SINGAPORE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH OVER RADIO

SINGAPORE AT 7.10 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 1962.

The battle for merger is, for all practical purposes, over. All that remains to be done is to write into the Constitution of Malaysia the provisions which have been agreed in the White Paper as amended, and to present it to the Legislative Assembly for approval. This may be ready before February 1963 when a formal treaty to set up Malaysia will be signed.

You may have noticed that the recent agreement in London stated that Malaysia should be set up by 31st August, 1963. In other words, it may in fact take place earlier, although for reasons of sentiment it may be officially proclaimed on 31st August, 1963 -- an auspicious day to judge by the peace, progress and prosperity of Malaya since that day five years ago. The Tunku places the emphasis of good government on the happiness of the people, and we in Singapore share that desire for a happy Malaysia.

National Archives of Singapore

I am sure that most of the others who did not vote for merger or Malaysia will slowly come round to our majority view when time and events prove groundless the fears of Malay domination and racial inequality which the anti-

national left elements have been spreading. The final corroboration of logic and reasoning comes when they become practical realities. And we shall feel in the coming months the real significance of political stability, economic progress, common citizenship and Singapore autonomy in education, labour, health, and social welfare. When the factories flourish and there are jobs for nearly everyone, a Housing Board house or flat for every family that wants one, schools in the language medium of our choice for our children, good hospitals and clinics to care for everyone, then we will win over nearly all the 25% who were misled into casting blank votes leaving only a hard core of Communists, who can never be convinced anyway. The test of the pudding is in the eating, and Malaysia will prove itself, given good government and co-operation amongst its many communities.

I am happy that our experiment in democracy has succeeded. I am sure you share my happiness that all has turned out well. It was a national and not a party issue. So much was at stake. We were voting not on the personal future of politicians or political parties but on the future of our whole country. That was evident from the poll of over 71% for Alternative 'A', our Singapore flag. The people have not fallen for the Communist lie that merger was a sell out of the Chinese to the Malays. They had made up their own minds and decided.

National Archives of Singapore

As a party the P.A.P. secured only 53% of the poll in 1959. But on a national matter, which affects all our lives, we all rallied together to defend our future for ourselves and our children. And the Communist-manipulated united front organisations, aided and abetted by cranks and opportunists can only temporarily deceive a quarter of the electorate. I must emphasise that the majority of this 25% did not vote for Communism.

It was because you also fought against evil and for what was right that we have all succeeded. I must thank the many civic organisations, the trade unions, like the National Workers Union Committee, the Chinese Schools Teachers Union, the Singapore Teachers Union, and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce for their stand which rallied our people to a national cause.

I must thank those of the opposition Assemblymen who resisted the temptation to make political capital out of a national issue. One in particular helped to prevent the spread of confusion by the Communist tactic of the united front by his firm stand in support of Clause 29. This prevented a clever tactical move by the Communist united front to persuade even right-wing parties to help camouflage their true colours.

National Archives of Singapore

My colleagues in the Cabinet and I were fortunate in having in our ranks men who have an intimate knowledge of Communist tactics and propaganda. Amongst them are sincere nationalists who were once members of the M.C.P. and their subsidiary organisations. They became completely disillusioned and disgusted when they discovered the anti-national and extra-territorial character of the Malayan Communists. By the nature of things they must remain anonymous, however much I would like to thank them publicly. Their expert analysis and advice either corrected or confirmed our own judgement of what the enemy was going to do and how to meet them. They made possible the first successful open confrontation against the clever and ruthless manipulations and shock tactics of the Communist united front. I cannot tell you how much we are all indebted to them.

Finally, let me, in the midst of rejoicing, say that the Malayan Communists are not going to accept the people's verdict against them quietly. My appraisal, confirmed by the advice of this devoted band of men, is that the Communist united front will try to recover from this exposure and defeat by creating a new issue for yet another so-called victory of the left.

National Archives of Singapore

Before you voted on 1st September, my colleagues and I thought it best to allow the Communist united front considerable latitude of criticism even if it bordered on the seditious and the libellous, without taking any legal action. My colleagues and I were advised against the serious security risk of allowing a prolification of open Malayan Communist publications and propaganda. We had to take a calculated risk for the good of us all to prove to our brethren in Malaysia that even aided and abetted by some clever cranks and cunning adventurers, the Communist united front cannot get the people to do things against the national interest and against the future of themselves and their children.

The calculated risk is now over. The people have declared their will. In spite of their vicious anti-merger campaign you have decided for merger. It is our duty to see it through. The front men of the Malayan Communist united front are now threatening a continuation of their struggle. After your verdict, it is our duty to tell them that if they continue their anti-national struggle against merger and Malaysia, they will have to face the consequences backed by the clear endorsement of the overwhelming majority of the people. And if the tough men in their midst take to direct action, they fact direct consequences.

National Archives of Singapore

Before 1st September, our firmness could have been misrepresented as Fascist repression of a so-called colonial liberation movement. After 1st September, I am sure you will want my colleagues and me to do what is right for the security and well-being of all in Singapore and Malaysia. I am grateful for your support in our difficult task of looking after the interests of all, against a fanatical minority of anti-nationalists who are out to wreck merger and Malaysia for their own selfish ends.

We can take heart from the lesson of the gruelling struggle over the last 14 months, and that is this. As long as our people are given an honourable stake in the country and are prepared to sink their minor sectional interests in favour of greater national interests of all, we have a sound foundation on which to build a happy and prosperous Malaysia.

National Archives of Singapore

This is your victory -- a victory of the people, of the ordinary men and women. They do not usually shout slogans or make fierce speeches. They do not run around in regimented groups giving a facade of omnipotence. But they have their own minds and they took a stand for the nation. They stood united against those who were anti the nation. In doing so they exploded the myth of invincibility by which the Communist intimidate or cow the people into submission. Regimented ranks in mass rallies of 10,000 people who shout loudly

and clap vigorously to make an appearance of 40,000 people do not make up the "masses". We must never let them forget this. As long as we are not afraid to take a stand for what is right, it is our ordinary men and women who will decide the fate of our people.

September 4, 1962 (Time issued: 1730 hours.)

National Archives of Singapore