SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

MC. OC. 32/63 (PM)

TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER,MR. LEE KUAN YEW, IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE SINGAPORE (ELECTION TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES) BILL AT THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22ND, 1963.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir, Members will notice that the Bill provides for the election of 15 Members to the Central Parliament in accordance with Section 95 of the Malaysia Act. If I may, for the enlightenment of Members who were not present at the last Assembly when this Act was adopted, read subsection (1) of the Act. It says.

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'Subject to Subsection (2) Part VIII of the Constitution shall not have effect for the purpose of elections of Members of the House of Representatives from Singapore until the second general election to that House held after Malaysia Day, and so long as this sub-section applies to those elections those Members shall, subject to subsection (2), be elected as may be provided by any law passed by the legislature of Singapore with the concurrence of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong including any laws so passed before Malaysia Day, and the period for which they are elected should be the period until the second dissolution of Parliament after Malaysia Day.'

Sir, I think Members on the Opposition side, even those who were not Members of this Chamber in the last session, will know that the Government introduced a Bill for the election of 15 Members direct from 15 constituencies in Singapore, such constituencies to be formed by grouping in threes and fours the existing 51 constituencies to form 15. My colleague, the then Minister for Home Affairs, invited all leaders of the Opposition Parties to put up their proposals as to how these constituencies were to be formed. For diverse reasons, each party having a separate reason, the Opposition teamed up to defeat or, if I may be more accurate, to prevent the passage of the Bill with the votes tying on the Second Reading.

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Sir, on the eve of nomination on the 11th of September, I made a broadcast in which I stated as a main plank of the Government's platform, the P.A.P. platform, that election for 51 seats was also for 15 seats to the Central Parliament, the 15 to be elected from the 51. I do not recall, Mr. Speaker, Sir, having read any contrary proposal being put forward by any Opposition Party. I did, however, subsequently read, when the election results have been declared for the 51, that the leader of the Barisan Sosialis, who is no longer in this Chamber, would now prefer to go back to our original proposal for 15 seats in direct elections.

Sir, I do not wish to labour this point. It does not require ingenuity, now that we know the results of the elections on a party basis, constituency by constituency, to so re-arrange the 51 in such a way as to give our party all the 15 seats, Barisan probably not a single seat. But I think that would be an exercise of ingenuity which would not be necessarily be in the interest of the country. Even by election in this Assembly we can since, we made an issue of it at the elections, like the Borneo territories, allot all the 15 seats to ourselves. But again I think that would not be in the interest of the country. I think it is useful to Malaysia and our 10-million people to be constantly reminded of the presence of people who, whatever they now piously say about defending the sovereignty of Malaysia, have as their primary object the destruction of the nation we have

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founded. I do not wish to arrogate to Members of this Chamber generally the right to nominate and vote for three Members of the Barisan Sosialis because I think that is a matter for them to decide; whether they would send three of their most affable, amiable colleagues in order to smooth and insinuate their way with the other 159 Members in Parliament or whether they send their three fiercest ones. This matter I leave completely in their hands.

But I would say to them they should bear this in mind – that all the great issues which have agitated this Chamber over the last nine years, Mr. Speaker, Sir, since 1955 – anti-colonialism, abolition of the Preservation of Public Security Ordinance, denunciation and condemnation of arrests and detention without trial, brutality of so-called Fascist Police Forces – all their burning issues unfortunately are no longer within the preserve, the jurisdiction, of this Chamber. When we meet, Mr. Speaker, now, from time to time I hope we will get on with the more constructive, if less exciting business of getting on with the job of building an industrial base in Singapore, rebuilding the old city and producing the other things for which the people have elected us.

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There will be these great issues of foreign policy, defence, security, confrontation, all the things that had filled this Chamber with so many long hours of debate. I do not know whether the practice of Central Parliament would allow

what we have allowed in this Chamber, allowing their leader on one occasion, if I remember correctly, no less than eight continuous hours of filibustering. It is for them to decide how they would wish to take advantage of the three seats that they will have out of 159 in the Central Parliament. No doubt it is their desire and their expressed intention to join up with other so-called Socialist forces in the Central Parliament. We look forward to meeting them there on these debates on security, defence and foreign affairs and all the other issues which agitate the Communists and the pro-Communists.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

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