



Theme 3: The Cold War and Southeast Asia, 1945 – 1991
Topic 3: Singapore and the Cold War

- 1. Context of Singapore's Foreign Policy during the Cold War**
- 2. Singapore's Foreign Policy and Responses to the 2nd Indochina War**
- 3. Singapore's Foreign Policy and Responses to the 3rd Indochina War**



1. Context of Singapore's Foreign Policy during the Cold War

Singapore's responses to Cold War developments in Southeast Asia (1965-1991)



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Despite the refusal to be openly identified as a US ally and occasionally criticising US policy in the region, Singapore was a consistent advocate for US military presence in the region during the Cold War, faithfully servicing US warships and providing training for Vietnamese officers during the Vietnam War.

Academic Ang Cheng Guan

Statements of principles and objectives propounded by the leaders of a country are generally very reassuring and infused with high moral purposes, but do not necessarily constitute the foreign policy of the country involved.... For practical purposes, the foreign policy of deed is a more reliable guide to the intentions of a country than its declared and invariably reassuring principles.

Foreign Minister S Rajaratnam, Parliamentary Debates, 16 Dec 1965

PAP's Coping with Insecurity and Vulnerability:

International Law, Sanctity of Sovereignty, Multilateralism, Non Alignment & "Balance of Power"

The practice of Singapore's foreign policy, rooted in a culture of siege and insecurity dating from the traumatic and unanticipated 1965 Separation experience, may be described as a paradoxical combination of non-alignment and balance of power, with an emphasis on the latter, and fierce commitment to upholding the integrity of international law and principles, particularly the sanctity of state sovereignty.

Singapore's foreign policy pragmatically attempts to reconcile an avoidance of engagement in the big power quarrels, with persisting efforts to secure access to benign external countervailing power (such as the USA) in the national interest of capitalist Singapore in its geographical neighborhood, and to fully exploit multilateralism through international organizations. This mindset and practice was set into foundation by former leaders: PM Lee Kuan Yew, Foreign Minister Rajaratnam, and Defence Minister Goh Keng Swee.

During the Cold War period of great power rivalry and the Sino-Soviet dispute, Singapore had shown that it is possible for minor countries to exercise a disproportionate influence within a multilateral context based on a willingness to shoulder more than its fair share of diplomatic burdens. During the 3rd Indochina War in particular, it was Singapore who played a key leading role at the United Nations on behalf of its regional partners within ASEAN in mobilizing voting support in the General Assembly against Vietnam. Even while espousing rhetoric on independence designed to secure international acceptance, Singapore reached out to engage benign cooperative external powers (such as the USA) to provide a countervailing security assurance for this capitalist open economy in a difficult geopolitical neighborhood.

¹ <https://www.buzzfeed.com/jasminepting/southeast-asia-flag-quiz>



Recap of Context Facing Singapore in 1965:

All the non-Communist countries of SEA were embroiled in disputes of varying intensity with one another. Singapore had just been “separated” from Malaysia and Indonesia was pursuing a policy of “Konfrontasi” against Malaysia and Singapore. The Philippines claimed Sabah. Brunei with British help had suppressed an internal rebellion backed by Indonesia. There were also strong irredentist pressures on the borders between West Malaysia and Thailand, and between the Philippines and Indonesia. In these unpropitious circumstances, ASEAN was formed so that the non-Communist states in SEA could contain and manage their differences to meet the greater threat from the Communists.

SG Former Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew

DEVELOPMENT OF SG’s FOREIGN POLICY AFTER INDEPENDENCE:

SURVIVAL & REALISM

Sensitivity to Regional & Global Developments

GEOGRAPHY	- Being the smallest state and only island Republic in Southeast Asia, geography dominates the outlook of Singapore’s leaders. Singapore is a focal point and hub of east-west, north-south trade and air-sea communications - a gateway to both the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Because of its location it acquired the focal position as the crossroads of international shipping routes. - Added to its small size and strategic location, the foreign policy perceptions of the Republic’s leaders have been conditioned by its location between two large Malay neighbours: Malaysia to the north and Indonesia to the south. The proximity to these two states with divergent ethnic-religious-political orientations and which have not always been friendly have created complex security problems for the Republic. At the same time, geography has also allowed the Republic to play a predominant role in regional and global affairs out of proportion to its size as it gives it a freedom of action and choice in political, social and economic matters.
DEMOGRAPHY	- At independence, SG was the only state in SEA to have political power vested in the hands of the local Chinese. (Chi Hegemony) - Became a natural racial barrier in the region - Chinese in SEA have been the object of envy, persecution & even seen as a potential ‘fifth column’ - Demographic makeup of SG places constraints on the SG leadership and has invoked the need to be cautious in order to reduce concern in Malaysia & Indonesia that SG may become a satellite of PRC or even give hope to the Chinese minorities in the two states. - Racial tolerance in domestic politics is hence emphasized as this is seen to have widespread foreign policy implications.



DEVELOPMENT OF SG's FOREIGN POLICY AFTER INDEPENDENCE:
SURVIVAL & REALISM

Sensitivity to Regional & Global Developments

ECONOMY	- Foreign policy has been viewed as an important tool for the advancement of the country's econ growth - SG's econ development is drawn from the open international economic system which allows it to get past the absence of a hinterland, raw materials and large domestic market. - Limited size of the SG domestic economy and the dependence on foreign trade and investments have made SG exceptionally vulnerable to exogenous developments, which in turn place constraints on the country's foreign policy in forcing it to be overly conscious of international developments.
LEADERS' MEMORY OF POLITICAL EXPERIENCE (Dangers of Communism)	- Sense of political psychosis & siege which dominated the PAP leadership's thinking (<i>Malaysia Years / Confrontation / Barisan Socialis</i>) - Fear of failure largely explains the cautious stance in its external relations - The PAP was also unable to forget about the bitter struggle against the Communists in Malaysia and Singapore
EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT	- Close political, economic, cultural and kinship ties have ensured that SG must always take particular notice of Malaysia in its foreign policy.

TIME-LINE OF PAP / SG FOREIGN POLICY DIRECTIONS DURING COLD WAR

1965 – 1967	Publicly Non-Aligned
1967 – 1975	Pro-USA (2 nd Indochina War)
1975 – 1978	Search for Focus & Appeal for US Influence to Remain in the Region
1979 – 1985	Activist for its Goals in Cambodia (3 rd Indochina War)
1985 - 1991	New Public Directions with Changes in USSR



SINGAPORE's FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 1) Safeguard Independence from External Threats
- 2) Ensure Economic & Political Survival, and Continued Prosperity in a Stable, Peaceful, Non-Communist Region
- 3) Preserve Economic Achievements & Seek Overseas Markets and Investments
- 4) Portray a Good World Image as a Peaceful, Progressive, Responsible, Law-Abiding Nation

FUNDAMENTALS OF SG FOREIGN POLICY: *SURVIVAL & REALISM*

- 1) Make as many friends & few enemies as possible
 - 2) Trade & Work with any state for Mutual Benefit
 - 3) Remain Non-Aligned with Regard to Rivalries of Great Power Blocs
 - 4) Cooperate Closely with ASEAN to achieve Regional Cohesion, Stability & Progress
 - 5) Sanctity of Sovereignty - Safeguard Inalienable Right of ALL Countries to Establish Forms of Govts in accordance with the wishes of its own people
 - 6) Adherence to Principles of International Law
- Reality of Singapore's small vulnerable size, its geographical neighborhood and history of confrontations with Malaysia and Indonesia that spurred this desire to have as many friends as possible.
 - Given Singapore's small and vulnerable economy, especially after 1965, it was willing to trade with any state that was willing to do so with it regardless of its ideology.
 - By trading with any county that's willing to do so for mutual benefit, Singapore is also trying to make the world know that it means no one harm.
 - Could not afford to take sides given its small vulnerable size and its location in a neighborhood with historically hostile countries.
 - Use ASEAN as a multilateral means to improve bilateral ties amongst countries that were historically hostile to Singapore and to ensure that everyone progresses together to reduce the chance of any side wanting to threaten Singapore.
 - Given Singapore's size and its historical tensions with its neighbours, Singapore was particularly worried that it might come under attack in future; so it was very firm on ensuring that international law is adhered to as it ensures that the big and mighty do not do as they please to the small vulnerable ones. In particular, it takes the principle of the sanctity of sovereignty very seriously, and is usually very sensitive to incidents where the sovereignty of states gets violated (ie. like when one country unilaterally invades another.)



