

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE'S ACTION PARTY
OF SINGAPORE MADE AT THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF
THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL HELD IN LONDON
ON 28-29 MAY 1976

By C.V. DEVAN NAIR

Gentlemen,

1. CREDENTIALS

First of all my personal credentials.

Together with Lee Kuan Yew and others, I was one of the convenors of the People's Action Party in 1954.

I was involved with the anti-colonial struggle, beginning with the Japanese Occupation. When many of my friends of Indian origin were joining Subhas Bose's Japanese-sponsored Indian National Army, I chose to cast my lot with sympathisers of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA), for I could not reconcile the Japanese penchant for head-chopping with the best interests of any people. As a result, in the last six months of the Japanese occupation, I was obliged to hide myself in the jungle.

With the re-occupation, my interest shifted to the great anti-imperialist national liberation movements unleashed by Gandhi and Nehru in India, Mao Tse-tung in China and Soekarno in Indonesia. I joined the Malayan Democratic Union in 1947. I did not know then that it was a communist front organisation. It would not have mattered in any case. For I was then prepared to join forces with anybody at all, as long as they shared the common aim of bringing an end to colonialism. In 1950 I joined the Anti British League, an underground auxiliary of the Malayan Communist Party. I spent a total of five years, in two separate spells, in British prisons.

I am not in the least bitter. Indeed, I look back nostalgically to my years of incarceration, for they were years of intensive reading and self-education.

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On the whole, my fellow detainees and I were well-treated. One of the few complaints we had was that the British allowed us radio sets which were doctored to receive only Radio Singapore. We wanted to listen in to Peking and Moscow as well.

We were in touch, through easily bribable camp warders, with the communist underground in Singapore. We were instructed to go on a hunger strike, to protest against "ill-treatment and torture". When some of us pointed out that there was ill-treatment or torture, our chief fellow detainee, one P.V. Sarma, a full-fledged member of the CPM, and now reportedly operating between Hanoi and Peking, told us that "it was a revolutionary duty to expose the imperialists, through whatever means were available". Our anti-colonial zeal being greater than our commitment to truth, we swallowed whatever qualms we had, and embarked on a 6-day hunger strike. It had the required effect, not upon the British, who were quite unmoved, but as far as underground communist propaganda in Singapore was concerned. For our hunger strike was extolled as an example of our heroism and of the vileness of the imperialists. I am sure that Amnesty International, if they had been approached then, would have adopted us as "prisoners of conscience", and given international ventilation to our allegations of ill-treatment and torture.

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I was reminded of this episode when I read the Dutch Labour Party paper with allegations about the torture of detainees. I personally knew Dr. Poh Soo Kai, who made these allegations of torture, and the so-called Singapore 4, particularly Dr. Lim Hock Siew and Syed Zahari. I knew they were communists and they knew that I was a fellow-travelling anti-British leaguer.

I also happen to know a good deal about prisons and detention camps in Singapore. For, soon after Lee Kuan Yew formed the first PAP Government in May 1959, I persuaded him to set up a Prison Inquiry Commission, for I had not liked what I had seen of many of the demeaning conditions of imprisonment imposed by the British authorities -- not on political detainees, but on convicted prisoners. For example, on the approach of a British prison officer, every convict had to kneel down on the floor, with his head down. That aroused my ire, and it still does, when I think of it.

I was appointed Chairman of the Prisons Inquiry Commission, which included two British academicians from the University of Malaya in Singapore, the late Dr. Jean Robertson and Professor T.H. Elliott. The recommendations my Commission made, to humanize prison conditions, still form the major basis for the administration of prisons and detention centres in Singapore. The International Red Cross have had access to our prisoners, detainees, and places of detention. You will appreciate that the Red Cross are not allowed in several other countries, and I can confidently challenge any country in the world to boast a more enlightened and more efficient prison system than the one we have in Singapore.

This explains why I read with wry amusement the absurd allegations of ill-treatment, torture and inhuman conditions in our prisons and detention centres, made by our communist united front group in Singapore, and faithfully repeated in the Dutch Labour Party paper. More on this later.

Let me return to my political credentials. After the PAP was formed in 1954, I moved with both communists like Lim Chin Siong and Fong Swee Suan, and non-communists like Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Keng Swee, in the United anti-colonial front, which was the PAP in those early days. I grew aware that the anti-colonial struggle would be won in any case, sooner than later. But the real struggle for the PAP and for Singapore would begin after self-government was achieved, between communists and non-communists. Would Singapore opt for a communist Left or a non-communist Left? The writing was already on the wall. The communists knew it. Lee Kuan Yew and his colleagues knew it, and I knew it. And we all knew that there would be no holds barred in the coming struggle.

By 1956 I had already developed reservations about the aims of the communists and their methods. I had no objections to intellectual Marxism, but I was distinctly disenchanted to discover that many of my communist friends were distinguished more by their Chinese chauvinism than by their Marxism. The

concentration on exclusively Chinese issues, Chinese education, Chinese language and Chinese culture, regardless of the sensitivities of the Malays, Indians and others in the multi-racial societies of Malaya and Singapore, seemed to me calculated to create a racial confrontation. I was not far wrong, for the thrust of communist policy and practice succeeded in thoroughly alarming the Malay majority in Malaya.

Anyway, I was among the seven top trade union leaders arrested in the big crack-down on pro-communist groups by the colonial authorities in October 1956. The intense discussions, debates and divisions which took place between my fellow-detainees and myself in the next 31 months, are crucial to an understanding of the basis on which the PAP led by Lee Kuan Yew, contested in 1959 elections, under the first fully self-governing constitution conceded by the British.

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Contrary to the communist version, which is obligingly retailed by the Dutch Labour Party in its paper, or to Mr. Caldwell's travesty of history, the non-communist leaders of the PAP did not resort to subterfuge in their appeal to the electorate. The claims I will make here are documented, and are attached as annexures to this paper. The falsehoods belong to those who, like Caldwell, in typical Marxist fashion, are not averse to re-writing history if it suits their purpose.

The top trade union leaders who were detained were as follows:-

Lim Chin Siong

Fong Swee Suan

C.V. Devan Nair

J.J. Puthucheary

Chan Chiaw Tor

S. Woodhull and

Tan Boon Eng

In the first part of our detention, Lim Chin Siong was detained separately. He was allowed to join us only during the latter part of our detention.

Lee Kuan Yew had access to us as our legal adviser. He categorically told us that he and his non-communist colleagues in the PAP would not contest the general elections scheduled for May 1959, with a view to winning and forming the Government, unless he was assured that we would abide by the democratic socialist values of the PAP, respect peaceful constitutional means, and take a clear-cut stand against the armed insurrection led by the MCP. He also told us that he would make his stand plain on the PAP's attitude to the continuation of the Emergency Regulations after the elections in 1959. This he did at a meeting of the Legislative Assembly on 8 October 1958, in which the PAP had then three seats as an opposition party (see Annexure I). I quote from the Singapore Hansard:

"We state our stand now on the question of the emergency laws, and it is this: that as long as they are necessary for the maintenance of the security of the Federation, so long will they be necessary for Singapore. Sir, we state this now in the full

knowledge and anticipation that there will be political bankrupts and charlatans, those who have, and those who have not ever graced the chairs of this Assembly, who will make promises to abolish them in the next elections. We have met such types before, and we expect to meet them in the next elections. When that time comes, we shall

justify our views and our stand, that there will be no abolition of the emergency laws in Singapore until they have been abolished in the Federation. Those who want the emergency laws abolished in Singapore should try to help to establish conditions of peace and security in the Federation so that they may no longer be required there."

This was the commitment which Lee Kuan Yew and the PAP honoured. There is no mention of this in the communist version as retailed in the Dutch Labour Party's paper.

Lee Kuan Yew told us that in the absence of a foolproof assurance from us that we would not play the communist game if the PAP were elected to govern, he and his colleagues would only be prepared to contest the elections with a view to forming an opposition bloc in the next Legislative Assembly.

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We all knew that if the PAP did not form the next government, we would not be released by the British and Malayan Governments, whose representatives would sit on the Internal Security Council of Singapore, in accordance with the provisions of the Rendel Constitution.

