as an agreement in favour of the Japanese position in the Pacific Ocean. According to N. Ryan,

> On paper this ratio appeared unequal. Japan in fact was able to concentrate her attention on the Far East whereas Britain and the United States had ships throughout the world. As part of the agreement, Britain agreed not to construct a naval base in Hong Kong or anywhere east of 110 degree longitude; the Americans said they would construct a base no nearer to Japan than Pearl Harbour in Hawaii; and the Japanese agreed not to build bases on any of the former German colonies.[126]

Ryan, a long-time British colonial officer in Malaya, observed that since Singapore was outside the area of limitation, it could house a naval base. Therefore Britain decided to begin the construction of the main British Far Eastern base there as soon as possible after the Washington decision.[127] The first sums of money were allocated in 1923 but the construction was slow at that time. The economic depression of the late 1920's and early 1930's affected the progress of base construction. However, the Japanese invasion of northeastern China in September 1931 forced the British government to reassess its military strength in the Far East and accelerate the construction of the Singapore base. Nevertheless, it was not until 1936, when the Japanese refused to renew the Washington Treaties, that the British colonial administration in Singapore was finally instructed to speed up the base construction. The base was finished not long before the outbreak of the Second World War and by that time S $500 million had been spent on it.

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[126] N. Ryan, The Making of Modern Malaysia and Singapore, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1969, P.188.

[127] Ibid.

However, as mentioned before, the base did not provide much protection as Britain, already committed in the European War, had only a few warships to put in it. By January 1942, Singapore had little chance of being able to prevent its capture after the sinking of the two British battleships, the Prince of Wales and the Repulse, then stationed in the Strait of Johore, north of Singapore.

At the end of the War, the British colonial administrations faced strong communist and nationalist movements in British dependencies in South and Southeast Asia. Two years later, it had to give up India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. Although Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo, Brunei and Hong Kong remained as British colonies, their colonial governments faced strong communist armed revolts in the Malayan-Singapore area from 1948 onward. Reconstruction of military bases in Singapore seemed necessary and the work was completed by the early 1950s.

In the late 1950s, the influence of communist-oriented leftist movements in this region had increased rapidly. In Singapore, the leftist PAP took over power from the right wing Lim Yew Hock government in 1959. In Malaya, the leftist Socialist Front, a coalition between the Labour Party (with mostly Chinese and Indian membership) and the Partai Ra'yat (the People's Party, with predominantly Malay membership), gained increasing support among the Chinese population in the cities and established some strongholds in the

Malay villages.   In Sarawak,   the United People's Party, which had already been penetrated by the communists,[128] started a national independence movement in 1960.   In order to deal with these increasing leftist pressures, Britain established her Far Eastern Military Command Headquarters in Singapore in 1962.

The military bases in Singapore played an important role in crushing the Malayan communist armed revolt between 1948 and 1960.[129] The usefulness and effectiveness of the bases had also been displayed during the Brunei revolt towards the end of 1962 and during the Indonesian military confrontation with Malaysia between 1963 and 1966.   Within the first few hours of the Brunei Revolt, the rebellion led by the pro-communist People's Party of Brunei had captured most of the local police stations.   Soon after the rebellion erupted, British troops stationed in Singapore were sent to Brunei and crushed the rebellion in a few weeks.   During the Indonesian confrontation,   Britain committed herself fully and without hesitation to the support of Malaysia. In fact, as D. Hawkins suggested, "despite the presence of three ill-prepared Malaysian battalions,   most of the fighting was being done by non-Malaysian troops,   mainly the British forces".[130] The total number of British servicemen killed in

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[128] Josey, op cit, P.208.

[129] For the British performance in this insurgent war, see Purcell's op cit, pp.56-70.

[130] D. Hawkins, "Britain and Malaysia - Another View: Was

Borneo (including Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah), 1963-1966, was sixty four while eighty nine were wounded.[131] During this 3-year period, Britain spent 5 million pounds a year in these operations against Indonesia. In the same period, Britain provided 22.5 million pounds to Malaysia in economic aid and another 12.7 million pounds in military aid.[132]

By June 1966, the number of British troops stationed in the Malaysian-Singapore area was 42,800 (including Gurkhas). According to Healey, Secretary of State for Defense in the Labour Government, the number of British troops (excluding the crews of the Far East Fleet) in Malaysia and Singapore by this date were as follows:[133] in Malaysia, there were 900 Royal Navy, 19,300 Army and 2,800 Royal Air Force; in Singapore, there were 2,500 Royal Navy, 9,100 Army and 8,200 Royal Air Force. If those servicemen stationed ashore and ships' companies on sea service in the Far East, together with both U.K. and locally entered civilians, were added to this figure, the total number was close to 80,000.[134]

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the Decision to Withdraw Entirely Voluntary or Was Britain Pushed a Little?" in Asian Survey, Vol. 9, July 1969, P.551.

[131] Statement on the Defense Estimates, London: H.M.S.O., 1968, P.10.

[132] Boyce, op cit, P.144.

[133] Ibid., P.143.

[134] Supplementary Statement on Defense Policy, 1967, London: H.M.S.O., 1967, P.5.

By the time that the British government decided to withdraw militarily from this region, Britain had two naval bases, three air bases, one army equipment store, and an army headquarters in Singapore. These bases located on different parts of the tiny island state, had a total surface area of 15,500 acres. The biggest naval base was located in Sembawang area, north and northeast of Singapore. It consisted of an area of four square miles, with a dockyard of 250 acres and 30 workshops. Another naval base was located at Loyang area, on the island's east coast. The three air bases were distributed in Changi, Seletar, and Tengah. The Seletar Air Base was affiliated with the Sembawang Naval Base. The army equipment store was located in the Alexandra-Pasir Panjang area with more than 40 workshops. The British Far Eastern Army Command Headquarters was located in Tanglin area, at the centre of the island. In addition, the British also used a small island called Pulau Blakang Mati for military training and recreational purposes.[135]

Until the separation of Singapore from Malaysia, the British bases in this region played a prominent role in the defense of Malaysia and Singapore. After Singapore became independent, the British continued to act as Malaysia's and Singapore's defense partner under the Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement.

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[135] Sin Chew Jit Poh, October 19, 1970, p.4.

3.2 MILITARY CONTRIBUTIONS OF BRITISH BASES TO SINGAPORE'S SECURITY SINCE INDEPENDENCE

The contribution of British bases to Singapore's security between 1965 and 1971 can be divided into two parts. First, they played an indirect role during the separation of Singapore from the Federation of Malaysia. Secondly, they helped Singapore to maintain her independence since 1965.

As mentioned in the past chapters, Singapore became independent largely because she was forced to do so, by way of being expelled by the Federal government of Malaysia. Neither the government nor the people of Singapore were well prepared for independence. As a matter of fact, several top leaders of the UMNO urged Tungku to take the following measures against Singapore in order to deal with the disputes between the Federal government in Kuala Lumpur and the state government in Singapore: to abolish the state Constitution of Singapore; to take over the Singapore government by the Federal authority; and to arrest Lee Kuan Yew and his principal colleagues.[136] Had all these measures been adopted by Tungku, there would have been a great danger to parliamentary democracy in Singapore as well as in Malaysia as a whole. The end result would probably have been the establishment of a government in exile led by the remaining PAP leaders in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, followed by chaos in Singapore and a constitutional crisis in Kuala Lumpur.[137]

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[136] Josey, op cit, P.415.

Representing a former colonial power which still maintained close economic and military relations with both Singapore and Malaysia, the British government, obviously, would not support the Kuala Lumpur government in the crisis. On the other hand, the Tungku's government seemed to be unable to predict exactly the reaction of the British government once the crisis occurred. It seemed that the Tungku, who was still in London until August 6, 1965, was reluctant to take the risk. Although British bases did not directly play a part in solving the crisis, the presence of the bases had an indirect impact on the final decision of the Malaysian Federal government as the British had apparently sided with Mr Lee Kuan Yew before and after separation. For instance, British newspaper reports and articles of the time had almost unanimous sympathy for Singapore. Britain had been accused, by Malaysia's Finance Minister in 1966, of "with-holding increased financial aid to Malaysia to try to force her to come to terms with Singapore".[138] Hence, it might be inferred that British bases in Singapore played a tacit, if not an explicit, role in solving the political crisis in August 1965. As D. Hawkins observed,

> Had the Singapore cabinet been less united, had the PAP government lost a vital by-election in July 1965, had British forces not been in Singapore, direct intervention might well have

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[137] Mr Lee Kuan Yew disclosed on August 14, 1965 that Phnom Penh was the place in mind for establishing a Singapore government in exile. Josey, op cit, P.420.

[138] Hawkins, op cit, P.554.

been tried with unthinkable consequences.[139]

On the second aspect, the British provided Singapore's principal military protection from the date of independence, until the Five Power Defense Arrangement came into force. Prior to September 1963, the responsibility for Singapore's defense was solely in the hands of Britain. During the Malaysian period (1963-1965), Singapore's security was protected by the Malaysian defense forces with British military support under the Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement.[140] The Separation Agreement between the Malaysian Federal government and the Singapore government provided that the government of Malaysia would provide sufficient assistance to Singapore on external defense.[141] Statements made by the British and Singapore leaders after independence indicated that British military commitments to this new state would remain unchanged until further arrangements were made between the two governments, although the Singapore government stressed that it had final authority over the future of the bases.[142] It was also understood that the

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[139] Ibid., P.553.

[140] According to the Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement, July 1963, the Agreement on External Defense and Mutual Assistance between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the Federation of Malaysia of October 12, 1957, would apply to all territories of Malaysia.

[141] Boyce, op cit, P.32.

[142] According to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the British Labour Government, "the legislation covering the separation of Singapore state specifies that the

Anglo-Malaysian Defense Arrangement would still apply to the Singapore area.[143]

Following the complete withdrawal of British bases in Singapore on October 31, 1971 and at the same time the end of the Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement, the external defense of Singapore was now covered by the Five Power Defense Arrangement which became effective on November 1, 1971. (The nature of this new Defense Arrangement will be discussed later).

After gaining independence, the Singapore government started to build its own national armed forces. At the beginning, there was only one battalion which had been established in the 1940s under British command and then transferred to the Singapore government upon independence. The second battalion of the Singapore People's Defense Force was established in early 1966 on a voluntary basis. In July 1967, when the British government announced its intention to withdraw completely its military forces from the Singapore-Malaysian area by mid-1970s, the process of

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Government of Singapore will permit the Government of the United Kingdom to make such use of these bases and facilities as the Government may consider necessary for the purpose of assisting in the defense of Singapore and Malaysia and for Commonwealth defense and for the preservation of peace in Southeast Asia". Boyce, op cit, pp.140-141.

[143] The Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement provided that it would not only cover the defense of Malaysia, but also the defense of Singapore and the security of British troops in Southeast Asia. Boyce, op cit, p.136.

Singapore's military expansion was accelerated and the first National Service Bill was passed later by the Singapore Parliament. Under the new National Service Act, all male citizens on reaching the age of eighteen had to serve actively in the military for a certain period of time. Service in the Armed forces was on a full-time basis, whereas services in the Vigilante Corps and the Police Special Constable Force were on a part-time basis. In addition, all those who entered government service and were under the age of thirty also had to serve in any of the above units on a part-time or full-time basis.

