Culture and Communication

News Flows in Singapore

**"From Third World to First": The Development of Disseminating News
Towards a "More Just and More Efficient Information Order"**

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von

Carl Alexander Haentzschel
geboren am 26. August 1975 in Mainz
wohnhaft in Carl-Herz-Ufer 23, 10961 Berlin
Matrikelnummer 138905

Praesident der Humboldt-Universitaet zu Berlin
Prof. Dr. Christoph Markschies

Dekan der Philosophischen Fakultaet III
Prof. Dr. Thomas Macho

Gutachter: 1. Prof. Dr. Thomas Macho
                2. Prof. Dr. Hans J. Kleinsteuber

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Content

Tables

Abbreviations (Selection)

Code	Meaning
AFP	Agence France-Presse
AMIC	Asian Media Information and Communication Center
ANN	Asia News Network
AP	Associated Press
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
APRANET	Advanced Research Projects Agency Network
APU	Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union
ASCII	American Standard Code for the Information Interchange
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AWSJ	Asian Wall Street Journal
CCTV	China Central Television
CNPS	Chinese Newspaper Publishing System
DBS	Development Bank of Singapore
DPA	Deutsche Presse Agentur
DSB	Direct Satellite Broadcasting
EDB	Economic Development Board
EWCI	East West Communication Institute
FANA	Federation of Arab News Agencies
FEER	Far Eastern Economic Review
FM	Frequency Modulation
GB	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDP/cap.	Gross Domestic Product Per Capita
GLCs	Government-linked Companies
HTTP	Hyper Text Transfer Protocol
ICP	Internet Content Provider
IDA	Infocomm Development Authority
IDD	International Direct Dialing
INTELSAT	International Telecommunications Satellite Organization
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISA	Internal Security Act
ISDN	Integrated Services Digital Network
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ISP	Internet Service Access Provider
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JCT	Jurong Town Corporation
MCP	Malayan Communist Party
MDA	Media Development Authority
MDU	Malayan Democratic Union
MediaCorp	Media Corporation of Singapore
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MNP	Malay Nationalist Party
NAN	News Agency of Nigeria
NANA	Non-Aligned News Agency Pool
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NHB	National Heritage Board
NOL	Neptune Orient Lines
NPPA	Newspaper and Printing Presses Act
NTU	Nanyang Technological University

NWICO	New World Information Order
OANA	Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies
OB marker	Out-of-bound Marker
OUB	Overseas Union Bank
PANA	Pan African News Agency
PAP	People's Action Party
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
RTM	Radio Televisyen Malaysia
RTS	Radio Television Singapore
SBC	Singapore Broadcasting Corporation
SHM	Singapore History Museum
SingTel	Singapore Telecommunication
SNP	Singapore News and Publishing Ltd
SPH	Singapore Press Holdings
SPRING	Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board
ST	Straits Times
STI	Straits Times Index
STP	Straits Times Press
TAS	Telecommunication Authority of Singapore
TCS	Television Corporation of Singapore
TEU	Twenty-Foot Equivalent Unit
TVB	Television Broadcasts Limited
TVRI	Televisi Republik Indonesia
UCLA	University of California in Los Angeles
UMNO	United Malays National Organization
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UOB	United Overseas Bank
USA	United States of America
USSR	Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWW	World Wide Web

"Never has the flow of information and ideas, of hard news and reasoned comment, been more important."

Rupert Murdoch on 14 March 2006
in an interview with *The Guardian*[1]

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[1] The Guardian: Internet Means End for Media Barons, Says Murdoch, http://media.guardian.co.uk/site/story/0,,1730382,00.html, London, 2006, accessed 2006.

Introduction

1.1   Subject of this dissertation

The subject of this dissertation is the cultural role of a certain kind of communication at a certain place during a certain period of time in a certain context. To be more specific, the subject of this dissertation is the development of news flows in Singapore between 1965 and 2000 in context with the discussions regarding the "New World Information Order".

In the 1950s and 1960s, scientists discovered that there are imbalances in the flows of news. A simple example is that wealthier people are generally better informed about current events than poorer ones. Another example is that people living in large cities are generally better informed about current events than those living in rural areas.[2]

The imbalances in international news flows are more complicated. Between the North and the South, the imbalances are usually characterized by the transfer of information and values from industrialized to developed countries through transnational news agencies as well as the tremendous differences in the availability of media and access to news.[3]

This has several effects. In industrialized countries, relatively little news about events in developing countries is available. What does end up being reported often describes developing countries as being less successful, poor and corrupt, and their citizens are depicted as being uneducated, uncultivated, barbaric and dangerous.[4] Meanwhile, industrialized countries are often praised as being successful, rich and honest, and their citizens are depicted as being educated, cultivated, obliging and trustworthy.

Generally, the same can be said about news disseminated within the South, even when the reports seem to originate from the same or a neighboring country. The reason is that almost 80 percent of international news flows are handled by the "Big Four" or "Big Five" transnational agencies. Until the late 1980s, three of them were either in American or British

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[2] Narayan Menon: Print Media are Concentrated in Urban Areas of Asia, p. 89-94, published in *Media Asia*, volume 2, number 2, Singapore, 1975, p. 89-94; and Inger Oesterdahl: Freedom of Information in Question, Freedom of Information in International Law and the Calls for a New World Information and Communication Order, Uppsala, 1992, p. 146.
[3] Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 13.
[4] Bukhory Ismail: Asian News in Four US Newspapers, p. 223-232, published in *Media Asia*, volume 16, number 4, Singapore, 1989, p. 223-232; and Mohd Hasim: Usage of Foreign News in Five ASEAN Newspapers and Perception of Foreign News in Malaysia, published in *Media Asia*, volume 17, number 1, Singapore, 1990, p. 8-16.

hands and one was Russian.[5] Today, they are based in America, Britain, France, Russia and China – the five permanent member countries of the United Nations Security Council – but the American and British agencies dominate the market.[6] This means that almost every single news item crossing a national frontier is transmitted via offices in a few media capitals, in most cases New York or London.

To illustrate the power of one of the dominating agencies, Stanley Swinton, World Service Director of the Associated Press (AP) news agency states: "Over a billion people a day make their judgments on international developments on the basis of AP news."[7]

(1) Simplified schema of news flows within a region[8]		
Direction	Volume	Quality
Top to bottom	High	Good
Bottom to top	Low	Poor
Wealthier to poorer	High	Good
Poor to wealthier	Low	Poor
Elder to younger	High	Good
Younger to elder	Low	Poor
Literate to illiterate	High	Good
Illiterate to literate	Low	Poor
Cities to rural areas	High	Good
Rural areas to cities	Low	Poor

(2) Simplified schema of news flows between regions		
Direction	Volume	Quality
North to south	High	Good
South to north	Low	Poor
North to north	High	Good
South to south	Low	Poor
Industrialized to developing	High	Good
Developing to industrialized	Low	Poor
Wealthier to poorer	High	Good
Poorer to wealthier	Low	Poor
Larger to smaller	High	Good
Smaller to larger	Low	Poor

These findings soon reached the international community. Already in the 1970s, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognized the problems and organized several hundred conferences, symposia and workshops. At those events, experts from various fields explained the state of things and presented several concepts.

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[5] Meaning the Associated Press, Reuters, Agence France-Presse, Itar-Tass and the United Press International.
[6] Meaning the Associated Press, Reuters, Agency France Press, Itar-Tass and Xinhua.
[7] After Vincente Maliwanag: The Flow of World News, p. 30, published in AMIC: 30 Years of Media Asia, Singapore, 2003.
[8] The schemata are based on the information provided in other chapters.

The discussions which resulted from them were very heated, because the perspectives of the so-called "Western" countries led by the USA, of the "Socialist Bloc" led by Russia and the less organized "Third World" differed fundamentally.[9] Soon, the UNESCO itself, particularly the management and the rising influence of the "Third World" in the organization, was coming under attack.[10]

In order to achieve at least some basic agreements, the UNESCO organization suggested to the participants of the19[th] General Assembly held in 1976 in Nairobi the assignment of the "International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems". It was chaired by Seán MacBride, the only person to have ever been awarded both the "Nobel Peace Prize" (1974) and the "Lenin Peace Prize" (1976).[11] Together with 15 other experts, he analyzed communication problems in contemporary societies for nearly four years.

In their ensuing report, published in 1980 under the title "Many Voices, One World", they recommended that developing countries restructure their media systems and that industrialized countries support these efforts with knowledge as well as financial and technical means. One of the main goals was to increase the diversity and availability of media and news by improving the overall conditions of the press. Among other things, the commission recommended the establishment of national news agencies, training centers for professionals, archives and libraries.[12]

On the following occasion, the UNESCO members more or less agreed to implement the recommendations in order to achieve a "New World Information Order", but how the report was interpreted and used by the members differed. While some understood it as a manifesto against the overwhelming media power of the former colonialists, others used the opportunity to point to the violations of "Human Rights" in the "Third World".[13]

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[9] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 18.
[10] William Preston: Hope and Folly, The United States and UNESCO, 1945-1985, New York, 1989.
[11] UNESCO: Records of the General Conference, Nineteenth Session, Held in Nairobi from 26 October until 30 November 1976, Paris, 1977, p. 54 et sqq; and Nobel Prize Foundation: Seán MacBride, Curriculum Vitae, http://nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/1974/macbride-cv.html, Stockholm, year of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[12] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 253 et sqq.
[13] Jadwiga Pastecka: The Right to Communicate, A Socialist Approach, published in UNESCO: The New World Information Order, Document Prepared for the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, number 39, Paris, date of publication unknown, no page numbers; William Fore: NWICO, From an American Perspective, p. 12, published in Teresita Hermano (Ed.): Communication Challenges of Our Time, An Asian Perspective, Papers and Reports Presented at the 1984 Manila Conferences on Communication Issues and Curriculum Development, Manila, 1984, p. 9-16; and Narinder Aggarwala: NIIO, A Hope or a Nightmare?, p. 44-53, published in Media Asia, volume 12, number 1, Singapore, 1985, p. 44-53.

At the height of the conflicts, three countries withdrew from UNESCO. The withdrawal of the United States of America in 1984 was the most dramatic, because the superpower had carried around 25 percent of UNESCO's budget. Soon after, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Singapore followed.[14] The organization was plunged into its worst crisis ever. This led to fundamental changes on all levels, including the adoption of a new strategy and the appointment of a new director-general.[15] As a result, Britain rejoined in 1997. In October 2003, even the United States returned. In fact, all countries that withdrew from UNESCO at some point rejoined sooner or later – with one exception: Singapore.

The reason why Singapore withdrew from UNESCO and has still not rejoined is not clear. Several documents verify that Singapore originally intended to cooperate with UNESCO and benefited from its membership.[16] An UNESCO official, who is familiar with Singapore but seems to have some provisos against its government, believes that Singapore is by nature not compatible with the UNESCO. From his point of view, the understanding of culture and communication in Singapore is too far away from the liberal statutes of the international community. Another official, who represented a large country at the time of Singapore's withdrawal, is convinced that Singapore simply followed the United States and the United Kingdom, either without any reflection or due to some pressure.[17] But why only Singapore and not any other country should have followed is hard to comprehend.[18]

Whatever the reason, there is no doubt that the understanding of culture and communication in Singapore is quite unique.[19] This was true for the 146 years when Singapore was a British colony and has particularly been the case since the country's independence in 1963 and separation from Malaysia in 1965.[20] That is the reason why the development of news flows in Singapore, particularly during the rule of Lee Kuan Yew from 1965 until 2000, in context with the discussions about the "New World Information Order", is the subject of this dissertation.

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[14] The budget in 1985 was 267.5 million US dollars. The withdrawals of USA, UK and Singapore meant a 30 percent reduction. UNESCO: UNESCO 1945-1995, A Fact Sheet, Paris, 1995, p. 1-5.
[15] In 1987, Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow was followed by Federico Mayor as director-general, who soon introduced a new strategy.
[16] UNESCO: Letter from the Assistant Director-General in Charge of Communication to the Director-General About a Technical Inspection Mission to Singapore, 8 April 1968, Paris, not yet published.
[17] Alexander Haentzschel: Should Singapore Rejoin the UNESCO?, published in *Asia-Europe Journal*, volume 2, number 4, Singapore, 2004, p. 549-556. See the annex.
[18] Compare with the conversation with John Lent.
[19] See Tan Lai Kim: The Singapore Press as a Mediator between the Government and the Public, p. 204-226, published in *Media Asia*, volume 25, number 4, Singapore, 1998, p. 204-226.
[20] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, 2000, p. 218, 223.

(3) Some facts about Singapore[21]		
Geography	Location	Southeast Asia, between Malaysia and Indonesia
	Area	692.7 sq km or around 3.5 times the size of Washington D.C.
	Climate	Tropical: hot, humid, rainy. There are two distinct rainy seasons
History	Founding	1919, by Stamford Raffles as a trading post
	Former status	British colony, later upgraded to a crown colony
	Independence	Unilateral declaration of independence in 1963
	Separation	Separation from the Federation of Malaysia in 1965
People	Population	Around 4.3 million in the year 2005 (est.)
	Ethnic groups	77% Chinese, 14% Malay, 8% Indian
	Religions	43% Buddhist, 16% Christian, 15% Muslim, 9% Taoist, 4% Hindu
	Languages spoken	35% Mandarin, 23% English, 14% Malay, 11% Hokkien, 6% Cantonese
	Literacy in English	At least 72% are fluent in English
Politics	System	Parliamentary republic, unicameral, Westminster model
	Dominant party	People's Action Party, opposition parties are practically irrelevant
	Prime minister	Before Lee Kuan Yew, now his son Lee Hsien Loong
Economy	Condition	Free market economy, depends largely on exports
	Goods	Electronics, manufacturing, chemicals, gasoline
	Annual growth rate	6.4% in 2005, similar rates in the previous years
	GDP	190 billion Singapore dollars or 43 000 Singapore dollars per capita
	Exchange rate	1 Singapore dollar is equal to 0.6 US dollars or 0.7 Euro

1.1.1   Restraints of the subject

This dissertation focuses on the development of the press in Singapore between the time of the establishment of the first two newspapers there, the *Prince of Wales Island Gazette* (1805, on the Malay island Penang) and the *Singapore Chronicle* (1823), and the recent launch of the *Today* paper (2000). Though the developments during colonial times are extensive, far more space is devoted to the last forty years. The reason for this is that the circumstances of the press have changed tremendously during this period; Singapore has developed *From Third World to First* (2000).[22]

Radio (introduced in 1936) and television (1963) in Singapore are more or less left aside in this dissertation. The reason is that radio and television broadcasting were introduced much later and, as a result, have a much shorter and also less revealing history. Whenever they are mentioned, this dissertation's intention is to emphasize the extent to which radio and television channels have become news sources for print journalists and, more importantly, their role as alternative media for the dissemination of news. Generally, the same applies to the Internet (1994). All other forms of media such as digital devices and mobile services are completely ignored since they have played practically no role in the news flows before the year 2000.

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[21] The table is based on the data provided in other chapters.
[22] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, 2000, p. 89-102.

The political, economic and technological developments are discussed in detail, because the print media generally rely heavily on their surrounding circumstances, in Singapore even more than in other countries.[23] To illustrate this: No one can understand the pressure on the press without being familiar with the nature of elections, for example. So it is essential to describe such background issues.

In some chapters, references are given to developments in other countries. In order to put the circumstances of the press in Singapore before 1965 into context, the history of newspapers in general and the development of the press in China in particular are briefly described. Though such excursions are not essential, they are useful to understand the differences between the cultural role of communication in Singapore and elsewhere.

However, the two main questions of this dissertation are how the news flows have developed in Singapore and whether the idea of a "New World Information Order" is still useful to make the news flows there "more just and more efficient". In order to investigate these topics, a number of related questions will be answered, including how the mass media in Singapore have developed. Another question is to what extent the idea of the "New World Information Order" is still up-to-date.

The central thesis of this dissertation is that the news flows in Singapore have become more efficient, but not more just in the past several decades. Therefore, it is still worth discussing the imbalances in the news flows there, even though the idea of the "New World Information Order" itself is unrealistic and outdated now.

Thus, the variety of newspapers, their number and ownership, as well as the legal regulations designed for the media and journalists in Singapore are some of the main criteria in answering the central questions and assessing the thesis of this dissertation.[24]

1.1.2   Relevance of the thesis

The subject and thesis of this dissertation are relevant and interesting for various reasons. On the one hand, this dissertation reviews some discussions regarding the "New World

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[23] Attorney-General's Chambers: Newspaper and Printing Presses Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_getdata.pl?actno=2002-REVED-206&doctitle=NEWSPAPER%20AND%20PRINTING%20PRESSES%20ACT%0a&date=latest&method=part&segid=1041301230-000004, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[24] Further criteria are mentioned in the following chapters.

Information Order". On the other, this dissertation analyzes the development of news dissemination in Singapore. This dissertation is the first to bring both issues together. Each, however, is important on its own.

To begin with the importance of the "New World Information Order": In recent years, it has become popular to talk about a process called "Globalization". Within this debate, the "Digital Divide" has become a major issue.[25] While some argue that the gaps between those with access to media and those who are too poor to access it are growing at an alarming rate, others argue that never in human history so many people have had access to media and that this trend would continue.[26] But the problem is far more complicated than that, because access to media does not automatically guarantee just flows of news and manifold information. This is exactly what the Seán MacBride Report outlines.[27]

Also, the developments in Singapore are more important than one might expect. The reason is that Singapore, the most advanced economy and leading media hub in Southeast Asia, is often taken as a role model. In 1987, Singapore's then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew even showed the world how print media can be controlled, namely by restricting circulation.[28] As a founding member of organizations such as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN, 1967), Singapore even has a direct say in some international issues. This means that developments in this small city-state are not only relevant to its citizens but might affect others in the region as well.

1.2   Structure and methods

This dissertation is divided into eight chapters plus annex of which each is split into several subchapters. The only purpose for grouping the content is to make it more accessible, although that might affect it. Hayden White even argues that history writing in general is nothing else than a catenation of single events in order to achieve a certain plot.[29]

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[25] Lu Ming Te: Digital Divide in Developing Countries, p. 1 et sqq., published in *Journal of Global Information Technology Management*, number 4, volume 3, Greensboro, 2001, p. 1-4.
[26] Arun Mahizhnan: Digital Divide, Will it Deepen or Diminish?, p. 72-77, published in *Media Asia*, volume 28, number 2, Singapore, 2001, p. 72-77.
[27] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. XXVII et sqq.
[28] See the chapter "Trouble with the Foreign Press".
[29] Hayden White: Der historische Text als Literarisches Kunstwerk, p. 123 et sqq., published in Christoph Conrad (Ed.): Geschichte Schreiben in der Postmoderne, Beitraege zur Aktuellen Diskussion, Stuttgart, 1994, p. 123-157.

However, different scientific methods were used for this dissertation. Generally, they can be allocated either to "induction", which means reasoning from the particular to the general, or "deduction", which means reasoning from the general to the particular. Neither one of these methods can stand on its own. Therefore, both are used in this dissertation.

In total, 14 experts were questioned in Singapore in November and December 2004.[30] Each interview lasted at least 30 minutes but most were more than twice as long. During the interviews, a pre-formulated questionnaire with 22 questions served as a guideline.[31] Some questions posed were comparatively long and provocatively formulated. One reason for this is that the author wanted to signal that he is familiar with the issues, so that the respondents would not hesitate to go into details. The other reason is that the author of this dissertation wanted to see the reactions of the interviewees when more controversial issues were raised. The answers to these latter questions turned out to be the most revealing, especially when the recorder was switched off. Therefore, the interviewer decided to stop audio tapping some of the conversations.

Furthermore, twelve different cases were analyzed. Eight of them concern local newspapers and four of them concern foreign publications. Though each case is unique, several similarities can be observed. At the end, it was possible to draw more than half a dozen conclusions from them.

Above that, a number of conversations were conducted, either personally or by e-mail, during which experts were asked about their personal experiences and opinions. The transcripts of two of these conversations can be found in the annex of this dissertation.

Most important, however, was the intense study of the literature available.

1.2.1   Availability of data

In order to find materials, the author of this dissertation researched at several institutions. Research at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, in the library of the School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) at the University of London and in the material rooms of the Asian Media Information and Communication Center (AMIC) which is located at the School of Communication and

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[30] Except the interview with Arun Mahizhnan; he was interviewed in July 2005 in Beijing, China.
[31] The questionnaire can be found in the annex.

Information at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore were the most productive. Many sources of information have also been found in the archive of the Institute of Asian Affairs in Hamburg and in the Berlin State Library. In total, more than 800 books, articles and websites have been identified which are relevant to this dissertation.

Those sources can be grouped by content, but also by date and place of publication. A significant number of sources deal with culture and communication. Interestingly, many of the older texts on this topic were published in Germany or France, while many of the newer texts come from the United States. The reason is probably that scientists in the United States started analyzing culture and communication later but with much more fervor.[32]

Analyzing the origin of texts dealing with Southeast Asia in general and Singapore in particular, a similar phenomenon becomes apparent. Many of the newer texts have been published in the region or country itself, while many of the older texts were published in the respective colonial motherland.

If at all, the texts about news flows could be located with great difficulty only. Although scientists from all over the world have contributed to discussions regarding news flows, there has never been a central institution to archive them, apart from the UNESCO headquarters and the Press Foundation of Asia in the Philippines.[33] Interestingly, a larger number of texts have been published by the Asian Media Information and Communication Center in Singapore, which might be taken as a further reason for the importance and relevance of this dissertation.

There is no longer text regarding the development of news flows in Singapore known to the author of this dissertation. However, a variety of related texts is available so that a careful selection of sources has been essential.

1.2.2 Selection of sources

As far as news flows are concerned, the report "Many Voices, One World" serves as the main primary source. Though it picks up on several texts which have been published earlier – some were explicitly prepared for sessions of the International Commission for the Study of

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[32] Communication studies as a distinct field was introduced in the mid of the 20th century in the United States.
[33] Already in 1967 and 1968, the newly established Press Foundation of Asia organized a series of three conferences.

Communications Problems – the report stands out. The reason is that the report is an official document published by UNESCO in 1980 and, as thus, was intensively discussed by numerous scholars (whose texts are classified as secondary sources).

The most relevant secondary sources about the news flows, however, are the books by authors such as Wilbur Schramm (published in 1949), Daniel Lerner (1958), Lucien Pye (1962), Jeremy Tunstall (1977), Oliver Boyd-Barrett (1980), Robert Savio (1980), John Lent (1982), Rolf Scheller (1983), Andrew Szende (1986) and Inger Oesterdahl (1992). At least this is a selection of authors whose texts have highly influenced the remarks about news flows in this dissertation.

As far as the developments in Singapore are concerned, particularly the developments of the press there, articles in newspapers and magazines published in Singapore itself (i.e. *Straits Times*, established in 1845) or distributed there (i.e. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1946) have been used. Besides, the two "Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew" ("The Singapore Story", 1989; "From Third World to First", 2000) are considered as primary sources. Although it is not known to what extend Lee Kuan Yew wrote those two books by himself, they are very revealing due to their insider's view.

The majority of the relevant secondary sources which describe the developments in Singapore in general and the development of the press there in particular, however, were published by the Asian Media Information and Communication Center between its founding in 1971 and today. A significant number of texts have been found in its *Media Asia* journal; all available issues have been screened for relevant articles.[34]

Further examples are the books by authors such as Charles Moses (published in 1978), Eddie Kuo (1983), Ang Peng Hwa (1998), and Cherian George (2000). Exceptions are the books by Mary Turnbull (1977), Soh Yew Peng (1998) and Francis Seow (1998); they were published by other institutions. At least this is a selection of authors whose texts have highly influenced the remarks about Singapore and its press.

In addition, numerous websites providing information about Singapore have been accessed by the author of this dissertation. Of these, the sites provided by the Singapore Department of Statistics and other official institutions turned out to be most useful; its contents were analyzed by relevance for this dissertation[35]

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[34] *Media Asia* is a quarterly journal; it was started in 1974 and still exists.
[35] Department of Statistics: Index, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

Definitions

2.1   Definitions of culture-related terms

One of the central terms used in this dissertation is also one of the most vague and controversial, because it is used in daily life, in the sciences, in politics and the arts – each time in another context.[36]

Etymologically, the term "culture" can be traced back to the Latin word "colere" which can be translated as "maintenance", "care" or "welfare". But it is also used for husbandy ("cultura agri"), worship ("cultura deorum"), education ("cultura animi") and life style ("cultura humans"), so practically everything ranging from cosmetics to manners.[37] This might explain why some centuries later Thomas Morus (1478-1535) and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) used the term "culture" for describing ways of thinking, while Voltaire (1694-1778) and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) used it for describing habits of communities.[38]

Meanwhile, the term "civilization" was introduced in French language. Originally, it was used for describing aspects beyond the human way of life. Today, the difference in most languages is that culture focuses on the habits, while civilization describes the citizens as members of society. [39]

What is today accepted as the "classic definition" of culture was provided by Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917). According to "Primitive Culture", first published in 1871, "culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as member of society" ("civitas").[40]

Edward Tylor adds that culture, so defined, is possessed by man alone. Thereby, he follows the argumentation of Johann Gottfried Herder, who compared the characteristics of man and orangutans in "Ideas about the Philosophy of the History of Mankind". He came to the

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[36] Dietrich Muehlberg: Woher wir wissen, was Kultur ist, Berlin, 1983, p. 1 et sqq.

[37] Klaus Hansen: Kultur und Kulturwissenschaft, Eine Einfuehrung, Tuebingen, 1995, p. 12, 13.

[38] Thomas Morus, posthumously also known as Saint Thomas More, was an English lawyer and politician. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing was a German writer and philosopher. François-Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire, was a French writer and reviewer. Johann Gottfried Herder was a German philosopher and theologian.

[39] Compare with Norbert Elias: Ueber den Prozess der Zivilisation, Basel, 1939, later published in Heike Hammer (Ed.): Gesammelte Werke, number III, Frankfurt, 1997, p. 95-97, 132 et sqq.

[40] Edward Burnett Tylor was an English anthropologist. Edward Tylor: Primitive Culture, Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom, London, 1871, later published in Edward Tylor: The Collected Works of Edward of Edward Burnett Tylor, number III, London, 1994, p. 1.

conclusion that humans alone are predisposed to "senses" such as the creation of art and language.[41] Since then, however, culture is often defined in contrast to nature.

Thomas Sterns Eliot (1888-1965), who knew Tylor's book, noticed that the term may be used for both individuals and groups of people. But it arouses different associations if an individual, a group, class or nation is meant. Part of his thesis and of this dissertation too, is that the culture of an individual depends on the culture of the social group, and the culture of the group depends on the culture of the society – as well as the reverse.[42]

In principle, this definition is still in use, but in the 1970s, some scientists of the "Birmingham School of Cultural Studies" noticed also some semiotic aspects: "The 'culture' of a group or class is the peculiar and distinctive 'way of life' of the group or class, the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of belief, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life. Culture is the distinctive shapes in which this material and social organization of life expresses itself. A culture includes 'maps of meaning' which makes things intelligible to its members. These 'maps of meaning' are not simply carried around in the head: they are objectivated in the patterns of social organization and relations through which the individual becomes a 'social individual.'"[43] Thus, culture is the way the social relations of a group are structured and shaped and it is also the way those shapes are experienced, understood and interpreted.[44]

Edward Hall (1914-) summed up this definition by arguing that "culture is communication and communication is culture." To him, culture is the most important link between humans and the basis for every inter-human contact. It is first and foremost a system of communication, "Any culture is primarily a system for creating, sending, storing, and processing information." Like a telephone system, any communication has three aspects: its overall-structure (comparable to the telephone network), its components (switchboard wires and telephones) and the message itself (which is carried by the network). Comparably,

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[41] Johann Herder: Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit, London, 1784/91, published in Wolfgang Pross (Ed.): Johann Gottfried Herder, Gesammelte Werke, number III/1, Munich, 2002, p. 107, 126.
[42] Thomas Stearns Eliot was an Anglo-American poet and dramatist. Originally, he meant classes. Thomas Eliot: Zum Begriff der Kultur, Paris, 1945, later published in Gerhard Hensel (Ed.): Thomas Stearns Eliot, Zum Begriff der Kultur, Frankfurt, 1961, p. 22.
[43] Meaning John Clarke, Stuart Hall, Jony Jefferson and Brian Robert. John Clarke: Jugendkultur als Widerstand, Frankfurt, 1979, p. 41; and John Clarke: Resistance through Rituals, London, 1976, p. 10-11.
[44] Compare with the UNESCO "Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies" in which the participants of the World Conference on Cultural Policies emphasize that culture in its widest sense "may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs." UNESCO: Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies, World Conference on Cultural Policies, Paris, 1982, p. 1.

messages could be divided into three components: sets (words), isolates (sounds) and patterns (grammar, syntax, etc.).[45]

Edward Hall comes to three conclusions which build the theoretical framework of this analysis: Firstly, culture is not inherent, it must be learned. Secondly, the different elements of culture are interlaced. And, thirdly, since culture is an experience which is shared with others, it distinguishes social groups and points out their differences. So it strongly affects what psychologists describe as identity. In this sense, "culture is the most important connector between men and fundament of every inter-human contact."[46] This means, among other things, that culture practically exists as long as individuals identify themselves with it.[47]

In this sense, the "Birmingham School of Cultural Studies" describes "cultural identity" as "identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has shared systems of symbols and meanings as well as norms/rules for conduct. Cultural identity is created through symbolic and normative competence." In other words: "When individuals identify with cultural groups they are able to enact culturally appropriate […] with members of that groups." So defined, the cultural identity is a combination of ideas about "being" and norms for "action".[48]

Although these definitions of culture (as communication), cultural identity (as condition of culture) and cultural diversity (as condition and result of various cultural identities and cultures respectively) are relatively precise and widely accepted, they are not so easy to apply. The reason is that none of them are stable but continuously in transition, because people are always interacting (cultural contacts).[49] As a result, no culture is what it once was.

This is particularly true for the Southeast Asian archipelago on whose southern tip Singapore is located. Though the settlement was officially founded by British settlers, it was dominated by ethnic Malay for a long time. Today, around 77 percent are ethnic Chinese, many of

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[45] Edward Hall is an American anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher. Edward Hall: Hidden Differences, Doing Business with the Japanese, New York, 1987, p. 3; and Edward Hall: The Silent Language, New York, 1959, p. 122.
[46] Edward Hall: Verborgene Signale, Ueber den Umgang mit Japanern, Hamburg, 1985, p. 22, 16.
[47] Compare with the UNESCO "Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies" in which the participants of the World Conference on Cultural Policies state that "it is culture that makes us specifically human, rational beings, endowed with a critical judgment and a sense of moral commitment. It is through culture that man expresses himself, becomes aware of himself, recognizes his incompleteness, questions his own achievements, seeks untiringly for new meanings and creates works through which he transcends his limitations." UNESCO: Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies, World Conference on Cultural Policies, Paris, 1982, p. 1.
[48] Mary Collier: Cultural Identity, An Interpretative Perspective, published in William Gudykunst (Ed.): Theories in Intercultural Communication, Newbury, 1988. p. 99-120; after Kurt Luger: Offene Grenzen in der Kommunikationswissenschaft, Ueber die Notwendigkeit eines Interkulturellen Forschungsansatzes, published in Kurt Luger: Dialog der Kulturen, Die Multikulturelle Gesellschaft und die Medien, Wien, 1994, p. 12.
[49] Gerhard Maletzke: Interkulturelle Kommunikation, Zur Interaktion Zwischen Menschen Verschiedener Kulturen, Opladen, 1996, p. 9.

whom are American (ABCs) or British-born (BBCs). Each group and individual, however, claims to have an own culture and to be following own traditions.

Some argue that those "cross-cultural people" will sooner or later assimilate (and become integrated) into the dominating culture. Fred Casmir even believes that the "cosmopolitans" could form a "new, third culture". Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980) speaks in this context of a "global village" and Wolfgang Welsch of a "global culture".[50] A definite answer is hard to give because people may not identify themselves with their origin or environment, but rather with other personal traits such as their native language, religion, profession or any other affiliation.

2.2 Definitions of communication-related terms

If, according to Edward Hall, culture is communication, the question which automatically follows is what communication is. This is difficult to answer, because everything can be communication, at least potentially. Another reason is that human beings are so used to communicating from their very first moment of life that they are hardly aware of doing so. Thirdly, communication is fleeting; it cannot be stopped for observation.[51]

Etymologically, the term can be traced back to the Latin word "communis", which means "common", or "communicare", which means "to make something common to many" or "to give a share of something". It can be found in the writings of Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) who generally differentiated between the orator, the speech and the listeners. Centuries later, it was often used in the context of the Holy Communion. The specific sense of imparting or transmitting information, however, is first found in English language in John Locke's (1632-1704) "Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (1690).[52]

Nowadays, the term is used in various disciplines. It is used in electronics (to mark the connection of two points by means of electrical apparatus), in economics (to describe the infrastructure upon which the transportation of persons and goods depends) and in military studies (to explain the lines of communication along which troops are transported, for

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[50] Until 1999, Fred Casmir was teaching at the Pepperdine University in Malibu. Herbert Marshall McLuhan was a Canadian professor for English literature, communications theorist and, as thus, one of the founders of modern media studies. And Wolfgang Welsch is teaching at the University Jena in Germany.
[51] Klaus Merten: Kommunikation, Eine Begriffs- und Prozessanalyse, Opladen, 1977, p. 12.
[52] John Locke was a philosopher primarily concerned with society and epistemology. Ernest Klein: A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language, Amsterdam, 1966, p. 322; Charles Onions: The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, London, 1966, p. 196; and Robert Barnhart: The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology, Communication, New York, 1988, p. 240.

instance).[53] In any case, the meaning depends largely on the frame of reference employed and the relevance given to certain aspects. [54]

As a result, there are numerous definitions available. Most known are the remarks by Harold Laswell (1902-1978) and Wilbur Schramm (1907-1987). Harold Laswell asked "Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect", and Wilbur Schramm answered in his works: "A communicates B through channel C to D with the effect E".[55]

Most experts generally agree that communication requires at least three but usually all five of the following elements: an initiator or sender, a message, a mode or vehicle, a recipient and an effect. "Simply expressed, the communication begins when a message is conceived by a sender. It is then encoded - translated into a signal or sequence of signals - and transmitted via a particular medium or channel to a receiver who then decodes it and interprets the message, returning a signal in some way that the message has or has not been understood."[56]

Nevertheless, at least two general lines of thought or even schools have been crystallized over the past decades: The so-called "structural" line of thought or "Process School" includes perspectives from fields such as history. It understands communication as the "transmission of messages" and focuses on how senders and receivers encode and decode, and how transmitters use the channels and media of communication. Thus, its primary object is likely to be the media systems and its functions.

In contrast, the "behavioral" approach or "Semiotic School" has its roots in fields such as psychology. It understands communication as the "production and exchange of meanings" and is more concerned with how messages or texts interact with people in order to produce meanings. Thus, it addresses the "works of communication" as something which constitutes the individual as a member of a group or society. So both schools generally interpret communication as interaction and exchange of messages but they differ, apart from other aspects, mainly in what constitutes a message and its relevance.[57]

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[53] Compare with Johannes Peters: Einfuehrung in die Allgemeine Informationstheorie, Berlin, 1967, p. 35.
[54] In the 1970s, Frank Dance identified more than 120 definitions. Later, Klaus Merten found around 140 definitions. Klaus Merten: Kommunikation, Eine Begriffs- und Prozessanalyse, Opladen, 1977, p. 9 et sqq.
[55] Kenneth Sereno: Foundations of Communication Theory, New York, 1970, p. 55-24; and Guido Fauconnier: Mass Media and Society, An Introduction to the Scientific Study of Mass Communication, Leuven, 1975, p. 19.
[56] During this process, both the sender and the receiver are subject to a multitude of cues which can influence the meaning as well as the understanding of the message; it might even change while one is in the act of examining it. James Watson: Dictionary of Media and Communication Studies, Communication, New York, 2000, p. 55.
[57] For the "Process School", a message is what is relayed during the communication process, while for the "Semiotic School" the message is a construction of signs. John Fiske: Introduction to Communication Studies, London, 1990, p. 2 et sqq.

Furthermore, it has become common to distinguish between levels such as "intrapersonal communication" for beings talking to themselves, "interpersonal communication" occurring between two or more beings and "group communication" requiring at least three participants. In most cases, communication is a two-way process (two-way flow). In contrast, "mass communication" is when one or more messages are transmitted to a larger number of recipients and the sender does not (yet) receive a (immediate) response. Then it is "indirect" or "unilateral", as Gerhard Maletzke describes it.[58]

The typical vehicle for mass communication is the mass media. Ray Hiebert argues that mass communication "always requires a mass medium; without mass medium, mass communication can never occur".[59] Guido Fauconnier follows this argumentation only partly because he does not see a reason why, for instance, a public speech should not be regarded as mass communication: "The presence or absence of a microphone and loud speakers can hardly be considered as a criterion of mass communication here." But he concedes that most of what is considered to be mass communication (press, radio, television, etc.) is indeed covered by this definition.[60] This dissertation, however, is a (system) analysis primarily in the sense of the "Process School" with focus on mass communication using mass media.

2.3   Definitions of media-related terms

Grammatically, the term "mass media" consists of two words, "mass" and "media". The latter one can be traced back to the Latin word "medium" which means "the middle". In the sense of "intermediate", it is first found in English language in Francis Bacon's (1561–1626) "The Advancement of Learning" (1605).[61] Its plural form is first recorded in "Greece, Ancient and Modern" (1866) by Cornelius Felton (1807-1862).[62] And the combination of both probably first appeared in the early 20th century.[63]

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[58] Gerhard Maletzke: Psychologie der Massenkommunikation, Hamburg, 1963, p. 32.

[59] Ray Hiebert: Mass Media II, An Introduction to Modern Communication, New York, 1979, p. 25.

[60] Guido Fauconnier: Mass Media and Society, An Introduction to the Scientific Study of Mass Communication, Leuven, 1975, p. 19.

[61] Francis Bacon was an English philosopher and essayist. Some authors such as William Henry Smith argue that Francis Bacon was the author of the plays usually attributed to William Shakespeare. Francis Bacon: The Advancement of Learning, Derived from the 1893 Cassell & Company Edition, http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/b/bacon/francis/b12a/, Adelaide, 2003, accessed 2004.

[62] Cornelius Conway Felton was an American professor of Greek literature and president of Harvard University.

[63] Ernest Klein: A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language, Amsterdam, 1966, p. 956; Robert Barnhart: The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology, Communication, New York, 1988, p. 646; Douglas Harper: Online Etymology Dictionary, Mass, http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=mass, Lancaster, 2001, accessed 2005.

As for communication, there are various definitions, models and theories available. Guido Fauconnier, for instance, describes mass media as the physical or technical means of converting communication messages along a given channel to a potentially unlimited number of recipients.[64] And John Fiske groups mass media into "presentational media" (verbal or non-verbal), "representational media" (books, paintings, photographs) applying cultural respectively aesthetical conventions "to create a 'text' of some sort", and the "mechanical media" (radio, television) which can make use of both.[65]

Generally speaking, there are only two or three different approaches, "media-centric" and "society-centric" or "socio-centric." The "media-centric" usually attributes a lot of autonomy to the media and focus on its activities, while the others regard the media as an outcome or even reflection of political, economical, technological or social developments.

In the specific case of Singapore, the mass media and the government are interlaced in several aspects, much more than in other countries. Therefore, the author of this dissertation prefers the "society-centric" approach. However, whenever the term mass media is used in this text, usually print media or the press is being referred to, because radio, television and the Internet are more or less left aside.

Since the time of Otto Groth (1875-1965), for whom periodicity (short frequency), universality (not to special), timelessness and publicity (availability to the people) were the main features of the print media, they are usually identified on the basis of technical information.[66] Newspapers, for instance, are often grouped by format (broadsheet or tabloid), size (up to 570 mm) and volume (up to 500 pages).

Further criteria identifying and grouping newspapers are the frequency of publication (daily, weekly, bi-monthly) and circulation (up to 20 million), the ownership (state owned, privately owned, etc.), the purpose of publication (commercial, non-commercial), the price per copy (free or up to several US dollars), the method of distribution (subscription, street sale), the target group (e.g. businessmen), the profile of the readership (age, gender, income, etc.) and so on.

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[64] Guido Fauconnier: Mass Media and Society, An Introduction to the Scientific Study of Mass Communication, Leuven, 1975, p. 14.
[65] The classic example for electrical transmission is the Morse Code in which frequently used source symbols are sent via a short code symbol while source symbols infrequently used are sent by means of longer code symbols. Fred Haber: An Introduction to Information and Communication Theory, Reading, 1974, p. 14.
[66] Otto Groth was a German media scientist and journalist.

Another outstanding characteristic of newspapers is its special style of wrapping messages into words and pictures. Usually the raw information is told in a narrative (constructed) or symbolic (arranged) mode ordered by relevance (inverted pyramid structure) which lets the information appear new. Such stories are usually called "news".[67] This shows that "news" and "new" are closely related.

Originally, this term derives from the Latin word "novus" which roots can still be found in the Portuguese "novo", the Spanish "Nuevo" and the Italian "novizio". The English-language version developed in the 13th century from the Old English "neowe" or "niowe" which is akin to the Frisian "nie" and sounds not much different from the Danish, Swedish and Norwegian "ny" or the German "neu".[68] In all of these languages, the term describes something that was - until recently - uncertain, unmade, untouched, undiscovered or completely unknown. At least is this the most important criterion for news: If something cannot be described as new, it cannot be news.[69]

Media professionals argue that news must also fulfill other requirements (in order to gain attention). In a handbook for Reuters journalists, for instance, a number of other criteria are listed.[70] Some are timeliness (newness), proximity (geographical nearness), prominence (popularity), consequences (for the reader) and social interest (emotional feelings).[71]

In this analysis, however, it is less relevant what constitutes news, since the subject is how larger numbers of news items are transmitted, and by which media in particular. The author seldom separates the message from the medium. Instead, he follows the general line of thought of Marshall McLuhan, who argues that the message is conditioned by the medium (the medium shapes the message, shapes the sender and shapes the audience; and vice versa) and presumes that (in the "Gutenberg Galaxy") the medium itself is not neutral.[72] Thus, the variety of newspapers, their number and ownership, as well as the legal regulations designed for the media and journalists are some of the main criteria in this dissertation.

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[67] Anura Goonasekera: News as a Social Construct, p. 9-12, published in *Media Asia*, volume 19, number 1, Singapore, 1992, p. 9-12.
[68] Robert Barnhart: The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology, Communication, New York, 1988, p. 702.
[69] Lord Northcliffe (1869-1922), one of the first press barons in Britain: "News is what somebody somewhere wants to suppress; all the rest is advertising." After James Watson: Dictionary of Media and Communication Studies, Communication, New York, 2000, p. 212.
[70] Ian Macdowall: Reuters Handbook for Journalists, London, 1992, p. 5 et sqq.
[71] Compare with Ray Hiebert: Mass Media II, An Introduction to Modern Communication, New York, 1979, p. 354; and Gaye Tuchman: The Production of News, published in Klaus Jensen (Ed.): A Handbook of Media and Communication Research, Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies, London, 2002, p. 78-90.
[72] Marshall McLuhan: Understanding Media, The Extensions of Man, London, 1964, p. 17; and Marshall McLuhan: The Gutenberg Galaxy, The Making of Typographic Man, London, 1962, p. 136.

