DETAILED GUIDE FOR SELF-GUIDED TOURS

Prepared for educators and docents

THE ALBATROSS FILE

SINGAPORE'S INDEPENDENCE DECLASSIFIED

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- CHATBOOK
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OVERVIEW

About the Exhibition
About the Book

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition **The Albatross File: Singapore's Independence Declassified** takes you behind closed doors, into the complex journey from Merger to Separation. Revisit the moments that led to Singapore's separation from Malaysia – in the footsteps of our founding leaders.

What to expect:

- **Atlas:** Trace the timeline of events that took place in the months, days and hours leading up to Separation.
- **Room:** Witness the historical moments that shaped our nation, through historical footage and dramatic reenactments.
- **Records:** See declassified documents from The Albatross File, and hear oral history interviews of key parties involved in Singapore's Separation.
- **ChatBook:** Ask questions and engage with the Gen AI-powered ChatBook which draws from NLB's collections.

The exhibition is located on Level 10 of the National Library Building. Admission is free. For more information on opening hours and other administrative details, please visit our exhibition website: go.gov.sg/albatross.



ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Each component covers a time period from pre-Merger to post-Independence.

Some reinforcement (and repetition) of content would be expected.

YEAR	<1963	1963	1964	1965		>1980
EVENT	Pre-Merger History	Sep 1963 Merger	1964 Tension	May 1965 Race Riots	Aug 1965 Separation	1980s Oral History Interviews
				ROOM		
		ATLAS				
		RECORDS				
	CHATBOOK					

ABOUT THE BOOK

The exhibition is based on the book **The Albatross File: Inside Separation,** which is supplemented by newly declassified documents and oral history accounts of key parties involved in Singapore's separation from Malaysia. It explores the uncertainty, conviction and tensions that defined 1963 to 1965, leading to the birth of an independent Singapore.

The book contains:

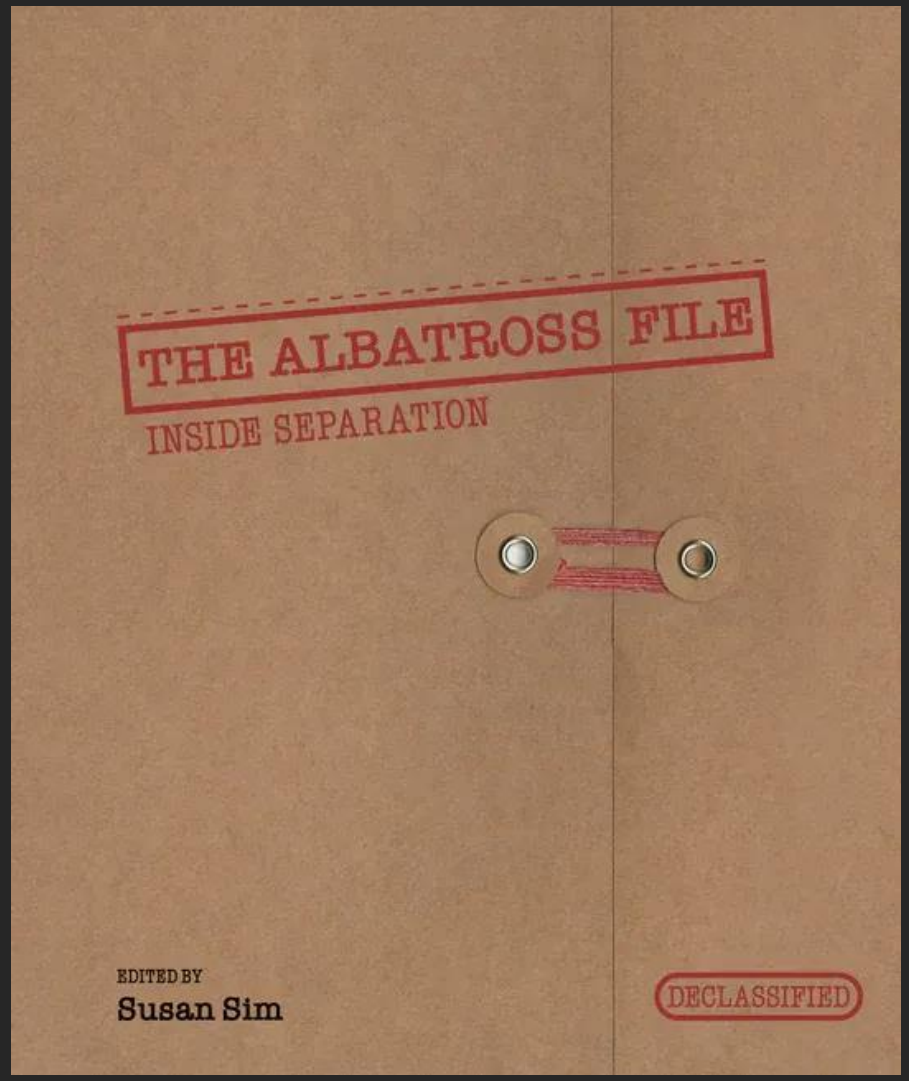
Historical essays
by Prof Tan Tai Yong and Prof Albert Lau providing historical context on Merger and Separation

Access the historical essays from the publication here: https://exhibitions.nlb.gov.sg/resources/

Original documents and handwritten notes
from The Albatross File and collections from National Archives of Singapore

Oral History Interview Transcripts
of key players involved in Separation from the National Archives of Singapore

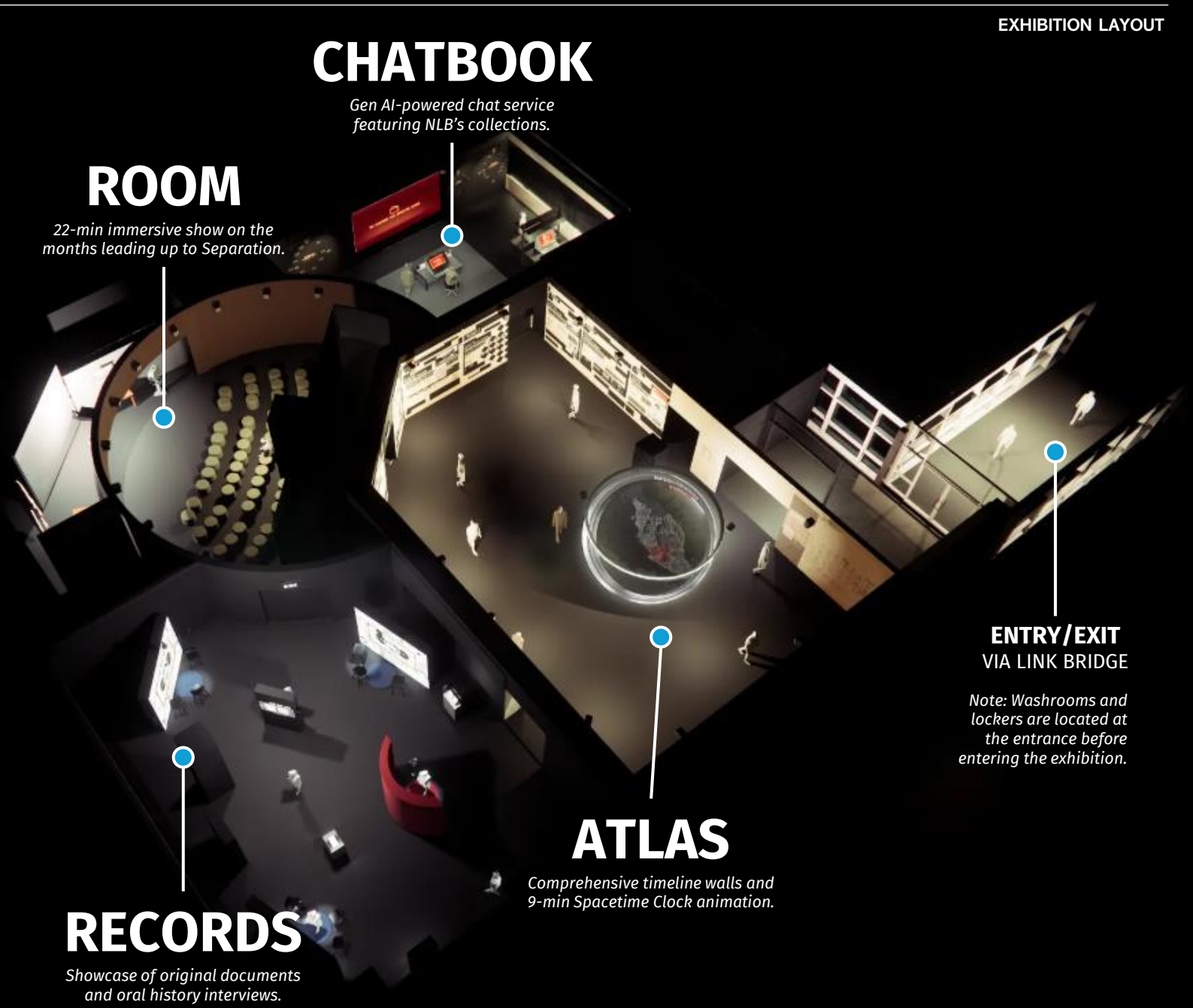
BOOK COVER OF THE ALBATROSS FILE: INSIDE SEPARATION



SUGGESTED ROUTE FOR SELF-GUIDED TOURS

ROOM **25 min**	• **Suggested start point** • Immersive show in a special theatre at 25-min intervals • 60 pax capacity – 50 seated, 10 standing • Countdown timers are displayed at the Room's entrances, indicating the wait time to the next show
ATLAS **25 min**	• Animated map visuals at 10-min intervals • Interactive wall panels with drawers and approach-sensitive displays
RECORDS **25 min**	• Interactive screens and listening booths • Free-and-easy segment
CHATBOOK **15 min**	• **Suggested end point** • Interactive station for teachers to demo and conduct Q&A segment
TOTAL	*90 min*

EXHIBITION LAYOUT



ATLAS

Atlas Wall
Spacetime Clock

The ATLAS presents a comprehensive narrative of the key plot, people and places.



ATLAS WALL

A comprehensive timeline of events from the months, days and hours that led up to Separation. It includes approach-sensitive and interactive displays that reveal content to visitors.

Note:
When a key event is featured on the Spacetime Clock, the corresponding event on the Atlas Wall is highlighted with an LED light marker.

SPACETIME CLOCK

A 9-min animation projection show, tracking movements and mapping the separation story across time and space.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
Access the full detailed timeline from The Albatross File: Inside Separation publication here: https://exhibitions.nlb.gov.sg/thealbatrossfile/timeline/

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

16 Sep 1963 **Merger**	Singapore merged with Malaya, North Borneo (Sabah), and Sarawak to form the Federation of Malaysia. Singapore and Malaysia stood to benefit from unification, as did the British. Indonesia condemned the merger. • **“On the 16th we go on with Malaysia and we will survive, and prosper and flourish.“** Lee Kuan Yew
21 Sep 1963 **Singapore General Election**	The ruling party, the People’s Action Party (PAP), which had been preparing for a general election for some time, called for the polls shortly after the formation of Malaysia. The Singapore Alliance party, supported by Tunku Abdul Rahman, contested in the election but failed to win a single seat.
20 Jan 1964 **Lee Kuan Yew in Africa**	While Lee Kuan Yew was in Africa on a diplomatic mission, the PAP resolved to contest the 1964 Malaysian federal election. This controversial move led to a fracturing of relations between Singapore and Malaysia.
25 Apr 1964 **PAP Enters Federal Election**	Confident of a good showing at the 1964 Malaysian federal election, the PAP soon realised their optimism had been misplaced. But despite their poor performance at the polls, tensions intensified between the PAP and the Alliance. • **“Although we won only one seat, our campaign and mass rallies were very well-attended, particularly by large numbers of Malays. This worried the Tunku who feared that the PAP would eventually be a political force to be reckoned with.”** Othman Wok

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

21 Jul 1964
2 Sep 1964
Race Riots

A series of clashes between Malays and Chinese broke out in Singapore. The ensuing carnage and mayhem pushed Singapore and Malaysia on the path to Separation.

- **"It was terribly disheartening, a negation of everything we had believed in and worked for — gradual integration and the blurring of the racial divide."**
  Lee Kuan Yew

- **"By mid 1964, we were thoroughly disillusioned. We knew that Malaysia had not brought about the benefits we expected... I myself could not see how we could extricate ourselves from this mess."**
  Goh Keng Swee

19 Dec 1964
Confederation Discussions

Malaysian leader Tunku Abdul Rahman started to have second thoughts about keeping Singapore in Malaysia. Discussions of a looser association began in late 1964 and continued until February 1965 when negotiations broke down.

- The Tunku had hardened this thinking. Not only did he want control of Singapore's defence, he also wanted Singapore to pay for the cost of Malaysian defence in return for the common market. Singapore could not agree to taxation without representation in Parliament.

- Kuala Lumpur wanted Singapore out of federal politics but was not prepared for Malaysia to be out of Singapore politics.

- Antony Head, the British High Commissioner, got wind of the talks. Any disintegration in the Malaysian Federation was unacceptable to the British as it would give credence to Indonesian propaganda claims that Malaysia was only an "artificial and ephemeral construction, not deserving of strong support".

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

9 May 1965
Formation of the Malaysian Solidarity Convention

The PAP decided that securing allies within Malaysia was necessary to end its political isolation, break free from containment by Kuala Lumpur, counter the tactics of the extremists (Ultras), and spread its non-communal ideals throughout Malaysia.

- **"We decided that one effective defence [to counter this system of intimidation through race riots] would be to link the opposition in all the towns in the Federation in one network... any communal intimidation by Kuala Lumpur would risk tearing Malaysia apart."**
  Lee Kuan Yew

27 May 1965
Lee Kuan Yew's Speech in Federal Parliament

The Malaysian Solidarity Convention's idea of a Malaysian Malaysia challenged Malay supremacy. Umno leaders were alarmed when galleries of Malays paid attention to Lee Kuan Yew when he delivered part of a parliamentary speech in Malay.

- **"Looking back, I think that was the moment when the Tunku and his colleagues felt it was better to have Singapore and Mr Lee out."**
  E W Barker

  [Artefact showcased on Atlas Wall, in a drawer – May 1965 Federal Parliament Speech]

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

6 Jun 1965 Malaysian Solidarity Convention Speech

To kick off a series of Malaysian Solidarity Convention rallies to be held in various Malaysian states, Lee Kuan Yew delivered an electrifying speech in Singapore, speaking up against communal intimidation. This further alarmed Malaysian leaders.

- **"They say they are worried about the Malays? I say, so are we. We want to raise their standard of living, and we will, and faster than they can."**
  Lee Kuan Yew
- **"The Solidarity Convention was again another move to bring political pressure to bear on KL — that they cannot get away with a racist policy directed towards Singapore."**
  Goh Keng Swee
- **"[...] and I was convinced that if we carried on, there would be bloodshed. And the only way to prevent bloodshed would probably be to lock up the Singapore Cabinet, and even that may not prevent bloodshed. The very act of locking up the Cabinet may trigger riots and bloodshed."**
  Lee Kuan Yew

22 Jun 1965 Shingles & Other Ailments

While in London for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, Tunku Abdul Rahman was struck by shingles and admitted to hospital. During his stay, he decided to cut Singapore from Malaysia.

- Razak reported to the Tunku: **"I asked him [Lee] for an assurance that he and his friends would not make provocative remarks against the Malays or interfere with Umno's domestic affairs. Unfortunately, he declined to give the assurance."**
- On 1 July, the Tunku wrote to Razak telling him he had given himself time to think about Lee. His comments included this analogy**: "...I fear we will have no choice but to cut out Singapore from Malaysia in order to save the rest of the body from gangrene."**

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

15 Jul 1965
“Separate Ways”

- The idea that Singapore separate from Malaysia started to take shape when Malaysian Deputy Premier Tun Abdul Razak arranged a meeting with Singapore’s Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee.
    - Razak said that Singapore and Malaysia could not go on like this and asked whether Goh had any ideas. Although taken aback, Goh saw an opportunity to put forward a proposal — to separate. Both agreed to discuss the proposal with their colleagues.
    - Goh explained what it meant for Singapore and Malaysia to go their “separate ways”: **“I said, well, we leave Malaysia, become an independent state, and you’ll be relieved of all these troubles and we would have also been relieved of troubles from you. All these tensions that built up, communal tensions, will all be over. We’re on our own, you’re on your own.”**
- Goh reported to Lee Kuan Yew that Razak wanted to discuss a plan that would allow both sides to disengage and avoid a disastrous collision. This included the possibility of total separation. After exploring all possible alternatives with Goh, Lee instructed him to:
    - 1. Find a way to avoid a racial clash.
    - 2. Restrict talks to the **“minimum few”** on both sides and be “**absolutely leak-proof”.** Lee feared that if the British found out about the separation plans, they would pressure the Tunku to **“call the whole thing off”… [and] would have agreed to have allowed the Tunku to arrest the few of us rather than have Malaysia break up”.**

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

20 Jul 1965
Setting It In Motion

- Goh Keng Swee met Tun Razak and Home Affairs Minister Tun Ismail at Razak's office to assure them that the separation proposal had the support of Lee Kuan Yew, Minister for National Development Lim Kim San and Minister for Law E W Barker. Discussions intensified over the following two weeks and by 3 August, Goh knew that Separation was "a won game".
  - **"I just wanted to get out. I could see no future in it, that the political cost was dreadful and the economic benefits, well, didn't exist. So it was an exercise in futility."**
    Goh Keng Swee

- Following the 20 July meeting between Goh and Razak, Lee asked Barker to draft the Separation Agreement. To prevent any leak, Barker did all the research himself. There were three documents to be drafted:
  - Firstly, an Agreement to Separate.
  - Secondly, an amendment to the Malaysian Constitution to allow Singapore to separate, as the Constitution only provided for states to join Malaysia but not to leave.
  - Thirdly, a Proclamation of Independence.

- Lee approved the drafts for submission to Razak after amending them with the help of his wife, Kwa Geok Choo, a conveyance lawyer. He asked her to include Singapore's water agreements with Johor, upon which Singapore depended for water supply.

- Lee was concerned that post-Separation, should there be a dishonouring of the Water Agreements, Singapore would be in trouble.

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

21 Jul 1965
Meetings Intensify

- **On 21 July,** Goh Keng Swee heard from Ghazali, the Permanent Secretary at the Malaysian Ministry for External Affairs, that the Tunku was indeed **"fed-up… and quite willing to chuck us out."** Ghazali passed on a message from the Tunku: **"If no way to avoid communal trouble can be found, return Singapore to Lee Kuan Yew."**

- **On 22 July,** Razak wrote to the Tunku to confirm that senior Malaysian ministers had agreed to Separation.

- **On 26 July,** Goh requested a written undertaking from Lee Kuan Yew, as Razak wanted proof of Lee's agreement to Separation.