During the 1960's, the Singapore government moved a long way in its effort to create a modern defense force adequate to its security needs. By 1971, defense and internal security accounted for nearly 37% of Singapore's annual budget. By October 31, 1971, when Britain withdrew from the bases, Singapore had six infantry Battalions organized into two brigades, together with the supporting elements of artillery, engineers and armour. The navy and air force were still being organized.

The Singapore Defense Force was a young force which had little or no experience in practical combat. To compare with its counterparts in Malaysia and Indonesia, which had already had more than two decades of experience in actual warfare against communist guerrillas and rebellions, Singapore's armed forces, according to its Defense Minister,

were insufficient to defend Singapore against a determined assault.[144] Quantitatively, the total number of Singapore's armed forces was only a quarter of that of Malaysia and one-twentieth of that of Indonesia.[145] Strategically, Singapore was placed in a vulnerable position, even in a defensive war. In war time, there would be no distinction between "rear" and "front". There were two potential threats to Singapore's security, one from direct military conflicts between great powers and the other from its immediate neighbours. However, it possessed certain resources to avoid possible threat from its neighbours. One of the important resources was the British military commitment. If British military strength was not taken into account, there was a military imbalance in this region. Regarding the purposes of retaining the British military presence in the Singapore-Malaysian area, Hawkins suggested that there seemed to be only two valid reasons. The first was to maintain the indirect economic assistance (through employment and purchases) which the military presence involved. The second possible reason for staying was to deter Malaysia and Singapore from fighting each other. He said:

> A better case would be made for retaining a presence in Singapore to deter an attack from Malaysia than for keeping troops in Malaysia to defend it

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[144] The Mirror, Singapore: Ministry of Culture, August, 1970, P.25.

[145] Malaysia had 18 battalions of land forces and her naval and air forces were established since 1957. Indonesia had at least 300,000 troops in her land, naval and air forces.

against Singapore.[146]

The British bases in Singapore had in fact acted as a balancer in keeping the balance of power in this region. The presence of British military bases had considerable military value in the safeguarding of Singapore's independence and security. As mentioned above, one of the potential threats to Singapore's security might come from her neighbours. Singapore has two immediate neighbours, Malaysia and Indonesia. The Philippines and Thailand are quite far away from Singapore. Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore had been at one time or another hostile to each other. There were two kinds of possible opposition in this region. The first was between Indonesia on the one side and Malaysia and Singapore on the other, as it was during the Indonesian confrontation. The second was between Malaysia and Singapore before and after separation. In both instances, the scales were widely imbalanced. Thus, a third element had to be added on the weaker's scale so as to maintain the balance and to withhold the status quo for the stability of this region. This element was what Morgenthau called "the holder of the balance" or "the balancer". In this region, the "balance" was held by Britain which from 1963-65 had invested approximately 700 million pounds or 13 to 14% of her total overseas investments in Malaysia and Singapore.[147]

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[146] Hawkins, op cit, P.561.

[147] Lee Kuan Yew, 'A View of Britain and the world', The Mirror, Singapore: Ministry of Culture, November 15,

However, Britain's role as a balancer in this region had a special nature. As far as "balance of power" was concerned, she had to consistently put her weight on: (1) the Malaysian-Singapore side to deter Indonesia, and (2) the Singapore side to deter Malaysia. Hence, as long as Britain still retained her military presence there, Singapore would be in a favourable position.

3.3 THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE BRITISH MILITARY BASES

The contribution of the British bases to Singapore's economy was far-reaching. The construction of the bases in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s not only provided tens of thousands of jobs for local people but also stimulated economic prosperity.

As the contribution of the bases to Singapore's economy was never assessed in exact terms in past official records, we can only realize the importance of the bases in Singapore's economy in a negative sense, that is, to examine the economic effects of the British military withdrawal so as to realize the extent that the British had contributed to Singapore's economy.

According to K. Goh, then the Finance Minister, the economic effects of the British military withdrawal would mean "not only an increase in the number of unemployed people in

1971, p.20.

Singapore, but also a reduction of their expenditure". He considered that these effects in Singapore's economy would be "severe and protracted".[148] In terms of reduction in the local expenditure which the base facilities generated, the British spent S $281 million in 1961 and had almost doubled it (S $450 million) by 1966. These expenditures included not only payments to civilian and locally-enlisted personnel but also expenditures by British military personnel and their families. It should be noted that the total local expenditure of the British forces in 1966 amounted to no less than 14% of Singapore's gross domestic expenditure.[149] By the time of the complete withdrawal of the British, the total local expenditure of the British armed forces per annum were reduced to between S $5 to $10 million which would be used for the support of British forces under the new Five Power Defense Arrangement.[150]

Unemployment, according to Goh, had always been the central problem of Singapore; and the military withdrawal would obviously make it even more acute than it had ever been before.[151] If the effect of the British military withdrawal was not taken into account, the number of unemployed in 1967 amounted to 52,630 against a working population of 524,025.

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[148] K. Goh, Two Years of Economic Progress, Singapore: Ministry of Culture, P.7.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Sin Chew Jit Poh, October 29, 1971, p.6.

[151] Goh, op cit, P.8.

This gave an unemployment rate of 9.1%.[152] In addition, there were 25,000 or so teenagers entering the labour market each year. In April 1968, when the British started to discharge local civilians and locally enlisted personnel, there were about 30,000 local people working in the bases, nearly 75% of whom were Singapore citizens.[153] Each year (until 1971), there were 12,000 base employees who lost their jobs. In the first year, 1969, and discounting job creation, if the number of those already unemployed (52630) and that of those teenagers who would enter to the labour market (25,000) were added to the number of the base employees who would be discharged each year, the total number of people looking for jobs would be 89,630, or approximately 17% of the total working population.[154] In terms of job creation, between 1963 and 1967, there was only an annual net increase of 5,000 to 6,000 jobs each year.[155] If this were used as the projected figure for 1969, then there would be roughly 84,000 unemployed.

The reduction of British military expenditure and the increase in the number of unemployed persons were direct effects of the British military withdrawal. There were also several indirect effects which had to be taken into account.

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[152] Ibid., P.11.

[153] Sin Chew Jit Poh, May 7, 1971, p.6.

[154] Ibid., Nov. 8, 1969, p.3.

[155] Goh, op cit, P.16.

For instance, there were tens of thousands of people who engaged in business and were indirectly employed in support of British base facilities. People like truck drivers, bus drivers, shop-keepers, house caretakers, and launderers, faced financial difficulties when the British military withdrawal was carried out. Furthermore, as a result of the withdrawal of the bases, the government, already engaged in industrial expansion, had to pay major attention to solve the problems created by the effects of the British military withdrawal, in the military as well as economic sphere. In addition, the confidence of foreign investment would also become a major problem if there was no other reliable military arrangement to replace the British role.

As mentioned above, whether or not the new Five Power Defense Arrangement could effectively provide sufficient assistance to Singapore's security, the burden of defence would largely rest on Singapore's Defense Forces. Since 1968, the amount of Singapore's military spending had been drastically increased. In 1971, one dollar out of three in the annual budget was going to defense and internal security. The burden was so heavy that the Singapore government had to reduce its expenditures on social welfare and cultural affairs.

Last but not least, since an increase in the number of unemployed persons as a result of the British military withdrawal was expected and did occur, the Singapore government

took a series of strict measures against non-Singapore citizens, mostly from Malaysia. For instance, restrictions on the entry of Malaysian citizens who wished to come to Singapore to look for jobs was imposed by the Singapore government. Work permits were required for those who already worked in Singapore. Malaysian citizens who worked in Singapore without work permits were arrested and deported by the Singapore government. Temporary re-entry passports were needed for Singapore citizens who wished to go to Malaysia. On the other hand, the Malaysian government had taken similar measures against the Singaporeans. All these had damaged Singapore-Malaysian relations.[156] In sum, the economic contributions of the British bases had far- reaching effects on Singapore's economy.

3.4 THE FIVE POWER DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT

The Defense Arrangement of five Commonwealth countries - Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore - was a confirmation of the continuing presence of British, Australian and New Zealand's troops, mainly of air and naval forces, in the Singapore-Malaysian area, although on a relatively smaller scale. For the past decade, the Royal Australian Air and Naval Forces and the Royal New Zealand Air and Naval Forces had been stationed in this area. Their

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[156] T.S. Lau, "Malaysia-Singapore Relations: Crisis of Adjustment, 1965-1968", in Journal of Southeast Asian History, March 1969, p.33.

Air Forces, together with the British Royal Air Force, were part of the Commonwealth Far East Air Force. Their naval ships were attached to and operated with the British Far Eastern Fleet.[157] During the Indonesian confrontation, both the Australian and New Zealand forces were also engaged in the fighting in North Borneo and shared the contribution of the British troops in the defense of Eastern Malaysia. After the British government decided to withdraw its bases in the Singapore-Malaysian region, negotiations for a new five power defense arrangement were initiated and agreement was reached at the end of the five-nation defense talks held in London on April 15 and 16, 1971. The new defense arrangement came into force on November 1, 1971.

The basic nature of the Defense Arrangement was "consultation" which had implications for the military alignment of the countries concerned. In the final communique of the London Defense Talks, the Defense Ministers of Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore declared that

> In the event of any form of armed attack externally organized or supported or the threat of such attack against Malaysia or Singapore, the governments of the five nations would immediately consult together for the purpose of deciding what measures would be taken jointly or separately in relation to such attack or threat.[158]

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[157] Statement on the Defense Estimates, 1968, London: H.M.S.O.,1968, P.11.

[158] "New Five Power Defense Arrangement", in The Mirror, Singapore: Ministry of Culture, May 3, 1971, p.15.

There were at least three things which the Defense
Ministers did not clarify in the communique. First, there
was no provision for future military action, jointly or
separately, even after consultation. In other words, the
use of force was flexible and was up to individual govern-
ment to decide. Second, the ministers agreed that "the
defense of Malaysia and Singapore was indivisible". This
could create confusion in the future. For example, if
Malaysia regarded Singapore as a threat to Malaysia's secur-
ity, and requested the other three nations to take a joint
action in relation to such threat, what should these nations
do in such a delicate situation? To inject a hypothetical
proposition, if Singapore invited the USSR to build a mili-
tary base there, whereas Malaysia considered the Russians
move as a threat to Malaysia's security and inferred that it
was a threat to both Malaysia and Singapore - because the
defense of Malaysia and Singapore was indivisible - what
should Britain, Australia and New Zealand do? Obviously,
Singapore would not agree with Malaysia's view. Third, the
communique also did not mention another possibility; that
is, a possible attack or threat of attack by Singapore
against Malaysia, or vice versa. Apparently, the Defense
Ministers had assumed that both Malaysia and Singapore would
never attack or constitute a threat of such attack against
one another. However, military conflict between Malaysia
and Singapore in the future might be possible, since rela-
tions between the Kuala Lumpur and the Singapore governments

were quite unfriendly for many years, especially during the early years of separation.[159]

According to the communique, the British, New Zealand and Australian forces would continue to be stationed in the Malaysian-Singapore area after the end of 1971. There would be an Air Defense Council, comprising one senior representative of each of the five nations, to be responsible for the functioning of the integrated air defense system, and to provide direction to the Commander of the integrated air defense system on matters affecting the organization, training and development and operational readiness of the system. A five-power naval advisory working group had been set up to deal with naval affairs. The Defense Ministers also decided to set up a joint consultative council to provide a forum for regular consultation at the senior official level on matters relating to the defense arrangement.[160]

Although the five Power Defense Arrangement came into force on November 1, 1971, the Five Power Air Defense System began functioning on September 1, 1970. Under this system, the air forces of Malaysia and Singapore would still remain under separate command, whereas the British, Australian and New Zealand forces would put under the command of ANZUK (Australian-New Zealand-United Kingdom) Joint Forces

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[159] Lau, op. cit, p.17.