Retrospection

3.1   Origins of the discussions about news flows

It is not clear who was the first to assess the imbalances in the flows of news. John Lent, who reviewed the discussions in 1982, does not mention any particular author.[73] Neville Jayaweera states that Daniel Lerner, Lucien Pye and Wilbur Schramm were among the first who contributed seminal research and writings.[74] That is certainly correct but none of them wrote about the topic before or during World War II. Daniel Lerner, a pioneer in the field of sociology, wrote several essays in the early 1950s and his most famous book in 1958. Lucien Pye published some essays in the late 1950s and a book on the subject in 1962. Alone Wilbur Schramm, who contributed more than two dozen books on this and related topics, began his research in the 1940s and published his first books in 1949.[75]

It is possible that the first contributions were made in one of the newly independent countries where the working conditions of academics and students had changed dramatically after World War II. During colonial times, the higher schools and universities there were established for the children of colonialists. Examples are the Hong Kong University and the National University of Singapore, which were both founded by or on behalf of colonialists.[76] For several decades, natives had hardly access. But with the independence, numerous "menials" flooded into the institutions and some even came into teaching positions a few years later.[77] One of the first universities to experience this in Asia was the University of the Philippines (UP).[78]

Henceforth, higher education did not need to serve expatriates anymore. Instead, the scientists were free to review developments which happened during colonial times and analyzed the heritage of their peoples for the common good. One of the central questions was to what degree these countries had become independent, if they were fully independent

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[73] Compare with John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 11-16.

[74] Neville Jayaweera: Rethinking Development Communication, Singapore, 1987, p. xiii.

[75] John Lent is communication professor at the Temple University in Philadelphia. Neville Jayaweera was director-general of the Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation in Sri Lanka. Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm were communication theorists. And Lucien Pye was specialized in politics and culture. Daniel Lerner: The Passing of Traditional Society, New York, 1958; Lucien Pye: Politics, Personality and Nation Building, New Haven, 1962; and Wilbur Schramm: Mass communications, Urbana, 1949.

[76] The foundation of the National University of Singapore, for instance, goes back to a proposal by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1823. National University of Singapore: The Beginning, 1905, Milestones, NUS, http://www.nus.edu.sg/corporate/timeline/index.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2004.

[77] Alone in the year 1965, the National University of Singapore conferred 521 degrees and 59 diplomas. Government Printing Office: Singapore Yearbook 1965, Singapore, 1966, p. 229.

[78] Thanks to a grant of 13 million Philippine pesos, the conditions improved rapidly. University of the Philippines: Honor and Excellence, UP Diliman Through the Years, http://www.upd.edu.ph/hist.htm, Diliman, date of publication unknown, accessed 2004.

or just nominally. In one form or another, this question was raised in every field of science. While architects studied the influence of European housing, historians noted the importance of the ancient trading routes. It was just a matter of time until someone started researching the colonial influence in the field of culture and communication, finding that newly independent countries still rely on the infrastructure and materials left behind or even still provided by the former colonists. In other words: "The debate has emerged as a consequence of the achievement of independence by scores of countries after centuries of colonial rule."[79]

But it is also possible that the issue was first raised somewhere in the United States or Western Europe. At that time, culture as well as communication studies was still part of other fields, such as fine arts, engineering or business administration, depending on the artifact.[80] One of the first having an Institute of Communication Research was the University of Illinois in Urbana, where Wilbur Schramm taught. And one of the first remarkable studies was conducted by the International Press Institute in Zurich in 1953; it focused on news flows in the United States, Western Europe and India.[81]

The author of this text, however, tends to believe Fernand Terrou, who argues that one of the pioneers was the French journalist and politician Jacque Kayser (1900-1962), although just a few of his early essays have been found.[82] Already in the late 1920s, Jacque Kayser was a well-known specialist of international problems and participated in the establishment of the League of Nations. Soon after World War II, he became one of the promoters of communication research in France. He participated at the "International Conference on the Freedom of Information" in 1948 in Geneva and since then regularly participated in United Nations and UNESCO activities regarding mass communication, serving either as a delegate of France or as an international expert. Also, he managed the Institute Français de Presse until 1963.[83]

The conditions at the universities in the newly independent countries, the introduction of communication studies at the universities in the "West" and the biography of Jacque Kayser show at what an early stage the issue was politicized. Originally, the discussions must have started among academics within the universities but they soon reached lawmakers. One

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[79] Andrew Szende is one of the few who researched intensively about news flows in Southeast Asia. Andrew Szende: From Torrent to Trickle, Managing the Flow of News in Southeast Asia, Singapore, 1986, p. 5.
[80] Communication began to emerge as a distinct academic field in the mid of the 20th century. Marshall McLuhan was one of the early pioneers.
[81] International Press Institute: The Flow of the News, A Study by the International Press Institute, In Cooperation with Editors, Agency Executives and Foreign Correspondents in Ten Countries, Zurich, 1953.
[82] Jacques Kayser contributed articles to publications such as the Republique, Ouvre and Le Monde.
[83] Fernand Terrou: In Remembrance of Jacques Kayser, published in *I.A.M.C.R. Bulletin*, number 1, Amsterdam, 1963, p. I-III.

might even argue that it had never been an issue among academics alone, but was also debated among politicians from the beginning due to its controversial nature.

However, the first conferences of note were organized by the Philippine Press Institute. So it is no surprise that Crispin Maslog remembers that he was in the Philippines when the discussion came up.[84] Already in the early 1960s, the institute held two series of conferences on the development of media and sparked interest in many of the issues. Over the years, its director Juan Mercado organized several seminars. In June 1965, for instance, experts discussed the correlation of the press and economic development in a workshop. From 1968 until 1971 alone, the Philippine Press Institute held 38 conferences, workshops and symposia.

Around the same time, UNESCO began to discuss the "disequilibria" in the flows of news in a series of meetings. At the 1968 "Symposium on the Information Media and International Understanding" in Ljubljana, for example, cultural imperialism was a topic of discussion. Also, the 1969 "Meeting of Experts on the Information Media and Sociology" in Montreal dealt with these issues. All of these conferences were covered by a number of magazines, particularly the *Journal of Communication* and the *Gazette Journal for Mass Communication Studies*. Both were established in the 1950s, extended in the 1960s and read primarily by academics and media professionals in a number of countries.[85]

John Lent argues that the discussions can be traced back to the "Bandung Conference" of 1955, which was attended by representatives from 29 newly independent African and Asian countries. These countries later formed the so-called "Non Aligned Alliance" opposing the neo-colonialism of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), of the United States of America (USA) and of any other "imperialistic nation." In its "Final Communiqué", its members demanded that the economic dependence of developing countries on industrialized countries should be lifted by providing technical assistance and that regional training centers and research institutions should be established.[86]

Following this line of thought, Robert Savio argues that the discussions could be traced back to the "New World Economic Order" or even to its forerunner, the "Bretton Woods System".[87] In July 1944 in the New Hampshire resort town of Bretton Woods, 730 delegates from 44

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[84] Crispin Maslog is professor at the Nanyang Technological University.
[85] The *Journal of Communication* was established in 1950 and the *Gazette* was established in 1955.
[86] UNESCO: G77, Historical Background, http://www.Unesco.org/delegates/g77/history/historical-background.html, Paris, date of publication unknown, accessed 2004.
[87] Robert Savio: Why the World Needs a New Information Order, published in *Media Asia*, volume, number 3, Singapore, 1980, p. 145-149.

countries discussed the situation of the world economy. The common view was that the fascism in the 1930s had been largely caused by the collapse of the international trade. Therefore, John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946), who led the British delegation, recommended the establishment of a world reserve currency administered by a central bank, which would recycle trade surpluses to finance deficits in order to create a "more stable and fair system".[88] But the delegates opted for a system based on the free movement of capital and goods, with the US dollar as the key currency.[89] European economies in particular benefited from this system; they soon did much better than developing economies. This is the reason why several newly independent countries started demanding a better deal in the 1960s. By rallying together in organizations such as the "Group 77", they asked for fairer terms of trade and exchange, a "New World Economic Order".[90]

Tapio Varis even refers the discussions back to the Russian Revolution and the "Anti-Imperialist League" in the 1920s.[91] However, there is no doubt that the imbalances of news flows became an increasingly popular topic of discussion. In fact, "no [other] mass media topic has generated as much international concern as the recent controversy that goes by the various names of the UNESCO debate, New International Information Order, New World Information Order, free flow of news or cultural imperialism/aggression arguments."[92]

3.1.1 The discussions in the 1970s and 1980s

In the early 1970s, the number of people and institutions involved in the discussions increased rapidly. The East West Communication Institute (EWCI) in Honolulu and the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Center in Singapore which was later renamed in Asian Media Communication and Information Center (AMIC) became two of the

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[88] John Maynard Keynes was a British economist. John Keynes: The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, New York, 1936/1960; and New School of Social Research: John Maynard Keynes, 1883-1946, http://cepa.newschool.edu/het/profiles/keynes.htm, New York, date of publication unknown, accessed 2004.
[89] As a result, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (later divided into the World Bank and the Bank for International Settlements) and the International Monetary Fund was established in 1946. One of the central tasks was to provide capital to the war-ravaged European economies. World Trade Organization: What is WTO?, http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/whatis_e.htm, place and date of publication unknown, accessed 2004; and International Monetary Fund: About the International Monetary Fund, http://www.imf.org/external/about.htm, place and date of publication unknown, accessed 2004.
[90] Not mentioned in the text is the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which covers international trade in goods. For further information see World Trade Organization: GATT and the Goods Council, http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gatt_e/gatt_e.htm, place and date of publication unknown, accessed 2004.
[91] Tapio Varis: International News and the New Information Order, Tampere, 1977, p. 2.
[92] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 1.

leading institutions.[93] The EWCI issued several monographs, including one regarding communication in China (1976) and one on the right to communicate (1977). And AMIC founded the quarterly *Media Asia* journal, in which several articles about news flows appeared. A third institution contributing materials was the Asia Research Service in Hong Kong.[94]

Meanwhile, further conferences were held. Some of these include, in chronological order, meetings on "Developmental Communication Resource Materials" (1970), "Role of Government Information in National Development" (1971), "Communication Policies and Planning" (1972), "Communication and Change in Rural Asia" (1973) and "Cultural Identity and Film in the European Community" (1974). Some of the organizers were, in alphabetical order, the American Newspaper Publishers Association (San Francisco, USA), the International Association of Mass Communication Research (Leipzig, Germany), the International Institute of Communications (Washington D.C., USA), the International Press Institute (Oslo, Norway) and the Radio Broadcasting Union of the Arab States (Cairo, Egypt).

It is somehow understandable that John Lent expressed in 1982 his disappointment about this development: "Perhaps too many of the same people, representing the same philosophies, are spending too much time and resources on far too many conferences." Instead, he argued, more historical and empirical research should be conducted.[95]

Two academics following his advice were Rolf Scheller (1983) and Andrew Szende (1986). They analyzed the flows of news in Southeast Asia by counting articles in newspapers and by interviewing selected experts respectively. They came to the conclusion that there are several imbalances in the flows of news.[96]

Andrew Szende argues that "the free flow of news has not been stopped completely" but "progress has been limited" so that the "regional flow of news still depends largely on the West, because "it is impossible for the national news agencies to compete with the international sources".[97]

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[93] The East West Communication Institute was established in 1960 by the U.S. Congress at the East West Center. And the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Center was established in 1971 by the Government of Singapore and the German Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation on the campus of the Nanyang Technological University. For further information see http://www.eastwestcenter.org/ and http://www.amic.org.sg/.

[94] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 40-93.

[95] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 18.

[96] A few years earlier, Al Hester had undertaken one of the first content analysis to document the flows of news. Al Hester: The Western News Agencies, Problems and Opportunities, Mexico, 1976; Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983; and Andrew Szende: From Torrent to Trickle, Managing the Flow of News in Southeast Asia, Singapore, 1986, p. 96.

[97] Andrew Szende: From Torrent To Trickle, Managing the Flow of News in Southeast, Singapore, 1986, p. 96.

His detailed analysis, which is an important source for this dissertation, concludes that the largest newspaper in Singapore, the *Straits Times*, in many cases did not mention any source at all and relied (in March 1983) largely on news provided by the Agence France-Presse.

(4) Sources of stories published on 28-30 March 1983 in four ASEAN newspapers[98]				
Source	Straits Times	New Straits Times	Indonesia Observer	Bangkok Post
AFP	13	0	6	2
Antara	0	1	0	0
AP	5	2	3	2
Bernama	0	8	8	0
Reuters	6	4	3	10
UPI	1	4	0	1
Others or unclear	35	10	0	1
Total	60	29	21	16

(5) Sources of stories published on 24-25 June 1983 in four ASEAN newspapers				
Source	Straits Times	New Straits Times	Indonesia Observer	Bangkok Post
AFP	2	0	4	0
Antara	0	2	0	0
AP	0	3	0	2
Bernama	5	4	1	0
Reuters	8	9	3	4
UPI	4	2	0	1
Others or unclear	36	9	0	3
Total	55	29	9	10

Rolf Scheller also states that the "the assessments of the present news and information flow are more critical than satisfying". Less than a third of his respondents expressed satisfaction with the flows of news while two thirds voiced criticism over the imbalances.[99]

Surprisingly, Rolf Scheller did not distinguish in his field study between obstacles within and outside the region. However, the results are still helpful. His respondents found the predominance of the Western news agencies to be most disturbing.

(6) Location of obstacles hindering the flows of news			
Obstacles	Flows within the country	Inflows of news	Outflows of news
Internal	x	X	X
External		X	X

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[98] The tables are based on data provided in Andrew Szende: From Torrent To Trickle, Managing the Flow of News in Southeast, Singapore, 1986, p. 59, 60.
[99] Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 99.

(7) The six most relevant obstacles to a balanced flow of news[100]			
Obstacle	Most important	Second most important	Third most important
Predominance of Western news agencies	32	17	9
Technical limitations / lack of mechanism	25	20	11
Domestic political factors / restrictions	19	20	25
Financial factors / lack of resources	10	20	19
Educational / cultural factors	7	4	15
Lack of skills / human resources	6	9	14

As a result of such findings, the number of conferences did not decline but continued to increase. The historically most important of them were those organized by the "Non-Aligned Movement", because the participants were not just debating but setting facts. Already during the 1973 summit in Algiers, the idea of a "Third World News Pool" was born.[101] Two years later, at the meeting in Lima, it was put into a resolution which was discussed during the following two conferences held in Tunis and New Delhi in March and July 1976 respectively.[102] Sooner than anyone had expected, the pool was established.

Also, the delegates of the "Fifth Non-Aligned Conference" in August 1976 in Colombo emphasized the need for a "New International Information Order" and called for the "emancipation and development of national media as an integral part of the overall struggle for political, economical and social independence for a large majority of the peoples of the world who should not be denied the right to inform and to be informed objectively and correctly." Therefore, they created a 14-member coordination committee of press agencies and a 12-member committee to examine tariffs and other barriers.[103]

Sometimes it was even for researchers difficult to follow, because every few weeks a new concept was proposed. Most popular among them were the "free flow"- and "balanced flow"- concepts, but only few people really knew what these meant. However, many felt that anything was better than the status quo. Crispin Maslog, for instance, remembered in the interview with the author of this dissertation that he supported both positions back then.

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[100] The table is based on data provided in Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 81.
[101] The Non-Aligned Movement was an international movement of over 100 countries which considered themselves not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc and represented 55 percent of the world population and nearly two-third of the United Nations assembly.
[102] The pool of news agencies was intended to improve the mutual exchange of information. Therefore, each participating news agency was entitled to transmit and to distribute news items within the framework of the pool.
[103] Guy de Fontgalland: News Pool, Background to the Controversy, p. 140-148, published in *Media Asia*, volume 3, number 3, Singapore, 1976, p. 140-148; and Guy de Fontgalland: The Emergence of a New Order, p. 67-72, published in *Media Asia*, volume 3, number 2, Singapore, 1976, p. 67-72.

3.1.2 The role of UNESCO in the discussions

The most important location, financer, organizer and player in the debate about the flows of news became the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which had been constituted by representatives of 37 countries on 16 November 1945 in London.[104] Although UNESCO encouraged research, cooperation and exchange in the field of communication from the very beginning, there was relatively little activity at its headquarters located in the war-ravaged Parisian business district during the term of the Italian former anti-fascist lawyer Vittorino Veronese (1910-1986). That changed as soon as he resigned due to health reasons in 1961.[105]

René Maheu (1905-1975) was then appointed director-general.[106] Earlier, the professor of philosophy had held a managerial post in the France-Afrique Press Agency in Algiers and was chief of the newly established UNESCO "Division of the Free Flow of Information". This might explain why, soon after his inauguration, the UNESCO "Department of Mass Communication" was expanded and its budget increased to four million US dollars in 1963 and 1964.[107]

At the next general conference, the delegates called on all governments to act in favor of UNESCO's mass communication development program in a unanimous vote.[108] This was a historic moment, because in doing so, they initiated a doctrine that information media plays a decisive role and should therefore be developed on all levels.[109]

On this basis, UNESCO carried out - apart from numerous conferences - several comprehensive studies on media problems in developing countries.[110] Among other things, it was found that 70 percent of the world population or 2 billion people lack adequate press,

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[104] UNESCO: Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, As Adopted in London in 1945, Paris, 2002, p. 7-22, 128, 143, 150.
[105] Colin Legum: A Free and Balanced Flow, Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the International Flow of News, Lexington, 1987, p. 26; and UNESCO: About UNESCO, Vittorino Veronese, http://portal.Unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3384&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, Paris, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[106] UNESCO: About UNESCO, René Maheu, http://portal.Unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3386&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, Paris, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[107] The objective of the department was to stimulate the use of media and to promote exchange in news.
[108] Already in 1963, UNESCO had organized conferences on the flow of information. At the "Meeting of Experts on the Development of News Agencies in Africa", it was discussed how to increase the flow of news in this particular area. Similar issues were topic of discussion at the 1968 "Symposium on the Information Media and International Understanding" and at the 1969 "Meeting of Experts on the Information Media and Sociology". UNESCO: Records of the General Conference, 12th Session, Paris, 1963, p. 60.
[109] Fernand Terrou: In Remembrance of Jacques Kayser, published in *I.A.M.C.R. Bulletin*, number 1, Amsterdam, 1963, p. II.
[110] A remarkable UNESCO study was carried out by Tapio Varis: International News and the New Information Order, Tampere, 1977.

radio, television and film facilities. These results were later confirmed through a number of further analyses. They all showed that there are tremendous distinctions in the availability of media and access to news, particularly between the "First" and the "Third World". In the early 1980s, scientists were even able to prove that there are gaps within regions. In Singapore, for instance, there were around four times more newspapers, radio and television sets available than in Malaysia.

(8) Distribution of mass media per 1 000 people in the "First" and "Third World"[111]		
Medium	"First World"	"Third World"
Newspapers	328.0	19.2
Radio receivers	741.0	56.0
Television sets	338.0	5.4

(9) Distribution of mass media per 1 000 people in Southeast Asia					
Medium	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Newspapers	n.a.	87.0	18.0	201.0	24.0
Radio receivers	37.0	38.0	44.0	158.0	131.0
Television sets	2.0	33.0	17.0	120.0	17.0

These findings heated up the ensuing discussions. Consequently, at the 16th and 17th general conferences in 1970 and 1972, the delegates demanded that news circulate in both directions between the "First World" and "Third World". To further this aim, a so-called "Communication Council" should be formed in each country. UNESCO's designated role was to act as a platform and coordinator "free of political or commercial taint".[112]

In this period, Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow (1921-) was appointed as the new director-general. Before his assignment, he had served as Minister for Education and Culture in Senegal during the country's transitional period of internal autonomy (1957-1958) and resigned in order to participate in the struggle for independence. When this was achieved, he returned to politics and became Minister for Education (1966-1968) and Minister for Cultural and Youth Affairs (1968-1970).[113]

From the first day in office at UNESCO, he shared the general opinion of that time that "more can be done than we are usually disposed to think, and should be done. […] We have to do

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[111] "Third World" countries are defined as having a GNP per capita of less than 400 US dollars per annum. Both tables are based on data provided in Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 5, 42.
[112] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 5.
[113] UNESCO: About UNESCO, Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, http://portal.Unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3386&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, Paris, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

more, because not to do so is lazy and selfish to an inexcusable degree", as his assistant Richard Hoggart summarized it.[114]

In this spirit, UNESCO sponsored a meeting of experts on communication in 1974 in Bogota and another meeting of experts on news media in 1975 in Quito. On both occasions, participants demanded an end to the disequilibria they saw in the flows of news. Therefore, "protection laws" should be passed which would empower exclusively national agencies to disseminate news from outside the region. In addition, a "Third World News Pool" should be established.

Consequently, some experts elaborated concepts for the establishment of regional news exchange systems and prepared a "Draft Declaration on Fundamental Principles Governing the Use of Mass Media in Strengthening Peace and International Understanding and in Combating War Propaganda, Racism and Apartheid".[115] This paper was one of the most controversial because article 12 states that individual countries are responsible for the activities of all mass media under their jurisdiction regarding the international sphere.[116]

None of these ideas were new. Even the idea of a "Third World News Pool" had already been outlined (Non-Aligned Movement: Algiers 1973, Lima 1975). One might argue that the debate had reached full circle with the Non-Aligned Movement (1961), the "Bandung Conference" (1955), the "Bretton Woods Conference" (1944), the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Center (1971), the East West Communication Institute (1960), the Press Foundation of Asia (1968), the Philippine Press Institute (1964), the *Gazette* (1955) and the *Journal of Communication* (1950).[117]

However, the more conferences were held and papers were presented, the more the positions differed. In order to achieve at least some basic agreements, the UNESCO organization suggested to the participants of the 19th General Assembly held in 1976 in Nairobi the assignment of the "International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems". The Irish journalist, lawyer, politician and diplomat Seán MacBride was appointed

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[114] After Colin Legum: A Free and Balanced Flow, Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the International Flow of News, Lexington, 1987, p. 18.
[115] UNESCO: Draft Declaration on Fundamental Principles Governing the Use of Mass Media in Strengthening Peace and International Understanding and in Combating War Propaganda, Racism and Apartheid, Paris, 1977, p. 1.-38.
[116] UNESCO: Historical Background of the Mass Media Declaration, Paris, 1982, p. 1 et sqq.
[117] Compare with the previous pages.

its president.[118] Its mission was to advise UNESCO on drafting a long-term mass media program. Therefore, Seán MacBride analyzed together with 15 experts the totality of communication problems in contemporary societies.[119]

(10) Milestones in the history of UNESCO[120]	
1945	Establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
1948	The organization recommends making free primary education compulsory
1956	South Africa withdraws from UNESCO due to "interference" in the country's "racial problems"
1958	Inauguration of the permanent headquarters in Paris
1962	René Maheu becomes director-general
1968	Launch of several programs for sustainable development in communication and other areas
1972	A convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage is adopted
1974	Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow is appointed director-general
1975	The World Heritage Committee is established
1976	Founding of the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems
1980	The MacBride-report is published
1982	A declaration on cultural policies is adopted
1985	The USA withdraws citing disagreement over management and communication issues
1986	UK and Singapore withdraw from the organization
1997	The UK returns to UNESCO
2001	A declaration on cultural diversity is adopted
2003	The USA returns
2005	Singapore sends observers to the general conference

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[118] Seán MacBride was born on 26 January 1904 as an Irish exile in Paris. He joined a paramilitary organization fighting in the Anglo-Irish War and became chief of staff of the Irish Republican Army which advocates a united Irish state independent from the United Kingdom. In addition, he worked as an advocate. In 1946, he founded the republican "Clann na Poblachta" party which appealed to disillusioned young urban voters who had lost hope in achieving their goals through violence. Seán MacBride became Minister of External Affairs. During his term in office, Ireland refused to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization because it would have meant that the republic recognizes British-controlled Northern Ireland. Instead, he offered bilateral talks to the United States, applied for Ireland's membership in the Council of Europe, of which he soon became president, and in the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, of which he became vice-president. He co-founded Amnesty International and became the first chairman of the non-governmental organization. In 1972, Seán MacBride was elected by the general assembly of the United Nations to the post of United Nations Commissioner for Namibia. Four years later, he was appointed chairman of the UNESCO International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems. Anthony Jordan: Seán MacBride, A Biography, Dublin, 1993; Nobel Prize Foundation: Seán MacBride, Curriculum Vitae, http://nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/1974/macbride-cv.html, Stockholm, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; Irelandseye: Maud Gonne MacBride, http://www.irelandseye.com/aarticles/history/people/whoswho/m_gonne.shtm, Dublin, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; Biographybase: Seán MacBride Biography, http://www.biographybase.com/biography/MacBride_Sean.html, place and date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; BookRags: Seán MacBride Biography, Hamden, 2002, p. 5.; Amnesty International: AI's First Forty Years, 1961-1969, http://web.amnesty.org/pages/aboutai-timeline-1960s-eng, London, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; and UNESCO: Records of the General Conference, Nineteenth Session, Paris, 1977, p. 54 et sqq.
[119] Among the experts were the "grand old man of French journalism" Hubert Beuve-Méry, Itar-Tass-director Sergei Losev, Columbia's most famous author Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Mustapha Masmoudi, at the time director of the Tunisian news ageny TAP and the Indian journalist Boobli Goerge Verghese. Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. I., and other sources.
[120] The table is based on information provided in UNESCO: Key Milestones from 60 Years of Existence, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=14606&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, Paris, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

3.2 Main parts of the report

In 1980, after four sessions at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris and four further sessions in Sweden, Yugoslavia, India and Mexico, the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems published its final report "Many Voices, One World". It is titled "Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow" and has as its subtitle "Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order".[121] Basically, the title already says what the book is about. It is a study of the totality of communication problems in contemporary societies.[122]

The report consists of five parts, each of which is divided into two to six chapters with three to eight subchapters. This seems very structured but actually it is just a composition of fragments; articles by experts combined with statistics by institutions and amended with short conclusions. The terms used are interpreted differently and in some cases they are not defined at all. That makes it difficult to review the report.[123]

In the first part, headed with "Communication and Society", a relatively broad overview of the historical, contemporary and international dimensions of communication problems is provided. Among other things, the authors argue that communication is the motor and expression of social activity and civilization. Starting with the simplest vocal and gestural signals rooting in the physical structure and continued in writing, "man's second major achievement" which gave permanence to the spoken word, communication would not only maintain but also animate life.[124]

To illustrate this: In the beginning, the human voice reached only those within its range, and the written message traveled no faster than a runner, horse, bird or sailing ship. But with the invention of printing presses, which allow the reproduction of messages at high speed and in great number, "the modern age of communication" began.[125]

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[121] In order to collect materials und get familiar with the positions, the commission organized several conferences such as the "International Seminar on the Infrastructure of News Collection and Dissemination" held in Stockholm in 1978. It was attended by around 100 representatives of news agencies, broadcasting organizations and research institutions.

[122] In the preface, Seán MacBride wrote "modern" societies, but "contemporary" is probably the better term to describe the content of the report. Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. XVII.

[123] Therefore, only the most important chapters are reviewed.

[124] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 4, 3.

[125] Techniques for reproduction were available before the invention of printing presses but it has had such overwhelming impact that the authors chose to take it as the beginning of the "modern age of communication". Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 6, 7.

Further milestones mentioned are the invention of telegraphy by Charles Wheatstone (1802-1875) and Samuel Morse (1791-1872) around 1840, the invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) in the late 1870s and the first transmission of a human voice by radio by Reginald Fessenden (1866-1932) in the early 20th century. But the inventions alone did not change anything by themselves. It was the people who seized the opportunities and who recognized the (social, political, economical, cultural or spiritual) needs which were the deciding factors.[126]

To the authors of the report, communication means the exchange of messages as an individual or collective activity for sharing ideas, facts and opinions. Its main functions are identified as being information (collection, storage and dissemination of data), socialization (allows people to act as a member of society), motivation (promotion and stimulation), debate and discussion (exchange of information and opinions), education (transmission of knowledge), cultural promotion (dissemination of cultural activities), entertainment (diffusion of the arts for recreation and enjoyment) and integration (possibility to access, understand and share messages). Communication is not seen as an isolated phenomenon, it is considered to be an agent. [127]

But this definition differs from the definitions provided in other parts of the report. In chapter four, for instance, the focus of the definition of communication is on its effects. There, the authors argue that communication immediately affects the psychological and social framework of people, making communication and the industry surrounding it different from all other phenomena.

In this sense, information and entertainment are not considered to be commodities but rather "merit goods" which are so valuable to society that its supply should not be governed entirely by market forces. Similarly, imbalances should not only be seen under quantitative but also under qualitative aspects.[128]

Interestingly, the authors speak about imbalances (and inequalities) as a matter of fact. At no point do they question whether they actually exist. Instead, they even argue that flaws have always existed, particularly between minorities controlling the communication and majorities

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[126] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 10, 11.
[127] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, 13, 14, 16.
[128] Compare with Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 111.

exposed to the impacts.[129] From their point of view, the "freedom of thought" and the "freedom of expression" have "always been contested". Three of the examples mentioned in the report are Socrates who paid with his life for "corrupting the young", the French Revolution and the struggles for independence in former colonial territories.[130]

However, the authors clearly state that despite any ideological differences, there is no alternative but to establish a new order. Therefore, the different means of communication and their impact are elaborated in the second and much longer part of the report, entitled "Communication Today".

Here, the role of language, both spoken and written, is analyzed.[131] The authors predict that national languages will become more important, but do not answer whether they support the adoption of one or more "world languages". Instead, they emphasize the need to fight against illiteracy, because the total number of illiterate people is continuing to increase, although in terms of percentage, it is declining due to the gradual expansion of access to education.[132]

In more or less the same manner, the developments of postal and telephone services are described. Due to the fast growth of the populations, the total number of people never having sent a letter or made a phone call had grown alarmingly in spite of an ever-expanding infrastructure. Particularly the "slow developments in poorer countries" appeared to the authors as "a real obstacle", because such services are not only considered to be the result of economic growth, but also as a condition for overall progress.

The authors devote a lot of space to the development of mass media, because "no other medium has the potential to reach so many people so efficiently" to disseminate information for educational, cultural and entertainment purposes. Fortunately, there has been much progress. Within just one decade, the number of people untouched by mass media rapidly declined: From 1950 to 1975, the total daily circulation of newspapers increased by 77 percent to more than 400 million copies. By the time of the publication of the report, the

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[129] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p 13.

[130] "In every age, man has fought to be free from dominating powers – political, economic, social, religious- that tried to curtail communication." Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p 172.

[131] At the time of the publication of the report, there were around 3 500 languages spoken of which 500 were also written. It was estimated that following 16 languages are spoken by more than 50 million people each: the family of Chinese languages, English, Russian, Spanish, Hindi, Portuguese, Bengali, German, Japanese, Arabic, Urdu, French, Malay-Bahasa, Italian, Teluga and Tamil.

[132] At the time of the publication of the report, there were more than 800 million people (above the age of 16) illiterate. Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 49, 50 and 51-53; and Clyde Sanger: Closing the Education Gap, p. 23-24, published in *Media Asia*, volume 4, number 1, Singapore, 1977, p. 23-24.

number of dailies stood at around 8 000. During the same period, radio transmission capacity more than tripled. In 1950, some 50 countries had no broadcasting facilities. Around 1960, the number had shrunk to 12, and in 1973, only three were left, while the number of radio receivers grew by 417 percent, so that there were approximately one billion receivers in the world – statistically one for every four persons.[133]

Though television was introduced much later, it expanded even faster. In 1950, only five countries had a regular television service. This figure increased fourfold by 1960 and just one decade later, more than 100 countries had a regular television service, and the number of televisions skyrocketed by 3 235 percent and reached the 400 million mark. This expansion has been accompanied by the installation of around 2 100 satellites since the launch of Sputnik in 1967.[134]

But the authors also stress the numerous remaining imbalances: In quite a few countries, more than nine-tenths of the daily press is only sold in cities. Field surveys in five countries (Costa Rica, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Tanzania) show that technical information in particular is seldom disseminated to villagers in a timely and appropriate manner. Other analyses yielded similar results: 440 of the 991 newspapers in Brazil, for instance, were published in only two out of 22 areas (Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo).

Such disparities between regions alarmed the authors. The developing world (Asia, Africa and Latin America) is home to three-quarters of the world population but only half the number of all newspapers and only a quarter of the total circulation. By the time the report was published, circulation averaged at one copy for every three people in North America, for every 15 in Asia and for every 90 in Africa. Eight African countries and three Arab states had no daily newspaper at all.[135]

Computers are more or less neglected in the report. Although the authors recognized that computers have become capable of performing more than one billion operations per second - a million times more than the pioneer model from 1944 - and that the costs of processing

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[133] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 53-55 and 57-62.

[134] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p 62, 63.

[135] Around 66 percent of the press circulation in Asia, 46 percent of all radio receivers and 63 percent of all television sets in Asia are available in Japan, although it has just five percent of Asia's population. Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 123-133.

storage units have fallen by 180 times over 25 years, they devote less than three pages to this important issue and therefore severely underestimate its increasing importance.[136]

However, the authors draw a number of conclusions from their findings. One is that all these changes represent an irreversible trend in the development of communication. Another is that there is interdependence, not competition, between different media and this trend continues to be true for the latest innovations.[137]

Furthermore, the authors remind of the problem of "one-way flows" and the specific danger of media concentration. From their point of view, concentration in ownership is not just a temporary trend but a "worrying phenomenon". Instead, they favor plurality and recommend adopting appropriate models in order to better the news flows.

3.2.1   Recommendations of the commission

Parts III and V of the MacBride report are the most relevant to this dissertation. Both discuss the imbalances in communication in general and in news flows in particular. Part III is entitled "Problems and Issues of Common Concern" and describes the flaws and imbalances, "the core of the debate on problems of communication". In Part V, entitled "Communication Tomorrow", recommendations for a "more just and more efficient information order" are provided.

A central theme in both parts is that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression", as guaranteed in the "Declaration of Human Rights": "This right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."[138]

According to the report, these rights are seldom applicable, because the number of obstacles is almost infinite. They are classified as being either "evident" or "non-evident". Some of the examples given are intimidation, repressive legislation, censorship, blacklisting of journalists,

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[136] Personal computers, later known as PCs, were not introduced yet. The authors expected that the trends in computer development would continue "at least into the early 1980s", but were doubtful in long-term. Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p 64-66.

[137] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p 66, 67.

[138] United Nations: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, As Adopted and Proclaimed by the General Assembly Resolution 217 A (III) on 10 December 1948, http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html, New York, date of publication unknown, accessed 2004.

banning of books, monopolies established by political action, bureaucratic or judicial obstructions, parliamentary privileges and restrictive professional practices.[139]

But even the absence of these obstacles would not necessarily mean that freedom of the press exists. Other obstacles include economic and social constraints and pressures, de facto monopolies, inadequate infrastructures, narrow definitions of what is news, what should be published or what may be debated. Also, entrenched cultural attitudes and taboos and the unquestioned reverence for authority can play a role in limiting the citizens' right to be informed and "should be eliminated".[140]

According to the report, the most widespread practice is censorship, although it is often limited to certain subjects such as the protection of the young, pornography, violence, or religious matters. Censorship is mostly based on legislation. It can occur in numerous ways, two of them being "prior censorship", where material is submitted to a censor for approval before the reproduction, and "post-publishing, pre-distribution censorship" or "post-distribution censorship" where materials are banned, confiscated or restricted.[141]

As far as the flows of news are concerned, however, the authors generally differentiate between "one way" and "two way" flows. The latter one is very uncommon because news flows generally tend to travel from bigger to smaller countries, from those with power and technological means to the less advanced ones, from the developed world to the developing world, and, on the national level, from the center of power centers to the rural areas.

According to the report, these imbalances occur for historical, cultural and linguistic reasons. The authors do not hesitate to establish direct links between former colonial powers and their one-time possessions which would result in selection, both through editorial decision as well as in the interest level among the recipients.

To illustrate this: Zimbabwe, for instance, is a major topic in the British press, while the French press devotes far more space to the Central African Republic. The converse is also true: the Indian reader tends to be much better informed about developments in Britain than in France or Germany. Even within Europe such phenomena can be observed because the news agencies and media in more powerful countries generally dominate the industry.

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[139] Not mentioned here are invidious obstructions such as physical violence including harassment, torture, kidnapping and murder.
[140] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 138.
[141] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 139.

News flows between the East and the West were out of the ordinary. During the Cold War, there was relatively little exchange between the capitalist and socialist world. But the situation within the South is much worse. The authors would not even call it an exchange because it practically did not exist.

Another way used to describe the imbalances is the so-called "vertical model". Ideally, communication is a continual exchange between equals or at least reciprocally responsive partners. In practice, this ideal was never entirely realized, probably because flows usually tend to travel in one direction: from the top downwards.

For the authors, this inevitably has effects on the type of work professionals carry out. Their duties are to "translate" information into simple terms and to gain and hold the people's attention as much as possible. This tends to eclipse more important objectives and in the process, ordinary issues and ordinary people become more or less excluded.[142]

However, the authors admit that all these problems are intertwined and that the solution of one often depends on the solution of others. Since it is not a matter of time-lag, it would be wrong to expect that developing countries could catch up. In fact, the disparities and imbalances are becoming greater and more serious, which is the main reason for recommending the establishment of a "new and more just information order".

In total, 82 recommendations are provided in the fifth part of the report, entitled "Communication Tomorrow". Due to contrary opinions of the members of the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, some of the recommendations are contradictory.[143] Nevertheless, the recommendations clearly indicate movement in a certain direction, which is why the report is still useful.

First of all, communication should no longer be regarded as merely an incidental service and its development should not be left to chance. Instead, communication should be integrated into overall development strategies.[144]

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[142] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 145-151.

[143] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 175, 183, 272.

[144] "Communication can be an instrument of power, a revolutionary weapon, a commercial product, or a means of education; it can serve the ends of either liberation or of oppression, of either the growth of the individual personality or of drilling human beings into uniformity". Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 252.

To further this aim, basic services should be continually expanded. Elementary education should be made available to all and illiteracy wiped out by supplementing schools with appropriate non-formal structures. Also, the postal service and telecommunication networks should be expanded or introduced where they are not yet available.[145]

On the local level, it would also be helpful to establish community presses and to encourage the production and distribution of local publications. Audio tapes, (low-cost) radio, (small-format) television and video systems can help make this possible. This requires production capacity for these materials in each of the areas to be developed, so that local publishers must not rely on external sources.

Appropriate training in primary and secondary schools or in reading, listening and viewing groups can help alleviate difficulties in perusing the media. Local community resource centers should be set up if financial means allow it. These could also be helpful in the establishment of (national) libraries and archives for the benefit of the general public.[146]

On the regional and national levels, infrastructure of the mass media should be strengthened. To achieve this, strong national news agencies and viable, regional networks should be set up in order to increase the exchange of news in all major language groups.[147] In addition, research institutions and facilities for training media professionals should be established.

A difficult question is whether national languages should be promoted. Generally, the commission recommends it, particularly in developing and multicultural societies, even if it is necessary to favor some at the expense of others. Meanwhile, the importance of cultural diversity is emphasized. Therefore, cultural identities of people should be strengthened by promoting conditions for the preservation of cultures.

However, since everyone has the right to communicate, which includes the right to be informed (to seek and receive information and ideas through any media regardless of national frontiers) and to inform (to hold and impart opinions without any interference), the independence of the "gatekeepers" in particular should be safeguarded.

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[145] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 254, 255.
[146] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 256, 257.
[147] Strong national news agencies are vital for improving a country's national and international reporting. Compare with AMIC: A New World Information Order, Cooperation is the Key Word, p. 102-111, published in *Media Asia*, volume 6, number 2, Singapore, 1979, p. 102-111.

Though the commission does not propose special privileges to protect journalists in the performance of their duties, it states clearly that freedom of speech, press, information and assembly are vital to upholding human rights, seen as one of the main tasks of the media and journalists.[148]

For the commission, freedom and responsibility are indivisible because freedom without responsibility would invite distortion and other abuses. But in the absence of freedom, there can be no real responsibility. So this concept airs a general concern for the role of journalists in society and their needs.[149]

Following this line of thought, distinctions should be made between media institutions, owners and managers on the one hand and journalists on the other. In addition, effective measures should be designed to limit the process of concentration and monopolization in order to reverse the trend towards reducing the number of "gatekeepers" at a time when the number of recipients is growing and the impact of news is increasing.

Last but not least, industrialized countries in general and transnational media companies in particular are addressed. They should all become more aware and familiar with the cultures and situations in developing countries.[150] Although the present imbalances in news flows can only be solved by improving conditions in the developing world, people in the industrialized world should make contributions for correcting these imbalances.

To sum it up, the commission recommends that developing countries restructure and strengthen their media and that industrialized countries support these efforts with knowledge, financial and technical means.

(11) Selection of recommendations for developing countries	
General	Adoption of a new understanding of communication
	Strengthening the cultural identities of the people
	Guaranteeing the right to get informed and to inform
	Abolishment of censorship and any other form of information control
	Measures against concentration in ownership and monopolization
Local level	Expansion of the primary and secondary schooling system

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[148] Any "censorship or arbitrary control of information should be abolished" because "free access to news sources by journalists is an indispensable requirement for accurate, faithful and balanced reporting". Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 263, 266.

[149] Another question is how to deal with the negative effects of inaccurate or malicious news. Generally, there should be a right of reply but the publication of corrections should be voluntarily. Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 263, 264.

[150] The media in the industrialized world should generally spend more space and airtime for reporting about events in developing countries.

	Introduction of reading, listening and viewing groups
	Establishment of community resource centers
Regional level	Expansion of the postal service
	Expansion of the telecommunication network
	Establishment of training institutions for professionals
National level	Introduction of a national language
	Establishment of national archives and research institutions
	Establishment of a strong national news agency
Intern. level	Cooperation with neighboring countries
	Exchange of news in international networks
	Financial and technological assistance by industrialized countries

3.3 Perceptions of the report

Although the circulation of the first edition of the report *Many Voices, One World* was relatively low at 7 000 copies, it sparked interest in every corner of the world. The reason is that it was distributed free of charge to the participants of the 1980 UNESCO General Conference in Belgrade and therefore was read by academics and politicians from more than 150 countries.[151] As a result, it was reviewed in numerous magazines. A large number was published in *Media Asia*.