I left my fellow detainees in no doubt that I was committing myself thenceforth to the PAP, and to a non-communist solution for Singapore and Malaya. I felt that Lee Kuan Yew was quite right not to seek power without an assurance of good faith on our part not to play the communist game any longer.

My fellow detainees thought at first that verbal assurances to Lee Kuan Yew would suffice. I told them that if we were sincere, we should be bold enough to commit ourselves in writing. This was the genesis of the two documents, one "The Road to Socialism in an Independent Malaya" and the other "The Ends and Means of Socialism", signed by the top leaders of the communist front group in Singapore in those days. (See Annexures II and III).

I meant every word in those two documents. I am afraid that my fellow detainees did not. For soon after Lee Kuan Yew formed the first PAP government after the elections in May 1959, they reneged on the affirmations made in those two documents, and made it clear that they were out to capture both party and government in the pursuit of communist aims in Singapore and Malaya. The battle between the communist Left and the non-communist Left was joined. The rest is part of history, but not the highly selective and largely cooked-up history as given in the Dutch Labour Party paper and in Mr. Malcolm Caldwell's paper.

2. THE SURREPTITIOUS MANNER IN WHICH THE CAMPAIGN
AGAINST THE PAP HAS BEEN MOUNTED

Before I deal with the trash of vulgar and dishonest documents which purport to make out a case against the PAP, permit me to comment on what strikes us as the surreptitious and sneaky way in which this campaign against the PAP has been mounted. Considering who are behind it, and the highly dubious source materials employed by the DLP paper, we are not in the least surprised. The following groups are traceable.

First, a communist united front group in Singapore who we know has been feeding the hostile communist version of events in the Republic to a radical group in Utrecht, Holland, which calls itself the Singapore/Malaysia Workgroup of the Mondial Information and Action Centre. We know of contacts between one Mrs. Lap Biem Cornelius, a Singapore girl, married to a Dutch man, who has been in contact with communist united front individuals in Singapore. Studying the content, language and style of the DLP document, we are practically certain that even the draft of this document originated with our communist united front in Singapore. It is written in a style which may be called "Singapore English".

We would have thought that DLP might at least have attempted to examine the credentials of those who fed it with the monstrous tissue of lies which litter their document. They could have consulted the numerous reliable and objective sources of information pertaining to Singapore; and not least, they could have asked their fraternal affiliate in Singapore, the PAP itself, for our comments, before making up their minds. None of this was done.

They might have followed the example, for instance, of Mr. W. Kok, President of the Nederland Verbond van Vakverenigingen, who had the courtesy to write to me as leader of a fraternal affiliate of the ICFTU in

Singapore, on the subject of so-called "trade unionists", alleged to have been detained in Singapore. This was refreshing courtesy, and I obliged Mr. Kok with an account of matters as seen by the Singapore National Trades Union Congress.

I also sent him a copy of Lee Kuan Yew's letter to Mr. Bruno Pittermann. Mr. W. Kok has sent me a courteous reply. Since he has not marked his letter as being confidential, I might quote an excerpt from it. Here it is:

"I highly appreciate it that you took the time and trouble to go into the matter and to answer my letter so amply. The contents of your letter made the situation clear, and confirmed our attitude not to participate in any international action as pointed out in my letter of 5 February '76. We realise the problems your country is facing and we welcome the efforts of your trade union organisation in its fight for freedom and democracy."

May we therefore expect that the Dutch Labour Party will now take steps to terminate all fraternal contacts with the Dutch Trade Union Federation, for the intelligent understanding and appreciation the Dutch trade unions have shown regarding our situation in Singapore?

(See Annexure IV for copies of correspondence between W. Kok, President of the Dutch trade union federation and C.V. Devan Nair, Secretary-General of the Singapore National Trades Union Congress)

Next, we have Mr. Malcolm Caldwell and his New Left group. We know that Mr. Caldwell is included in the public honours list of our communist united front. We are sorry for Mr. Caldwell, but we also know what our communists privately think of him. They have described him contemptuously as a "petit bourgeois" Marxist Intellectual, whose services should still be utilised in order to promote the communist cause in Malaysia and Singapore. He is usable and dispensable.

What are his credentials? He is the main editor of the Journal of Contemporary Asia. This journal started publication in 1971. Their aim, in their own words:

"Re-launch the Journal with the consciousness and avowed purpose of extending support to the liberation struggles of Asia both by servicing their needs and by helping to inform and enlighten progressives elsewhere of their policies and progress and of possibilities of active solidarity."

The "liberation struggles" clearly do not refer to democratic socialist struggles in Asia, but the communist "liberation movements."

In the introduction to the first issue, the Editor stated, "Naturally we are eager to receive mss of an appropriate kind, documents from the liberation struggles (i.e. meaning communist struggles) -- manifestoes, programmes, news sheets, etc, and books and other materials for review.

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Over the years a number of CPM documents have been published in the JCA. A list is provided below, including a document of the Communist Party of Thailand:

- a) JCA Vol. 3 No. 2/73 pp. 233-236

"New Constitution of the Communist Party of Malaya"
(published in May, 1972).

- b) JCA Vol. 5 No. 2/75 pp 260-262

"Warmly Celebrate the 5th Anniversary of 'March 22'
Revolution Rebellion, March 22, 1975 Statement of the
MPLA".

- c) JCA Vol. 5 No. 2/75 pp 262-265

"Statement of the Central Committee of the Malayan National
Liberation Front, November 26, 1974".

- d) JCA Vol. 5 No. 2/75 pp 255-257

"Communist Party of Thailand issues statement on 32nd
Founding Anniversary."

Also, an article under the following title, "The coming General
Election in Singapore -- will it be the last one?" was published in JCA Vol. 2
No. 3/72 pp 270-282. The last passage is worth noting:

"But the message of revolution comes strong and clear from Suara Revolusi, the clandestine radio of the Malayan Communist Party. It calls upon the masses to join the Malayan People's Liberation Army whose history is rich in service to the cause of liberation. It fought valiantly against the Japanese and against the British colonialists. The MCP considers Malaysia a neo-colony and has pledged to reunite Singapore with mainland Malaya and restore to the Malayan nation its true identity and to its people genuine freedom. To the MCP this five-yearly pantomime in the name of parliamentary democracy is a tragic-comedy. It is determined to ring the curtain down."

There are similar articles, with a clear communist slant on Malaysia and Indonesia as well.

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For the further enlightenment of the DLP, the following facts might be cited with regard to the sources employed in its memorandum. A Marxist writer like Mr. Iain Buchanan is not "one of the foremost authorities on Singapore", as the DLP puts it. Indeed, he is no authority at all. I shall distribute copies of a review of his book by a senior impartial academician in South East Asia, for your information.

If Mr. Iain Buchanan had his way, Singapore would be transformed into something like a Cambodian fishing village. The workers of Singapore, who today enjoy the highest income levels in Asia, after Japan, would certainly not welcome such a fate.

Mr. Buchanan's book made its appearance before the September 1972 general elections in Singapore. He did not have to wait long for the most telling of all verdicts on his dire prognostications for Singapore. I cannot do better than quote the review:-

"In the last two paragraphs of his book, the author predicted large-scale insurrection in Singapore in the early 1970's because of his view (expressed in many parts of the book) that there was widespread serious dissatisfaction and discontent with the Singapore Government and because of mounting unemployment and under-employment in Singapore. The people would fight, to use his own colourful and provocative words, 'in the streets, in the schools, and in the factories and business houses, for a new and more representative government'. True enough, in September 1972, there was an important 'fight' in Singapore, but initiated by the Singapore

Government, and true enough, the 'contest' was carried out in the streets, in the schools, in the factories, in business houses and one may add, even in the homes, but the contest was over votes in the general election, not of the type he prognosticated. He thus has erred in judgement, especially so when it is borne in mind that the ruling party was returned with an even greater majority of votes".

To be exact, 69.2% of the electorate voted for the PAP. Members of the Bureau are referred to the full text of the review of Dr. Lim Chong Yah, for further information about Mr. Buchanan's brand of economics (See Annexure V).

