SPEECH BY MR. LEE KUAN YEW AT A RALLY IN MALACCA ON 22ND APRIL, 1964.

Government by consent

Tonight at midnight, the Minister of Internal Security is releasing for publication a document which sets out in broad outline the pattern of Indonesian infiltration, penetration and subversion which has been going on quietly over the last few years via the Indonesia Consulate-General in Singapore and their Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. A Malaysian government which seeks to articulate the popular will of the people owes a duty to its own citizens to keep them as fully informed as is possible. When our citizens make up their minds as to what they want to be done, it should be made in full knowledge of all relevant facts.

Too little disclosed too late

National Archives of Singapore

But whilst I congratulate the Minister of Internal Security for having disclosed the basic data, I cannot but express regret that much more which could have been disclosed has been left out for reasons of security, and that what has been released has come out so late, one day before the eve of poll. It is too late for it to seep through into the remotest kampong in Malaysia.

In the battle for hearts and minds, the government must keep people informed of what is going on, even if it means risking the enemy knowing that we know what they are doing, provided it does not jeopardise intelligence sources which the enemy could seal off. Perhaps the other details, which would have given so much vividness to the whole picture, may be subsequently released.

This is a document of grave import containing data which have been in the hands of the governments in Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Kuching and Jesselton for quite a long while. Each of the government's contributions to date, build up the complete picture. It took us months of painstaking research and analysis to map out the pattern of penetration through racial, cultural, linguistic and religious links which have been exploited by the Indonesians all these years.

National Archives of Singapore

To expect people generally to read a 64-page document and comprehend it within 48 hours of polling shows how naively optimistic the information side of the government is. Now the opposition is sure to claim that this is a "dressed-up" piece of evidence published two days before polling in order to embarrass them. They will claim that they had not enough time to study the essence of the charge against them.

The pity is that this document could have been published two or three weeks ago. Furthermore, the slow relentless debate and examination of data over two to three weeks would have brought home the dangers we face from our neighbour who is using both Chinese chauvinism and communism in the S.F. and Malay-Indonesian chauvinism and anti-Chinese zenophobia in the Malay side of S.F. and PMIP.

Battle for minds

The battle for minds between pro-Malaysia and patriotic parties and anti-Malaysia and pro-Communist groups in the country is not a battle between rival political parties. The battle for the loyalties of 10 million Malaysians between those who uphold the integrity and sovereignty of Malaysia and those who like the Indonesians wish to see Malaysia crushed and absorbed into Malaysia is one that goes to the very roots of survival.

National Archives of Singapore

This is a fight which cuts across party and sectional interests. We must put the best team forward to fight and win. To win in this fight we must constantly keep the people informed of what is happening, round by round. For people to receive news and information via enterprising reporters who pick up interesting tit-bits of parachute drops and hearsay reports of landings by men in khaki

uniform in small boats is not the best way in which one can galvanize and mobilise the nation.

We hope that every month the Ministry of Internal Security can keep the people up to date by putting up a 8-10 page document setting out the pattern of events over the preceding month.

To release information of a discovery of ammunitions on the beaches of Kelantan with footmarks of a frogman via a Minister whilst he is campaigning during the general elections is not the best way to bring home the gravity of the facts.

The use of data damaging to opposition political parties is legitimate and usual in all democratic systems. But an effective and intelligently run democratic government should first disclose the facts coldly and without comment. Later let the debate begin on the conclusions to be drawn on the facts.

National Archives of Singapore

Evidence goes back over 15 years

The evidence of complicity and duplicity of Barisan Sosialis, Socialist Front, Party Rakyat (Brunei), and PMIP with Indonesia is her plans for

expansion and absorption of our territories through the use of military, economic and political pressures goes back nearly 20 years.

For different reasons the governments in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore had not underlined these facts over the last few years. In Singapore we tried to get on with our neighbour and to trade with them. But now partly through an accident in the timing of confrontation, but mainly because of the ambitious plans Indonesia has with regard to our future, the facts have to be disclosed.

Our relations with Indonesia will never be the same again. Nor our internal security position. Indonesia will pose a constant threat to our survival, first because of her geo-political ambitions, and second, because there will always be disloyal elements of Indonesian descent in Malaysia who seek to pull us that way. It does not do any good to pretend that they do not exist. It is better to recognise the facts, learn how to identify the people likely to want to pull us towards Indonesia and chaos and then mobilise and galvanize the people to isolate such groups. The battle in unceasing.

National Archives of Singapore

22nd April, 1964.