    - Later that day, Goh called on Razak and brought along the letter from Lee authorising him to negotiate with Razak, but did not use it. He found Razak depressed and having misgivings about hiving off, which Goh attributed to his "dithering" disposition.
    - **"So it was necessary for me, from time to time, to apply psychological pressure to him, which in the event had the desired effect…"**
      Goh Keng Swee

    [Artefact Showcased on Atlas Wall – Authorisation to Negotiate]

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

21 Jul 1965 Meetings Intensify (cont'd)

- **On 31 July,** Lee Kuan Yew left Singapore for a PAP rally in Kuala Lumpur on 1 August. After the rally, he drove to Cameron Highlands for a week's holiday with his family, and to wait for a call from Goh Keng Swee.

- **On 3 August**, Goh met Razak again in Kuala Lumpur. By this time, Razak had received the Tunku's go-ahead for Separation, subject to two conditions: Singapore was to make military contribution to Malaysia's defence and enter into a defence agreement with Malaysia; and Singapore was not to enter into any treaty that countered the proposed defence agreement.
    - After the 3 August meeting, Goh returned to Singapore and called Lee in Cameron Highlands. Goh told Lee that the Tunku had agreed to Singapore's separation from Malaysia.
    - Goh and E W Barker then worked on the revisions requested by the Malaysians.

    [Artefact Showcased in Records with interactive screen – Goh Keng Swee's Handwritten Notes from 3 Aug 1965 Meeting with Razak]

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

6 Aug 1965 Behind Closed Doors

- Goh Keng Swee and E W Barker met Lee Kuan Yew in Kuala Lumpur to get his sign-off on the Separation Agreement. That same day, the Tunku met his senior ministers and agreed that Separation was inevitable.
- At Temasek House, the Singapore state guest house in Kuala Lumpur, Lee studied, approved, and signed off on Barker's latest draft of the Separation Agreement.
- Goh and Barker proceeded to Razak's office, where the draft agreements were read carefully by Razak, Ismail and Kadir Yusof, the Attorney-General. They then adjourned to Sri Taman, Razak's Lake Gardens home, where they were joined by Malaysian Chinese Association president Tan Siew Sin and Malaysian Indian Congress president V T Sambanthan.
- With further changes made to the draft, it was past midnight when the documents were all typed and ready to be signed. After everyone present had signed the documents, Goh and Barker returned to Temasek House and handed them to Lee.

7 Aug 1965 Last Hurdle

- Lee knew that he would have a tough time convincing some of his ministers to accept Separation. Even on 7 August, he tried to convince the Tunku to consider an alternative arrangement but the Tunku would not be persuaded.
    - In his interview for his biography, when asked why he did not entertain Lee's plea for a looser federation, the Tunku said: **"I thought for a long time, you know, and I was in close touch with Razak, that the best way was to go on our separate ways but remain good friends."**

      [Artefact featured on Atlas Wall as reproduction – Loss of Face]

ATLAS WALL : TIMELINE OF EVENTS

8 Aug 1965 Countdown Begins

- Lee Kuan Yew met the Tunku and presented a document summarising the points the two leaders had agreed on during their 7 August meetings. To avoid any leaks and delays, the two leaders agreed that the constitutional amendments be carried out expeditiously.

    - **“It was a coup because it was not easy to pull off. It had to be done in absolute secrecy and by the time the British or anybody knew about it, it must be too late to stop.”**
      Lee Kuan Yew

[Artefact featured on Atlas Wall as reproduction – Summary of Agreement]

9 Aug 1965 Separation

- Tensions between Singapore and Malaysia became so unbearable that 23 months after Merger, Singapore separated from Malaysia.

    - In his address, the Tunku said he could not find a way to resolve the differences between Singapore and Malaysia. **“It appeared that as soon as one issue was resolved, another cropped up. Where a patch was made here, a tear appeared elsewhere, and where one hole was plugged, other leaks appeared.”**

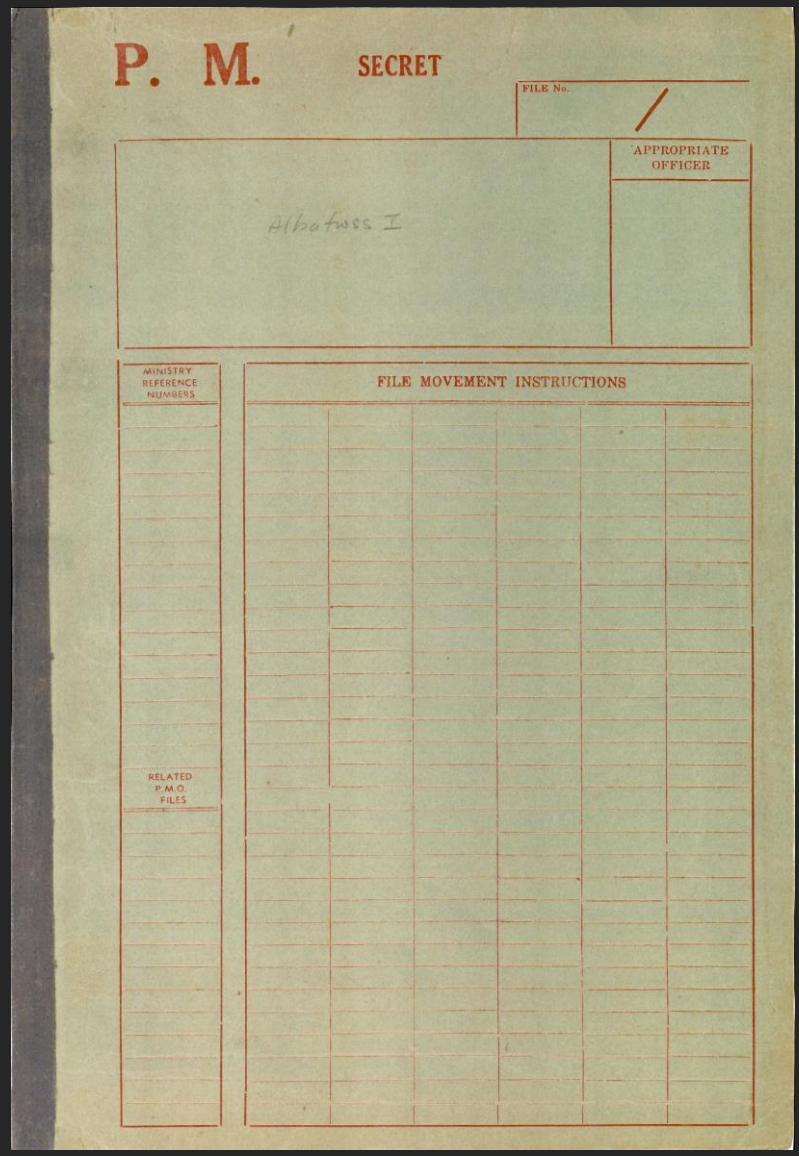
    - **“Every time we look back on this moment when we signed this Agreement which severed Singapore from Malaysia, it will be a moment of anguish. For me it is a moment of anguish because all my life… the whole of my adult life… I have believed in Merger and the unity of these two territories.”**
      Lee Kuan Yew

ATLAS WALL : DOCUMENTS SHOWCASED

Albatross I File Cover

- The Albatross File was compiled by Singapore Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee as a record of events, discussions and observations leading to Separation in 1965.
- While it is a common perception that Singapore was expelled from Malaysia, the contents of the file present a more nuanced picture of history.

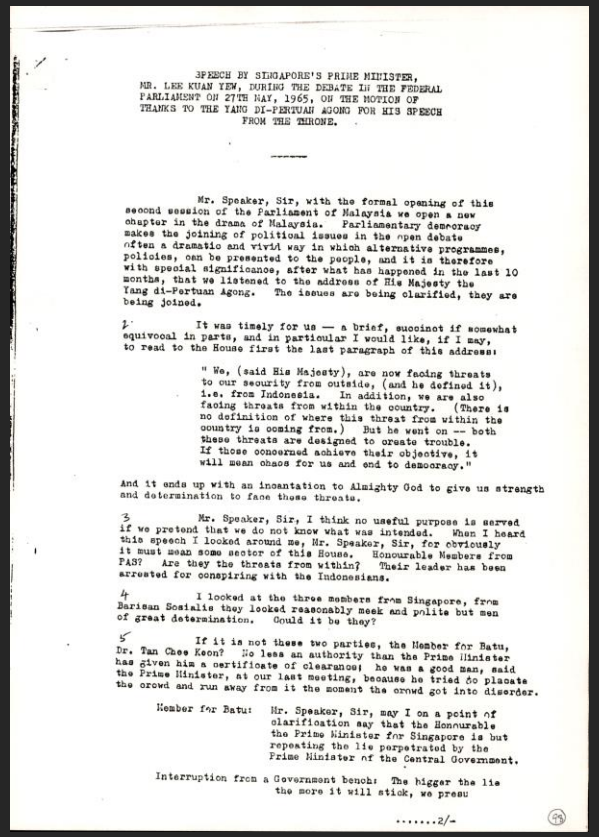
Albatross I File Cover



Prime Minister's Office Collection, National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

ATLAS WALL : DOCUMENTS SHOWCASED

Text of Lee Kuan Yew's speech during the debate in the Federal Parliament on 27 May 1965



SPEECH BY SINGAPORE'S PRIME MINISTER,
MR. LEE KUAN YEW, DURING THE DEBATE IN THE FEDERAL
PARLIAMENT ON 27TH MAY, 1965, ON THE MOTION OF
THANKS TO THE YANG DI-PERTUAN AGONG FOR HIS SPEECH
FROM THE THRONE.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, with the formal opening of this second session of the Parliament of Malaysia we open a new chapter in the drama of Malaysia. Parliamentary democracy makes the joining of political issues in the open debate often a dramatic and vivid way in which alternative programmes, policies, can be presented to the people, and it is therefore with special significance, after what has happened in the last 10 months, that we listened to the address of His Majesty the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. The issues are being clarified, they are being joined.

2 It was timely for us — a brief, succinct if somewhat equivocal in parts, and in particular I would like, if I may, to read to the House first the last paragraph of this address:

> " We, (said His Majesty), are now facing threats to our security from outside, (and he defined it), i.e. from Indonesia. In addition, we are also facing threats from within the country. (There is no definition of where this threat from within the country is coming from.) But he went on — both these threats are designed to create trouble. If those concerned achieve their objective, it will mean chaos for us and end to democracy."

And it ends up with an incantation to Almighty God to give us strength and determination to face these threats.

3 Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think no useful purpose is served if we pretend that we do not know what was intended. When I heard this speech I looked around me, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for obviously it must mean some sector of this House. Honourable Members from PAS? Are they the threats from within? Their leader has been arrested for conspiring with the Indonesians.

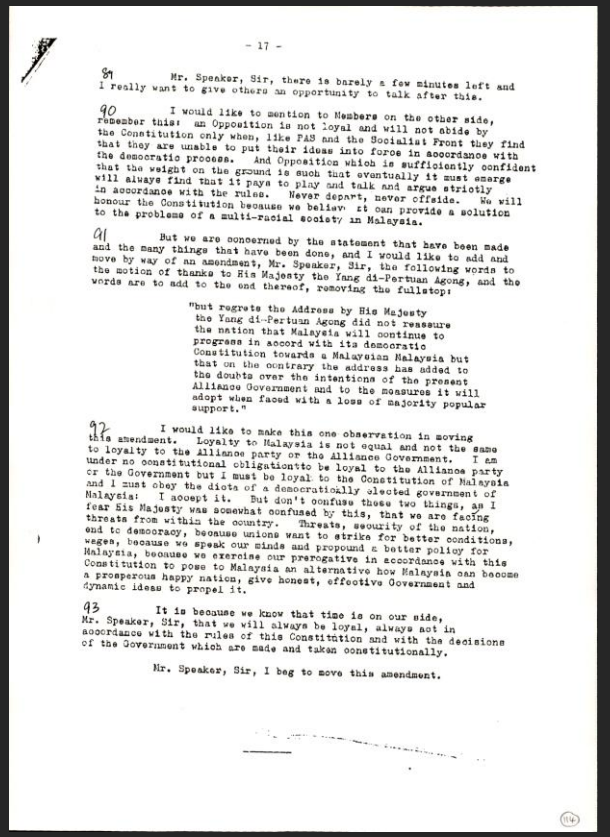
4 I looked at the three members from Singapore, from Barisan Sosialis they looked reasonably meek and polite but men of great determination. Could it be they?

5 If it is not these two parties, the Member for Batu, Dr. Tan Chee Khoon? No less an authority than the Prime Minister has given him a certificate of clearance: he was a good man, said the Prime Minister, at our last meeting, because he tried to placate the crowd and run away from it the moment the crowd got into disorder.

Member for Batu: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I on a point of clarification say that the Honourable the Prime Minister for Singapore is but repeating the lie perpetrated by the Prime Minister of the Central Government.

Interruption from a Government bench: The bigger the lie the more it will stick, we presu

.....2/-



- 17 -

87 Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is barely a few minutes left and I really want to give others an opportunity to talk after this.

90 I would like to mention to Members on the other side, remember this: an Opposition is not loyal and will not abide by the Constitution only when, like PAS and the Socialist Front they find that they are unable to put their ideas into force in accordance with the democratic process. And Opposition which is sufficiently confident that the weight on the ground is such that eventually it must emerge will always find that it pays to play and talk and argue strictly in accordance with the rules. Never depart, never offside. We will honour the Constitution because we believe it can provide a solution to the problems of a multi-racial society in Malaysia.

91 But we are concerned by the statement that have been made and the many things that have been done, and I would like to add and move by way of an amendment, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the following words to the motion of thanks to His Majesty the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, and the words are to add to the end thereof, removing the fullstop:

> "but regrets the Address by His Majesty the Yang di-Pertuan Agong did not reassure the nation that Malaysia will continue to progress in accord with its democratic Constitution towards a Malaysian Malaysia but that on the contrary the address has added to the doubts over the intentions of the present Alliance Government and to the measures it will adopt when faced with a loss of majority popular support."

92 I would like to make this one observation in moving this amendment. Loyalty to Malaysia is not equal and not the same to loyalty to the Alliance party or the Alliance Government. I am under no constitutional obligationto be loyal to the Alliance party or the Government but I must be loyal to the Constitution of Malaysia and I must obey the diots of a democratically elected government of Malaysia: I accept it. But don't confuse these two things, as I fear His Majesty was somewhat confused by this, that we are facing threats from within the country. Threats, security of the nation, end to democracy, because unions want to strike for better conditions, wages, because we speak our minds and propound a better policy for Malaysia, because we exercise our prerogative in accordance with this Constitution to pose to Malaysia an alternative how Malaysia can become a prosperous happy nation, give honest, effective Government and dynamic ideas to propel it.

93 It is because we know that time is on our side, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that we will always be loyal, always act in accordance with the rules of this Constitution and with the decisions of the Government which are made and taken constitutionally.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move this amendment.

Prime Minister's Office Collection,
National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

27 May 1965 Federal Parliament Speech

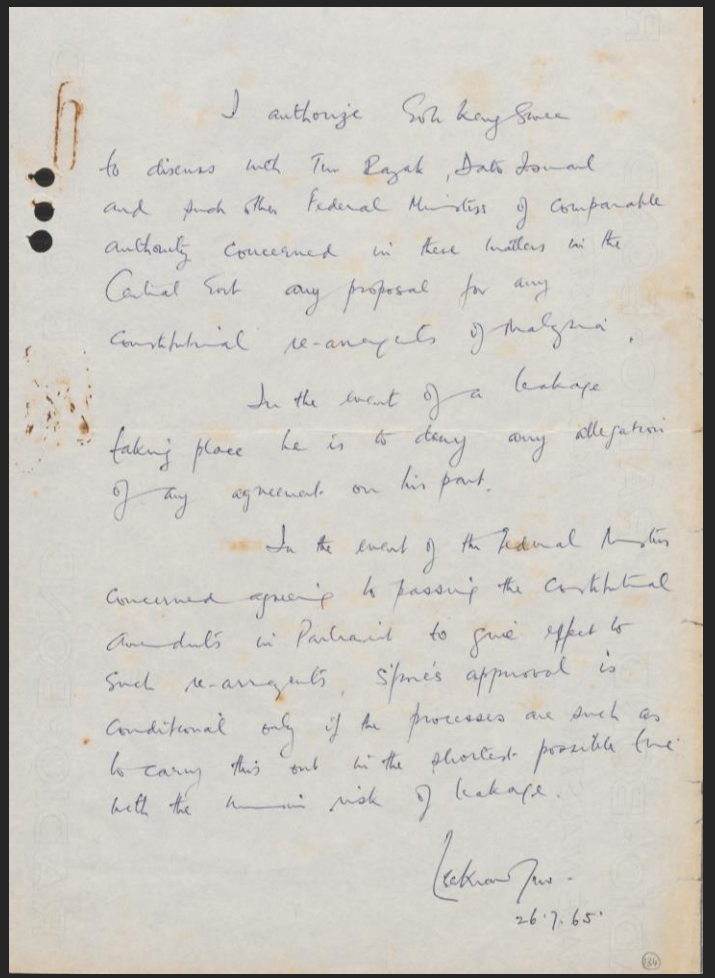
- Singapore Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee likely kept this copy of Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's speech in the Albatross File as Lee's impressive delivery signalled a turning point in the relations between Singapore and the Malaysian leaders.

ATLAS WALL : DOCUMENTS SHOWCASED

26 Jul 1965 Authorisation to Negotiate

- Before his third meeting with Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak on 26 July 1965, Singapore Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee asked Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew for a written authorisation to continue the discussions and conclude the constitutional re-arrangements, including separation from the Federation.
- Although Lee had asked Goh to press Razak for a looser re-arrangement, Goh did not do so. In his oral history interview, Goh said that he had asked for the authorisation letter as he wanted Lee to commit himself and not back away from Separation.

26 July 1965
Lee Kuan Yew's handwritten letter authorising Goh Keng Swee to negotiate with Razak



TRANSCRIPT

I authorise Goh Keng Swee to discuss with Tun Razak, Dato Ismail and such other Federal Ministers of comparable authority concerned in these matters in the Central Government any proposal for any Constitutional rearrangements of Malaysia.

In the event of a leakage taking place he is to deny any allegation of any agreement on his part.

In the event of the Federal Ministers concerned agreeing to passing the Constitutional amendments in Parliament to give effect to such rearrangements, Singapore's approval is conditional only if the processes are such as to carry this out in the shortest possible time with the minimum risk of leakage.

