

SECTION A: The Political Development of Singapore, 1945–65

You **must** answer Question 1.

**PROGRESS FROM PARTIAL SELF-GOVERNMENT TO FULL SELF-GOVERNMENT, 1955–1959:
BRITAIN AND THE 1957 CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS**

- 1 Read the Sources, and then answer the question.

When answering **Question 1**, candidates are advised to pay particular attention to the interpretation and evaluation of the Sources both individually and as a group.

Source A

Mr de la Mare expressed the British anxiety that Lim Yew Hock might become unreliable as Marshall before him had done. Mr Sebald said that it was the United States' feeling that, in co-operating with the British, Lim Yew Hock might be accused by the opposition in Singapore of being a puppet of the colonialists. We were, however, of the opinion that Lim Yew Hock had handled himself well, and as the British pointed out, the riots were evidence of his firmness.

Record of a conversation between a British diplomat, Mr de la Mare, and the American Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Mr Sebald, 30 October 1956.

Source B

In 1956, Lim Yew Hock's major concern was to show the British that his government was capable of preserving law and order. Immediately he adopted a tough attitude towards the radical opposition. The opposition retaliated by organizing a wave of strikes. Singapore was thus the scene of serious disorders in September 1956. It was proved that Lim Yew Hock's cabinet was indeed able to take a firm stand against opposition, but also that it was totally incapable of coping with the situation thus created. In the end police forces and troops from Malaya had to be called to put down the disturbances.

By 1957, Singapore was well on the road towards self-government. At the second constitutional conference, held in London from 11 March to 11 April 1957, the main point at issue – that of internal security – was solved by a compromise. Singapore would be formally responsible, but under the supervision of an 'internal security council', consisting of three members from Britain, three from Singapore, and one from Malaya. One issue remained. Although the British had more confidence in Lim Yew Hock than in David Marshall, they insisted that persons known to have engaged in subversive action would not be eligible for election in the Legislative Assembly.

From a general history of Singapore written in 1974.

Source C

The new constitution would be a form of power sharing, in which defence and foreign affairs would be reserved to the United Kingdom Government. The Governor would be a Malayan-born person who would be appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Secretary of State. We had been compelled to rely, in the last resort, on the power to suspend the constitution. This power would remain with the Resident Commissioner, together with the fact that he would preside over both the Defence and External Affairs Council and the Internal Security Council. This should suffice to retain in our own hands an effective degree of authority in Singapore. At the moment a body of opinion in Singapore which was friendly to Great Britain was growing, and it would be advisable to seize the present opportunity to establish a constitution which would be popular and at the same time, safeguard our essential interests.

From a discussion in the British Cabinet on the proposed constitution for Singapore, 4 March 1957.

Source D

At the final session of the conference in 1957, the British introduced a provision that individuals known to have been active in subversion should not be allowed to qualify for election to the first legislative assembly under the new arrangements. The Singapore delegation strongly resisted the suggestion but the British made it an integral part of their proposal. On 30 April the Singapore Legislative Assembly accepted a motion of Lim Yew Hock expressing approval of the constitutional proposals, but opposing the ban on subversives.

From a diplomatic history of Singapore published in 1958.

Source E

The Singapore delegation were unable to agree to one condition laid down by the United Kingdom Government, that persons known to have engaged in subversive activities should not be eligible for election to the first Legislative Assembly. The United Kingdom government made it clear that their agreement to the constitution was dependent upon this provision. It was their view, the report states, that some kind of temporary restriction was necessary 'to safeguard the orderly development of democratic government in Singapore against the danger of Communist insurgency'.

Article from The Times newspaper, London, 12 April 1957.

Now answer the following question.

How far do Sources A–E support the view that Britain's concerns over the threat to law and order in Singapore were exaggerated?

SECTION B

You must answer **three** questions from this Section. You must support each answer with examples drawn from at least **three** countries.

- 2 Assess the extent to which Western powers achieved political control over Southeast Asia in the period 1870 to 1914.
- 3 How successfully did the rural populations in Southeast Asia respond to the economic opportunities and challenges of capitalism from 1900 to 1941?
- 4 How significant was the growth of cities to the economy and politics of Southeast Asia before 1941?
- 5 To what extent was nationalism in Southeast Asia up to 1941 based upon traditional ideas?
- 6 Assess the reasons why the Second World War was the turning point for nationalist movements in Southeast Asia. (You must **not** use examples drawn from Singapore to support your answer.)
- 7 How much were ethnic minorities allowed to participate in the politics of the newly-independent states of Southeast Asia?
- 8 How successful were attempts at regional co-operation between the newly-independent states of Southeast Asia from 1960 to 1980?

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| Source C | © University of London Institute of Commonwealth Studies; <i>The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957–1964: Economics, International Relations and the Commonwealth</i> ; The Stationery Office Books; 2000. |
| Source D | © Russell Fifield; <i>Diplomacy of Southeast Asia</i> . |
| Source E | © <i>The Times</i> , 12 April 1957. |

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