2. Singapore's Foreign Policy and Responses to the 2nd Indochina War

CONSTANT FEARS IN SG (PAP) FOREIGN POLICY OUTLOOK DURING COLD WAR

Context: Constant vision of its historical antagonisms with its neighbours in its geopolitical neighborhood & of the PAP's own past manipulation of the Communists to gain power in SG

- 1) Feared Spread of Communism & China's hegemony of SEA (Domino Theory psychology)
- 2) Feared USA's Pullout & Disengagement from SEA
- 3) Feared Losing Domestic Political Power due to Internal Communist Subversion with External Infiltration, Influence & Supporting Aid
- 4) Feared Losing Time Before SG Economy & Political Landscape is Stabilized

Constant Key Tenets of SG Foreign Policy throughout 2nd Indochina War

- 1) Flexible Pragmatism & Realism for SURVIVAL
- 2) Willing to work with anyone for Mutual Benefits (Realism)
- 3) Realist Need for Powerful Countervailing Forces to Balance Power in the region to SURVIVE

<u>Early Years Before 1966</u>	<u>Growing Fears & Doubts 1967/8 - 1972</u>	<u>Sino-US Rapprochement & End of War 1972 - 1975</u>
Fears of Domino Theory if South Vietnam were to fall: China's influence and hegemony will spread - This in turn will cause problems for SG with its population make-up, and past history with the local Communists - Although SG may have publicly declared that it was non-aligned, in reality, it was highly cautious and worried about the spread of Communism that will threaten its non-Communist PAP government and	Fears of Domino Theory: SG feared that the US public opinion will cause its govt to pull out. - Evolution of US domestic public opinion to become increasingly anti-war against their government's position, but even before the blow of 1968, Johnson was already obsessed with countering the public opposition to the war effort in Vietnam. - June 1967: LKY in London continued to stress that the North Vietnamese must not win, and he noted that if the US were to withdraw, it will result in a communist China free to seize on the region's problems. LKY pronounced SG and SEA's fears on this scenario if this US withdrawal comes on	Fears of Domino Theory: SG feared the collapse of South Vietnam & SEA to Communism under China's hegemony. - LKY felt that Nixon's intensification of the bombing of North Vietnam was a right move as it would reduce its capacity to sustain military operations in the South, and would thus eventually lead to peace. - SG continued to tell the USA that it had to achieve peace with honor to ensure that the rest of the 'dominoes' in SEA would not follow Communism - SG had no control however over how developments will go: LKY was unsure if US will stay, of whether Hanoi will side with China or USSR, and how this will affect China's position on SEA. - SG hence wanted to be friends with anyone regardless of their ideological leanings, and therefore



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the new-found independence of 1965. - Therefore, it did not want the US or UK to withdraw prematurely from SEA. - Eg: In Aug 1966, SG Foreign Minister Rajaratnam's reply to Thai government's proposal for a Vietnam Peace Proposal was to not support it! SG felt that it was not the right time then to stop US military force on the Communists in Vietnam, and wanted peace talks to start only after Hanoi was convinced that it could not win and thereby initiate the talks.	the back of the British leaving. - 1968 Tet Offensive incident also aggravated SG's security fears as it seemed to shake the US commitment in Vietnam, and its disengagement from the region triggered off renewed Domino Theory fears for SG and LKY. - Jan 1968: LKY also learnt that Britain would pull out its commitment completely from SEA by 1971. - This only heightened SG's fears, and continue its support for the US effort in Vietnam. - This ties in with SG's policy of having countervailing forces as a balance of power in the region against the USSR and China-backed North Vietnam. - Oct 1971: LKY made his first official visit to the US, and continued to urge the US to stay the course in Vietnam, and to continue to try to nurture a strong and stable leadership of the South Vietnamese government to eventually stand resolutely by itself against the Communists.	on Aug 1973, it established ties with Hanoi & Saigon. This flexible pragmatism was to ensure that SG was not seen publicly at least to be siding with any. - BUT....at the same time, SG revealed its inner preference when it offered to help the South Vietnam Government in a demonstration project to show them what can be done to consolidate their political power since SG had experience confronting the Communists before: - <i>In May 1973, Saigon's Minister of Economy, Pham Kim Nguoc visited SG to learn more about its housing programme, and LKY even asked Washington to assist to arrange a meeting for South Vietnam President Nguyen Van Thieu to visit SG to learn about its experience.</i> - When South Vietnam finally fell in 1975, LKY revealed SG's fears in a meeting with US President Gerald Ford in May whereby he told the US of SG's astonishment and fear of a Communist takeover of SEA as Vietnam (with USSR's backing) might want a master-servant relationship with its neighbors. - SG thus sought to get an official confirmation from the US of their continued commitment and engagement in SEA through the provision of counter-insurgency



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		assistance too Thailand and Malaysia!

SG RESPONSE TO 2nd INDOCHINA WAR (1964 – 1975)

SURVIVAL & REALISM

'We are surrounded by bigger and more powerful neighbors...At the same time my country is well aware that it is situated in a region of the world which has traditionally been the battleground of big power conflicts... This is why my country has chosen the path of non-alignment. It simply means that we do not wish to be drawn into alliances dedicated to imposing our way of life on other countries. Friendship between two countries should not be conditional on the acceptance of common ideologies, common friends and common foes...

This does not mean that my country equates non-alignment with indifference to basic issues of right and wrong or that it will evade taking a stand on matters which it considers vital lest it displeases some member nations, including those with which it now has close ties. Non-alignment is only in regard to narrow power bloc interests and not in regard to the basic principles embodied in the U.N. Charter.'