The arguments for and against the report are numerous and largely depend on the standpoint and perspective of the writer. Inger Oestedahl, who analyzed the impact from a judicial point of view, shows that (as in other post world war debates) three principal parties have formed: the "Capitalist Bloc" (West) led by the United States, the former "Socialist Bloc" (East) led by Soviet Union or Russia, and the "Third World" (South) which was mainly represented by supporters of the "Non-Aligned Movement".[152]

(12) Highlights of the Cold War	
1944	During the "Yalta Conference", Franklin Roosevelt meets Joseph Stalin and Winston Churchill
1945	Harry Truman, Joseph Stalin and Winston Churchill meet at the "Potsdam Conference"
1947	According to the "Truman Doctrine", the USA supports "peoples resisting attempted subjugation"
1947	The "Marshall Plan" for rebuilding Europe is passed but excluding East European countries
1948	The USA reacts to the Soviet "Berlin Blockade" with an airlift
1949	The NATO declares any attack against one of its members as an attack against all
1950	During the Korean War more than one million people lose their lives without any political result
1955	To counter the perceived threat from the NATO, the Warsaw Pact is established
1955	The USA becomes involved in the Vietnam War at which end its troops pull out of the country
1956	British troops control the Suez Canal
1956	The Hungarian Uprising is suppressed by Soviet troops
1957	The Soviet Union launches a Sputnik satellite and therewith demonstrates its strength
1961	The USA invades the "Bay of Pigs" in Cuba
1961	East Germany constructs the Berlin Wall

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[151] The 21st general conference of UNESCO was held from 23 September until 28 October 1980 in Belgrade.
[152] Inger Oesterdahl: Freedom of Information in Question, Freedom of Information in International Law and the Calls for a New World Information and Communication Order, Uppsala, 1992, p. 130 et sqq.

1962	John F. Kennedy blocks the installation of nuclear missiles by the Soviet Union on Cuba
1967	Diplomatic controversies end the cooperation between the Soviet Union and China
1968	After the "Prague Spring", the Soviet Union invades Czechoslovakia
1972	The "SALT" agreement freezes the number of strategic missiles at existing levels
1980	Lech Walesa founds the trade union federation "Solidarnosc" in Poland
1985	Mikhail Gorbachev introduces a policy of "Glasnost" and "Perestroika"
1989	The fall of the Berlin Wall marks the end of the Cold War

The report obliges neither the "West" nor the "East" to implement many of its recommendations. Among other details, both were asked to give more media attention to events in the "South" and to "de-colonize" information by taking a more objective approach to the aspirations and concerns of the developing countries. Furthermore, they should put an end to the "pernicious activities" of newsrooms and stations established outside the national frontiers and to ensure that correspondents retrain from hasty judgments and ideological propaganda.[153]

However, neither the Reagan administration nor any of its important strategic partners had much sympathy for the report.[154] They criticized it for favoring government involvement in mass media at the expense of commercial private media. From their point of view, expressions such as the "right of people to inform and be informed" and the "people's right to seek, receive and impart information" are nothing but individual rights. Therefore, its purpose is to protect individuals from the government and from other authorities.[155] Any intervention in the mass media, however benign it may appear, even in the interest of "balancing", was looked upon with skepticism.[156]

Some even suggested that the principal reason that notably the "Soviet Bloc" and the "Third World" advocated a new order was simply the wish to control and censor the flows of news to their populations. In fact, many of those who condemned the dominance of "Western" media companies represented systems in which internal monopolies imposed censorship on all incoming and outgoing news.

It was doubted that they were really concerned with the fact that quantitatively news flow less from the periphery to the center and from poor to rich than vice-versa within their own society. And qualitatively speaking, it was doubted whether they were really interested in

[153] Mustapha Masmoudi: The New World Information Order, As Presented at the Third Session of the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems in July 1978, p. 12, published in UNESCO: The New World Information Order, Document Prepared for the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, Paris, number 31, date of publication unknown, no page numbers.
[154] Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) was the 40th president of the United States of America, serving from 1981 until 1989.
[155] They considered, moreover, that human rights exist to the benefit of individual citizens whereas the countries of the "Soviet bloc" (and most developing countries) generally put equal or more emphasis on the human rights of the collective.
[156] Elie Abel: Communication for an Interdependent, Pluralistic World, published in UNESCO: The New World Information Order, Paris, number 33, date of publication unknown, no page numbers.

letting their populations have access to all the news and giving them the opportunity to freely express their undistorted views on different subjects.[157]

From the "Western" point of view, where the press is often understood as a tool or instrument of the public for the proper functioning of democracy, any interference in the flows of news runs diametrically against the doctrine of "Human Rights", according to which information should be allowed to flow freely, within as well as between countries. Another argument was that it would be in direct violation of the values enshrined in the first amendment of the US constitution ("Bill of Rights"), which guarantees the free flow of news.

Indeed, there it is stated that the "congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."[158] This basic law was emphasized at the 1981 Tailloires conference during which the participants stressed "the universal right to be freely informed", opposed to "any interference with this fundamental right" and called for the elimination of any kind of "censorship and other forms of arbitrary control of information and opinion".[159]

In support of these rights, Peter Galliner, Edward Pinch and other members of the Zurich-based International Press Institute expressed several reasons to be concerned that "Third World" news agencies could become a "very real threat to the freedom of the press and free flow of news". One, for example, is that the majority of these agencies are under "full control" of autocratic governments. "Hence, a news agency pool or regional news agencies could become merely exchanges of official government statements."[160]

Furthermore, it is important to notice that the United States generally opposed international organizations such as the UNESCO and even the United Nations back then. The main reason is that notably the Reagan administration feared loosing influence and power in the international relations due to the rising number of votes and the increasing demands of "Third World" countries in such organizations. Thus, the UNESCO itself was put extremely under pressure. The strongest attacks came from the Heritage Foundation. It did not even hesitate

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[157] Inger Oesterdahl: Freedom of Information in Question, Freedom of information in International Law and the Calls for a New World Information and Communication Order, Uppsala, 1992, p. 146.
[158] United States House of Representatives: The US Constitution, Amendment 1, Freedom of Religion, Press and Expression, as ratified on 15 December 1791, http://www.house.gov/Constitution/Amend.html, accessed 2005.
[159] The "Tailloires Conference", organized by the World Press Freedom Committee, was held from 17 until 19 May 1981. William Fore: NWICO, From an American Perspective, p. 12, published in Teresita Hermano (Ed.): Communication Challenges of Our Time, An Asian Perspective, Papers and Reports Presented at the 1984 Manila Conferences on Communication Issues and Curriculum Development, Manila, 1984, p. 9-16.
[160] Edward Pinch: The Third World and the Fourth Estate, A Look at the Non-Aligned News Agency Pool, Washington, 1977, p. 4 et sqq; and Colin Legum: A Free and Balanced Flow, Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the International Flow of News, Lexington, 1987, p. 38, 39.

to misinform the American media in order to harm the reputation of the UNESCO organization in general and the director-general in particular.[161]

The representatives from the "Socialist Bloc", however, had a very different perspective because the media played another role in their systems. There, the media was not understood as having a primary role critically observing those in power and calling attention to its shortcomings, like a watchdog.

Instead, the press was seen as an instrument of the communist party. So, in contrast to the "West", where the flows of news ideally travel upwards from the public focusing on the politicians, the flows of news in the "East" is ideally are being directed downwards from those in power to the general public.[162]

The theoretical framework was provided by authors such Lenin. For him, "freedom of the press meant freedom for the rich to publish and for the capitalists to control the newspapers, a practice which in all countries, including even the freest, produces a corrupt press."[163] According to Lenin, the freedom of the press is nothing else than an "illusion as long as capitalists possess the best printing houses and the largest reserves of paper, as long as the capitalists rule the press. This becomes more apparent and more cynical the more democracy and the republican order is developed. True equality and genuine democracy can only be achieved by depriving the capitalist of the possibility to hire writers, to bribe and publish newspapers and this in turn calls for the overthrowing of capitalist slavery and the ousting of the exploiters as well as the suppression of their resistance."[164]

Besides, there were also strategic reasons why the Soviet Union was so much in favor of the "New World Information Order". Inger Oesterdahl argues that some delegates believed that serious discussion over a longer period of time could create a situation where the freedom of press would become a negotiable issue.

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[161] William Preston: Hope and Folly, The United States and UNESCO 1945-1985, New York, 1989, p. XVI et sqq.
[162] Stan Harms: The Right to Communicate Concept, and Jadwiga Pastecka: The Right to Communicate, A Socialist Approach, both published in UNESCO: The New World Information Order, Document Prepared for the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, numbers 37 and 39, Paris, date of publication unknown, no page numbers.
[163] Vladimir Lenin: Draft Resolution on Freedom of the Press, first published on 7 November 1932 in the newspaper Pravda, Moscow, 1932, later published in Marxists Internet Archive: Lenin Internet Archive, http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/nov/04.htm, place of publication unknown, 2000, accessed 2005.
[164] The statement is often used both by non-socialist and socialist authors to illustrate the communist or socialist conception of the press. Vladimir Lenin: Borgerlig Demokrati och Proletaer Diktatur. Teser Antagna pa den Kommunistiska Vaerldskongressen i Moskva den 2-6 Mars 1919, Moscow, 1928, p. 8-9, after Inger Oesterdahl: Freedom of Information in Question, Freedom of Information in International Law and the Calls for a New World Information and Communication Order, Uppsala, 1992, p. 150.

However, the discussions only partly concerned the report, media and freedom of the press. As explained before, it was an ideological battle to be won in accordance to the "Domino Theory", the "Monroe" and "Truman" doctrines and comparable concepts on the Soviet side.[165] That is one of the reasons why the idea of the "New World Information Order" is unrealistic. There was never a chance to establish it.

On 28 December 1983, the American Secretary of State George Schultz sent a letter to UNESCO Director-General Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, stating that the United States of America was withdrawing from UNESCO at the end of 1984.[166] The official reason announced in the media was that the US administration was unhappy with the management of UNESCO.[167]

But, on the following day, Seán MacBride said in a radio interview that the actual reason for the withdrawal must have been the organization's "absolutely justified" criticism on the Reagan administration ("The Americans believe that those who pay for [the] band could decide what music is played").[168] With that, he formulated what many people probably thought. However, the withdrawal of one of the two superpowers ended his dream of a new "One World" information Order.

3.3.1   The perspective from the South

The perspective from developing countries was totally different than those of the "East" and the "West". It was neither about capitalism nor communism. Instead, it was about independence and sovereignty, autonomy and autarky.[169] There was a common belief that after the liberation from colonial oppression, full sovereignty could only be achieved if all

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[165] According to the "Monroe Doctrine", formulated in 1823, no one has the right to intervene in national affairs. Originally, it proclaimed that the Americas should be free from European influence. The "Truman Doctrine", formulated in 1947, states that the United States of America would support any "free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures", particularly communism. And the "Domino Theory", more a metaphor than a theory, was originally used by US-President Dwight Eisenhower to justify the American war in Vietnam. It was believed, if Vietnam falls to communism, then Cambodia and Laos would be next, and eventually all of Southeast Asia.
[166] UNESCO: UNESCO 1945-1995, A Fact Sheet, Paris, 1995, p. 1-5.
[167] During a meeting of the UN Committee on Information in 1985, some delegates, who appeared to be from the "Soviet Bloc", labelled the activities of the media of "some" (meant are the delegates from "Western" countries, notably the United States) as "psychological warfare, trying to justify acceleration of the arms race and its extension into outer space and preparing peoples for the possibility of war." United Nations: Draft Report, Committee on Information, Session from 17 June until 5 July 1985, New York, 1985, p. 2-5.
[168] Wolfgang Kleinwaechter: USA gegen UNESCO, Szenarium einer Epressung, Berlin, 1985, p. 53, 54.
[169] Compare with Mervyn de Silva: How Far Could the Third World Push for a New Information Order, p. 37-41, published in *Media Asia*, volume 3, number 1, Singapore, 1976, p. 37-41.

forms of "neo-colonialism" (the wish to impose one's will on others) and "cultural imperialism" (the wish to impose one's values on others) are resisted.[170]

For authors such as Robert Savio, the founder of the first "alternative" news agency, it was unacceptable that foreign powers had still so much influence on developing countries.[171] In one of his articles, published shortly after the MacBride report, he illustrates the problem: "If tomorrow, a special envoy of the 'Daily News' from Sri Lanka writes that the economy of the Federal Republic of Germany is showing signs of a crisis, this fact would have no consequence. But if, tomorrow, the special envoy of 'Die Welt' were to write the same about the Sri Lanka economy, the impact […] would be quite different."[172]

In general, most academics, media professionals and politicians from developing countries were satisfied with the report and supported the recommendations of the commission. The Organization for African Unity (OAU), for instance, declared in 1981 that the establishment of a "New World Information Order" is "essential" and acknowledged that this aspiration gained the "wholehearted support, at worldwide level, of a large part of public opinion". The delegates furthermore noted "with concern" that "part of the world press and of the mass information media persists in taking advantage of its privileged position on the international scene by disseminating false information and by placing wrong interpretation on the aspirations of the recently liberated countries, their need in all areas, the objectives of their sovereign governments, the obstacles to their development" and their cultural identities.[173]

It is indeed remarkable that they were so much in favor of the report, since it makes a number of demands on developing countries.[174] First of all, the report stipulates that they should outline national communication policies as a prerequisite for progress. As a next step, large investments should be made to expand the educational, postal and telephone systems, to establish a national news agency and regional networks as well as training, research and community centers, and so on. To comply with all these recommendations would have been

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[170] Two other popular terms at the time were "Decolonization" and "Democratization of Information". Both basically mean that all parties should have the same factual opportunity to participate. Inger Oesterdahl: Freedom of Information in Question, Freedom of Information in International Law and the Calls for a New World Information and Communication Order, Uppsala, 1992, p. 142.

[171] The Inter Press Service (IPS) committed itself to a "New Journalism".

[172] Robert Savio: Why the World Needs a New Information Order published in *Media Asia*, volume 7, number 3, Singapore, 1980, p. 145-149.

[173] Organization of African Unity: Resolution on the New International Information Order, Adopted by the Council of Ministers in its 37th Ordinary Session held in Nairobi from 15-26 June 1981, published in Africa Union: Declaration and Resolutions, http://www.africa-union.org/Official_documents/council%20of%20minsters%20meetings/com/21CoM_1981b.pdf, place of publication unknown, probably first published in Kenya, later published in Addis Abéba, date of publication unknown, accessed 2004, p. 127, 128.

[174] AMIC: Toward a New World Information Order, Consequences for Development Policy, p. 31-33, published in *Media Asia*, volume 6, number 1, Singapore, 1979, p. 31-33.

very costly for their meager budgets. Even Robert Savio did not believe that it is possible to fulfill all the obligations: "In the Third World, […] industrialization with its mass phenomena does not yet exist; therefore the media do not have a significant market, they are few and they are poor. And, with few media, you cannot build a national news agency."[175]

Nevertheless, some of the most prestigious projects were realized. Among the first were the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) and the News Agency of Tanzania (Shihata), which both became fully operational in the early 1980s. Within a few years, even regional news networks were established. In Africa, the Pan African News Agency (PANA) committed itself to a "fresh view of African peoples".[176] In Arab countries, the Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA) contributed to political developments. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the National Information Systems Network (A'SIN) was established. In Asia, the Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA) was formed, which later launched the Asian News Network (ANN). And on the global level, the Non-Aligned News Agency Pool (NANA Pool) was designed to bridge the gaps between the continents.[177]

But not all recommendations were considered helpful. Notably the recommendations concerning press freedom and freedom of speech aroused suspicion. They claimed that the "Western" style of independent, critical or negative reporting does not suit the fragile situation in developing societies. Therefore, it would be a necessary prerequisite that institutions control the flows of news in order to keep countries and peoples from falling apart.

For "Western" representatives, this was difficult to comprehend. From their point of view, the evolution of a community depends primarily on debate, dissent and a strong tradition of tolerance in order to find a consensus in a cooperative and creative manner.[178] But the "Southern" representatives complained about the lack of social cohesion in their countries, stressing that they cannot be blamed for not (yet) having democracy. Furthermore, they pointed out that it took two or three hundred years for the "West" to go through the development process and that developing countries are merely still en route. Thus, the

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[175] Robert Savio: Why the World Needs a New Information Order published in *Media Asia*, volume 7, number 3, Singapore, 1980, p. 145-149.
[176] Pan African News Agency: About Us, http://www.panapress.com/about/page1.html, Dakar, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[177] Robert Stevenson identified three types of news organizations, all dedicated to implementing different definitions of the New World Information Order: "They were the Third World national agencies, specialized regional and global services, and second-tier Western agencies with a special interest in cooperating with Third World partners." Robert Stevenson: Communication, Development and the Third World, The Global Politics of Information, New York, 1988, p. 79.
[178] Although an empirical study shows that there was no progress in countries where the control of the press was increased. David Weaver: Press Freedom, Media and Development, 1950-1979, A Study of 134 Nations, published in *Journal of Communication*, volume 35, number 2, Washington D.C., 1985, p. 116.

"West" would have no right to force a system of free press upon them when they are not yet ready for it.[179]

Several representatives of Asian countries even argued that their situation is special, as a statement by Kuldip Nayar, former chief of the United News of India agency, shows: "We Asians form almost two-thirds of the world's population, and I am sure we should make news by the dint of numbers alone […] We have a point of view which needs to be expressed fully and adequately. You may call it the Eastern point of view or the Asian […] It is a point of view with a positive content – something different, something real. We who have been subject people for centuries, we who have always looked towards Washington, London or Paris are not free to fend for ourselves. We have a history; we have a culture, a tradition. We are not just jumble of events, names and dates thrown about, as the West generally depicts us and probably sees us. We represent a whole stream of thought, a wave of reaction, traditions, reaching far into the past, a distinct attitude and a way of life."[180]

Following this line of thought, the participants of the first "Intergovernmental Conference on Communication Policies in Asia and Oceania" held in 1979 in Kuala Lumpur emphasized the originality of the region before recognizing that the "developing countries of our region are still suffering from a dependence upon colonial legacies". Furthermore, they admitted that individuals generally should have the right "to acquire an objective picture of reality by means of accurate and comprehensive information through a diversity of sources and means of information available to them, as well as to express themselves through various means of culture and communication." But this freedom is limited because the media has "responsibility for contributing to the common task of nation-building and to the further development of the cultural identity of peoples and ethnic minorities, so ensuring national cohesion and creating abilities to derive the utmost benefit from enriching influences coming from outside."[181]

Another document revealing the "Asian Perspective" is the "Bangkok Declaration".[182] Therein, it is even argued that "while human rights are universal in nature, they must be considered in the context of a dynamic and evolving process of international norm-setting,

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[179] Inger Oesterdahl: Freedom of information in Question, Freedom of Information in International Law and the Calls for a New World Information and Communication Order, Uppsala, 1992, p. 147, 148.
[180] After Colim Legum: A Free and Balanced Flow, Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the International Flow of News, Lexington, 1987, p. 66, 67.
[181] UNESCO: The Kuala Lumpur Declaration, As Adopted by the Intergovernmental Conference on Communication Policies in Asia and Oceania, Microfiche number 81s0839, Paris, 1979, no page numbers.
[182] Compare with Kishore Mahbubani: An Asian Perspective on Human Rights and Freedom of the Press, p. 159-172, published in *Media Asia*, volume 20, number 3, Singapore, 1993, p. 159-172.

bearing in mind the significance of national regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds."[183]

Andrew Szende, who analyzed the flows of news in Southeast Asia, confirms that there is a certain attitude towards the news media there: "The basic role of the press in the region is to act as an educational medium, amplifying the views of the government and helping the public understand how the country is being developed and the role they can play in that development."[184]

From today's point of view, it seems that it was more important to the people in Asian countries to make their own decisions than to eliminate any imbalances. In both documents it is at least stressed that "all countries, large and small, have the right to determine their political systems, control and [...] social and cultural development", particularly communication strategies and practices.

To further these, a number of regional concepts were introduced. One is that of "Development Journalism", whose primary function is not merely to keep an eye on government actions but to promote the development of a country.[185] CV Rajasundaram defines it as the "discipline and practice of communication in the context of developing countries". Peter Godling adds that "Development Journalism" could promote national progress by stressing the educational function of news, raising awareness and producing stories about social needs or problems in the hope of stirring governments into action. But others dismiss it as "government say-so journalism".[186] Another example is the debate about "Asian Values in Journalism" which implies that journalists in Asia would have more responsibility for their respective society.[187]

However, there has been no unity on any one perception or concept regarding the report. That underlines the thesis that the "New World Information Order" never really had a chance to succeed. The reason for this disunity is that the peoples and experts reacting to the report

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[183] UNESCO: The Bangkok Declaration, As Adopted by the Ministers and Representatives of Asian States Meeting at Bangkok from 29 March to 2 April 1993, published in *UNESCO Courier*, Human Rights, The Unfinished Task, number XLVII 3, Paris, 1994, p. 44.
[184] Andrew Szende: From Torrent to Trickle, Managing the Flow of News in Southeast Asia, Singapore, 1986, p. 22.
[185] Boobli Verghese: Project Chhatera, An Experiment in Development Journalism, Singapore, 1976, p. 3-14.
[186] CV Rajasundaram: Manuel of Development Communication, With Special Reference to Broadcasting, Singapore, 1981, p. 17; Owais Aslam Ali: Freedom of the Press and Asian Values in Journalism, Karachi, 1995, p. 2; and Alan Chalkley: Development Journalism, A New Dimension in the Information Process, p. 215-217, published in *Media Asia*, volume 7, number 4, Singapore, 1980, p. 215-217.
[187] The two main promoters of "Asian Values" were Malaysia's former Prime Minister Mohammad Mahathir and Singapore's former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. One of the few critical of the concept is the former Malaysian deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim. He argued that "it is altogether shameful, if ingenious, to cite Asian values as an excuse for autocratic practices". A few years later, he was arrested because of "bad behavior".

have different backgrounds.[188] This applies particularly to the diversity of Southeast Asia where socialist countries such as Vietnam and capitalist countries such as Thailand, rich countries such as Brunei and poor countries such as Cambodia, large countries such as Indonesia and small countries such as Singapore are geographically so close together.[189]

Therefore, it is recommended to select one and look closer at it. How the press and its circumstances have developed in Singapore is the subject of contemplation in the following chapters.

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[188] "Therefore, no one spokesperson for the less developed countries makes all the criticisms nor will all critics emphasize each issue in the same way." William Stover: Information Technology in the Third World, Can I.T. Lead to Humane National Development?, Boulder, 1984, p. 43.
[189] Colin Legum: A Free and Balanced Flow, Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the International Flow of News, Lexington, 1987, p. 32.

Circumstances

4.1   Early development of the press in Asia

It is often believed that the idea of regularly publishing newspapers and magazines was conceived in Western Europe or in the United States of America, where the press played an active part in the struggle for independence and freedom.

In Western Europe, the *Fugger Newsletter* is usually seen as a prototype of modern newspapers. The newsletters were used to inform the agents and clients of the "Fugger Empire" about recent developments and upcoming events.[190] Another example is the *Weekly News* that was published from 1621 in Italy, Germany, Hungary, Spain and France. By the end of the 17th century, such publications were not only distributed throughout Europe and elsewhere, some were also founded in the colonies.[191]

In Britain's colonies in America, for example, the bookseller Benjamin Harris (~1660–1716) published the *Public Occurrences, Both Foreign and Domestic* in 1690.[192] Being a free spirit, he was frequently in trouble with the authorities, both in London and in the colonies. He printed the paper without a license and offended the authorities so that the first issue of the paper was also its last.[193]

Already a few years later, a second newspaper appeared in the British colonies in America. It was called the *Boston News-Letter* and was published by John Campell, whose younger brother later managed the *Pennsylvania Gazette of Philadelphia*, which became one of the leading newspapers in America during colonial times.

So it is certainly correct to conclude that Europeans exported the idea of regularly publishing newspapers to the "uncivilized world", where they served expatriates only. *The Freshest Advices Foreign and Domestic*, for example, carried almost exclusively news from Europe to the British settlers and ignored local news.[194] One might even argue that the press in the modern sense is nothing else than an outcome of the colonization, although it is a bit more complex than that.

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[190] The Fuggers were a prominent family of bankers and merchants in Germany.
[191] Joseph Frank: The Beginning of the English Newspapers, 1620-1660, Cambridge, 1961, p. 3, 179 et sqq.
[192] Sidney Kobre: The Development of the Colonial Newspaper, Pittsburgh, 1944, p. 13-17.
[193] Isaiah Thomas: The History of Printing in America, first published in 1810, later published in Marcus McCorison (Ed.): The History of Printing in America, Barre, 1970, p. 129.
[194] Meaning the *Boston Gazette*. David Copeland: Colonial American Newspapers, Character and Content, Cranbury, 1951, p. 12.

Charles Moses and Crisipin Maslog have shown that the press does not have a single origin but evolved in different regions at different times.[195] They argue that in East Asia, particularly in China and Japan, the press started much earlier, but that the developments in Europe had much more impact.[196]

Historians such as Lin Yu Tang even believe that the beginnings of the press in China can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn Period (722-481 B.C.) of the late Chou Dynasty (1034-256 B.C) which is the "Golden Age" in Chinese history as characterized by Confucius and Lao Tse.[197] But this is doubtful, as the inventions necessary for the production of newspapers and magazines were only made some centuries later. Paper, for instance, was not invented before the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) and the crudest form of printing - woodblock printing - was not invented before the Sui Dynasty (581-618).[198]

However, already during the Tan Dynasty (618–907), a court gazette called *Ti Pao* was published in China; which is comparable to Julius Caesar's *Acta Diurna* to a certain extent.[199] Its articles were fabulously written, similar to the classical Chinese essays of that time, but the idea behind them was the collection and dissemination of news.

It became so popular that additional editions were launched: the *Chao Pao* which means "Palace Press", the *Bien Pao* which means "Border Press", and the *Yi Pao* which means "Courier Press".[200] The most popular was a condensed version of the original called *Hsiao Pao* which means "Little Press".[201] It was distributed directly to the peasants and enjoyed a great amount of freedom until the mid-Song Dynasty (960–1279) when in 1160 the Confucian scholar Chou Lin Chih wrote the following letter to the emperor:

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[195] Charles Moses (1900-1988) was a British-born Australian broadcasting executive who managed the Australian Broadcasting Commission for more than three decades. Filipino Crispin Maslog is professor at the School of Communication and Information at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. He was interviewed for this dissertation.
[196] Charles Moses: Mass Communication in Asia, A Brief History, Singapore, 1978, p. 3-7.
[197] The Zhou Dynasty can be divided in the Western Zhou and Eastern Zhou periods, whereby the latter one can be divided into the Spring and Autumn Period from 722 B.C. until 481 B.C. and the Warring States Period from 471 B.C. until the unification of China in 221 B.C. The most prominent thinker during the Spring and Autumn Period were Confucius and Lao Tse, whose historical existence is debated. The main difference in the writings of the two thinkers is that Lao Tse was more interested in myths than rational wisdoms.
[198] The method of producing paper out of cotton rags is first mentioned in 105 A.D. Woodblock printing was invented in 593. Printing with movable types using clay was introduced in 1038.
[199] The *Acta Diurna*, sometimes translated with "Daily Public Records", were official notices carved on stone or metal.
[200] "Ti" is usually the official resident of the representative of local governments in the national capital; "Pao" means report or paper.
[201] Charles Moses: Mass Communication in Asia, A Brief History, Singapore, 1978, p. 7.

"At times when drastic measures were promulgated by Your Majesty, through your edicts, there were always rumor-mongers who took the opportunity to spread sensational news misleading the public. For instance, when Your Majesty summoned some of your old ministers back to power the other day, there was a great deal of talk about the town emanating from an unknown source. On close examination I found out that such rumors always started from the tabloid news, which leaked out from the Bureau of Official Reports and are the work of the official agents of the residences. In recent years whenever there is news in the air and the public is held in suspense, these agents would snatch the chances and write news down on little scripts and circulate them abroad. This is so-called *Hsiao Pao*. […] The news from *Hsiao Pao* is often inaccurate or even groundless fabrication but scholars at the capital would say, on hearing such news, 'we have already seen in the *Hsiao Pao'*, and magistrates in the countryside would say on hearing the news, 'we have received the *Hsiao Pao* already'. If it were true, the news should not have been permitted to leak out, and if it were false, it was misleading. […] I humbly petition that Your Majesty should issue an edict prohibiting their circulation with definite forms of punishment attached to it."[202]

Meanwhile, Johannes Gutenberg (1398-1468) invented a method of printing using movable types in the 1440s in Europe, making printing easier and more efficient. Within a few decades, the technique spread around the globe. Already in 1593, missionaries brought a printing press to the Philippines and published Asia's first modern book there. The Spanish-language "Doctrina Cristiana" was a small catechism book on Christian faith.

Also, Asia's first modern newspaper was printed in the Philippines. Its Spanish-language successor, *Felices*, launched in 1637 by Thomas Pinpin (~1580-1640), was more than simply a reprint or translation of European papers. It also carried some original articles: one is about a Spanish naval victory over the Dutch near Manila, for example, and another describes a military operation against rebels in the South.[203]

The first modern newspapers in Mainland China were started by foreigners. Two examples are the English-language *Eastern Western Monthly Magazine*, which was launched by a British missionary in 1833 in Canton, and the translation of it, the *Shanghai Hsui Pao*, which started publishing in 1862 in Shanghai.[204] Another example is the country's first daily

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[202] The emperor accepted this petition so that many papers suddenly stopped publishing. In the Ming Dynasty (960-1279), even a special department was set up to ensure that no false or undesired news was dismissed. The Song Dynasty is marked by the reunification of China, and the Ming Dynasty is best known for the mass production of porcelain. Henry Mao: History of Mass Communication, Singapore, 1974, p.3.
[203] Jose Castro: Philippine Journalism, From the Early Years to the Sixties, published in Clodualdo del Mundo (Ed.): Philippine Mass Media, A Book of Readings, Manila, 1986, p. 3-13.
[204] Despite the title, it was actually a newspaper. Charles Moses: Mass Communication in Asia, A Brief History, Singapore, 1978, p. 33.

newspaper, the English-language *North China Daily News*, which was established in 1864 after the British defeat of the Manchu in the Sino British (Opium) War.[205]

The press in the Pearl Delta started similarly. The first newspaper in Hong Kong was the English-language *Canton Register* which was established in 1823. Further papers were started as soon as the island was ceded to Britain under the "Treaty of Nanking" in 1842.[206] All of them, however, were founded by foreigners. Interestingly, some of them like the *China Mail* (1845) and the *South China Morning Post* (1903) still exist.[207]

From a historical point of view, it seems that the closer to Europe and the further away from China one is, the higher the influence of colonialists. While two of China's neighbors, Korea and Japan, acquired at least some of their earliest methods from China, the whole development of the press in Southeast Asia can be attributed to Europeans.[208] The reason is not geographical distance alone; its history is closely related to the European Industrial Revolution and the European adventures that followed.[209]

In Indonesia, for instance, where the Dutch ousted the Portuguese and Spanish, all of the first publications were founded, owned, ran and read by the Dutch. An example is the Dutch-language *Bataviaise Nouvelles en Politque Raisonenmenten* which was started in 1744 in Batavia (later renamed Jakarta). The first paper in the local language did not come out before 1855 when *Bromartine* was started. Even in the second half of the 19th century, there were still more papers in Dutch available than in local languages.[210]

Similar observations can be made in Thailand, although it was never a colony. The first printing press there was established by a French missionary in 1662, and the first newspaper, the *Bangkok Recorder*, was launched during the reign of King Rama III (1824-1851) in 1844 by an American missionary.[211] The paper only published 16 issues and ceased publication in 1845 but it was revived in 1864 in two versions, one in English and the other in Thai under the title *Siamese Recorder*.[212]

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[205] There were two Sino-British (Opium) Wars, one from 1834 until 1843 and the other one from 1843 until 1860.
[206] The "Treaty of Nanking" led to the opening of ports plus the handover of Hong Kong from China to Britain.
[207] Liqun Yan: China, Development of Press and Broadcasting, Brief Early History, published in Shelton Gunaratne (Ed.): Handbook of the Media in Asia, New Delhi, 2000, p. 499 et sqq.
[208] Charles Moses: Mass Communication in Asia, A Brief History, Singapore, 1978, p. 18.
[209] The Spanish overtook the Philippines from the Portuguese, the Dutch gained Indonesia from the Spanish, the British prevailed in Burma, Malaysia and Singapore, the French occupied Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and the Germans ran the settlement of Tsingtao in Mainland China.
[210] Naswil Idris: Indonesia, Development of Press and Broadcasting, Brief Early History, published in Shelton Gunaratne (Ed.): Handbook of the Media in Asia, New Delhi, 2000, p. 266 et sqq.
[211] King Rama III. was the last traditional monarch in the kingdom. His successors modernized the country.
[212] Even the first book in Thai was printed by a foreigner. Daradirek Ekachai: Thailand, Development of Press and Broadcasting, Brief Early History, published in Shelton Gunaratne (Ed.): Handbook of the Media in Asia, New Delhi, 2000, p. 431 et sqq.

Also, in what is known today as Malaysia and Singapore, the then three scattered British territories (Singapore, Malacca, Penang) of the Straits Settlements, foreigners brought the first movable type printing presses and launched the first newspapers.[213] Interestingly, all of the first printing presses in the region were exclusively reserved for English-language publications and only few missionaries were granted the right to import and make use of the presses.[214]

(13) Selection of the first books printed in Singapore[215]		
Year	Title	Language
1824	A Spelling Book	English
	A System Arithmetic	English
	A Selection of Hymns	Malay
1825	The Gospel of Matthew	English
	Assembly's Catechism	English
1826	Malay Tracts	English / Malay
1827	Watts First Catechism	English
	School Lessons	English
	Three Tracts	English
1828	Watts First Catechism	Malay

Printing presses were introduced first in Penang in 1806, in Malacca in 1815 and in Singapore in 1823. Among the pioneers were William Milne, who applied for a land grant in Singapore in order to establish a mission, and Samuel Milton, who selected the land for the mission and requested permission to run a printing press. The petition was granted on 23 January 1823 "with regard to the establishment of a printing press in aid of your labor, the Lieutenant Governor gives his full sanction to the measure, and will be happy to assist the undertaking by the patronage and support of government, as far as circumstances admit."[216]

The region's first newspaper was the *Prince of Wales Island Gazette* which appeared in 1805 in Penang. On the tip of the peninsula, the first newspaper was the *Commercial Register*, which was started by a Christian missionary and soon merged with the *Singapore Chronicle*.[217] This single-sheet bi-monthly was established in 1823 by Francis James Bernard, who had escorted Stamford Raffles on his historic visit to Singapore in 1819 and

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[213] The establishment of the Straits Settlements was laid out in the "Anglo-Dutch Treaty" of 1824 in which the Southeast Asian archipelago was divided into a British zone (in the north) and a Dutch zone (in the south). Cecil Byrd: Early Printing in the Straits Settlements, Singapore, 1970, p. 2.
[214] One exception was the *Chinese Monthly Magazine* which appeared from 1915 onwards in Malacca. It was circulated in Thailand, Vietnam and China where the Manchu had banned the printing of Christian papers in the early 19th century. It is considered to be the world's first Chinese-language paper. Chen Mong Hock: The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore, 1812-1912, Singapore, 1967, p. 1-3.
[215] The table is based on Cecil Byrd: Early Printing in the Straits Settlements, Singapore, 1970, p. 15.
[216] After Cecil Byrd: Early Printing in the Straits Settlements, Singapore, 1970, p. 13.
[217] Eddie Kuo: Singapore, Development of Press and Broadcasting, Brief Early History, published in Shelton Gunaratne (Ed.): Handbook of the Media in Asia, New Delhi, 2000, p. 404.

later served as the superintendent of the British police.[218] The editorship was then passed on to James Loch and later to John Henry Moor. Also the ownership was handed on from one foreigner to another, namely to the Scottish merchant James Fairlie Carnegie who was living in Penang at the time. He planned to circulate the paper throughout all three Straits Settlements but a group of Singapore residents set up a rival paper.[219]

Hence, the second newspaper that appeared in Singapore was the four-page weekly *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*.[220] It was launched in 1835 by a handful of influential men, including Edward Boustead, a merchant, William Napier, the city's first lawyer and George Drumgoole Coleman, an architect.[221] In order to keep up with the competition, the *Singapore Chronicle* halved its cover price. Unfortunately, it did not succeed because the former editor, John Henry Moor, took up a position at the *Singapore Free Press* and took many advertisers along with him. Consequently, the *Singapore Chronicle* folded two years later. Its owner transported its printing press to Penang, where he had bought the inefficient *Prince of Wales Island Gazette* and renamed it the *Pinang Gazette and Straits Chronicle* in 1838. As a result, the *Singapore Free Press* remained the only paper in Singapore for several years.[222]

So Charles Moses and Crispin Maslog conclude correctly: "While [East] Asia gave birth to paper and printing – the two main tools for mass communication – it was Europe that nursed these inventions into full manhood. As a result perhaps of the Industrial Revolution that swept Europe first, printing was developed ahead there and brought back to [Southeast] Asia in more modern form by the early Christian missionaries from the 16th century onward."[223]

(14) Selection of the first modern newspapers in Asia[224]			
Year	Title	Language	Place of Publication
1637	Successos Felices	Spanish	Manila
1744	Bataviaise Nouvelles en Politique Raisonenmenten	Dutch	Batavia
1780	Begal Gazette / Calcutta General Advertiser	English	Calcutta
1785	Madras Courier	English	Madras
1789	Bombay Herald	English	Bombay
1805	Prince of Wales Island Gazette	English	Penang
1811	Del Superior Govierno	Spanish	Manila
1815	Chinese Monthly Magazine	Chinese	Malacca
1818	Dig Darshan	Bengali	Calcutta

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[218] Soh Yew Peng believes that the first name of Mr. Bernard was Frederick, but this is probably inaccurate. All other sources mention the name Francis. Compare with Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 1, 2.

[219] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 6.

[220] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 6, 7.

[221] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 2.

[222] Until 1842, when a potential rival, the *Straits Messenger*, started publishing.

[223] Moses: Mass Communication in Asia, A Brief History, Singapore, 1978, p. 7.

[224] The table is based on information provided in Charles Moses: Mass Communication in Asia, A Brief History, Singapore, 1978, p. 3 et sqq; and other sources.

1824	Singapore Chronicle	English	Singapore
1828	Canton Register	English	Hong Kong
1832	Colombo Journal	English	Colombo
1833	Eastern Western Monthly Magazine	English	Canton
1845	China Mail	English	Hong Kong
1845	Straits Times	English	Singapore
1846	La Esperanza	Spanish	Manila
1855	Bromartini	Javanese	Surakarta
1861	Bulletin de l'Expedition de la Cochinchine	French	Hanoi
1861	Nagasaki Shipping List and Advertiser	English	Nagasaki
1862	Shanghai Hsiu Pao	Chinese	Shanghai
1864	Bangkok Recorder	English	Bangkok
1858	Chung Wei Hsin Pao	Chinese	Hong Kong
1864	North China Daily News	English	Shanghai
1865	Gia Dinh Bao	Vietnamese	Saigon
1868	Siam Daily Advertiser	English	Bangkok
1872	Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun	Japanese	Tokyo
1896	Tongnip Sinmun	Korean	Seoul

4.1.1 The "Golden Age" of newspaper publishing

The "Golden Age" of newspaper publishing began in Asia, in particular on the Southeast Asian archipelago, in the middle of the 19th century.[225] The reasons are manifold but the most important being the overall growth of the economy and increasing purchasing power. Trade was booming, especially since the British East India Company lost its monopoly in trade with China in 1833.[226]

Before that time, the ports in Southeast Asia played just a small but notorious role, because Chinese goods bound for Britain as well as British wares bound for China were only allowed to be carried directly between the two countries exclusively by the British East India Company. To evade this regulation, shipping documents were often forged to obscure reality. But the penalties were extremely high and the Singapore port in particular benefited when the legislation was lifted. Within only two decades, so many cheap and willing workers emigrated from China to Singapore that the number of Chinese exceeded the number of Malays.[227]

Two other factors that decisively accelerated the growth of the economy were the regular use of steam ships starting in 1842 and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Due to the steam

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[225] In Japan, for instance, the *Yokohama Mainichi Shimbun* was started in 1872. In the following year, the *Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun* was launched.
[226] The British East India Company had been granted a "Royal Charter" trade privilege by Elizabeth I. in 1600.
[227] Song Ong Siang: One Hundred Years History of the Chinese in Singapore, London, 1923, p. 6 et sqq.

engines, ships no longer needed to adjust their schedule around the monsoon season.[228] Much time was saved, because the "canal route" is much shorter than the "cape route" around the horn of Africa.[229] Both made the flow of news much more effective.

These developments were advantageous for the press in two ways. Firstly, the number of potential readers increased. Secondly, the time of transmission of news to and from Western Europe was decreased. The newspaper that benefited most of it was the newly established English-language *Straits Times*.

How the small weekly came to be conceived in the first place remains a mystery. According to Mary Turnbull, who reviewed the historical development of the *Straits Times*, the American Catchick Moses bought a printing press from the Armenian Marterus Thaddeus Apcar.[230] With this, she follows the argumentation of Charles Burton Buckley, who ran the *Singapore Free Press* from 1884 until 1887 and reviewed the "Anecdotal History of Singapore" in the late 1890s on the basis of his own articles.[231] The only difference in their versions is that Charles Burton Buckley emphasizes the role of the Armenian merchant, and that Mary Turnbull spends great effort and several pages correcting this detail. However, the English journalist Robert Carr Woods was appointed as founding editor. He published the first issue of the *Straits Times* on 15 July 1845. Here is an excerpt from the editorial:

"We need not seek out arguments in support of the unfettered liberty which the Press should possess, because there are few in whose breast a doubt is entertained respecting the benefits derived and derivable from Public Journalism. The Press is allowed to be 'the fourth estates' and ought never to be wanting in an unequivocal and zealous maintenance of its object, since it embraces a defense of the immunities and privileges of a free people. A knowledge of the fact that the Press is free serves to deepen the conviction that its end is fulfilled so long only as it upholds fearlessly the integrity of national institutions, laying bare to the eye whatever abuses spring up or exist, and by its faithful advocacy of public rights secure to the governed protection against the innovations or misrule of the governing. These

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[228] The first steam ship, the "Vander Capellen", arrived 1827 in Singapore; and the first regular service carrying mail from Ceylon to China, via Penang and Singapore, was opened in 1845 with the arrival of the "Lady Mary Wood" in Singapore. Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 11; and Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of The Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 16.

[229] Won Klin Ken: Commercial Growth before the Second World War, p. 50, 51, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Singapore, 1991, p. 41-65.

[230] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 10-14.