Writers like Iain Buchanan, Malcolm Caldwell and T.J.S. George whose books, incidentally, are freely available in Singapore bookshops and libraries, belong to the so-called New Leftgroup. It is important that social democrats in Western Europe, who we assume, do not desire to be taken in by communist propaganda relating to the Third World, should be made aware of the distinctly pro-communist credentials of this group.

The British version of the New Left follows closely that of the United States, the so-called "Concerned Asian Scholars", whose leading figures include men like Noam Chomsky and Gabriel Kolko. Nearly all of them derive

their inspiration from the Swedish writer Johan Galtung. They have a common thesis: that American, Japanese, and West European imperialism continues through a process of penetration and exploitation by way of a network of economic, cultural and political agencies, including foreign investors, and they seek to maintain the elites in power in the developing countries (i.e. those who are not communists!) and suppress the masses. Their writings are published in such journals as the Journal of Contemporary Asia and the Bulletin of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars. Needless to say, they are infinitely more distinguished for the polemical skills than for their scholarships. These writers are openly sympathetic to communist revolutionary movements in the Third World.

Neither scholarship nor objectivity marks the writings of these men.

As Professor Robert James Maddox in his book "The New Left and the Origins of the Cold War" has stated, such New Left writers always employ a double standard. For example, Soviet actions are justified or explained by reference to national security or realpolitik. But Western actions are invariably measured against some high ideal and found wanting. Professor Maddox rightly observes that the New Left "exaggerates the importance of evidence which supports their themes and minimises or ignores materials which do not". In his review of New Left, writings, Professor Maddox concludes: "Granting a generous allowance for

mere carelessness, such an analysis reveals that these books of the New Left, without exception, are based upon pervasive misusages of source materials. Although the frequency varies from volume to volume, even the best fails to attain the most flexible definition of scholarship. Stated briefly, the most striking characteristic of revisionist historiography has been the extent to which New Left authors have revised the evidence itself."

It would be superfluous to ask the authors of the DLP memorandum to take note.

I said earlier that there was something surreptitious about the whole campaign mounted against the PAP. There was pre-judgement and conspiracy. I refer now to the activities of Miss Jenny Little, the International Secretary of the British Labour Party. May I take you back a little to the background of the decision of the Bureau on 29-30 May '75, calling on the Secretariat to produce a report on the political situation in Singapore. A reading of S.I. Circular Y 8/75 of 21 November 1975 gives the background. According to this Miss Little played a crucial part. She is supposed to have visited Singapore in May 1975, as a result of which she presented a report about the situation in Singapore. Although Miss Little was in Singapore for this so-called study on civil liberties, the Bureau should know that the PAP was never informed of this visit. All that we know is

that she came to Singapore and rang up a colleague, Mr. Rodrigo who is Secretary/Treasurer of the Asian Pacific Socialist Organisation. She did nothing more than to leave a hotel address at which she could not be contacted. She saw nobody in the Party nor did she call at the Party Office -- a courtesy one would normally expect from a visitor from the Socialist International Headquarters. How she came to her conclusions about civil liberties in Singapore, and whose views she was expressing, remain a mystery, as far as the PAP is concerned.

3. COMMENTS ON DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THE DUTCH LABOUR PARTY PAPER

- a) THE FUEMSSO set, including Mr. Malcolm Caldwell's essay with the title -- "Lee Kuan Yew -- the Man, his Mayoralty and his Mafia"

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The influence of the New Left group on the FUEMSSO set of

documents is obvious. On the very first look, the dubious nature of the document hits the eye. The authors and publishers choose to hide behind a cloak of anonymity. Neither the names of those responsible for this publication, nor of those who accept responsibility for its scurrilous and libellous contents, are given.

Let us take the essay purported to have been written by Malcolm Caldwell. We call upon him to publicly own up to this highly libellous article, so that Lee Kuan Yew might join issue with him in a British Court of Law.

If Mr. Malcolm Caldwell is honest, he will do one of two things. Either he publicly repudiates this scurrilous and libellous article as being falsely attributed to him, in which cases the DLP would look even more foolish in its choice of source material for its memorandum; or he accepts responsibility, and thereby enables Lee Kuan Yew to join issue with him in a British Court of Law. In which case, he will either obtain the satisfaction of eliminating Lee Kuan Yew and the PAP altogether from the life of Singapore, which he so ardently wishes, or he parts with a substantial sum in damages for a most serious libel. Perhaps the Dutch Labour Party, in its crusading concern for the truth, might convey this challenge to the honesty of Malcolm Caldwell.

b) The Dutch Labour Party Memorandum

Obviously a concerted effort, between a communist united front group in Singapore, the Mondial Information and Action Centre in Utrecht, and perhaps a very gullible radical group within the Dutch Labour Party itself. The

source materials used in the DLP memorandum deprive it of the slightest pretence to objectivity. Our communist united front in Singapore could not have done a better job for themselves. For in large parts, it reads almost verbatim like communist united front documents produced in Singapore on the so-called history of the PAP. The communists refer to themselves as the nationalist movement in Malaya! So does the DLP paper. All you have to do is to read the word "communist", in place of the term "nationalist", wherever it occurs in the DLP paper, and you get a faithful reflection of how the communists regard themselves and the PAP.

Joining the concert of the communist united front group in Singapore, the authors of the DLP paper, and the New Left tribe of Malcolm Caldwell and Company, are the broadcasts of the Voice of the Malayan Revolution (VMR) broadcasting from somewhere on the Chinese mainland, and calling on the PAP to release hard-core detainees. Allow me to quote from some of these broadcasts, which we monitor regularly.

On 11 July 1975, the VMR broadcast the following topic: "Joint statement of Dr. Poh Soo Kai and four other political detainees -

a) Dr. Poh Soo Kai, P. Govindasamy, Lan Ah Lek, Fu Yeng Yeow and Tan Kim Siar have recently "issued a statement in English to expose the atrocious acts of the Lee Kuan Yew clique in trampling the fundamental rights of the people and to demand for the unconditional release of all political detainees in Singapore and Mainland Malaya." The statement is rendered in Mandarin in this broadcast. It first gives a brief historical background of the detention of these five persons saying that they were imprisoned for their involvement in the opposition to the terms of merger and other political activities concerning the great majority of the people. It also gives an account of the ill-treatment and various methods of torture used to break their political conviction in prison. It points out that the Amnesty International's investigators were barred from entering Singapore because Amnesty had acknowledged the fact of tortures applied on the detainees. Besides condemning the Lee Kuan Yew clique for depriving many political detainees of their citizenship, it strongly denounces the undemocratic acts of the clique in suppressing the students and workers, abolishing freedom of speech, expression and association and serving the US imperialist policy of aggression in Southeast Asia. In "conclusion, it calls upon all those who treasure justice, freedom and democracy to redouble

their efforts and join in the just demand or the unconditional release of all political prisoners in both Singapore and Mainland Malaya".

I attach a list of VMR calls to overthrow the Singapore Government through armed struggle, made between June 1974 and April 1976 (Annexure VI).

The obvious question from the PAP to the DLP is: "Who are you helping in Southeast Asia, please? And why should we regard you as desirable company if your view of the PAP is indistinguishable from that of the VMR and the communist united front group in Singapore?"

In parts, the DLP document loses itself in abysms of ludicrousness. A choice piece of sarcasm by Lee Kuan Yew is transformed into a confession by Lee Kuan Yew of the methods of torture he employs in Singapore. How low can social democratic IQs go? The people of Singapore laughed till their bellies ached when the Far Eastern Economic Review, that fearless little monthly published in Hong Kong as one of the articles submitted by the British Labour Party to the Bureau puts it, perpetrated the same idiocy. We might perhaps forgive the DLP. Their lack of competence in the nuances of the English language might be allowed for. But how do you forgive that "fearless little

monthly published in Hong Kong", edited by pukka Englishmen? That is something for the British Labour Party to ponder over.

The full text of Lee Kuan Yew's speech to the Commonwealth Press Union, from which this "confession of torture" was taken, is attached as Annexure VII. It is offered purely as sophisticated literary entertainment for those who are cultivated enough to be so entertained.