Former Singapore Foreign Minister, S Rajaratnam, in a speech to the UN GA, 1965

SINGAPORE's REALIST VIEW OF 2nd INDOCHINA WAR (1964 – 1975)

Not static: Change & Continuity over time and context for SURVIVAL

SG's Publicly Declared Position: <u>Non Alignment</u> (1965 – 1967)	In Reality over time.... SG's REALIST POSITION: <u>Anti-Communist & Pro-West/USA</u> (<u>Stop Domino Theory & Buy Time to Survive</u>) (From 1966/67)
- Context in Post-1965 Period: → "Harsh" neighborhood → Trauma of "separation" → Need to attain international recognition and acceptance. → PAP & Communists in SG Political Arena - Many Afro-Asian countries opposed the Vietnam War as they saw it as an attempt by the Western colonial powers to reassert their control without regard for self-determination and sovereignty, which many of these	- Context: UK had a military base in SG and in 1967 had announced its decision to reduce its military commitment in Southeast Asia: Posed a dire economic and potential security threat to SG who were reliant on the British military until then for security needs in a region with potentially hostile neighbors and the seeming threat of Communism lurking on the horizon. - Loss of Vital Presence of the British military base in Singapore → Security Needs during turbulent context: Sparked off SG govt's frantic security fears. → Economic Impact: Approx. 50 million pounds a year was spent on the SG economy because of the presence of the British base and soldiers in SG. Losing it will thus mean a



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Afro-Asian countries had fought so hard for. - Non Alignment for SG: Need to establish credentials by shedding off "Chinese" image in its unique geographical neighborhood, and amongst the Afro-Asian countries to gain greater international acceptance by emphasizing common bonds of connection. - SG maintained distance from US intervention and even criticized it: Appeared publicly to be anti-US: → <i>SG shamed the US government publicly by denouncing the failed 1961 CIA bribery attempt of the PAP government.</i> → <i>SG also felt that US involvement will not be successful as its local ally, the South Vietnam govt, was too corrupt</i> → <i>Evidence: US assassination of Diem in 1963 only brought about more corrupt generals</i> - Initially: Wanted a neutral & non Communist South Vietnam	<i>huge negative impact on the SG economic employment and GDP figures.</i> - SG under LKY thus proactively sought to lean towards supporting the US intervention in Vietnam as an indirect replacement to guarantee SG and the PAP's survival to ensure that Communism does not spread further beyond Indochina. <u>SG's Considerations & Aims:</u> - SG's security needs continued to be fixated on a Domino Theory fear of Communism - Continued to urge the US to not walk out on Vietnam & SEA: <i>Argued that it was in the econ & geopolitical interests of the US to have a strong SEA</i> - SG focus: Buy time for the SG economy & political system to stabilize through US efforts to ensure that the situation in Vietnam did not spill over negatively - Just as before, SG refused to be directly involved in great power blocs' rivalry in SEA and refused to pledge direct public allegiance to any one party. - However, SG believed that firm US action and commitment in Vietnam was necessary for stability and security in SEA - Protect SG national security and economic interests (<i>Heightened perceived threat of Communism esp after British announcement heightened the threat perception</i>) - Have to be pragmatic and shift its previously publicly declared policy of Non Alignment - Get US capital to invest in Singapore economy, and justify this need to protect this investment through a continued firm policy in Vietnam lest the Communist threat spread to threaten even SG and its economy.



SINGAPORE's REALIST APPROACH FOR SURVIVAL: Support the USA
(from 1966/67)

- 1) LKY's Visit to the US in Oct 1967 (11 Day Visit)
- 2) SG's Logistics Support to the US Military
- 3) SG as R & R Base to US Military Until Jan 1970

SINGAPORE's REALIST APPROACH TO SURVIVE: SUPPORT US
INVOLVEMENT
(1964 – 1975)

- SG's security needs continued to be fixated on a Domino Theory fear of Communism
- SG focus: Buy time for the SG economy & political system to stabilize through US efforts to ensure that the situation in Vietnam did not spill over negatively

**LKY's Official
Visit to US in
Oct 1967

(11 Day Visit)**

- Subscription to the Domino Theory fear
- Aim: Need for the US to give a reassuring security presence for the peaceful development of non-Communist countries in SEA such as SG
- SG's fear from Historical Memory of Communist Insurgency and Uprising: Communist victory in Vietnam could spur Communist groups in non-Communist countries like SG to be emboldened to rise up

Discussions with US President Johnson & Senior Officials

- Met US President Lyndon Johnson for discussion on: political developments in Vietnam, the stability of SEA and pace of economic development there.
- Both leaders agreed that a stable and peaceful international order could only be achieved if all nations respected each other's sovereignty and treated each other equally with mutual respect.
- LKY also held talks with: VP Hubert Humphrey, Sec of State Dean Rusk, Sec of Defence Robert McNamara.
- Emphasis was on SG's strategic important position that will be of use to the US in its efforts to stay as a superpower.
- Persuade US businesses to invest in SG economy: *Oil exploration and refineries, foreign capital funds, US manufacturing MNC factories etc.*

Presented SG's Perspective to American Press & Public Opinion

- LK also met with the press to state his position that there will eventually be a power shift to Asia and SEA once there is stability and regional cooperation; hence it was vital for the US to stay engaged there for its own interests.

**SG's Logistics
Support**

- Repair & Oil for US naval ships & aircraft jets



SINGAPORE's REALIST APPROACH TO SURVIVE: SUPPORT US INVOLVEMENT
(1964 – 1975)

- SG's security needs continued to be fixated on a Domino Theory fear of Communism
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	- US in return provided Singapore with the sale of A15 rifles for its military defence - SG's Consideration: Establish a US military presence in SG for security & provide a boost for SG economic industries serving these US military assets. - SG became the fifth highest supply country of export goods to South Vietnam: → <i>Petroleum products: kerosene, high speed diesel, lubricating oil (all vital for US fighter jets to carry on its bombing operations)</i> → <i>Eggs, Meat, Pork and Canned food (vital to feed US soldiers out in the field on operation)</i> - US ships stopped over for maintenance in transit: → <i>The Independence, Henry W Tucker, The George K. Mackenzie, The Tolovana</i>
SG as R & R Base	- April 1966: First batch of US troops arrive in SG for R & R - Had spill over multiplier effect on the SG economy and the industries providing goods and services to these US military 'tourists' on rest - 1966 to 1969: US spent an approx. of \$700 million in export orders to Singapore per year from South Vietnam

SG's Meetings with the USA on Vietnam

- March 1966: LKY met with US Asst. Secretary for East Asia, William Bundy: Emphasized that US should not see every single Chinese as a Communist or potential Communist; and wanted to know how the US would react to a Communist-inspired Communal conflict in Malaysia and Indonesia
- Nov to Dec 1968: Many meetings, including with Kissinger
- May 1969: Meeting with US President Nixon
- US VP Agnew visited SG in Jan 1970

<u>Tensions & Negative Aspects of US-SG Ties</u>	<u>Growing Ties & Positive Aspects of US-SG Ties from 1966</u>
<u>In Theory & Publicly</u> Given its nascent independence in a difficult geopolitical neighborhood, SG	<u>Realistically....</u> - BUT LKY also was aware that only the powerful USA had the strength to reverse the erosion of people's will to resist the Communists in SEA