[160] The Mirror, Singapore: Ministry of Culture, May 3, 1971, p.22.

Headquarters. The first Commander-in-Chief was an Australian general.[161] Under the new arrangement, there was to be 7,000 ANZUK troops stationed in the Malaysian-Singapore area.

Under the Five Power Defense Arrangement, there would be no particular identification of a "potential enemy". No country had been regarded as a real target which might extend a threat to this area.[162] However, Mr Lee Kuan Yew implied that the Five Power Defense Arrangement would become "a powerful cornerstone of Australia, New Zealand and American security arrangements". He thought that "the Americans had depended upon the British and Britain's allies to look after the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean and the Straits of Malacca". Hence, he considered that "the transition between this small ANZUK presence and some future arrangement would depend largely upon whether the American regained their self-confidence and took an interest in the outer world beyond the immediate waters washing her shores".[163] According to his analysis, the Five Power Defense Arrangement was in fact a military alliance which was to defend the Malaysian-Singapore area under the system of Western defense. Mr Lee also considered that the main purpose for stationing British, Australian and New Zealand

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[161] Sin Chew Jit Poh, October 29, 1971, p.11.

[162] Ibid., October 17, 1971, p.6.

[163] The Mirror, Singapore: Ministry of Culture, November 29, 1971, p.10.

troops in Singapore and Malaysia was for psychological rea-

sons. He said:

> I believe in this thing called the psychological
> impact more than the realities of the five-power.
> And the psychological impact of a small ANZUK
> presence there will deter any adventurism.   The
> real danger is this gradual build-up of guerrilla
> insurgency which was a technique which was pursued
> in South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand is
> now under pressure. And if they go under, then it
> will go south into peninsula Malaya.   And, in
> fact, in that situation, the troops won't make
> much of a difference.   But it's going to take a
> long time for them to come down, even if they do.
> But, in the meanwhile, acts of piracy, acts of
> adventurism are less likely to happen.[164]

This meant that the purpose of the five Power Defense

Arrangement was to provide Singapore and Malaysia with pro-

tection from a direct military threat as well as from commu-

nist infiltration.   It meant that Singapore's leaders had

foreseen that the tragedy of Indochina might in the future

occur in this area and Singapore might now prepare for the

future.   Singapore's joining the new Defense Arrangement

indicated that the Singapore government was dependent upon

Britain, Australia and New Zealand to deter a threat to its

security.

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[164] <u>Ibid</u>.

3.5   CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis, the following conclusions may be drawn:

(1)   Singapore became a British military base in the 1930s.   The bases did little to defend Singapore during the Second World War, but they did make a profound military and economic contribution to the security and stability of the Malaysian-Singapore area during the post-war period.

(2) During the Malaysian period (1963-1965), Britain was a Malaysian defense partner under the Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement which provided the continued presence of British bases in Singapore.

(3)   After Singapore became independent, the Anglo-Malaysian Defense Arrangement still covered the defense of Singapore.

(4) The new Defense Arrangement was viewed by Singapore's leaders as a "powerful cornerstone of Australia, New Zealand and American security arrangements" and as a military arrangement to look after the Straits of Malacca on which the Americans had placed some importance.   Its purpose was to provide Singapore and Malaysia with protection from a direct military threat as well as from communist infiltration.

In conclusion, the British military bases played an important role in maintaining peace and security in this region. Their military and economic contributions to Singapore were far-reaching. The new defense arrangement was taking the place of the British military role in protecting the Singapore-Malaysian area. The next chapter will examine the validity of the proposition as set for this study.

Chapter IV

NONALIGNMENT: REAL OR COMPROMISED?

This chapter will examine the validity of the proposition
that Singapore advertised itself as a nonaligned state, but
that its capacity to implement and to impress others that it
was nonaligned was inhibited by the presence of foreign mil-
itary forces.   Compared with neutrality, nonalignment is a
more descriptive term,   since it corresponds with what its
advocates say they are doing,   even if their policies reveal
inconsistencies.[165] In other words, a nation may describe
its policy as nonaligned while in practice it may be aligned
with great powers.   Thus nonalignment is not an absolute
term.   It refers to a strategy of the nonaligned nations in
relations with major powers of the two blocs: namely, aloof
from bloc conflicts,   free from military alliances,   and
refraining from siding diplomatically with any bloc.

In order to test the validity of this proposition, we
must answer two important questions.   The first was whether
the presence   of the British   bases and   the Defense
Arrangement were a part of the Western alliance system
against international communism in Southeast Asia.   If it
was so, Singapore should be regarded as a Western aligned

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[165] R. Rothstein, Alliances and Small Powers, N.Y.: Columbia
University Press, 1968, P.245.

country.   Then   a second question arises: Was Singapore's
foreign policy compromised through such a military link?   In
answering   these   questions,   we have   to   examine   various
aspects of Singapore's external   policies.   Several indica-
tors will be dealt with.   First, did Singapore have any mil-
itary alignment   with any   great powers?   As a   nonaligned
country,   it should not have any military alignment with any
country.   Second,   did Singapore have   any linkage with the
Southeast Asian   Treaty Organization   (SEATO)?   As   a nona-
ligned   country,   it   should not   have any   linkage with   it
because SEATO was mainly a   pro-Western organization to com-
bat communism in Asia.   Third, did Singapore support or try
to persuade the British military to stay in Singapore?   As a
nonaligned country,   it should   not permit   or ask   foreign
troops to stay in its territory.   Fourth, did Singapore sup-
port the United States in the Vietnam War?   As a nonaligned
country,   it should not have had any involvement in the East
West dispute.   Fifth,   did Singapore support neutralization
of Southeast Asia?   As a nonaligned state, it should support
and try to carry out the proposal.   Finally,   did Singapore
fulfill the criteria   set by the First   Summit Conference of
Nonaligned Countries?   As a   nonaligned country,   it should
satisfy all the criteria and conditions.   Finally, the exam-
ination should   include Singapore's   votes and   behaviour in
the U.N., its diplomatic recognition patterns and diplomatic
visits.

4.1   MILITARY ALIGNMENT

Alliances, according to Morgenthau, are a necessary function of the balance of power operating within a multiple state system.   He states that

> Nations A and B, competing with each other, have 3 choices in order to maintain and improve their relative power positions. They can increase their own power; they can add to their own power the power of other nations; or they can withhold the power of other nations from the adversary.   When they choose the first choice, they embark upon an armaments race.   When they choose the second and third alternatives, they pursue a policy of alliances.[166]

Were the Anglo-Singapore military relations a type of "second choice" for Singapore as described by Morgenthau?   If the answer is positive, then Singapore indeed pursued a policy of alliances.

At the time of independence, Singapore faced the confrontation of Indonesia and a strong potential threat to her security from Malaysia.   The local communists also maintained a highly organized underground network in Singapore. Singapore's small, inadequately equipped military could not cope with these pressures.   Traditionally, Singapore's defense and security had been based on British military protection.   During the colonial period, Singapore was protected directly by the British colonial government and also by the organization of ANZAM (Australia, New Zealand and Malaya).   The coordinating arm of ANZAM was the ANZAM

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[166] H. Morgenthau, _Politics Among Nations_, N.Y.: Alfred Knopt, 1968, P.175.

Defense Committee and the Chiefs of Staff Committee of Britain, Australia and New Zealand. During the Malaysian period, the Anglo-Malaysian Defense Agreement (AMDA) also covered the defense of Singapore. After independence, Singapore's security was still protected by the AMDA. In 1971, a new defense agreement was reached. In the new Five Power Defense Arrangement, Singapore aligned militarily with Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia. Thus Singapore added to her own power the power of Britain by permitting the continuing presence of the British bases.

From Singapore's independence in 1965 until 1971, the AMDA covered the defense of Singapore. The formal adjustments to Singapore's status as a defense partner were embodied in Article V of the Separation Agreement.[167] In paragraph 2 of the Article, Malaysia agreed to give "reasonable and adequate" assistance for the external defense of Singapore on the basis of a reasonable and adequate contribution by Singapore's own armed forces for the same purpose. Paragraph 3 allowed Malaysia to retain bases and other facilities used by its military forces within Singapore and to use such bases and facilities for the purpose of external defense. These two paragraphs formalized "the concept of the indivisibility" of Malaysia-Singapore defense. This was reinforced by paragraph 4 in which both governments pledged to refrain from entering into any treaty or agreement with a

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[167] "Separation Agreement", in State of Singapore Government Gazette, Vol. VII, Aug. 9, 1965, p.16.

foreign country detrimental to the independence and defense of either government. The mutuality of their defense interests was institutionalised by a Joint Defense Council for the purposes of external defense and mutual assistance.

Article V preserved the defense *status quo* between Malaysia and Singapore which had provided the original strategic basis for the military assistance rendered by the ANZAM partners within the extended AMDA while nevertheless adjusting to Singapore's new status.[168] The status quo was maintained by Annex B of the Separation Agreement which stipulated that "any treaty or agreement entered into before Malaysia Day between Malaysia and another country would, where it applied to Singapore, be deemed a treaty or agreement between Singapore and that country". With AMDA in mind, Annex B further stated that Singapore would continue to grant Britain the right to maintain the bases and facilities occupied by British service authorities and would permit use of these bases and facilities for the "purpose of assisting in the defense and for the preservation of peace in Southeast Asia".[169] This appeared to preserve a British interest in the use of the Singapore bases within the SEATO context. Britain's position was expressed in a statement issued after discussions on 15 August at Culdrose. The

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[168] K. Chin, *The Defense of Malaysia and Singapore*, Singapore: University of Singapore Press, 1984, P. 108.

[169] "Separation Agreement", in *State of Singapore Government Gazette*, Vol. VII, Aug. 9, 1965, p.16.

statement acknowledged that the Malaysia-Singapore declaration that "facilities accorded to British forces would be unchanged", provided an assurance that "we should be able to continue to assist both countries in their external defense".[170] Hasluck, then Australian Defense Minister, indicated in Parliament on 18 August 1965 that the essential features of the situation which provided the context to Australia's association with the extended AMDA still existed. In Hasluck's opinion, this constant factor was reinforced by the existing system of "combined defense". On 17 August, Malaysia and Singapore announced the establishment of a Combined Defense Council for their common defense as provided for in paragraph 1 of Article V.