[231] Charles Buckley: An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore, From the Foundation of the Settlement under the Honourable The British East India Company on February 6th, 1819 to the Transfer to the Colonial Office as Part of the Colonial Possessions of the Crown on April 1st, 1867, first published in Singapore, 1901, later published in Kuala Lumpur, 1965, p. 438.

are the primary uses of the Press, to which the communication of intelligence and miscellaneous information are merely secondary."[232]

Other newspapers founded in this period in Singapore were the *Straits Guardian* (1856), the *Shipping Gazette* (1858), the *Straits Produce* (1868), the *Straits Intelligence* (1883) and the *Singapore Herald* (1886, not to be confused with a subsequent paper of the same name which is mentioned in another part of this dissertation).[233] With the start of *Jawi Perankan* (1876, Malay), *Singai Varthamani* (1876, Tamil) and *Lat Pau* (1881, Chinese), even the first non-English-language newspapers were launched.[234]

There is another reason why the second half of the 19th century became the "Golden Age" of newspaper publishing.[235] Both the invention of the electrical telegraph by Charles Wheatstone (1802-1875) and the prototype of electromagnetic transmission using a dot-and-dash system by Samuel Morse (1791-1872) in the late 1830s made the exchange of messages over long distances easier and more effective. Sooner or later, every news bureau stopped using mail wagons and pigeon-carriers and switched to telegraphy instead.[236] Already on 6 August 1844, the world's first news received by telegraph appeared in the British press; it was a telegram from Windsor Castle announcing the birth of Queen Victoria's second son.

One of the first regularly using the new technology was Bernhard Wolff (1811-1879), who had learned his business at the Havas agency in Paris, published the *National Zeitung* and opened Wolff's Telegraphisches Bureau in 1849. Within a few years, he dominated the German market, crowding out other agencies such as Louis Hirsch's Telegraphisches Buero in Berlin, Herald Depeschenbuero in Frankfurt and Boesmann's Telegraphisches Buero in Bremen.[237]

Meanwhile, in 1848, ten men representing six leading newspapers in the United States discussed David Hale's (*Journal of Commerce*) idea to pool their resources by producing a single telegraphic report. Together, they established the Associated Press agency which

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[232] Straits Times: Editorial, Singapore, 15 July 1845, p. 2.
[233] Eddie Kuo: Singapore, Development of Press and Broadcasting, Brief Early History, published in Shelton Gunaratne (Ed.): Handbook of the Media in Asia, New Delhi, 2000, p. 404; Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 1-4; Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 4-9; and other sources.
[234] Lim Jim Koon (Ed.): Our 70 Years, 1923-1993, History of the Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore, Singapore, 1993, p. 41; and Chen Mong Hock: The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore, 1812-1912, Singapore, 1967, p. 24 et sqq.
[235] Not discussed here is the invention of modern typewriter which was patented in 1867 by Christopher Sholes, Carlos Glidden and Samuel Soule who sold the patent to a partner of the E. Remington and Sons company.
[236] *Reuters*, for instance, had sent pigeons by rail to Brussels, to fly back to Aachen on the next day.
[237] Juergen Wilke: Telegraphenbueros und Nachrichtenagenturen in Deutschland, Untersuchungen zu ihrer Geschichte bis 1949, Munich, 1991, p. 24-34, 41, 46, 49.

began selling news items in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore.[238] Samuel Julius Reuter (1815-1899) also became interested in the new technology. Starting in 1850, he made use of the submarine cables across the "English channel" between Dover and Calais so that the sea presented no longer a barrier.[239]

Before newspapers in Singapore were able to benefit from it, submarine cables had to be laid. The first one was installed between Singapore and Hong Kong in 1869. Additional cables were laid to connect Singapore, Penang, Hong Kong and Madras in 1872.[240] The main reason for the delay was that cabled news was initially very expensive.[241]

(15) Milestones in the early history of international news transmission	
1835	A bureau which later becomes known as Agence France-Presse is established in Paris
1837	Charles Wheatstone successfully transmits a message between two places using telegraphs
1847	Samuel Morse patents his version of telegraphy
1838	The first steam ship crosses the Atlantic Ocean
1844	The world's first news received by cable is published in the British press
1848	Wolffs Telegraphisches Bureau is established in Berlin
1848	Ten men representing six newspapers establish the Associated Press in New York
1849	The world's first submarine cable is installed between France and England
1850	Samuel Julius Reuter opens a bureau in London and makes use of the "English channel"
1867	A modern typewriter is patented by Christopher Sholes, Carlos Glidden and Samuel Soule
1866	A transatlantic cable is laid to connect Europe and America
1868	Europe is connected with India
1869	Asia's first submarine telegraph cable is installed between Singapore and Hong Kong
1871	A trans-Siberian cable is laid, connecting Western Europe with China and Japan
1873	The first practically useful typewriter is commercially available
1876	Alexander Graham Bell patents the telephone

However, the new vehicle for the transmission of news was not only faster. It also totally changed the style of how news was written. Before, most articles were written in a narrative form, often starting with superficial impressions of the scenes. But since the transmission of each single character cost money and the connections could get interrupted, the reporters were instructed to send the most important facts first. One might even argue that the inverted pyramid structure in which news are published today is nothing else than an outcome of the introduction of telegraphy.

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[238] The *Journal of Commerce*, *Express*, *Courier and Enquirer*, *Herald, Sun*, and *Tribune*. Oliver Gramling: AP, The Story of News, Dallas, 1969, p. 19 et sqq; Charles Hanley: The Story of the Associated Press, published in Vincent Alabiso (Ed.): Flash! The Associated Press Covers the World, New York, 1998, p. 173 et sqq; and Menahem Blondheim: News over the Wires, The Telegraph and the Flow of Public Information in America, 1844-1897, London, 1994, p. 47 et sqq.
[239] Evidence about his early ventures is patchy. One certain fact is that before he moved his office to London, he had found himself a fresh name. Actually, he was born as Israel Beer Josaphat. Donald Read: The Power of News, The History of Reuters, 1849-1989, Oxford, 1992, p. 5-13.
[240] Lars Aronsson: Aronsson's Telecom History Timeline, http://aronsson.se/hist.html, Linkoeping, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[241] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 64.

As another result, the number of stories about events overseas increased. However, due to the historical development and local circumstances, the editor usually reported the British point of view for a predominantly British or European readership anyway. A good example is the reporting of the Russian-Japanese War (1904/05). Though the war mainly took place in Manchuria, prominence was given to the British point of view on it (Britain supported Japan against Russia).[242]

4.1.2 The role of the press in the colonial era

Basskaran Nair describes the British Empire as a media empire, meaning the British imposed their media structure on its colonies, hoping that even after independence the colonies would continue using British-styled organizational structure and media resources – and he believes that Singapore was no exception.[243] That is certainly correct, but the situation was a bit more complex. Neither those who brought printing presses to Southeast Asia nor those who established the first newspapers in the region were government officials. Most of them were missionaries, merchants or soldiers. As with most people who leave their home country, either force by someone else or of their own accord, they must have had a definite reason, either for leaving or for going elsewhere.[244]

The free spirit Benjamin Harris had such a reason; he wanted to start anew in the British colonies in America. Also Robert Carr Woods, the founding editor of the *Straits Times* newspaper, must have had something in mind when he went to India at the age of 24. Later, he claimed that he had worked there as a journalist but it is more likely that he was just a stringer or occasional correspondent. However, he had been "obliged to leave there" because he had been mistaken for a political spy after traveling incognito more than once to remote areas in order to research the "native character". Thus, he moved on to the British settlement of Singapore, which was probably the best place for him to bury his embarrassing past in Bombay and to rebuild his fortune afresh.[245]

Another reason that Basskaran Nair's argumentation is not fully convincing is that no one believed at this time that the Straits Settlements would become independent anytime soon. Actually, the British settlers were already satisfied when they were able to make a living.

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[242] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 63 et sqq.
[243] Basskaran Nair: Communication in Colonial and Independent Singapore, Singapore, 1980, p. 3.
[244] Gretchen Liu: Singapore, A Pictorial History, 1819-2000, Singapore, 1999, p. 18 et sqq.
[245] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 15.

Even the editors had to take up part-time jobs. Robert Carr Woods, for instance, worked as a law agent. And his successor, John Cameron, worked as a coal merchant, wine importer and cigar dealer in order to finance his position at the *Straits Times*. "To write for daily bread", complained Robert Carr Woods in an editorial, "is a very irksome labor; invention will not always obey the summons when it is wanted; the taste of the public is sometimes capricious; the hand may be paralyzed by sickness when it should be writing; the head may throb with fever when it should be thinking intensely".[246]

One of the reasons was that there were not many noteworthy events happening in Singapore back then, apart from the "enjoyment of all the pleasure which a footing on such classic ground must inspire", as Stamford Raffles had formulated it on 31 January 1819 in a letter to the orientalist William Marsden (1754-1836) the day after signing the treaty which provided the foundation of the first trading post.[247] According to the first official census taken in 1824, there were only around 11 000 people living in Singapore, including 74 Europeans.[248]

This shows that there were not only a small number of potential readers but also only few news items to be reported on, such as the occasional fire or robbery. In order to fill the space, editors published the horse racing program, reviewed amateur theatrical performances and recommended playing cricket for "keeping away that dread disease" - meaning cholera.

Even the news items from overseas were either already outdated or already familiar to the readers, often both, because the journey from Britain to Singapore was, at more than three months, very long (that is, before the opening of the Suez Canal), and it was common in Singapore to meet in the evenings at the Commercial Square or at the "Scandal Point" for gossiping.[249] As a result, the Singapore newspapers were considered to be a good gift for friends overseas rather than being a local force, because they portrayed what was going on in Singapore (and outdated news from overseas).

This changed with the immense interest in news caused by the outbreak of the Sino-British (Opium) War in the 1840s, particularly among the increasing number of Chinese refugees in Southeast Asia. Due to its central location between the headquarters of the British East India Company in Calcutta, which was responsible for the military operations, and the battlefield in

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[246] Straits Times: Editorial, Singapore, 03 January 1849, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 24, 25.
[247] After Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 1.
[248] Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 13.
[249] The Commercial Square is today known as Raffles Place.

China, Singapore was well placed to gather information about the war.[250] The *Singapore Free Press* published several special editions of war news and increased its regular size to twelve pages. The war even inspired the emergence of a direct competitor; the *Straits Messenger* was launched in 1842.

One difficulty of that time for newspapers and editors was that they were closely watched by the colonial administration. Starting with the "Gagging Act" of 1823, all newspapers were required to be licensed and to submit their materials to the authorities before publication (pre-publication censorship). When John Crawfurd invested money in the *Singapore Chronicle*, he had to assure that "the paper is to be entirely under the control of the local authority. Its object is to be exclusively commercial […] All personal and party discussions will be excluded."[251] The Chinese-language press was also under British control; the editor See Ewe Lay of *Lat Po* was considered to be a loyal subject because of his social status.[252]

But this does not mean that the press was an organ of the British East India Company or established in order to impose British values. Instead, the editors promoted their own position. They reported that no seat was provided for the press in the police court, complaining that "members of the press have a right to be treated as gentlemen, and are not compelled to stand like prisoners." For a similar marginal reason, the postal service also had to endure some criticism.[253]

As far as possible, the newspapers supported the positions of their readers. In the case of the English-language *Straits Times*, the readership was composed of predominantly British and American settlers who came to Singapore in order to work as agents for international companies.[254] Together, they forced the governor to stop intervening and censoring grand jury presentments. In 1846, the *Straits Times* even devoted almost an entire issue to criticism of a proposed act, demanding that two-thirds of a committee responsible for customs rates should be elected by rate-payers; the paper accused the colonial administration for being top-heavy and wasteful.[255]

However, since all the important newspapers were founded, owned, ran and read by the British, they were adamantly pro-British. This means that the press generally supported the

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[250] Won Lin Ken: Commercial Growth before the Second World War, p. 41, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Singapore, 1991, p. 41-65.

[251] Carl Gibson-Hill: The Singapore Chronicle, Singapore, 1953, p. 173, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 6.

[252] Chen Mong Hock: The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore, 1812-1912, Singapore, 1967, p. 24 et sqq.

[253] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 18, 19.

[254] Soh Tiang Keng: The Singapore Press, Its Role in a Multi-Racial City-State, Singapore, 1971, p. 4.

[255] Mary Turnbull: The Straits Settlements, 1826-67, Indian Presidency to Crown Colony, London, 1972, p. 134, 320.

inflow of news and values from the West and often hesitated to criticize the colonial administration, partly because the influence of the press was limited. Or, as Ang Peng Hwa, said of the *Straits Times*, "When it was founded, it was a trade journal. Trade was done by business. And business was done by the colonialists."[256]

4.2   Developments in the early 20th century

For the press, the 20th century began with a spectacle: the Russian-Japanese War in 1904/05. It was the world's first war in which an "Asian" nation defeated a "Western" nation: "Never in history has Singapore witnessed a spectacle of such impressive array as the passage of the Baltic fleet on Saturday afternoon", commented an editor, "and never, according to all the chances of war and precedents of history, will she ever witness it again".[257] Unfortunately, he was proven wrong. Ten years later, World War I broke out, during which around nine million people were killed on the battlefield and nearly as many on the home fronts due to food shortage, genocide and ground combats.

In this context, people's interest in news rapidly increased starting at the beginning of the century. So it is not surprising that further newspapers were launched. In Kuala Lumpur, the *Malay Mail* was started in 1896. In Penang, the *Straits Echo* was founded in 1903. In Ipoh, the *Times of Malaya* was set up in 1904. And in Singapore, the *Eastern Daily Mail* (1905) and the *Malaya Tribune* (1913) were launched.[258] The latter even emerged as a competitor to the *Singapore Free Press* and the *Straits Times* because it catered to the English-speaking educated classes, including wealthy Chinese. But the *Malaya Tribune* lost out to the competition. *The Straits Times* doubled its circulation. And the *Singapore Free Press* was converted into a morning paper in order to be the first to report about the events in Manchuria and Western Europe.[259]

In addition, several Chinese-language newspapers were launched, but none of them survived for long. The *Sing Po* was established in 1890 and folded nine years later. The *Thien Nan Shin Pao* was founded in 1898 and shut down seven years later. The *Jit Shin Pau* was run from 1899 and folded four years later. The *Chong Shing Yit Pao* was established in 1907 and closed down two years later. And the *Sun Pao* was introduced in 1909 and shut

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[256] Ang Peng Hwa in the interview with the author of this dissertation.
[257] After Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 63.
[258] All of these newspapers appeared in English language.
[259] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 65.

down just a few months after. The Tamil-language *Al-Imam* ("The Leader") shared a similar same fate; it was introduced in 1906 and ceased publication two years later.[260]

The main reason for these unsuccessful operations was the false belief that peace would prevail and trade would continue to boom. Instead, a rising number of commodities were in short supply and prices exploded. Paper, usually ordered from Korea, became particularly expensive due to the Russian-Japanese War (in Manchuria). So the duration of a newspaper's survival largely depended on its savings. The *Thoe Lam Jit Poh*, for instance, began just a few months before the Russian-Japanese War in 1904 and survived only a few months because its liquid capital of 30 000 dollars was exhausted in early 1905.[261]

Another effect was that the editors were getting bolder. In particular, Alexander William Still from the *Straits Times* showed courage.[262] On 8 October 1913, he explained his understanding of the press in an editorial, "For our own part, we cherish the liberty of the press simply for its value to the community as a whole. […]. But in the modern constitution of society, the press has great functions to perform. It is the chief safeguard against corruption. […] Our business is to do what we deem right and necessary in the public interest, and no law court can be the keeper of our conscience."[263]

In the same year, the first libel case against a newspaper was filed and several followed. The most notable case was brought before the courts in 1921, when Alexander William Still had argued that the Singapore Cold Storage Company was operating at a loss. The *Straits Times* lost the case and was ordered to pay 5 000 Singapore dollars, according to Mary Turnbull.[264] The journalist Arthur Wilson estimated that all libel cases against the *Straits Times* under the editorship of Alexander William Still cost the sum of 30 000 dollars. But it was a good investment because the paper was henceforth known as "Thunderer of the East" – in remembrance of the *Times* in London.[265]

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[260] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 8-23, and other sources.
[261] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 11.
[262] A decade earlier, on 14 June 1900, a *Straits Times* writer had demanded, "A country, colony or republic is doomed when the principle of authority is gone. We shall, in our columns, avoid giving offence to individuals. If we unwittingly fail on that point, our columns are open for redress. But we act on the principle that it is better to avoid offending people than to have to tender apology." Straits Times: Editorial, Singapore, 14 July 1900, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 60.
[263] Straits Times: Editorial, Singapore, 08 October 1913, p. 2, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 69.
[264] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 69, 70.
[265] Even the small, four-sheet Chinese-language *Thien Nan Shin Pao* contributed to the development of the press in Singapore, because it was careful in its selection of news items. Although it focused on China, it did not reproduce the "wonder" tales and "hearsay" reports which were so common in other papers.

Meanwhile, the *Straits Times* was converted into a private company with a capitalization valued at 100 000 Singapore dollars (1900).[266] Not only does this mark the end of the "good old days" when the editor was also the proprietor, it also marks the beginning of the professionalization of the press, because only profitable papers had a chance to survive the calamities caused by the Russian-Japanese War (1904-1905) and World War I (1914-1918).[267]

So it might be concluded that in the early 20th century, the press was maturing and becoming a big business. In 1923, the multimillionaire rubber magnate Tan Kah Kee (1874-1961) invested a larger sum in the establishment of the *Nanyang Sian Pau*. And in 1929, one of the "Tiger Balm Oil" brothers Aw Boon Haw (1882-1954) established the *Sin Chew Jit Poh*.[268] Both papers soon enjoyed a good share of the market but never reached the circulation number of the *Straits Times*.

4.2.1   World War II and the Japanese oppression

In the Western hemisphere, it is often believed that World War I and World War II broke out in Europe. Actually, both had forerunners in Asia: the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894/95, after which Taiwan was ceded to Japan, the Russian-Japanese War in 1904/05, after which Japan annexed the Korean peninsula, and the Second Sino-Japanese War from 1937 until 1945, during which Japan occupied Southern China. The origins of these conflicts are complex but one was the growing "Japanese Nationalism" which refers to a blend of patriotic and nationalist ideas combining the "Samurai" code "Bushido" with the "Hachiman" cult and contemporary ideologies.[269]

When the Japanese military came to power in the aftermath of the Great Depression ("Black Friday", 1929), it cut all major links with the rest of the world by withdrawing from the League of Nations ("Treaty of Versailles", 1919) and the "Washington Naval Agreement" (1921).[270] Simultaneously, the military put the media under control by establishing a national

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[266] In spring 1900, the plant and assets of the *Straits Times* were sold for 85 000 dollars, after keen bidding drove the price higher than expected, to a young man on behalf of a syndicate that converted it into a private company.
[267] Soh Tiang Keng: The Singapore Press, Its Role in a Multi-Racial City-State, Singapore, 1971, p. 4.
[268] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 13-15.
[269] "Bushido" is an ethical code of conduct that was developed between the 11th and 14th century and formalized during the years of the Tokugawa shogunate for the members of the Samurai class. "Hachiman" is the Shinto god of war and divine protector of the Japanese people.
[270] After the "Black Friday", many people feared heavy financial losses due to the close relations between Japan and the United States, and therefore welcomed that the international links were cut off. The "Washington Naval Treaty" limited naval armaments.

information department and giving exclusive authorization to the Domei Tsushin news agency. As a result, the number of newspapers in Japan dwindled from around 1 200 in 1937 to 55 five years later and the few which survived carried henceforth officially approved information only.[271] Basically the same thing happened in the Southeast Asian countries occupied by Japanese troops, including Singapore.

When war broke out in Europe, the news spread quickly throughout Asia. Already on 2 September 1939, the *Straits Times* reported the German invasion of Poland and the ultimatum by Britain and France which followed. The next day, several radio stations broadcasted the speech by Britain's Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain (1869-1940) live and in full length, declaring that Britain is at war with Germany, while the press echoed the general opinion of its readers that the time of broken promises was over.

Back then, all the newspapers in Singapore were in full support of the British position. The *Straits Times* even sponsored a war fund which raised more than six million Singapore dollars and some editors, such as Ivan Palmer, quit their jobs in order to join the allied forces against the axis powers.[272]

Although the battles were still far away, many difficulties arose in the region. Within a few months, food became scarce. Electricity, water and transportation were becoming major problems.[273] Paper was also getting to be in short supply and the number of staff continued to dwindle.[274] In this period, the editors depended almost fully on what the authorities released and what news agencies such as Reuters transmitted.[275]

Since the editors were asked not to publish strategically critical information such as specific reference to naval ship movements or about the arrival of reinforcement troops, the press played an active part in bolstering a false feeling of security. In January 1941, the *Singapore Free Press* reported that "the majority of well-informed people do not believe that the Japanese in their present difficulties will branch out on fresh ventures."[276] At this time, the Japanese military was already preparing its next attacks.

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[271] Charles Moses: Mass Communication in Asia, A Brief History, Singapore, 1978, p. 14.
[272] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 103, 104.
[273] A pen worth 15 dollars in pre-war days fetched 500 dollars in March 1944 and 5 000 dollars another year later. Eunice Thio: The Syonan Years, 1942-1945, p. 103, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Singapore, 1991, p. 95-114.
[274] With the outbreak of the war, the *Straits Times* was reduced to 16 pages, and by 1941 shrank again to 12 pages of smaller size.
[275] In addition to the news that was transcribed from radio broadcasts.
[276] After Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 167.

As late as 6 December 1941, two days before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the *Singapore Herald* still made the people believe that "peace can […] be saved". The newspapers did not report for two days that Penang had fallen, although the island is only a few hundred kilometers away. And even 24 hours before the siege of Singapore, the newspapers did not clearly point out the danger so that only few citizens fled.[277]

To be fair, no one had expected that Japan would attack the American Pacific fleet in Pearl Harbor, invade Hong Kong, Thailand and the Philippines, and drop bombs on Singapore's main public squares within such a short period of time.[278] The effects were tremendous. In the United States, the public was shocked by the significant number of sunken ships which were all named after states in America (Tennessee, Nevada, Arizona, etc.) and called for immediate action.[279] In Southeast Asia, however, there were not many options open. Singapore had just a few planes. And only the "Prince of Wales" and the veteran cruiser "Repulse" were deployed to protect the naval base, the main object of the defense plan.[280]

Surprisingly, the Japanese attacked the island not only from the sea but mainly from the hinterland in the north by bike and on foot. There are numerous accounts describing this attack, particularly regarding the brutality of the Japanese troops. However, starting on Christmas in 1941, the aggressors began broadcasting from a wireless station in Penang urging citizens to light their homes in order to protect themselves from B29-bombers. In addition, they dropped leaflets on Singapore to surrender. Meanwhile, the local newspapers still expressed the hope that further British troops would arrive.[281]

(16) World War II in Asia	
1937	The "Marco Polo Bridge Incident" leads to the Second Sino-Japanese War
1940	Japan occupies French Indochina and signs an agreement formalizing the "Axis Powers"
1941	In response to an oil embargo, Japan attacks the United States at Pearl Harbor
1942	Japan invades Malaya, Borneo, Burma and parts of the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia)
1944	General MacArthur concentrates troops in Southeast Asia in order to fight back the Japanese
1945	On 6 August, an atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima

One of the first newspapers that ceased publication was the *Tribune*, because its office had received a direct hit during an air raid and the emergency printing plant, which had wisely been installed in the editor's home, was not adequate. It folded on 11 February 1942.[282] On

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[277] Instead, many people demanded weapons because they still believed that the Japanese troops could be stopped: "Give us guns and we will fight!"

[278] "Japan strikes against Britain and US", headed the *Straits Times* in the afternoon edition of 8 December 1941.

[279] The attack killed more than 2 400 servicemen and 68 civilians. Twelve warships and 188 aircrafts were destroyed or damaged. A few hours after the attack, president Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared war on Japan, but the allied forces decided to fight against Germany first and to attack Japan later.

[280] Both ships were destroyed in early February 1942.

[281] Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 164.

[282] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 111.

the following day, most of Singapore's media professionals fled. The editors of the *Malaya Tribune* and the *Straits Times*, Edwin Maurice (Jimmy) Golver and George William Seabridge, took a boat to India, while the war correspondent of the London-based *News Chronicle*, Burly Dickson Brown, was already on his way to Australia. Some like *Singapore Free Press* editor David Waite died while trying to escape. Among those who stayed in Singapore were the *Straits Times*' editors Harry Miller, George Peet and Leslie Hoffman, the paper's chief editor after the war. Consequently, the *Straits Times* was reduced to a small single-sided sheet and distributed free of charge.

On the evening of 15 February 1942, the editors received a message from Governor Shenton Thomas that all units remain in the position which they occupied that morning.[283] On the same day, Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival (1887-1966) surrendered unconditionally.[284] The Union Jack was lowered and the Rising Sun was raised – ending 123 years of British rule. To Britain's new Prime Minister Winston Churchill (1874-1965), the fall of Singapore was the "worst disaster and largest capitulation in British history."[285]

Those who suffered most during the Japanese occupation were the British and the Chinese, although the latter had supposedly been liberated from "Western Imperialism" by an Asian nation. In the first week of the occupation, approximately 20 000 Chinese lost their lives.[286] The reason was that many Chinese living in Singapore had been engaged in China's battles against Japan. Only the Malays and Tamils were treated relatively well and many asked to join the Indian National Army to fight for the independence of India.

Apart from Leslie Hoffman, who was interrogated for two months, the Japanese took no special measures against journalists other than interning them in prisons and camps. There, Harry Miller and Guy Wade produced news sheets in order to boost the morale of the 700 to 3 500 internees. The *Karikal Chronicle* appeared for only three months and was then replaced by the *Changi Guardian*.[287] Both are revealing sources because of their detailed reports about the experiences of the survivors of "The Last Days of Singapore".

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[283] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 112.
[284] Eunice Thio: The Syonan Years, 1942-1945, p. 95, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Singapore, 1991, p. 95-114.
[285] Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 187.
[286] A first-hand account of the massacre is the memoirs of Mamoru Shinozaki who worked as a press attaché at the Japanese consulate before the war and was sent to prison when the war broke out. Later, he served as director of the education and welfare department. Mamoru Shinozaki: Syonan, My Story, The Japanese Occupation of Singapore, Singapore, 1975. Compare with Thumboo Danaraj: Japanese Invasion of Malaya and Singapore, Memoirs of a Doctor, Kuala Lumpur, 1990.
[287] The *Karikal Chronicle* appeared for the first time on 19 February 1942, but only published 14 issues because the internees were moved to another prison where the *Changi Guardian* and the *Changi Chimes* were printed. Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 116, 117, 121-124.

There was also resistance media.[288] Already in early 1942, the Malayan Broadcasting Corporation had transferred equipment to Batavia and set up a pirate radio station, broadcasting on the Singapore wavelength, but it did not last long due to the Japanese invasion of Indonesia. And Robert Scott, who had headed the "Far Eastern Bureau" of the British Ministry of Information, formed a secret "Camp News Committee" that received allied broadcasts and disseminated the news in town, which was highly illegal. Its impact, however, was marginal.[289]

Meanwhile, the mass media came fully under the control of the Japanese, who provided jobs denied to local people during colonial times.[290] Goh Peng Hian, for instance, who could not find an employment as a reporter when he left school in 1933, obtained a position at the newly established *Syonan Times*.

The first Japanese-controlled newspapers already appeared a few days after the fall of Singapore.[291] The *Syonan Times*, formerly known as the *Straits Times* and later renamed in *Syonan Shimbun*, became the dominant newspaper for English-language readers. And the *Syonan Jit Poh*, formerly known as the *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, became the most important newspaper for Chinese-language readers.[292] In total, 15 newspapers were published in Singapore during the Japanese occupation. They were all controlled by the Synonan Newspaper Association - "Syonan" was the Japanese name for the island and means "Light of the South".[293]

In addition, the Singaporeans were encouraged to learn Japanese, listen to Japanese music and to watch Japanese movies.[294] The calendar was changed from the year 1942 to 2602, and clocks were put forward two hours to Tokyo time.[295] The purpose of all this was to introduce the Japanese way to people's daily lives.

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[288] National Archives: The Japanese Occupation, Singapore, 1942-1945, Singapore, 1985, p. 117 et sqq.
[289] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 110 et sqq.
[290] Compare with John Clammer: Japan in Southeast Asia, An Introductory Essay, p. 3 et. sqq., published in Eyal Ben-Ari (Ed.): Japan in Singapore, Cultural Occurences and Cultural Flows, Richmond, 2000, p. 1-36.
[291] Perhaps the most successful revival was the *Malay Mail*. It had ceased publication two days before the fall of Kuala Lumpur, and its successor resumed publication only eleven days later and henceforth supported the Japanese. In 1943, the Japanese governor even gave a lunch in honor of its editor, Francis Cooray, because he had contributed so much to the "understanding between Nippon government officials and the public."
[292] From 1942 onwards, the *Straits Times* was edited by Tatsuki Fujii, who had been released from prison in exchange for British internees.
[293] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 116 et sqq.
[294] In January 1944, the Japanese considered forbidding the use of the English language in Singapore. Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 207.
[295] Eunice Thio: The Syonan Years, 1942-1945, p. 95, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Singapore, 1991, p. 95-114.

Apart from local sports and some cultural activities, the journalists did not have much to write about. All the relevant information was provided by the Japanese military or the Domei news agency, which was basically the same thing. This is also why neither the Japanese nor the citizens of Singapore were informed when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, killing more than 70,000 people.[296]

Consequently, the news of Japan's surrender came as a sudden but welcome surprise:[297] "World at peace again; Formal surrender of Japan concluded", declared the *Syonan Shimbun* in its last issue on 3 September 1945 and announced that British troops would land two days later. But General Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964), who commanded the Allied Pacific fleet, ordered that no landing should take place until all the formalities were fulfilled. So it took three more uneasy weeks before the liberation forces landed.

Interestingly, two Japanese Domei war correspondents helped to revive the press in Singapore. They freed *Straits Times* chairman Robert Burns and his editor George Peet from prison and brought them to their former office, so that the *Straits Times* was the first newspaper to be revived after the war.[298]

However, the war had several long-term effects. One was that non-Caucasians became actively involved in the media industry. Besides the Chinese, the Malays and Tamils also benefited from this. Another result is that the women who had been mobilized by the Japanese did not retreat to their homes when the British returned. They remained in the labor force, either because of necessity or by choice. So it was just a question of time until they were appreciated as readers and as consumers of products advertised in the newspapers.

There is also no doubt that it was the Japanese rather than the British who enhanced Singapore's role as a regional media hub, since it was the Japanese who had moved their regional headquarters to the island and had held top-level consultations there.[299] All this, however, should not blur the fact that it was a very violent and oppressive period.

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[296] In November 1944, American Air Force bombers raided Singapore's harbor and, from July 1945 onwards, Allied planes appeared with increasing frequency.

[297] Internees at Changi Prison heard about Japan's formal surrender on 15 August 1945 on secret wireless sets, but it was not officially announced until two days later.

[298] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 116 et sqq.

[299] The Japanese envisaged "Syonan" as the hub of "Nampo", the southern region of Japan's "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" which eventually included Malaya, Singapore, Burma, Thailand, Indo-China, the Philippines and Indonesia. Compare with Eunice Thio: The Syonan Years, 1942-1945, p. 110, 111, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Singapore, 1991, p. 95-114.

4.3 The press in the struggle for independence

In contrast to other countries such as the Philippines, where the people and with them the press had actively fought for independence, in Singapore this was not the case.[300] There was no famous editor like Jose Rizal (1861-1896) and also no partisan newspaper such as the *Manila Times* (1898). The independence of Singapore was granted rather than being hard won.

When the British arrived in September 1945, a colorful parade was held. The citizens were proud that they had survived the wartime cruelties and that "their" forces brought an abrupt end to it.[301] The *Straits Times* ran following headline on that day, 7 September 1945: "Singapore is British again – Our day of liberation".[302]

The story behind this headline is even more revealing, because it illustrates the confused situation in the aftermath of World War II.[303] Colonel John Dumeresque instructed the editors to stop printing because all newsprint was reserved for the official *Malayan Times*, but the chairman of the *Straits Times* ordered his staff to go ahead in defiance of the ban. That was the first time that a newspaper overrode a command by the authorities and it was also the first time that the authorities hesitated to enforce their command.[304]

In other words: The British authorities were welcomed back with relief because it was benign; and because of its relatively weak position in returning. Also, unlike that of the Japanese, its image was not marred by cruelty or the dragooning of the population. But the unquestioning trust in its ability to protect the territory and to solve its problems had been shattered. Literally speaking, Raffles' statue, which had been moved away by the Japanese, was returned to its place but it had somehow faded in color.[305]

In the aftermath, the press quickly adopted the role of a watchdog, but continued to support the British on many occasions. The editors downplayed the situation just described and

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[300] In the Philippines, the fight for independence already began at the end of the 19th century when the native "Katipuneros" attacked the Spanish during the Philippine Revolution (1896-1898). It resulted in the first "Philippine Declaration of Independence" on 12 June 1898.
[301] Harold Pearson: A History of Singapore, London, 1956, p. 176 et sqq.
[302] Straits Times: Singapore is British Again, Singapore, 07 September 1945, p. 1.
[303] See Daljit Singh (Ed.): Singapore, An Illustrated History, 1841-1884, Singapore, 1884, p. 50 et sqq.
[304] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 132, 134.
[305] When Franklin Gimson arrived in April 1946, he followed the tradition started by Stamford Raffles that governors arrive by ship, although he actually came by plane. However, he did not become "Governor of the Straits Settlements" as all of his predecessors in the pre-war period had been titled. Instead, he was appointed as "Governor of the Crown Colony of Singapore". At first glance, this seems to be a marginal difference but it is not. Henceforth, Penang and Malacca, two of the three towns of the Straits Settlement were part of what was known as the Federation of Malaya, and Singapore was conceded to be a self-contained territory. Harold Pearson: A History of Singapore, London, 1956, p. 186.

proved its positive attitude by recognizing the great difficulties the British had to face. In September 1945, the *Straits Times* even devoted its entire front page with a conciliatory article in order to prevent a panic that was spread by the official *Malayan Times*, which printed that the Japanese military "banana" currency was worthless.[306] And in the following month, it accepted that the introduction of income tax was inevitable, although its readers were strongly against it.

The interim government drew the conclusion that an independent newspaper could be more useful than an official one, because independent newspapers are generally more critical and also higher regarded by readers.[307] So the authorities stopped enforcing censorship but continued to keep their eyes on the press, since it alerted them to numerous problems that needed to be solved, for example leaks in pipelines.[308] The press probably never enjoyed so much freedom, credibility and respect than in this short period: "If ever there was a time when the *S*[*traits*] *T*[*imes*] had a useful job of work to do in Singapore, it's now, in this phase of rehabilitation."[309]

The first postwar issues carried more international news from Reuters than local news. Even the first general strike on 20 January 1946 did not make it on the front page. Instead, the debates in the United Nations, the civil war in China and the violence in Palestine were reported. Even the few anti-colonial editorials which were printed were taken from prominent newspapers in America or news agencies. This dependence even increased after 1 July 1946 when the cable rates between America and Malaya were halved and services such as Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI) became affordable.[310]

The press, however, flourished. By January 1948, the circulation of the *Straits Times* had already shot up to 42 000 copies per day and rose to more than 50 000 copies in early 1950. The *Singapore Tiger Standard*, *Sunday Times* and *Sunday Mail* were also doing well. In addition, numerous magazines were launched, including the *Radio Weekly*, *Young Parents*, *Go Magazine*, *Home and Déco*r and *Singapore Trade*.

Consequently, the publishers of the *Straits Times* listed the company on the Singapore Stock Exchange and spent more than 500 000 Singapore dollars for new machines and additional

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[306] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 135, 136.
[307] The *Malay Tribune* folded in 1951.
[308] In return, the *Straits Times* praised that the people "could not ask for a more genuinely sympathetic, considerate and liberal attitude towards the civil population by the military government."
[309] Straits Times: Singapore Diary, Singapore, 03 October1945, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 143.
[310] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 145, 146, 149.

staff.[311] By the end of 1952, the *Straits Times* already had a regional network of around 100 correspondents, including Mary Heathcote as the first female writer.[312]

Political reporting, however, started relatively slowly with strikes and riots, but speeded up with the "Suez Crisis" in November 1956.[313] While the *Singapore Free Press* supported the British position as upholding international law, the *Straits Times* passionately argued that the British actions were morally indefensible. This was the first time the *Straits Times* did not defend British politics and, as a result, it received many letters from angry readers.[314]

Meanwhile, numerous local associations and parties were founded, including the Malayan Democratic Union (MDU, 1945) and the Malay Nationalist Party (MNP, 1945). Another one was the Malayan Communist Party (MCP, 1930). It tried to make the people believe that its guerilla troops beat the Japanese, although in reality it did not contribute to Japan's surrender.[315] While the British feared this group as being a dangerous force, many local politicians welcomed it as a possible coalition partner.[316]

There was a common belief that independence could only be achieved through merging with Malaya and that this could only be achieved with the support of the communists. In order to achieve this, a referendum was held in 1962. Two options were presented to the public: the first envisaged that Singapore would become a federal state with no more autonomy than the other eleven states of Malaysia. The second option was that all Singapore citizens would become citizens of the federation but retain a large extent of their autonomy. Each required a two-thirds majority.

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[311] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 157, 179, 182.
[312] In October 1960, the *Straits Times* even had its own correspondent in Congo covering the activities of the Malayan special contingent of the United Nations peacekeeping mission. While the international agencies dealt mainly with big topics such as the diplomatic discussions at United Nations headquarters in New York, reporter Wee Kim Wee found himself in the unique position of being able to get news out ahead of both the Malayan radio and the local people. Via Brazzaville and London, he dispatched his information within just two hours to Singapore using the cheap British Commonwealth rate of a penny a word. That was even faster and more efficient than the military was able to do it. Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 225.
[313] The strategically important Suez Canal, finally opened in 1869, had been financed by the French and the Egyptian governments. Later, the Egyptian government's share was bought out by the British. Since all of them had economic interests in it, Egypt was pitted against an alliance between France, Britain and Israel. In 1956, an armed conflict erupted over the issue. When the USSR threatened to intervene on behalf of Egypt, the USA feared a larger conflict and forced the British and French to withdraw. The "Suez Crisis" resulted in the resignation of the British Prime Minister Anthony Eden and marked the completion of the shift in the global balance of power from Europe to the USA and the USSR respectively.
[314] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 208, 209.
[315] Already on 25 September 1945, more than two weeks before the British landed, the "Central Executive Committee" issued a manifesto stressing that it wants "to establish a democratic government in Malaya [including Singapore] with an electorate drawn from all races of each state and the anti-Japanese army."
[316] In the years between 1945 and 1947 alone, they organized altogether 119 strikes, of which around 85 percent were successful.

Around 73 percent chose the second option and 26 percent left the form blank because the pro-communist Barisan Sosialis (founded in 1961) opposing the idea of a referendum had recommended doing so.[317] But this move had been anticipated by the People's Action Party, founded in 1954 by Lee Kuan Yew, as seen in the insertion of a clause that all blank or invalid votes would be counted as being on the side of the People's Action Party (the second option). Though this method was highly controversial, the ruling party used the mandate to merge Singapore with Malaysia on 16 September 1963. But this was not the only outcome. The referendum (as well as the earlier election in May 1959) was accompanied by extremely heated exchanges between the media and politicians.

Although newspapers in Singapore generally supported the merger with Malaysia, some were critical how it was achieved. Notably the English-language press got in trouble with the local political parties, particularly Leslie Hoffman's *Straits Times* with Lee Kuan Yew's People's Action Party (1954).[318] Already in 1956, a top-level politician had accused the "mouthpiece of British colonial interests" (meaning the *Straits Times*) that it "favors only those who in its opinion are playing the colonial game."[319] Also, Lee Kuan Yew had the impression that the *Straits Times* was "vehemently anti-PAP to prevent us from winning and forming the government."

Both argued that newspapers which were owned and run by foreigners cannot truly represent the interests of the local people. But at that time, the *Straits Times* was no longer foreign-owned. Thus, the editors protested and soon, freedom of the press became a big issue in Singapore: "Not for hundred years has the freedom of press in Singapore been in such danger as it is today."[320]

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[317] In total, 624 000 people were allowed to vote, and nearly 90 percent of those eligible voted.
[318] The problems with the Chinese-, Malay- and Tamil-language press were over Chinese chauvinism towards the other ethnical groups.
[319] Lin Chin Siong in a speech in the Legislative Assembly on 4 October 1956. Published in Straits Times: Unknown, Singapore, 10 May 1956, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 201.
[320] On 16 December 1960, the *Straits Times* devoted a full-length editorial to the issue of freedom of the press. "It is plain that if the Press were completely free, the matter of its freedom would not have to be discussed. It is no less plain that if the press were completely controlled, the matter of this control could not be debated. […] The position today is that no newspaper can be printed and published without government permission. It needs a second permit for its sale in the other territory. These permits must be renewed annually. They can be refused without reason being given, they can be withdrawn without notice, the courts have no jurisdiction and the newspaper no redress. The press is not free. It may be asked why the press should claim a greater freedom than the individual whose fundamental freedoms are restricted by legislation which permits detention without trial. The answer is simple, and it should be convincing. If a newspaper is subversive, if its editors are seditious, if the press stirs up communal strife – the activities for which personal freedom can be lost – the evidence is there in black and white. Newspapers cannot commit their crimes in secret. The printed word is never too terrified to testify." Straits Times: Editorial, Singapore, 16 December 1960. Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 223.

Since a solution was not in sight, the *Straits Times* decided to move its main office to Kuala Lumpur, where the company already owned the *Malay Mail*. In context with the election and merger, Lee Kuan Yew warned on 18 May 1959 that "any newspaper that tries to sour up or strain relations between the federation and Singapore after May 30 will go in for subversion." Leslie Hoffman took the case to the International Press Institute in Zurich which was meeting in West Berlin at the time, but not much came out of it.

"This was a very significant moment in the media history of Singapore", said Arun Mahizhman in an interview with the author of this dissertation, because never before had the press been so directly confronted.[321] How heated the situation was, is also shown by the fact that even Chinese- and Tamil-language newspapers came under fire. The *Kerala Bandu* was banned for five months, and the *Nanyang Siang Pau* was intercepted on the causeway to Kuala Lumpur without any explanation.

However, the political parties in both parts of the federation failed to reach a power-sharing agreement, which led to the announcement of Singapore's separation from Malaysia in a radio broadcast on 9 September 1965 at 10 a.m.[322] This decision brought the newspapers in a difficult situation, especially those which had moved from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur or vice versa. Neither the Singaporean nor the Malaysian government put pressure on the publishers at this early stage, but it was clear that each wanted to have an own national paper.[323]

The Chinese-language *Nanyang Siang Pau,* which already had plans for the separation of the company, abandoned its Kuala Lumpur office within ten days and moved back to Singapore, while the Malay-language *Utusan Melaya* went in the opposite direction.[324] The decision for the *Straits Times* was tougher, because at least 70 percent of its owners were based in Singapore and up to 90 percent of the editors located in Kuala Lumpur.[325] Since it had readers on both sides of the new border, it henceforth published two versions, one for Federation of Malaysia and the other one for independent and newly separate Singapore.[326] But this was obviously not a long-term solution.