<i>Tensions & Negative Aspects of US-SG Ties</i>	<i>Growing Ties & Positive Aspects of US-SG Ties from 1966</i>
was non-aligned, even appearing to be anti-West at times, and did not choose to take sides between any of the powers in the Cold War	- LKY was also highly worried that the US will abdicate the regional role that it played if it were to pull out and disengage from Vietnam as he feared that this will not only spark off a domino theory of Communism spreading but also galvanizing Malaysia and Indonesia closer together against the majority Chinese-population in SG.
<u>Evidence of Tensions in Ties in 1964-65</u> - Dec 1964: US Consul General in SG, John Lacey, reported back that SG was anti-capitalist, anti-American, and fertile ground for anti-American barbs. Lacey also noted that SG did not want to associate or identify too closely with US policies. - Aug 1965: In a televised news conference, LKY shamed the US by making public the CIA bribery and called it an 'unbelievable insult' as the US govt had tried to buy the SG government over to their side and release 2 CIA agents who were detained for espionage in SG. - Sept 1965: LKY criticized the US government again and made it clear that the SG government was in full control of the bases in SG and would not allow the US government to utilize them.	<u>Evidence of Improving Ties from 1966</u> - In reality, as early as August 1965, the SG government had allowed the US to use its bases to transport South Vietnamese officers to Singapore for training in the Johore Jungle Warfare School - By 1966, US-SG ties had improved considerably and were best seen in LKY's request to meet with the newly appointed US Ambassador to SG on March 1966 and told the press that 'bygones were bygones.' - SG now allowed the US military from Vietnam to come to SG for rest and recreation (R&R), on the condition that the troops do not appear in the streets in their uniform. The first batch of US troops arrived on March 1966, and it stopped in January 1970. - June 1966: In a speech to SG university students, LKY agreed that the war in Vietnam was a crime against humanity BUT he did not believe that it was an American crime! He also announced his hopes publicly that the US would hold the line in Vietnam despite domestic pressures. - July 1966: SG even broke up anti American demonstrations by the Barisan Socialis Party, and arrested Chia Thye Poh for protesting about the American Aggression in Vietnam. - Aug 1966: LKY publicly said in an interview with Malay language newspapers that he feared armed terrorists coming to power if the US were to leave South Vietnam, and that the US troops should remove these terrorists before leaving. - Aug 1966: PAP-dominated Parliament passed a Punishment for Vandalism Bill that gave the police powers to arrest those who made anti-American slogans, and it also passed a law that made it a necessity for newspapers to obtain government approval before publishing any type of 'security' information (<i>such as stories concerning the R & R programme for US troops</i>)



<i>Tensions & Negative Aspects of US-SG Ties</i>	<i>Growing Ties & Positive Aspects of US-SG Ties from 1966</i>
<u>Why did it do so?</u> - SG had to put forth a certain public image and outlook as the nascent independent country then needed to receive endorsement from the very significant and influential Afro-Asian group of countries which were mostly non-aligned and anti-American.	<u>Deeper Critique of Growing SG-US Ties</u> - BUT SG's support and warmness towards the US was not totally absolute even during this period. - July 1966: LKY questioned some of the US strategies as he feared that the US military tactics of bombing North Vietnamese oil storage areas might escalate the conflict more and drag in China and even USSR, which would then pose disastrous security problems for nearby non-Communist Thailand, and subsequently Malaysia and Singapore. <u>Why did it do so?</u> - Context of the British Withdrawal from East of the Suze Canal: would critically affect the PAP's chances of survival after independence, especially against the Communists in Chinese-majority Singapore. - LKY continued to be fixated by the Domino Theory, and of the historical antagonisms with Malaysia and Indonesia. - LKY felt that the security derived from British and American military presence in SEA would help to boost investor confidence in SG and help keep the potential Communist threat from spreading.



ANALYSIS OF CHANGE IN SG'S PUBLIC POSITION ON VIETNAM

'Any extension or escalation of the war is dangerous and contrary to the ideals we claim to espouse. ... Then after the South Vietnamese are able to exercise their collective will without duress from either side, ultimately be it five, ten or twenty years, they must have the right to decide their final destiny.'

Lee Kuan Yew at the Asian Socialist Conference, 1965

'But the Americans, they lack depth...They don't understand the Vietnamese. That is why it is such a mess. I thought, well, they must have a plan, you know. Ngo Dinh Diem, bumped off. "A" takes over. Then plan Alpha moves into operation. But, my god, they had no plans. There have been no less than 15 to

20 governments since Ngo Dinh Diem.'

*Lee Kuan Yew's Interview with Foreign Correspondents,
30 Aug 1965*

'We cannot allow the same forces that have emasculated South Vietnam to emasculate the whole region. Rather than face a Communist threat to the national integrity, sensitive former colonial countries of SEA may very well prefer a permanent American presence. The credit worthiness of the US will be judged by Southeast Asians from now on in the proximity of promises and performances...'

Lee Kuan Yew, New York Times, 29 March 1967

'In any competition or conflict between the power blocs, we would prefer to stay out, or non-aligned. But where Singapore's survival is at stake... we cannot be neutral. And a non-Communist progressive South Vietnam will add to the stability of the whole of South and South-East Asia. It will also enhance the prospects of peace and security, and greater economic strength and prosperity'

LKY's address to the American Association, Nov 1967



EVAL. OF SG's PRAGMATIC REALIST RESPONSE TO SURVIVE

Successful? How & Why so? (Over Time?)

- a) **Was SG foreign policy always uniform & constant?**
- b) **Was SG always in control of its foreign policy?**
- c) **Was SG's foreign policy a successful response to the Cold War context?**

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Successfully bought time for its economic development to stabilize the country under the non-communist PAP through supporting the US to stay engaged in the region after leaving Vietnam which helped to provide some geopolitical assurance and stability in the midst of other powers and historically hostile neighbors.	SG foreign policy had to walk the tightrope and change to become more pro-West after the South Vietnamese continued to flounder so as to secure its interests in the event of the spread of Communism throughout SEA
SG managed to be flexible enough in reaching out to the US and toning down on its initial public Non Alignment position and early clashes with Washington	Aroused Suspicions of Countries that SG was a Western ally
	Was ultimately unable to convince the US to stay on beyond 1973 in Vietnam due to the political backlash in the US after 1968

'The manner in which the war in Vietnam is resolved and ended will either help or hinder the development of other countries in the region. One of the objectives of the war has been to try and prevent this same kind of internecine strife from engulfing the other countries contiguous to Vietnam. And the enormous expenditure of American resources will only have been worthwhile...if the solution achieved in Vietnam buys time for these other countries to make the economic, social and political changes for their own survival.'

PM Lee Kuan Yew, Speech to Columbia University in New York, Dec 1968



Was SG in control of its foreign policy during 2nd Indochina War?

Was it able to ALWAYS decide on the course, aims and outcome?

UNEXPECTED FORCES & EVENTS BEYOND SG's CONTROL

- 1) Widespread US Public Discontent after 1968 Tet Offensive
- 2) US Decision to Pull out of Indochina from 1973
- 3) Sino-Soviet Rivalry: Both powers use Proxies for Influence in SEA (*Destabilizing*)
- 4) Sino US Rapprochement: Fear that US might not reign in China adequately

<i>SUPERFICIAL</i>	<i>IN REALITY: SURVIVAL & REALISM</i>
<i>SG may thus have appeared to have lost control of its foreign policy to guard SG's national interests when it:</i> 1) Seemingly contradicted its initial publicly declared non-alignment position when it shifted to its subtle pro-West actions in supporting the US to be involved in SEA 2) And when the above 4 events occurred even though it was not in SG's interests.	<i>But in reality, this pragmatic flexible balancing in its actions was precisely based on:</i> 1) SG's key tenet of involving major external powers to be involved as a countervailing balance to potential threats 2) And based on mutual benefit of having as many friends as possible to bring about a stable non-Communist region that helps all to progress.

- On the whole, SG was still largely in control of its foreign policy during the 2nd Indochina War as it was able to anchor it on its key tenets and aims, and in ensuring that nothing was ever done haphazardly without a clear aim or principle in mind that advanced its interests even when developments overseas took place beyond its control, such as Sino-Soviet rivalry, Sino-US rapprochement and the widespread backlash in US public opinion from 1968.
- SG was still able to maintain its flexible pragmatism of appearing publicly not to take sides, and yet at the same time, subtly support in the background countervailing powerful forces to balance the apparent threat of Communism in the region to buy it more time for economic and political consolidation under the non-communist PAP government.
- Furthermore, all this was always done to ensure that there was mutual benefit for not just Singapore and the partner country, but also to help in the progress and stability of the region to advance forward without having to fear great power rivalry and conflicts that can threaten political stability of the incumbent governments and economic growth.