The doctrine of indivisibility had not been affirmed merely for the consumption of the external powers.[171] According to Chin, apart from the fact that Malaysia's external defense was still dependent on the British presence which was centred on Singapore, neither state's defense could be seen in complete isolation from the other. He contended that if Singapore became a party to action that jeopardized Malaysian security, it would be placed in a position where its own security would be threatened. In this sense, Malaysia could no more be defended without Singapore than Singapore could be defended without Malaysia. In short,

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[170] Quoted in Chin, op cit, P.109.

[171] Ibid., P.111.

continuity was emphasized in that part of the Separation
Agreement extending British commitments to Singapore after
1965. Separation left intact AMDA's pre-existing structure.
Thus, even after independence, Singapore aligned with
Britain and Malaysia militarily through the Separation
Agreement and the AMDA.

In the above analysis, the AMDA covered the defense of
Singapore after separation in 1965. In this Agreement, it
was stated that

> In the event of an armed attack or a threat of
> armed attack against any of the territories or
> forces of the Federation Malaysia or any of the
> territories or protectorates of the U.K. in the
> Far East, the governments of Malaysia and of the
> U.K. would consult together on the measures to be
> taken jointly or separately to enlist the fullest
> cooperation between them for the purpose of meet-
> ing the situation effectively.[172]

The key word here was "consultation". Did the provision of
"consultation" distinguish the Anglo-Malaysian military
relations from a military alliance? It is doubtful that
there was much difference. As K. Holsti has pointed out,
"some alliance treaties only spelled out vaguely the type of
response the treaty partners would make". For instance, the
ANZUS pact which tied Australia, New Zealand and the United
States into a defense alliance system provided only that
each party would "act to meet the danger in accordance with
its constitutional processes". This treaty contained no
precise military commitments, nor did it prescribe any

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[172] Boyce, op cit, P.134.

course of action to which the parties committed themselves if one of them was attacked. Similarly, the Japanese-American security treaty of 1960 provided only for "consultations" between the parties if Japan was attacked.[173] Neither of these provisions disqualified the ANZUS pact nor the Japanese-American security treaty as an alliance treaty. Hence, the provision of "consultation" for future actions in the AMDA did not disqualify it as a military alliance since the Agreement provided mutual military assistance when necessary.[174] In summary, the AMDA was a military alliance. Since Singapore was included in the AMDA as a defense partner, Singapore did engage in military alliance with Britain and Malaysia after independence.

After independence, Singapore not only permitted the British government to maintain and use its military bases but also tried to keep the British military presence there for self defense. It is certain that the Singapore government indeed pursued an alliance policy. In June 1967, with the imminent announcement of a final withdrawal date, Lee Kuan Yew and the Prime Ministers of Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand arrived in London to discuss the matter. Lee himself admitted, following discussions on 27 June, that Singapore could only hope to influence the British decision

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[173] Holsti, op cit, P.113.

[174] J. Burton had listed Malaysia in the category of Western aligned countries. See Burton, op cit, pp.89-100.

marginally.[175] There was no doubt that Lee wanted to persuade his British counterpart to change the withdrawal decision or to at least delay a complete withdrawal. By October, when Lee arrived for further discussions in London, he was still hoping for a token British force in Singapore by 1975. He envisaged some British personnel remaining to operate the early warning system, and the basing of amphibious forces being based closer to Singapore than to Australia.[176] In January 1968, Commonwealth Secretary Thomson's visit provoked a sharp response from Lee who threatened retaliation including the removal of Singapore's sterling reserves if British forces were withdrawn by 1970. Lee said that he regarded the withdrawal timetable as final and that Singapore had since geared all its economic and military planning to cope with the withdrawal terminating in the mid 70s.[177] According to Thompson, there could be no reversal of the July announcement on withdrawal by the mid 70s. Nor did Wilson mention any changes when they met in December 1967. Lee bluntly refused to accept Thompson's proposals and, in an attempt to reverse the British decision, decided to see Wilson personally. Lee counter proposed a "NATO-type" arrangement whereby Malaysia and Singapore would provide the ground elements, Australia and New Zealand the support units and the British, perhaps, the

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[175] Strait Times, June 28, 1967, p.6.

[176] The Times, Nov. 10, 1967, p.10.

[177] Strait Times, Jan. 9, 1968, p.7.

commander-in-chief.[178] Lee went to London once more in 1968. In London, he emphasized the need for adequate defense against "a rapacious piratical attack" and sufficient time to "develop muscles of my own" so as to assure investors of continuing security.[179] In summary, all the above evidence shows that Lee not only permitted the British military presence in Singapore, but also tried to insist on the continued presence of the British military in Singapore. There was no doubt that Lee wished the British to stay. As he put it, "it so happened that I could not survive without the bases so I was as keen about the bases as I was keen about the survival of my countrymen".[180]

The nature of the Five Power Defense Arrangement was similar to that of the AMDA, with its membership extended to five nations. Singapore was adjusting to changed circumstances. It tended to view regional stability as a function of the involvement of the great powers in the region, rather than as a function of their exclusion.[181] In Singapore's conception of a balance of power system, the five-power arrangements were relevant since they institutionalized a certain sphere of Commonwealth interest. The three external powers could also provide a counterweight to Malaysia. They

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[178] Strait Times, Jan. 10, 1968, p.9.

[179] The Times, Jan. 15, 1968, p.12.

[180] New Statesman, 20 Aug. 1965, p.16.

[181] Chin, op cit, P.174.

agreed to establish an air defense council responsible for the functioning of the Integrated Air Defense System (IADS). In naval and ground operations, the five powers would effectively function as three: Malaysia, Singapore and the combined ANZUK forces. The external forces would have a single command, and the air component would also be subject to a five-power command. The shift from the AMDA to the Five Power Defense Arrangement had accompanied the transition of Malaysia and Singapore from dependence on Britain to their de facto partnership with the external powers.[182] The fact that Britain, Australia and New Zealand still stationed their armed forces in the Singapore-Malaysia area was sufficient to indicate that this defense arrangement was an extension of the AMDA, and that it was a military alliance.

It should be noted that the purpose of each partner to enter this new alliance was not the same. For instance, Singapore wished to preserve a minimum presence of the British, Australian and New Zealand forces so as to maintain a power balance in this region and to prevent any possible threat to its security from its neighbours. At the same time it wanted to regain confidence in its economic development after the withdrawal of the British bases. For the British, the new alliance would reduce their heavy burden on overseas military expenditure and at the same time permit continuation of their military presence in the

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[182] Ibid., P.178.

Singapore-Malaysian area so as to protect its economic interests. Although the threat of security in this area was not imminent to Australia and New Zealand, both countries were taking a greater interest there. By joining the new defense arrangement, they hoped to increase their influence in this region. For the Malaysians, the defense arrangement was considered an extension of the Anglo-Malaysian alliance designed to protect them from communism and any threat to Malaysia's security. There was another factor which made the Five Power Defense Arrangement possible. As Singapore and Malaysia had expressed that they had no desire to ally themselves with the United States, the only possible alternative of creating a Western alliance was to bring Britain, Australia and New Zealand into the new military pact.

Given that Singapore was an aligned country with military links with Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia, were the military links between Singapore and Britain and the Five Power Defense Arrangement a part of the Western alliance system against international communism in Southeast Asia? This question was largely related to U.S. Asian strategy. The basic rationale for American involvement in Southeast Asia in the post-war period - what later came to be called the Domino Theory - was first clearly enunciated by the U.S. National Security Council in February 1950, when it decided to extend military aid to the French in Indochina. The council said

> It is important to U.S. security interests, that all practicable measures be taken to prevent futher communist expansion in Southeast Asia. Indochina is a key area and is under immediate threat. The neighbouring countries of Thailand and Burma could be expected to fall under communist domination if Indochina is controlled by a communist government. The balance of Southeast Asia would then be in grave hazard.[183]

Concerning the importance of Malaya and Indonesia, a Statement of Policy by the same Council stated in early 1952 that

> Southeast Asia, especially Malaya and Indonesia, is the principal world source of natural rubber and tin, and a producer of petroleum and other strategically important commodities. The loss of Southeast Asia, especially Malaya and Indonesia, could result in such economic and political pressures in Japan as to make it extremely difficult to prevent Japan's eventual accomodation to communism.[184]

The Council concluded that communist domination of all Southeast Asia would seriously endanger short term American security interests. The security risk would escalate in the longer term.

In the 1960s, a considerable number of top American officers accepted the Domino Theory - that all of the countries of Southeast Asia, from Cambodia to Malaysia, would tumble automatically into the communist camp if the linchpin, South Vietnam, were knocked out, and that the U.S.'s position in the rest of the Far East, from Indonesia through the Philippines to Japan and Korea, would also be irrevocably

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[183] The Washington Post, Feb.9, 1950, p.20.

[184] Ibid., pp.27-28.

harmed.[185] As Mr Nixon maintained in 1967 "whatever one might think of the domino theory, it was beyond question that without the American commitment in Vietnam, Asia would be a far different place".[186] However, he considered that "the central pattern of the future in U.S.- Asian relations might be American support for Asian initiatives". In other words, he contended, "to ensure that a U.S. response would be forthcoming, if needed, machinery might be created that was capable of meeting two conditions: (a) a collective effort by the nations of the region to contain the threat by themselves; and , if that effort failed, (b) a collective request to the U.S. for assistance".[187]

The formation of the Five Power Defense Arrangement, coincidently if not purposely, suited the American inter-ests. Britain was a founding member of SEATO. She was a traditional ally of the United States, although both have refrained from concluding a formal bilateral alliance with each other. Yet, as Morgenthau observed,

> from the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 to the attack of Pearl Harbour in 1941, they had acted, at least in relation to the other European nations, as if they were allied.[188]

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[185] Ibid., P.254.

[186] R. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam", in Foreign Affairs, October, 1967, P.26.

[187] Ibid., P.115.

[188] Morgenthau, op cit, P.175.

Both Australia and New Zealand were also founding members of SEATO and both concluded the ANZUS pact with the U.S.. According to Teune and Synnestvedt's finding, Britain, Australia and New Zealand were respectively the second, third and fourth "most aligned" countries with the U.S. in rank order.[189] According to the AMDA and the Separation Agreement, the British bases would not only be used for the defense of Singapore, but also for the defense of Malaysia, for Commonwealth defense and for "the preservation of peace in Southeast Asia". Coincidently, "the preservation of peace in Southeast Asia" was also the main purpose of the SEATO in which Britain and her two Commonwealth partners, Australia and New Zealand were founding members.

Casey, then Australian External Affairs Minister, indicated that the Australians would still be part of SEATO's strategic reserve.[190] Since Malaya was the one place with Australian and New Zealand forces, this coordinated shift in emphasis enhanced perceptions of the significance of a SEATO-oriented Malaya. The New Zealand External Affairs and Defense Minister stated that their Malayan-based battalion would play "a fine brigade role in the case of communist aggression anywhere in the area".[191] Menzies, then

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[189] Teune and Synnestvedt, in Friedman (ed.), <u>Alliances in International Politics</u>, Boston: Ally and Bacon Inc., p.324.