The thesis presented in the DLP's paper will be debunked in the way it deserves, when I come to deal with the actual situation in Singapore.

I would now touch briefly on the two articles on "Lee Kuan Yew and the Singapore Media", submitted by the British Labour Party.

4. THE ARTICLES ON "LEE KUAN YEW AND THE MEDIA"
SENT BY THE BLP WHICH WERE DISTRIBUTED AT THE
LAST BUREAU MEETING OF THE SOCIALIST
INTERNATIONAL

There are two articles, one with the title "Purging the Press" by an American journalist Simon Casady, the second "Protecting the People" by one

John A. Lent. They are not distinguished for their accuracy, and even less for profundity of insight. In fact, the piece by Simon Casady contains downright falsehoods. For instance, he claims that the Far Eastern Economic Review is now banned in Singapore, and its correspondents are persona non grata.

Singaporeans knew that this is nonsense. No issue of the Review has ever been banned in the Republic. None of the persons in Singapore who contribute articles to the Review are persona non grata.

Casady also claims that when Time contains an offensive article, it is scissored out of every copy by Government censors.

Neither Time nor Newsweek nor any other journal has ever been "scissored" for carrying articles adverse to Singapore. And no issue of Time has ever been banned in Singapore. There are neither Government censors nor scissors. These are blatant falsehoods.

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If we were a closed society in Singapore, we would not have allowed the BBC to operate their booster service in the Republic, after the BBC was booted out from Malaysia. In fact, Singaporeans get BBC on their FM radio. For we want our people to be exposed to world news. And we shall continue to use the services of the BBC, so long as they continue to retain their

present high standards of objective coverage and stimulating presentation of world news. But we shall certainly smack down on the BBC if every that great corporation should come under the control of the New Left group, the Malcolm Caldwells and the like.

Mr. John Lent's article is also easy to dismiss. For one thing, he is so keen to prove his point, even in the teeth of the facts he himself quotes. For example, he quotes Mr. R. B. Ooi, Editor of the Eastern Sun, which closed down of itself in 1968, Mr. Ooi's remarks, as quoted by Mr. Lent were:

"In 1968, our Singapore edition of the Sun printed a special issue for the anniversary of the North Korean Republic. Before the issue came out, the North Korean Ambassador stormed into my office and demanded an advertisement. I told him to go to hell, and as Editor,

I refused to be dictated to by any advertiser. He surprised me by saying he would withdraw support for my newspaper. I was

shocked. My investigations "from then on revealed that we had for some time been using newsprint sent to us by the communists from North Korea. I left the newspaper. Looking back, I can see why Lee Kuan Yew is so worried about control and policy of

newspapers. Everybody is ready to come with money and support to influence your editorial position."

Mr. Lent's observation on this quotation from Mr. Ooi is curious in the extreme. For he says:

"Ooi also discussed the episode that was eventually used by the Prime Minister to force closure of the Eastern Sun."

Gentlemen, the truth is that nobody forced the closure of the Eastern Sun. The paper had serious financial difficulties, which were compounded when it was revealed that from as early as 1964, following secret negotiations, Mr. Aw Kow, Managing Director of the Eastern Sun, met high-ranking officials of a communist intelligence service based in Hong Kong. He was given a loan amounting to HK \$3 million in order to establish an English language daily in Singapore. Appropriately enough, the paper was named the "Eastern Sun". In return for this loan, which was made available at a ridiculously low rate of interest of 0.1% per annum, with repayment of the capital to commence after five years, Aw Kow agreed that the Eastern Sun would follow three basic principles laid down by the communist intelligence service officials. These were (translation of actual wording from Chinese):

a) ON MAJOR ISSUES - NO OPPOSITION

No opposition to the country represented by the said communist intelligence service.

b) ON MINOR ISSUES - NEUTRAL STAND

Neutral attitude to be adopted on minor issues.

c) TO MAINTAIN FAIRNESS

To be fair in editorial comments and the treatment of news.

These requirements were only meant to be a modest start in their long term political objective of gaining control of the press in Singapore.

In September 1965, a second loan of HK\$3 million was again made available to Aw Kow on the same terms and conditions. This second loan was paid into Aw Kow's account with the Chung Khiaw Bank, Hong Kong Branch, of which he was a Director, between 28.9.65 and 24.12.65.

The Eastern Sun commenced publication on 17.7.66 and at once incurred heavy losses in its running costs. Between January 1967, and March

1968, Aw Kow had a series of meetings with communist officials in Hong Kong and was again granted a subvention of HK\$1.2 million.

This time Aw as told that a Chinese operator under their control would be infiltrated into Singapore. This nominee would act as adviser to the Easter Sun and carry out unacknowledged duties on behalf of their intelligence service. Aw was to provide a cover position in his newspaper organisation for this man.

The communist officials made it clear that their representative would feed news items of their own choice to the Sin Poh group of newspapers.

Back in Singapore, in mid 1968, Aw Kow attempted to sponsor the nominee's entry into the Republic. His attempts were frustrated. The intermediary used by Aw Kow to contact and liaise with the officials of the communist intelligence service based in Hong Kong was his own personal secretary and former deputy editor-in-chief of the Sin Chew Jit Poh, Julius Yeh Sai Fu. Yeh was arrested and detained under the Internal Security Act on 25.2.71 and subsequently released on 24.3.71 after interrogation.

Several outside forces, for different objectives, and working independently of one another, have sought to capture and manipulate the local mass media, as one of the most effective ways of influencing public opinion and creating political situations favourable to their interests. The Eastern Sun was allowed to pursue a moderate editorial policy to gain respectability as a responsible paper.

None of the members of the editorial staff of the Eastern Sun was privy to this operation, nor knew what their preliminary role was.

The Eastern Sun was not closed down by the Government. On the contrary when the connections with the communist intelligence service in Hong Kong were revealed by the Government, the outraged editorial staff resigned, and advertisers withdrew their support. This, taken together with the financial difficulties of the newspaper, obliged it to close down.

5. ALLEGED CURBS ON THE PRESS IN SINGAPORE

There has been gross and malicious misrepresentation about curbs on newspapers in Singapore. The cases of three newspapers, the Eastern Sun, the Herald and the Nanyang Siang Pau have been repeatedly flogged by foreign

critics, although as far as the people of Singapore are concerned, this is tantamount to flogging dead horses. For these were the issues, including the security laws providing for detention without trial, which was drummed up by the opposition parties as major election issues at the 1972 General Elections. These issues were widely and publicly ventilated and debated, both among the electorate in Singapore, as well as internationally. Lee Kuan Yew went to Helsinki in June 1971 to confront our critics head-on at the General Assembly of the International Press Institute. A copy of his address in Helsinki is attached as Annexure VIII. Also attached is a copy of the transcript of the press conference he held after his address to the General Assembly. (See Annexure IX).

I also throw in for good measure copies of two of his speeches made in Singapore regarding the mass media, one on 8 May 1971, and the other on 28 April 1971, delivered to a seminar on “Communism and Democracy”.

(See Annexures X and XI).

National Archives of Singapore

Members of the Bureau are also referred to his address, at a pre-election rally in Singapore, delivered on 29 August 1972, which was published by the Fabian Society in the Third World (see Annexure XII).

You will learn one thing from a perusal of these speeches. We have never lied to the people of Singapore. And in spite of all the pains taken by our critics, both foreign and local, the PAP romped home in the September 1972 elections with a thumping majority of 69% of the votes cast.

National Archives of Singapore

A brief on the laws governing the operations of newspapers in Singapore is attached as Annexure XIII. It is the most liberal set of laws we can think of in our particular situation. I need permit myself only a few brief observations on the rationale and justification of these laws. Having regard to the ease with which foreign intelligence agencies and other foreign interests have attempted in the past to manipulate public opinion in Singapore, we have now ensured that management shares in all our newspapers can now be vested only in citizens of Singapore, and editorial control is effectively divorced from ownership. What is so terrible about requiring that management shares of newspapers can only be acquired by our own nationals? The editorial boards of the non-Chinese newspapers do not have any Government nominees sitting on them. Those of the Chinese newspapers do have a Government nominee each; and it is not difficult to explain why.