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[321] See the documentation of the interviews.
[322] One of the main issues was how the different ethnical groups would be represented in the government. Lee Kuan Yew: The Battle for a Malaysian Malaysia, Singapore, 1965, p. 5 et sqq.
[323] After riots in Kuala Lumpur broke out, the Tunku Abdul Rahman declared a state of emergency in Malaysia in 1969. At the end of the emergency, journalists were urged to guarantee loyalty to the king.
[324] Chen Ai Yen: The Mass Media, 1819-1980, p. 292, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Singapore, 1991, p. 288-311.
[325] "Singapore Separation like Siamese Twins Operation: Razak", headlined the *Straits Times* on 1 September 1965. After Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 282.
[326] At this time, the *Straits Times* described itself as the "National Newspaper" which was hard to justify after separation, but it would have also been embarrassing to drop this masthead immediately.

So it might be concluded that the press played a very small role in the struggle for Singapore's independence, if any, because there was not much struggle at all. In fact, some writers for the *Straits Times* even asked the British to stay in the country. But the foreign press demanded their retreat. The London-based *Observer*, for instance, criticized that the "current cost of British Far Eastern operations, based on Singapore, is reckoned at 350 m[illion] pound sterling a year" and asked whether "we can afford this […] when our economy is fighting for its life."

Also the London-based *Guardian* could not accept that the government was spending 600 000 pounds sterling per day for the troops in Singapore while 600 000 people in Britain were unemployed: "Britain should not be asked to make economic sacrifices at home in order to maintain Singapore as a costly alternative to [the British garrisons at] Aldershot or Catterick."[327]

(17) Major events in Singapore from 1819 until 1965	
1819	Founding of the settlement on the southern tip of the Malay peninsula by Stamford Raffles
1826	Formation of the Straits Settlements (Singapore, Malacca, Penang)
1967	Singapore becomes a British crown colony
1869	The opening of the Suez Canal increases Singapore's accessibility
1941	Japanese troops conquer the city
1945	Japan surrenders, the British return
1954	Establishment of the People's Action Party
1959	Lee Kuan Yew becomes prime minister
1961	Members of the communist faction of the People's Action Party form the Barisan Sosialis
1963	After a referendum Singapore joins the Federation of Malaysia
1965	Singapore leaves the federation and becomes an independent country

4.4   The press in the nation-building process

In contrast to other countries such as the Philippines, where nationhood developed during the struggle for independence, no one had intended Singapore to become a separate, independent country. Thus, the ruling People's Action Party did not only have to tackle the practical problems of building an independent economy and defense. It also had to create among the citizens a feeling of identity and solidarity with their newly independent territory, "making them feel they are Singaporeans instead of Chinese, Malays, Indians and

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[327] The Observer: Unknown, London, 15 August 1965; The Guardian: Unknown, London, 07 February 1967; and The Guardian: Unknown, London, 21 April 1967, both after Toni Schoeneberger: Der Britische Rueckzug aus Singapore, 1945-1967, Zurich, 1981, p. 104, 105.

Eurasians."[328] Neither prime minister Lee Kuan Yew (1923-) nor any of his ministers had any doubt that the media were of vital importance in this process.[329]

Unfortunately, relations between journalists and notably Lee Kuan Yew were still tense. Anthony Polsky, who tried to explain the quarrels of *Lee Kuan Yew Versus the Press* in 1971, argues that the "ruthlessness and increasing despotism of his rule" were an outcome of a series of four crises, starting with his conflict with the communists in the late 1950s, often described as "Riding the Tiger".[330] But his argumentation is not fully convincing, because it does not reflect to what extent the press was involved in the crises. It is also hard to believe that Lee Kuan Yew was just reacting to the events around him, as he never conceals his prejudice towards what he perceived to be the sub-standard quality of the *Straits Times* and other newspapers.

Some years later, Lee Kuan Yew even said: "I read reports of all the bright students going into engineering, the sciences, medicine, economics, and so on. The not-so-bright go to political science and sociology. When they cannot get a good job, they go on to journalism." On another occasion, he noted that all kinds of professionals (doctors, lawyers, engineers) have to pass stringent examinations and are bound by rules of conduct except for journalists: "What amazes me is that this powerful instrument does not require of its practitioners special professional training nor codes of conduct to govern them. You can be a journalist without understanding the impact on the minds of millions when you write smut and circulate it through millions of copies to literate and semi-literate people."[331]

Lee Kuan Yew's negative attitude towards the press probably results from earlier experiences. When he returned from Cambridge to Singapore in late 1949, "press reports and photographs [...] caused [several] riots with loss of life." One clash happened in 1950 and became known as the "Maria Hertogh Riots". It lasted for three days during which in total 18 people were killed (nine by the rioters and nine shot by the police) and more than 170

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[328] Soh Tiang Keng: The Singapore Press, Its Role in a Multi-Racial City-State, Singapore, 1971, p. 11.
[329] Lee Kuan Yew was born on 16 September 1923 as a fourth-generation Chinese Singaporean. Educated in English at Telok Kurau Primary School, Raffles Institution and Raffles College, he studied law in Cambridge where he got grounding in economics and became interested in politics. When he returned to Singapore in 1949, he found a job as a lawyer and gained experience as an agent for John Laycock during election rallies and as a negotiator for several worker unions. In 1954, he founded the People's Action Party as an uneasy marriage between a group of Chinese-educated communists, English-educated socialists and English-educated anti-communists, and became prime minister later. Alex Josey: Lee Kuan Yew, The Struggle for Singapore, Singapore, 1974, p. 31-32; Bruno Zoratto: Lee Kuan Yew, Ein Leben fuer Singapur, Stuttgart, 1991, p. 16; Lee Kuan Yew: The Singapore Story, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, 1998, p. 129; Robert Milne: Singapore, The Legacy of Lee Kuan Yew, San Francisco, 1990, p. 62-64; and Pang Cheng Lian: Singapore's People's Action Party, Its History, Organization and Leadership, Singapore, 1971, p. 1 et sqq.
[330] The other crises were the "Confrontation" caused by Indonesia's president Sukarno against the federation, Singapore's expulsion from the federation and the Suez crisis. Anthony Polsky: Lee Kuan Yew Versus the Press, p. 183, 195, 196, published in *Pacific Community*, volume 3, number 1, Singapore, 1971, p. 183-203.
[331] After Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 25, 26.

people were injured.[332] Another clash with 36 dead and many more wounded happened on Prophet Mohammed's birthday in 1964. It was ignited by a Malay-language newspaper which had alleged that the Malay minority was being oppressed by the Chinese majority.[333]

Also, the "bad" behavior of the press before, during and after the merger with Malaysia obviously angered Lee Kuan Yew.[334] Not only did he have the impression that the press "saw the non-communist leadership as a Trojan horse of the Chinese-speaking communists", it even seemed to him that the English-language newspapers were "bitterly hostile to the P[eople's] A[ction] P[arty]".

Thus, he warned the editors that "they would give it to them as hard as they were giving it to us" and fired his "first salvo" by arguing that it was an open secret that the "mouthpiece of the British colonial interests" (meaning the *Straits Times*) would scoot to Kuala Lumpur as soon as People's Action Party won the next election.

Interestingly enough, he turned out to be right. The *Straits Times* moved to Kuala Lumpur and Lee Kuan Yew lost his remaining respect for those "birds of passage" flying away to the federation to "proclaim from there that they would die for the freedom of the press in Singapore". Even more embarrassing, the *Straits Times* moved back to Singapore after Singapore's separation and completely changed its editorial bias then.[335]

Consequently, Lee Kuan Yew began propounding his own concept, according to which politics should be reserved for professional politicians only, so no person or group of persons, organizations or associations would be allowed to comment on national politics without first joining or forming a political party.[336]

The role Lee Kuan Yew wanted the media to play, he explained in a speech at the meeting of the International Press Institute in Helsinki on 9 June 1971: "The mass media can help to present Singapore's problems simply and clearly and then explain, how, if they support certain programs and policies, these problems can be solved. Most important, we want the mass media to reinforce, not to undermine, the cultural values and social attitudes being

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[332] Tom Hughes: Tangled Worlds, The Story of Maria Hertogh, Singapore, 1980, p. 58-59.
[333] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, p. 218.
[334] Immediately after Singapore's separation from Malaysia, he expressed anger about a photograph which allegedly showed him smiling on the occasion of the separation, although some argue it showed the prime minister near to tears. Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 262.
[335] The company was split into the [New] Straits Times (Malaysia) which remained in Kuala Lumpur, and the Straits Times Press (Singapore).
[336] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 27.

inculcated in our schools and universities. The mass media can create a mood in which people become keen to acquire the knowledge, skills and disciplines of advanced countries. Without these, we can never hope to raise the standards of living of our people."

Henceforth, the stated objectives of the press in the 1970s, as announced by the Times Organization Group of Newspapers, were to "inform, to educate, to activate, and to entertain." "To inform" meant keeping readers abreast of developments in Singapore and abroad. "To educate" involved explaining major news events and creating a deeper awareness of the problems. "To activate", the most controversial aim, meant helping to seek solutions to community problems by providing forums for the exchange of views. And "to entertain" meant to "communicate without boring".[337]

One unknown scholar argued in 1971 that even some sort of intimidation was used to keep the media in line. "There exist then various checks and controls on the news media in Singapore today. They range from […] laws […] to discrete phone calls from top government officials to newspaper editors. […] Any newspaper man knows for a fact of life that if he had the bravado to publish Government classified information (a la Pentagon Papers) it is not his Publishing Permit that would be withdrawn or to a Court of Law that he would be dragged to, but to a Police Cell at the Central Police Station followed by a systematic search of his editorial offices by Internal Security Department, which is not for normal men a very happy state of affairs."[338]

Thus, not everybody was satisfied with this situation. In 1970, Deputy Prime Minister Goh Keng Swee commented that "we have in Singapore intellectual conformity in place of intellectual inquisitiveness and the sum total is a depressing climate of intellectual sterility." A few years later, Toh Chin Chye, chairman of the People's Action Party, complained that "the people of Singapore feel restless, that the government is doing or making decisions which they feel are being rammed down their throats."[339]

But, in general, the limited role of the press was accepted, even by journalists. Thus, the early 1970s marked not only the end of "expatriate editorship", after the manager of the *Straits Times* had to flee because of tax problems, it also marked the beginning of

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[337] Times Organization Group of Newspapers: Editorial Politics, Singapore, 1977, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 318, 319.
[338] AMIC: The Press in Singapore, Singapore, 1971, p. 1.
[339] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 298

"government say-so journalism."[340] This is the first indication that the news flows in Singapore had not become more just.

Nevertheless, the newspaper business flourished. In the early 1970s, there were twenty locally published papers available: eleven dailies and nine Sunday papers, with a total daily circulation of around 370 000 copies. Seven were in English, eight in Chinese, three in Tamil and two in Malay. The leading newspaper was the English-language *Straits Times* (1845); it had a daily circulation of almost 230 000 copies.[341]

(18) History of the *Straits Times* from the beginning until the early 1970s	
1845	Catchick Moses buys a printing press and appoints Robert Carr Woods as editor
1845	The first issue of the *Straits Times and Singapore Journal of Commerce* is published on 15 July
1858	Robert Carr Woods turns the paper into an afternoon daily
1861	John Cameron becomes editor
1870	The editors subscribe to Reuters news service
1896	Bicycles are bought for suburban delivery
1900	The plant and assets are sold in an auction and turned into a private corporation
1908	Alexander William Still is appointed as editor
1921	The first libel case is filed against the paper
1928	George William Seabridge changes the format and increases the size to 24 pages
1931	The first rotary press installed; several vans are bought
1935	The paper is delivered by plane to Kuala Lumpur and Penang
1937	The first advertisements are printed in color
1942	After the Japanese conquered the city, the last issue is published on 15 February
1942	The Japanese use the printing press for the *Syonan Times*, later renamed in *Syonan Shimbun*
1945	The *Straits Times* resumes publication on 7 September
1946	The editors subscribe to the Associated Press and United Press International news wires
1947	A teleprinter is installed to link the headquarters with branch offices
1950	The company is publicly listed at the stock market
1952	A.C. Simmons is appointed managing director
1956	Leslie Hoffman is appointed editor-in-chief
1959	After a dispute with Lee Kuan Yew, the headquarters are moved from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur
1972	A.C. Simmons regains his post as Managing Director
1973	The *Straits Times* moves back to Singapore and completely changes its editorial bias

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[340] In 1973, the *Straits Times* came under fire when the comptroller of Inland Revenue accused the company of alleged tax evasions on secret commissions paid into the accounts of a foreign subsidiary. A.C. Simmons, who, although he had worked for the *Straits Times* half of his life, had nothing do with the allegations, fled via Malaysia and Hong Kong to New Zealand and never came back to Singapore, since all those responsible had either already died or left Singapore. When he died in 1987, his sons brought their father's ashes back to Singapore, which was considered to bringing unfavorable "feng shui food". Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 305, 306.
[341] Soh Tiang Keng: The Singapore Press, Its Role in a Multi-Racial City-State, Singapore, 1971, p. 1, and Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 9.

Development

5.1   Dominance of the People's Action Party

The period from 1965 to 2000 was a turbulent time in Singapore's history. Apart from major events on the international level such as the "American War" in nearby Vietnam (1965-1973), politicians in Singapore had to face several difficulties. One was to uphold social peace and stability. Another one was to diffuse a general feeling of alienation between the different ethnic groups living in the independent and newly separate city state which was far away from being a nation.

The politicians believed that only a strong government could cope with these challenges. This is not surprising because many politicians in the region were this opinion; as described in the previous chapters. In fact, every political party intends - must intend - to gain as much power as possible in order to form a capable government. But in Singapore, the development as well as the outcome of the political competition is unusual.[342]

When Singapore was part of the Federation of Malaysia, there was a variety of parties representing different concepts. By backing the Singapore Alliance Party, the Malaysia-based United Malays National Organization (UMNO) tried to oust the Singapore-based People's Action Party (PAP), which was trying to expand its influence on the peninsula. In the 1963 general election, eight different parties plus several independent candidates lined up.[343] The People's Action Party was challenged in every single constituency.[344]

A new party having good chances to form or at least to be part of the government was Barisan Sosialis. It was founded by former left-wing members of the People's Action Party such as Lee Sie Choh and Lim Chin Siong after they had been expelled or had left the party because they were unhappy with the more moderate faction surrounding Lee Kuan Yew.[345]

The election was accompanied by very heated media campaigns. The People's Action Party accused its competitor for being a front for communism. This charge was vehemently denied

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[342] Chan Heng Chee: Political Developments, 1965-1979, p. 166, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Singapore, 1991, p. 157-181.

[343] The People's Action Party, Barisan Sosialis, United People's Party, Singapore People's Alliance, Pan-Malayan Islamic Party, United Democratic Party, Worker's Party and the Party Rakyat.

[344] Singapore Elections: Index, http://www.singapore-elections.com/, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2005; and Elections Department Singapore: Past Parliamentary Election Results, http://www.elections.gov.sg/past_parliamentary.htm, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2005.

[345] Pang Cheng Lian: Singapore's People's Action Party, Its History, Organization and Leadership, Singapore, 1971, p. 14, 15; and Chan Heng Chee: Political Parties, p. 167, 168, published in Jon Quah (Ed.): Government and Politics of Singapore, Oxford, 1985, p. 146-172.

by the members of the Barisan Sosialis, although it was obvious that some of its members admired the Chinese brand of revolutionary socialism. In return, the Barisan Sosialis tried to spread fear among the citizens that freedom would be curtailed if the People's Action Party rose to power.

In light of these events, the Internal Security Council launched operation "Cold Store" on 2 February 1963. Hundreds of pro-communists were arrested, including several leaders of the Barisan Sosialis and other organizations which were coincidentally challenging the People's Action Party.[346]

Furthermore, the ruling People's Action Party kept the official campaigning period (between nomination and polling day) to a legal minimum of nine days. This period coincided with festivities in Malaysia so that opposition parties had difficulties getting election materials printed. Only the People's Action Party had all its posters and brochures ready.[347]

As a result, the People's Action Party won nearly 47 percent of the vote: 37 out of 51 seats. Subsequently, Barisan Sosialis felt that it was pointless to continue the political struggle. One by one, they resigned from parliament. By 1968, there was not a single opposition in parliament left.[348] It took a full decade until they returned.

(19) Number of seats won by the People's Action Party in the parliamentary elections[349]							
Year	Number of seats	Fielded by the PAP	Unopposed	Contested	Won by the PAP	Seats for the PAP	Percentage
1963	51	51	0	51	37	37	72.50
1968	58	58	51	7	7	58	100.00
1972	65	65	8	57	57	65	100.00
1976	69	69	16	53	53	69	100.00
1980	75	75	37	38	38	75	100.00
1984	79	79	30	49	47	77	97.50
1988	81	81	11	70	69	80	98.80
1991	81	81	41	40	36	77	95.10
1997	83	83	47	36	34	81	97.60
2001	84	84	55	29	27	82	97.60

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[346] Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 28.
[347] Pang Cheng Lian: Singapore's People's Action Party, Its History, Organization and Leadership, Singapore, 1971, p. 17.
[348] They left the seats vacant because they thought that it would be more useful to "take the fight to the streets". In the following election, they asked the voters for blank ballots but only few followed.
[349] The table is based on data provided in Singapore Elections: Index, http://www.singapore-elections.com/, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2005; and Elections Department Singapore: Past Parliamentary Election Results, http://www.elections.gov.sg/past_parliamentary.htm, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2005.

(20) Number of votes won by the People's Action Party in the parliamentary elections[350]							
Year	Eligible voters	Total voters	Voters turnout in percent	Obtainable by the PAP	Won by the PAP	Percentage	Change to previous election
1963	617650	587433	95.10	581615	272924	46.90	- 7.20
1968	759367	84833	91.80	75894	65812	86.70	+ 39.20
1972	908382	812926	93.50	760468	524892	69.00	- 17.70
1976	1095817	857297	95.10	815130	590169	72.40	+ 3.40
1980	1290426	685141	95.50	636452	494268	77.70	+ 5.30
1984	1495389	944624	95.60	876565	568310	64.80	- 12.90
1988	1669013	1449838	94.70	1342435	848029	63.20	- 1.60
1991	1692384	847716	95.00	783612	477760	61.00	- 2.20
1997	1881011	765332	95.90	716745	465751	65.00	+ 4.00
2001	2036923	675306	94.60	625267	470765	75.30	+ 10.03

Meanwhile, Lee Kuan Yew cemented his power within the People's Action Party. One of his first steps was the introduction of a closed cadre system in which "the cardinals appoint the pope, and the pope appoints the cardinals", as Pang Cheng Liao describes it.[351] At the top is the so-called "Central Executive Committee" which chooses the cadres. The only distinction between an ordinary member and a cadre is the latter's right to vote every two years for the party's top leaders.[352] Nobody knows how many cadres there are because their names are kept secret. Originally, there were probably around 500 "temporary cadres" appointed. Diane Mauzy guesses that each year another 100 cadres are recommended. However, in such a closed system, it is apparent that the same group of people is elected again and again.[353]

Henceforth, power was kept to a handful of men headed by Lee Kuan Yew, who saw them as architects of a new society.[354] Among them were the "economic and social visionary" Goh Keng Swee, the "organizational utility man" Lim Kim San and the "history maker" Devan Nair.[355] The parliament continued to perform several functions. It was a good forum to acquire political skills and visibility for the less experienced politicians. They discussed bills drafted by the leadership and with that prevented hasty or bad legislation. The backbenchers playing the role of opposition were able to criticize details of the implementation, but not any

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[350] Only eligible voters who previously did not have a by-election in their constituency are allowed to participate in general parliamentary elections. The table is based on data provided in Singapore Elections: Index, http://www.singapore-elections.com/, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2005; and Elections Department Singapore: Past Parliamentary Election Results, http://www.elections.gov.sg/past_parliamentary.htm, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2005.
[351] Pang Cheng Lian: Singapore's People's Action Party, Its History, Organization and Leadership, Singapore, 1971, p. 35 et sqq.
[352] Even ordinary membership is not automatic. Straits Times: The PAP Cadre System, 04 April 1998, published in Singapore Window: The PAP Cadre System, http://www.singapore-window.org/80404st1.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[353] Diane Mauzy argues that the role of the parliament in Singapore is overestimated anyway. Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 28, 41.
[354] Diane Mauzy: Singapore, The Legacy of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, 1990, p. 103 et sqq.
[355] Lam Peng Er: Lee's Lieutenants, Singapore's Old Guard, St. Leonards, 1999, p. I.

principles. So the main function of the de facto one-party parliament was limited to legitimize what a small group of leaders had come up with.[356]

One of the main tasks of this group was to recruit "talents" because "captain" Lee Kuan Yew believed that "whether we score a resounding success, did not depend on the captain alone. Each member of the team has a decisive role to play."[357] Therefore, they systematically scanned the top echelons of all sectors in Singapore "to look for men and women in their 30s and 40s whom we would persuade to stand as our candidates." Inspired by the drama of the American spaceship Apollo 13, when one false move by any of the astronauts on board would have left them drifting out in space, Lee Kuan Yew even used the help of a psychologist to test the candidates.[358]

In addition, the government initiated the establishment of several "para-political" organizations which were linked directly to the prime minister's office.[359] Those organizations were used to identify grassroots leaders as early as possible in order to get them in party line.[360] Already in the 1960s, the People's Action Party began establishing kindergartens - by the late 1990s, there were more than 300 of them. Meanwhile, the government limited the scope of the opposition by passing the "Societies Act" in 1967 which requires any gathering of more than ten people to be registered.[361]

One of the best recruiters was the civil servant Hon Sui Sen. He placed promising talents not only in political but also in business positions, notably in Government-linked companies (GLCs).[362] Among many others, he chose the physics lecturer Tony Tan to manage one of the largest banks in Singapore, the Overseas Chinese Banking Corporation, and the civil

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[356] As a result, the role of the press is limited to inform the public about the legislation drama and its impact on the people. Chan Heng Chee: The Role of Parliamentary Politicians in Singapore, p. 6, 7, published in *University of Singapore Occasional Paper Series*, number 19, Singapore, 1975, p. 1-31; and Chan Heng Chee: Legislature and Legislators, p. 75, published in Jon Quah (Ed.): Government and Politics of Singapore, Oxford, 1985, p. 71-91.
[357] Lee Kuan Yew in an article published in the *Straits Times* on 14 June 1959, after Lam Peng Er (Ed.): Lee's Lieutenants, Singapore's Old Guard, St. Leonards, 1999, p. ix.
[358] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, p. 739, 740.
[359] As a result, the number of party members increased by 2 000 per annum. Approximately 70 percent joined the party either for employment or a similar reason such as prestige. In the 1990s, the People's Action Party had more than 12 000 members. Today, even the youth wing of the party, the "Young PAP", is said to have more members than any of the opposition parties.
[360] Seah Chee Meow: Parapolitical Institutions, p. 173 et sqq., published in Jon Quah (Ed.): Government and Politics of Singapore, Oxford, 1985, p. 173-194.
[361] The 1988 amendment tightened the act so that any registered society making political statements beyond the scope of the stated constituency can be de-registered. Today, around 200 groups are registered every year, whereas typically only two or three have their applications denied. Recently, a martial arts sports club was denied because many of its would-be members had criminal records, another one was a cult group and a third one was the gay and lesbian group "People Like Us". Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 131; and David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 8, 9.
[362] From 1961 until 1968, Hon Sui Sen was chairman of the Economic Development Board. Later, he became chairman of the Development Bank of Singapore.

servant Goh Chok Tong to run the national shipping Neptune Orient Lines. Both later became deputy prime minister and Goh Chok Tong even succeeded Lee Kuan Yew as prime minister.[363]

It is often denied that family relationship with Lee Kuan Yew or membership in the People's Action Party boosted the career of anyone.[364] But the fact is that his son, Lee Hsien Loong, was appointed as Junior Minister to the Ministry of Trade and Industry and head of the youth wing of the People's Action Party during his father's term in office. Later, Lee Hsien Loong even became finance and deputy prime minister.[365] Since August 2004, he is prime minister of Singapore. Further examples can be found in the following list:

(21) Selection of 15 positions held by relatives of Lee Kuan Yew[366]		
Name	Relationship to Lee Kuan Yew	Latest or highest known position
Freddy Lee Thiam Yew	Brother	Chairman of Vickers Ballas, the leading brokerage firm
Dennis Lee Kim Yew	Brother	Partner in the country's biggest law firm Lee & Lee which handles most property transactions in Singapore
Lee Suan Yew	Brother	Director of Hotel Properties Ltd. (stepped down because he had accepted discounts when buying a flat)
Kwa Geok Choo	Wife	Partner in the law firm Lee & Lee
Lee Hsien Loong	Son	Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore
Lee Hsien Yang	Son	President of Singapore Telecommunication
Lee Wei Ling	Daughter	Head of the National Neuroscience Institute
Ho Ching	Stepdaughter	Executive Director of the government investment company Temasek Holdings which has high stakes in media companies
Lee Suet Fern	Stepdaughter	Director of Asia's leading logistics company Sembcorp Logistics
Lim Suet Boey	Stepdaughter	Senior Vice President of Sembcorp Utilities which belongs to Sembcorp Industries
Edmund Lee	Nephew	Chief Executive Officer of DBS Vickers which belongs to the country's largest bank
Kwa Soon Bee	Brother-in-law	Chairman of the Jurong Bird Park and the Zoological Gardens
Kwa Chong Seng	Nephew-in-law	Deputy Chairman of the government investment company Temasek
Ho Sing	Stepdaughter's brother	Vice President of Singapore Precision Industries and Director of Advanced Materials Technologies
Ho Peng	Stepdaughter's brother	Director at the Education Ministry of Singapore

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[363] Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 33.
[364] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, p. 752.
[365] Carolyn Choo: Singapore, The PAP and the Problem of Political Succession, Singapore, date of publication unknown, p. 123 et sqq.
[366] The table is based on information provided in Tan Boon Seng: Why it Might be Difficult for the Government to Withdraw From Business, http://www.sfdonline.org/Link%20Pages/Link%20Folders/02Pf/glc_100202.html, Singapore, 2002, accessed 2005; and other sources.

Special attention was paid to the mass media because they were considered being essential to maintain power and to develop the country. Based on the experiences in the 1950s and 1960s when reporting had caused or at least promoted several riots (e.g. the "Maria Hertogh Riots" in 1950 and the "Mohammed Birthday Riots" in 1963), Singapore's politicians drew two conclusions: first, that the mass media, if in the "wrong hands", might disturb the political stability and second, that the mass media, if in the "right hands", can play a constructive role in the nation-building process.[367]

In other words: From the leadership's point of view, the media was seen as a "double-edged weapon", as then Minister of Culture Jek Yeung Thong said in an article published on 20 September 1971 in the British newspaper *The Mirror*.[368] Therefore, the mass media should not only be properly controlled, but also properly managed.[369]

To further the aims, the People's Action Party infiltrated several members into the media industry. In 1982, even S.R. Nathan, the former director of the security and intelligence service of the Ministry of Defense, was placed on top of the managerial board of the Times Organization.

Jusua Jeyaretnam, the first opposition candidate to become a member of parliament after a decade of one-party parliament, criticized this decision as a "total clampdown on any news or view that may be considered in any way a criticism of the government policy or program" and argued that the censor himself had moved into the publishing house.

The former newspaperman Geoge Peet, who had revived the *Straits Times* after the Japanese surrender, wrote as the last entry in his notebook in capital letters, "The End of the *S*[*traits*] *T*[*imes*]. Lee Kuan Yew appoints intelligence man Executive Director of *S*[*traits*] *T*[*imes*]." It is said that even Peter Lim, who had put the name of S.R. Nathan forward, felt so bad about it that he spend weeks agonizing whether to resign on principle.[370]

According to Mary Turnbull, the leadership made use of its contacts in late 1985, when Lee Kuan telephoned from the airport en route to a Commonwealth meeting to prevent the

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[367] Compare with the previous chapter.

[368] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 42.

[369] The first change initiated in communications was a restructuring of part of the government. The Ministry of Information took over all the activities of the Department of Information and had three components: a headquarters to coordinate the functions of the two other components, a broadcasting division and a publicity division. Under the new communication structure, the core decision making body was compromised of the minister, the parliamentary secretary and two political assistants. Basskaran Nair: Communication in Colonial and Independent Singapore, Singapore, 1980, p. 6, 7.

[370] As a result, the journalists' morale was very low. Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 336, 338.

appearance of a story concerning the collapse of an electric conglomerate.[371] Already when S.R. Nathan was appointed, Lee Kuan Yew briefed him in the following way: "Nathan, I am giving you the *Straits Times*. It has 140 years of history. It's like a bowl of China. You break it, I can piece it together, but it will never be the same. Try not to."[372] Not only did S.R. Nathan "not break it", he did such a "good" job that he was elected sixth President of the Republic of Singapore a few years later (1999).

Further examples can be found in the following list.

(22) Selection of 15 positions in the media held by former government officials[373]		
Name	Former position	Latest or highest known position in the media section
S Dhanablan	Minister for Foreign Affairs	Executive chairman of the government investment companies GIC and Temasek, which both have stakes in media companies
Lim Kim San	Minister for Finance	Executive chairman of Singapore Press Holdings which has practically a monopoly in the newspaper business
Yeo Ning Hong	Minister for Communications	Director of Singapore Press Holdings
Lim Chee Onn	Minister in the Prime Minister's Office	Chairman of Singapore's largest mobile telecommunication company Mobile One
Goh Chee Wee	Minister for Trade, Industry and Labor	Chairman of NTUC Media which publishes several magazines and operates two radio stations
Alan Chan Heng Loon	Secretary in the Ministry for Transport	Chief Executive Officer of Singapore Press Holdings
Ngiam Tong Dow	Secretary in Prime minister's office	Director of Temasek
Low Sin Leng	Deputy Secretary in Ministry for Trade	Director of Pacific Internet which is one of Asia's largest Internet providers
Lim Chuan Pho	Deputy Secretary for Communications	Executive vice president of Singapore Telecommunication
Lai Seck Khui	Deputy Secretary for Trade and Industry	President of Times Publishing Limited, whose activities range from commercial printing and book publishing to retail bookstores
Lim Ho Kee	Deputy Director of Monetary Authority	Director of the Singapore Post which plays a key role in the distribution of print media in Singapore
S Iswaran	Deputy Speaker of Parliament	Managing director of Temasek
Audrey Lee	Executive Director of InfoComm Authority	Executive director of Singapore's second largest telecommunication company Star Hub
Lee Cheok Yew	Deputy Director of Ministry for Trade	Chief executive of SPH MediaWorks which set up two terrestrial television channels and was later merged with MediaCorp
Patrick Daniel	Director of Ministry for Home Affairs	Managing editor of the English- and Malay-language newspaper division of the Singapore Press Holdings

Most controversial is the position of Ho Ching, daughter-in-law of Lee Kuan Yew and wife of his son Lee Hsien Loong who is currently prime minister of Singapore. As director of the government investment company Temasek, she has a direct say in the appointments of the

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[371] Minister for Culture Ong Teng Cheong, for instance, regularly held luncheon meetings for editors to meet government ministers.
[372] S.R. Nathan in an interview with Mary Turnbull on 2 June 1994, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 337.
[373] The table is based on information provided in Tan Boon Seng: Why it Might be Difficult for the Government to Withdraw From Business, http://www.sfdonline.org/Link%20Pages/Link%20Folders/02Pf/glc_100202.html, Singapore, 2002, accessed 2005; and other sources.

boards of all large media companies in Singapore, including Media Corporation of Singapore and Singapore Press Holdings.[374]

However, the leadership put the media and journalists increasingly under pressure. It started in 1959 when Lee Kuan Yew warned that "any newspaper that tries to sour up or strain relations between the federation and Singapore after May 30 will go in for subversion", and it continued in 1971, when three local newspapers (*Nanyang Siang Pau*, *Eastern Sun* and *Singapore Herald*) and in 1987 when even four foreign publications (Time, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Asiaweek* and *Far Eastern Economic Review*) were closed down or restricted in circulation. All of these cases, reviewed in another part of this dissertation, are based on a handful of laws, particularly the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act."[375]

5.1.1 Laws restricting the media and journalists

As a former British crown colony, Singapore inherited most of its laws from Britain or India, where the headquarters of the British East India Company was located. Several laws such as those dealing with sedition, libel and defamation are modeled after British examples. Almost 90 percent of the Penal Code as well as of criminal procedures is based on the Indian legal system.

Over the years, almost every law was modified or amended, and further laws were passed in order to take the special circumstances of Singapore's multi-cultural society into account. That is also true regarding the constitution. It originates from the "Second Charter Justice" of 1826 and was written in 1963 when Singapore joined the federation with Malaysia. The constitution came into full effect with the separation in 1965 and was revised in 1985.[376]

Regarding the media, article 14 is the most relevant because it grants the right to "freedom of speech, assembly and association." According to this, "every citizen of Singapore has the right to freedom of speech and expression". But unlike in Britain or India, where courts have ruled that this sentence includes freedom of the press, and in contrast to the recommendations of the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, this right is restricted in the following paragraph.

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[374] See the table "Selection of 15 positions held by relatives of Lee Kuan Yew".
[375] See the chapters "The role of the press in the nation-building process" and "Pressure on the local press".
[376] Attorney-General's Chambers: Constitution of the Republic of Singapore, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_retrieve.pl?&actno=Reved-CONST, Singapore, date of publication unknown, modified 2005, accessed 2005.

This clause empowers the parliament to pass laws restricting freedom of speech for a variety of reasons, "in the interest of the security of Singapore or any part thereof, friendly relations with other countries, public order or morality and restrictions designed to protect the privileges of Parliament or to provide against contempt of court, defamation or incitement to any offence."

The courts in Singapore have taken the view that laws restricting freedom of speech are allowed under the constitution. Legally, however, the restrictions can override the right of expression itself. In practice, this means, as Ang Peng Hwa shows, that there is no need to worry about constitutional implications if - let's say - a defamation suit is brought about or a newspaper license is revoked.[377]

The fact that all printing presses and newspapers are required to be licensed and that these licenses must be renewed annually is spelled out in the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" (NPPA), which was introduced in 1974 and strengthened in 1977. It practically regulates the whole newspaper industry:

"No person shall print or publish or assist in printing or publishing of any newspaper in Singapore unless the chief editor or the proprietor of the newspaper has previously obtained a permit granted by the Minister authorizing the publication thereof, which permit the Minister may in his discretion grant, refuse or revoke, or grant subject to conditions to be endorsed thereon."[378]

Since the law applies to all newspapers and magazines in Singapore, both local and foreign, only those which are explicitly desired or at least tolerated are allowed to be circulated.[379] Every newspaper can be shut down without reason at any time: "The Minister may in his discretion grant to any person in Singapore a license to keep and use a press for the printing of documents and may at any time withdraw the license either permanently or for such period he thinks fit."[380] The only way to appeal is to write to the president of the republic, whose decision is final.

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[377] Ang Peng Hwa: Mass Media Laws and Regulations in Singapore, Singapore, 1998, p. 18; and Ang Peng Hwa: Information Highways, Policy and Regulation, The Singapore Experience, p. 109, published in Venkat Iyer (Ed.): Media Regulations for the New Times, Singapore, 1999, p. 97-114.

[378] Attorney-General's Chambers: Newspaper and Printing Presses Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_legdisp.pl?actno=2002-REVED-206, Singapore, date of publication unknown, modified 2005, accessed 2005.

[379] Ivan Lim: Media Monitors in Singapore, p. 74, published in K.S. Venkateswaran (Ed.): Media Monitors in Asia, Singapore, 1996, p. 73-80.

[380] Attorney-General's Chambers: Newspaper and Printing Presses Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_legdisp.pl?actno=2002-REVED-206, Singapore, date of publication unknown, modified 2005, accessed 2005.

Furthermore, the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" ensures that the press does not fall into the "wrong" hands, regulating it by employing a system of "management shares", which grant voting rights 200 times that of ordinary shares. Since the 1977 amendment bars anyone from holding more than three percent of ordinary shares, at least one percent must be "management shares" and those "management shares" can only be held by persons approved by the minister. As a result, the authorities have a say in all important decisions: the composition of board directors of all publishing companies and through them the appointment of group editors, publication editors, section editors, etcetera.[381]

Here is a simplified example: Let's say that a newspaper company issues 100 shares, 99 of which can be ordinary shares held by up to 99 different persons. At least one must be a "management share" held by a person approved by the minister. So when it comes to voting, holders of 99 ordinary shares have 99 votes and the one person holding the one "management share" has 200 votes and can overrule any decision of the others. As a result, nothing can be done without at least the silent consent of the authorities.[382]

If any kind of difficulties arise, despite this tight licensing and management system, a wide range of further laws is available. The "Internal Security Act" (1960) empowers the government to ban "biased" publications. The "Undesirable Publications Act" (1967) prohibits the distribution of undesirable publications such as pornography. And the "Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act" (1990) enables the government to restrain the publication of people who cause ill-will between religious groups.[383]

Those laws were not only employed against the editors of the *Nanyang Siang Pau* ("Newspaper and Printing Presses Act"), *Eastern Sun* and *Singapore Herald* ("Internal Security Act") but also against opposition politicians such as Jusua Jeyaretnam ("Defamation Act").

When the head of the Worker's Party became the first opposition member of parliament after a decade of one-party parliament, he was welcomed because Lee Kuan Yew thought that "he was useful as a sparring partner [...]. Besides, he filled up space on the opposition side

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[381] Ang Peng Hwa: Media Ethics in Singapore, Pushing Self-Regulation in a Tightly Controlled Media Environment, p. 81, published in Vekat Iyer (Ed.): Media Ethics in Asia, Singapore, 2002, p. 80-89.
[382] Yawning Bread: Control of the Press, The One Percent Lever, http://www.yawningbread.org/arch_2001/yax-239.htm, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2003.
[383] Ivan Lim: Media Monitors in Singapore, p. 74-75, published in K.S. Venkateswaran (Ed.): Media Monitors in Asia, Singapore, 1996, p. 73-80.

of the political arena and probably kept better men out."[384] But already a few years later, Jusua Jeyaretnam was brought down by a series of charges and fines.

Just for saying during an election rally in 1997 that "Mr. Tang Liang Hong has just placed before me, two reports he has made to the police against, you know, Mr. Goh Chok Tong and his people", eleven suits were filed against him by members of the ruling People's Action Party. They argued that this innocuous sentence would imply and be understood to mean that the plaintiffs were guilty of an act serious enough to merit a police report. The court ordered Jusua Jeyaretnam to pay 20 000 Singapore dollars but the High Court upped the damages to 100 000 Singapore dollars. Three years later, Jusua Jeyaretnam was expelled from parliament for being bankrupt.[385]

5.1.2 Concepts of responsible journalism

At first glance, journalism in Singapore follows the same rules as journalism in many other ("Western") counties.[386] The first rule of the "Code of Professional Conduct" of the "Singapore National Union of Journalists" emphasizes that "every member shall maintain good quality of workmanship and high standard of conduct."[387] The question is what constitutes good quality and high standards.

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[384] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, p. 147.
[385] Amnesty International: International Trial Observer to Attend Court of Appeal as Former Opposition Leader JB Jeyaretnam Faces Possible Expulsion from Parliament, http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA360052001?open&of=ENG-SGP, London, 2001, accessed 2005, and Amnesty USA: JB Jeyaretnam, The Use of Defamation Suits for Political Purposes, http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/singapore/document.do?id=BF56868404E3D63E802569A5007186A8, New York, 2006, accessed 2006.
[386] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 233 et sqq.
[387] Ang Peng Hwa: Media Ethics in Singapore, Pushing Self-Regulation in a Tightly Controlled Media Environment, p. 89, published in Yenkat Iyer (Ed.): Media Ethics in Asia, Addressing the Dilemmas in the Information Age, Singapore, 2002, p. 80-89.

(23) "Code of Conduct" of the "Singapore National Union of Journalists"[388]	
1	Every member shall maintain good quality of workmanship and high standard of conduct.
2	No member shall do anything that will bring discredit on himself/herself, his/her union, his/her newspaper or other news media or his/her profession.
3	Every member shall defend the principles of freedom in the honest collection and dissemination of news and the right of fair comment and criticism.
4	Every member shall realize his/her personal responsibility for everything he/she prepares for his/her newspaper or other news media.
5	Every member shall report and interpret the news with scrupulous honesty.
6	Every member shall use only honest methods to obtain news, pictures and documents.
7	No member shall accept any form of bribe whether for publication or suppression nor permit personal interest to influence his/her sense of justice.
8	Every member shall respect all necessary confidence regarding sources of information and private documents.
9	Every member shall keep in mind the dangers in the laws of libel, contempt of court and copyright.
10	Every member shall observe at all times the fraternity of their profession and shall never take unfair advantage of a fellow member.

In order to clarify this, a number of concepts have been introduced which are all based on the general assumption that Singapore is as fragile as an egg and therefore the government must hold it firmly so that it does not drop and break.[389] It largely depends on the standpoint, whether one agrees with it or not.

Interestingly, the overwhelming majority of all experts interviewed for this dissertation are convinced that this assumption reflects the situation when Singapore was merged (1963) with the Federation of Malaysia and then separated from it (1965). Only the scientist Tan Ern Ser and the journalist Patrick Daniel believe that it still describes the situation today. All others think that "the egg is getting stronger" or is not fragile anymore at all.

However, there is a general concern that in multi-cultural societies like Singapore, ethnic matters and religion can be "explosive issues". All interviewees are afraid that street disorders could arise due to reporting in the media. "Could it arise? Yes, it could", says Arun Mahizhnam: "But would it arise? Not likely". He believes that the "media leadership is capable of carrying out responsible media discourse on race, religion and language."

A central issue is whether a newspaper should report it if a street fight breaks out between Chinese and Malay and some people get killed.[390] Asked in a seminar for ASEAN journalists in Singapore in March 1989, Cheong Yip Seng answered: "Very simple, I wouldn't carry it.

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[388] Singapore National Union of Journalists: Code of Professional Conduct, as published in K.S. Venkateswaran (Ed.): Media Monitors in Asia, Singapore, 1996, p. 294, 295; and Ang Peng Hwa: Code of Ethics of Various Journalists' Unions in Asia, published in Ang Peng Hwa (Ed.): Media Law and Ethics in Singapore, http://www.medialaw.com.sg/ethics/jcode.htm, Singapore, 1998, accessed 2004.
[389] John Heuvel: The Unfolding Lotus, East Asia's Changing Media, A Report of The Freedom Forum Media Studies center At Columbia University in the City of New York, New York, 1993, p. 135.
[390] This scenario is based on an actual event in Geylang where there was a street brawl involving a Chinese and a Malay. The story did not run in the press for fear of reprisals between the two ethnic groups.

[…] Publishing the story would mean the whole city get to know. There is no guarantee that people wouldn't misinterpret it."[391]

But when a Chinese politician made a racial slur against the Tamils living in Singapore in a speech in parliament in 1992, he chose another option. Although Lee Kuan Yew had asked him to drop the story, Cheong Yip Seng carried it in the *Straits Times* newspaper but cooled it down. When asked about it in an interview with the author of this dissertation, he answered that he would make the same decisions and statements today.