Lee Kuan Yew
26.7.65

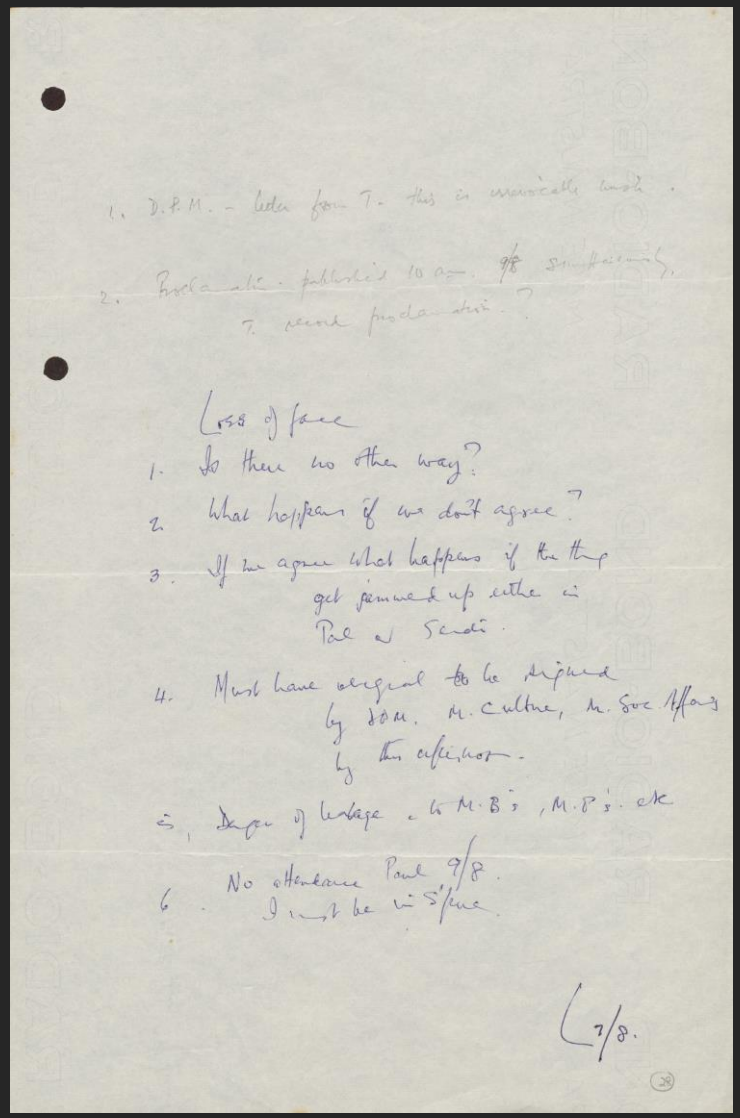
Prime Minister's Office Collection, National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

ATLAS WALL : DOCUMENTS SHOWCASED

7 Aug 1965 Loss of Face

- When Lee Kuan Yew met Tunku Abdul Rahman on 7 August, he had in his pocket this handwritten reminder of items to discuss with the Tunku.

7 August 1965
Lee Kuan Yew's Handwritten Note
(REPRODUCTION)



TRANSCRIPT

1. D.P.M. – Letter from T. this is irrevocable wish
2. Proclamation published 10am, 9/8.
Simultaneously,
T. record proclamation?

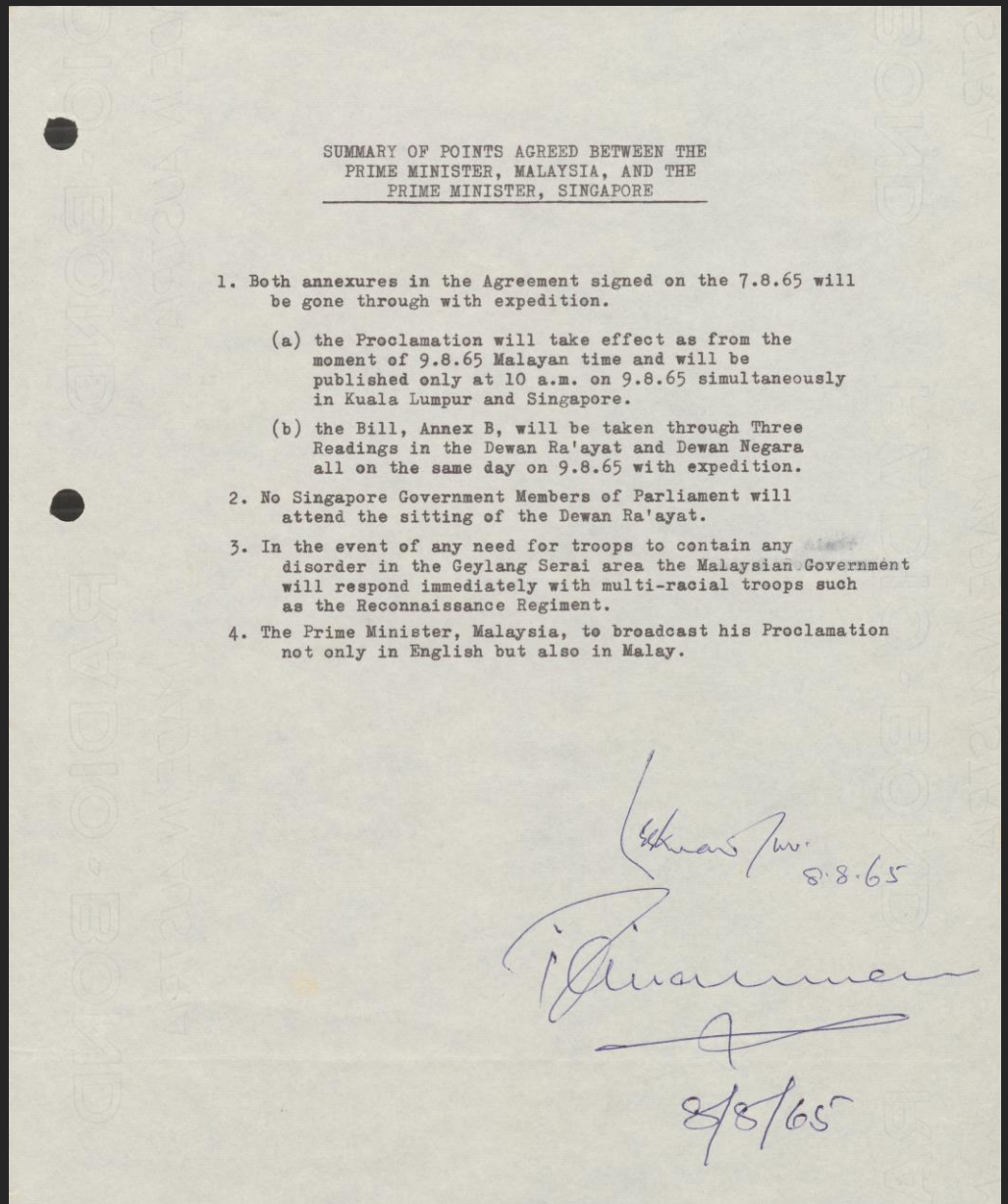
Loss of face
1. Is there no other way?
2. What happens if we don't agree?
3. If we agree what happens if the thing gets jammed up either in Parl or Senate
4. Must have original to be signed by DPM, M. Culture, M. Soc Affairs by this afternoon.
5. Danger of leakage to M.B's, M.P's etc
6. No attendance Parl 9/8. I must be in S'pore.

ATLAS WALL : DOCUMENTS SHOWCASED

8 Aug 1965 Summary of Agreement

- A typed document outlining the points of agreement between Lee Kuan Yew and Tunku Abdul Rahman, signed on 8 August, showed that the two leaders were prepared for political agitation and civil disorders once Separation took effect.

8 August 1965
Summary of Points Agreed Between the Prime Minister, Malaysia, and the Prime Minister, Singapore
(REPRODUCTION)



SUMMARY OF POINTS AGREED BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER, MALAYSIA, AND THE PRIME MINISTER, SINGAPORE

1. Both annexures in the Agreement signed on the 7.8.65 will be gone through with expedition.

   (a) the Proclamation will take effect as from the moment of 9.8.65 Malayan time and will be published only at 10 a.m. on 9.8.65 simultaneously in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore.

   (b) the Bill, Annex B, will be taken through Three Readings in the Dewan Ra'ayat and Dewan Negara all on the same day on 9.8.65 with expedition.

2. No Singapore Government Members of Parliament will attend the sitting of the Dewan Ra'ayat.

3. In the event of any need for troops to contain any disorder in the Geylang Serai area the Malaysian Government will respond immediately with multi-racial troops such as the Reconnaissance Regiment.

4. The Prime Minister, Malaysia, to broadcast his Proclamation not only in English but also in Malay.

8.8.65

8/8/65

ATLAS SPACETIME CLOCK

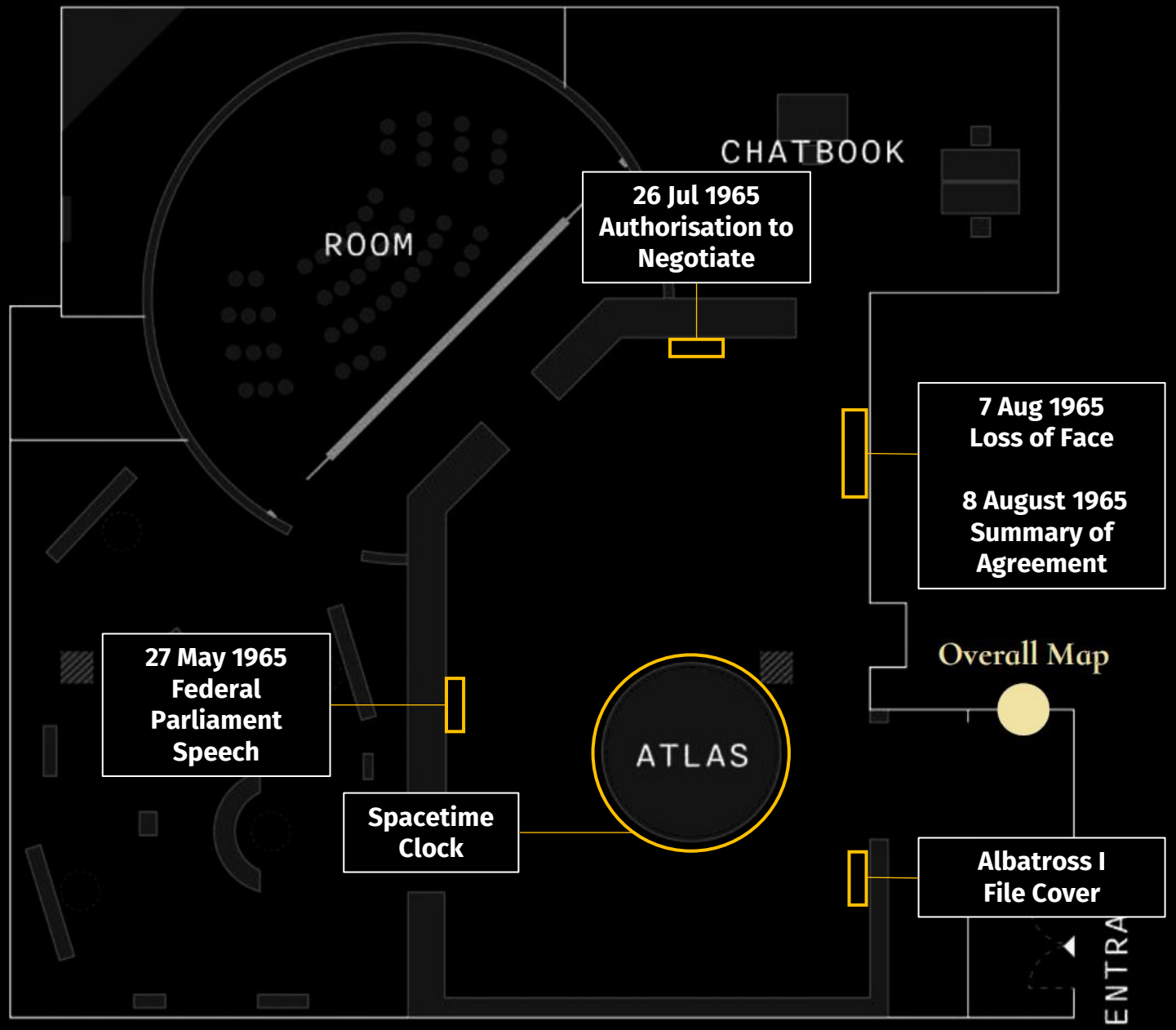
The Spacetime Clock features a 9-min animation projection show, tracking movements and mapping the separation story across time and space.

Dates	**Dates** of key events are indicated at the top of the Spacetime Clock, and corresponds with the events on the Atlas Wall.
People	**Key players** involved are shown as round markers, indicating their location and movement, marked by dotted lines across the map.
Places	**Key locations** are highlighted on the geographical map as the events unfold.
Plot	**Key events** are depicted with an illustration and a short summary.

SPACETIME CLOCK ANIMATION



ATLAS


ROOM
CHATBOOK
26 Jul 1965
Authorisation to
Negotiate
7 Aug 1965
Loss of Face
8 August 1965
Summary of
Agreement
Overall Map
27 May 1965
Federal
Parliament
Speech
ATLAS
Spacetime
Clock
Albatross I
File Cover
ENTRA

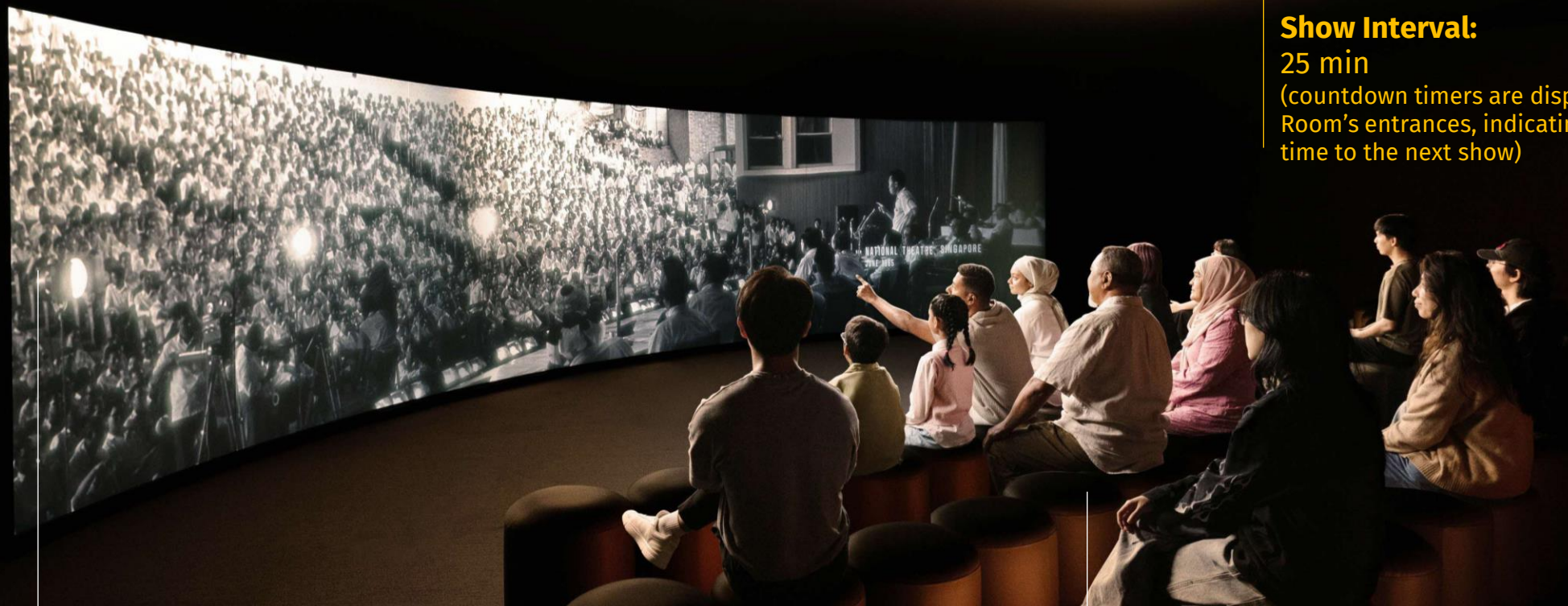
ROOM

ROOM

An intimate and emotional look at key moments of the story through reenactments, historical footage and oral histories.

Room capacity:
60 pax (50 seated, 10 standing)

Show Interval:
25 min
(countdown timers are displayed at the Room's entrances, indicating the wait time to the next show)



PANORAMIC SCREEN WITH A HIDDEN ROOM

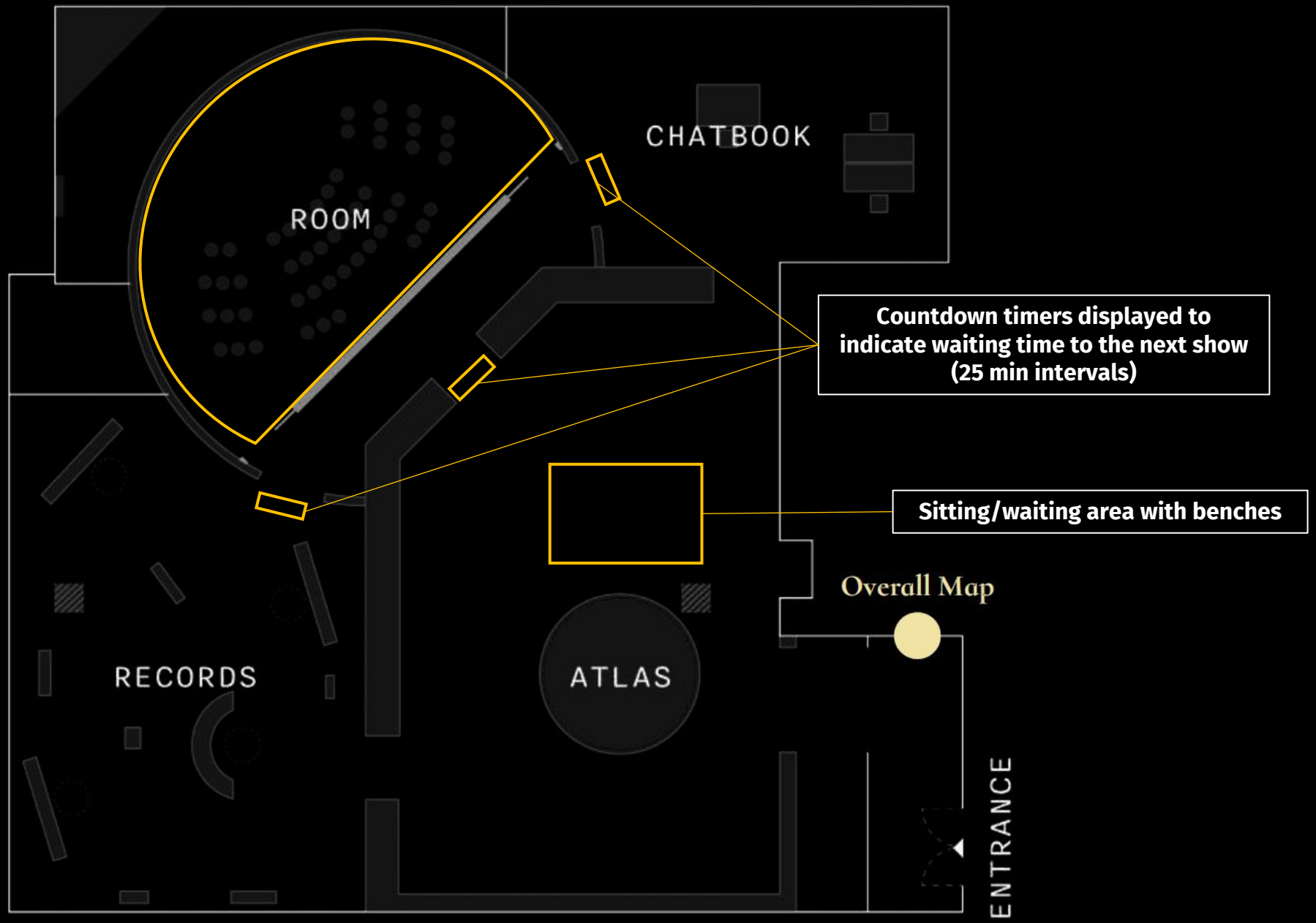
A physical room set is revealed behind the glass screen in certain scenes. Key characters are presented as "virtual presence" on set.

