SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

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PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH WHEN MOVING THE MOTION ON MALAYSIA IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ON 24TH JANUARY, 1962.

Sir, I rise to move the motion standing in my name. This motion was first tabled in the House for debate in November last year to be taken together with two other motions -- the first supporting merger in principle and the second accepting the heads of agreement published in Command Paper 33 of 1961 as a working basis for a merger between Singapore and the Federation of Malaya.

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As a result of the long debate on the question of merger, it was not possible to take a vote on this motion before the second meeting of the Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee which was held in Kuching from 18 to 20 December last year. This was a meeting intended to bring together all those members of the legislative chambers of the five territories who supported Malaysia in principle and wanted to help the Solidarity Committee quicken its realisation.

However, belated though this motion may be, it is not without its value, for it is as well from time to time to have all members of the Assembly state for the record whether they are in principle for or against Malaysia, or whether they are for various reasons unable to take a stand and therefore abstaining from voting either openly in this Chamber or surreptitiously by absenting themselves.

However, in moving this motion I am reassured by two facts. First, that members of Barisan Sosialis have always claimed to support in principle both merger and Malaysia and had asked for their representative to attend the Solidarity Committee meetings as a member of the Singapore delegation. We had gladly agreed to the Member for Thomson as their representative, and he was present at both meetings of the Solidarity Committee held in Kuching last December, and in Kuala Lumpur a fortnight ago. Since only those who support Malaysia in principle were invited to attend and Barisan Sosialis asked to attend, logically we can assume that they support Malaysia in principle. Furthermore, when the Member for Thomson was pressed to state his stand at the meeting in Kuching, he stated categorically off the cuff that he fully supported Malaysia in principle, but added that he had to ensure that the people of the Borneo territories were fully looked after, as if the Borneo people could not look after themselves.

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The other fact which has given me encouragement is the resolution on West Irian moved in the name of the Member for Queenstown and the Member for Upper Serangoon.

Taking a stand on any issue, be it West Irian or Malaysia, presents no difficulty to political parties with an open and straightforward stand like the PAP. But parties like the Barisan Sosialis who do not stand for what they claim to stand for, may find themselves in considerable difficulties if they start supporting things they do not really support.

I do not know whether these things were carefully considered by them and all the implications weighed as between a stand on West Irian, and a stand on merger and Malaysia. I would have thought that here indeed was the height of contradiction. In supporting the liberation of West Irian as the PAP did, we were supporting the liberation of an integral part of a European Empire in South East Asia which has still to be freed in order to complete the independence of what were formerly the territories of the Dutch Empire in South East Asia. And so Afro-Asian nationalists support the right of succession of the Indonesian Republic to West Irian, for Dutch New Guinea was an integral part of the Netherlands East Indies. The Dutch Empire once spread over the 3,000 odd islands now constituting the Republic of Indonesia. So the Indonesians rightly

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dismiss all Dutch talk of self-determination for a few hundred thousand Papuans in Dutch West Irian as imperialistic nonsense designed to delay matters.

So in the same way we support the right of the people of Singapore and the three Borneo territories to be liberated from British Colonialism and to join together with the Federation of Malaya to constitute the Federation of Malaysia consisting of all the territories which once formed the British Empire in South East Asia. I am happy that the Barisan Sosialis have sided with the Indonesians in condemning the imperialistic powers who support the Dutch in putting forward this excuse of self-determination for the Papuans. West Irian is part of Indonesia and to Indonesia it must return. I am disappointed, however, that the same militant anti-colonial spirit vanishes completely when they are asked to take a stand on Malaysia. Here is a concrete issue right on our own doorstep on which they can express their anti-colonial feeling to fight colonialism without the danger of being sent ill-equipped to land on shores. Nobody is asking them to volunteer to risk their life and limb. All we are asking them to do is to take a stand to liberate the three Borneo territories and Singapore and together form an independent sovereign nation. I gather that the Member for Thomson, having said on behalf of the Barisan Sosialis in Kuching that they support Malaysia in principle, ,they are now interested in taking the Dutch colonial line of gradual self-determination for each individual divided territory. This very same line they

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condemned when taken by the Dutch on West Irian but shamelessly adopted when it suits their Communist interests to oppose Malaysia. So the fierce freedom fighters of Barisan Sosialis and their Communist friends and supporters were prepared to find women to fight for the liberation of West Irian. Sir, the Chairman of the Barisan Sosialis was somewhat apologetic yesterday when he explained that he could not find these three women on their records. How even more shameless -- if they had to sacrifice three of their women members, at least, I would have respected them for it. But to find three innocent women who were not even members of Barisan Sosialis to go and set forth themselves to suit Barisan Sosialis propaganda line was a heartless and cold-blooded act akin to murder. The strange thing about Barisan Sosialis is that they believe in sending women and children first to put in the front rank of their fighting -- Work Brigade, schools, very characteristic of the fierce freedom fighters. They are actively trying to create difficulty and confusion over the creation of Malaysia. They know with Malaysia there will be a strengthening of nationalist anti-colonial forces, and their Communist anti-colonial forces will be isolated and confined. But that is their problem -- a problem that will face those who expound causes of democracy when they don't believe in it, and expound non-Communism when in fact they are Communists, and Socialism when in fact they mean Communism.

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1962 is likely to be a memorable year in the annals of South East Asia for two issues, Malaysia and West Irian. I am looking forward during this debate to see what they are going to say and how they are going to vote, or perhaps whether they are going to vote at all, and instead find an excuse to absent themselves from this Chamber when the vote is taken. But all honest and good democrats always stand up to be counted. It is only the Communists in democratic clothing who always find it embarrassing when the doctor comes around to remove their democratic clothing for a closer examination.

January 24, 1962 _____ (Time issued: 1730 hours)

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