**Overall, was Singapore successful in advancing its interests
during the Cold War context of great power rivalry through proxies?**

- Managed to publicly appear to be neutral in not taking any sides
- Managed to convince the USA to stay committed in Indochina till 1973 that bought time for SG to develop and stabilize: SG was able to maintain political, economic stability and progress even in the midst of a brutal war in its region.
- Even though it failed to entrench the US commitment in Indochina beyond 1973, SG still managed to secure from the US aid for anti-insurgency for Thailand and Malaysia in the event of a “Domino Theory” fall.



3. Singapore's Foreign Policy and Responses to the 3rd Indochina War

SINGAPORE's PRAGMATIC & FIRM APPROACH TO 3rd INDOCHINA WAR (1978 – 1989)

"The Kampuchean issue was central to Singapore's policy. The principle involved was that no foreign military intervention should be allowed to overthrow a legally constituted regime. If this principle was violated, it would create a dangerous precedent. Foreign forces could go into Thailand and depose the current Thai government and put up a regime under the Communist Party of Thailand. Singapore had to work on the worst possible outcome. With this in mind, Singapore could not compromise."

S R Nathan (Director of SID: 1971 – 1979, Perm Sec at MFA: 1979 – 1982)

SINGAPORE's REALIST VIEW OF 3rd INDOCHINA WAR (1978 – 1989)

'Singapore had no wish to interfere in the affairs of others or tell them how they should order their house. It was an issue of principle – the invasion of a smaller country by a larger neighbor, the deposition of a legitimate government by external force and the imposition of a proxy by a foreign power was a direct challenge to the fundamentals of Singapore's foreign policy.'

Wong Kan Seng, Former Singapore Foreign Minister (1988 – 1994)

- It was a conflict over a dispute between 2 big communist powers played out through their respective proxies / surrogates that could not be settled by regional countries.
- Singapore felt that an astute handling this conflict required the active involvement of the non-communist and Western powers (*led by US*) to be a multilateral countervailing force to the USSR
- Capitalist Singapore also had fears of China's potential ambitions of hegemony over SEA.
- LKY: ASEAN needed to be concerned as the conflict involved **infringing upon another's sovereignty** and could spill over into Thailand threatening regional stability and peace through the spread of Communism.
- SG had an affinity of feelings for Cambodia as Cambodia's problems could become Singapore's problems in the future. I.e. this issue of a bigger country invading and violating the sovereignty of a smaller one.

Dilemma for SG:

Strongly opposed Vietnam's military intervention but also did not support the barbarous human rights record of the Pol Pot regime.

- Singapore continued to officially recognize and push for the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) led by Pol Pot because of the sheer illegal nature of Vietnam's invasion and how it violated international law and the sovereignty of Cambodia
- SG also felt that the replacement pro-Vietnam Government in Kampuchea led by Heng Samrin would have to prove that it was a popular government chosen by the people genuinely and not merely a Vietnamese puppet or proxy.



SINGAPORE's REALLIST VIEW OF 3rd INDOCHINA WAR (1978 – 1989)

- SG also wanted all foreign troops to be withdrawn from Kampuchea before any form of recognition could be made.

Singapore's Legal Justification for its Official Position

The UN Security Council and General Assembly had continued to recognize the Pol Pot regime and Singapore should follow the UN and international community's position on the matter.

Retaliation: China's Invasion of Vietnam of 1979:

- SG felt that by combining diplomatic moves with military pressure against Vietnam, China had brought about the isolation of Vietnam and her economic impoverishment.
→ LKY actually felt thankful privately that the Chinese had punished the Vietnamese.
- Although Thailand was not worried about this development as they welcomed Beijing's help against Vietnam, the SG govt was worried about how far and how long China would pursue its punishment of Vietnam and the repercussions ("Domino Theory psychology")
- SG strongly supported ASEAN's draft resolution to the UN Security Council that called for a halt to all hostilities in Indochina, and for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from all areas of conflict and the exercise of restraint by all extra-regional powers. Although this was not adopted due to USSR's veto, it nonetheless received 13 positive votes, an unusual support of a resolution by countries who were not members of the Council.

Singapore & ASEAN's Fears:

- Feared the outflow of refugees ('boat people') that would strain their resources
- Thailand (US ally) in particular became increasingly worried about a Communist Vietnam-controlled Cambodia at its doorstep given its long shared border frontier
- Singapore also was very concerned with a potential Communist takeover of the region as well as at the principle that a smaller country can be invaded at will by a bigger country.
- While ASEAN felt that Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea could not be condoned, neither could they officially support China's action for the same reason that they could not support Vietnam's invasion!

"But we were also aware that we were a new and small country, essentially irrelevant in the larger international order. ASEAN needed to act as a group for us to have any chance of success. The first task was to ensure a united ASEAN position. And even then, we were aware that what was happening in Cambodia was essentially a Sino-Soviet proxy war. While the US had little appetite at the time to meddle, Vietnam enjoyed the support of the Soviet bloc, as well as the pro-Soviet countries in the Non-Aligned Movement...."

Although China was previously an ally to the Soviet bloc, it had become openly opposed to the Soviet Union since the early 1960s. Despite just emerging from the paralysis of the Cultural Revolution and launching its Open Door policy in December 1978, its attack on Vietnam in February 1979 demonstrated its keen interest in the issue. In the wake of these major players, we had to be realistic and accept that there were limits to what even a united ASEAN could expect to achieve."

Former Singapore Foreign Minister (1988 – 1994), Wong Kan Seng



SINGAPORE'S REALIST RESPONSE TO THE 3rd INDOCHINA WAR
IN THE COLD WAR CONTEXT FOR SURVIVAL

- 1) *Pragmatic Multilateralism: Make use of regional/international organizations*
- 2) *Principled: Adherence to International Law of Respect for Sovereignty*
- 3) *Refusal to back down to bigger powers like China & USA*
- 4) *Preserve stable and peaceful non-communist SEA*

**1) SG's RALLYING OF DIVERSE ASEAN TO BE FIRMLY UNITED
AGAINST VIETNAM**

- Not all of the other members of ASEAN shared SG's frantic concern over Vietnam's invasion: Only Thailand seemed to share similar fears, who welcomed China's assistance against Vietnam.
- After China's invasion of Vietnam to support its proxy (Khmer Rouge), Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia suspicions of China were enhanced and became more concerned about the growing Sino-Thai relationship: *Felt that China was trying to drag the Soviets into deeper involvement in Vietnam to bleed their resources to support its proxy Vietnam, and after this made them lose Indochina, it will be free for China to pursue its hegemony in SEA.*

<i>1979 ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting</i>	<i>1983 ASEAN Ministerial Meeting</i>
• Singapore's Foreign Minister S Rajaratnam initiated a special ASEAN Foreign Ministers Closed Door Meeting in Bangkok on Jan 1979 and rallied the Thais and other ASEAN states to respond firmly to Vietnam's illegal invasion. • Philippines Deputy FM Romulo nearly threatened to derail the Joint Statement as he did not want to be responsible for adopting a position that did not tally with his government's interests. • Eventually a Joint statement with the clout of all the foreign ministers deplored the armed intervention of Kampuchea and called for the immediate and total withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchean territory. It also welcomed the decision of the UN Security Council to promptly consider the situation and strongly urged the Council to take the necessary and appropriate measures to restore peace, security and stability in the area. • SG's pushing for the other members of ASEAN to adopt this common position even though they did not totally share SG's concerns shows the effectiveness of its foreign policy to advance its interests.	• Indonesian President Suharto and Malaysian PM Hussein Onn proposed the Kuantan principle that would have resulted in allowing Vietnam a considerable degree of hegemony over Kampuchea • Indonesia also continued to call for the exclusion of the Khmer Rouge from any solution (<i>which was contrary to the ASEAN position that all sides must be involved</i>) as they were worried about any potential influence by Beijing to be kept in Kampuchea. • Philippines did not object to regional talks but was of the view that ASEAN should only negotiate with Vietnam after it had withdrawn. • Amidst the different priorities and interests of ASEAN members, SG had to rally ASEAN together to commit to standing united.