50-SEAT THEATRE

Individual seating provided, with additional room for visitors to stand, if needed.

ROOM

LAYOUT MAP



RECORDS

Listening Booths
Artefact Showcases (with interactive screens)

RECORDS

ORAL HISTORY LISTENING BOOTHS

features exclusive oral history interviews with key players involved in Singapore's Merger and Separation, presented as a podcast-style radio play.



Listening Booth A – *Background*

1. What led to the Separation?
2. Who came up with the idea of Separation?

Listening Booth B – *Alternatives*

3. Could history have turned out differently?
4. Why didn't the merger work?
5. Instead of a Separation, could there have been a confederation?

Listening Booth C – *Reflections*

5. Was there ever a feeling that you were personally in danger?
6. How did you feel after? Any regrets?

Note: Headphones are provided at the sides of each booth.

Features excerpts of oral history interviews with:

- *Lee Kuan Yew*
- *Kwa Geok Choo*
- *Goh Keng Swee*
- *S Rajaratnam*
- *E W Barker*
- *Devan Nair*
- *Ong Pang Boon*
- *Othman Wok*
- *Lim Kim San*
- *Lee Khoon Choy*

RECORDS – LISTENING BOOTHS

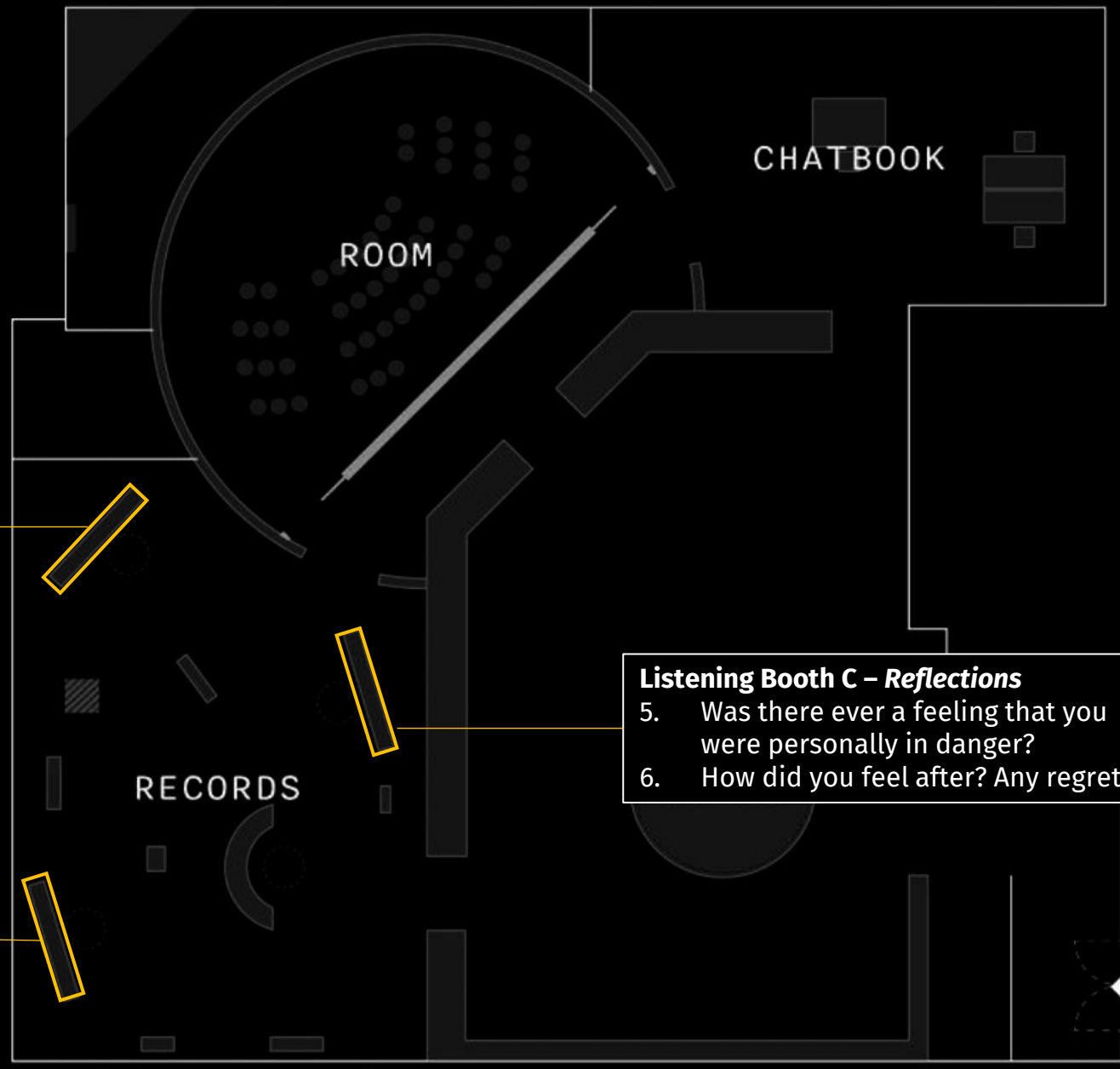
LAYOUT MAP

Listening Booth B – *Alternatives*

3. Could history have turned out differently?
4. Why didn't the merger work?
5. Instead of a Separation, could there have been a confederation?

Listening Booth A – *Background*

1. What led to the Separation?
2. Who came up with the idea of Separation?



Listening Booth C – *Reflections*

5. Was there ever a feeling that you were personally in danger?
6. How did you feel after? Any regrets?

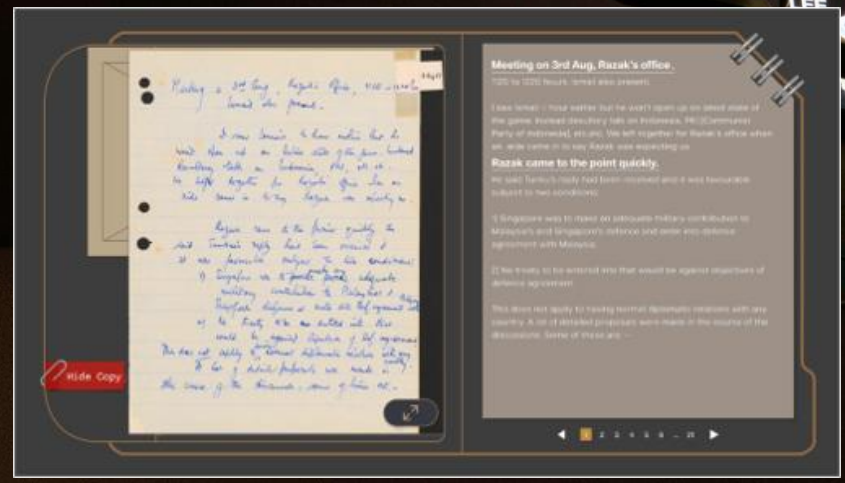
RECORDS

ARTEFACT SHOWCASES

8 showcases featuring official documents and handwritten notes from The Albatross File and other related collections.

INTERACTIVE OLED SCREENS

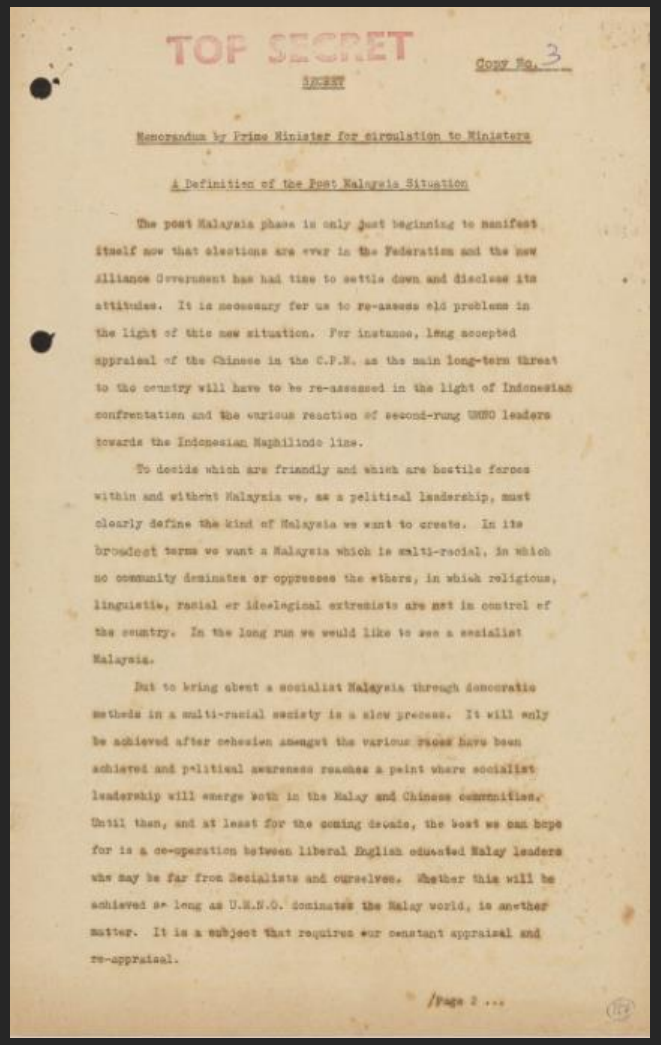
4 showcases are presented with a transparent OLED screen display, where visitors can take a closer look at digital scans of the full set of documents, and dive deeper into the content through footnotes and annotations.



RECORDS

ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

INTERACTIVE OLED SCREEN: MEMORANDUM



TOP SECRET

SECRET

Copy No. 3

Memorandum by Prime Minister for circulation to Ministers

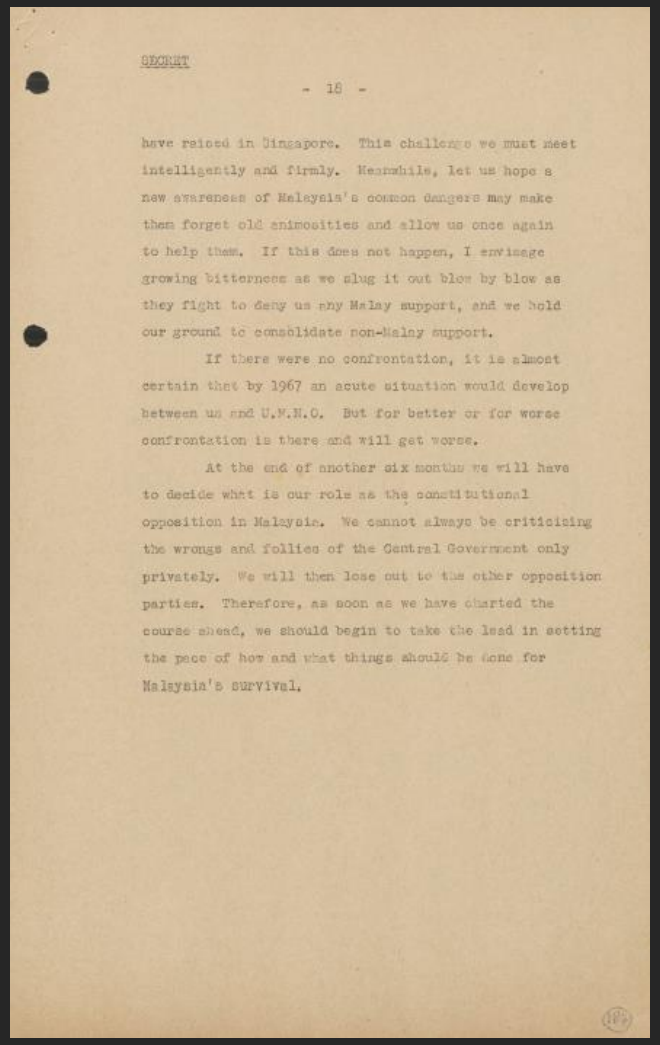
A Definition of the Post Malaysia Situation

The post Malaysia phase is only just beginning to manifest itself now that elections are over in the Federation and the new Alliance Government has had time to settle down and disclose its attitudes. It is necessary for us to re-assess old problems in the light of this new situation. For instance, long accepted appraisal of the Chinese in the C.P.M. as the main long-term threat to the country will have to be re-assessed in the light of Indonesian confrontation and the various reaction of second-rung UMNO leaders towards the Indonesian Maphilindo line.

To decide which are friendly and which are hostile forces within and without Malaysia we, as a political leadership, must clearly define the kind of Malaysia we want to create. In its broadest terms we want a Malaysia which is multi-racial, in which no community dominates or oppresses the others, in which religious, linguistic, racial or ideological extremists are not in control of the country. In the long run we would like to see a socialist Malaysia.

But to bring about a socialist Malaysia through democratic methods in a multi-racial society is a slow process. It will only be achieved after cohesion amongst the various races have been achieved and political awareness reaches a point where socialist leadership will emerge both in the Malay and Chinese communities. Until then, and at least for the coming decade, the best we can hope for is a co-operation between liberal English educated Malay leaders who may be far from Socialists and ourselves. Whether this will be achieved so long as U.M.N.O. dominates the Malay world, is another matter. It is a subject that requires our constant appraisal and re-appraisal.

/Page 2 ...



SECRET

- 18 -

have raised in Singapore. This challenge we must meet intelligently and firmly. Meanwhile, let us hope a new awareness of Malaysia's common dangers may make them forget old animosities and allow us once again to help them. If this does not happen, I envisage growing bitterness as we slug it out blow by blow as they fight to deny us any Malay support, and we hold our ground to consolidate non-Malay support.

If there were no confrontation, it is almost certain that by 1967 an acute situation would develop between us and U.M.N.O. But for better or for worse confrontation is there and will get worse.

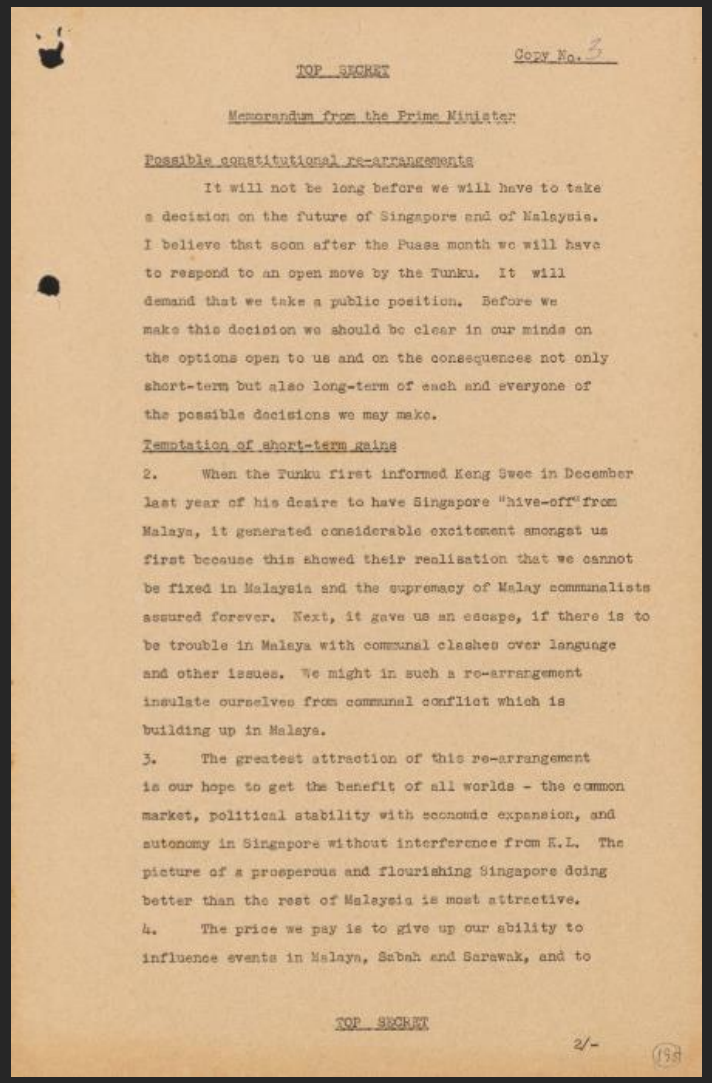
At the end of another six months we will have to decide what is our role as the constitutional opposition in Malaysia. We cannot always be criticising the wrongs and follies of the Central Government only privately. We will then lose out to the other opposition parties. Therefore, as soon as we have charted the course ahead, we should begin to take the lead in setting the pace of how and what things should be done for Malaysia's survival.

Undated; likely mid-July 1964
"A Definition of the Post-Malaysia Situation": Memorandum by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew for Circulation to Ministers

Prime Minister's Office Collection,
National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

This 18-page memorandum, classified "Secret", was undated but likely written sometime in mid-Jul 1964. What Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew meant by "the post-Malaysia situation" was the state of affairs between Singapore and the Federal Government 10 months after Merger in Sep 1963. Chronologically the oldest document in the Albatross File, it not only provided a stark analysis of the political dynamics at work, but also presaged the path the Singapore leaders took that eventually led to Separation.

RECORDS
ARTEFACT SHOWCASE



TOP SECRET

Copy No. 3

Memorandum from the Prime Minister

Possible constitutional re-arrangements

It will not be long before we will have to take a decision on the future of Singapore and of Malaysia. I believe that soon after the Puasa month we will have to respond to an open move by the Tunku. It will demand that we take a public position. Before we make this decision we should be clear in our minds on the options open to us and on the consequences not only short-term but also long-term of each and everyone of the possible decisions we may make.