[190] <u>The Times</u>, March 20,1956, p.8.

[191] Quoted in Chin, <u>op cit</u>, P.30.

Australian Prime Minister, in turn forthrightly declared that Australian forces deployed in Malaya would be "constantly related to SEATO defense".[192] Menzies' remarks reflected attempts to demonstrate Australia's good faith in SEATO in containing communism in the region. Article III of the AMDA reflected the wider strategic interests of the Commonwealth partners by stating that in return for the U.K.'s assistance in external defense (Article I) and in the training and development of the Federation's armed forces (Article II), the Federation would grant the U.K. the right to maintain in Malaya such naval, land and air forces including a Commonwealth Strategic Reserve for the fulfilment of Commonwealth and international obligations.[193] To the ANZAM partners, these "obligations" obviously referred to the SEATO commitments. Thus there was a *de facto* Malaysian and Singapore association with SEATO. In 1958, the Tungku had in fact admitted an "indirect SEATO link", but chose to focus on the area of commitment in which Malaya would be involved if one of the British Far East dependencies (such as Singapore) were attacked because of British involvement in a SEATO war.[194]

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[192] Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, vol. 16, Sept.19,.1957, p.52.

[193] Quoted in Chin, op cit, P.32.

[194] Malayan Legislative Council Debates, Vol. 2, Dec.11,1958, p.32.

Singapore's strategic importance to the ANZAM partners was enhanced after AMDA was formed. Singapore provided the loophole through which units of the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve could be redeployed for SEATO purposes. The improving counter-insurgency situation in Malaya led, in early 1959, to a shift in the emphasis of the Commonwealth Reserve's role towards garrison duties. As a strategic reserve, its SEATO connections became even more discernible. Indeed at SEATO's founding conference, Britain pressed strongly for the siting of SEATO headquarters in Singapore as opposed to the Philippines's preference for Manila.[195] Singapore's strategic importance gave Britain a special interest in the security of the bases there - an interest reinforced by Singapore's internal unrest of the mid-50s when communist agitation intensified along a broad front. As S. Lloyd, then the Foreign Secretary of Britain, said at the time: "We need Singapore now more than ever".[196]

The deployment of the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve (CSR) in anti-terrorist operations in Malaya were stationed under the terms of AMDA. From the ANZAM's point of view, they generally tended to draw a SEATO connection. The British were looking for a suitable site for training a strategic reserve. Following an observation tour of North

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[195] G, Modelski (ed.), SEATO, Canberra: Cheshire Pty Ltd., 1962, P. 107.

[196] Quoted by A. Marshall, Singapore Legislative Assembly Debates, vol.1, June 6, 1959, p.28.

Borneo in early 1959 and discussions between the British Far East Land Forces and the North Borneo government, the vast undulating country in the Kota Belud district was confirmed as a "training area for British army units stationed in Malaya and Singapore".[197] The first SEATO amphibious exercises involving ANZAM and U.S. forces was conducted in June 1959 in Kota Belud. In 1961, SEATO exercises were again held near Kota Belud. The extension to the Butterworth runway and the reinforcement of the base by more Australian jet bombers and fighters fitted into the SEATO oriented forward defense postures of Australia and New Zealand. As the Commanding Officer of Canberra RAAF rather cautiously told Penang Rotarians in March 1959, Australian air forces in Butterworth were in immediate readiness to fulfil SEATO obligations.[198]

The Laos crisis in April 1961 amply demonstrated the significance of AMDA's Article III, which was deemed to provide "the loophole of technical withdrawal" for the CSR's redeployment from Singapore at short notice for SEATO purposes. Similarly, during a further Laos crisis in May 1962, CSR air detachments were dispatched to Thailand which was threatened by the proximity of communist forces and their operations in neighbouring Laos. AMDA's Article VIII in effect linked Malaya indirectly with SEATO. It could operate because

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[197] Colony of North Borneo, Annual Report 1958, P.1.
[198] Strait Times, March 12, 1959, p.9.

Britain retained control over the Singapore bases. According to Chin, Singapore was, in the general public view, though not in a strict technical sense, a "SEATO base".[199] New Zealand's Defense Review clearly mentioned SEATO as one area "of primary strategic interest" and declared that the ground elements of the CSR would assume "the role which that implies – that of a contribution to a standing force ready to counter communist aggression in Southeast Asia".[200] Indeed, the "international obligations" which the CSR was to fulfil were then sufficient to give Malaya and Singapore a SEATO association. Singapore was a Western aligned country. Hence, it was beyond doubt that the British-Malaysian-Singapore military link and then the Five Power Defense Arrangement were coincident with the U.S. Asian alliance policy and therefore, they were a part of the Western alliance system against international communism in Southeast Asia. Thus, the U.S.'s three allies, Britain, Australia and New Zealand, were taking the U.S. position as protectors for Singapore-Malaysia security.

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[199] Chin, op cit, P.53.

[200] "Review of Defense Policy, 1961", in New Zealand Annual Journal of the House of Representatives, Vol. 1, pp.4-6.

4.2   NEUTRALITY IN QUESTION

In reality,   there were few instances which had indicated that Singapore was nonaligned in the Cold War context.   Its official declaration of pursuing a nonaligned foreign policy and its   attendence of the   Summit Conference   of Nonaligned Countries,   could only be counted as superficial commitments to   nonalignment.   Other examples,   such   as   accusations directed against   the British   and the   Amercians,   did   not affect   Singapore's relations   with Britain   and the   United States.   Moreover,   Singapore's trade   and diplomatic rela- tions with communist countries did not particularly indicate that she was nonaligned, since many of the aligned countries had also relations with the communist countries.   The previ- ous section indicated that,   militarily,   Singapore aligned with the West.   In this   section,   the discussion will deal with Singapore's   policy and   attitudes on   Cold War   issues related to Singapore's security and national interests.   In these terms as well, the argument will be that Singapore was in fact not neutral at all   but,   instead,   aligned with the West.

After gaining admission to the U.N.   and the Commonwealth and   gaining better   understanding of   the difficulties   in dealing   with external   and internal   affairs,   PAP   leaders turned their   attention to   Singapore's economic   situation, namely trade   relations and foreign investment.   Since the end of 1966, at least three developments had caused the gov-

ernment to mellow its so called "anti-Western" attitudes and to change its "nonaligned" attitude towards world affairs professed during the early months of independence.

The first was the publication of the British Defense Review in February 1966. The Review proposed a drastic reduction of British overseas forces. Although it stated that the bases in Singapore and Malaysia would be retained, the government believed that the British presence would probably not last beyond 1980.[201] There was speculation that the U.S. was the best available alternative in Singapore's search for a new defense partner. During the visit of E. Black, then a U.S. Presidential Adviser, to Singapore in November 1966, Singapore had bartered support for future U.S. aid.[202] Pressure on the government increased when the British Labour Government announced in July 1967 that British military forces would be withdrawn completely by mid-1970. Later the date of complete withdrawal was put back to the end of 1971.[203] In addition to going to Britain to request the British government to postpone the date of complete withdrawal, Mr Lee went to Washington for the purpose of "inviting American investment". During his visit to Washington, Lee gave "unprecedented" support to the U.S.

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[201] H. Chan, Singapore: The Politics of Survival, Singapore: University of Singapore Press, 1980, P. 185.

[202] Ibid.

[203] Statement on Defense Estimates, 1968, London: H.M.S.O., P.2.

presence in Vietnam.   He expressed the belief that "sudden U.S. withdrawal from Southeast Asia would be disastrous".[204] He also said that the sensitive former colonial countries of Southeast Asia might very well prefer a permanent American military presence.[205] Given the British intention to withdraw completely from Singapore, Lee's visit to the U.S. was clearly an attempt to gauge the extent to which the U.S. was prepared to advance political and economic aid to Singapore.

As a country which benefitted from the status quo, Singapore preferred a strong American presence to deter Chinese or other communist inroads in Southeast Asia.[206] One of the Singapore's foreign policy objectives is to prevent the domination of Southeast Asia by any communist countries. Thus, Singapore was clearly pursuing an alignment policy by inviting an U.S. presence in the region to balance the communist influence there.   For example, Lee advocated a continuing American presence in Thailand,

> Before the communists could get a communist Malay Peninsula, Thailand might either be communist, or willing to go along with it.   It was important that the Thais should be psychologically reassured they were not being abandoned.   If there were American presence in Thailand, the Thais would be assured that the Nixon Doctrine of supplying arms and economic aid would apply to them.[207]

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[204] Josey, op cit, P.594.

[205] Chan, op cit, P.186.

[206] C. Morrison and A.   Suhrke, Strategies of Survival, London: Oxford University Press, P. 184.

[207] The Mirror, 6 Nov. 1972, p.21.

Further evidence could be cited to show that Singapore was pursuing a Western alignment foreign policy. According to Singapore's Foreign Minister, Singapore and Thailand agreed on the importance of a continuing American presence in Thailand because "none of us small countries could defend ourselves in an attack. We had to, therefore, have one or the other big powers to be with us".[208] Lee continued to expound on the same theme in the U.S. - warning the Americans that opting out of Southeast Asia meant opting out of the Indian Ocean and Asia, and that her global influence would shrink. Aside from the special concern of Thailand, Lee desired a continued Western naval presence in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Singapore's leaders seemed optimistic that the economic and strategic interests of the U.S. would sustain such a naval presence and that Japan at some future time might also develop a naval presence in the area.[209] If Singapore was really a nonaligned country, it should advocate the withdrawal of American presence in the area. On the contrary, Singapore supported such a presence. This is consistent with the pursuit of a Western alignment policy.

To understand Singapore's view of the U.S. role in the Vietnam War, it was important to remember that first of all Lee was anti-communist; second, he was a pragmatist.[210]

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[208] Bangkok Post, 11 Jan. 1973, p.3.

[209] Far Eastern Economic Review, 13 Aug. 1973, P.6.

Lee's understanding of how communists operated probably convinced him that an early U.S. withdrawal would lead to a communist victory in Vietnam and provide fresh encouragement to local communist parties elsewhere in Southeast Asia. By this time, it was clear that Singapore's foreign policy had moved rapidly out of the nonaligned camp and Lee no longer highlighted his speeches with anti-American criticisms. To appreciate why Lee decided to make this "unneutral" contribution to the U.S. side in the Vietnam War, it is necessary to examine Singapore's interests in the matter more closely. One of Singapore's foreign policy main objectives was to secure a strong and dependable defense partner. As we have discussed before, Singapore failed to persuade the British to drop their military withdrawal plan. Therefore, Lee wanted the U.S. to stay in the region to defend against any communist aggression.

Aside from security, economic benefits also encouraged Singapore's leaders to support the American presence in Vietnam. Singapore had made great economic profits, both from a drastic increase of her trade with South Vietnam and from tourism. In terms of trade between Singapore and South Vietnam, Singapore was in the twenty fifth position in 1963. After the escalation of the war in 1965, Singapore's position jumped to the fourteenth. Two years later, she was in the fifth position. The importance of South Vietnam in

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[210] Chan, *op cit*, P.44.