This correlates with the opinions of other interviewees. They all believe that it would not be possible anymore to suppress such a story because it would spread over the Internet and through mobile phones anyway. One even argues that it could be more dangerous not to run it. But all suggest not to glorify such a story. And Cherian George adds that the race must not be mentioned because it might not be an ethnical conflict. Instead, it could also be about girls or money.[392]

However, one of the first concepts discussed was taken from the Manila-based Press Foundation of Asia. It is closely related to the discussion about the "New World Information Order" and suggests that journalists in developing countries contribute to national progress by producing stories about social needs or problems. What notably some American authors dismiss as "Government Say-so Journalism" is taken very seriously in other countries. In Peru, for instance, several programs were launched to train journalists and feed them with "development news".[393] But in Singapore, no comparable action was taken. Instead, all journalists were asked to support the government.[394]

In February 1988, Lee Hsien Loong stressed in a speech at the "Singapore Press Club" that "you must educate Singaporeans – not just with facts, but also in terms of national education and values. One way or another, the press moulds the perception of Singaporeans. It should do so constructively – both supporting national campaigns and also day to day, in the way the news is presented, analyzed, emphasized."[395] He concluded by giving a lesson in journalism, saying that to be a good journalist in Singapore requires a political sense of what

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[391] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 19.
[392] See the documentation of the interviews.
[393] CV Rajasundaram: Manuel of Development Communication, With Special Reference to Broadcasting, Singapore, 1981, p. 17; and Owais Aslam Ali: Freedom of the Press and Asian Values in Journalism, Karachi, 1995, p. 2.
[394] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 4.
[395] One of the latest campaigns was against smoking. Basskaran Nair: From Main Street to Cyber Street, A Series on Changes in the Practice of Communication, Singapore, 2003, p. 14-17.

is important, an understanding of the issues, the ability to explain complex topics, without descending to trivia, and finally having something to say and being able to say it well.[396]

Meanwhile, Lee Kuan Yew (Lee Hsien Loong's father) and Mohamad Mahathir, the prime ministers of Singapore and Malaysia respectively, promoted the concept of "Asian Values."[397] It is hard to trace its origins but the idea probably goes back the establishment of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN, 1963).[398] Its official aim is to "foster cooperation and mutual assistance among its members", but David Birch shows that it is "principally a communication strategy" which stresses the region's common heritage and values in order to maintain a credible cohesion in dealings with third parties.[399]

However, the concept of "Asian Values" assumes that every culture in Asia has its own values but there are some values common to all Asians which differ from the values in "Western" cultures. In Indonesia, for instance, the five lines of the Buddhist code of ethics Pancasila are usually seen as the general guideline. In Malaysia, the comparable five lines are known under the term Rukunegara. Singapore alone has no such guideline. Therefore, Lee Hsien Loong formulated Five Core Values in a white paper which was passed by parliament in 1991.

(24) The five core values in Malaysia and Singapore	
Malaysia	Singapore
Belief in God	Nation before community and society before self
Loyalty to King and Country	Family as the basic unit of society
Upholding the Constitution	Community support and respect for the individual
Sovereignty of the Law, and	Consensus, not conflict
Good Behavior and Morality	Racial and religious harmony

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[396] After David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 20.
[397] Mohamad Mahathir: The Social Role of Mass Media, p. 51 et sqq., published in Abdul Razak (Ed.): Press Laws and Systems in ASEAN States, Jakarta, 1985, p. 51-61; Zaher Mikhaeel: Asian Journalism, Challenges, Problems and Solutions, p. 166-168, published in *Media Asia*, volume 13, number 3, Singapore, 1986, p. 166-168; Melinda de Jesus: Asian Values, Do They Exist?, p. 3-6, published in *Media Asia*, volume 23, number 1, Singapore, 1996, p. 3-6; Mrinal Pande: Asian Values in Journalism, p. 8-11, published in *Media Asia*, volume 23, number 1, Singapore, 1996, p. 8-11; Sinha Ratnatunga: Asian Values, An Idlle Concept or a Realistic Goal?, p. 47-48, published in *Media Asia*, volume 23, number 1, Singapore, 1996, p. 47-48; and Xiaoge Xu: Asian Values Revisited in the Context of Intercultural News Communication, p. 37-41, published in *Media Asia*, volume 25, number 1, Singapore, 1998, p. 37-41.
[398] ASEAN: Overview, http://www.aseansec.org/64.htm, Jakarta, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[399] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 5.

(25) Code of ethics in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore[400]		
Indonesia (Pancasila)	Malaysia (Rukunegara)	Singapore (The Pledge)
"I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying living creatures. I undertake the precept to refrain from taking that which is not given. I undertake the precept to refrain from sexual misconduct. I undertake the precept to refrain from incorrect speech. I undertake the precept to refrain from intoxicants which lead to carelessness."	"Our Nation, Malaysia is dedicated to: Achieving a greater unity for all her people; maintaining a democratic way of life; creating a just society in which the wealth of the nation shall be equitably distributed; ensuring a liberal approach to her rich and diverse cultural tradition,/ and building a progressive society which shall be oriented to modern science and technology."	"We the citizens of Singapore, pledge ourselves as one united people, regardless of race, language or religion, to build a democratic society based on justice and equality so as to achieve happiness, prosperity and progress for our nation."

It is difficult to answer whether such values really exist. David Birch shows that they do not emerge willy-nilly out of the flux of the people's lives. They are rather imposed on the lives, often in such a subtle form as to disguise their religious or political nature.[401] But this does not mean that they are not related to inherent cultural values or cannot be adopted.

However, it was just a matter of time until the concept of "Asian Values" was transferred to the media.[402] The 1987 "Code of Ethics" of the "Confederation of ASEAN Journalists" (1976) is one such example. Among other things, it requires all journalists in the region to "pay due regard to the multi-ethnic, cultural, and religious fabric of ASEAN countries". They "shall not write reports, opinions or comments which would endanger the security of his/her country, or foment armed confrontation between his/her country and any other ASEAN country, striving at all times, instead, to promote closer friendly relations among them."

In addition, the 1988 "Consultation on Press Systems in ASEAN" resolved that "efforts [should] be made to eliminate possible dissonance arising from differences in perception between […] the government, the media and the public" and that "the press [should] be considered a partner in development, with the responsibility of […] helping society progress in development and nation building."[403]

Asked whether Asian journalists really have or should have more responsibility than journalists in Western countries, the experts interviewed for this dissertation expressed

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[400] Indonesia has no official core values comparable to those in Malaysia and Singapore. The tables are based on information provided in Pratyeka: The Five Precepts, http://www.pratyeka.org/a2i/ptf/pancasila.html, place of publication unknown, 2003, accessed 2005; Government of Malaysia: Rukunegara, http://www.gov.my/MYGOV/BI/Directory/Government/AboutMsianGov/GovRukunegara/, Kuala Lumpur, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; and Expats in Singapore: The Five Shared Values, http://www.expatsingapore.com/general/pledge.htm, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2005.
[401] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 7, 8.
[402] Owais Aslam Ali: Freedom of the Press and Asian Values in Journalism, Paper Presented at the Seminar on Asian Values in Journalism Held in Kuala Lumpur from 24 to 25 August 1995, place and date of publication unknown, probably Singapore, 1995, p. 1-6.
[403] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 26.

differing points of views: While some agree, others argue that such an idea is farcical because a "journalist is a journalist" and there is only "good and bad journalism". Ang Peng Haw's view is the most interesting. He sometimes has the impression that many Asian journalists take less responsibility because in practice they often merely obey the laws and do not scrutinize their government's actions.[404]

The "Next Lap", however, started when Lee Kuan Yew resigned and Goh Chok Tong succeeded him as prime minister. At his swearing-in ceremony on 28 November 1990, he stated: "The torch has passed from one generation of runners to the next. But the race continues. I will use the collective talents of my colleagues, and the combined energies of all citizens, to help the Singapore team stay ahead. Singapore can do well only if her good sons and daughters are prepared to dedicate themselves to help others. I shall rally them to serve the country. For if they do not come forward, what future will we have? I therefore call on my fellow citizens to join me, to run the next lap together."[405]

Apart from maintaining the power of the ruling People's Action Party, Goh Chok Tong formulated three goals: To get Singaporeans to feel a deeper bond with Singapore so that they do not emigrate, to practice a more constructive, participatory-style democracy and to enhance Singapore's dynamism to face future "unsettling changes" in the world and in the region. In this context, he identified four priority areas: sustaining Singapore's economic growth, seeking new challenges, being more creative and working together effectively.[406]

One of the key terms in the "Open Order" was "Feedback". Already in 1985, the authorities set up a so-called "Feedback Unit" whose aim was to "gather and receive feedback on existing or impending government policies and suggests from the public on national issues as well as to ensure swift and effective response by government departments on public suggestions and complaints."[407]

Another term which was created in this period is *create.connect@sg*, which is the title of a book published in 2000 by the Ministry for Information, Communication and the Arts. It analyzes the status quo and comes to the conclusion that "in the age of information, arts and culture must no longer be viewed as the exclusive preserve of the elite sectors of societies. It

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[404] See the documentation of the interviews.
[405] Government of Singapore: Singapore, The Next Lap, Singapore, 1991, p. 149. For background information and the outcome of this plan see Urban Redevelopment Authority: Living the Next Lap, Towards a Tropical City of Excellence, Singapore, 1991.
[406] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 5, 6.
[407] In 1997, the government decided to expand and enhance the "Feedback Unit" by organizing feedback contributors in 27 groups. Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 156.

must be brought into the mainstream and integrated into the workings of our economic and social ecosystem."

Most interesting is the summary on the first few pages of the chapter on "Economics of the Arts": "The results of our investments in the arts and culture may not be visible nor measurable in ways as cultural capital takes root and manifests itself across all facets of our economy and society."[408]

This was new because until then spending in the arts was seldom seen as an investment. But it did not really change anything. Meetings of the "Feedback Groups", for instance, are still not made public and usually only "opinion-makers" with "good knowledge of the subject" are invited. Even those invited cannot expect that every proposal is accepted by the government, since it reserves the right to challenge any proposal. And the press was not included. Instead, Lee Hsien Loong asked "who gives the media the right to criticize the government?" He added: "Who is to vote and elect the media?"[409]

The latest idea became popular under the abbreviation "OB Marker". It is not clear when and by whom this concept was introduced. An active member in the Internet-based discussion forum of the youth wing of the People's Action Party believes that the term originally refers to the sport golf: When the player strikes a ball out of bounds, he gets penalized two strokes or the hole. But it remains a mystery if this is true and how the term was transferred to the political sphere and the media.[410]

According to Diane Mauzy, the People's Action Party realized at some point that many educated Singaporeans who do not want to be involved in party politics still want to be able to voice their criticism as citizens and taxpayers. So instead of the "sledgehammer" (i.e. the "Defamation Act") which is sometimes employed against members of the opposition (i.e. Jusua Jeyaretnam), "OB Markers" were introduced as public rebuttals in the form of letters by the press secretary of the prime minister in which the government's position and the shortcomings in the points of the offenders are made clear.[411]

More colorful are the explanations of the debaters in the "Young PAP" forum. According to them, "OB markers" are not a "set of guidelines and ethics but are pure blinkers", which refer

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[408] Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 11 and p. 212.
[409] After David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 20.
[410] Young PAP: Discussion Forum, http://www.youngpap.org.sg/phpbb/viewtopic.php?t=6871&start=0, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[411] Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 141.

to the limits for a wide range of topics and comments one might discuss and make about the government "without getting yourselves into troubles". Those limits are considered highly flexible and are "determined by a number of factors such as the minister's moods and the nature of one's comments". Practically speaking, "anything that the government feels awkward or uneasy with becomes an OB marker".[412] And this is exactly the problem: No one knows for sure what is allowed and what is not.

The earliest case found by the author of this dissertation is from 1995, when author Catherine Lim argued in two articles in the *Straits Times* that there was a "great affective divide" between the People's Action Party and the people, and that there were hardliner and more liberal factions within the ruling party. Furthermore, she insinuated that Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong was not really in charge. This was out of bounds, of course, and his secretary replied with a stinging rebuttal.

A slightly different case was caused by a group of around 25 young professionals who had registered a society under the name "The Roundtable" in order to discuss political issues. In 1997, they published an analysis of the general election in the *Straits Times* in which they disagreed with the tactic of the People's Action Party. The government had a minister responded by pointing out where the People's Action Party thought the analysis was wrong.[413]

And a third case occured in 1999 when Cherian George and Melanie Chew offended the authorities.[414] Interestingly, Cherian George fired back an answer to the press secretary's rebuttal, but it did not have much impact.[415]

In an article published on 17 January 2000 in the weekly edition of the *Straits Times*, Lee Hsien Loong tried to clarify the limits: "As long as the argument is over policies, the limits for debates – or the out-of-bounds markers – are very wide. There is no policy too sensitive to question, and no subject so taboo that you cannot even mention it […] But if it is an attack on the government and on its fitness to rule, then that response has to go beyond the merits of the particular issue and to address the broader question."

[412] Young PAP: Discussion Forum, http://www.youngpap.org.sg/phpbb/viewtopic.php?t=6871&start=0, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[413] Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 162
[414] Cherian George: Govt Shouldn't Equate Analysis With Advocacy, http://cherian.blogspot.com/, 2005, accessed 2005.
[415] The latest example happened just a few months ago when a Malaysian led a campaign at Singapore Airlines to oust union leaders who accepted pay cuts and redundancies. He was singled out by senior minister Lee Kuan Yew as an instigator of a revolt and expelled from entering the country. BBC: Singapore Expels Union Activist, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3676881.stm, London, 2004, accessed 2004.

There is no doubt that taboos can be found in every society, but there are differences between judicial restrictions upheld in accordance with the constitution, inherent social norms generally accepted by at least a large portion of the public and flexible "OB markers" set by few leading ministers and issued by the prime minister's press secretary. "OB markers" can hardly be justified.

In the opinion of the author of this dissertation, the biggest problem with "OB markers" is the fact that the one who issues the "OB markers" has no mandate. The press secretary in the prime minister's office is neither employed as a judge nor elected by the people. One could argue that he has absolutely no right to restrict anyone. Still, he wields much power.

However, the "OB markers" serve the government's purpose: to make people wary of criticizing the government or any of its major decisions. Only one participant in the forum of the youth wing of the People's Action Party was so bold to argue that "OB markers in Singapore are devised by ruling party for monopoly". Another one even "regrets to inform that my personal opinions tend to fall in the 'out-of-bound' range and hence they are not available for public discussion". Self-explaining is the little joke of another debater: "See enemy hiding behind every tree – that's how S[inga]poreans think and act."[416]

As a result of all this - the dominance of the ruling People's Action Party, the strict laws and the concepts introduced - the freedom of speech in general and the freedom of the press in particular is very limited and self-censorship is very high.[417] Whereas in other countries the media are the watchdog of the government, in Singapore the government is the watchdog of the media or it is as least "taking care" of it. That means that the news flows - in the sense of the MacBride Report - are not free and fair to all.

The journalists seem to accept this situation, as the following quote by the chairman of the Singapore Press Holdings shows: "One of our jobs is to support a good government, and we have been doing that, and helping to explain government policies."[418] When Patrick Daniel of the *Straits Times* newspaper was interviewed by the author of this dissertation, he added: "Does it matter to you? By most comparisons, this is a good government, honest government, clean government that comes up with fair policies."

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[416] Young PAP: Discussion Forum, http://www.youngpap.org.sg/phpbb/viewtopic.php?t=6871&start=0, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[417] Francis Seow: The Media Entralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 208-215; and Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 51, 52.
[418] After Chua Lee Hoong: Singapore, p. 153, published in Asad Latif (Ed.): Walking the Tightrope, Press Freedom and Professional Standards in Asia, Singapore, 1998, p. 142-155.

That might be true, but no one knows for sure if it is really a "good government, honest government, clean government", as long as it is not checked by independent institutions – and the press in Singapore is demonstrably not independent, neither politically nor economically.

5.2　Overall economic growth

Although Singapore does not have any natural resources - even half of its water, food and raw materials must be imported (from Malaysia and Indonesia) - there is no secret or miracle to its economic development. As Adam Smith (1723-1790) pointed out, cities situated on the coast are generally in a better situation because sea transport is much cheaper than terrestrial transport.[419] Another advantage is that Singapore is a city state and as such much easier to govern than countries with large territory. The economic development, however, is largely based on the political stability and the continuity in wise economic decisions of which the general commitment to free trade is usually considered essential.[420]

(26) The Singapore economy in 1965 (at current market prices)[421]			
Population	Gross domestic product in million Singapore dollars	Gross domestic product per capita in Singapore dollars	Unemployment rate
1 886 900	2 956	1 567	> 12.0 (est.)

In 1965, there was relatively little economic activity. According to the Singapore Year Book 1965, the value of trade imports stood at 3.8 billion and the value of exports at 3 billion Singapore dollars, so that the total external trade was around 7 billion Singapore dollars. More than 75 percent of the total cargo was handled by roads and only 8.2 percent was handled by seaport. The port cleared 25 074 vessels and handled a tonnage of 89.2 million tons. The most important trading partners were based in Malaysia, with Britain in second and Japan in third place. Among the commodities, rubber and petroleum were the most relevant, followed by textiles, rice, pepper, coffee and pineapples.[422]

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[419] Adam Smith was a Scottish political economist and moral philosopher whose book "Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" was one of the earliest studies on the historical development of industry and commerce in Europe. Adam Smith: Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, London, 1776, published in The Library of Economics and Liberty: Adam Smith, Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, http://www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smWN.html, Indianapolis, 2000, accessed 2005.
[420] Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 159.
[421] The table is based on the data provided in this chapter of the dissertation.
[422] Government Printing Office: Singapore Year Book 1965, Singapore, 1966, p. 103 et sqq; and The Port of Singapore Authority: Report & Accounts for the 9 Month Period ending 31 Dec 1964, Singapore, 1965.

(27) Singapore's three most important trading partners in 1965[423]		
Country	Value of imports in million Singapore dollars	Value of exports in million Singapore dollars
Malaya (Malaysia)	884.9	938.6
United Kingdom	413.8	192.4
Japan	421.2	112.2
Others	2087.3	1760.9
Total	3807.2	3004.1

(28) Singapore's three most important commodities in 1965		
Commodity	Value of imports in million Singapore dollars	Value of exports in million Singapore dollars
Rubber	553.8	668.8
Petroleum	508.3	431.2
Textiles	188.8	99.7
Others	2556.3	1804.4
Total	3807.2	3004.1

Due to the relatively little economic activity, the unemployment rate of around 12 percent was very high and earnings and savings were very low. On the average, employees earned about 178 Singapore dollars per month (for a 46-hour work week), which totaled about 2 100 Singapore dollars per annum. The total amount of the 247 082 bank accounts at the Singapore Post Office Savings Bank, including one million in interests, was 38.8 million Singapore dollars. And the total revenue of the government was 382.8 million Singapore dollars. Expenditures, however, exceeded the 400 million mark.[424]

The foundation for the growth was laid by then Minister for Finance Goh Keng Swee and the Dutch economist Albert Winsemius (1910-1996) who visited Singapore in 1960 on behalf of the United Nations to advise the decision makers on industrialization and job creation.[425] Although Albert Winsemius had no contract with the government, he pushed the upgrading of the port so that it could handle containers. Furthermore, he recommended the establishment of a single coordinating agency.[426] The purpose of this Economic Development Board (EDB) was to attract foreign investors by offering tax incentives, loans and equity participation, as well as technical advice and access to the workforce.[427]

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[423] The tables are based on data provided in Government Printing Office: Singapore Year Book 1965, Singapore, 1966, p. 104 et sqq; and other sources.
[424] Government Printing Office: Singapore Year Book 1965, Singapore, 1966, p. 79 et sqq, 174.
[425] Albert Winsemius was a Dutch economist. He led the "United Nations Survey Mission" to Singapore and played a major role in the formulation of Singapore's national economic development strategy.
[426] Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 5.
[427] Lim Joo-Jock: Foreign Investment in Singapore, Some Broader Economic and Socio-Political Ramifications, Singapore, 1977, p. 6.

Meanwhile, Goh Keng Swee adopted the principle of Adam Smith and David Ricardo (1772-1823) that a system of free trade would be best for a port city like Singapore.[428] He came to the conclusion that economic growth rather than high value of output would result in higher wages, which in return would lead to stronger domestic purchasing power and hence to higher trade and profits.[429] Furthermore, he saw the advantage of Singapore being a former crown colony primarily in the ability of its citizens to speak English, and often mentioned this fact in negotiations with foreign investors.

As a result, large investments were made, notably by companies from New York, Chicago and London, in this first economic phase after independence which lasted from 1966 until 1973. Gavin Peebles argues that the arrival of these companies could largely attributed to luck, since the ongoing chaos on the Chinese mainland made Singapore the more logical choice over Taiwan and Hong Kong.[430]

By the early 1970s, however, more than 50 multinational companies were operating in Singapore.[431] The economic activity increased the government revenue to more than four times its level of 1965 and was used by the government to play the role of an entrepreneur. It established and strengthened organizations considered essential for the economic growth.[432]

The most important player was the Development Bank of Singapore (DBS), which was incorporated in 1968 as a public company.[433] With an authorized capital of 200 million and a paid-up capital of another 100 million Singapore dollars, it was able to provide long-term finance at relatively low interest rates.[434] Another important institution was the Jurong Town Corporation (JTC), which was also set up in 1968 and took over all responsibilities for industrial land estates.[435]

In 1971, some experts decided to float the currency. Until the "Smithsonian Agreement", it was fixed against the US dollar and formerly linked to pound sterling. Parity was then

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[428] David Ricardo was one of the most influential classical economists. His most famous work is David Ricardo: Principles of Political Economy and Taxation, London, 1817, published in The Library of Economics and Liberty: David Ricardo, Principles of Political Economy and Taxation: David Ricardo, On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation, http://www.econlib.org/library/Ricardo/ricP.html, Indianapolis, 2000, accessed 2005.
[429] Gregg Huff: The Economic Growth of Singapore, Trade and Development in the Twentieth Century, Cambridge, 1994, p. 351.
[430] Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 49.
[431] Lim Joo-Jock: Foreign Investment in Singapore, Some Broader Economic and Socio-Political Ramifications, Singapore, 1977, p. 6.
[432] You Poh Seng: The Singapore Economy, Singapore, 1971, p. 102 et sqq.
[433] Development Bank of Singapore: Profile, http://www.dbs.com/dbsgroup/about/, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[434] Garry Rodan: The Political Economy of Singapore's Industrialization, National State and International Capital, London, 1989, p. 93, 94.
[435] Jurong Town Corporation: Milestones, http://www.jtc.gov.sg/Corporate/overview/milestones.asp, Singapore, 2002, accessed 2005.

adjusted.[436] As a result of this de-facto devaluation of the US dollar, the Singapore dollar appreciated by several percent.[437] Henceforth, it was much cheaper for the local people to buy foreign products. Surprisingly, it did not harm the exports. The main reason is that most products for export were based on imported materials. However, this situation prevailed until the US dollar became stronger again.[438]

(29) Exchange rate of the Singapore dollar to US dollar[439]		
Year	Average rate	Year-end rate
1975	2.3713	2.4895
1980	2.1412	2.0935
1985	2.2002	2.1050
1990	1.8125	1.7445
1995	1.4174	1.7315
2000	1.7239	1.7315
2005	1.6646	1.6642

Difficulties arose after the oil shock and energy crisis in the 1970s, when labor was getting short and productivity remained low.[440] The decision makers thus came up with another plan that was also inspired by Albert Winsemius and marks the beginning of the second economic phase after independence which lasted from 1974 until 1990.

The plan aimed to move employment from labor-intensive sectors to higher value-added sectors by increasing wages and expanding the number of engineering and technical students at the university level.[441] Within a few years, from 1979 until 1984, unit labor costs rose by 40 percent and the number of students enrolled in universities grew by 50 percent.[442]

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[436] On 18 December 1971, representatives of the "Group of Ten" met at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. and agreed to a realignment of currencies, including a new set of pegged exchange rates. The dollar was devalued in terms of gold, while other currencies were increased in value in terms of the dollar. Encyclopedia Britannica Online: International Payment and Exchange, http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-61797, Chicago, 2005, accessed 2005.

[437] The Chinese University of Hong Kong: Historical Exchange Rate Regime of Asian Countries, http://intl.econ.cuhk.edu.hk/exchange_rate_regime/index.php?cid=3, Hong Kong, 2000, accessed 2005.

[438] The Economist Intelligence Unit: The Asean Countries, Economic Structure and Analysis, London, 1989, p. 163.

[439] The table is based on data provided in Department of Statistics: Exchange Rate, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/exchange.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, modified 2006, accessed 2006.

[440] In 1973, oil was in short supply after members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) announced during the Yom Kippur War that they would no longer ship petroleum to nations that had supported Israel in the conflict with Syria and Egypt. And in 1978, oil and other fuel sources were in short supply in the wake of the Iranian Revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini.

[441] The Economist Intelligence Unit: The Asean Countries, Economic Structure and Analysis, London, 1989, p. 164-168.

[442] Compare with Amnuay Tapingkae: Higher Education and Economic Growth in Southeast Asia, Singapore, 1976, p. 8, 9, 13-19.

(30) Qualifications of economically active persons in 1970 and 1980[443]		
Highest qualification reached	Year 1970	Year 1980
Below secondary school	57 059	810 573
Secondary or upper secondary	9 450	265 906
University or other higher education	1 527	39 479
Total	68 313	1 115 958

What followed was what Garry Rodan later called the "Second Industrial Revolution", because it turned the country into a "modern industrial economy based on science, technology, skills and knowledge", as the Minister for Finance at the time, Goh Chok Tong, had anticipated it in a budget speech on 6 August 1981 in parliament.[444]

During this period, several government companies such as Singapore Airlines were privatized.[445] The government, however, continued to control those companies through investment holdings, of which Temasek is the largest.[446] Today, they are known as "Government-linked Companies" (GLCs).[447]

The banking and finance sectors were benefiting most from it. Between 1970 and 1990, the number of banks in Singapore rose from 37 to 141, merchant banks from two to 69 and insurance companies from zero to 124.[448] Even more impressive than these numbers is the role the financial institutions started to play, as Van Oenen had anticipated it in a conversation with Albert Winsemius in 1968:

"Look here, the financial world begins in Zurich. Zurich banks open at 9 o'clock in the morning, later Frankfurt, later London. In the afternoon Zurich closes, then Frankfurt and London. In the meantime, New York is open. So London hands over financial money traffic to New York. In the afternoon New York closes; they had already handed over financial money traffic to San Francisco. When San Francisco closes in the afternoon, the world is covered with a veil. Nothing happens until next day, 9 a.m. Swiss time, then the Swiss banks open.

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[443] The table is based on data provided in Department of Statistics: Yearbook of Statistics Singapore 1981/82, Singapore, 1983, p. 51.

[444] Garry Rodan: The Political Economy of Singapore's Industrialization, National State and International Capital, London, 1989, p. 142 et sqq.

[445] Singapore Airlines: Our History, http://www.singaporeair.com/saa/en_UK/content/company_info/siastory/history.jsp, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

[446] Temasek: Corporate Profile, http://www.temasekholdings.com.sg/about_temasek/corpro_main.htm, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2005.

[447] This was becoming visible in early 2000 when Richard Li, son of Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-Shing, who had sold Star TV to Rupert Murdoch and bought "Hong Kong Telecom" (later renamed in "PCCW"), made a bid for Singapore Telecommunication (SingTel). The Singapore government intervened and prevented him from investing. Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 72, 73; and other sources.

[448] Lim Guan Huan: Strategies for Financial Sector Development, p. 197, published in Toh Mun Heng (Ed.): Competitiveness of the Singapore Economy, A Strategic Perspective, Singapore, 1998, p. 195-248.

When we put Singapore in between, before San Francisco closes, Singapore would have taken over. And when Singapore closes, it would have handed over to Zurich. Then, for the first time since creation, we will have a 24-hour round-the-world service in money and banking."[449]

A third economic plan was passed in 1991 after a national recession, which was caused by the erosion of Singapore's international competitiveness. From a historical point of view, this "Strategic Plan Towards a Developed Nation" was the most important or at least the most ambitious.[450] It set out the long-term objective of building wage flexibility into the economy and promoting the service sectors.

Its eight objectives were "enhancing human resources, promoting national teamwork, becoming internationally orientated, creating a conducive climate for innovation, developing manufacturing and service clusters, spearheading economic redevelopment, maintaining international competitiveness and reducing vulnerability."[451]

As part of the government's strategy, a dozen programs were launched, including a "Multi-Agency Taskforce on Economic Redevelopment" to spearhead uncompetitive or inefficient industries, a "Competitiveness Monitoring Group" to compile short- and long-term information about the markets, and an "International Manpower Program" for attracting foreign talents.[452]

(31) Gross domestic product (GDP total) at current market prices[453]		
Year	In million Singapore dollars	In million US dollars
1965	2 956	966
1970	5 805	1 896
1975	13 443	5 669
1980	25 091	11 718
1985	38 924	17 691
1990	66 994	36 902
1995	118 963	83 930
2000	159 596	92 578
2005	> 190 000 (est.)	> 117 100 (est.)

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[449] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, p. 89.

[450] Ministry of Trade and Industry: The Strategic Economic Plan, Towards a Developed Nation, Singapore, 1991.

[451] Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 6.

[452] Ministry of Trade and Industry: The Strategic Economic Plan, Towards a Developed Nation, Singapore, 1991, p. 97-110.

[453] The "gross domestic product" (GDP) is the total value of output of goods and services produced within the domestic territory before deducting capital consumption. The table is based on data provided in Department of Statistics: GDP at Current Market Prices, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/gdp2.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

(32) Per capita gross domestic product (GDP per capita) at current market prices[454]		
Year	In Singapore Dollars	In US Dollars
1965	1 567	512
1970	2 798	914
1975	5 941	2 505
1980	10 394	4 854
1985	14 226	6 466
1990	21 950	12 110
1995	33 743	23 806
2000	39 723	23 043
2005	> 43 000 (est.)	> 26 500 (est.)

(33) Annual growth of the overall gross domestic product at 1995 market prices[455]	
Year	Annual growth
1965	- 3.8
1970	13.7
1975	4.1
1980	9.7
1985	- 1.4
1990	9.0
1995	8.0
2000	9.6
2005	> 6.0 (est.)

In analyzing these statistics, it can be concluded that apart from smaller setbacks, of which some were corrected in modified economic plans such as "Industry 21" and Manpower 21", most of the programs implemented yielded positive results.[456] Between 1965 and 2000, the gross domestic product rose from around three billion to almost 160 billion Singapore dollars or from nearly 1 600 to almost 40 000 Singapore dollars per capita.

This is even more remarkable considering the rapid growth of the population which is not the result of a high birth rate, but rather of the continuing influx of foreign workers. Except for a few years in the late 1960s, unemployment was never a big problem.[457] Within just four years during the 1970s, the unemployment rate fell below four percent and 1973 is generally remembered as being a year when Singapore had a labor shortage. Even the rapid population growth attests the remarkable economic growth: Two million immigrants would not have come to Singapore if there were no chances to make a living.[458]

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[454] The table is based on data provided in Department of Statistics: Per Capita GDP at Current Market Prices, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/gdp.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[455] The table is based on data provided in Department of Statistics: GDP at 1995 Market Prices, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/gdp1.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[456] "Industry 21" was developed in 1999 as a blue-print for Singapore's economic success in the next century. The goal was to turn the city into a vibrant and robust global hub of knowledge driven by industries that rely on technology, innovation and capabilities. "Manpower 21" is a comparable vision but focuses on labor.
[457] Gavin Peebles: The Singapore Economy, Glos, 1996, p. 47-50.
[458] "The King of Thailand would not have sent 20 of his sons to a fishing village for education in the late nineteenth century", reminds Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 26.

(34) Growth of the population, women in the labor force and unemployment rate[459]			
Year	Population	Percentage of females in the labor force	Annual unemployment rate
1965	1 886 900	n.a.	> 12.0 (est.)
1970	2 084 500	28.2	8.2
1975	2 262 500	34.9	4.5
1980	2 413 900	44.3	3.5
1985	2 836 000	44.9	4.1
1990	3 047 100	53.0	1.7
1995	3 525 600	50.1	2.5
2000	4 017 700	55.5	4.4
2005	4 351 400 (est.)	> 54.0 (est.)	4.3 (est.)

In 1995, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) decided to stop classifying Singapore as a developing country. In 1997, the World Bank ranked Singapore as a "high income economy", along with countries such as the United States and Japan. And in the same year, the International Monetary Fund made it clear that Singapore belongs to the "group traditionally known as industrial countries".[460]

(35) Self-evaluation of the quality of life in Singapore in 1990		
Issue	Best country out of 100 countries	Singapore's position out of the best ten countries
Housing	Singapore	10
Health Care	Singapore	10
Physical Environment	Australia	7
Political Environment	Singapore	10
Economic Environment	Singapore	10
Public Transport	Singapore	10
Private Transport	United States of America	4
Communication	Singapore	10
Education	United States of America	6
Mass Media	United States of America	10
Crime	Singapore	10
Arts	France	4
Recreation	United States of America	5
Essential services and utilities	Japan	7

(36) Quality of life in Singapore in 1990[461]	
Issue	Rank out of 100 countries
Public safety (murder rate)	20
Food Cost (% of income)	5
Living Space	42
Housing standards (availability of utilities)	1

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[459] Figures for 1980 and earlier refer to all persons present in Singapore and enumerated on census day. The table is based on data provided in Department of Statistics: Population, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/population.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; Department of Statistics: Labor Force Participation Rate, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/labour.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; and Department of Statistics: Annual Unemployment Rate, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/unemployment.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[460] Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 153.
[461] The tables are based on data provided in Ministry of Trade and Industry: The Strategic Economic Plan, Towards a Developed Nation, Singapore, 1991, p. 24, 25

Communications (no. of telephones)	20
Education (% with secondary education)	40
Public health (infant mortality)	6
Noise level	1
Traffic flow	7

In 2000, economic activity was very high. According to the Department of Statistics, the value of trade imports exceeded 232 billion Singapore dollars and the value of exports 237 billion Singapore dollars, so the total foreign trade value was around 470 billion Singapore dollars. Singapore's port had become number one in handling international cargo. It cleared 145 383 vessels and handled a total shipping tonnage of 910 million tons while the airport cleared 86 853 planes arriving with 13.5 million passengers and 848 269 tons of cargo. The most important trading partners were in Malaysia, the United States and Japan. Among the most relevant commodities were mineral fuels (petroleum), chemicals and manufactured goods.[462]

(37) Singapore's three most important trading partners in 2000[463]		
Country	Value of imports in million Singapore dollars	Value of exports in million Singapore dollars
Malaya (Malaysia)	39 399	43 190
United States	34 718	41 189
Japan	39 955	17 949
Others	118 103	135 498
Total	232 175	237 826

(38) Singapore's three most important commodities in 2000		
Commodity	Value of imports in million Singapore dollars	Value of exports in million Singapore dollars
Mineral fuels (petroleum)	27 987	23 061
Chemicals	13 282	16 488
Manufactured goods	16 359	9 017
Others	174 547	189 260
Total	232 175	237 826

As a result of this economic success, unemployment fell to 3.5 percent; wages were high and savings remarkable. On the average, people earn 3 063 Singapore dollars per month (for a 47-hour work week), that makes about 36 000 Singapore dollars per annum. In 2004, the gross national savings totaled 73.9 billion Singapore dollars. And the total revenue of the government was 31.1 billion, of which only 18.9 billion were needed for expenditures.[464]

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[462] Department of Statistics: Yearbook of Statistics Singapore, Singapore, 2004, p. 144, 159, 160 et sqq.
[463] The tables are based on data provided in Department of Statistics: Yearbook of Statistics Singapore, Singapore, 2004, p. 145-147, 149-152.
[464] Department of Statistics: Yearbook of Statistics Singapore, Singapore, 2004, p. 51, 203.

(39) The Singapore economy in 2000 (at current market prices)[465]			
Population	Gross domestic product in million Singapore dollars	Gross domestic product per capita in Singapore dollars	Unemployment rate
4 017 700	159 596	39 723	4.4

Today, Singapore is one of the very few countries in the world where the total amount of foreign trade is greater than the entire annual gross domestic product. It has one of the busiest ports in the world and it is also a major airport hub and service center.[466] In other words: The economic conditions for effective transmission of news are excellent. Singapore's economy, however, depends more than ever on the rest of the world.

5.2.1 Investments in media-related industries

The economic development of Singapore can be divided into different phases. After a phase of heavy construction of housing and infrastructure such as expanded port facilities, industrial estates and roads, transport and communication were becoming the fastest growing sectors, including tourism.[467]

(40) Number of visitors and turnover between 1970 and 2000 in Singapore[468]			
Year	Number of visitors	Tourism receipts in million US dollars	Percentage of the Gross Domestic Product
1970	579 000	280	4.8
1980	2 562 000	3 068	12.7
1990	5 323 000	8 428	11.5
2000	7 691 000	9 950	6.3

The strongest impetus came from the electronics industry. Originally, there were only two significant electronics companies. They were set up in 1965 and 1966 to manufacture radios and black-and-white television sets for the small domestic market. In the following year, the Economic Development Board (EDB) sent a mission to the United States to promote Singapore as a good offshore location. Already a few weeks later, the first delegates from American companies were visiting Singapore to study the prospects for investments.[469]

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[465] The table is based on the data provided in this chapter of the dissertation.
[466] Compare with Gavin Peebles: The Singapore Economy, Glos, 1996, p. 159.
[467] Gregg Huff: The Economic Growth of Singapore, Trade and Development in the Twentieth Century, Cambridge, 1994, p. 305, 306.
[468] The table is based on data provided in Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 167.
[469] Pang Eng Fong: The Electronics Industry in Singapore, Structure, Technology and Linkages, Singapore, 1977, p. 13.

Besides low-cost labor, the so-called "Pioneer Status" they found very attractive, which offered a complete exemption from the corporate tax for five to ten years and the "Export Enterprise Certificate", which granted tax on export profits.[470] As a result, three American electronics companies invested in Singapore in 1967.[471] They were followed by companies from Japan and Europe in 1969.[472] Among the first were Texas Instruments, Hewlett Packard and General Electrics from the United States, Hitachi, Toshiba and Sanyo from Japan, and Philips, Siemens and Thomson from Europe.[473]

(41) Electronic firms in Singapore between 1965 and 1974[474]							
Year	Singapore	USA	Europe	Japan	Hong Kong	Other	Total
1965	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
1966	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
1967	1	3	-	-	-	-	4
1968	1	3	-	-	-	-	4
1969	3	2	1	1	1	-	8
1970	2	7	3	-	1	2	15
1971	1	2	1	1	3	-	8
1972	1	1	3	2	-	-	7
1973	3	1	2	7	1	2	16
1974	3	3	1	-	-	1	8
Total	17	22	11	11	6	5	70

By 1975, there were already 91 electronic firms operating in Singapore. In total, they employed 46 247 workers, more than one-fifth of the total manufacturing workforce, representing 1.6 billion Singapore dollars or about twelve percent of the total manufacturing output.

As in other sectors, the world recession of 1975 caused a fall in output and a drop in employment by around 14 000 workers.[475] But economic recovery began in the following year. By 1980, there were already 185 electronics companies in Singapore. In total, they employed 71 727 workers which was more than a quarter of the total manufacturing workforce. Altogether, they represented 5.6 billion Singapore dollars or more than 16 percent of the total manufacturing output.[476]

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[470] Lim Joo-Jock: Foreign Investment in Singapore, Some Broader Economic and Socio-Political Ramifications, Singapore, 1977, p. 6 et sqq; and Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 33.
[471] Wolfgang Hillebrand: Industrial Restructuring in Singapore, Technological Decision-Making and International Cooperation in the Electronics Industry, Berlin, 1981, p. 7.
[472] Pang Eng Fong: The Electronics Industry in Singapore, Structure, Technology and Linkages, Singapore, 1977, p. 14.
[473] Linda Lim: Trade, Employment and Industrialization in Singapore, Geneva, 1986, p. 87.
[474] The table is based on data provided in Pang Eng Fong: The Electronics Industry in Singapore, Structure, Technology and Linkages, Singapore, 1977, p. 14.
[475] Wolfgang Hillebrand: Industrial Restructuring in Singapore, Technological Decision-Making and International Cooperation in the Electronics Industry, Berlin, 1981, p. 7.
[476] Linda Lim: Trade, Employment and Industrialization in Singapore, Geneva, 1986, p. 88.

(42) Multinational electronic companies operating in Singapore in the 1980s[477]	
Company name	Product
Aiwa	Radio and cassette tape recorders
Apple	Micro computers
Fairchild	Integrated circuits
Fujitsu	Relays
General Motors	Car radios
Hewlett-Packard	Programmable calculators
Hitachi	Electrical appliances
JVC Trio Kenwood	High-fidelity equipment
Mitsubishi Electronics	B/W television sets
Olivetti	Printing calculators
Philips	Telecom equipment
Sanyo	Domestic appliances
Siemens	Semiconductors
Sumitomo	Enameled wires
Texas Instruments	Semiconductors

In other words: Within just ten years, electronics became the second most important group of exports after petroleum. Between 1970 and 1980, the industry created over 60 000 jobs plus at least 200 000 related jobs.[478] It is remarkable that most of these new jobs were created for unskilled or semi-skilled female production operators, who accounted for 80 percent of the workforce in this industry, compared with the average of around 45 percent.[479]

According to Chia Siow Yue, the electronics industry passed through four phases of development. The first phase, from the late 1960s until the late 1970s, was characterized by the arrival of multinational companies. In the second phase, from the late 1970s until the late 1980s, earlier investments in semiconductor plants by American companies were followed by investments in consumer electronics by Japanese companies. During the third phase, from the late 1980s until the mid-1990s, ever-shortening product cycles intensified global and regional competition. And in the fourth phase, from the late 1990s until today, digitalization, wireless technology, miniaturization, automation, human interface technology and product intelligence have become core issues.[480]

Based on data from 1992, Chia Siow Yue identified three salient features: "First, the largest category of domestically produced exports was disk drives, computers and subassemblies, ICs, TV receivers, and subassemblies. Domestic exports were destined primarily for the US and EC markets (64.1 percent), with Japan accounting for only 5.1 percent. […] Second, entrepot exports (from other countries' production) were concentrated in ICs, computers and

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[477] The table is based on data provided in Linda Lim: Trade, Employment and Industrialization in Singapore, Geneva, 1986, p. 50.
[478] In 2000, the electronic products and components industry employed more than 100 000 workers who produced an output value of 82 billion Singapore dollars.
[479] The percentage of female employment in the electronics industry has remained fairly constant over the time.
[480] Chia Siow Yue: A Regional Hub in ICT, p. 277, 278, published in Seiichi Masuyama (Ed.): Towards a Knowledge-based Economy, Tokyo, 2003, p. 259-298.

subassemblies, disk drives, colour TV sets, radios and videocassette recorders, and telecommunication equipment. Third, East Asian countries, particularly Malaysia, provided large markets for Singapore's domestic exports of electronics components, indicating the increasingly integrated production pattern in East Asia and Singapore's role in the value chain."[481]

However, several conclusions can be drawn from the development of the electronic industry. First of all, it generated many jobs, particularly for female workers, and in doing so strengthened the purchasing power of the households.[482] Secondly, mass production lowered the costs for technical devices (vehicles) which are essential for the production, distribution and reception of news: radio and television sets, computers, and so on.[483] And, thirdly, the development of the electronics industry had great effects on the media industry, although this is not representative for the development of the media industry itself.