Temptation of short-term gains

2. When the Tunku first informed Keng Swee in December last year of his desire to have Singapore "hive-off" from Malaya, it generated considerable excitement amongst us first because this showed their realisation that we cannot be fixed in Malaysia and the supremacy of Malay communalists assured forever. Next, it gave us an escape, if there is to be trouble in Malaya with communal clashes over language and other issues. We might in such a re-arrangement insulate ourselves from communal conflict which is building up in Malaya.

3. The greatest attraction of this re-arrangement is our hope to get the benefit of all worlds - the common market, political stability with economic expansion, and autonomy in Singapore without interference from K.L. The picture of a prosperous and flourishing Singapore doing better than the rest of Malaysia is most attractive.

4. The price we pay is to give up our ability to influence events in Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak, and to

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(138)

Undated; likely 25 January 1965
"Possible Constitutional Re-arrangements": Memorandum from Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew

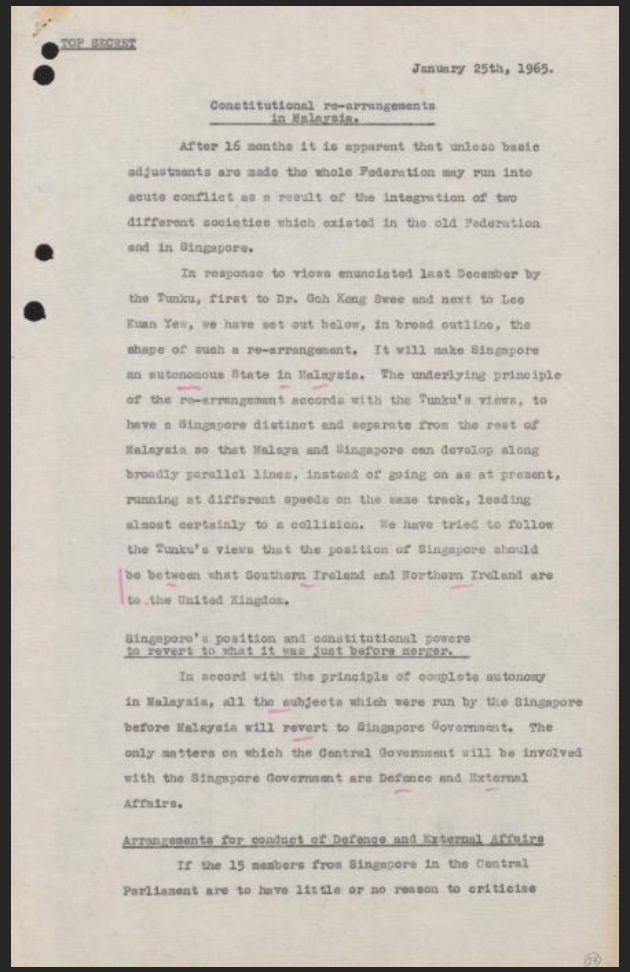
Prime Minister's Office Collection, National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

This Cabinet Memorandum was completed by Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew on or shortly after 25 Jan 1965 and distributed to Cabinet members between 25 and 26 Jan 1965. Its title reflected Lee's hope then that a re-arrangement could be found to insulate Singapore from communal conflict in Malaya. Lee knew he had first to persuade his Cabinet colleagues that the best they could hope for was to return to the position just before Merger: complete autonomy for Singapore, with contribution in kind to the common defence of Malaysia. Singapore's ultimate objective was still to be part of Malaysia.

RECORDS
ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

INTERACTIVE OLED SCREEN: CONSTITUTIONAL RE-ARRANGEMENTS (1/3)

25 January 1965
"Constitutional Re-arrangements in Malaysia": Paper drafted by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew for the Tunku



TOP SECRET

January 25th, 1965.

Constitutional re-arrangements in Malaysia.

After 16 months it is apparent that unless basic adjustments are made the whole Federation may run into acute conflict as a result of the integration of two different societies which existed in the old Federation and in Singapore.

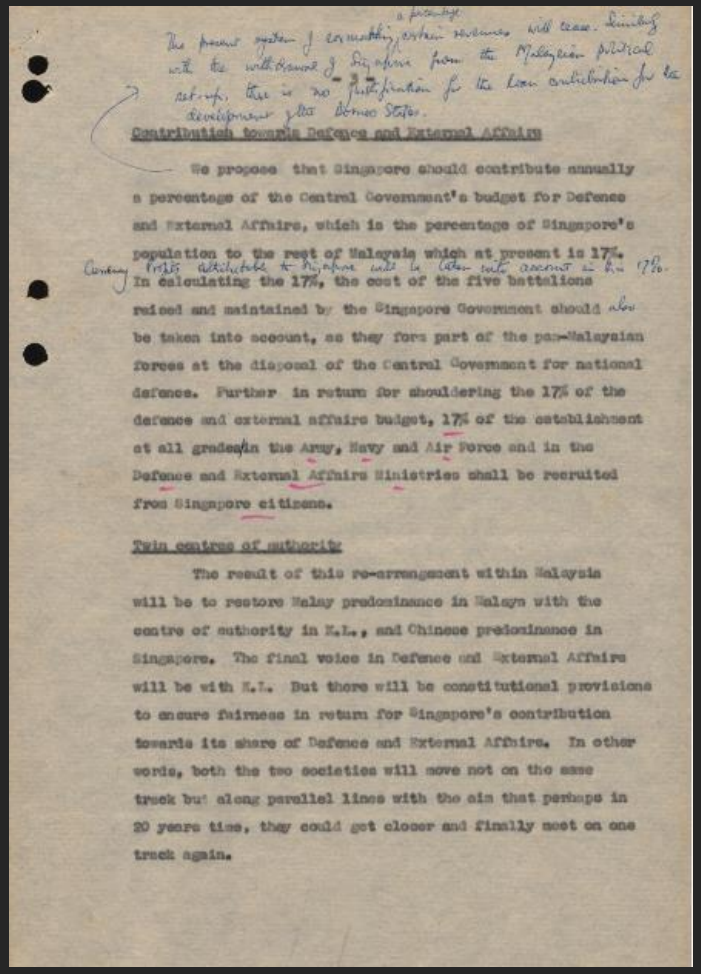
In response to views enunciated last December by the Tunku, first to Dr. Goh Keng Swee and next to Lee Kuan Yew, we have set out below, in broad outline, the shape of such a re-arrangement. It will make Singapore an autonomous State in Malaysia. The underlying principle of the re-arrangement accords with the Tunku's views, to have a Singapore distinct and separate from the rest of Malaysia so that Malaya and Singapore can develop along broadly parallel lines, instead of going on as at present, running at different speeds on the same track, leading almost certainly to a collision. We have tried to follow the Tunku's views that the position of Singapore should be between what Southern Ireland and Northern Ireland are to the United Kingdom.

Singapore's position and constitutional powers to revert to what it was just before merger.

In accord with the principle of complete autonomy in Malaysia, all the subjects which were run by the Singapore before Malaysia will revert to Singapore Government. The only matters on which the Central Government will be involved with the Singapore Government are Defence and External Affairs.

Arrangements for conduct of Defence and External Affairs

If the 15 members from Singapore in the Central Parliament are to have little or no reason to criticise



The present system of earmarking a percentage of certain revenues will cease. Similarly with the withdrawal of Singapore from the Malaysian political set-up, there is no justification for the loan contribution for the development of the Borneo States.

Contribution towards Defence and External Affairs

We propose that Singapore should contribute annually a percentage of the Central Government's budget for Defence and External Affairs, which is the percentage of Singapore's population to the rest of Malaysia which at present is 17%.

Currency profits attributable to Singapore will be taken into account in this 17%.

In calculating the 17%, the cost of the five battalions raised and maintained by the Singapore Government should also be taken into account, as they form part of the pan-Malaysian forces at the disposal of the Central Government for national defence. Further in return for shouldering the 17% of the defence and external affairs budget, 17% of the establishment at all grades in the Army, Navy and Air Force and in the Defence and External Affairs Ministries shall be recruited from Singapore citizens.

Twin centres of authority

The result of this re-arrangement within Malaysia will be to restore Malay predominance in Malaya with the centre of authority in K.L., and Chinese predominance in Singapore. The final voice in Defence and External Affairs will be with K.L. But there will be constitutional provisions to ensure fairness in return for Singapore's contribution towards its share of Defence and External Affairs. In other words, both the two societies will move not on the same track but along parallel lines with the aim that perhaps in 20 years time, they could get closer and finally meet on one track again.

TRANSCRIPT: The present system of earmarking a percentage of certain revenues will cease. Similarly with the withdrawal of Singapore from the Malaysian political set-up, there is no justification for the loan contribution for the development of the Borneo States.

TRANSCRIPT: Currency profits attributable to Singapore will be taken into account in this 17%

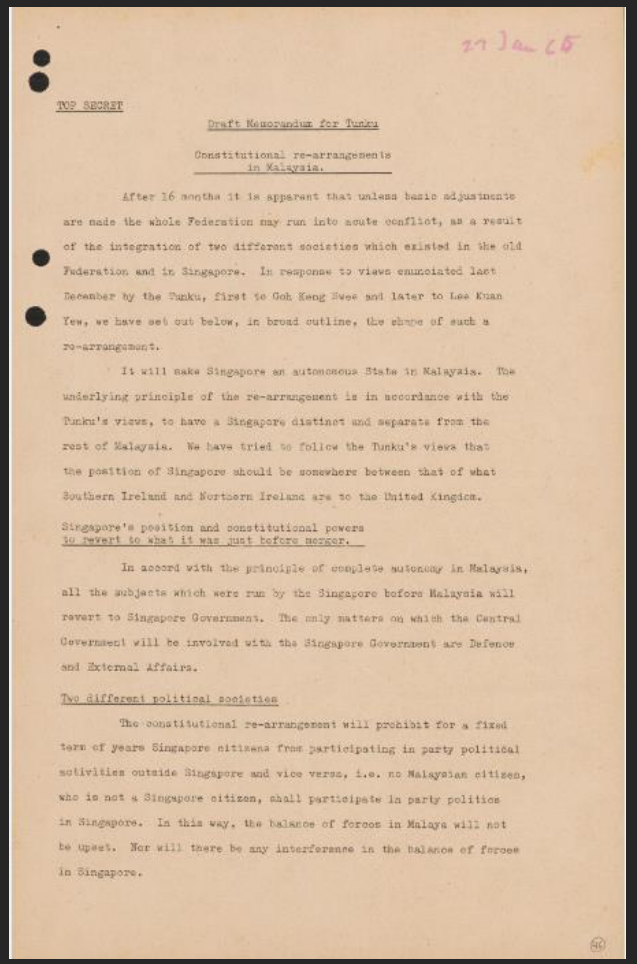
Prime Minister's Office Collection,
National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

It would appear that this early draft from Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew had been shown to Singapore Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee. Kept in the Albatross File, the draft shows Goh's handwritten annotations. Goh had marked the document with suggestions pertaining to the financial aspects. At the end of the paper, Goh suggested an additional paragraph on the levying of taxes.

RECORDS

ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

INTERACTIVE OLED SCREEN: CONSTITUTIONAL RE-ARRANGEMENTS (2/3)



TOP SECRET

Draft Memorandum for Tunku

Constitutional re-arrangements in Malaysia.

After 16 months it is apparent that unless basic adjustments are made the whole Federation may run into acute conflict, as a result of the integration of two different societies which existed in the old Federation and in Singapore. In response to views enunciated last December by the Tunku, first to Goh Keng Swee and later to Lee Kuan Yew, we have set out below, in broad outline, the shape of such a re-arrangement.

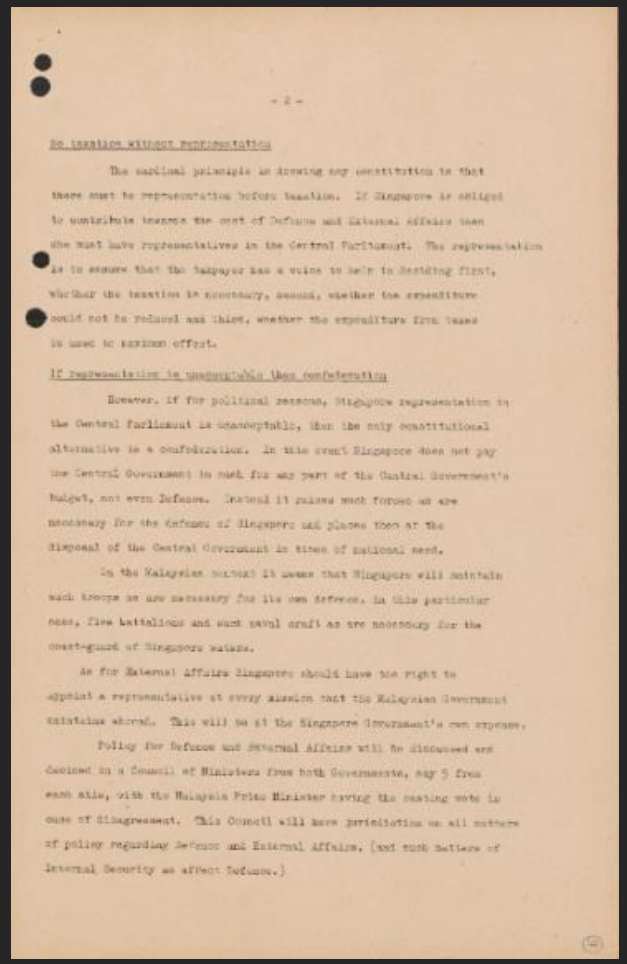
It will make Singapore an autonomous State in Malaysia. The underlying principle of the re-arrangement is in accordance with the Tunku's views, to have a Singapore distinct and separate from the rest of Malaysia. We have tried to follow the Tunku's views that the position of Singapore should be somewhere between that of what Southern Ireland and Northern Ireland are to the United Kingdom.

Singapore's position and constitutional powers to revert to what it was just before merger.

In accord with the principle of complete autonomy in Malaysia, all the subjects which were run by the Singapore before Malaysia will revert to Singapore Government. The only matters on which the Central Government will be involved with the Singapore Government are Defence and External Affairs.

Two different political societies

The constitutional re-arrangement will prohibit for a fixed term of years Singapore citizens from participating in party political activities outside Singapore and vice versa, i.e. no Malaysian citizen, who is not a Singapore citizen, shall participate in party politics in Singapore. In this way, the balance of forces in Malaya will not be upset. Nor will there be any interference in the balance of forces in Singapore.



- 2 -

No taxation without representation

The cardinal principle in drawing any constitution is that there must be representation before taxation. If Singapore is obliged to contribute towards the cost of Defence and External Affairs then she must have representatives in the Central Parliament. The representation is to ensure that the taxpayer has a voice to help in deciding first, whether the taxation is necessary, second, whether the expenditure could not be reduced and third, whether the expenditure from taxes is used to maximum effect.

If representation is unacceptable then confederation

However, if for political reasons, Singapore representation in the Central Parliament is unacceptable, then the only constitutional alternative is a confederation. In this event Singapore does not pay the Central Government in cash for any part of the Central Government's budget, not even Defence. Instead it raises such forces as are necessary for the defence of Singapore and places them at the disposal of the Central Government in times of national need.

In the Malaysian context it seems that Singapore will maintain such troops as are necessary for its own defence. In this particular case, five battalions and such naval craft as are necessary for the coast-guard of Singapore waters.

As for External Affairs Singapore should have the right to appoint a representative at every mission that the Malaysian Government maintains abroad. This will be at the Singapore Government's own expense.

Policy for Defence and External Affairs will be discussed and decided on a Council of Ministers from both Governments, say 5 from each side, with the Malaysia Prime Minister having the casting vote in case of disagreement. This Council will have jurisdiction on all matters of policy regarding Defence and External Affairs. (and such matters of Internal Security as affect Defence.)

Undated; likely 27 January 1965
"Draft Memorandum for Tunku: Constitutional Re-arrangements in Malaysia": Circulated to Cabinet by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew

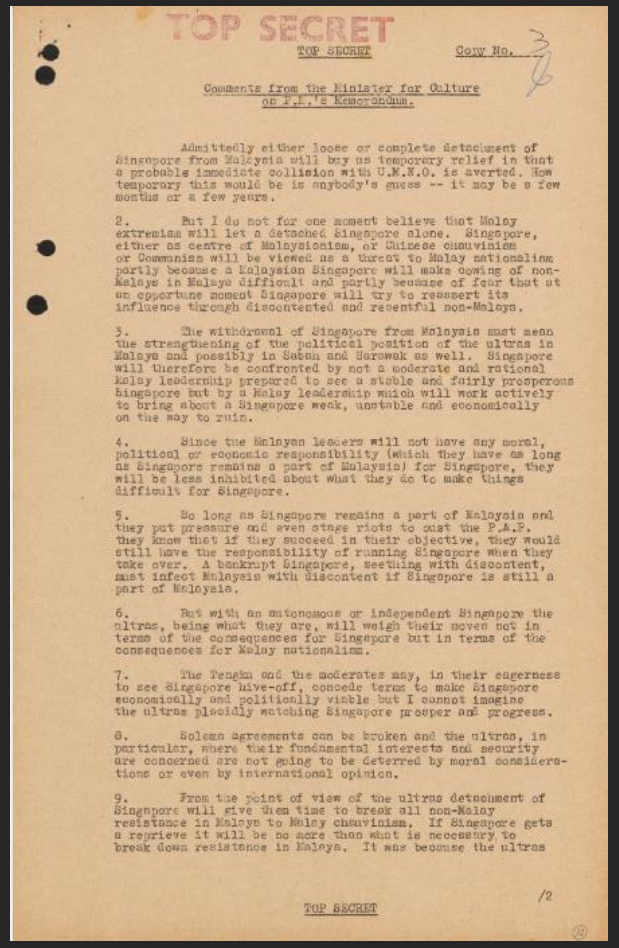
Prime Minister's Office Collection,
National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

This document, while undated, was preceded by a cover note from Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew dated 27 Jan 1965. Lee did not incorporate any of Singapore Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee's handwritten amendments from an earlier draft. But Goh's influence might be seen in the addition of the "cardinal principle" of "no taxation without representation" in this paper. That principle underscored Lee's argument that Singapore would make cash payments to the Malaysian defence and foreign affairs budget only if she were represented in the Central Parliament. This version was likely presented to Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman.

RECORDS

ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

INTERACTIVE OLED SCREEN: CONSTITUTIONAL RE-ARRANGEMENTS (3/3)



TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET Copy No. 3

Comments from the Minister for Culture on P.M.'s Memorandum.

Admittedly either loose or complete detachment of Singapore from Malaysia will buy us temporary relief in that a probable immediate collision with U.M.N.O. is averted. How temporary this would be is anybody's guess -- it may be a few months or a few years.

2. But I do not for one moment believe that Malay extremism will let a detached Singapore alone. Singapore, either as centre of Malaysianism, or Chinese chauvinism or Communism will be viewed as a threat to Malay nationalism partly because a Malaysian Singapore will make cowing of non-Malays in Malaya difficult and partly because of fear that at an opportune moment Singapore will try to reassert its influence through discontented and resentful non-Malays.