2) SG's GREAT LOBBYING EFFORTS INTERNATIONALLY:
NAM, UN, G77 & Bilateral Visits (USA, China & ASEAN countries)

We did not seek a restoration of the status quo ante which would have seen a return of the Khmer Rouge. That was unacceptable. On this point of principle, we clashed with China and even with the US that initially sided with China against us and ASEAN."

Former Singapore Foreign Minister (1988 – 1994), Wong Kan Seng,

Singapore's Lobbying of USA to Provide Help to Non-Communist Forces in Cambodia

- Singapore felt that the US should not be standing just side-by-side with ASEAN but be pushing ahead and shaping events for the better, but it was not easy to get the US to be more active in supporting the non-communists in Kampuchea given the political mood after the 2nd Indochina War.
- LKY met US Secretary of State George Shultz in July 1984 in SG and tried to persuade the Americans to reconsider their policy of not providing substantial aid to anti-communist groups globally and assured him that unlike the 2nd Indochina War, the US will not be left alone as ASEAN will be a close partner in support. Lee also went to great lengths to explain that what was needed in Cambodia was financial assistance that will not endanger American lives like what happened in South Vietnam.
- SG appealed to the American conscience that they had some role to play in the Cambodian holocaust due to their manner of defeat and withdrawal from Indochina in 1973 that had cleared the way for the Khmer Rouge to seize power and eventually carry out their atrocious acts.
- LKY told Shultz that the US should provide moral words of encouragement, in the President's public speeches, to the Cambodian anti- communist fighters so as to aid them in their recruitment of better leaders; which will eventually improve their credibility.
 - *Assured the US that ASEAN would not leave the problem totally in US hands.*
- 1985: SG also spearheaded an active ASEAN lobby in the US Congress to support the Solarz Initiative: *provide Thailand with addition US\$5 million under Reagan's proposed 1986 Security Assistance Bill so as to assist the Cambodian non-communist resistance in whatever way the Thai government thought most appropriate.*
 - *SG Ambassador to the UN Tommy Koh even personally called on and sent letters to key Congressmen to explain SG and ASEAN's reasoning for its position that supported the US Congress vote this.*



**Singapore's Efforts at Other International Multilateral Meetings:
Bilateral Meetings, UN, NAM, ASEAN**

1978 / 1979	• At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Coordinating Bureau (Jan 1979): SG managed to get it to decide that the DK rep would be seated but would not participate in the proceedings. ➤ <i>BUT in Aug 1979, the DK rep was unseated by Cuba</i> ➤ <i>SG thus lost the fight to keep the DK seat but managed to prevent the pro Soviet faction from establishing its claim that the USSR and the NAM were 'natural allies'</i> ➤ <i>NAM Declaration of 1979 made reference to the situation in SEA but did not mention Vietnam's military intervention nor called for Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea.</i> • 34th UN General Assembly in 1979: India proposed for the Kampuchean seat to be vacant. ➤ <i>SG's Response: Ambassador Tommy Koh argued that the Indian Amendment was completely new and proposed that the Credentials Committee's resolution to seat DK be discussed first and after much debate, the UN GA eventually rejected the Indian Proposal.</i> ➤ <i>The US in 1979 supported ASEAN (and SG) at the UN General Assembly on this as the Carter administration believed that Cambodia was a 'proxy' war between the Soviet Union and China, and this alone justified supporting the anti-Vietnamese forces regardless of their character.</i> • 14 Nov 1979 UNGA ASEAN-sponsored resolution on Kampuchea called for an immediate ceasefire & withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, as well as called on the UN Secretary General to explore the possibility of convening an International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK) as a means of negotiating peace in the country. • Subsequently, SG's focus was on sustaining and increasing support for this UN resolution, and to ensure that the conflict was not localized and forgotten by the international community. • SG felt that the conflict involved the big powers, and hence would need the support of the 5 Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, which would only be achieved through a negotiation process within the framework of the ICK. SG also felt a solution could not be hastened too soon as each party, especially Vietnam, had to first feel the cost of the war so as to voluntarily withdraw and adhere to international norms.
1980	• SG PM LKY visited Beijing to persuade Deng Xiaoping to agree to a broadening of DK Government to include more than just aiding the



	unpopular anti-Vietnam Khmer Rouge so as to not damage ASEAN's efforts at the UN to find a political settlement due to the huge international outcry against the Khmer Rouge's human rights record. • SG felt that it was important that other Kampuchean leaders such as Sihanouk or Son Sann should be helped and encouraged to form a non-Communist Third Force and bring about an independent and neutral Kampuchea. • At the International Meeting of Humanitarian Assistance and Relief to the Kampuchean People, held in Geneva on May 1980, although SG was aware that Vietnam was using the humanitarian assistance as a bargaining card to gain greater recognition of the pro-Vietnam Heng Samrin government, Singapore had to support allowing aid into Kampuchea for its people even though SG opposed the illegally installed pro-Vietnam regime there. • SG was however highly determined to maintain its international campaign of censuring and isolating Vietnam, and was opposed to any aid being given to Vietnam.
1981	• At the 1981 NAM Meeting, SG together with Malaysia and Indonesia, successfully exerted pressure on pro-Soviet India to convene a special debate session for senior officials to discuss the Kampuchean issue: ➤ <i>New Delhi Declaration: Urged all states in SEA to work together towards the resolution of the Kampuchean problem through a political solution, which would restore the rights of the Kampuchean people and help the emergence of an independent, neutral, non-aligned Kampuchea, free of foreign troops.</i> ➤ <i>Enabled critical references of the Soviet Union and its allies for the first time on Cambodia even though they were not directly named. SG thus managed to keep the Kampuchea issue on the agenda of the NAM for the subsequent years</i> • During the 1981 International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK), China was unhappy with SG and ASEAN for not supporting China's interests and position of not disarming all the Khmer resistance groups and the setting up of an interim administration ➤ <i>SG believed that China wanted to continue to bleed Vietnam from the resistance in Cambodia and SG FM Dhanabalan remained firm by not bowing down to Beijing's pressure.</i> ➤ <i>Surprisingly the US sided with China over SG and ASEAN due to its strategic needs at that point in time: Despite the US as a champion of human rights and democracy, it sided with China on the need to bring back the barbarous anti-Vietnam Khmer Rouge so as to please China to get its help against USSR in the backdrop of the Sino-Soviet and Cold War rivalry.</i>