Besides, it should be noted, as Pang Eng Fong showed in an analysis for the Economic Research Center of the University of Singapore, that "the electronics industry in Singapore is heavily dominated by U.S. and semiconductor firms which are the largest in term of sales and employment size" which is another aspect criticized in the MacBride Report.[484]

5.2.2   Purchasing power and advertising

For traditional media companies in Singapore, the prospects were actually not so promising. The English-language press faced a uncertain commercial future. At the time of Singapore's separation from Malaysia (1965), the leading newspaper *Straits Times* had a combined daily circulation of more than 150 000 copies and the group's pre-tax profits reached a record of 12.6 million Singapore dollars for the fiscal year ending August 1972.

This was difficult to maintain when the company was split into the New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) serving the market in Malaysia and the Straits Times Press (Singapore) for the

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[481] Chia Siow Yue: A Regional Hub in ICT, p. 281, published in Seiichi Masuyama (Ed.): Towards a Knowledge-based Economy, Tokyo, 2003, p. 259-298.

[482] Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 97.

[483] Compare with Meheroo Jussawalla: Towards an Information Economy, The Case of Singapore, p. 141, published in Mehreroo Jussawalla (Ed.): The Cost of Thinking, Information Economies of Ten Pacific Countries, Norwood, 1988, p. 135-150.

[484] Pang Eng Fong: The Electronics Industry in Singapore, Structure, Technology and Linkages, Singapore, 1977, p. 60; and Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 109-111.

market in Singapore. Henceforth, the latter's horizon was narrowed to a small island with a population of only two million people.[485]

Another danger to the commercial future was the withdrawal of the 30 000 British soldiers who spent around 450 million Singapore dollars a year and employed around 24 000 people in the naval base plus another 70 000 domestic helpers, many of whom were English-speaking.[486] In addition, many British bureaucrats were told to return home, and so a large proportion of the traditional readership disappeared or was left behind without any income.[487]

A third difficulty was caused by the 1974 legislation prohibiting any foreign investments and regulating local ownership, even though huge investments were necessary in order to move the newspaper companies back to Singapore and establish them as listed companies. For a new printing plant alone, at least 20 million Singapore dollars were needed.

However, all the forecasts of experts turned out to be wrong. Already two years later, the *Straits Times* announced a record profit of 15.8 million Singapore dollars. Henceforth, the group went from strength to strength. Its circulation advanced steadily, its profits grew and its share prices spiraled. In 1976, the *Straits Times* had a daily circulation of 163 000 copies and in 1980, it passed the 200 000-mark.[488]

So it was no problem for the newspaper company to absorb the increasing wage and newsprint costs. It purchased new typing machines and incorporated a "Business Times" section of four pages in the paper. In 1976, the group even launched a new journal called *Singapore Business*. And bonuses were issued nearly every year until the mid-1980s. Meanwhile, also the Chinese-language media companies were listed. When the *Nanyang Siang Pau* offered 4.98 million ordinary shares in 1977, it was twelve times over-subscribed. And when *Sin Chew Jit Poh* offered 5.32 million ordinary shares in the same year, it was even 22 times over-subscribed.[489]

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[485] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 294.
[486] National Education Branch: The Withdrawal of the British Military Base, http://www.moe.gov.sg/ne/sgstory/withdrawal.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[487] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 301.
[488] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 302, 327.
[489] Lim Jim Koon (Ed.): Our 70 Years, 1923-1993, History of the Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore, Singapore, 1993, p. 45.

(43) Newspaper circulation in Singapore from 1965 until 2005[490]		
Year	Number of newspapers	Combined circulation
1965	8	> 300 000 (est.)
1970	9	389 900
1975	10	449 001
1980	10	615 512
1985	10	713 866
1990	8	813 484
1995	8	1 005 307
2000	10	1 100 859
2005	10	1 197 301

So apart from minor setbacks, the newspaper business flourished, primarily because of three reasons. First of all, due to political decisions, local competition was almost completely shut out and threats from foreign investors like tycoon Rupert Murdoch were very unlikely. Secondly, the English-language readership surprisingly did not decline, instead it continued to rise.[491] And the third and most important reason for economic success was the steady growth in the purchasing power of the readers, since this was accompanied by a rapid increase in advertising.

In the late 1960s, there were around 90 advertising companies employing around 900 people. Already ten years later, the numbers had increased to around 300 advertising companies employing 2 350 people.[492] It is not known how much these agencies spent for placing advertisements in the 1960s and 1970s, but the amount increased between 1980 and 1990 from around 177 million Singapore dollars to 582 million Singapore dollars.[493] In 2000, 753 million Singapore dollars were spent on advertisement.[494]

Traditionally, the lion's share goes to newspapers.[495] This is not attributed to the fact that advertising in radio and television broadcasting was only introduced in the mid-1960 but because newspapers appeal to more specific readerships.[496] The *Straits Times* and *Business Times*, for instance, cater to established professionals while the *New Paper* mainly serves young readers.

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[490] The table is based on data provided in Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 130; Peter Chen: Mass Media and Communication Patterns in Singapore, Singapore, 1979, p. 53; and Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Asian Communication Handbook, Singapore, 2003, p. 266.
[491] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, p. 218.
[492] Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 45.
[493] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 166.
[494] ACNielsen Singapore: Nielsen Media Research Records Sluggish Ad Spend in Singapore in 2001, http://www.acnielsen.com.sg/news.asp?newsID=85, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[495] John Keshishoglou: Electronic Broadcast Media in Singapore and the Region, Singapore, 2005, p. 132.
[496] Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 59.

In 1990, 51.5 percent of the total budget was spent on newspaper advertising and not much less in 2000, although television is catching up since the mid 1990s. The promotion of consumer (retail) products plays the most important role.

(44) Advertising expenditure by medium in 1990[497]		
Media	Expenditure in million Singapore dollars	Market share in percent
Newspaper	299.7	51.5
Television	173.6	29.8
Magazines	63.0	10.8
Radio	15.7	2.7
Buses / Taxis	14.2	2.4
Posters	12.1	2.1
Cinema	3.7	0.6

(45) Advertising expenditures by product category in 1990	
Product category	Advertising expenditure in million Singapore dollars
Department stores / retail	40.2
Entertainment	39.1
Leisure/travel	23.9
Watches / clocks	36.2
Transportation	19.3
Government	16.1
Office equipment	16.0
Banking/finance	17.9
Fast food outlets	16.2
Corporations	16.3

The remarkable thing about the development of advertising in Singapore is that not only the top advertising agencies are in the hands of foreigners, but also their clients.[498] Among the largest advertisement agencies in Singapore are McCann Erickson, Saatchi & Saatchi and Leo Burnett. And among the biggest spenders are McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken and American Express whose regional offices are usually also run by foreigners.[499]

(46) Top ten advertising companies in Singapore in 1990[500]	
Company	Expenditure in million Singapore dollars
Batey Ads	85.0
McCann Erickson	50.0
Saatchi & Saatchi	47.0
Ogilvy @ Mather	45.2
Dentsu, Young & Rubicam	45.2
Leo Burnett	38.5

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[497] The tables are based on data provided in Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 167, 174.
[498] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 59.
[499] Compare with Katherine Frith: Advertising as Cultural Invasion, p. 179-184, published in *Media Asia*, volume 16, number 4, Singapore, 1989, p. 179-184.
[500] The tables are based on data provided in Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 168, 172.

J Walter Thompson	33.4
Spenser / BBDO	29.2
The Ball Partnership	28.0
Dailey, Nardu & Chan	27.0

(47) Top ten spenders on advertising in Singapore in 1990	
Company	Expenditure in million Singapore dollars
McDonald's	5.6
Courts Furniture	3.0
Metro Stores	2.9
Kentucky Fried Chicken	3.5
Yaohan	5.2
American Express	3.6
Tiger Beer	2.8
Singapore Airlines	3.8
Telecom	3.1
Ministry of Communication & Information	2.8

So it can be summarized that, despite some difficulties, the media industry prospered during the past few decades. It benefited from the overall growth of both the economy and the population, which led to the higher purchasing power of an increasing number of people. This had two effects, namely higher circulations ("the miracle of selling newspapers below costs") and higher advertising revenues ("the lifeblood of newspapers"), which together resulted in higher annual receipts.[501]

Today, however, media is a big business. Nearly all newspapers and magazines are published by the Singapore Press Holdings, which achieved record receipts of more than one billion Singapore dollars each in 2000 and in 2005.[502] And the majority of radio and television channels are operated by the Media Corporation of Singapore, which had a turnover of approximately 430 million in 2000 and 460 million Singapore dollars in 2005.

In addition, several hundred local, small and medium-sized media enterprises are operating in Singapore. Most of them are serving the two dominating companies in one way or another. To a certain extent, this is even true for the local or regional offices of international media companies operating there.[503] Among the international publications printed at the plant of the

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[501] Cyril Pereira: Advertising, The Lifeblood of Newspapers, and C. Prasad: The Miracle of Selling Newspapers below Costs, both published in Achal Mehra (Ed.): Newspaper Management in the Multimedia Age, Singapore, 1988, p. 107-114 and 13-28; and David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 61, 62.

[502] Singapore Press Holdings: Annual Report 2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 8, and Singapore Press Holdings: Annual Report 2005, Singapore, 2005, p. 14.

[503] Chia Choon Wei: Economic Aspects of the Information Revolution, The Singapore Experience, p. 45, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): The Passing of Remoteness, Information Revolution in the Asia-Pacific, Singapore, 1986, p. 42-50; and Chia Siow Yue: A Regional Hub in ICT, p. 270, published in Seiichi Masuyama (Ed.): Towards a Knowledge-based Economy, Tokyo, 2003, p. 259-298.

Singapore Press Holdings are the International *Herald Tribune*, *USA Today*, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Asahi Shimbun* and the Egyptian paper *Al-Ahram*.[504]

5.3 Expansion of the existing systems

According to the MacBride report, technology is not only considered an outcome of economic growth but also a prerequisite for it.[505] In this sense, the government in Singapore established the Ministry of Science and Technology as well as several statutory boards. One of these was the Science Council of Singapore which was formed in 1967 and aims to promote the development of national scientific and technological capabilities. Its scope was limited, because in a city state with less than two million inhabitants, fundamental research hardly makes sense. Instead, all research and development (R&D) and science and technology (S&T) should be in support of the overall programs.[506]

One of the most important challenges was the expansion of the school system. In 1965, there were 16 986 teachers and 477 408 pupils at 594 schools as well as around 700 academic staff members and 8 315 students at four institutions of higher education: Ngee Ann Polytechnic, founded in 1963 as a private college, had 80 members of academic staff and 893 students.[507] At Singapore Polytechnic, established in 1954, there were 204 professionals and 2 426 students.[508] At Nanyang University, also established in 1954 as a Chinese-language institution, there were 147 professionals and 2 126 students. And at the University of Singapore, which was established following a proposal by Stamford Raffles in 1823, the number of academic staff was 272 and the number of students totaled 2 870.[509]

In other words: When Singapore became an independent and separate country, every forth citizen was in one way or another involved in education or research. Although this can be explained by citing the low average age, the numbers are bluffing. Reports show, however, that only half of the teachers at the time had any formal training and that many students did not attend classes because they had to support their parents to make a living.[510]

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[504] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 24.
[505] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 258.
[506] Nilyardi Kahar: Technology Policies and Planning Singapore, Bangalore, 1989, p. 7.
[507] Ngee Ann Polytechnic: Historical Milestones, http://www.np.edu.sg/corpcomm/abt_np/con_history.html, Singapore, 2003, accessed 2005.
[508] Singapore Polytechnic: Our History, http://www.sp.edu.sg/abt_history.htm, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[509] Government Printing Office: Singapore Year Book 1965, Singapore, 1965 p. 225, 236-238; and National University of Singapore: Timeline, http://www.nus.edu.sg/corporate/timeline/, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2005.
[510] Government Printing Office: Singapore Year Book 1965, Singapore, 1965 p. 224 et sqq.

Another major problem was that several buildings were damaged and only few had adequate supplies. Therefore, the government launched several programs to properly equip the institutions.[511] In 1979, the Ministry of Education restructured the primary education system. And in the following year, the secondary education system was made more flexible.

The reforms on the higher education level were even more comprehensive.[512] In 1980, the English-language University of Singapore and the Chinese-language Nanyang University were merged to become the National University of Singapore. Chinese citizens, however, were angry that preference was given to the English language. [513]

Thus, the Chinese-language Nanyang Technological Institute was established in 1981.[514] About ten years later, it was upgraded to Nanyang Technological University.[515] Therewith, it became a counterpart to the National University of Singapore and Singapore Management University (incorporated in 2000), which both teach in English.[516]

The per capita government expenditure on education grew steadily, from around 90 Singapore dollars in 1970 to 284 Singapore dollars ten years later. In 2000, around 4 500 Singapore dollars were spent per primary school pupil and more than double that figure per student enrolled at institutions of higher education.[517]

At the same time, the ratio of primary pupils per teacher declined from around 30 to 26 between 1970 and 1980 and continued to fall to 25 in 2000. As a result, the literacy rate increased from 73 to 84 percent between 1970 and 1980 and continued to rise to more than 92 percent in 2000. Another indicator is the ratio of pupils passing the orientation level; it increased from 53 to 69 percent between 1970 and 1980 and continued to rise to 78 percent in 2000. Similar effects can be observed at the universities.[518]

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[511] Ministry of Education: Mission and Vision Statement, http://www.moe.gov.sg/corporate/mission_statement.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

[512] Amnuay Tapingkae: Higher Education and Economic Growth in Southeast Asia, Singapore, 1976, p. 13 et sqq.

[513] National University of Singapore: Timeline, http://www.nus.edu.sg/corporate/timeline/, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2005.

[514] Ministry of Education: Education Statistics Digest 2004, Singapore, 2005, p. 68, 69.

[515] Today, the Nanyang Technological University has a high reputation what is largely attributed to the School of Communication and Information which was established in 1992 by Eddie Kuo. Nanyang Technological University: School of Communication and Information, History, http://www.ntu.edu.sg/sci/about/history.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

[516] The Singapore Management University is modeled after American institutions, in particular the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Singapore Management University: About SMU, http://www.smu.edu.sg/aboutsmu/index.asp, Singapore, 2000, accessed 2006.

[517] Today, 3.5 percent of the gross domestic product or 5.5 billion Singapore dollars are spent by the government for education.

[518] Alone at the Singapore Polytechnic, around 140 000 persons were educated over the years. Singapore Polytechnic: Our History, http://www.sp.edu.sg/abt_history.htm, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.

In 2000, there were 22 950 teachers and 505 914 pupils at 369 schools plus an unknown number of academic staff, but at least 400 professors, teaching 107 200 students at all the institutions previously mentioned plus the Temasek University, Nanyang Polytechnic and the Institute of Technical Education – today's numbers are slightly higher.[519]

Not all problems regarding education have been solved, of course. Generally, children from wealthier families receive a higher level of education than those from poorer families. As a result, Chinese are more represented at Singapore's universities than other ethnic groups because Chinese are generally in a better economic situation than the Malays and Tamils. And males are often educated for longer than females because boys are traditionally more coddled than girls. But in comparison with other countries, these gaps are gradually becoming negligible, partially due to an increasing number of scholarships.[520]

(48) Singapore's ranking in the United Nations Human Development Index in 1998[521]			
Country	Life expectancy	Literacy rate	Rank
Canada	79.1	99.0	1
Norway	78.3	99.0	2
Australia	76.7	99.0	3
Iceland	79.1	99.0	4
Sweden	79.7	99.0	5
Singapore	77.3	91.8	24

Meanwhile, other institutions were also expanded. In 1968, an expert in archives administration from UNESCO, whose family name is said to be "Verhoeven" was assigned to the National Library to survey the archives and records in the government departments. He forced the establishment of the National Archives and Record Center, which was later renamed the National Archives and Oral History Department (after the addition of the Oral History Department).[522] Henceforth, the National Library was discharged from the duty of collecting all kinds of materials and was able to focus on public services.[523]

As a result, the number of members as well as the number of books in the National Library more than doubled between 1970 and 1980, from 177 513 members and 460 552 books,

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[519] Ministry of Education: Factsheet 2005, http://www.moe.gov.sg/esd/Factsheet%202005.pdf, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2006, p. 1-2.
[520] Compare with Organization of Economic Cooperation and Security: First Results From Pisa 2003, Executive Summary, http://www.pisa.oecd.org/dataoecd/1/63/34002454.pdf, Paris, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[521] The table is based on data provided in Gavin Peebles: Economic Growth and Development in Singapore, Cheltenham, 2002, p. 137.
[522] Victoria School: National Archives of Singapore, http://itclub.vs.moe.edu.sg/cyberfair2003/landmarks/nationalarchives.html, Singapore, 2003, accessed 2005; and National Archives of Singapore: About NAS, http://www.nhb.gov.sg/NAS/AboutNAS/AboutNAS.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[523] Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 11 and p. 107-102.

and continued to increase in the following years.[524] Since 2000, three regional, 18 community libraries and 18 community children's libraries are part of the National Library. Altogether, they store approximately ten million items and handle 34 810 566 loans by 1 732 860 library members and 31 238 654 visitors per year.[525] In the same period, the National Archive acquired the paper equivalent of 7 650 linear meters, as well as 270 000 microfilm reels, 3.2 million images, 14 099 hours of oral history recordings and 100 415 audio-visual records.[526]

The expansion of the National Museum of Singapore is even more demonstrative of this trend. During colonial times, the leading museum was the Raffles Library and Museum which was founded in 1887 by Governor Frederick Weld (1823-1891).[527] Although it had an impressive national history collection of Southeast Asia, the British staff was primarily concerned with providing materials and services for the British. During and after the Japanese occupation, the museum was renamed several times; today it is known as Singapore History Museum (SHM).[528]

In 1969, at the advice of the Science Council of Singapore, the authorities decided to convert the institution into an art and history museum focusing on Singapore. Seven years later, it was expanded by the opening of the National Museum Art Gallery. Today, the following institutions belong to the Singapore History Museum and to the National Heritage Board (NHB): the Asian Civilizations Museums, the Singapore Art Museum, The Heritage Conservation Center, Singapore Philatelic Museum and Reflections at Bukit Chandu, which is a World War II documentation center. In total, they have 108 000 collections and were visited by 1 204 379 people in 2004 – these are the latest available numbers.[529]

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[524] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 14, 15.
[525] National Library Board: Fast Facts, http://www.nlb.gov.sg/CPMS.portal?_nfpb= %2FIBMS%2FaboutNLB%2FaboutNLBDisplay&NLB+Fast+Facts&_pageLabel=NLBOverview, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.
[526] National Archives of Singapore: The Treasure Trove, http://www.nhb.gov.sg/NAS/OurCollections/TheTreasureTrove.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.
[527] Frederick Weld was a New Zealand politician and a governor of various British colonies including New Zealand, Western Australia and Tasmania. From 1880 until 1887, he was governor of the Straits Settlements consisting of Malacca, Penang and Singapore.
[528] Singapore History Museum: Overview, http://www.nhb.gov.sg/SHM/AboutUs/Overview/, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; and Singapore History Museum: National Museum History, http://www.nhb.gov.sg/SHM/NMhistory/index.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[529] Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 11, 77, 78, 87; National Heritage Board: About Us, http://www.nhb.gov.sg/MCC/aboutnhb/?indexar=1, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006; and National Heritage Board: Our Key Performance for FY04/05, http://www.nhb.gov.sg/NR/rdonlyres/4D8194A8-3303-48D1-A69D-8969C9B546A0/0/04_NHB_Annual_Report0405_Our_Key_Performance.pdf, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.

(49) Exhibitions and visitors of the four largest museums in Singapore in 2000[530]		
Museum	Number of exhibitions	Number of visitors
Singapore History Museum	15	308 683
Singapore Art Museum	11	133 843
Asian Civilization Museum	9	71 347
Singapore Philatelic Museum	8	37 810
Total	43	551 683

More important for the news flow, however, was the expansion of the communication infrastructure. In the MacBride Report, the postal service is seen as the backbone of this infrastructure.[531] In Singapore, it dates back to the early days of Stamford Raffles and was gradually expanded. By 1965, there were 39 post offices and 28 postal agencies; they dealt with nearly 158 million items per year.[532]

Over the years, the general office was moved from one location to another. For example, in 1971, it was moved from Fullerton Building, which had earlier been used by journalists, to Nelson Road, near the port. Three years later, a facer-canceller table capable of processing up to 30 000 letter mail items per hour was put into operation. Soon after, the first generation of optical character reader technology was introduced so that 40 percent of all mail was processed mechanically.[533]

By the year 1977, there were a total of 62 post offices supplemented by two mobile post offices, 49 postal agencies, 190 licensed stamp vendors and 488 posting boxes. On the average, 520 000 postal articles were handled daily or 350 million postal articles annually. Those numbers continued to increase by more than five percent per year, particularly after the introduction of a "Local Urgent Mail Service" which covers both the collection and delivery of urgent mail.[534]

(50) Development of the postal service in Singapore[535]	
1819	A postal office is opened in the former Parliament House and run by three persons
1858	The Post Office becomes a separate department in the Marine Office
1925	The general office is moved to Fullerton Building

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[530] The tables are based on data provided in Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 40, 41, 223, 224.
[531] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 256.
[532] Government Printing Office: Singapore Year Book 1965, Singapore, 1965 p. 282.
[533] Singapore Post: About Us, History, http://www.singpost.com/singpost_06about_history.htm, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.
[534] Usually, urgent mail items are delivered within two and a half hours of its collection at specially scheduled times. Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 22.
[535] The table is based on information provided in Singapore Post: About Us, Introduction, http://www.singpost.com/singpost_06about.htm, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.

1949	The Singapore Postal Department is linked with the Postal Department of the Federation of Malaya and introduces standardized rules, procedures and postage rates in both territories
1965	After Singapore's separation from Malaysia, the Postal Service Department becomes a fully autonomous body
1971	The general office is moved to a Port of Singapore Authority warehouse near Nelson Road
1974	A facer-canceller table capable of processing up to 30,000 mail items per hours is put into operation
1978	The 2-digit postal code system is changed to a 4-digit system
1982	The Postal Service Department is merged with the then Telecommunication Authority of Singapore
1983	The mail and parcel center is moved to a larger location at the Chai Chee Complex where the first generation of optical character reader technology is implemented
1992	After the split of the Telecommunication Authority of Singapore into three entities, the Singapore Post becomes incorporated
1998	The mail-sorting operations at the Chai Chee Center are moved to the Singapore Post Center located along Eunos Road
2003	The Singapore Post is listed on the main board of the Singapore Stock Exchange

Today, the Singapore Post operates more than 60 offices, around 80 authorized postal agencies, nearly 200 self-service automated machines, more than 660 stamp vendors and over 800 postboxes throughout town. It is processing 2.4 million local and overseas items per day, or about 830 million items a year.[536]

Telecommunication services, another backbone according to the MacBride Report, are still closely related to the postal service because the two were part of one entity in Singapore's early years and also between 1982 and 1992, when the Postal Services Department was merged with the Telecommunication Authority of Singapore (TAS).[537] They were later split into three entities: Singapore Post, the Telecommunication Authority of Singapore and the Singapore Telecommunications Private Limited.

What is remarkable about the development of telecommunication is not only the fast expansion of the distribution system but also its international orientation. Already seven years after the installation of a fully automatic switching system (1930), overseas phone calls were made possible between Singapore and London (1937).[538] The reason is that all telecommunication services were managed by the British until the mid-1950s. Singapore even joined the Commonwealth Telephone Cable System, which crosses Southeast Asia to

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[536] Singapore Post: How Your Mail Gets Delivered, http://www.singpost.com/singpost_06about_how.htm, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.
[537] Frank Yung: Telecommunication, the Singapore Experience, p. 3-6, published in *Media Asia*, volume 8, number 1, Singapore, 1981, p. 3-6.
[538] Singapore Telecom: Milestones, Early Years, http://home.singtel.com/about_singtel/company_profile/milestones/early_years.asp?milestone_id_=BE247BE3-290E-4046-9D38-C9CF07D7A6AE, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

Australia (SEACOM), the Pacific from Australia to Canada (COMPAC) and the Atlantic Ocean to Britain (CANTAT).[539]

In 1955, the exclusive right to operate local telecommunication services was handed over to the Singapore Telephone Board, and international services were run by the Telecommunication Authority of Singapore. When they merged in 1974, fully automatic "International Direct Dialing" (IDD, 1976) was introduced and international telephone service to and from Singapore, either person-to-person or station-to-station, became available to and from 184 different countries.

In addition, international telex service became available to 165 countries with direct keying to around 100 countries, by 1977. And in the following year, another service, then known as "Datel" was introduced for the transmission of data to Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Britain and to the United States.[540]

(51) Development of telecommunications in Singapore[541]	
1879	Singapore becomes the first country in Asia to introduce a telephone system, just three years after Alexander Graham Bell patented his invention
1907	The Central Telephone Exchange is opened at Hill Street
1930	A switching system is installed so that the telephone systems becomes fully automatic
1937	The first overseas call is made between Singapore and London
1955	The exclusive right to operate local telecommunication services is handed over to the Singapore Telephone Board, and international services to the Telecommunication Authority of Singapore
1976	Full international direct dialing becomes available
1977	The first mobile telephone system is designed to support the use of car-phones
1983	Push-button service and automatic paging is introduced
1985	Public card-phones are made available
1988	The first cellular mobile radio system is introduced
1989	Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) becomes available
1990	The one millionth fixed telephone line is installed

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[539] The Commonwealth is an association of independent sovereign states, almost all of which are former territories of the British Empire. Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 20, 21, and Commonwealth Secretariat: Modern Commonwealth, http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Templates/Internal.asp?NodeID=38150, London, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

[540] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 19-22.

[541] The table is based on information provided in Singapore Telecom: Milestones and History, http://home.singtel.com/about_singtel/company_profile/milestones/companypro_milestones.asp, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; StarHub: Company Information, http://www.starhub.com/corporate/aboutus/index.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006; Mobile One: Company Profile, http://m1.com.sg/M1/site/M1Corp/, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; and other sources.

1993	Singapore Telecommunication, now better known as SingTel, is incorporated as a wholly government owned company and listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange
1994	A digital cellular system, called "Global System for Mobile Communications" (GSM900), is introduced
1996	The Telecommunication Authority of Singapore announces the advanced expiry of the exclusive rights to provide telecommunication services
1998	While Singapore Telecommunication launches its first own communication satellite, Star Hub and Mobile One are established in order to provide mobile communication services
2000	After the liberalization of the telecommunications market, Star Hub and Mobile One began to offer fixed and mobile communication services
2004	Star Hub and Mobile One roll out their 3G-networks
2006	Voice-over-IP becomes increasingly popular

As a result of this rapid technological expansion, prices fell and the local demand increased. Between 1960 and 1974, the number of phones soared by 350 percent while international calls grew ten-fold and telex calls fifteen-fold.[542] In the year 1974 alone, around 6 000 people per month applied for a residential line. As a result, operators were not able to provide immediate service upon request. These numbers continued to increase, particularly after further drops in prices due to the liberalization of the telecommunication market in 2000.[543]

(52) Telecommunications in Singapore between 1965 and 2000[544]					
Year	Phones per 1000 people	International calls per 1000 people per year	Telex connections per 1000 people	Telex calls per 1000 people per year	Telegrams per 1000 people per year
1965	<55.0	<65.0	<0.1	<38.0	<550.0
1970	77.8	122.9	0.1	67.0	523.4
1975	143.4	395.0	1.0	802.4	420.5
1980	294.6	1 576.1	3.4	3 208.5	278.4
1985	419.3	6 503.1	6.6	6 283.8	119.9
1990	>450.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1995	>490.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
2000	569.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Everybody benefited from this development but to journalists in particular, this fast and easy person-to-person, person-to-office and office-to-office communication became essential. One might even argue that the whole media industry depends on the expansion of the communication systems because it is the "linchpin" and "backbone" of modern media, as Ang Peng Hwa and Soh Yew Peng describe it.[545]

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[542] Nilyardi Kahar: Technology Policies and Planning Singapore, Bangalore, 1989, p. 84.
[543] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 22; and Chia Choon Wei: Economic Aspects of the Information Revolution, The Singapore Experience, p. 45, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): The Passing of Remoteness, Information Revolution in the Asia-Pacific, Singapore, 1986, p. 42-50.
[544] The table is based on data provided in Eddie Kuo: Trends of Informatization in Singapore, p. 38, published in Eddie Kuo (Ed.): Information Technology and Singapore Society, Trends, Policies and Applications, Singapore, 1990, p. 29-44.
[545] Ang Peng Hwa: Information Highways, Policy and Regulation, The Singapore Experience, p. 102, published in Venkat Iyer (Ed.): Media Regulations for the New Times, Singapore, 1999, p. 97-114; and Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 227.

Soh Yew Peng even compares the importance of telecommunications to the media industry with the importance of the railway, road and seaport system to agriculture, and with energy supply to heavy industry: "In the information era, accurate and timely transfer/transmission of information, whether the information originates from a local or international source, is often the key to success in the business world in terms of precise calculative decision making. […] To be able to know the latest news […] is not only of utmost importance, but it is the only link and channel that can deliver these services to its respective subscribers."[546]

Radio and television were the media most affected by these trends. Both had started off as experimental projects and were later officially introduced with the establishment of the British Malaya Broadcasting Corporation in 1936 and the launch of *Channel* 5 in 1963 respectively.[547] Broadcasting, just like the postal and telecommunication services, was also dominated by the British for a long time, but it was handed over following the independence of the country and Singapore's separation from Malaysia.[548]

One of the first decisions of the newly established Radio Television Singapore (RTS) was to introduce "Frequency Modulation" (FM radio), as invented by Edwin Armstrong (1890-1954) in 1933, to its four radio channels in 1967. As a result, all radio stations in Singapore use this kind of modulation for broadcasting. Accordingly, a "Phase Alternating Lines" system using 626 lines was introduced for color television in 1967. Today, all television stations use this technology for color transmission.[549]

Further progress was made when the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation was set up as a statutory agency and took over all functions of the Radio Television Singapore (RTS). It upgraded the production facilities with the completion of a large television studio and the introduction of an "Electronic News Gathering System" which allows the broadcasting of videotapes without processing them in the dark room – the system is still in use and has the advantage that news captured on videotapes can be edited for inclusion even while the news show is on air.[550]

In the meantime, several radio channels were launched, including *Class 95* (English), *Radio V* (English, Chinese), *Radio X* (Chinese), *93.3 FM* (Chinese), *Radio Ria* (Malay, English) and *Radio Singapore International* (to cater to people outside Singapore). In addition, a third free-

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[546] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 227.
[547] Drew McDaniel: Broadcasting in the Malay World, Radio, Television and Video in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, Norwood, 1994, p. 22 et sqq.
[548] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 30.
[549] Drew McDaniel: Broadcasting in the Malay World, Radio, Television and Video in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, Norwood, 1994, p. 172.
[550] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 74-75.

to-air television channel named *Channel 12* was started.[551] Since 1992, they all broadcast in stereo and dual sound respectively so that the listeners and viewers simultaneously receive two sound lines.[552]

Cable broadcasting was not introduced for a long time, although Singapore had a relatively high cable density. There were at least 16 000 fiber-optic cable lines with a total length of around 21 kilometers linking 26 (telephone) exchange booths.[553] The reason for the delay in cable broadcasting is that the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation was split into three entities in 1994: While the Radio Corporation of Singapore inherited the radio broadcasting arm, the Television Corporation of Singapore (TCS) took over the television channels except *Channel 12*, which was given to TV 12 (later renamed in STV 12); this channel was later split into *Prime 12* (today known as *Suria*) and *Premiere 12* (today known as *Central*).

As a result of this "privatization", radio and television were, for the first time, not operated by the same institution and also two television companies operating four channels were competing with each other. It did not take long, however, until the Television Corporation of Singapore was renamed Media Corporation of Singapore (MediaCorp) and merged with STV 12.

In the short period from 2001 to 2004, when SPH Media Works (belonging to the Singapore Press Holdings) shook the market with the launch of two free-to-air television channels, *Channel U* (Chinese) and *TV Works* (English, later renamed in *Channel I*), there was relatively little progress towards competition but the launch caused an immense staff turnover. These four years socked Singapore Press Holdings with such heavy losses that it ended up following the recommendation of the Singapore Broadcasting Authority to merge SPH Media Works with the Media Corporation of Singapore.

As a result, there was once again only one broadcasting institution left in Singapore, since all radio and television channels (except for four radio channels of marginal importance) were all owned by the Media Corporation of Singapore.

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[551] In addition, the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation forced the production of the first local drama series and introduced voice dubbing of dialogue of acquired drama programs, mainly from Cantonese to Mandarin in accordance with the "Speak Mandarin Campaign".

[552] MediaCorp TV: 40 Years of Television, http://www.mediacorptv.com/40years/eng.htm, Singapore, 2003, accessed 2005.

[553] Today, at least 400 000 households are connected to the cable network. Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 120.

(53) The development of broadcasting in Singapore[554]	
1922	The Amateur Wireless Society experiments with radio transmission
1936	The British Malaya Broadcasting Corporation is established and Radio Singapura is launched
1942-1945	The Japanese Military Administration occupies the radio station and runs it under the new name Syonan Hoso Kyoku
1949	Rediffusion established two radio channels: *Gold* is broadcasted in Chinese and *Silver* in English. Another channel is launched by British and Australian forces for their soldiers
1957-1963	Radio Malaya is split into two entities, the Singapore entity becomes known as Radio Singapore, but the two services are later amalgamated again following the merger with Malaysia
1963-1980	After Singapore's separation from Malaysia, Radio Television Singapore (RTS) restructures the market and launches four FM radio channels in different languages
1963/1967	Television broadcasting is started as a pilot project. Later, the first channel is launched. Its name is *Channel 5*. The second channel launched is *Channel 8*
1974	Color television is introduced and becomes a regular service two years later
1975	The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) sets up a relay station in order to broadcast BBC World in English and 13 other languages
1980-1994	The Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) takes over all functions from "RTS", introduces stereo for radio and dual sound for television, and launches several radio and television channels
1991	The National Trade Union Congress (NTUC) starts two radio channels, *FM91.3* in English and *FM100.3* in Chinese language
1993	The construction of the island-wide cable network Singapore Cable Vision begins; it is completed seven years later
1994	The Singapore Armed Forces Reservist Association launches two radio channels, *Power 98* in English and *Dong Li* in Chinese language
1994-2001	The "SBC" is split into entities: While the Radio Corporation of Singapore (RCS) inherits the radio arm, the Television Corporation of Singapore (TCS) launches several television channels
2001-2004	After the merger of the broadcasting services into the Media Corporation of Singapore, the Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) challenges it with two free-to-air television channels
2004	After half a century of renaming the same institution (RTS, SBC, TCS), "MediaCorp" has practically a monopoly in broadcasting, while "SPH" dominates print journalism

However, the media has benefited in several aspects from the expansion of the existing systems. Radio stations, for example, started accepting telephone requests. This may seem marginal but its effects are remarkable, since "phone-ins" allow the people to participate in the programs. During a radio call-in talk show in April 2001, so many people (250 000 calls per hour) tried to get through that the exchange system (capable of 100 000 calls per hour) was getting overheated, which in turn increased the number of incoming calls.[555]

Also, the development and introduction of new media demonstrate the high impact of the expansion of the telecommunications system, as the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems recommended it.[556] "Audiotex", which was started by Singapore Press Holdings in 1991, is based on both telecommunication and news in order to handle consumer requests. Similarly, "Teletex" functions (not to be confused with Telex or Teletext), became essential for journalists who need to receive and send words over long distances,

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[554] The table is based on different sources, including MediaCorp TV: 40 Years of Television, http://www.mediacorptv.com/40years/eng.htm, Singapore, 2003, accessed 2005.
[555] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 34.
[556] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 255.

from one newsroom to another for instance. Another example is "Interactive Teletext", which was introduced by the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation in 1993 as "SBCText" and later its more sophisticated successor; "INtv". Although it uses broadcasting technology and requires a decoder, viewers need a telephone to interact with it.[557]

Even the expansion of the postal system, as discussed in the MacBride Report, has had some relevance for the media. Not only does the Singapore Post distribute a large number of newspapers and magazines from the printing presses to the subscribers, it also issues and renews radio and television licenses which are required to receive broadcasting services legally. Thus, the more post offices are opened, the better for the media.[558]

The expansion of the media industry itself, however, was the most important of all. On the production side, capacities were increased.[559] Already by 1970, the *Nanyang Siang Pau* had commenced using an offset printing machine and later bought a second "Goss Urbanite" offset printing machine in 1979 for six million Singapore dollars from a company in the United States, a machine capable of printing 50 000 copies of a forty-page broadsheet newspaper per hour.[560]

Another example is the construction of the headquarters of the Singapore Press Holdings,[561] which cost 45 million Singapore dollars and was completed in 1985. In addition to several newsrooms, the building has an auditorium, a resource center, a cafeteria, a clinic and sports facilities. It is equipped with high capacity fiber-optic cables, an electronic network and color facsimile transmission link-ups with the other two offices of the company.[562]

Consumer purchases, especially those of radio and television sets, are an equally important development. The total number of sets has never been calculated, but the number of licenses (one license permits its holder to use an unlimited number of sets within his premises) are revealing: Between 1965 and 1985, the number of radio licenses increased from 140 589 or 75.4 per 1 000 people to 590 543 or 230.9 per 1 000 people. In the same

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[557] Kwan Ting Keong: Development of Teleview in Singapore, p. 133, published in Eddie Kuo (Ed.): Videotex Development in the Asia-Pacific, Policy, Marketing and Implications, Singapore, 1995, p. 132-138; Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 80, 227; and William Hachten: The Growth of Media in the Third World, African Failures, Asian Successes, Salem, 1993, p. 75.
[558] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 22.
[559] Compare with Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of The Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 131.
[560] Lim Jim Koon (Ed.): Our 70 Years, 1923-1993, History of the Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore, Singapore, 1993, p. 18, 19.
[561] Singapore Press Holdings: Our Print Center, http://www.sph.com.sg/aboutus/print_centre.html, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[562] Lim Jim Koon (Ed.): Our 70 Years, 1923-1993, History of the Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore, Singapore, 1993, p. 44-52.

period, the number of television licenses increased from 62 921 or 33.7 per 1 000 people to 481 908 or 188.4 per 1 000 people. Today, those numbers are almost twice as high.

(54) Radio and television licenses in Singapore between 1965 until 2005[563]				
Year	Radio licenses	Radio licenses per 1 000 people	Television licenses	Television licenses per 1 000 people
1965	140 589	75.4	62 921	33.7
1970	236 856	114.2	156 848	75.6
1975	344 690	152.3	280 479	124.0
1980	459 004	190.3	397 155	164.5
1985	590 643	230.9	481 908	188.4
1990	/	/	582 540	191.2
1995	/	/	652 970	196.5
2000	/	/	761 000	233.0

All this, however, was not only a prerequisite of the economic growth; it was also an outcome of it. Today, Singapore has one of the most effective infrastructures for the transmission, dissemination and reception of news.

5.3.1   Introduction of new technologies

Many new technologies have been introduced in the past decades, but some are outstanding. One innovation that "changed history", according to the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, was the successful launch of Sputnik I on 4 October 1957 by the Soviet Union. Although it took only 98 minutes to bring the world's first artificial satellite, which was the size of a basketball and weighed only 44.5 kilograms, into orbit, this event marks the beginning of the "era of space communication"

The short-term effect of Sputnik was an intensification of the Cold War, because the United States feared that the Soviet's ability to launch satellites proved its capability to launch intercontinental ballistic missiles carrying nuclear weapons. In response, the U.S. Defense Department approved funding for two satellite projects which finally led to the creation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).[564]

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[563] The actual number of radios and television is probably much higher because the licenses permits its holders to use more than one radio or television set within their premises. The table is based on data provided in Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 36.
[564] National Aeronautics and Space Administration: Sputnik and The Dawn of the Space Age, http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/pao/History/sputnik/, Washington D.C., date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

However, communication satellites completely changed how news are transmitted. It is not known how many are currently in space, but since the first satellite was launched ("Telstar", 1962), several hundred have been put into orbit.[565] Apart from a few exceptions, all are geostationary, which means that they stay in a fixed position to an earth-based observer. The advantage is that ground-based antennas, which must be directed towards the satellite, can operate effectively without any equipment tracking the satellite's motions.

Surprisingly, most authors writing about communication and media in Singapore fully ignore this subject.[566] The reason is probably that at first glance, satellite communication has never played a role in the city state. But it does exist and it is important. In fact, one of the first decisions after the withdrawal of the British military forces was to establish an earth station.

The Sentosa Island Earth Station began operation in August 1972. It was fixed on an Intelsat IV satellite positioned 35 800 kilometers above the Indian Ocean and enabled direct communication with Britain, Bangladesh, Greece, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Indonesia, India, Japan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Taiwan. A second antenna, commissioned two year later, was locating another geostationary Intelsat IV satellite, this one above the Pacific Ocean. It enabled direct exchange with Australia, Canada, South Korea, New Zealand, Mainland China, and the United States.[567]

This is interesting in several ways. First of all, it was a clear decision in favor of the "International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium" which was founded in 1964 by eleven "Western" countries in order to establish the Intelsat system, and against the "International Organization of Space Communications" which was founded in 1961 by nine communist countries in order to expand the Intersputnik satellite system.[568]

Thus, in the 1970s, it was decided to connect Singapore directly with several "Western" countries instead of those of the "Soviet Bloc". As a result, for the next twenty years, the media in Singapore received news streams via satellite from "Western" news agencies such as the American Associated Press and the British Reuters rather than from "Soviet-influenced" agencies such as the Russian Itar-Tass.

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[565] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, one World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p 62, 63.
[566] Compare with Ang Peng Hwa: Information Highways in Singapore, IT as Part of Macroeconomics, p. 220-231, published in Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Information Highways in ASEAN, Policy and Regulations, Singapore, 1999, p. 220-231.
[567] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning Singapore, Norfolk, 1983, p. 21.
[568] Intelsat Global Services: Making History, http://www.intelsat.com/aboutus/ourhistory/yr1960s.aspx, Washington D.C., 2005, accessed 2006; and International Organization of Space Communication: Heritage, http://www.intersputnik.com/history.htm, Moscow, 2003, accessed 2006.