Singapore's foreign markets jumped from the thirteenth position in 1961 to the seventh position in 1967.[211] In terms of balance of payments, Singapore's exports to South Vietnam exceeded her imports from this country by S$ 50.8 million in 1964, and by 1967 this figure had jumped to S$ 303.1 million, 600% higher than it was three years before. During the period (1959- 1969), more than four fifths of Singapore's exports to South Vietnam were petroleum products. Singapore's main imports from Vietnam were rice and rubber before 1965, but after 1965, the latter not only ceased to export rice but was importing 653,000 tons of rice from her neighbours by 1968. Furthermore, South Vietnamese rubber production had been reduced by more than two thirds between 1964 and 1968.[212] The main import during this period was scrap iron. There is a direct relationship between these aspects of Singapore's foreign trade and the escalation of the Vietnam War.

Another impact of the escalation of the war on Singapore's economy was the increase of American tourists, about 25 to 30% of whom were American soldiers who came to Singapore for vacation. In 1967, for instance, American soldiers spent S$ 14 million in Singapore. The stage had been set by Mr Lee's frank talks with W. Bundy, then the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs,

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[211] C. Lim, "Singapore Economy and Vietnam War", in Sin Chew Jit Poh, Jan. 1, 1971, p.7.

[212] Ibid.

on the Vietnam issue during his visit to Singapore in early March 1966. During the talks, the two officials concluded an agreement on the use of Singapore as a rest and recreation centre for U.S. troops stationed in Vietnam. Based on the above economic benefits, Singapore modified its nonaligned position by supporting the American presence in Vietnam.

The third development which showed Singapore's Western aligned policy was a side effect of the British decision to withdraw militarily from the Singapore-Malaysian area. The complete withdrawal of British forces, in an economic sense, had two implications. First, it meant that thousands of people who worked directly or indirectly for British bases faced unemployment within three or four years. Secondly, it meant Singapore as a whole would lose about S$ 450 million a year starting from 1968 as a result of the British pull out. The city was a product of European colonialism, linked strongly through the British Empire to the mother country and to a system of international relations and a world economy in which Britain was for many years the preponderant element.[213] As the centre of British civilisation, commerce and power in Southeast Asia, Singapore depended upon free access to the resources and markets of Britain for its economic prosperity. The British military withdrawal and the separation of Singapore from Malaysia left the city without

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[213] Morrison and Suhrke, op cit, P.171.

an economic hinterland. The traditional pattern of commodity movements became subject to the wills of other countries of the region. Inasmuch as Singapore's neighbours needed first of all to provide for their own economic advancement, they were basically hostile to Singapore's economic role and interests in the region.

To solve these problems, Singapore accelerated the industrialization process so as to create new jobs and to increase the gross national income. To achieve this target, Singapore had to seek more foreign investment. Anti-Western attitudes and nonaligned policy were not practical, as foreign capital would obviously come from the West. Soviet trade and aid were not very attractive to Singapore since Soviet goods and products were not competitive enough in quality or price as compared with the Western industrialized countries such as the U.S. and Japan. Soviet repair and maintenance services were not adequate. Besides, Soviet aid had too many political strings attached to it, and the inconvertibility of Soviet rubles into hard currency made trade difficult. Another obstacle of Soviet trade was Moscow's refusal to provide preferential access to socialist bloc markets for Third World products. The USSR claimed itself not to be responsible for Third World poverty, and there was thus no reason why it had to provide such a preference to the Third World. It was with these background factors in mind that Mr Lee tried to moderate his

anti-American attitude and gave support to the U.S. presence in Vietnam before he went to New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco to meet 150 businessmen in October 1967.[214]

In order to look at Singapore's orientation, it might be also instructive to realize its massive economic links with the West. At the beginning of the 1960s more than a third of the gross domestic product was derived from the entrepot trade and British military spending. However, during the 1960s, Singapore suffered three dramatic setbacks: the Indonesian confrontation campaign of 1963-1966; the separation from the Malaysian market in 1965; and the British government's decision in 1968 to withdraw its forces from the island. The Indonesian confrontation meant the official suspension of trade with a major partner, as well as a general decline in business confidence. Expulsion from Malaysia dealt a fatal blow to many of the infant manufacturing industries, notably motor-car assembly, which had been set up in Singapore on the assumption that they would serve the pan-Malaysian market.[215] The uncertainty which followed over the financial relations between the two countries gave pause to investment. The British military withdrawal meant an increase in unemployment and a reduction of British spending in Singapore.

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[214] Chan, op cit, P.186.

[215] D. Wilson, The Future Role of Singapore, N.Y.: Praeger, 1975, P.77.

In order to solve these economic problems, a Bases Economic Conversion Unit was established, and every effort was made to see that the physical facilities which were originally designed for military purposes could be constructively utilized for commericial operations. For instance, the Royal Naval Dockyard at Sembawang became a government-owned shipyard managed under contract by Swan Hunter, a British businessman. The oil boom was an unexpected bonus for the Singapore government at a time of great anxiety and need. There came a sudden influx of Americans, both individuals and corporations, following the hunt for oil in Southeast Asian waters. Between 150 and 200 companies involved in some aspect of the oil industry established offices or appointed representatives in Singapore since 1969.[216] The size of the American community tripled in that period.[217] Singapore had become a regional centre for more than the oil company. Caterpillar tractors were stocked there, with 70,000 component parts in a computerized inventory for delivery to 19 countries ranging from India to South Korea and New Zealand.[218] A number of American firms followed suit in selecting Singapore as a base for commercial purposes, and in 1968, a number of American and European banks joined with some local banks in forming the Asian Dollar market. Singapore also encouraged Western

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[216] Ibid., P. 80.

[217] Ibid.

[218] Ibid.

investment in advanced light industries. Investments by
such corporations as Plessey, Beecham, Rolleiwerke, Siemens,
Dutch Philips, Ishikawajima-Harima Industries, Mitsubishi,
and General Electric ensured the production of 15,000 ton
Freedom ships, camaras, electric-appliance manufacturing
equipment, telephones, TV sets and similar high-technology
capital intensive goods.[219] A Swedish machinery exporter had
all its meters made in Singapore and flown to Sweden for
insertion into the final product. A Dutch firm made all its
production machinery in Singapore for use in all its facto-
ries throughout the world, including Holland itself. Broken
Hills Proprietary, the iron and steel corporation, assisted
Singapore's modest steel mill in its expansion. A leading
Australian industrialist had been an active adviser to the
PAP government on its economic development. Singapore was
also the first foreign country in which the Melbourne Herald
and Weekly Times group, one of the largest newspaper pub-
lishers in Australia, invested.[220] Singaporeans had begun to
look as much to the U.S. as to Britain for higher education,
technical training, foreign aid, foreign investment, diplo-
matic understanding and support, while Australia was fav-
oured by Singaporeans for professional training, especially
in accountancy, engineering, medicine and dentistry.
Compared to the trade with the Western countries, the trade
between Singapore and the Eastern countries was negligible.

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[219] Ibid.

[220] Ibid., P.26.

In 1965, the total imports to Singapore from the communist states were M$ 256 millions, but the imports from Western countries were M$ 3,807 millions.[221] The total exports to communist states in the same year were M$ 331 millions, but the total exports to Western countries were much larger: M$ 3,004 millions.[222] In 1971, the total exports to communist countries were only S$ 380 millions, and the total imports from communist states were S$ 723 millions.[223] However, the total exports to and imports from Western countries were S$ 5,000 millions and S$ 8,010 millions respectively.[224] Thus, in summary, Singapore had a closer economic relationships with the Western countries than with the communist states.

The withdrawal of support for China's admission to the United Nations between 1966 and 1970 also reflected Singapore's alignment policy with the West. On the issue of China's membership in the U.N., Singapore voted in favour of Beijing's admission in 1965 and abstained in each of the following five years. The fluctuating policy of Singapore on the China issue in the United Nations might not be in itself viewed as an unfriendly attitude towards China. However, at least two sensitive events which had happened in Singapore indicated that the abstention taken by Singapore

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[221] P. Boyce, Malaysia and Singapore in International Diplomacy, Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1968, P. 47.

[222] Ibid.

[223] Wilson, op cit, P.84.

[224] Ibid.

on China's seat in the U.N. might not be a simple action.

First, in early 1969, due to the cool response of American businessmen in Singapore's search for foreign investment, Mr Lee went to the U.S. again in order to encourage American investment. During his visit, the PAP government took legal action against the Bank of China and ordered all other banks not to accept chequing accounts transferred from the Bank of China. The dispute between the Singapore government and the Bank of China was not settled until after Mr Lee came back from the U.S.. Singapore's action was viewed by the Headquarters of the Bank of China in Beijing as an "unfriendly and hostile action".[225] However, political observers in Singapore considered the action against the Bank of China as a device "to create political and bargaining capital during the Prime Minister's trip to the United States".[226]

Second, in May 1971, the Singapore government applied the Internal Security Act to arrest without trial four newsmen of Nanyang Siang Pao, one of the two leading Chinese daily newspapers in Singapore. The reason given by the PAP government was that this newspaper had reported in the past several months too much news on China.[227] They were also charged with deliberately trying to build up an image that

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[225] Radio Beijing news broadcast in May, 1969.

[226] Chen Sien Pao, May 8, 1969, p.12.

[227] Ibid., May 13, 1971, p.8.

the Chinese language and culture were fighting for survival in Singapore. One of the offending editorials argued that,

> Southeast Asia in the future would be mainly of China's and Japan's sphere of influence. If there were people still dreaming about the supremacy of the English language, they had better wake up now.[228]

A second editorial stated: "Since Singapore was too small a nation, the most important influence on its political market quotation might be the waters around it (China) instead of itself".[229] The arrest of these editors was followed immediately by accusations that communist money from Hong Kong was behind the Eastern Sun. The senior staff immediately resigned and the newspaper closed. Within a few days, an attack was launched on the Singapore Herald, on information supplied from abroad that foreign money was being put in to control the newspaper through East Malaysia and Hong Kong. These actions were viewed by observers as a move to please the Americans.[230]

It might be argued that these incidents were merely Singapore's domestic affairs and that they had no international significance. It seemed, however, that since the timing of these incidents was coincidental with Singapore's pro-American policy, we could not simply consider them as merely domestic affairs. These actions had obviously dam-

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[228] Quoted in Morrison and Suhrke, op cit, P.177.

[229] Ibid.

[230] Chen Sien Pao, May 20, 1971, p.6.

aged Singapore's relations with China. In terms of its pro-American policy, as discussed above, the Singapore government had expressed its support of the U.S. presence in Vietnam and considered that the sudden withdrawal of the U.S. forces from the area would be disastrous. This series of pro-American and anti-China policies would no doubt damage any possibility of establishing normal relations between Singapore and China. In short, since these anti-China measures were carried out at the same time as its pro-American policy, it might be speculated that Singapore tried to please the Americans in order to obtain more U.S. aid and investment through Lee's visit of Washington.