Gentlemen, you in Europe cannot even begin to understand the Chinese newspaper world. It is a world apart. The Red Book may be dismissed as a joke in English translation. But it is no joke in the Chinese language. It is literally an assault on, and capture and capitalisation of vital gut issues, and a call to bloody revolution.

Our English newspapers, who freely lift feature articles from the Observer, the Guardian, the Times, the New York Herald Tribune, and other Western newspapers, are a different matter. But we would be out of our minds to allow our Chinese newspapers to lift articles from Hong Kong-based Chinese communist newspapers, for they sing the glories of the People's Republic of China, and chant the praises of the armed insurrection of the communists in Malaysia and Singapore. Do you seriously expect us to consider it as a fundamental democratic social right to allow free play to those who are out to use force to overthrow our elected government?

This is precisely what Mr. Lee Eu Seng, Managing Director of the Nanyang Siang Pau did. He systematically played up the glories of communist China, and attempted to whip up Chinese communal feelings on gut issues of language, education and culture in his newspaper -- issues which had over the years been largely defused by the PAP Government. Further, he did this at a time when our Malay newspapers were also whipping up Malay communal feelings in Singapore. Mr. Lee Eu Seng did all this, not because he was a communist. Indeed, ideologically he probably has more in common with the Kuomintang. But for a communalist, even Chinese communist grist comes in useful for his communal mill. Can you wonder that we in Singapore are flabbergasted that this bumptious and spoiled upstart son of a South East Asian

Beaverbrook should have aroused the sympathies of British socialists, of all people?

If you are interested, attached as annexures to this paper are public statements by Lee Eu Seng's hired henchmen, who tell how they were obliged to deliberately play up explosive Chinese chauvinistic issues in the Nanyang Siang Pau (see Annexures XIV and XV).

Mr. Lee Eu Seng knows that he will be released from detention, the moment he gives an assurance that he will never again play up to Chinese chauvinistic sentiments, which could easily lead to inter-racial carnage in our heterogeneous societies in Singapore and Malaysia. You in Europe have no idea of the brutal savagery of conflicts engendered in our region by the rank politics of race, colour or creed.

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Almost alone in the multi-racial societies of the Third World, the

PAP in Singapore has managed to build a multi-racial nation transcending divisions of race, language, religion and colour. And yet, you would put us in the dock for having succeeded? And some of you are even ready to revile us because we act firmly and speedily against those who would lead our nation to rack and ruin in a communal blood-bath!

Lee Kuan Yew has just returned from a highly successful trip to China, where he was warmly welcomed and feted. Let me tell you that Peking did not complain about our refusal to allow Chinese newspapers in Singapore to glorify China, and to lift articles from Hong Kong-based Chinese communist newspapers. Nor did they object to the way we deal with our communists. Premier Hua of China told Lee Kuan Yew in Peking that China “does not interfere in the internal matters of other countries, and that how the Singapore Government deals with its communists is a matter for the Singapore Government to decide”.

It is ironical that while China disclaims the mantle of god-father to the communists in Malaysia and Singapore, there are those who would pressurize the Socialist International to take on the role of democratic socialist god-father to our communists.

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Nobody in non-communist Southeast Asia will be terribly upset at this prospect. For the men in Peking are not political jokers. They know what the game is about. But you in Western Europe can only be seen as stalking-horses for our communists. And stalking-horses do not arouse fear and trepidation. They only arouse contempt.

6. THE PAP'S ANSWER TO THE DLP PAPER

If the core of a thesis is smashed, it follows that the whole thesis crumbles. The core of the DLP thesis is now smashed. For it is a thesis which shares everything in common with the propaganda ploy of the communist united front in Singapore. Nonetheless, to put the finishing touches, we might still profitably deal with some of the bits and pieces.

a) Detention without Trial

The first question that needs to be answered is: "Why not bring accused persons to trial?" The answer is straightforward. The British have had the same experience with the IRA. And they know why detention without trial is sometimes necessary. Those who dare give evidence against communists and fellow-travellers in Malaysia and Singapore are marked for the assassin's bullet. Everybody in our part of the world knows this, and therefore nobody dares give evidence. This was also the reason why successive British Labour Governments, which were responsible for administering the emergency laws in Malaya and Singapore when the first communist-led armed insurrection broke out in 1948 resorted even more widely than we do today, to powers of detention without trial.

Granted that such powers are certainly susceptible to abuse. But the Government of Singapore has to give an account of itself, once every five years, to one of the most sophisticated electorates in the Third World. It is pertinent to note that, in successive general elections since 1963, when our internal security laws were among the major election issues, the PAP won, and won handsomely, every time with increased majorities!

You will see from the figures given in Annexures XVI and XVII, that the majority of those detained since 1960 have been released. Most of them disavowed and renounced the CPM's use of force to overthrow the elected governments of Malaysia and Singapore. Of the 661 persons detained under orders of detention between 1960 and 1976, 492 have been released in Singapore, and 90 persons were released and proceeded to countries like China and Malaysia. You will also note that 53 of the 64 current detainees (i.e. 82.8%) were detained for Malayan National Liberation Front (MNLF) and Malayan People's Liberation League (MPLL) activities following the discovery of arms and ammunition in June 1974.

Those still in detention know that they are under detention by their own choice. We do not require any confessions from them, for we already know who they are. But our detainees know that their release is assured the moment they are prepared to renounce and disavow the CPM's use of armed force, terror and assassination, as means of securing political change. This, a few of them at least, are not prepared to do. Neither have they accepted offers to send them off to any country of their choice. Obviously, for how do you contribute to the CPM's armed insurrection by accepting asylum in London, Amsterdam or Stockholm? But you are welcome, Gentlemen, to offer them asylum in the moral liberal atmosphere of your counties. And we wish you good luck, if you can persuade them to accept your generosity.

Amnestis International has adopted many of our detainees as "prisoners of conscience." In so doing, they would appear to have violated their own code, which stipulates that Amnesty would not seek the release of persons who use, or advocate the use of violence to achieve their ends. I attach as samples copies of clear calls to violence made by detainees who have nonetheless been adopted by Amnesty International. (See Annexures XVIII and XIX).

To put it bluntly, we are unable to accept Amnesty International as an impartial organisation. They see nothing wrong in ventilating malicious and mischievous allegations made by communist united front elements in Singapore without making any attempts whatsoever to substantiate such allegations before giving them currency.

The Voice of the Malayan Revolution (VMR), the communist united front in Singapore, and the DLP paper, make the outrageous allegation that people are arrested in Singapore for their political opinions. This is simply not true. There are several non-communist opposition political parties in Singapore, none of whose leaders have ever suffered arrest and detention. They contest elections and speak their minds freely. There are also several anti-establishment intellectuals and others in our tertiary institutions, among our professional men, and in other sectors of our society. They are absolutely free to espouse their separate causes. But it is no fault of the PAP that, thus far, no non-communist anti-PAP group has managed to influence public opinion to any significant degree.

The DLP pretend to mock horror about provisions in our internal security laws for detention without trial. They seem to have forgotten that Dutch socialists have themselves resorted, when the occasion demanded, to powers of detention without trial. I do not quote from either the New Left or the New Right. I refer to the official history of the Netherlands Government -- the Kingdom of the Netherlands during the Second World War, Part V, March 1941 to July 1942 by Dr. L. de Jong. On page 278 of this book, we are told that on the evening of 3 May and the night of 3-4 May 21 persons were arrested and transported to the internment camp Ooltgensplaat on the Island of Overflakkee. The official history also reveals that in the Dutch Cabinet at that time the Social Democratic Labour Party was represented, in the persons of two members of high standing in the Cabinet: Alberda and Van den Tempel. We are also told on page 278 of this official history that a prominent member of this Cabinet, by the name of Gerbrandy who took the stand to arrest people "who on the basis of their utterances or their behaviour could be considered as a danger to the Netherlands."

