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TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER'S BROADCAST

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7.30 P.M.

There may be people who say that all this talk of the Communist underground is a fairy tale. I shall have to tell you something which is known to very few people.

In March, 1958, before I went with the All-Party Merdeka Mission to the London talks, someone whom I knew to be connected with the Communist organisation approached me and arranged for me to see a man who he said would like to see me and discuss some matters. I met him in Singapore one afternoon on the road between Victoria Memorial Hall and Legislative Assembly and took him to a room in the Legislative Assembly. He was a Chinese-educated young man several years younger than myself. An able and determined person. He told

me that he was a representative of the Communist party in Singapore. I told him that I did not know who he was and I had no way of knowing the truth of his claim. He explained that his purpose in seeing me was to establish co-operation between the Communists and the non-Communists in the PAP.

You will remember that the Communists had been purged in 1956 and 1957. Some of them had given trouble to the PAP. He told me that they were all young and enthusiastic people who did not understand the Communist policy of united front, but that they meant well and wanted to help to bring about the Communist revolution in Malaya. He wanted to re-establish co-operation in the united anti-colonial front with the PAP. I shall call him the PLEN, short for plenipotentiary. We spoke in Chinese. Sometimes I used English words to clarify my meaning and I found that he understood English. I asked him for proof to show me that he was a genuine representative of the MCP. He smiled and said that I had to take his word for it. I then asked him whether he had authority over the open-front communist cadres in the unions and political parties and I gave as an example Chang Yuen Tong.

Chang was then a City Councillor and Executive Committee member of the Workers Party. He is now the President of the Electrical and Wireless Employees Union and is on the protem committee of the new Communist trade

union united front, SATU. I knew he was one of the pro-Communist trade union workers. I told the PLEN that I thought the Communists were trying to make use of David Marshall's Workers Party to fight the PAP. They had used the Workers Party to fight us in the Jalan Besar Division in the City Council elections and they had lost on a close fight. I said that as evidence of his credentials that he was a real representative of the Communists Command in Singapore and his good faith in not wishing to attack the PAP by using the Workers Party as an instrument, he should give the word for the resignation of Chang Yuen Tong from the Workers Party and the City Council and let the Workers Party and David Marshall go on their own. He said "All right. Give us some time. We shall see that it is done."

Several weeks later in April 1958 while I was in London for the constitutional talks I read in the newspapers that Chang Yuen Tong had resigned from the Workers Party and from the City Council. The MCP had given orders.

The PLEN had proved his credentials. Subsequently, in the City Council by-election at Kallang, David Marshall, without Communist support, and after all the foolish policies of his party in the City Council, found himself with just over one hundred votes at the end of a campaign in which he was most times talking to empty fields. The Communists had withdrawn support and the Workers Party collapsed.

When the Workers Party was formed hurriedly in November 1957, they were able to win 3 out of 4 seats they contested in the City Council elections in December 1957. They did this with the help of the Communist supporters who had broken with PAP after the 1957 conflict in the PAP and the purge which took place. Only one Workers Party candidate lost and that was to a PAP candidate Chan Chee Seng in the Jalan Besar Division. But in the last general elections in 1959, the Communist supporters had abandoned the Workers Party and everyone of their candidates lost.

Before the general elections in 1959 I met the PLEN altogether on four occasions, all in Singapore, each time at a different rendezvous. We discussed things generally. He was trying to gauge the PAP intentions and purpose. He wanted again and again to find out if we were prepared to let the Communists work together with us in a united anti-colonial front in the PAP. I told him that I did not see much virtue in this, because from time to time we were going to have repetitions of the troubles we had in 1956 and 1957. Each time the MCP decided to take a different line, we the PAP would be involved. I told him it was far better from the PAP point of view that the Communists left us alone. They have their other open-front organisations. They could work on parallel lines if they chose to, but if they decided to change policy they could please themselves it would not damage the PAP. He tried to allay my doubts. He said that Lim Chin

Siong and the others I had dealt with may have given me an unfortunate impression as a result of my unhappy experiences in 1956 and 1957. But this time I was dealing with the top, the men who decided and gave the orders, and they would keep their word. He said Lim could not decide policy and the errors were made because of the difficulty of communicating instructions to him in time. I did not commit myself to anything in reply. Never in any one of our meetings did I say or do anything which would commit the PAP. We left things at that. The general elections came in May 1959. But I was to meet him again in May this year.

In 1959, it was quite clear to everybody, including the Communists, that the PAP was in for a landslide victory. Because of the corruption and stupidities of the people then in power, we were the obvious choice for the people. The PAP therefore fielded 51 candidates to cover all 51 constituencies. The MCP supporters fought us through the Party Raayat only in four constituencies - Aljunied, Kampong Kembangan, Geylang Serai and Siglap. It was difficult for them to work up enthusiasm against the PAP and as the election campaign went on, the amount of effort put in for the Party Raayat by the Communist cadres and their supporters in their unions flagged away. As a result, the Party Raayat was defeated in all four constituencies.

In all the other areas where there were no Party Raayat candidates, the MCP was neutral and at best their supporters may have voted for the PAP. But we never asked for their support. Even during the election campaign you will remember that we made our non-Communist stand quite clear. In several speeches, I stressed the distinction between us and the Communists. I posed the problems that we would face after we won the elections.

Let me quote from one of my election rally speeches made at Clifford Pier on May 26th, 1959, published in the Straits Times, Nanyang Siang Pau and Sin Chew Jit Poh. I stated that the real fight would begin after the general elections in which the ultimate contestants would be the PAP and the MCP. This would be the fight to establish the democratic system in the hearts and minds of the people. I said :-

"In this fight the ultimate contestants will be the PAP and the MCP - the PAP for a democratic non-Communist, Socialist Malaya, and the MCP for a Soviet Republic of Malaya. It is a battle that cannot be won by just bayonets and bullets. It is a battle of ideals and ideas. And the side that recruits more ability and talent will be the side that wins".

I further said that the PAP would not adopt the behavior of Mr. David Marshall or that of Lim Yew Hock in combating the Communists, because Mr. Marshall was vacillating, pushed from pillar to post and retreating in the face of each demonstration and because Tun Lim Yew Hock only used the big "stick and the gun" as his answer till finally the GOC Singapore Base District and his helicopters took over. The PAP would not fall into either of these errors.

This was all said nearly 2 ½ years ago during the last general elections. We knew all along what we had to expect. It was no smear then. It is not a smear now.

In my next talk I shall tell you how after I met the PLEN again in May this year, the Communists and the Nationalists came to the parting of ways.

22nd September, 1961

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