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TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER'S BROADCAST ON

OCTOBER 2, 1961 AT 7.30 P.M.

You may ask: If the Communists are such a danger to our society, why did we work with Lim and his Communist friends in one anti-colonial united front? This and other questions have to be answered. However uncomfortable the truth may be to me and my colleagues, you must know it.

I have told you how in 1953 we came to make our first Communist contact with Laniaz. 1953 was a time when the British in fighting the Communist insurrection also suppressed all nationalists who attacked them. The result was that all those who were anti-British either kept quiet, or quietly threw in their lot with the Communists underground to down the British.

So in the open constitutional arena there were no lawful parties of any significance with people capable or willing to lead the anti-colonial fight. There were the mild and feeble political parties, like the Progressive Party, the Labour Party, and a whole host of funny ones. Clowns and crooks passed off as leaders of the people.

Emotionally, we felt more sympathetic with the Communists who were sacrificing their life and limb to down the British and get them out of the country than with these comic and crooked men.

Laniaz himself did not originally start off as a Communist. He started as a nationalist. Slowly over the years he drifted more and more with the men who were fiercely fighting the British. They happened to be communists, and he joined them. In this same way we also drifted into the same Communist

company as Laniaz had done. Laniaz was anti-British as strongly as we were.

We knew he wanted to establish an independent Communist Malaya, and he knew we wanted to establish an independent democratic Malaya. But neither of our two different objectives would ever come to anything as long as the British were here. First we had to get rid of the British to get independence. That was a common objective. We came to the conclusion that we had better forget the differences between our ultimate objectives and work together for our immediate

common objective, the destruction of the British. Whether you wanted a democratic Malaya or a Communist Malaya, you had first to get rid of the British.

This broad anti-colonial united front was an inevitable phase in the history of our struggle for freedom. Before India got her independence, there was a time when Nehru and the Communist Party of India formed a united front against the British to fight for independence. At a time when the colonial ruler made no distinction between the Communists and the non-Communists who opposed him, it was only logical and indeed inevitable that both the Communists and the non-Communists should come together to achieve their common objective. But we never forgot that once the British were out of the way, there would be trouble between us and the Communists as to what kind of Malaya we wanted to have in place of the old British colonial Malaya.

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We were quite clear as to what we wanted - an independent, democratic, socialist Malaya, which by democratic means could bring about a more just and equal society. On the other hand, they wanted A Communist Malaya. This is what the Communists mean when they say "seeking concord whilst maintaining differences." They know the difference between our ultimate objective and

theirs. But they say, let us not argue about these differences, let us seek concord on the common objective of fixing the British and on that we agreed.

We have now fallen out because we have disagreed on our next objective. We want merger and independence. The Communists do not. They have a vested interest in continuing the anti-colonial struggle so that under cover of the anti-colonialism they can advance Communism. They want the anti-colonial struggle to go on and on, meanwhile using Singapore as a base from which to undermine Malaya.

The second question that you may ask is: Now that we all know Lim and his friends are up to no good, why do we not take immediate steps to deal sternly with them? The answer is because if we take immediate steps to deal sternly with them, we shall lose the open argument of who is right and who is wrong.

This is a battle for the minds of the people, for the people's support for what we believe is right for the country. We must convince you the people that what we propose, independence through merger with the Federation, is in your best interests; that the Communist aim to frustrate immediate merger is only for their own Communist selfish advantage, and that deliberate prolonging of the anti-colonial struggle in Singapore to use Singapore as a base from which to undermine the Federation, will bring trouble to all of us.

To take immediate action is to lose to the Communists in the battle for the people's support. Singapore is a multi-racial city with four major language groups - the Chinese-speaking, Malay-speaking, Indian-speaking and the English-speaking. The Malay-speaking, Indian-speaking and the English-speaking groups are quite certain that Lim Chin Siong and his Communist friends are up to no good, and consider that they should be put away and not allowed to do mischief. But we have to convince the Chinese-speaking not only that Lim and his friends are Communists, working under instructions from the Communist underground, but also that what they are doing is not good for all of us in Singapore.

We must carry the opinion of all the people, including the Chinese-educated, with us. To do this we must bear in mind two things.

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The first is that to take stern action against the Communists while Singapore is still a semi-colony with ultimate power still vested in the British would be to open ourselves to smear and misrepresentation that we are just stooges of the British and have acted to preserve British interests. British power is supreme in Singapore. The sovereignty of Singapore is still vested in the

British. In the last resort, it is they who have the final say on what happens to Singapore.