3. The withdrawal of Singapore from Malaysia must mean the strengthening of the political position of the ultras in Malaya and possibly in Sabah and Sarawak as well. Singapore will therefore be confronted by not a moderate and rational Malay leadership prepared to see a stable and fairly prosperous Singapore but by a Malay leadership which will work actively to bring about a Singapore weak, unstable and economically on the way to ruin.

4. Since the Malayan leaders will not have any moral, political or economic responsibility (which they have as long as Singapore remains a part of Malaysia) for Singapore, they will be less inhibited about what they do to make things difficult for Singapore.

5. So long as Singapore remains a part of Malaysia and they put pressure and even stage riots to oust the P.A.P. they know that if they succeed in their objective, they would still have the responsibility of running Singapore when they take over. A bankrupt Singapore, seething with discontent, must infect Malaysia with discontent if Singapore is still a part of Malaysia.

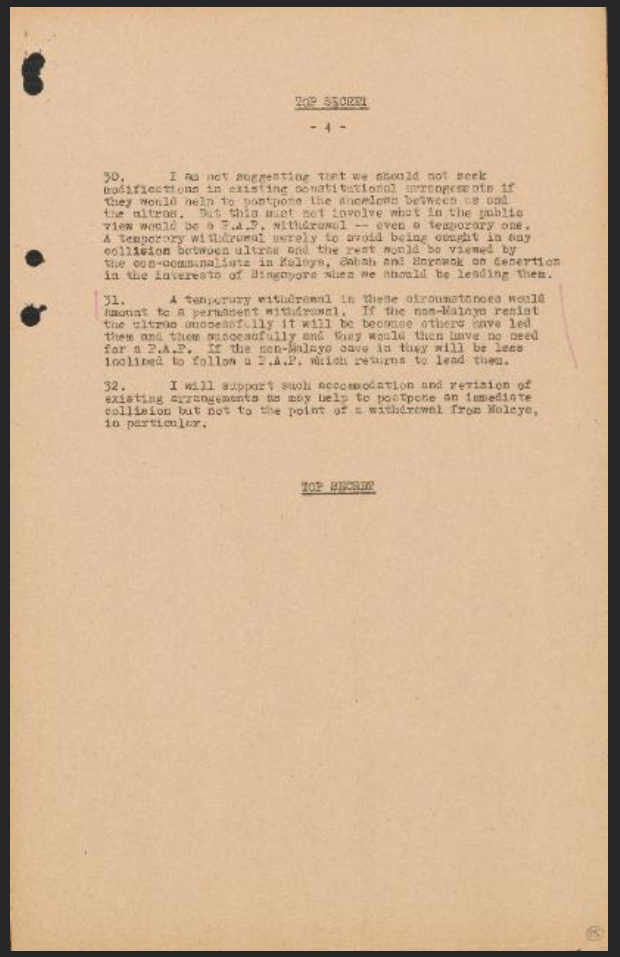
6. But with an autonomous or independent Singapore the ultras, being what they are, will weigh their moves not in terms of the consequences for Singapore but in terms of the consequences for Malay nationalism.

7. The Tengku and the moderates may, in their eagerness to see Singapore hive-off, concede terms to make Singapore economically and politically viable but I cannot imagine the ultras placidly watching Singapore prosper and progress.

8. Solemn agreements can be broken and the ultras, in particular, where their fundamental interests and security are concerned are not going to be deterred by moral considerations or even by international opinion.

9. From the point of view of the ultras detachment of Singapore will give them time to break all non-Malay resistance in Malaya to Malay chauvinism. If Singapore gets a reprieve it will be no more than what is necessary to break down resistance in Malaya. It was because the ultras

TOP SECRET /2



TOP SECRET

- 4 -

30. I am not suggesting that we should not seek modifications in existing constitutional arrangements if they would help to postpone the showdown between us and the ultras. But this must not involve what in the public view would be a P.A.P. withdrawal -- even a temporary one. A temporary withdrawal merely to avoid being caught in any collision between ultras and the rest would be viewed by the non-communalists in Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak as desertion in the interests of Singapore when we should be leading them.

31. A temporary withdrawal in these circumstances would amount to a permanent withdrawal. If the non-Malays resist the ultras successfully it will be because others have led them and them successfully and they would then have no need for a P.A.P. If the non-Malays cave in they will be less inclined to follow a P.A.P. which returns to lead them.

32. I will support such accomodation and revision of existing arrangements as may help to postpone an immediate collision but not to the point of a withdrawal from Malaya, in particular.

TOP SECRET

Undated; likely 27 January 1965
"Comments from the Minister for Culture on PM's Memorandum": Rajaratnam's Views on Constitutional Re-arrangements

Prime Minister's Office Collection,
National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

In his Cabinet Memorandum on Possible Constitutional Re-arrangements, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew described the two options for Singapore he intended to present to Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman: The People's Action Party to stay in the Malaysian Parliament but not participate in politics outside Singapore; or complete autonomy, with contribution in kind to the common defence of Malaysia. He asked his colleagues to note their views on the memorandum, an invitation that Singapore Minister for Culture S Rajaratnam took up. Although undated, his comments appeared to have been circulated to Cabinet members on 27 Jan 1965.

RECORDS

ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

INTERACTIVE OLED SCREEN: GOH KENG SWEE'S HANDWRITTEN NOTES

TRANSCRIPT: Meeting on 3rd Aug, Razak's office, 1120 to 1220 hours. Ismail also present.

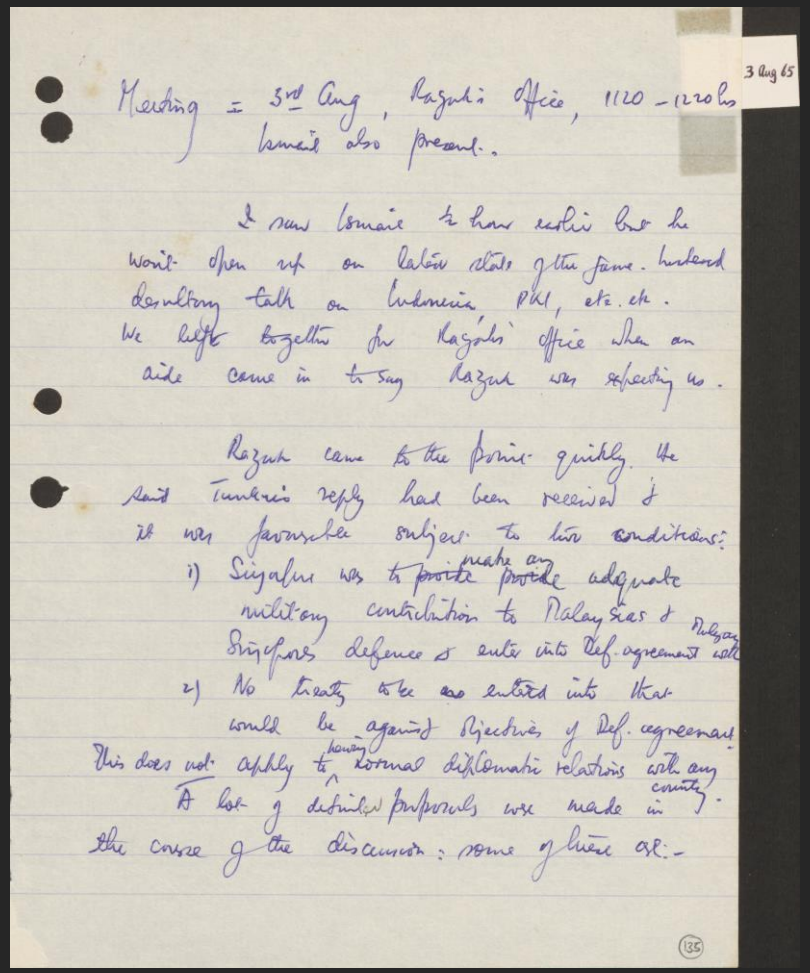
I saw Ismail ½ hour earlier but he won't open up on latest state of the game. Instead desultory talk on Indonesia, PKI [Communist Party of Indonesia], etc.etc. We left together for Razak's office when an aide came in to say Razak was expecting us.

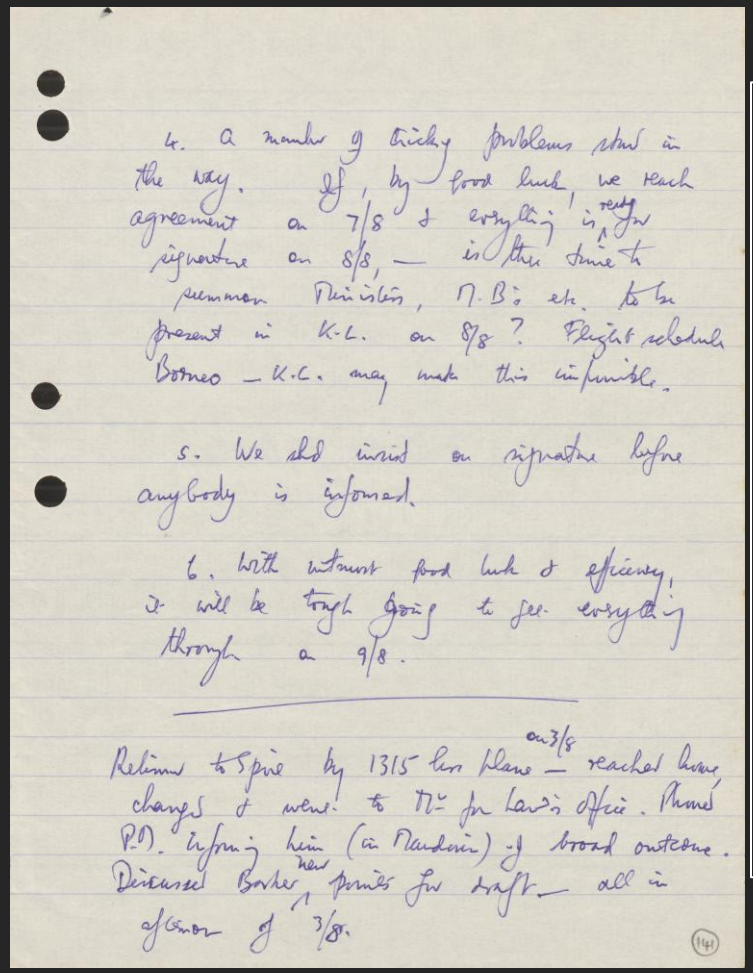
Razak came to the point quickly. He said Tunku's reply had been received and it was favourable subject to two conditions:

1. Singapore was to make an adequate military contribution to Malaysia's and Singapore's defence and enter into defence agreement with Malaysia.

2. No treaty to be entered into that would be against objectives of defence agreement.

This does not apply to having normal diplomatic relations with any country. A lot of detailed proposals were made in the course of the discussions. Some of these are: –
[page 1 of 7]





TRANSCRIPT :
4. A number of tricky problems stand in the way. If, by good luck, we reach agreement on 7/8 and everything is ready for signature on 8/8 – is there time to summon Ministers, MPs etc to be present in KL on 8/8? Flight schedule Borneo-KL may make this impossible.

5. We should insist on signature before anybody is informed.

6. With the utmost good luck and efficiency, it will be tough going to get everything through on 9/8.

--

Returned to Singapore by 1315 hrs plane on 3/8 – reached home, changed and went to Minister for Law's office. Phoned PM informing him in Mandarin of broad outcome. Discussed [with] Barker new points for draft – all in afternoon of 3/8.

[page 7 of 7]

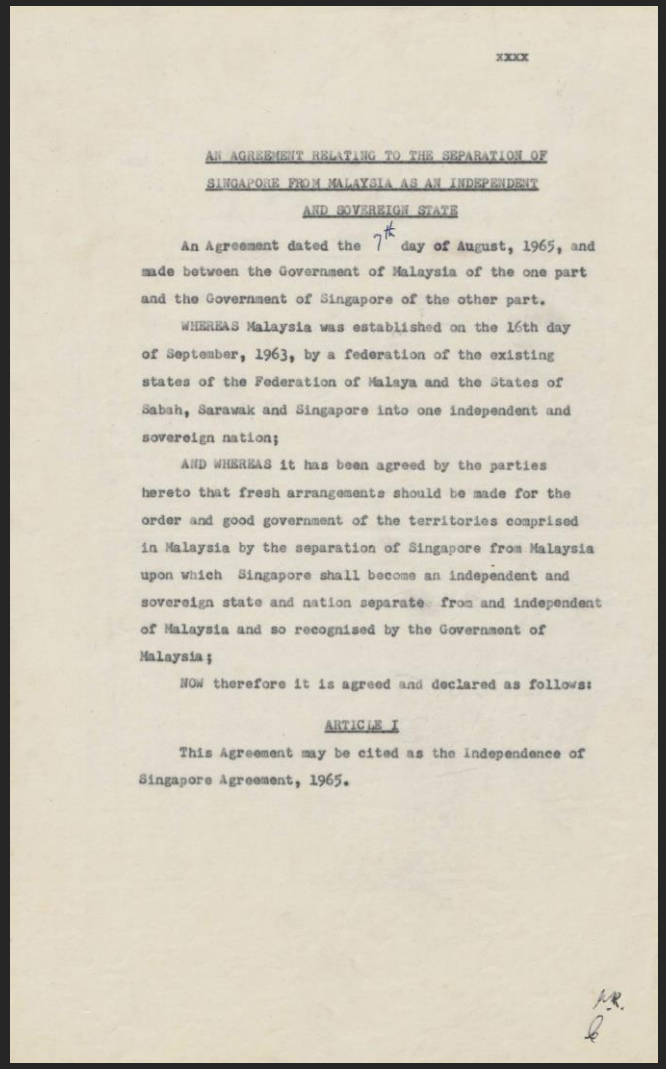
3 August 1965
Goh Keng Swee's handwritten note on his meeting with Razak and Ismail

Prime Minister's Office Collection,
National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Albatross I

In this last handwritten note that Singapore Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee kept in the Albatross File, he recorded his fourth discussion with Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak and Malaysian Home Affairs Minister Ismail Abdul Rahman on Singapore's independence. The two Malaysian leaders proposed ideas that would, in Goh's assessment, "limit the size of Singapore's defence forces". Goh also showed Razak the Separation Agreement that Singapore Minister for Law E W Barker had drafted. In his 1982 oral history interview, Goh said: "Once the meeting of 3 Aug had been concluded, I knew that Separation was on."

RECORDS
ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

7 August 1965
Draft Agreement relating to the Separation of Singapore from Malaysia as an independent and sovereign state



xxxx

AN AGREEMENT RELATING TO THE SEPARATION OF SINGAPORE FROM MALAYSIA AS AN INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN STATE

An Agreement dated the 7th day of August, 1965, and made between the Government of Malaysia of the one part and the Government of Singapore of the other part.

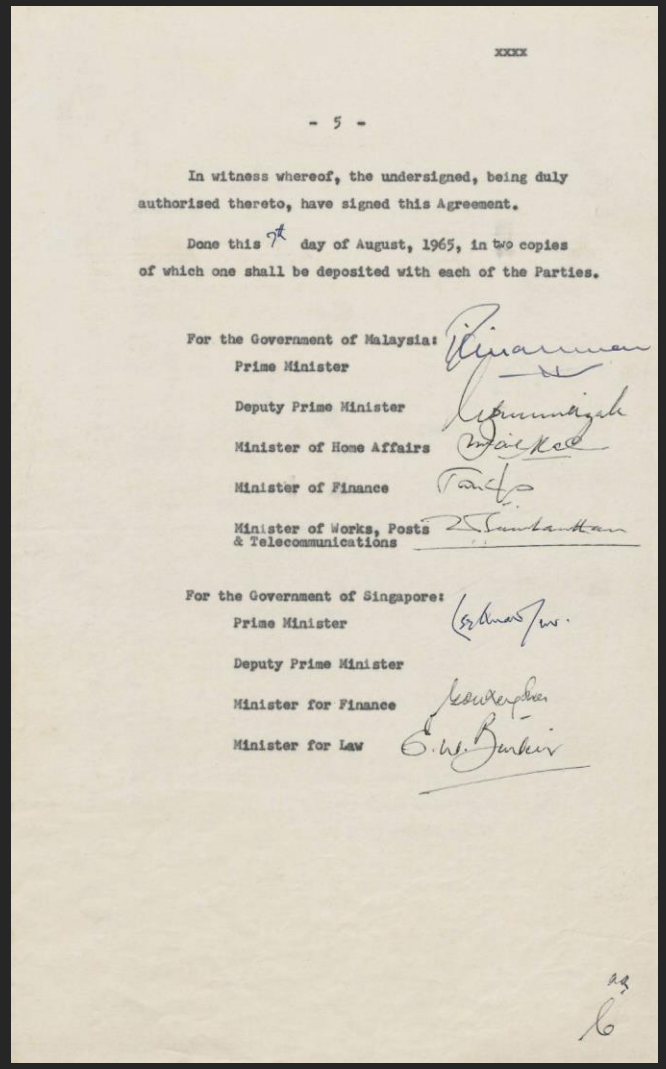
WHEREAS Malaysia was established on the 16th day of September, 1963, by a federation of the existing states of the Federation of Malaya and the States of Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore into one independent and sovereign nation;

AND WHEREAS it has been agreed by the parties hereto that fresh arrangements should be made for the order and good government of the territories comprised in Malaysia by the separation of Singapore from Malaysia upon which Singapore shall become an independent and sovereign state and nation separate from and independent of Malaysia and so recognised by the Government of Malaysia;

NOW therefore it is agreed and declared as follows:

ARTICLE I

This Agreement may be cited as the Independence of Singapore Agreement, 1965.



xxxx

- 5 -

In witness whereof, the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed this Agreement.

Done this 7th day of August, 1965, in two copies of which one shall be deposited with each of the Parties.

