

CONFERENCE REPORT

Following is text of summary which has been agreed by the Chief Minister, Mr. Lim Yew Hock, and which will be issued to the London Press at the same time as the Singapore Constitutional Report, i.e. 1015 GMT (5.45 p.m.) on Thursday, April 11:

"The Conference met in London from the 11th March until the 10th April under the chairmanship of the Secretary of State for the Colonies the Rt. Hon. Alan Lennox-Boyd, M.P. The All-Party Delegation from Singapore was led by the Chief Minister, the Hon. Mr. Lim Yew Hock.

"Agreement was reached on a new Constitution which will confer full internal self-government upon Singapore. The elected membership of the Legislative Assembly will be increased to 51 and the ex-officio and nominated membership will be abolished. The Prime Minister will preside over the Council of Ministers which will be responsible to this wholly elected Legislative Assembly for the conduct of Singapore affairs.

"The United Kingdom Government will remain responsible for external affairs and defence and will have the full right to the occupation, control and use of the base and installations in Singapore. Provision will be made for the United Kingdom Government to delegate the conduct of trade and cultural relations to the Government of Singapore. The power to legislate generally by Order in Council in Singapore will cease but the United Kingdom Government will retain the right to suspend the Constitution and to make fresh arrangements for the government of Singapore.

"In recognition of its advanced status Singapore will in future be known as the State of Singapore and not as a colony. The office of Governor will be abolished and in its place there will be established the office of the Queen's Representative who will be a Malayan-born personage entitled Yang di-Pertuan Negara (Head of State) and the office of the United Kingdom Commissioner who will discharge the responsibilities of the United Kingdom Government in Singapore. It was agreed that the United Kingdom Commissioner should hold both the two posts for six months after the introduction of the new Constitution in order to allow time for the new arrangements to be satisfactorily established.

"The Conference recognised that although the Singapore Government will have full responsibility for the preservation of internal security, the United Kingdom Government will because of its own continuing responsibilities retain a vital interest in the subject. It was therefore agreed that an Internal Security Council should be established to provide for the exchange of information and for consultation on matters concerning the maintenance of law and order. The Government of the Federation of Malaya have agreed to participate in the work of this Council which will consist of the United Kingdom Commissioner as Chairman, three Singapore Ministers, a Minister from the Federation of Malaya and two U.K. members. The Council will have the power to take binding decisions by a vote of all its members. Agreement was also reached on the establishment by administrative action of an inter-Governmental committee in which representatives of the Singapore and United Kingdom Government will discuss matters affecting Singapore arising from the United Kingdom's responsibilities for external affairs and defence.

"Consideration was also given to the position of the Public Service. It was agreed that the Public Service Commission should be incorporated in the Constitution which should contain safeguards for the rights of members of Her Majesty's Overseas Civil Service. The independence of the judiciary would also be fully safeguarded by the Constitution.

"A separate Singapore citizenship will be created by Legislation enacted in Singapore and the United Kingdom Government have agreed to propose an amendment to the British Nationality Act 1948 so that Singapore citizens will be recognised under the Act as British subjects and Commonwealth citizens. Agreement has been reached on the provisions on the proposed Singapore citizenship which take due account of the special position of Commonwealth citizens.

"Special provision will be made in the Constitution to safeguard the rights of Malays and other minorities in Singapore.

"It was the view of the Singapore Delegation that elections under the extended franchise which will result from these citizenship proposals must precede the coming into force of the new Constitution. It was therefore agreed that the introduction of the new Constitution should come into effect on a day after the 1st January, 1958 and when the Governor is satisfied that sufficient time has been allowed to enable those entitled to the new citizenship to acquire it and to be placed on the Electoral Roll.

"The position of civilian employees of the armed forces was discussed separately from the Conference and agreement was reached."

APRIL 11, 1957.

(Time issued - 1930 hours.)