Singapore's decision to establish diplomatic relations with Israel in 1968 was also viewed as a pro-Western move. It was hard to know exactly why the government made such a sensitive decision which was no doubt regarded by the Arab World as well as Muslim Malaysia as a hostile action. Since independence, Singapore had maintained trade relations with, and received technical and military assistance from Israel. PAP leaders once compared Singapore's geographical and political position with Israel's and considered that both countries were facing a similar situation, that is, both were small nations and were facing a huge ethnic population which was basically hostile to them.[231] In late 1965, at Singapore's request, the Israeli government sent an expert

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[231] Josey, op cit, P.587.

in youth movements to Singapore, serving as the Principal of the Youth Leadership Training Centre which was to train youth leaders from the People's Association and trade unions. After 1965, several instructors of the Armed Forces Training Institute were sent to Israel for practical training, and after 1967, more than two dozen Israeli military advisers assisted military training at the Institute in Singapore. Lee's tendency to visualize Singapore as Israel in Southeast Asia suggests that Lee believed Singapore, like Israel, needed strong U.S. backing to survive amidst its ethnically hostile neighbours.[232]

Singapore also was not very enthusiastic about the "neutralization of Asia" idea. Singapore's attitude was reflected in the first President's speech in the parliament soon after independence. "So many of our neighbours", he said, "and we ourselves would not have had a separate existence if purely Asian forces were to settle the shape of decolonized Asia".[233] He was referring to the 1963-65 confrontation with Indonesia, which without the opposition of British arms could well have reduced Singapore to an adjunct of Indonesia.[234] The implication was that Singapore preferred the presence of foreign military power, namely British or American, in the region to protect Singapore's

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[232] Chan, op cit, P.45.

[233] The Times, London, 9 Dec. 1965, p.7.

[234] Wilson, op cit, P.78.

security and the region's stability. Given that her need to
keep the more distant big powers in play in order to mini-
mize the risk of pressure by her immediate neighbours and
her highly pragmatic and business- oriented approach to dip-
lomacy, there was strong pressure for Singapore to react
skeptically to Malaysia's proposal for the neutralization of
Southeast Asia.   Singapore's reaction to the Malaysian pro-
posal echoed Indonesian's in saying that the first priority
was for Southeast Asia to put its own house in order; and
only then could the big powers be invited to formally recog-
nize the region's desire to be declared neutral.[235]

According to T. Koh, a former ambassador to the U.N., the
majority of the nations of Southeast Asia preferred to rely
on policies of alignment, of alliance with powers outside
the region or on the potential maneuvers of diplomacy.[236]
The Indonesian Foreign Minister, Malik, argued that there
were five preconditions for the realization of a neutral
Southeast Asia: (1) the countries in the area had to be
ready to cooperate; (2) they had to minimize conflicts and
differences; (3) they had to refrain from taking sides in
big power conflicts;   (4) they should not invite external
powers into the region to solve internal disputes; (5) there
had to be national resilience and regional cohesion.[237]

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[235] Ibid.

[236] Strait Times, 19 Jan. 1972, p.10.

[237] Quoted in Wilson, op cit, P.88.

Singapore's leaders observed that the last two of these conditions were targets rather than "realities", and that until they were realized, "neutralization" might remain largely a topic of discussion and debate.[238] Singapore's view on neutralization was simply expressed by its Foreign Minister after the Kuala Lumpur Declaration: "We are all agreed on the concept itself. To be quite frank, we all have different approaches to this goal".[239] Singapore's approach was almost always in favour of retention of American military support in the region as opposed to neutralization. In short, Singaporeans were fundamentally skeptical about neutralization because the pre-conditions for the successful realization of the proposal had been absent in Southeast Asia. Although Singapore agreed with the neutralization proposal in principle, she in reality supported and advocated the American presence in the region. The evidence clearly shows the pro-Western orientation in Singapore's alignment foreign policy.

Further evidence could be cited to show Singapore's pro-Western alignment policy. The criteria set by the preparatory meeting held in Cairo in 1961 as the basis for inviting countries to the Belgrade Conference of Nonalighed Countries, can be applied to Singapore to see whether it qualifies as a nonaligned country. These criteria are

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[238] New Nation, Singapore, 24 Oct. 1973, p.14.

[239] Far Eastern Economic Review, 4 Dec. 1971, p.26.

appropriate because they were set for the first nonaligned conference to determine which countries should be invited and also because this was the original idea of what nonalignment policy was in the minds of the nonaligned leaders in the early 1960s. If our judgement was based on these rules of conduct, Singapore should be disqualified as a nonaligned country. Among these rules, the conduct of Singapore's foreign affairs during 1965-71 had been inconsistent with two of them. First, Singapore was, as pointed out in the previous section, allied militarily with the U.K. and Malaysia between 1965 and 1971. Second, the Singapore government had publicly expressed its support of the U.S. involvement in Indochina and granted the American forces who had been fighting in Vietnam the right to use Singapore as a rest and vacation base. Lee had publicly stated that he would like to see a continuing American involvement in this region. Moreover, Singapore had been supplying annually hundreds of millions of dollars of war material for South Vietnam, whereas she had no trade relations with North Vietnam. Singapore had indeed taken sides in the cold war - even in a shooting war as it was in Indochina - and publicly involved herself in East West disputes. Furthermore, the government not only permitted the presence of British bases in its territory, but also invited the British, Australia and New Zealand troops to be stationed in Singapore. Thus the conduct of Singapore's foreign affairs during 1965-71 had indeed been in contradiction with the rules set by the preparatory meeting of the 1961 Belgrade Conference.

H. Teune and S. Synnestvedt have suggested that military agreements, unweighted in terms of the amount of commitment they involve, are a powerful discriminatory indicator of alignment. They contend that certain types of military agreements, for example, bilateral or multi-lateral, centralized or decentralized, might prove to be a more critical test of alignment.[240] The presence of British military bases, the extension of AMDA to the Five Power Defense Arrangement in which Singapore was a founding member, provided strong evidence that Singapore was a part of the Western alliance system in Southeast Asia against communism. From a military point of view, Singapore was an ally of the West.

Teune and Synnestvedt also suggest three other sets of indicators of a nation's alignment: (1) votes in the U.N.; (2) diplomatic recognition patterns; and (3) diplomatic visits by heads of states and of government and other important persons.

In the first category, official records of the U.N. General Assembly showed that Singapore was comparatively inactive in the general debates. Relatively few speeches were made by Singapore's representatives, even on some critical issues. For instance, the Singapore representative made no speech on the Middle East Crisis in the 5th

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[240] Teune and Synnestvedt, op cit, P.329.

Emergency Session of the U.N. General Assembly in 1967.[241]
Nor did the Singapore representative speak out in the 23rd
Session of the General Assembly which dealt with the Soviet
invasion of Czechoslovakia.[242] Furthermore, Singapore did
not join very often with other nations to initiate draft
resolutions in the General Assembly. By and large,
Singapore's position in the U.N. was in line with that of
the nonaligned nations.

However, Singapore did not follow the nonaligned coun-
tries all the time in the U.N.. For instance, Singapore was
absent when the General Assembly voted on December 21, 1965
on the Resolution of economic sanctions against South
African policies of apartheid.[243] She also abstained on the
December 18, 1965 Resolution denouncing the violation of the
fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet.
Singapore also abstained on the resolution which called on
India and Pakistan to bring about a ceasefire and withdraw
their troops to their own borders. In these terms,
Singapore's behaviour in the U.N. did not provide a clear
indication of the tendency of her alignment.

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[241] U.N. General Assembly, Official Records, 5th Emergency
Session, 1967, p.45.

[242] Ibid., 23rd Session, 1968, p.80.

[243] U.N. Year Book, 1965, Vol. 1. p.92.

In terms of diplomatic recognition patterns, twelve countries were selected by Teune and Synnestvedt in this category. There were: The People's Republic of China, Taiwan, East Germany, West Germany, North Korea, South Korea, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Cuba, Israel and South Africa. Among these countries, Singapore had established diplomatic relations with one communist state (Yugoslavia) and two non communist states (West Germany and Israel). She had official trade relations with three communist states (East Germany, North Korea and Yugoslavia) and three non-communist states (West Germany, South Vietnam and Israel). Among these 12 countries, Singapore total trade exceeded S$ 50 million with one communist state (China) and three non-communist states (West Germany, South Vietnam and South Africa). There was a very slight tendency to show that Singapore had a closer relations with the noncommunist states. But the main problem with Teune and Synnestvedt's criteria to decide a nation's alignment was that the choice of the "twelve countries" was very subjective. As these twelve countries did not represent both the communist and the Western blocs, the result of the finding might not be an accurate indication of Singapore's alignment position.

Teune and Synnestvedt further suggest that the frequency of visits (by heads of state and of government and other important persons) between the country concerned and the U.S. or the USSR might indicate a nation's alignment.

In the case of Singapore, there was evidence, although not strong, in this category which showed that Singapore was more allied with the West than with the East. During the period between 1965 and 1971, Singapore's Prime Minister and other important minissters had visited the U.S. and its Western allies almost twice or much as they did the USSR and its Eastern European allies. It is also important to recall that during his visits to the U.S., expecially on two occasions, the Prime Minister of Singapore publicly expressed his support of American involvement in Vietnam. Moreover, he went to the U.S. mainly for the purpose of seeking American investment. On the other hand, his visit to Moscow was merely a goodwill visit and it lacked an essential purpose. In addition, no important Soviet official visited Singapore. On the other hand, at least four American official visits during 1965-71 had significance for Singapore-American relations: (1) E. Black, then the U.S. Presidential Adviser, visited Singapore in 1966 to discuss with Lee about the future U.S. aid; (2) W. Bundy, then the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, came to Singpore in March 1966 and conferred with Mr Lee on the Vietnam issue and negotiated for the use of the island as a rest and recreation centre for U.S. troops stationed in Vietnam; (3) Vice President Agnew visited Singapore in the Fall of 1971 to discuss with Singapore leaders the future of American political and military roles in the region; (4) an American military delegation - consisting of five generals

and two colonels - visited Singapore and conferred with Singapore's Defense Minister in March 1971 to discuss U.S.-Singapore defense relations. On balance, the evidence justifies the view that, diplomatically, Singapore's foreign relations were more closer to the West than to the East.

With respect to the other countries' reactions towards Singapore, generally the Western countries were warmer to Singapore than were the communist states. Britain, its former colonial master and ally, supported Singapore instead of Malaysia in the Malaysian- Singapore dispute. The British Prime Minister said:

> Difficulties began to arise last August, when Singapore was pushed out of the Malaysian Federation without consultation with us, or prior information being given us, and I think that once this situation arises, there is always a suspicion on the part of the one party that we are leaning over in support of the other party (Singapore).[244]

Thus Britain gave support to the PAP government in Singapore. Australia and New Zealand had been the traditional military allies of Singapore. Australia supported Singapore by saying that "we were determined to play our part with all the other countries in continuing a common resistance to attacks upon the area, an area which would still include Singapore, though it was no longer part of the Federation of Malaysia".[245] The Americans also supported the independence of Singapore by withholding all aid to

[244] Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Vol. 730, No. 692, 28 June 1966, p.72.

[245] International Affairs, Aug. 1965, P.504.