For the Government of Malaysia:
Prime Minister
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister of Home Affairs
Minister of Finance
Minister of Works, Posts & Telecommunications

For the Government of Singapore:
Prime Minister
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Finance
Minister for Law

Cabinet Office Collection, National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Independence of Singapore – Original Documents 1965

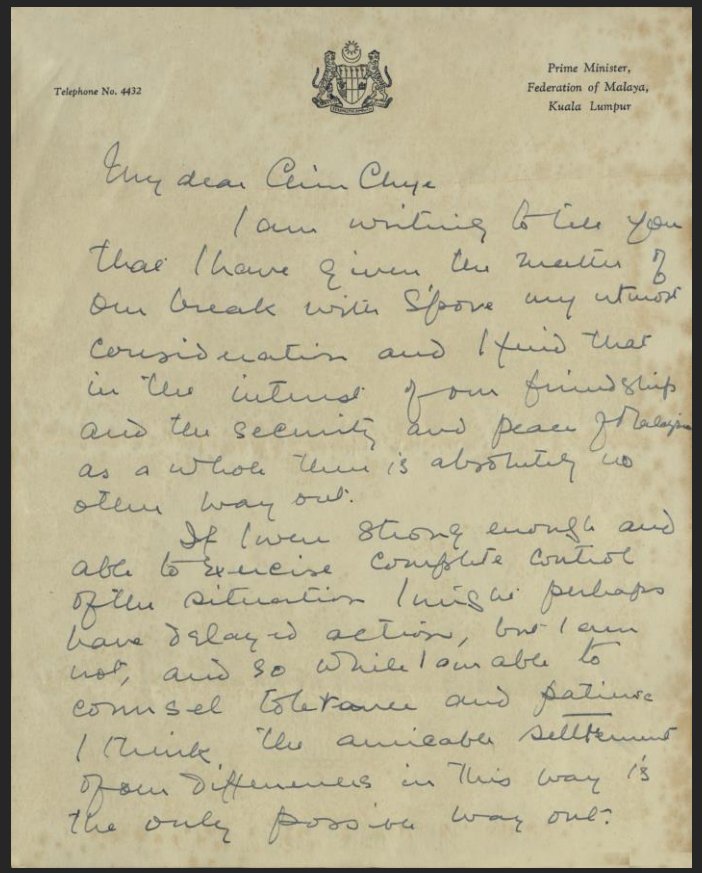
Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew had asked Singapore Minister for Law E W Barker to draft the Separation Agreement and limit the number of persons in the know. In all, there were three documents to be drafted: an Agreement to Separate; an amendment to the Malaysian Constitution to allow Singapore to separate; and a Proclamation of Independence. This draft copy of the Separation Agreement features the signatures of Lee, Singapore Finance Minister Goh Keng Swee, and Barker.

RECORDS

ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

INTERACTIVE OLED SCREEN: TUNKU AND TOH CHIN CHYE'S LETTERS (1/2)

Undated; likely 7 August 1965
Letter from the Tunku to Toh Chin Chye urging him to agree to the Separation of Singapore from Malaysia



Telephone No. 4432

Prime Minister,
Federation of Malaya,
Kuala Lumpur

My dear Chin Chye

I am writing to tell you that I have given the matter of our break with Spore my utmost consideration and I find that in the interest of our friendship and the security and peace of Malaysia as a whole there is absolutely no other way out.

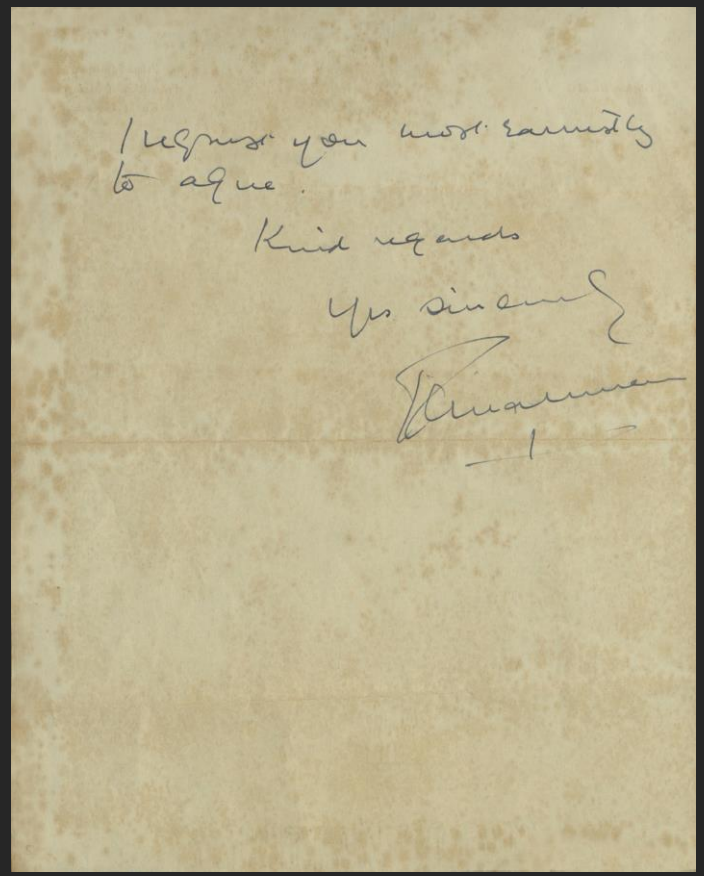
If I were strong enough and able to exercise complete control of the situation I might perhaps have delayed action, but I am not, and so while I am able to counsel tolerance and patience I think the amicable settlement of our differences in this way is the only possible way out.

TRANSCRIPT:

My dear Chin Chye,

I am writing to tell you that I have given the matter of our break with Singapore my utmost consideration and I find that in the interest of our friendship and the security and peace of Malaysia as a whole there is absolutely no other way out.

If I were strong enough and able to exercise complete control of the situation I might perhaps have delayed action, but I am not, and so while I am able to counsel tolerance and patience I think the amicable settlement of our differences in this way is the only possible way out.



I request you most earnestly to agree.

Kind regards

Yrs sincerely

T Abdul Rahman

TRANSCRIPT:

I request you most earnestly to agree.

Kind regards.
Yours sincerely,
Tunku Abdul Rahman

Cabinet Office Collection, National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Independence of Singapore – Original Documents 1965

When Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew told Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Toh Chin Chye and Singapore Minister for Culture S Rajaratnam about Singapore and Malaysia parting ways, they were shocked and refused to sign the Separation Agreement. Lee urged Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman to persuade Toh and Rajaratnam to accept Separation. The Tunku wrote this brief letter to Toh underscoring that there was no alternative but Separation. Although undated, the letter was likely written on 7 Aug 1965.

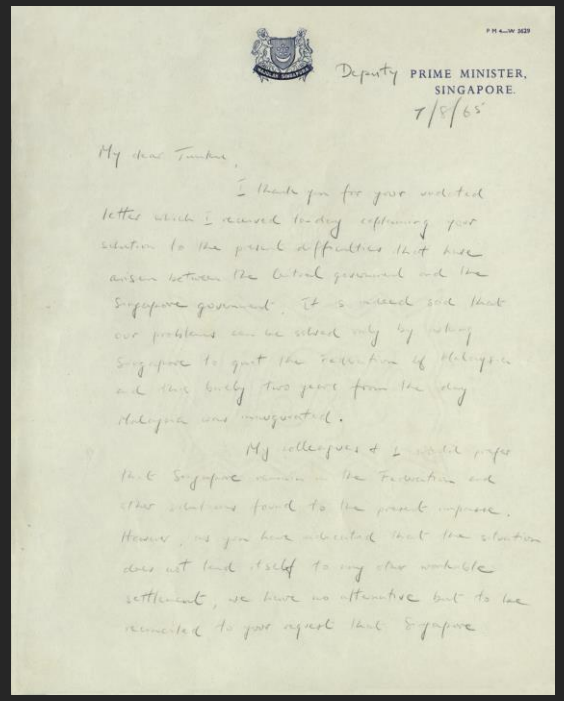
RECORDS

ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

INTERACTIVE OLED SCREEN: TUNKU AND TOH CHIN CHYE'S LETTERS (2/2)

Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Toh Chin Chye wrote to Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman accepting "the expulsion of Singapore from Malaysia". Interviewed in 1996, Toh said he was "ignorant of" the July 1965 discussions on independence between Singapore Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee and Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak. Toh added that he and Singapore Minister for Culture S Rajaratnam "were kept out of all this, because we would be objecting."

7 August 1965
Letter from Toh Chin Chye to the Tunku accepting "the expulsion of Singapore from Malaysia"



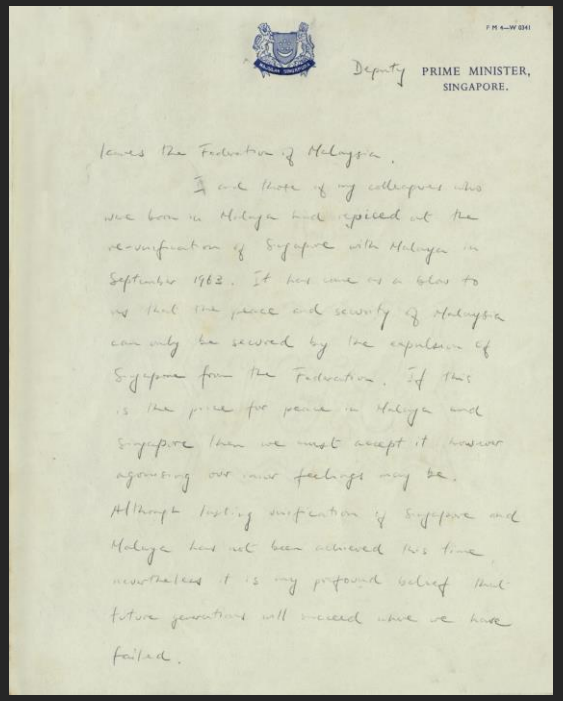
Deputy PRIME MINISTER, SINGAPORE.

7/8/65

My dear Tunku,

I thank you for your undated letter which I received yesterday explaining your position and your solution to the present difficulties that have arisen between the Central government and the Singapore government. It is indeed sad that our problems can be solved only by asking Singapore to quit the Federation of Malaysia and this barely two years from the day Malaysia was inaugurated.

My colleagues & I would prefer that Singapore remain in the Federation and other solutions found to the present impasse. However, as you have indicated that the situation does not lend itself to any other workable settlement, we have no alternative but to be reconciled to your request that Singapore

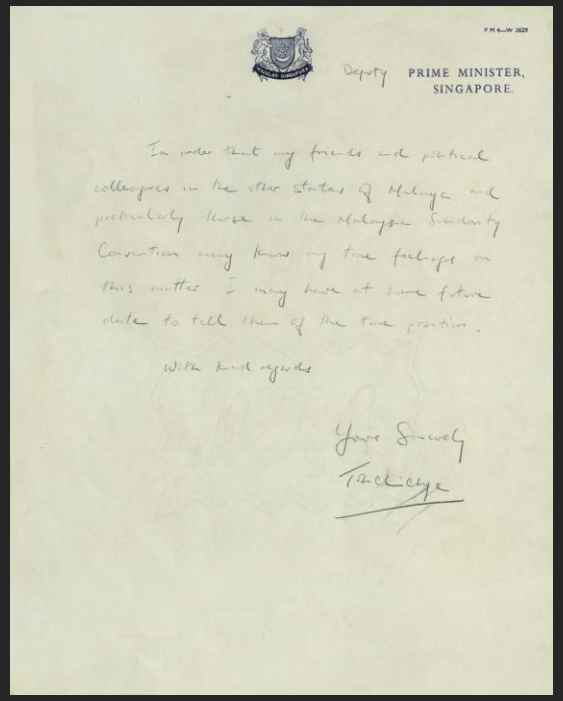


Deputy PRIME MINISTER, SINGAPORE.

leaves the Federation of Malaysia.

I and those of my colleagues who were born in Malaya had rejoiced at the re-unification of Singapore with Malaya in September 1963. It has come as a blow to us that the peace and security of Malaysia can only be secured by the expulsion of Singapore from the Federation. If this is the price for peace in Malaya and Singapore then we must accept it however agonising our inner feelings may be.

Although lasting unification of Singapore and Malaya has not been achieved this time, nevertheless it is my profound belief that future generations will succeed where we have failed.



Deputy PRIME MINISTER, SINGAPORE.

In order that my friends and political colleagues in the other states of Malaya and particularly those in the Malaysian Solidarity Convention may know my true feelings on this matter I may have at some future date to tell them of the true position.

With kind regards

Yours Sincerely
Toh Chin Chye

TRANSCRIPT:

My dear Tunku,

I thank you for your undated letter which I received yesterday explaining your position and your solution to the present difficulties that have arisen between the Central Government and the Singapore Government. It is indeed sad that our problems can be solved only by asking Singapore to quit Malaysia and this barely two years from the day Malaysia was inaugurated.

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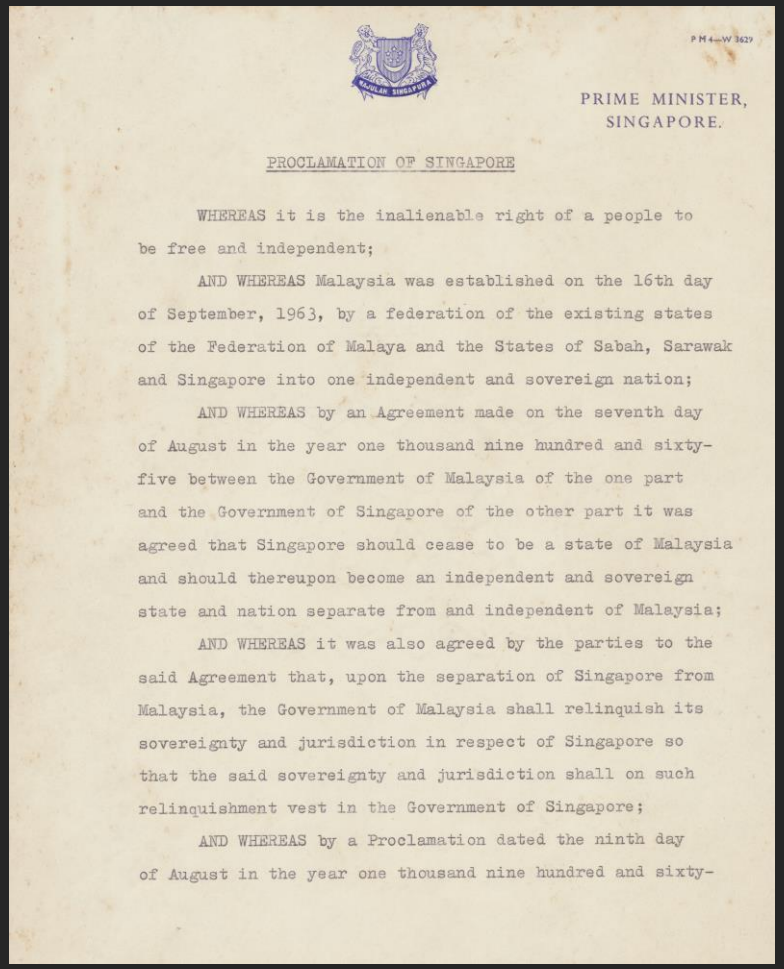
With kind regards

Yours sincerely
Toh Chin Chye

Cabinet Office Collection,
National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Independence of Singapore – Original Documents 1965

RECORDS
ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

9 August 1965
Proclamation of Singapore



PRIME MINISTER,
SINGAPORE.

PROCLAMATION OF SINGAPORE

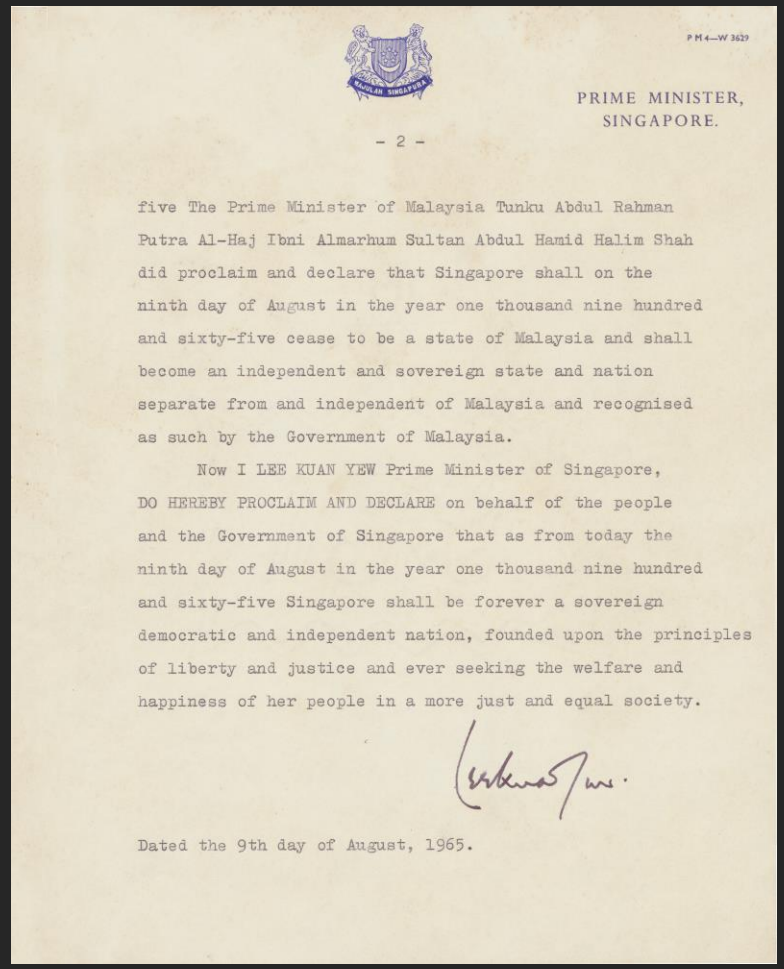
WHEREAS it is the inalienable right of a people to be free and independent;

AND WHEREAS Malaysia was established on the 16th day of September, 1963, by a federation of the existing states of the Federation of Malaya and the States of Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore into one independent and sovereign nation;

AND WHEREAS by an Agreement made on the seventh day of August in the year one thousand nine hundred and sixty-five between the Government of Malaysia of the one part and the Government of Singapore of the other part it was agreed that Singapore should cease to be a state of Malaysia and should thereupon become an independent and sovereign state and nation separate from and independent of Malaysia;

AND WHEREAS it was also agreed by the parties to the said Agreement that, upon the separation of Singapore from Malaysia, the Government of Malaysia shall relinquish its sovereignty and jurisdiction in respect of Singapore so that the said sovereignty and jurisdiction shall on such relinquishment vest in the Government of Singapore;

AND WHEREAS by a Proclamation dated the ninth day of August in the year one thousand nine hundred and sixty-



PRIME MINISTER,
SINGAPORE.

- 2 -

five The Prime Minister of Malaysia Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj Ibni Almarhum Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah did proclaim and declare that Singapore shall on the ninth day of August in the year one thousand nine hundred and sixty-five cease to be a state of Malaysia and shall become an independent and sovereign state and nation separate from and independent of Malaysia and recognised as such by the Government of Malaysia.

Now I LEE KUAN YEW Prime Minister of Singapore, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM AND DECLARE on behalf of the people and the Government of Singapore that as from today the ninth day of August in the year one thousand nine hundred and sixty-five Singapore shall be forever a sovereign democratic and independent nation, founded upon the principles of liberty and justice and ever seeking the welfare and happiness of her people in a more just and equal society.

Dated the 9th day of August, 1965.