Attached is an excerpt from this official history as Annexure XXIV.

b) Allegations of Torture and Ill-treatment of Detainees

I have touched on these allegations earlier. Here is only necessary to repeat what the Secretary-General of the PAP, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, stated in his letter to the Chairman of the Socialist International. I quote:

“Allegations of torture made in statutory declarations are patently false. Our Law Courts are open, with appeals going to the Privy Council in London. Yet no civil or criminal action has been brought by anyone for battery and assault, let alone torture. And there are quite a few pro-communists and even more anti-establishment lawyers, ready to pick up cudgels on behalf of any aggrieved party.”

You may well ask why this has not been done. We know why. It is communist tactics never to use the Law Courts. It is far easier to make wild allegations of torture and ill-treatment, on the safe assumption that there are enough gullible persons, in some West European democratic parties, and in Amnesty International, who are only too willing to ventilate such allegations, to the detriment of the elected Government of Singapore. Amnesty International would be doing a more honest and responsible job if they offered legal assistance to all detainees who have sworn affidavits alleging torture, and to seek redress in our law courts and, if necessary, to take their cases right up to the

Privy Council in London. We know that the detainees will decline, because they know that it is impossible to substantiate blatant falsehoods.

A whole lot of allegations relating to the treatment of detainees are given in the DLP paper. Replied to these allegations are given in Annexure XX.

In this connection, we might inform you that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited places of detention and interviewed political detainees in Singapore, as follows:

- a) On 29 and 30 April 1974, representatives of ICRC visited Moon Crescent Centre and Queenstown Remand Prison; and
- b) On 27 and 28 January 1975, representatives besides visiting Moon Crescent Centre and Queenstown Remand Prison also visited the Whitley Road Holding Centre.

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It will be noted that the FUEMSSO publications and the authors who contributed to this publication made no mention of the fact that we allow the ICRC to visit our detention centres, whereas there are countries with political detainees to which the International Red Cross can never hope to have access.

c) Singapore is NOT a one-party State

No scholar, as distinguished from New Left polemicists, who has studied our multi-party system and our elections laws, has ever cared to define Singapore as a one-party state. There are several such studies available in the Social and Political Science Departments of numerous Western universities. They know, what every child in Singapore knows, that a whole number of political parties have contested seats in every general election held in Singapore. It is certainly not the fault of the PAP that the people of Singapore have not voted in any opposition candidate since the 1968 elections, although they did obtain some support from among the electorate. In fact, in the 1972 general elections, in at least two constituencies, the PAP candidates only managed to come in with very narrow majorities.

Tabulated below are the results of the general elections held since 1959, together with the number of political parties which contested:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats won</u>	<u>% of Votes</u>
1959	People's Action Party	43	53.4
	Singapore People's Alliance	4	20.4
	Liberal Socialists	0	8.1

	United Malays National	3	6.3
	Organisation/Malaysian Chinese		
	Association		
	Independent	1	7.1
1963	People's Action Party	37	46.9
	Barisan Socialis	13	33.3
	United People's Party	1	8.3
	Singapore People's Alliance	0	8.4
	Other 4 parties	0	1.9
	Independent	0	1.2

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1968	(Only 7 contested seats)		
	People's Action Party	58	86.7
	Workers' Party & Independent	0	13.3
1972	(57 contested seats)		
	People's Action Party	65	69.2
	Barisan Socialis	0	4.5
	United National Front	0	7.2
	Workers' Party	0	11.9
	People's Front	0	3.0
	Social Justice Party (PKMS)	0	1.3
	Independent	0	1.0

If any West European social democratic party achieved the same degree of electoral endorsement as the PAP has achieved in Singapore, fraternal parties all over the world would have saluted such exemplary performance. But the PAP is blamed for its outstanding electoral performance.

- d) Our General Elections conducted by Secret Ballot is based on the British Model

The DLP paper repeats communist united front allegations in Singapore that our electoral system is a farce, and that the way our secret ballots are conducted is dubious. The truth is that our election system remains exactly what the British Labour Government introduced for our benefit.

We follow the balloting procedure which is practised in other Commonwealth countries, including the United Kingdom, which started it one hundred years ago in 1872. Singapore adopted the same practice in 1947.

In accordance with this procedure, the purpose of writing the voter's number on the counter foil of a ballot paper is to establish that the ballot paper is given to a registered voter; just as the serial number on the back of the ballot paper is to guarantee that the ballot paper is genuine.

To find out how a person has voted, you have first to trace the counterfoil to obtain the serial number of his ballot paper. At the close of the ballot, counterfoils are put inside envelopes which are sealed immediately. These sealed envelopes are then brought to the counting centres together with the

ballot boxes containing the ballot papers. They remain sealed and the candidates and their counting agents are there to see that this is so.

After counting, and the result of the ballot has been declared, these sealed envelopes together with the ballot papers are put into ballot boxes which are immediately sealed and taken to the High Court vault for safe keeping for six months before destruction.

Throughout the period of storage in the High Court vault, inspection of counterfoils, as well as ballot papers, can only be authorised by a High Court Judge, and only in connection with an election position.

At the end of six months, the ballot papers are burnt by High Court officials in the presence of representatives of all political parties which contested the elections.

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e) The Trade Union Situation in Singapore

My credentials as a trade unionist happen to be well known, not only in Singapore, but also in international free labour circles. I am Secretary-General of the Singapore National Trades Union Congress. And only two weeks

ago, I was unanimously elected President of the Asian Regional Organisation of the ICFTU at their Congress held in Manila. This is an organisation which represents 21 million organised workers in the Asian Region. My trade union colleagues in Asia elected me to preside over their deliberations, mainly by virtue of the fact that Singapore boasts about the most successful trade union organisation anywhere in the Third World.

The comments in the DLP paper on the trade union situation in Singapore is no more than a rehash of the pack of lies propagated by the communist united front in Singapore. The overwhelming majority of the organised workers of Singapore have been quite unimpressed by these falsehoods. But the Dutch Labour Party, however, has allowed itself to be impressed.

The brazen shamelessness of the description of the Singapore trade unions is highlighted by the way in which a quotation from Iain Buchanan's book, "Singapore in South East Asia" is cited. The NTUC Secretary-General is supposed to have asserted in his 1967 Annual Report:

"The trade union role is obviously one of marshalling complete support for the Government ..."

This is intended to give the impression that the NTUC is a stooge organisation, something like a trade union in a communist country. I look up the NTUC's 1967 Report and discovered that the statement was made, not in reference to the Government's industrial or economic policies, but in reference to the Government's attempts to deal with the danger posed by the presence of Big Powers and their manoeuvres in the Indo-Pacific Region. Let me quote the exact excerpt from the NTUC Secretary-General's Report of 1967:

“The more immediate danger is the one posed by the presence of Big Powers and their manoeuvres in the Indo-Pacific Region. In the permutations of possibilities, a small island of two million souls troubles little the conscience of big power trading. The trade union role here is obviously one of marshalling complete support for the Government in its very difficult tight-rope walk in international politics.”

There is a world of difference when one reads that sentence in its proper context.

I am distributing to members of this Bureau copies of a book under the title: "Tomorrow -- the Peril and the Promise", which is the Secretary-General's report to the Second Triennial Delegates Conference of the NTUC, held in Singapore last month. Please read it. I can place a safe bet that those who do take the trouble to read this book will come to realise why we say that the DLP paper is the vulgar trash that it is.

I will content myself here only with quoting a section of this report under the title: "Without Apologies -- A Re-statement of the NTUC Position and its Role in Singapore" -

"A reading of the fraternal messages from trade union organisations throughout the world for our Second Triennial Delegates Conference (published elsewhere in this report) will satisfy delegates that our achievements as a trade union organisation, and what we stand for, are sincerely and honestly acknowledged by our numerous friends and well-wishers in international labour circles.

Blowing his own trumpet does not comes easily to the Singaporean. Nonetheless, we may express a modest gratification at the fact that our labours have earned wide-spread recognition.

This report in itself, the several working papers which discuss our various problems and projects, and the distinctive approaches we have taken to them together with the honest assessment of those who know us -- our friends and well-wishers in labour unions throughout the world -- as well as the poise which our own certitudes give us, constitute as the testimony we require.