We know, and the Communists also know, that in the last resort the British must take action on their own to protect their military and other interests. The Communists fear this and for that reason their proxies went to see Lord Selkirk, the U.K. Commissioner, in Woodhull's own words "to clarify the situation".

The last government under Tun Lim Yew Hock took massive action against the Communists. The Government failed in the eyes of the people. They failed not because they had taken action against the Communists, but because their action was deliberately misconstrued to the people by the Communists as having been done under instigation by the British. As a result, the government lost out.

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The second thing we have to bear in mind is this. It is unwise to take stern immediate action against subversion in the unions, cultural organisations, old boys' associations and even in the Universities' Student Clubs, because the action will be very largely against the Chinese-educated who have penetrated the leadership in these unions and associations. Unless there is a clear distinction made between the Communists and the non-Communists amongst the Chinese-

educated we would merely create resentment against the government and sympathy for the cause of those detained.

We must therefore make a clear distinction between the Chinese-educated and the Communists. As Fong Swee Suan, Chan Chiaw Tor, Woodhull, Devan Nair and James Puthuchearry have stated in their letter to me, nearly all Communists in Malaya are Chinese-educated. But not all the Chinese-educated population are Communists. To purge the Communists we have to be careful that we make it clear that we are not purging the Chinese-educated. This is a trap into which we must never fall.

The last Government fell into the Communist trap of allowing themselves to be presented as anti-Chinese culture and Chinese education. When they purged the Communist student leaders to immobilize the handful who were responsible for the "stay-in" strike, they had to flush out of Chinese High School and Chung Cheng High School thousands of non-Communist Chinese-educated students. The Labour Front government helped the Communists to convince the people that the Government had purged Chinese education. We cannot afford to make this same mistake. Hence the vital importance of getting a constitutional guarantee on local autonomy on education which will enable the Chinese to carry on their education from primary school to Nanyang University; otherwise the

Communists will make trouble over this to prevent merger. Our conflict is with the Communists, most of whom are in the Chinese-educated world. But this does not mean we quarrel with the Chinese-educated for that is exactly what the Communists want us to do. Our duty is to bring the various linguistic groups together to build up a united, tolerant society in which all the races and all the language groups will live in peace. We must give the Chinese-educated a fair and equal place in our society and convince them that their best interests lie with the nationalist and democratic side.

So in spite of all the misunderstanding the Communists and their supporters are trying to create amongst genuine and sincere Chinese educationists over the recent proposed change in the Chinese middle schools from the present six-year system of three years for junior middle and three years for senior middle to a system with four years for Secondary School Certificate plus two years for post school certificate; we have been patient and always open to reason. In this way, we prevent the Communists from making people believe that we are anti-Chinese education and carry with us the support of the neutrals who form the bulk of the people in the Chinese educational world.



Because we are not likely to play into their hands, Lim Chin Siong and his friends know that they are in serious trouble. They realise they have made a grave error of judgment and have been taken for a ride by the British.

Let me tell you what James Puthuchearry said a few days ago before my series of broadcast talks began to the Chairman of a Trade Union. He said, "I still have a high regard for Devan Nair. Ask him to come and see me. I am a liberal, but I must stand with them because I know that they are going back to jail."

On the 29th August at about 10 a.m. Dr. Rajakumar of the General Hospital, Kuala Lumpur, went to see Ahmad Ibrahim at his house in Nassim Road. Rajakumar was one of the accused in the Fajar sedition trial together with Poh Soo Kai, the new assistant secretary-general of the Barisan Sosialis. I defended them and we became friends. He had been in Singapore for a few days to look up his friends like Poh Soo Kai and Woodhull. He asked Ahmad whether he could come and see me. Ahmad said certainly, and offered to arrange a meeting between him and me, but Rajakumar said, "Not this time". He went on to say that "the boys" i.e. his friends, were very foolish if they think that the Communists could run Singapore and the Federation simply keep quiet and do

nothing about it. Rajakumar also said, in his own words: "there is no solution to this problem except that the boys would all go back to jail".

They know that they are in trouble with the British and with the Federation. The question is how do we, the non-Communists, stay out of their trouble? Their objective is to involve us in their trouble and do us the greatest amount of damage in the minds of the people, to paint us as rightists, reactionaries, stooges and a host of other abusive terms. Our duty is to show you, the people, that this trouble is all of their own making and that what the Communists want to do, will harm the country and damage our livelihood.

In my next talk I shall tell you how when the Communists saw that we were succeeding in getting merger, they tried to bring the Government down to prevent merger.

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