Indonesia during the confrontation. The U.S. President said in a Joint Communique that "The President reaffirmed the support of the U.S. for the peaceful national independence of Singapore".[246] Western European countries generally gave support to Singapore. The French representative at the U.N. criticized Indonesia and stated that it did not have the right to use force in order to threaten the existence of Singapore.[247]

With regard to the communist countries, Singapore received less support. China did not have official diplomatic relations with Singapore although they had numerous trade agreements and unofficial visits. Moreover, China had in the past accused the Lee Kuan Yew group of suppressing people's liberties and democracy.[248] Both China and the USSR with its East European allies condemned the Malaysian project as a neocolonial move to control the people of Malaya and Singapore. Mr Khrushchev said:

> The British imperialists and its lackeys in
> Singapore want to uphold onto their colonial domi-
> nation in Southeast Asia, and in creating this
> State they are merely changing the label, so that
> under the new label they may be able to continue
> their old policy in that part of the world.[249]

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[246] Anglo-American Conversations: Joint Communique, 13 Feb. 1964, quoted in New York Times, 14 Feb. 1964, P.3.

[247] Official Records, 1152nd meeting, 17 Sept. 1964.

[248] Peking Review, Aug. 12, 1966, p.26.

[249] Official Records, 1145th Meeting, 10 Sept. 1964, p.92.

Although the USSR did not give full scale support to the communists in Singapore, they still had contact with them and gave considerable moral support.[250] They offered an alternative to China's support although they refrained from any large scale commitment. In 1968, the USSR sent a protest to Singapore government concerning the arrest of several Barrison Socialist members and their detention without trial. In short, Singapore received more support from the Western countries than from the Eastern countries.

4.3   CONCLUSION

While espousing nonalignment and agreeing in principle with the concept of regional neutralization, Singapore in fact supported a continued powerful Western military presence in Southeast Asia.[251] The goals of Singapore's leadership - security buttressed in some fashion by outside commitment, economic growth based upon close integration with world markets, and a domestic society supportive of continued rule by a multi-cultural and Western-oriented leadership - were quite clear.[252] In conclusion, our findings can be summed up in the following:

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[250] H. Chan, op cit, P.32.

[251] Morrison and Suhrke, op cit, P.172.

[252] Ibid.

(1) Militarily, Singapore should not be regarded as a nonaligned country. In fact, it had been allied with the West ever since independence. Singapore's military links with Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia made her part of the Western alliance system.

(2) Diplomatically, Singapore took sides with the U.S. in bloc conflicts. Although on some issues such as voting in the U.N. and diplomatic recognitions, Singapore showed a more independent position, there was strong evidence to indicate that Singapore had been maintaining closer relations with the West than the East.

For the purpose of this thesis, the most important task was to determine whether Singapore "was" an aligned country. The degree of diplomatic alignment should be the second important problem. In the previous analysis, we have already argued that Singapore was not nonaligned but rather, she was in fact a Western aligned country during 1965-1971. Diplomatically, Singapore had taken sides in cold war disputes and had maintained close relations with the West. The government's position of "nonalignment" had been to a large extent compromised by the presence of foreign bases and armed forces. In summary, our proposition - that Singapore advertised itself as a nonaligned state, but its capacity to implement and to impress others that it was nonaligned during 1965-1971 had been inhibited by the foreign military presence - is valid.

Chapter V

CONCLUSION

This thesis attempted to show that Singapore in reality was a Western-oriented, aligned country during 1965-1971, although it officially declared an independent and nonaligned foreign policy after its independence. On many official and formal occasions, Lee Kuan Yew declared that Singapore would adopt nonalignment as the major principle of its foreign policy and it would not take sides in bloc conflicts. There were several motives that make the Singapore leaders declare a nonaligned foreign policy. The first one was due to nationalism. Singapore was a British colony for over 100 years. It became independent in 1965. After the Second World War, nationalism was a strong force among the Afro-Asian colonies. They struggled fiercely against their colonial masters for freedom and independence. The colonial and imperial countries gave up their colonies gradually as a result of the strong sense of nationhood among the colonies and of the world public opinion pressure. After independence in 1965, Singapore did not want to be regarded or treated as a lackey of Britain. Therefore the Singapore leaders declared a nonaligned foreign policy in order to show to the world that Singapore was now a new, independent state. They would not participate in bloc conflicts, and

would not involve themselves in military alliance with any great power.

Moreover, in the 1950s and 1960s, many Afro-Asian colonies were liberated from their former colonial masters. After they became independent, they all declared a foreign policy of nonalignment. Singapore, as an Afro-Asian state, shared the same attitude as its Afro-Asian counterparts. Singapore did not want to be isolated from the Afro-Asian World. Thus, to declare a foreign policy of nonalignment could prevent the isolation of Singapore from the Afro-Asian World.

In addition, in declaring a foreign policy of nonalignment, Singapore hoped to get moral and political support from the Afro-Asian World. In the first month of independence, less than half of the Afro-Asian nations recognized Singapore. Basically, there were two factors which caused the delay of the recognition of Singapore by the Afro-Asian nations. First, they suspected that Singapore was not really independent due to the ambiguity of the Separation Agreement and its military links with Britain and Malaysia. The second reason for the delay was the hostile attitude of Indonesia towards Singapore's independence. Indonesia, under Sukarno, regarded Singapore's independence as another neocolonialist move against Indonesia. Besides, Indonesia feared that the merger would pose serious political and economic challenges to Indonesian's role in the region.

Therefore, from the very beginning, Singapore's independence was not recognized by many Afro-Asian nations. To tackle this problem, Singapore had to show to the world that it was really a sovereign, independent state. In order to prove that, the Singapore leaders declared that it was executing a nonalignment foreign policy. The desire to get moral and political support for its independence required the Singapore leaders to declare a nonaligned foreign policy.

However, there is evidence to show that Singapore to certain degree was a aligned state with close relations to the West, especially with Britain and the United States. First of all, let us conclude the factors that forced the Singapore leaders to compromise their nonaligned position. Historical developments in Singapore had had a great impact on its foreign policies. First, the demand for industrial and economic development forced Singapore to invite and attract foreign investment. Since most capital investment came from the West, it was natural that Singapore sought closer relations with the Western countries in absorbing foreign investments and aid. Second, its predominantly Chinese migrant population was a result of the early tin mining boom in Malaya. This population was the focus of external threats because it was surrounded by Malay-dominated, anti-Chinese neighbours - Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia. Third, communist activities and influence had been strong in Singapore. Before the split of

the PAP, the leftists inside the Party were influencial. Even after the split of the PAP, the Barrison Socialist could also command a large degree of support from lower class Chinese in Singapore. Fourth, political differences and economic competition were additional sources of Singapore-Malaysian and Singapore-Indonesian confrontations. Singapore was highly vulnerable in that it had small military and security forces, and it had few resources and unfavourable topography. These factors forced Singapore's leaders to soften and compromise their nonaligned position because they had to depend on the British and the Americans for their economic development and security concerns.

Therefore Singapore was not nonaligned, but rather it was an aligned country with military pact with the Western powers. It also maintained close diplomatic and economic relations with the West. Its capacity to implement and to impress others that it was nonaligned were inhibited by the foreign military presence and its close diplomatic relations with the West. Economic developments and external security required the Singapore government to modify its nonaligned commitment. In the 1970s and 1980s, Singapore's foreign policy posture remained the same. It should be clear that there is a very close connection between Singapore's domestic and foreign policies, a connection which reflects Singapore's ethnic characteristics as well as the complex of

factors connected with its small size.[253] Given that its
domestic, ethnic, social, political, economic and geographi-
cal structures impose relatively narrow limits on
Singapore's foreign policies, there are not many alterna-
tives for it to achieve both economic prosperity and exter-
nal security.

The possibility of allying with the Soviet Union is quite
limited. Rather than perceiving the Soviets as potential
ally, Singapore's leaders regard them as the most dangerous
enemy in the region. At present, Singapore's security is
directly under the threat of the Soviet backed Vietnamese
expansion in Indochina. Compared with China, Singapore's
leaders perceive the Soviet Union as posing a more serious
threat to the region's stability. PAP leaders refuse to
ally with the Soviet Union, fearing that they will lose
their autonomy and become a puppet regime of the Soviet
Union. The Soviet's high-handed external policy in
Afghanistan and Kampuchea does not impress Singapore's lead-
ers. It instead arouses Singapore's suspicion and fear of
the Soviet Union. Ideology is also a major obstacle between
the two countries, since Lee Kuan Yew and his close PAP col-
leagues are anti-communists. Lee is a firm believer in a
domino theory which assumes that a communist victory in one
country will greatly strengthen the communist movement in
the next. He is very determined to wipe out any communist

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[253] Morrison and Suhrke, op cit, P.192.

influence in Singapore as he launched several anti-communist movements in the past. Cultural differences make mutual understandings and communications difficult. Moreover, economic transactions and aid from the Soviet Union are less favoured compared with the West. Thus the possibility of allying with the Soviet Union is quite low.

With regard to China, to have official diplomatic relations with China will certainly both provoke its Malay neighbours and give propaganda value to the communist insurgent movements, let alone to have any military or political alliance with China. A third alternative is to join the Malaysia Federation. It has been already a failure since Singapore was expelled from the Federation in 1965. The outcome is inevitable due to their immense political differences and economic competition, coupled with personal rivalries. The fourth alternative is nonalignment. However, throughout this thesis, it is emphasized that nonalignment is not a practical policy to bring Singapore economic prosperity and internal as well as external security. The fifth alternative is to promote the Association of the South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) into a supranational organization with integrated political, economic, social and military structures. But this would prove to be a very difficult task. Mutual distrust, territorial disputes, economic competition and racial conflicts pose serious obstacles to such development.

The only alternative left is to align with the West. Through Western capital investments and transaction, Singapore hopes to build up its own economic infrastructure and to become a commercial centre in Southeast Asia. The Singapore government's feelings of helplessness in security reinforced its desire to maintain some form of British or Commonwealth commitment to its own security or, at least, a stabilizing influence throughout the region as a whole, as it believes is provided to some extent by the American presence.[254] In the 1980s, the conditions that direct Singapore's external policies in the past remain the same. Communist insurgent movements still exist; racial dis-harmony continues between Singapore and its neighbours; political and economic competition between them is still keen; its leaders remain the same; and Singapore continues to be an island state depending on entrepot trade and tertiary industries. All these require Singapore to modify its nonalignment position. There will be no abrupt changes in Singapore's external policies in the near future. Indeed, this policy is a successful one which brings prosperity and stability to Singapore. In the 1980s, Singapore and Hong Kong become commerical centres in Southeast Asia. In conclusion, Singapore is an aligned country. It remains and will remain aligned with the West given its unique characteristics. Singapore's commitment to nonalignment is nothing but rhetorical. Given the facts that Singapore is pur-

[254] Morrison and Suhrke, op cit, P. 180.

suing an aligned external policy, and that it is a member of
the Five Power Defense Arrangement, Singapore derives a lot
of benefits from such arrangements. But the Defense
Arrangement since 1971 has not been put into serious test-
ing. In the event of real threat to Singapore, is the
Defense Arrangement effective enough to protect Singapore's
security? Will its allies save Singapore by every means?
This has yet to be seen.

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