We might merely restate here that the governing bodies of the NTUC are freely elected by duly accredited delegates from affiliated trade unions, which are themselves free institutions. No trade union leader in Singapore is beholden for his office to any political party or to the government in power, as is the case in totalitarian countries.

We are committed to the maintenance and further development of the principles of tripartism in our Republic, and to the more efficient functioning of existing tripartite institutions in our Republic. Trade union representatives sit on all statutory boards in the Republic, including crucial planning or executive boards like the Economic Development Board and the Industrial Training Board. The NTUC is consulted when major legislative changes are contemplated or before they are introduced in Parliament.

As an institution, we are financially self-sufficient. Indeed, our co-operative and other enterprises have already generated sizeable investible surpluses which will contribute to further expansion in the years ahead. However, like employers and managements in the Republic, we also benefit from grants from public funds for specific objectives, like subsidising the operations of the NTUC Research Unit. It continues to be a matter for argument with our Government whether trade unions benefit as much from public funds as employers do, considering the relatively heavier public subsidies expended on management training programme of all kinds.

From the NTUC's own surpluses, we have contributed to date more than \$20,000 to the Asian Solidarity Fund of the ICFTU/ARO. With the exception of trade union organisations in Japan, the NTUC is the only national centre in the Asian Region which contributes 100% in affiliation fees to the ICFTU. Even the Australians and New Zealanders do not do likewise.

And if any further testimony be required, our membership statistics will show that never before in the history Singapore have so many workers in Singapore been unionised. It must be remembered, in this connection, that we do not have a closed shop or compulsory unionism in Singapore. Our membership keeps on increasing, month by month.

We enjoy a greater sense of integration with the rest of society than our counterparts elsewhere have been able to achieve. We take no special credit for this, for we are conscious that we have the advantage of being part of a compact urban society.

Individually and collectively, we are proudly committed to Singapore -- to its stability, security and progress. So is the political leadership of our nation, which governs on the basis of overwhelming electoral endorsement. And over the years there has developed a mutually responsive co-operation between the political leadership on the one hand, and the trade unions on the other. This is inevitable in a society in which the majority of the electorate are wage-earners or salary earners, who could belong to one trade union or another.

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Off and on, we have our difference, but we take care not to allow any such differences to be exploited by hostile foreign political forces and interests, against the interests of Singapore.

We are aware that we enjoy a status, prestige and influence in the public life of the nation, which is the envy of trade unions in other developing

countries. This has been achieved by dint of the fact that we have imparted a wider scope, and an ampler sweep, to our objectives as a trade union movement in a developing society. While collective bargaining remains our primary responsibility to the workers of Singapore, it has ceased to be the sole and exclusive concern of our trade unions.

Visitors to Singapore have often been struck, and have said so publicly, by the palpable sense of pride among our workers in the fact that one in every three life insurance policies sold in Singapore is an NTUC INCOME policy that about 1,600 owner-driven taxis bearing the imprimatur of the NTUC travel our roads day and night; that four (soon to be eight) supermarkets, co-operatively owned and managed by the NTUC and its affiliate unions, play a crucial role in combating the profiteering by certain groups of the private sector, that the trade union movement founded and launched CASE -- the Consumer

Association of Singapore, which has effectively taken up the grievances of hundreds of Singapore consumers given raw deal by retailers of various kinds of merchandise; that thousands of school children and their parents in several Singapore schools have benefitted from the operations of the NTUC's school text books co-operative, FAIRDEAL, and that even more projects by the NTUC and by some of its affiliate unions are in the pipeline.

In the final analysis, any movement must be judged on the basis of the place it has earned in the esteem of the workers whom it represents. On the basis of the evidence, statistical or otherwise, the place the NTUC occupies, as of now, is fairly high. We will justify our continued existence by aiming for an even higher place.”

The communist united front informants to the authors of the DLP paper have got their arithmetic all wrong with regard to the organised workers in the Republic. Trade unions affiliated to the NTUC have a total membership of around 200,000. And this is not book membership. It represents fully paid-up membership, because we have a system for the check-off of union dues in Singapore. It is on the basis of actual paid-up union dues that we are able to accurately assess the actual paid-up membership of the trade unions. This means that roughly around 28% of the total work-force in Singapore are organised under the banner of the NTUC, which is a pretty good record by the standards of developing countries, and even of many developed countries. The pro-communist unions, according to Labour Ministry statistics, can only boast a miserable 7,000 odd members. Further, under our laws, union jurisdiction in places of employment is determined by secret ballot. If more than 50% of workers in any undertaking vote for a particular trade union, the employer concerned is legally obliged to accord official recognition to that union. And in

numerous secret ballots conducted, on practically every occasion, trade unions affiliated to the NTUC almost invariably have been accorded official recognition on the basis of the clear-cut majorities they won in secret ballots among the workers.

The DLP paper refers to low wage levels in Singapore. Attached an Enclosure XXV are the findings of an American group of economists of Arthur D. Little, which makes useful reading. The truth is that Singapore Labour enjoys the highest income levels in Asia, next to Japan. This is a cause for worry, and not for elation. The problem is to curb wage increases in Singapore, so that our wages are not excessively high in comparison with wage levels in countries like South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The chances are that if we fail to regulate our wage increases, the goods that we manufacture in Singapore may well be priced out of world markets.

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Lee Kuan Yew also been quoted in the DLP paper as standing for an elitist society. This is again a gross misrepresentation. The truth is that class conflicts in Singapore are much less acute than they are in Great Britain, for example. This is ensured by our education system. There are no special schools for the privileged. No matter what the social or economic class of parents may be, people of all classes in society send their children to the same schools. The result is that many members of the professional and executive elite in Singapore are the offspring of the washerwomen of yesteryear. We have thereby ensured in Singapore a very high degree of social mobility.

Unlike the DLP paper, the United Nations Family Planning agencies have praised Singapore's success in drastically reducing the fecundity of Asian families. What Lee Kuan Yew said about weak, undernourished and anaemic products of large families is the tragic truth in so many over-populated Asian societies. But here again, we get blame where praise is due.

- f) Why the Communists object to the PAP's Categorisation of Members and Ordinary Members

In the 1957 party conference of the PAP, the pro-communist faction managed to distribute membership cards to their supporters who were then able to vote them into the Central Executive Committee. To prevent a recurrence of such a fraud, the PAP then introduced two categories of members, viz Cadre and Ordinary. Ordinary members, who make the grade in contributing to the objectives of the Party become eligible for cadre membership, who have the right to vote in elections to the Central Executive Committee of the party. This system makes it impossible for the party to be captured by pro-communists elements. The communist united front in Singapore would certainly be delighted if the PAP threw open its membership to all and sundry, without screening anyone for his credentials. Anyway, it is a prudent practice which helps to keep the communists at bay.

g) Lee Kuan Yew and his concern for the Rule of Law

Quoting Lee Kuan Yew shamelessly and outrageously out of context, and against himself, is a favourite device employed in the DLP paper. I suppose this is what is meant by the Devil quoting scripture. For instance, an observation he made in 1967 is quoted, with a view to achieving the same kind of mischievous misrepresentation as was displayed with regard to his speech to the Commonwealth Press Institute. The impression that is conveyed is that Lee Kuan Yew is proudly boastful of the way in which Singapore is supposed to have

“departed from the principles of justice, and the liberty of the individual.” I enclose copy of the text of the speech he made. And if you take the trouble to read this text, you may come to the conclusion that rarely has any political leader in the Third World shown the same depth of concern with regard to the problems of maintaining and strengthening the rule of law in newly emergent countries.

The text speaks for itself. (see Annexure XXI).

h) The Democratisation of the Student Movement

Anyone who cares to look up the high rating given to the University of Singapore by the British Inter-Universities Council will easily appreciate that the University of Singapore maintains the highest academic standards.

University lecturers have the freedom to pursue their academic pursuits and to criticise the Government, which they often do. However, expatriate lecturers from Britain, the United States and elsewhere, have been bluntly told that it is not part of their academic duties to interfere in the political affairs of the Republic.

Further, with the return of local scholars, expatriate lecturers began to lose their privileges, which they came to resent. Many of them have had their contracts terminated or have moved on to greener pastures in other areas outside of their homelands.