	US Assistant Secretary of State Holdridge even told SG FM Dhanabalan that there will be 'blood on the floor' if SG did not relent on its stance, but SG remained firm and offered to China and the US its position that they will help ASEAN and China find a compromise in the wordings of the declaration without sacrificing ASEAN's position.
1982	- SG PM Lee Kuan Yew told the US Senate during a visit in 1982 that Holdridge had been 'amateurish' in handling China. - Analysis: This incident clearly demonstrates the firm non-ideological, principled and pragmatic stance of SG's foreign policy in not bowing down to pressure from any big powers even if they are economically and politically powerful. - SG however succeeded in keeping the Kampuchea issue visibly alive internationally and together with ASEAN managed to put forward a very reasonable framework for negotiation to Vietnam that would make Hanoi appear unreasonable internationally if they rejected it, and yet at the same time managed to stand firmly to China and the US, thereby showing the world that SG and ASEAN were not colluding with China to bully another country (Vietnam).
1984	- Oct 1984 UN General Assembly session saw the SG and ASEAN-sponsored resolution on Kampuchea being adopted again in a voting session in which Vietnam and the Soviet bloc countries did not even bother to participate in the debate which showed to the world how Vietnam was openly defiant to international opinion. - SG foreign Service officers were given considerable lee-way to exercise their discretion on the ground in lobbying so long as the end goal was achieved to help push ASEAN's case on Cambodia. - Context: A huge number of the UN members in distant Africa and Latin America did not know much about the conflict. Neither was it of immediate interest to them. Furthermore, some were wary of incurring the wrath of the superpowers involved. - It was not surprising to see the Singapore delegation at the UN checking to see that those countries supporting the ASEAN position had somebody present at their desks to press the voting button at the right time of voting, and if some country's representative was absent, the Singapore foreign service officers would even rush around the whole UN building looking for that person! - SG also made a series of booklets and pamphlets of first-class political propaganda (<i>designed and penned succinctly by former SG FM Rajaratnam</i>) that criticized the illegal Vietnamese invasion and distributed these at the UN to gain backing for its position.



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	As the years went by, it became more and more challenging to increase the number of votes in support of the ASEAN sponsored resolution. But the fact that ASEAN succeeded every year in increasing the 'Yes' votes is a testimony to the efforts of SG's foreign service officers such as Tommy Koh, Michael Cheok, Barry Desker, Tony Siddique and T Jesudasen.
1984 - 1985	<i>Situation: In 1984/85, Vietnam attacked civilian camps and military bases along the Thai-Cambodian border and effectively routed an estimated 10,000 lightly armed Kampuchean resistance fighters.</i> - SG's Discussion Paper for the Special ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (Feb 1985) → <i>Proposed improving the liaison with the CGDK</i> → <i>Improve coordination within ASEAN to help the CGDK, and not rely too much on the UN alone</i> → <i>Obtain additional arms and assistance from external countries, especially Washington</i> → <i>SG also argued that ASEAN should give moral support for these initiatives even if not all are involved actively.</i> - Analysis: SG was trying to continue the spotlight on Kampuchea and to rally the neighbors to respond firmly to such illegal acts. - CGDK's 8 Point Proposal: Based on UN resolutions & 1981 ICK Declaration → <i>Argues that Vietnam's invasion and installation of Heng Samrin govt is illegal and violates the UN Charter</i> → <i>Urged Vietnam to enter into negotiations for a cease-fire and a phased withdrawal of its troops</i> → <i>Set up a coalition govt involving all before a nation-wide election</i> → <i>Guarantee of Kampuchea's neutral status with the UN presence serving as an observer role for the first 2 years</i> <i>ASEAN urged Vietnam to agree and abide with the 8 Point Proposal</i>
1989 - 1991	- At the 44th UN GA session in 1989, during the post-mortem of the Cambodian vote, the Malaysian Permanent Representative to the UN praised Singapore for being at the forefront of the lobbying efforts. The other ASEAN representatives – <i>Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines</i> – also acknowledged the hard work put in by Singapore. <u>International Conference on Cambodia (Jul-Aug 1989)</u> - SG's position was not always unopposed - SG & Indonesia's Differing Views of ASEAN's position on Cambodia → <i>Indonesia wanted to reduce the role of PRC-backed Khmer Rouge and was more sympathetic towards Vietnam as it feared a weak Vietnam that could not withstand China's influence from spreading</i>



	→ <i>Indonesia also wanted ASEAN to have an ambiguous position of keeping the dialogue with Vietnam open and to have the chance to capitalize on its economic market.</i> → <i>Therefore, Indonesia was more keen on a regional solution that allows for greater flexibility and concessions amongst a small group of neighbors than an international solution towards Cambodia.</i> → <i>Unlike Indonesia, SG supported the CGDK proposal of having a full-fledged working commission inclusive of all parties involved, including the PRC-backed Khmer Rouge.</i> → <i>SG also wanted to maintain international sanctions pressure on Vietnam if there was no political withdrawal from Cambodia: LKY did not want to abandon the UN or ASEAN policy of censoring and isolating Vietnam until a comprehensive political settlement of Cambodia was reached.</i> • <i>By 1991, SG did not take such an activist position on Cambodia as it was no longer of crucial importance as before:</i> → <i>Vietnam had cut its losses and withdrawn from Cambodia</i> → <i>USSR leadership change had cut itself off from Hanoi</i> → <i>Reduced Soviet desire to intervene in Third World & SEA</i> → <i>Thailand was much more secure politically and economically</i> • <i>Paris Peace Accords (23 Oct 1991)</i> → <i>PRC-backed Khmer Rouge still in control of parts of the country</i> → <i>UN would send a mission to Cambodia (UNTAC) until 1993 which would supervise ceasefire, prepare it for a new Constitution and for free and fair elections: explicitly mandated to foster “an environment in which respect for human rights shall be ensured”</i>
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3) SG's HELP TO THE NON-COMMUNIST COALITION OF CAMBODIA OVER TIME

- Helped to bring about the formation of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) in 1982: *It was necessary to include the Khmer Rouge in this coalition to help bring about the withdrawal of the powerful Vietnamese in Cambodia*
- SG provided advice to Sihanouk on how to sustain his efforts to win political support and power to gain control of Cambodia:
 - *Not just about getting aid but to inspire the Cambodian people to fight resolutely under him against the Communists*
 - *Also tried to convince Sihanouk repeatedly to consolidate and merge the FUNCINPEC and KPNLF to strengthen their position against the Khmer Rouge.*

SG thus provided support to Sihanouk and the NCR to create a viable and credible non Communist Kampuchean fighting force

- After the formation of the CGDK in SG, SG began secretly sending military consignments that amounted to US\$60 million by 1989 to aid the Sihanouk National Army (ANS) and KPNLF.
 - *This aid included AK-47 rifles, hand grenades, ammunition, communication equipment, anti-tank weapons, surface-to-air missiles.*
 - *Former SG Director of SID (Security & Intelligence Division) Eddie Teo even went down to the Thai Cambodia border to see for himself how the recipients of this aid from SG were doing against the Communists.*
- SG also helped to train Khmers in radio broadcasting in 1983 and even set up Samleng Khmer (Voice of Khmer): *Lee Kuan Yew felt that a rousing series of broadcast appeals would help the KPNLF and FUNCINPEC recruit a large number of fighters, & create ferment passion amongst the people.*
- In addition, SG provided technical and maintenance assistance
- Finally, SG coordinated lobbying efforts of ASEAN, UN, USA, and third countries to provide support and arms assistance so as to strengthen the non-Communists:
 - *It was SG who helped to convince the US to support the CGDK with US\$4 million for non-lethal aid (food and medicine) to supplement SG and ASEAN's efforts.*
 - *SG (together with Malaysia) also helped to successfully press for the most advantageous position to be recognized officially for the CGDK at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting on Oct 1982*
 - *At the 1983 Non Aligned Meeting, SG fought hard to argue that the CGDK deserves to be officially acknowledged and recognized as the legitimate government of Cambodia.*
 - *SG pushed for a 1985 Discussion Paper at an ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting and continued to push for an international solution to Cambodia despite Indonesia's sentiments in 1989.*