Cabinet Office Collection,
National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Independence of Singapore – Original Documents 1965

The Proclamation of Singapore, signed by Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew on 9 August 1965, formally declared that Singapore has ceased “to be a state of Malaysia and shall become an independent and sovereign state and nation separate from and independent of Malaysia”. The original reading of the Proclamation over Radio Singapore on 9 Aug 1965 was made by announcer Mr Steven Lee. A recording of Lee reading the Proclamation of Independence was made in 2012 and broadcast on 9 Aug 2015 to mark National Day observance ceremonies islandwide.

RECORDS

ARTEFACT SHOWCASE

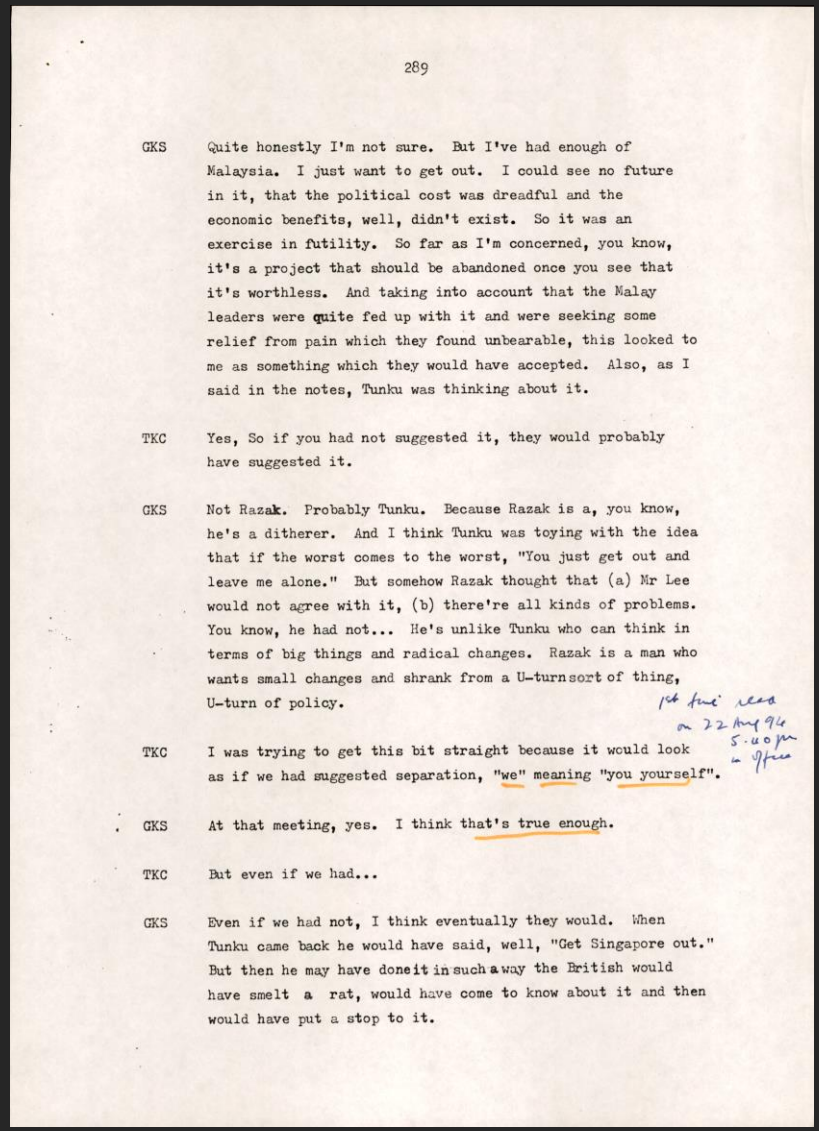
WHAT DID LEE KUAN YEW DISCOVER AFTER NEARLY 30 YEARS?

- When Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew was writing his memoirs in the mid-1990s, he got Singapore Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee's permission to read his oral history recorded in 1982. It was only then that Lee learnt that it was Goh who had suggested to Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak on 15 Jul 1965 that Singapore and Malaysia go their separate ways.

- **"1st time read on 22 Aug 94 5.40 pm in office"**, Lee noted on the margin of a page of the transcript. Later in his 1998 memoirs, *The Singapore Story*, Lee wrote he learnt only in 1994 that Goh had "never pressed Razak for a looser re-arrangement as I had asked him to. He knew they wanted Singapore out of their parliament and went along with their desire to have us hive off. Keng Swee also said that he wanted that written undertaking from me because he feared I would balk at Separation."

- Both Lee and Goh did not know in Jul 1965 that the Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman had already decided by the end of June 1965 to "cut out Singapore" and wrote to Razak to consider how that might be achieved. Razak then met Goh in mid-July and asked Goh if he had any suggestion how the two sides might avoid calamity. Razak appeared relieved when Goh suggested Separation but wondered if Lee would go along with it.

Transcript of Goh Keng Swee's oral history interview on 17 July 1982, with Lee Kuan Yew's handwritten notes on 22 August 1994



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GKS Quite honestly I'm not sure. But I've had enough of Malaysia. I just want to get out. I could see no future in it, that the political cost was dreadful and the economic benefits, well, didn't exist. So it was an exercise in futility. So far as I'm concerned, you know, it's a project that should be abandoned once you see that it's worthless. And taking into account that the Malay leaders were quite fed up with it and were seeking some relief from pain which they found unbearable, this looked to me as something which they would have accepted. Also, as I said in the notes, Tunku was thinking about it.

TKC Yes, So if you had not suggested it, they would probably have suggested it.

GKS Not Razak. Probably Tunku. Because Razak is a, you know, he's a ditherer. And I think Tunku was toying with the idea that if the worst comes to the worst, "You just get out and leave me alone." But somehow Razak thought that (a) Mr Lee would not agree with it, (b) there're all kinds of problems. You know, he had not... He's unlike Tunku who can think in terms of big things and radical changes. Razak is a man who wants small changes and shrank from a U-turn sort of thing, U-turn of policy.

1st time read on 22 Aug 94 5.40 pm in office

TKC I was trying to get this bit straight because it would look as if we had suggested separation, "we" meaning "you yourself".

GKS At that meeting, yes. I think that's true enough.

TKC But even if we had...

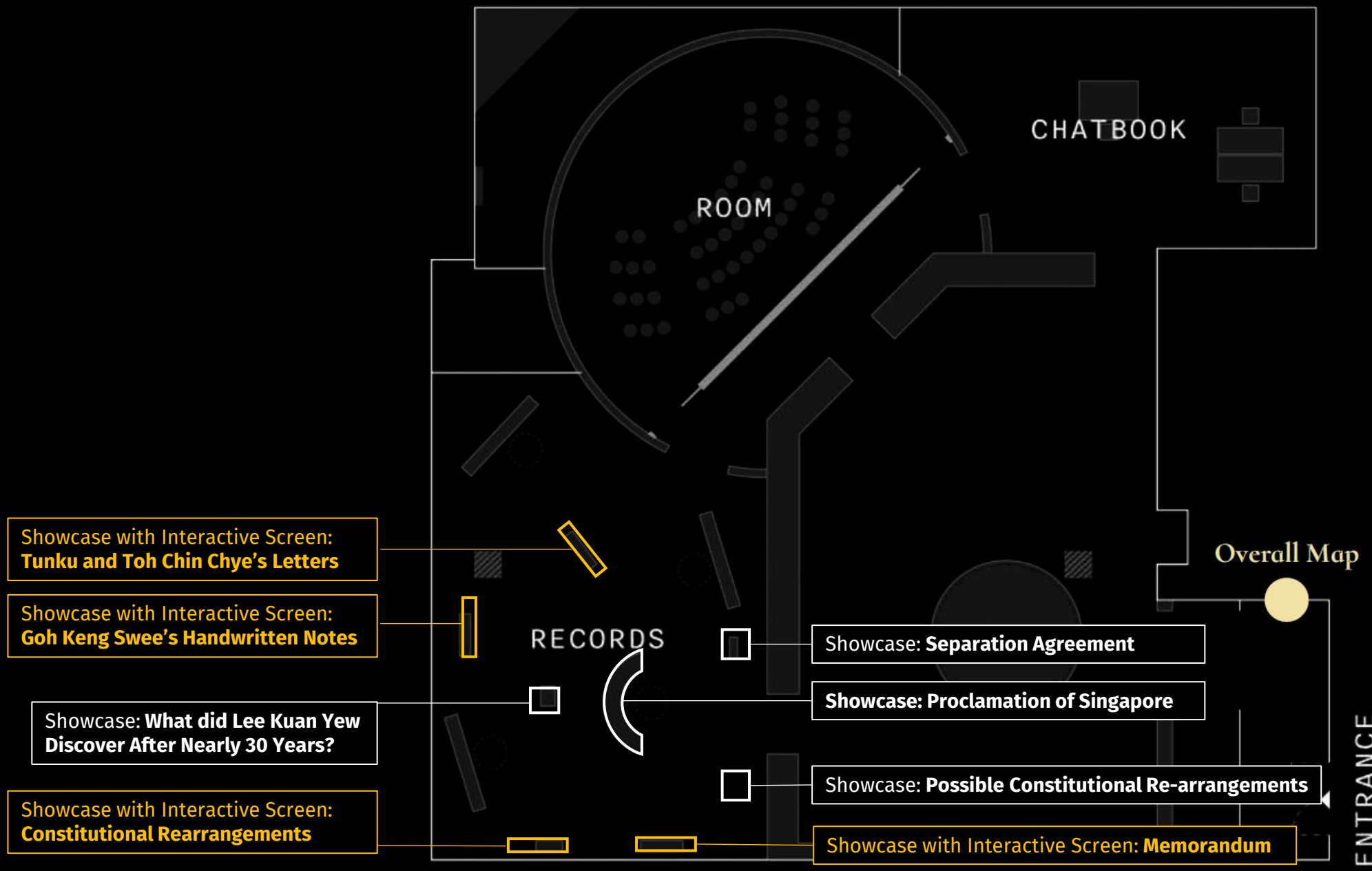
GKS Even if we had not, I think eventually they would. When Tunku came back he would have said, well, "Get Singapore out." But then he may have done it in such a way the British would have smelt a rat, would have come to know about it and then would have put a stop to it.

TRANSCRIPT: 1st time read on 22 Aug 94 5.40 pm in office

Oral History Centre, National Archives of Singapore
File Reference: Accession Number 000046, Track 36

RECORDS – ARTEFACT SHOWCASES

LAYOUT MAP



CHATBOOK

CHATBOOK

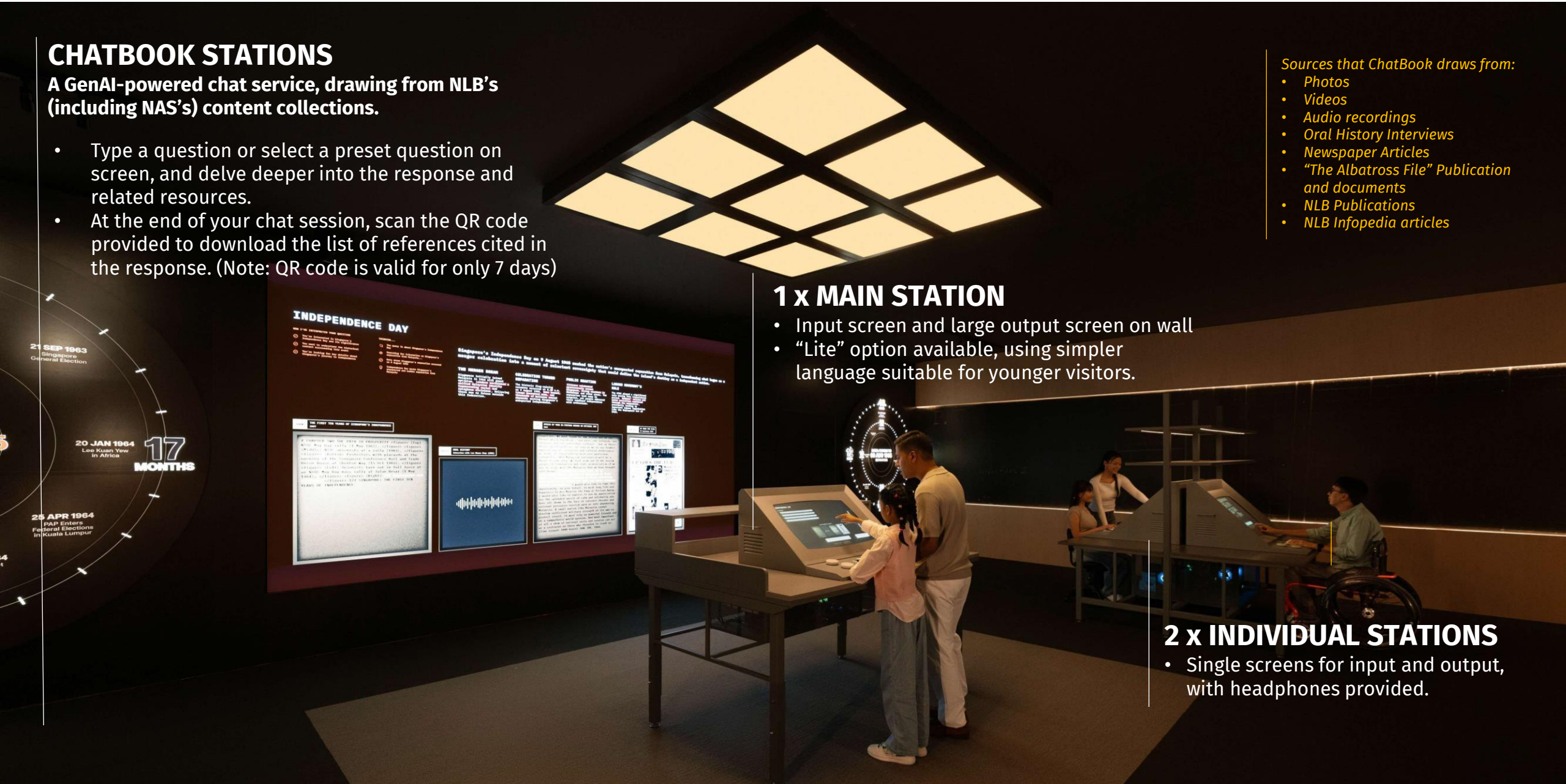
CHATBOOK STATIONS

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- *"The Albatross File" Publication and documents*
- *NLB Publications*
- *NLB Infopedia articles*



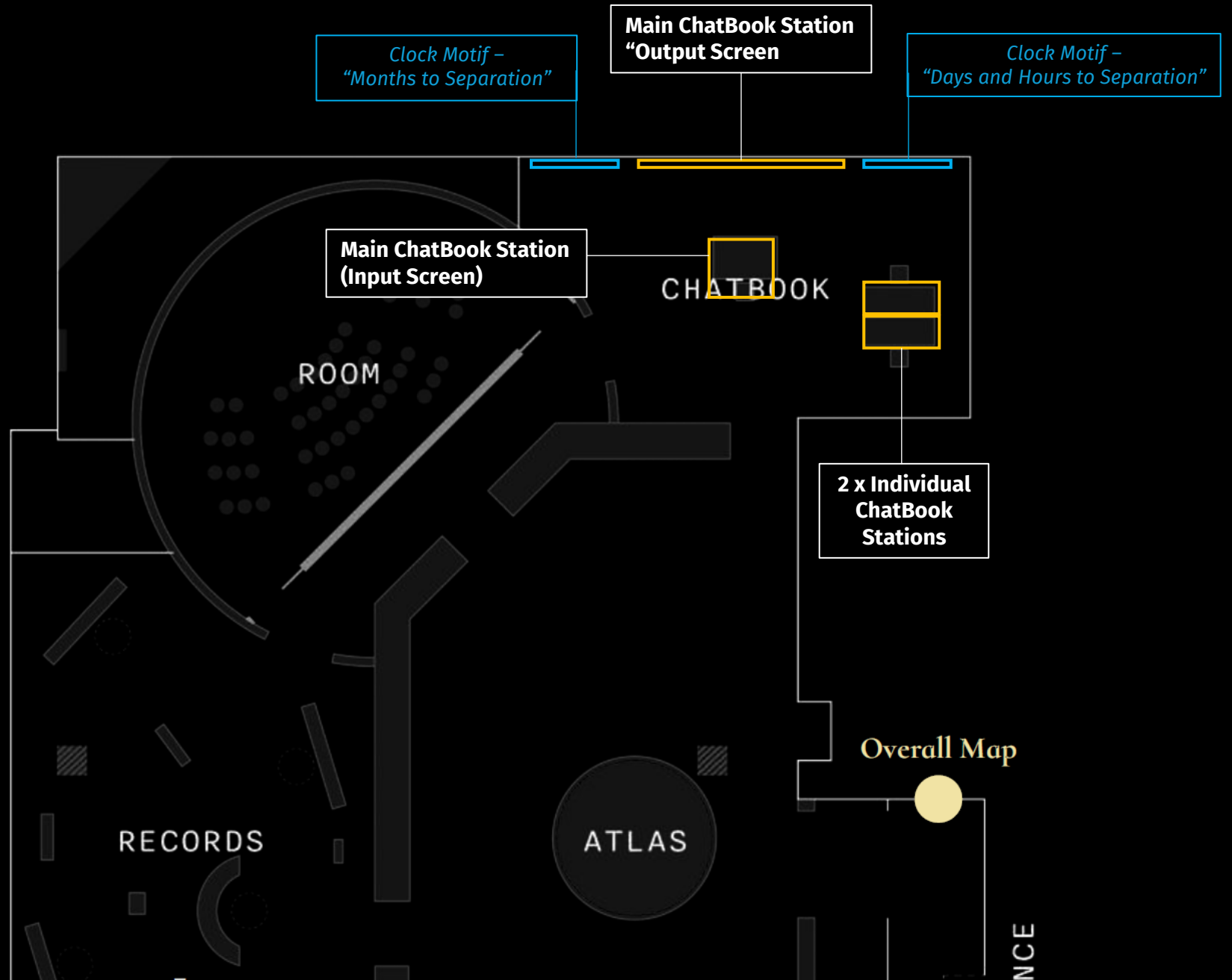
1 x MAIN STATION

- Input screen and large output screen on wall
- "Lite" option available, using simpler language suitable for younger visitors.

2 x INDIVIDUAL STATIONS

- Single screens for input and output, with headphones provided.

CHATBOOK


Clock Motif –
"Months to Separation"
Main ChatBook Station
"Output Screen
Clock Motif –
"Days and Hours to Separation"
Main ChatBook Station
(Input Screen)
CHATBOOK
ROOM
2 x Individual
ChatBook
Stations
Overall Map
RECORDS
ATLAS

OTHER RESOURCES

- Student Activity Sheet

- Additional Reading Materials from the book – **The Albatross File: Inside Separation**
  - “Chronology of Key Events Leading to Separation” by Susan Sim
  - “Merger” by Prof Tan Tai Yong
  - “Separation” by Prof Albert Lau

- Exhibition Guides
  - English
  - Bahasa Melayu
  - 华文
  - தமிழ்

- FAQs

END

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