Students organisations in the Republic have also been natural targets for infiltration and subversion by the communists. In our history, the mid 1950s and mid 1960s saw student riots and demonstrations inspired by communists. The student unions of both the University of Singapore and Nanyang University have been regular targets. Under the new amendments to the University Act, the Students' Union will be much more representative than it is today, as all societies, clubs and political bodies within the University will be represented in the Students' Council. As things stand today, the Students' Council is manipulated by a minority of Chinese-educated and radical activists who claim the right to speak in the name of all, when the majority are much more interested in pursuing their studies than in working for the violent overthrow of the Government. The objective of the PAP Government has been, not to snuff out of existence legitimate student activities, but to ensure that the participation of the majority of students, the capture of student organisations by a minority group is rendered impossible. We have confidence in the judgement of the majority of our students. And what is there so undemocratic about ensuring that the student majority really run their own organisation?

7) THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

Here I will address myself not so much to the Dutch Labour Party.

They have never mattered very much to us. But the British Labour Party did matter. Successive Labour Governments since 1948, when the first communist armed insurrection in Malaya began, made much wider use of the same emergency powers to protect our security and stability. We are grateful to the British Labour Party for what they did in the past to protect our security. What amazes us, however, is that now that the British Labour Government has shed all responsibility for our defence and security arrangements, the Labour Party should appear to countenance reckless irresponsibility on the part of elements within the Socialist International. Our question to our erstwhile benefactors is posed more in sorrow than in anger: "Who are you helping in South East Asia, Gentlemen?"

Lee Kuan Yew told me that at the Prime Minister's Conference in Jamaica, he quoted to the conference, at which Mr. Callaghan was present, the aphorism of a Chinese military strategist by the name of Sun Tzu, who lived in 500 BC -- several centuries before Clausewitz. It goes:

“Know yourself,
Know your enemy.
A hundred battles.
A hundred victories.”

“I know myself”, said Lee Kuan Yew to Callaghan. “And I know my enemy. What I did not bargain for was the weakness and soft-headedness of my friends”. And thereby will eventually hang a tale, which we in Singapore fervently hope will not prove to be too painful in the telling.

Our situation in South East Asia has always been quite different. And we cannot adopt Western methods and standards to our entirely different situation. The British Labour Party and Government have always known this. They knew our situation in 1966, when we were invited to join the Socialist International. Our internal security laws today are the same as they were in 1966. We had communist front detainees then, and we still have them today.

Why is it then that since nothing fundamental has changed in Singapore, what was acceptable to you in 1966, should suddenly have become reprehensible today?

The British Labour Party and Government know much better than other West European social democratic parties the serious implications, not only for Singapore, but for all the non-communist ASEAN nations in South East Asia, of the communist conquest of South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. You know well that this drastic alteration in the geo-political configuration of South East Asia has been a major morale booster for communist guerilla insurgency movements in Thailand and Malaysia. You also know that communist united front activities are also being hotted up in Singapore. Please see the lists which I have provided in Annexures XXII and XXIII. It relates to incidents of terror, assassination, arson, sabotage and bombings in Malaysia and Singapore in the recent past. You know that things in all probability will get worse and not better. So who are you helping?

Do you really believe that if we released all our hard-core detainees, as you want us to, without requiring that they renounce the use of armed force by the CPM to overthrow the elected Governments of Malaysia and Singapore, that we will be serving the cause of peace, democracy and progress in South East Asia? If we followed your advice, we would not become another happy Holland, able to fall back on large resources of natural gas. Or is it assumed that we will become like Great Britain, potentially well-heeled as a result of North Sea oil?

Gentlemen, we have nothing like that to fall back on. If we do what you want us to do, we will only provide for the systematic hotting up of communist united front operations in Singapore, thereby giving a boost to increasing strident guerilla insurgencies in Thailand and Malaysia.

What saddens us is that certain elements in the British Labour Party appear to have the clear intention of doing us maximum possible damage. I have already referred to Miss Jenny Little's visit to Singapore, ostensibly to study and report on our situation, but without any attempt to contact the PAP.

We are entering in South East Asia a new and far more dangerous phase. The Americans have effected a military withdrawal from the Asian mainland. No British troops and no General Templers will be made available to either Malaysia or Singapore to cope with our guerilla insurgents. We can understand that it is clearly not possible to expect military succour from either the British or the Americans.

Nevertheless you can help us. First, you can help us by refusing to condone activities in the Socialist International calculated to provide solace and comfort to our communists. Second, you can help us with economic growth. Stop being protectionists, by giving encouragement to proposals to close your markets to our manufactured products. Encourage off-shore investments in the ASEAN region, and thereby give a boost to our economic development. For the only ways in which we can overcome the growing threat of guerilla insurgencies in our region are:

- a) To deny the political ground to the communists by giving all sections of our population equal political rights;
- b) To ensure rapid economic development and to ensure that the fruits of such development are fairly distributed.

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We are confident that we in Singapore have done the right things in both these directions. We can only hope that our neighbours are equally successful.

Any help that you can give us in our situation will be most welcome.

We have entered a new phase in our history. But we cannot and will not concede to any member party of the Socialist International, neither to the Dutch nor British Labour Parties, the right to dictate or meddle in our problems, about which some of you seem to be profoundly ignorant.

8) CONCLUSION

I might state, in conclusion, that we in the PAP have become rightly dubious about the value of membership in the Socialist International, especially in view of changing attitudes to communism on the part of a number of West European social democratic parties. We know, for example, that the social democratic government in Sweden sustains its precarious control of parliament by depending on the votes of some 19 communist deputies. We therefore understand why Sweden's brand of neutrality is very much a left-handed neutrality. We do not complain. We do not wish to sit in judgement on the policies of any social democratic party in Western Europe.

If some West European socialists desire to play poker with their own communists, we sincerely wish them good luck. For we think that they will require lots of luck. But we beg to opt out. For our communists are an altogether different breed. They do not pretend like French or Italian

communists, to any liberal change of heart. On the contrary, with every passing day after fall of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, they mount their insurgency operations, and their campaigns of terror and assassination, in Thailand and Malaysia. They find solace and comfort, not only in the thought of the US\$3 billion worth of American arms left behind in Hanoi's hands, but also in the ignorant support they have received from some West European social democrats.

We cannot and will not permit the lunatic liberal fringes of West European social democratic parties to make common cause with our communists and fellow-travellers, and to tell us how we ought to run our affairs. We must therefore part company with the Socialist International, and we propose to do so without so much as a farewell.

My instructions are that unless the Dutch Labour Party paper is withdrawn, without reservation or qualification of any kind, I should hand in the resignation of the PAP from the Socialist International. Before I do so, I must express gratitude to those social democratic parties in the Socialist International who give us their backing. We are grateful. But to be fair to our own people, and being intensely conscious of the requirements of their security, we cannot continue to belong to an organisation like the S.I., which had failed to define its attitude to the growing problem of communist insurgencies in South East Asia.

We cannot belong to an organisation some of whose social democratic members allow themselves to be made use of by communist elements in our society who are out to destroy democratic institutions. For if the friends of the Dutch Labour Party in Singapore ever obtain control, they will certainly not seek affiliation with the S.I. On the contrary, we might well witness a repetition of Cambodia.

Practically the whole intelligentsia of Cambodia has been wiped out, and the whole population of Phnom Penh been violently uprooted. But one sees no reference to these appalling tragedies in Malcolm Caldwell's Journal of Contemporary Asia. Nor do sensitive social democratic conscience in Western Europe appear to have been unduly agitated over happenings in that unhappy land.

I have therefore come here, Mr. Chairman, not to show cause why the PAP should not be expelled from the S.I. I have come here rather to ask the S.I. to show cause why we should regard some of the member parties of the International as being desirable company for us to keep.

Gentlemen, we know our political ground in Singapore. And our political ground knows us, our integrity, the intelligence of our policies, and our undeniable achievements. The next general elections must be held in Singapore in 1977. And when we win these elections, you will have the satisfaction of

knowing that the folly of social democratic elements in Western Europe will have contributed in some measures to our victory.

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