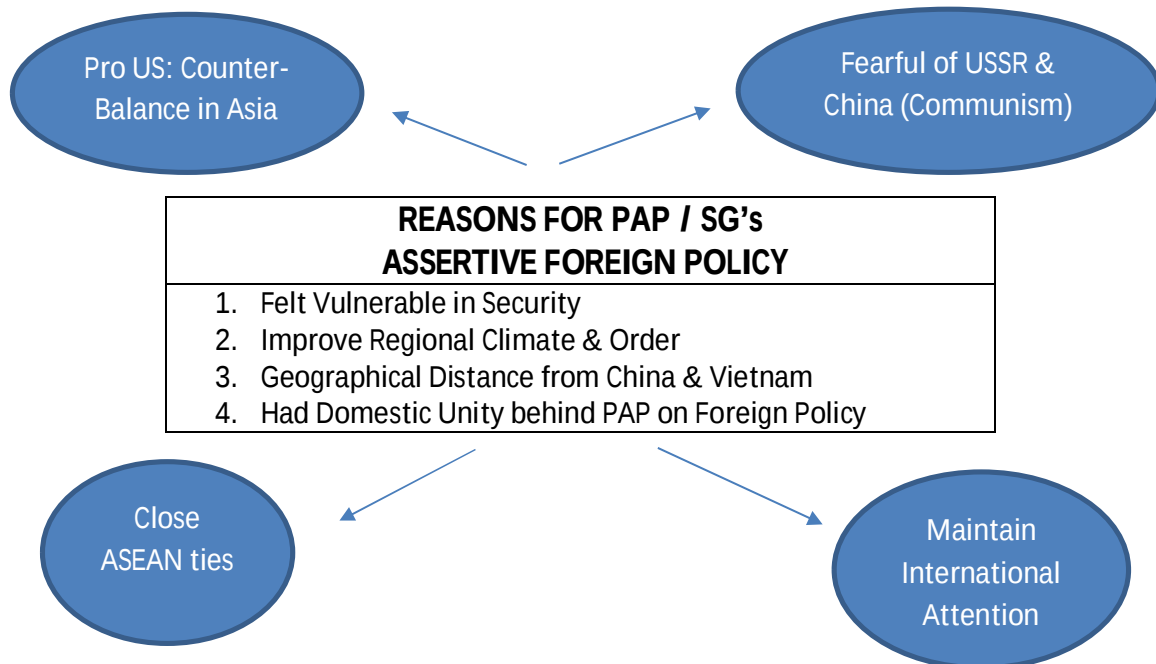
**SUMMARY OF SG's FOREIGN POLICY RESPONSE TO THE
3rd INDOCHINA WAR IN COLD WAR CONTEXT**

- *Refusal to back down to bigger powers like China & USA*
- *Principled: Adherence to International Law of Respect for Sovereignty*
- *Pragmatic Multilateralism: Make use of regional/international organizations*
- *Preserve stable and peaceful non-communist SEA*

**1) SG's RALLYING OF
DIVERSE ASEAN TO BE
FIRMLY UNITED AGAINST
VIETNAM**

**2) SG's GREAT LOBBYING EFFORTS
INTERNATIONALLY:**
*NAM, UN & Bilateral Visits
(USA, China, ASEAN countries)*

**3) SG's HELP TO THE
NON-COMMUNIST
COALITION OF
CAMBODIA**



EVALUATION OF SG's REALIST RESPONSE TO 3rd INDOCHINA WAR :

Successful? How & Why so? (Over Time?)

- a) Was SG foreign policy always uniform & constant?
- b) Was SG always in control of its foreign policy?
- c) Was SG's foreign policy a successful response to the Cold War context of 3rd Indochina War?



POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
<u>Successfully amplified its position through regional & international organizations</u> - Despite its small size, SG made use of its capable foreign service officers to go through regional and international organizations to denounce Vietnam's invasion as an illegal act against international law. - This was done in the UN, NAM, ASEAN and other bilateral forums. - Given the remote distance of Vietnam and Cambodia from the rest of the world, the fact that SG managed to sustain international focus and attention on it speaks volumes about its success in lobbying internationally. - Analysis of the Effect: <i>Kept Kampuchea Issue Alive Internationally at Forums, which kept up the pressure on Vietnam and the USSR.</i> <u>Won Respect for Successfully Standing Up to Bigger Powers</u> - In 1981, at the International Conference on Kampuchea held at the UN, the US was poised to sell out Singapore's and ASEAN's interests in favour of China's interest to see a return of the Khmer Rouge regime. - The then Assistant Secretary of State in charge of China policy even threatened our Foreign Minister that there would be "blood on the floor" if we did not relent. We held firm. The next year, Mr Lee travelled to Washington DC and in a meeting with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, described America's China policy as 'amateurish'. <u>Prevented Big Powers from taking root in the Region through Proxies for their own Gains</u> - While SG was not able to prevent big powers (like USSR) from having proxies in SEA, SG	<u>Int. Criticism over "Boat People Refugees":</u> - Rajaratnam lambasted Vietnam for expelling its 'unwanted citizens' in rickety boats, describing them as 'floating coffins' and he felt that this was part of Vietnam's military exercise to further its ambition of hegemony in SEA. - At the July 1979 international conference at Geneva to deal with this 'boat refugee' problem, Singapore stated clearly that: → SG allows temporary asylum to Indochinese refugees only if they were survivors at sea picked up by passing commercial vessels with Singapore as its next port of call. → There must also be a written guarantee of resettlement of these refugees within 3 months by a third country → Other refugees arriving in their boats, mercy ships or illegally by other means were not allowed to be resettled by third countries from Singapore. - Result: SG received heavy international criticism over its hard-hearted approach. - Rational of SG: Help SG avoid the problems of a large residual refugee population similar to those in Thailand and Malaysia. <u>Int. Criticism over Supporting the Khmer Rouge as part of the Coalition & Peace Process:</u> - SG had no choice but to include the Khmer Rouge in the CGDK and peace process as it was the strongest resistance group that



POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
was able to bring in powerful counter-vailing balances to prevent such external powers from single-handedly dominating the region and entrenching their Communist influence unobstructed. • Even after the US withdrew from Vietnam in 1973, SG still continued (continues) to provide logistical support to the US armed forces that facilitates maintaining the non-Communist USA presence in the region to serve as a security check against the Communist powers like PRC and USSR.	had the best chance of pressuring the Vietnamese invaders to withdraw. - As a result, SG attracted much criticism from the West about its stance on supporting the brutal PRC-backed Khmer Rouge against Vietnam when it illegally invaded Kampuchea. - All SG could do was to state on record its opposition to the Khmer Rouge's brutal past actions and that a coalition of all the parties involved was the only means to achieve lasting peace for the future.

Impact of the Cold War Rivalry on SG Foreign Policy

(How & Why so? Positive/Negative? Short/Long Term?)

- 1) Provided Strategic Clarity on Friends & "Foes": "
- 2) Forced SG to Adopt an Adroit & Flexible Power Balancing Act
- 3) Demonstrated SG's Capability Internationally
- 4) Demonstrated SG's Firmness to Historically Hostile Geographical Neighbors