It is not surprising that the former colony stuck with Britain and its partners. In fact, all countries in Southeast Asia except Vietnam preferred Intelsat over Intersputnik. But the way that Singapore dealt with this issue is noteworthy because it did not actively participate in the so-called "Pacific Satellite War" which began in the early 1970s, when Indonesia started operating its own satellite network named "Palapa".[569]

(55) Selection of satellites positioned in the Pacific Hemisphere[570]		
Year	Satellite	Country of origin
1970	Dong Fang Hong I	China
1976	Palapa I	Indonesia
1977	Sakura	Japan
1978	Yuri	Japan
1982	Insat 1A	India
1983	Palapa II	Indonesia
1984	STW-1	China
1985	Aussat 1	Australia
1990	Asiasat 1	Hong Kong
1993	Thaicom 1	Thailand
1995	Koreasat-1	Korea (South)
1996	Measat 1	Malaysia
1997	Agila II	Philippines
1998	Kwang Myong Song 1	Korea (North)

Instead, Singapore made use of already existing technologies. It leased transponders to connect to Palapa I and Palapa II. In addition, Singapore connected to the Maritime Satellite System (Marisat) in 1971 and joined the International Maritime Satellite Organization in order to benefit from the "INMARSAT" system, which provides data transmission to another 50 countries.[571]

One of the reasons why Singapore did not actively participate in the "Pacific Satellite War" is that Lee Kuan Yew and his comrades were and still are skeptical about the use of satellites

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[569] The "Palapa" system was designed to serve the widely scattered islands of Indonesia. Its initial costs amounted to 100 million US dollars and annual recurring costs are about 35 million US dollars. Drew McDaniel: Electronic Tigers of Southeast Asia, The Politics of Media, Technology and National Development, Ames, 2002, p. 68-70; Achal Mehra: Communication Structures in Asia and the Pacific, Present State and Future Prospects, place of publication unknown, 1988, p. 98; Dan Wedemeyer: Communication Satellites in the Pacific, p. 87, 89, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): The Passing of Remoteness, Information Revolution in the Asia-Pacific, Singapore, 1986, p. 77-98; Naswil Idris: Indonesia, Satellites as the Backbone of Telecommunications Development, p. 15 et sqq, published in Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Information Highways in ASEAN, Policy and Regulations, Singapore, 1999, p. 13-24; Hatsuhisa Takashima: The Age of Satellites in the Asia-Pacific, p. 264, published in Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Opening Windows, Issues in Communication, The Silver Jubilee Collection, Singapore, 1996, p. 262-266; Meheroo Jussawalla: Telecommunication and Regional Interdependence in Southeast Asia, p. 204, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): Global Telecommunications Policies, The Challenges of Change, Westport, 1993, p. 193-207; Alwi Dahlan: The Palapa Project and Rural Development in Indonesia, p. 28-30, published in *Media Asia*, volume 14, number 1, Singapore, 1987, p. 28-30; and Jonathan Parapak: The Progress of Satellite Technology and its Role in the Development of the Asia-Pacific Region, The Case of Indonesia, p. 187-197, published in *Media Asia*, volume 17, number 4, Singapore, 1990, p. 187-197.
[570] The table is based on different sources, including Dan Wedemeyer: Communication Satellite in the Pacific, p. 80, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): The Passing of Remoteness, Information Revolution in the Asia-Pacific, Singapore, 1986, p. 77-98.
[571] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning Singapore, Norfolk, 1983, p. 21.

for broadcasting. The official explanation was and interestingly still is that satellite broadcasting would have no advantage over cable broadcasting for the end consumer.[572] But this is wrong, because "Direct Satellite Broadcasting" (DSB) would offer many more programming choices. Obviously, the authorities simply want to maintain the control over the inflow of news.

As a result, the situation of satellite communication in Singapore is quite different to that of its neighbors. While Indonesia, for example, introduced a so-called "Open Sky Policy" that practically allows everyone to send out and receive signals from space, satellite dishes are generally prohibited in Singapore.[573]

(56) The development of satellite communication in Singapore	
1971	Singapore makes use of the Maritime Satellite System (Marisat)
1972	The country's first satellite earth station is installed; it is locating an Intelsat IV over the Indian Ocean
1973	Singapore is leasing transponders to connect to the Indonesian Palapa I and Palapa II satellite systems
1974	A second antenna is installed; it is fixed on another Intelsat IV satellite above the Pacific Ocean
1976	Singapore joins the International Maritime Satellite Organization in order to participate in the INMARSAT system
1991	The Singapore Broadcasting Corporation feeds incoming *CNN* live streams into its regular program
1993	A second earth station is opened, named Tampines Telepark
1994	A third earth station is opened, named Seletar Satellite Earth Station
1995	The Chinese-language satellite television channel Xin Shi begins broadcasting
1997	The forth earth station is opened, named Bukit Timah Satellite Earth Station and becomes the second most important
1998	Together with Taiwan's Chungwa Telecom, Singapore Telecommunication launches its first satellite "ST-1"
1999	The Nanyang Technological University launches a mini-satellite for academic purposes
2000	Singapore Telecommunication forms a joint venture with the Hong Kong-based APT Satellite Company which operates three Apstar satellites
2001	Singapore Telecommunication buys the second largest telecommunications operator in Australia, which has a fleet of at least four satellites

Nevertheless, satellite communication has had a great impact on Singapore because it made the transmission of news approximately 50 million times faster than a century ago. Satellite

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[572] Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union: Technical Development of Broadcasting in the Asia Pacific Region 1964-1984, Sydney, 1984, p. 44.
[573] Naswil Idris: Indonesia, Satellites as the Backbone of Telecommunications Development, p. 24 et sqq, published in Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Information Highways in ASEAN, Policy and Regulations, Singapore, 1999, p. 13-24.

communication has even expanded the variety of incoming news items and recently became a way to export own news streams.[574]

How important satellite communication is became obvious in the Gulf War in 1991, when *CNN* was the only television channel broadcasting live from Baghdad. The interest of the public was so immense that the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation aired the *CNN* stream live for two hours daily. The Ministry of Information even granted temporary licenses to some banks and other financial institutions to operate satellite dishes in order to obtain the latest news directly.[575]

Since then, however, foreign news and reports are increasingly often fed into the regular program. Actually, the whole coverage of the attacks of 11 September 2001 on the World Trade Center in New York City was taken from *CNN* and other channels, which all resided on the 110th floor of the north tower.[576]

Even full entertainment programs from abroad are fed into the local cable system. An example is *Star TV*, which was launched in 1991 by a partnership of Li Kashing's Hutchison Wampoa group and run by his son Richard Li. Later, it was sold to Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, which bought a four percent stake of Singapore Telecommunication in 2000, probably to ensure the transmission.[577]

Meanwhile, satellites have also been increasingly used to distribute information from Singapore. One example is *Singapore International Television*. Another example is *Xin Shi*, a satellite channel which started broadcasting 18 hours of Mandarin programs daily to cable households in Taiwan in 1995.[578] In addition, foreign operators increasingly use Singapore's uplink facilities to broadcast their programs throughout the region. The most well-known examples are the *ESPN*, *HBO* and *Disney* channels.[579]

Today, the country operates an unknown number of satellites but there are at least five. The first satellite, "ST-1", was launched as a joint project between Singapore Telecommunication

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[574] Sonia-Kay Kierstead: Satellite Television Broadcasting in Asia-Pacific Countries, p. 223-226, published in *Media Asia*, volume 12, number 4, Singapore, 1985, p. 223-226.
[575] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 122-125.
[576] CNN: List of World Trade Center Tenants, http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/tenants1.html, Atlanta, 2001, accessed 2006.
[577] Star TV has 300 million viewers in 53 countries. Star TV: Transforming Asia's media landscape, http://startv.com/eng/frame_aboutus.cfm, Hong Kong, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006; Drew McDaniel: Electronic Tigers of Southeast Asia, The Politics of Media, Technology and National Development, Ames, 2002, p. 71, 72; and William Atkins: The Politics of Southeast Asia's New Media, London, 2002, p. 48-50.
[578] John Keshishoglou: Electronic Broadcast Media in Singapore and the Region, Singapore, 2005, p. 92.
[579] Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 11 and p. 141.

and Taiwan's Chungwa Telecom in August 1998 from French Guiana. It covers South and Southeast Asia from India to the Philippines, and it is designed for both telecommunication and broadcasting.

Three other satellites bought by Singapore Telecommunication cover the rest of the world except North and South America. And the fifth known satellite, for academic purposes, passes every 90 minutes over Singapore and carries components by the Nanyang Technological University, which is researching on real-time mobile communication.[580] In 2000, there were even rumors that Singapore and Israel would sign an agreement worth over one billion US dollars for the joint development of five surveillance satellites gathering intelligence information, but this has not yet been confirmed.[581]

In addition, Singapore Telecommunication operates four earth stations (teleports) with more than 30 antennas interacting with at least ten other satellites in the region – and this does not even include the ground facilities of SingTel Optus in Australia which operates another fleet of at least four satellites. Further teleports are probably operated by Media Corporation of Singapore and Singapore Press Holdings but information about this is scarce. Ordinary citizens, however, are still not allowed to install satellite dishes.

(57) Satellite access in Singapore[582]	
ST-1	PAS 2
Intelsat I-60	PAS 8
Intelsat I-62	PAS 10
Intelsat I–64	Palapa C2
Intelsat I–66	Asiasat 2
Intelsat P–174	Asiasat 3
Intelsat P–180	Measat 1
New Skies I–57	Thaicom 1
APT 1	Thaicom 3
APT 2R	Other satellites by agile antennas

Another innovation with an even greater impact are "information processing machines", which later became known as "computers". A forerunner was the "Antikythera" mechanism which was a device for calculating the movements of planets, which dates back to 80 B.C.[583]

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[580] Tim Huxley: Singapore and the Revolution in Military Affairs, p. 13, published in Joint Center for International and Security Studies: Huxley Final, http://jciss.llnl.gov/IT_RMA/Huxley_Final.pdf, Davis, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

[581] South China Morning Post: Singapore's Spy Satellite Deal Adds to Tensions, Hong Kong, 27 July 2000, published in Singapore Window: Singapore's Spy Satellite Deal Adds to Tensions, http://www.singapore-window.org/sw00/000727sc.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

[582] The table is based on data provided in Singapore Telecom: Fixed Satellite, Satellite Access, http://business.singtel.com/fixed_satellite/facilities/satellite_access.asp, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

[583] American Mathematical Society: The Antikythera Mechanism, http://www.math.sunysb.edu/~tony/whatsnew/column/antikytheraI-0400/kyth1.html, Stony Brook, 2000, accessed 2006.

Further historical milestones are the "Difference Machines" and the "Analytical Engine" of Charles Babbage (1791-1871), which was planned but never constructed. Both were programmable, but the "Analytical Engine" would have been more complex and would have used punch cards.[584]

The world's first computer is considered to be the "Z3" by Konrad Zuse (1910-1995).[585] Its attributes - being freely programmable, fully automatic and using binary code - are often used as criteria for defining a computer. The mass production und use of computers is largely attributed to companies such as IBM, Apple and Microsoft, notably after the introduction of 8 to 64-bit home and small enterprise "micro-computers" operating on the basis of "DOS" or "Windows" (which is based on "DOS"). The "Apple II" and the "Commodore 64" became the most popular among them.[586]

It is not clear when the first computer was installed in Singapore. A senior teaching fellow of the Department of Information Systems and Computer Science at the National University of Singapore believes that it was in 1964, but he does not give any details.[587] However, in contrast to the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, the government in Singapore realized the advantages of computers quite early. Already by 1975, several ministries were equipped with them.

Five years later, a National Computerization Board was established under the Ministry of Finance. It developed a "National Computerization Plan" and supervised its implementation. Among other things, the plan included the installation of 1 000 computers at secondary schools and zero tax on computer products.[588] In addition, several trade fairs were organized. The "Computa 83", for example, attracted 85 000 visitors. Another example is the "National Informatics Week", during which 200 computer companies presented their products.[589]

While the "Small Enterprise Computerization Program" encouraged the use of computers among small and medium-sized business companies, the "Pioneer Status" attracted several

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[584] Charles Babbage was an English mathematician. His machines are among the most celebrated icons in the prehistory of computing. Charles Babbage Institute: Who was Charles Babbage, http://www.cbi.umn.edu/exhibits/cb.html, Minneapolis, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.
[585] Konrad Zuse was a German engineer and computer developer. Konrad Zuse Internet Archiv: Zuse, Konrad, http://www.zib.de/zuse/Inhalt/Kommentare/Html/0677/0677.html, Berlin, 2005, accessed 2006.
[586] Stephen White: A Brief History of Computing, http://trillian.randomstuff.org.uk/~stephen/history/, place of publication unknown, 1996, accessed 2006; and Stan Veit: PC History, http://www.pc-history.org/, place of publication unknown, 1999, accessed 2006.
[587] K.S. Raman: IT Applications and their Impacts in Singapore and other Asian NIEs, p. 116, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): Information Technology and Singapore Society, Singapore, 1990, p. 108-123.
[588] Meheroo Jussawalla: Information Technology and Integration of the Global Market, p. 7, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): Information Technology and Singapore Society, Singapore, 1990, p. 1-9.
[589] Nilyardi Kahar: Technology Policies and Planning Singapore, Bangalore, 1989, p. 41.

multinational companies. The German company Nixdorf (now owned by Siemens) invested 15 million US dollars in manufacturing in Singapore. Another example is the American company Victor Technology, which shifted all its manufacturing to the island. Many components of the "Apple IIe" computer were also produced in Singapore.

As a result, the prices fell and the demand increased. During the five years from 1982 to 1987 alone, the number of organizations (with ten or more employees) using computers increased from around 13 to 59 percent. In the finance and banking sectors, this percentage even increased from 24 to 85 percent.[590]

Authors such as Toh Mun Heng, Chia Siow Yue and Jamus Jerome Lim usually divide the development of the computer in Singapore into four phases: During the first phase (1980-1985), the computer was primarily used as a tool for management and business. In the second phase (1986-1991), the computer infrastructure was expanded, particularly in the civil service and business sectors. When the third phase begins and ends is subject of discussion, but it is generally agreed that it is marked by the establishment of the "Singapore One" system which links offices, schools and homes to the broadband network. It was completed in late 1999. And the forth phase from that time to the present is characterized by the popularity of the Internet and the introduction of "electronic commerce" (eCommerce).[591]

From a historical point of view, all these phases have something in common. Each began with the outline of a strategy which was executed in "cluster" areas. Examples of such plans are the "National Computerization Plan" (1980), the "National IT Plan" (1986) and "IT 2000" (1992). The largest cluster is the Singapore Science Park which was established in 1984 as a focal point for research and development-oriented activities.[592]

The media, however, benefited from computers almost from the beginning. Already in the late 1970s, the first computers were installed in the newsrooms of the *Straits Times*. A communication computer, which enabled the collection of news from wire service agencies, was the most important addition. In 1978, a number of "Talstar" computers (not to be confused with the "Telstar" satellite) were introduced and equipped with video display terminals. In addition, several portable computers were bought so that by 1985, even

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[590] Meheroo Jussawalla: Information Technology and Integration of the Global Market, p. 7, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): Information Technology and Singapore Society, Singapore, 1990, p. 1-9.
[591] Toh Mun Heng: Singapore as a Regional Information Technology Hub, p. 153, 154, published in Chia Siow Yue (Ed.): Information Technology in Asia, New Development Paradigms, Singapore, 2002, p. 147-176; and Chia Siow Yue: Singapore, A Regional Hub in ICT, p. 285, 286, published in Seiichi Masuyama (Ed.): Towards a Knowledge-based Economy, Singapore, 2003, p. 259-298.
[592] Nilyardi Kahar: Technology Policies and Planning Singapore, Bangalore, 1989, p. 12.

journalists on assignment overseas were able to fill their texts into the article management "System 55".[593]

A milestone was the introduction of an automatic pagination system in 1991 because it allows full page layout on-screen. Again, it was the English-language press that ran ahead but the Chinese-language newspapers *Lianhe Zaobao* and the *Shin Minh Daily News* followed suit with the installation of the "Chinese Newspaper Publishing System" (CNPS). By 1992, it consisted of 486 terminals of different types and 17 printers.[594]

The final breakthrough came with the interconnection of computer networks on the basis of universal standards and packet switching for the transmission of data.[595] According to a widely accepted myth, this technology goes back to the "Sputnik Shock" and was designed to ensure communication in the case of a nuclear war, but the factual reason was that the switching nodes and network links were not reliable, even without any disaster.[596]

What is today known as the Internet started with the "Advanced Research Projects Agency Network" (APRANET), which was developed by computer scientists researching at different universities, notably Lawrence Roberts at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Leonard Kleinrock at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA) and Vinton Cerf at the same institution and later at the Stanford University.[597]

The APRANET did not attract much attention, however, until the early 1990s, when Tim Berners-Lee invented the "WorldWideWeb" (WWW) at the "Organisation Européenne pour la Recherche Nucléaire" (CERN) near Geneva.[598] Today, this term is often mistakenly used as a synonym for the Internet itself but it is actually a service that operates over the Internet, comparable to "Electronic Mail" (eMail), another "killer application" of the Internet.

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[593] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 375, 376.
[594] Lim Jim Koon (Ed.): Our 70 Years, 1923-1993, History of the Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore, Singapore, 1993, p. 22, 51.
[595] The World Wide Web is based on three general standards: HyperText Markup Language (HTML) for documents, Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) for referencing resources, and HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP) for specifying how computers can communicate.
[596] Compare with Ronda Hauben: Ueber die Entstehung des Internet und die Rolle der Regierung, http://www.heise.de/tp/r4/artikel/5/5409/1.html, Munich, 1999, accessed 2006.
[597] World Wide Web Consortium: A Little History of the World Wide Web, http://www.w3.org/History.html, Tokyo, 1995, accessed 2006, and Internet Society: A Brief History of the Internet, http://www.isoc.org/Internet/history/brief.shtml, Reston, 2003, accessed 2006.
[598] Today, Tim Berners-Lee is director of the World Wide Web Consortium, which oversees the development of the World Wide Web. Tim Berners-Lee: Tim Berners-Lee, http://www.w3.org/People/Berners-Lee/, Cambridge, 2005, accessed 2006.

Waipeng Lee writes that the Internet did not become available in Singapore before 1994 but this is inaccurate.[599] In fact, Singapore's network experiences date back to the early 1980s when several "Bulletin Board Systems" (BBS) were set up. Already by 1987, the National University of Singapore joined the "BITNET" network which connected to several universities in the United States and overseas. Thus, the first "eMail" was received in Singapore from the City University of New York in January 1987. Four years later, the first regular Internet connection was established.[600]

In 1992, TechNet began providing Internet access to selected institutions. It was later renamed Pacific Internet and became Singapore's second Internet service provider next to the Singapore Telecommunication subsidiary SingNet, which started public service in July of 1994. These two were later joined by Cyberway, known today as Star Hub Internet.[601]

Although all continue to provide dial-up connections by using regular telephone lines, the "Singapore One" initiative ("One network for everyone") has become more and more important. It was started in 1996 and makes use of Singapore Cable Vision's hybrid fiber-coaxial broadband network, which cost 500 million Singapore dollars.[602]

Although originally designed for radio and television broadcasting, the cables are capable of high-speed Internet and even allow interactive multimedia services such as Internet-telephony and video-conferencing. This is why Drew McDaniel compares this system to Malaysia's "Multimedia Super Corridor", but Singapore's is actually much more sophisticated.[603] Since the year 2000, 99 percent of all households in Singapore are able to connect to the cable system.[604]

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[599] Waipeng Lee also states that the country's first homepage "www.sg" was the world's first homepage but this is also inaccurate. At this time, there were already hundreds of websites available. Most popular were the homepages of the World Bank and the White House, which had both been started in 1993. Waipeng Lee: Singapore, p. 149, published in Sankaran Ramanathan (Ed.): Internet in Asia, Singapore, 2001, p. 149-161.
[600] International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 11.
[601] Pacific Internet: About Us, http://www.pacific.net.sg/business/article.php?id=3507, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006; Singapore Telecom: Subsidiaries and Associated Companies, SingNet,http://home.singtel.com/about_singtel/subsidiaries_n_associated_companies/subsidiariesjoint_subsidiaries.asp, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006; and StarHub: Company Information, http://www.starhub.com/corporate/aboutus/index.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.
[602] Larry Press: The Internet in Singapore, A Benchmark Report, http://mosaic.unomaha.edu/SINGAPORE_2000.pdf, Omaha, 2000, accessed 2005, p. 7-8.
[603] Drew McDaniel: Electronic Tigers of Southeast Asia, The Politics of Media, Technology and National Development, Ames, 2002, p. 101.
[604] Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 180.

(58) The development of computer and the Internet in Singapore[605]	
1964	The first computer is installed
1975	Several ministries are equipped with computers
1978	A computer network is installed at the *Straits Times* newspapers
1980	The "Committee on National Computerization" develops the "National Computerization Plan"
1980-1985	The first phase of computerization is characterized by the introduction of computers
1984	During the first "National Informatics Week", around 200 computer companies present their products
1985	The *Straits Times* introduces an article management system
1986	Another "National IT Plan" is passed
1986-1991	The second phase of computerization is characterized by the expansion of the infrastructure in the civil service and business sector
1987	After the National University of Singapore joins "BITNET", it receives the first "E-Mail" from the City University of New York
1991	TechNet provides Internet access to selected institutions. Meanwhile, an automatic pagination system for full-page layout and the Chinese Newspaper Publishing System is installed
1992	The "IT 2000" development plan is passed
1992-1999	In the third phase of computerization, "Singapore One" is set up to link offices and homes with the cable broadband network
1994	The Singapore Telecommunication subsidiary SingNet offers Internet access to its customers
1995	TechNet is incorporated as Pacific Internet and becomes the second "ISP". Meanwhile, Singapore Press Holdings launches the internet portal *Asia One*
1996	The Singapore Broadcasting Authority passes the "Internet Code of Practice"
1997	The top level domain ".sg" is introduced
1998	A mass training event is held at the Singapore Indoor Stadium with 3 750 participants. Meanwhile, the "Singapore Internet Project" analyzes the Internet usage
2000	The Singapore Cable Vision completes the wiring up of 99 percent of Singapore's households (Singapore One)
2000-2006	The forth phase of computerization is characterized by the increasing popularity of the Internet and the introduction of "electronic commerce"
2003	The Media Development Authority (MDA) is formed and absorbs all duties of the Singapore Broadcasting Authority, including regulation of the Internet
2005	Based on the 3G-networks of Singapore Telecommunication, Star Hub and Mobile One wireless internet access is becoming increasingly popular

But access is only one side of the story - usage is the other. In the beginning, interest in the Internet must have been relatively modest. Therefore, a five-day mass training event was organized in 1998 at the Singapore Indoor Stadium at which 3 750 people participated. In addition, permanent training centers were opened, providing courses on computers and the Internet at the four national libraries.[606] Singapore Telecommunication's offer providing free Internet access and free email accounts to all telephone subscribers starting in 1999 proved to be the most successful.

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[605] The table is based on different sources, including Lee Chu Keong: Singapore, p. 360, 361, published in Madanmohan Rao (Ed.): News Media and New Media, The Asia-Pacific Internet Handbook, Singapore, 2003, p. 358-370.
[606] Infocomm Development Authority: Evolution of Singapore One, http://www.ida.gov.sg/idaweb/broadband/infopage.jsp?infopageid=I881, Singapore, 2003, accessed 2006.

As a result, both the number of computers and the number of Internet users increased rapidly. Statistics vary because computers do not have to be registered. Also, it is dicussed how often someone has to access the Internet in order to be considered a "regular user".

In 2000 alone, however, 427 000 personal computers were sold in Singapore and it is estimated that there were already 1.7 million in use. This means that every second inhabitant owns a computer.[607]

Nearly every computer has a modem or network card required to establish an Internet connection. In total, there were around 1.8 million dial-up subscribers plus around 250 000 broadband subscribers in 2000 and 404 000 users who frequently use the Internet plus approximately another 1.5 million who use it once in a while.[608]

According to a report by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), this represents a market penetration rate of around 54 percent.[609] Yet another survey - released in 2000 - states that the penetration rate is only around 46 percent.[610]

(59) Dial-Up Internet subscribers in Singapore per 1 000 residents[611]	
1994	1
1999	181
2000	595
2001	578
2002	592
2003	523
2004	492

To date, there is only one comprehensive field study available, the "Study on Usage and Impact of the Internet in Singapore". Its results are comparable to the results of studies completed in other countries. Generally, there are more males than females using the Internet. The average age is relatively low and the educational level high.[612]

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[607] International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 13.
[608] Singapore is one of the few countries where the number of subscribers is higher than the numbers of users and computers. Both is a result of free access campaigns.
[609] International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 13.
[610] Eddie Kuo: Internet in Singapore, A Study on Usage and Impact, p. 480, published in Madanmohan Rao (Ed.): News Media and New Media, The Asia-Pacific Internet Handbook, Singapore, 2003, p. 478-481.
[611] The table is based on data provided in Department of Statistics: Other Social Indicators, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/annual/yos/yos115.pdf, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.
[612] International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 27.

(60) Profile of PC-users in Singapore in 1999[613]		
Characteristics	Attributed	Percentage
Gender	Male	54.7
	Female	45.3
Age	Below 20	35.6
	20-29	22.9
	30-39	21.9
	40-49	14.7
Education level	Primary or below	17.3
	Secondary	34.9
	Post-secondary	9.4
	University or higher education	52.2
Employment status	Worker	52.5
	Student	39.4
	Retirees / Housewives	6.6
	Unemployed	1.5

(61) Profile of Internet users in Singapore in 1999		
Characteristics	Attributed	Percentage
Gender	Male	56.7
	Female	43.3
Age	Below 20	26.1
	20-29	28.9
	30-39	25.3
	40-49	14.4
Education level	Primary or below	4.5
	Secondary	32.5
	Post-secondary	11.1
	University or higher education	51.9
Employment status	Worker	60.3
	Student	42.2
	Retirees / Housewives	6.4
	Unemployed	1.4

If one breaks down these statistics to include language skills and ethnicity, the results are striking: Almost half of the people with English-language skills are online compared to only one third of those without English-language skills.[614] And Chinese are more often connected than Malays and Tamils.

(62) Computer ownership and Internet access by ethnicity in 2001[615]		
Ethnicity	Computer ownership	Internet access
Chinese	64.7	58.4
Malay	57.2	45.9
Tamil	62.5	51.5

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[613] The tables are based on data provided in Chia Siow Yue (Ed.): Growth and Development of the IT Industry in Bangalore and Singapore, A Comparative Study, Singapore, 2001, p. 72, 74.
[614] Around 55 percent of the people who understand both English and Chinese are online compared to 38 percent of those who are literate in either but not both languages. And there are hardly any Internet users among those who speak Chinese or Malay only. Eddie Kuo: Internet in Singapore, A Study on Usage and Impact, Singapore, 2002, p. 100-112.
[615] Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 187.

However, the main reasons for accessing the Internet are communicating ("eMail", "Chat") and searching for information.

(63) Time spent on various Internet activities[616]	
Type	Average hours per week
Email	3.2
Chat / Online discussions	1.6
Entertainment (watching short movies, etc.)	1.7
Seeking information (for work/school use)	2.3
Seeking information (for personal use)	1.8
Transactions (financial, shopping, etc.)	0.4
Total	11.0

Because of this, the role of the government and the situation of the market are interesting. On the one hand, the government promotes the use of computers and the Internet. Over the years, it passed several development plans and set up statutory boards to encourage investors to expand the infrastructure on the island.[617]

The government itself even invested in the new technology by upgrading the infrastructure of the civil service. Between 1994 and 1999, government expenditures on information technology services grew from 45 million Singapore dollars or 0.5 percent of the total budget to 458 million Singapore dollars or 3.3 percent of the total budget.[618] On the other hand, the government tries to regulate and control the access and usage of the Internet.[619] Already in 1996, it introduced a so-called "Internet Code of Practice" which identifies what the government regards to be offensive, which includes pornography, violence, racism and religious slurs. Discussion groups organized around political or religious matters are particularly undesired. Also, astrology, palmistry and other fortune-telling services are not allowed unless they are registered.

(64) "Internet Code of Practice" of the Singapore Broadcasting Authority (Excerpt)[620]	
4.1	Prohibited material is material that is objectionable on the grounds of public interest, public morality, public order, public security, national harmony, or is otherwise prohibited by applicable Singapore laws.
4.2	In considering what is prohibited material, the following factors should be taken into account:

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[616] The table is based on data provided in Eddie Kuo: Internet in Singapore, A Study on Usage and Impact, Singapore, 2002, p. 31.

[617] Under "Infocomm 21", an "E-Government Action Plan" was initiated worth of 1.5 billion Singapore dollars. Chia Siow Yue: A Regional Hub in ICT, p. 291, published in Seiichi Masuyama (Ed.): Towards a Knowledge-based Economy, Tokyo, 2003, p. 259-298.

[618] International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 32.

[619] Ang Peng Hwa: Singapore, p. 230, published in Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Information Highways in ASEAN, Singapore, 1999, p. 220-231, and Ang Peng Hwa: Information Highways, Policy and Regulation, The Singapore Experience, p. 107, published in Venkat Iyer (Ed.): Media Regulations for the New Times, Singapore, 1999, p. 97-114.

[620] The table is based on information provided in Media Development Authority: Internet Code of Practice, With Effect from 1 November 1997, http://www.mda.gov.sg/wms.file/mobj/mobj.497.internet_code.pdf, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

	(a) whether the material depicts nudity or genitalia in a manner calculated to titillate; (b) whether the material promotes sexual violence or sexual activity involving coercion or non-consent of any kind; (c) whether the material depicts a person or persons clearly engaged in explicit sexual activity; (d) whether the material depicts a person who is, or appears to be, under 16 years of age in sexual activity, in a sexually provocative manner or in any other offensive manner; (e) whether the material advocates homosexuality or lesbianism, or depicts or promotes incest, pedophilia, bestiality and necrophilia; (f) whether the material depicts detailed or relished acts of extreme violence or cruelty; (g) whether the material glorifies, incites or endorses ethnic, racial or religious hatred, strife or intolerance.
4.3	A further consideration is whether the material has intrinsic medical, scientific, artistic or educational value.
4.4	A licensee who is in doubt as to whether any content would be considered prohibited may refer such content to the Authority for its decision.

To foreigners, these rules often lead to the assumption that Internet use in Singapore is very restricted, but the reality is quite different. In fact, the Singapore Broadcasting Authority, or the Media Development Authority (MDA) as it is known today, is passive most of the time. It mostly responds to complaints rather than taking up its own initiatives.[621]

Nevertheless, the government indirectly wields power over the Internet, since all kinds of providers must be licensed annually. In order to apply for such a license, they must be incorporated in Singapore and at least 51 percent must be in the hands of a national. According to Ang Peng Hwa, each license costs a one-time fee of 450 000 Singapore dollars and an annual fee equivalent to one percent of the audited annual gross receipts.[622] Practically, only a few companies in Singapore are able to fulfill all these requirements and most of them have ties to the government in one way or another.

Until 1998, there were only three Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Singapore. SingNet is a subsidiary of the government-linked Singapore Telecommunication. Pacific Internet is the former university network. And Cyberway was bought by Star Hub. The government has a stake in all of these companies (i.e. through the investment company Temasek). In the meantime, the number of Internet Service Providers has increased to around twenty, but the three mentioned above still corner the bulk of the market.[623]

Through Temasek, the government even has a say in several Internet Content Providers (ICPs). The largest and most frequented local portal, *Asia One*, belongs to the print monopolist Singapore Press Holdings and more than twenty web radios belong to the radio

[621] International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2004, p. 25.
[622] Ang Peng Hwa: Information Highways, Policy and Regulation, The Singapore Experience, p. 107, published in Venkat Iyer (Ed.): Media Regulations for the New Times, Singapore, 1999, p. 97-114.
[623] International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 12.

and television monopolist Media Corporation of Singapore.[624] The latter must be especially careful to toe the line, because according to the Broadcasting Security Act, all broadcasts must meet local censorship standards before streaming over the Internet.[625]

(65) The ten most popular websites in Singapore in 2000[626]			
Name	Unique audience	Reach in percentage	Time per person in minutes
MSN	238 014	43.4	42.33
AsiaOne	80 652	14.7	28.50
Yahoo	278 629	50.8	26.26
Pacific Internet	158 823	28.9	12.51
Singapore Telecom	217 377	39.6	11.57
Lycos	131 304	23.9	09.02
Excite	66 351	12.9	08.31
AOL	146 486	26.7	07.07
Altavista	81 404	14.8	06.56
Microsoft	107 175	19.5	04.23

To summarize, it can be said that the news flow in Singapore today is much more efficient but not less restricted. What Lee Kuan Yew predicted in 1998 at the "Asian Media Conference" in Los Angeles became true in a way: "[…] the new technology is a force for both good and evil […] Although it may take some time, morality and wisdom, we must find a way to control and tame the new technology to preserve the fundamental values of society by which parents bring up their children to be good citizens. In responding to this challenge of new technology, Asian societies will seek solutions different from those of the West."[627]

5.3.2 Standardization and cooperation

A major condition for the successful expansion of the infrastructure and introduction of new technologies has been the formulation and adoption of specific standards, because basic rules are essential for any kind of interaction. Principally, all sustainable commitments are standards: Money is a standard for payment, the inch is a standard for measurement and

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[624] AsiaOne was launched in 1995 and sees itself as a "one-stop information mall for everyone". According its own data, it has more than 250 million page views and around 4.5 million unique visitors per month. Lee Chu Keong: Singapore, p. 359, published in Madanmohan Rao (Ed.): News Media and New Media, The Asia-Pacific Internet Handbook, Singapore, 2003, p. 358-370; and AsiaOne: About Us, http://www.asiaone.com.sg/html/aboutus.html, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.
[625] Ang Peng Hwa: Singapore, p. 230, published in Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Information Highways in ASEAN, Singapore, 1999, p. 220-231.
[626] The table is based on data provided by Nielsen in International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 15.
[627] After Drew McDaniel: Electronic Tigers of Southeast Asia, The Politics of Media, Technology and National Development, Ames, 2002, p. 99.

octane is a standard for gasoline. Historically, the cylindrical stones which were used for height in Egypt around 7 000 B.C. are considered as being the world's first standard.[628]

For modern Singapore, the introduction of standards for shipping containers was of particular importance. As mentioned earlier, this small country depends heavily on regional and international trade (the total external trade is even greater than the entire gross domestic product).[629]

Although it has never been verified, the American truck operator Malcolm McLaim (1914-2001) claimed to have invented shipping containers in the 1930s when he realized that it would be much more efficient to transfer the truck itself on the ship than its cargo only. In 1956, he rebuilt his standard ship "Ideal X" into the world's first container ship capable of 58 boxes. Meanwhile, shipping companies such as "Hapag" and "Lloyd" experimented with bins of different sizes.[630] But large single-sized containers turned out to be more convenient, so a universal standard (ISO/TC-104) was agreed upon by the "Technical Committee" (TC) of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1961.[631]

Five years later, the first container terminal was built in Singapore at the advice of the Dutch economist Albert Winsemius. The first container berth was put into operation in 1972. Its first job was handling the 300 containers which had been carried by the "M.V. Nihon" from Japan.[632] Since Singapore's national Neptune Orient Lines (NOL) formed an alliance with the Japanese K-Line and the Belgium Compagnie Maritime Belge, container reloading services ("intermodal transportation") are provided on a regular basis. Singapore was placed along the world's longest and most important shipping route connecting the Atlantic coast of the United States and the southern coast of Europe with Japan and the Pacific coast of the United States.[633]

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[628] Library of Congress: Technical Reports and Standards, http://www.loc.gov/rr/scitech/trs/trswhatare.html, Washington D.C., 2005, accessed 2006.

[629] Gavin Peebles: The Singapore Economy, Glos, 1996, p. 159.

[630] Hapag (1847) and Lloyd (1856) merged in 1970.

[631] Gesamtverband der Deutschen Versicherungswirtschaft: Containerhandbuch, Geschichte des Containers, http://www.containerhandbuch.de/chb/stra/stra_01_01_00.html, Berlin, 2000; accessed 2006; Sea Land Alumni: Historic Timeline, http://www.sealandalumni.com/timeline.htm, Charlotte, 1999, accessed 2006; Tineke Egyedi: The Standardized Container, Gateway Technologies in Cargo Transportation, ISO/IEC JTC1/SC29/WG11, Delft, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006; and Michael Bohlman: ISO's Containers are Nothing but Good News, Containers Standards Help Remove Technical Barriers to Trade, http://www.iso.org/iso/en/commcentre/isobulletin/articles/2001/pdf/container0109.pdf, Geneva, 2001.

[632] PSA: Heritage, The Dawn of a New Era, http://www.internationalpsa.com/about/heritage_e1.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

[633] Neptune Orient Line / APL: History, Intermodalism, http://www.apl.com/history/topics/innovate/intermodal.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; and Maritime and Port Authority: International Maritime Center, http://www.mpa.gov.sg/aboutmpa/portofsg/port.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

Today, the leading container operator, PSA, operates 46 berths which handle 23.3 million "TEUs" for 200 shipping lines connecting 600 ports in 123 countries - "Twenty-Foot Equivalent Unit" is the standard for measuring container sizes; a regular container is 20 feet or one "TEU" long, 8 feet wide and 8.5 feet high.[634]

Similarly, standards have been introduced for the transmission of information. A very basic standard is the "Morse Code", a more complex one is the "Integrated Services Digital Network" (ISDN). The first one was introduced in Singapore in the second half of the 19th century for telegraphy, the second in 1988 for simultaneous telephone services.[635]

The classic example for a computer standard is the "American Standard Code for the Information Interchange" (ASCII) which enables character encoding. The "Hyper Text Transfer Protocol" (HTTP) fulfils a similar function, regulating how computers can communicate over the Internet.[636]

Even the term "container" is known in this context. It is used for computer files that can hold various types of compressed data using standardized codices. Simple containers are audio files in "WAV"-format, more advanced containers are video files in "MPEG"-format. The latter was defined as standard "ISO/IEC-JTC1/SC29/WG11" by the International Organization for Standardization in 2000.[637]

In order to develop and introduce standards, a research institute was opened in order to collect materials on standards and patents. Furthermore, a statutory board was established, known today as the Standards Council; it belongs to the Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board (SPRING). The statutory board launched several programs over the past years, of which the "Singapore Standardization Program" of 2001 is the most comprehensive.[638]

Because the number of standards for information technology was rapidly increasing, the Singapore Standards Council established an "Information Technology Standards Committee" in 1990. The industry-led group consists of more than 250 members from the public and

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[634] PSA: Factsheet, Singapore Terminals, http://www.internationalpsa.com/factsheet/pdf/Singapore.pdf, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.
[635] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 228.
[636] World Wide Web Consortium: Hypertext Transfer Protocol, http://www.w3.org/Protocols/, Tokyo, 1996, accessed 2006.
[637] International Organization for Standardisation: Coding of Moving Pictures and Audio, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/tech/digital-broadcasting/kiev/References/mpeg-4.html, Beijing/Geneva, 2002, accessed 2006.
[638] Nilyardi Kahar: Technology Policies and Planning Singapore, Bangalore, 1989, p. 40; and Singapore Productivity and Standards Board: The Singapore Standardization Strategy 2001, http://www.standards.org.sg/files/final-rpt-for-sss2001.pdf, Singapore, 2001, p. 5.

private sectors who voluntarily analyze and develop new standards, last but not least to the benefit of the media.[639]

In addition, Singapore joined several international organizations. In 1966, it became a member of the International Organization for Standardization that has its roots in the International Electrotechnical Commission (1905) and began operation officially in 1947, after delegates from 25 countries had realized the need for an organization to "facilitate the international coordination and unification of industrial standards".[640]

Already one year earlier, Singapore had joined the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which was a later incarnation of the International Telegraph Union (1865) and became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1947.[641] Together, they have issued around 20 000 standards until today.

(66) Selection of organizations Singapore joined[642]	
1965	Commonwealth of Nations, United Nations Organization (UNO), Group of 77 at the United Nations, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
1966	International Monetary Fund (IMF), Asian Development Bank (AsDB), International Maritime Organization (IMO), United Postal Union (UPU), International Organization for Standardization (ISO)
1967	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD, World Bank Group), World Health Organization (WHO)
1968	International Finance Corporation (IFC, World Bank Group), International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), Interpol
1972	International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT)
1973	International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRM)
1989	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)
1994	ASEAN Regional Forum (AFR)
1995	World Trade Organization (WTO)
1998	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA, World Bank Group), International Olympic Committee (IOC)
2002	International Development Association (IDA, World Bank Group)

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[639] Information Technology Standards Committee: The Information Technology Standards Committee Story, http://www.itsc.org.sg/synthesis/2001/itsc-synthesis2001-ITSC-story.pdf, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.
[640] International Organization for Standardisation: ISO in Brief, http://www.iso.org/iso/en/prods-services/otherpubs/pdf/isoinbrief_2005-en.pdf, Geneva, 2005, accessed 2006.
[641] International Telecommunication Union: History, http://www.itu.int/aboutitu/overview/history.html, Geneva, 2004, accessed 2006; and Frank Shepherd: Technical Development of Broadcasting in the Asia Pacific Region, 1964-1984, place of publication unknown, 1984, p. 8.
[642] The table is based on different sources, including Central Intelligence Agency: World Fact Book, Singapore, http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/appendix/appendix-a.html, Washington D.C., 2005, accessed 2006.

In some cases, even the negotiations worked wonders for Singapore. While negotiating with the World Trade Organization (WTO), Singapore made several offers, including the privatization of the Singapore Broadcasting Authority (today known as Media Corporation of Singapore), the establishment of two additional telecommunications operators and the introduction of value-added network services such as electronic mail, database retrieval and electronic data interchange.[643]

The classic example of cooperation is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which was established in 1967 in Bangkok by officials representing Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand (later, Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia joined). It aims to promote peace and stability and to accelerate the economic growth in the region.[644]

Under its broad auspices, a number of associations were established. One is the "Meeting of ASEAN News Agencies" and another one is the "Consultations on Press Systems in ASEAN".[645] A third example is the "Confederation of ASEAN Journalists". Since 1975, it holds general assemblies every second year. In 1989, Ivan Lim, representing the "Singapore National Union of Journalists", as well as five other officials issued the following standards for journalists:

(67) Preamble of the "Code of Ethics for ASEAN Journalists"[646]	
The Confederation of ASEAN journalists, aware of the responsibility of journalists to the public in each country of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, with a view to achieving peace and progress in the region, hereby promulgates this Code of Ethics for ASEAN Journalists.	
1	The ASEAN journalist shall resort only to fair, open and honest means or efforts to obtain news, photographs or documents necessary to enable him/her to carry out his/her professional work, properly identifying him/herself in the process as being a representative from media.
2	The ASEAN journalist shall not allow personal motives or interests to influence him/her or to color his/her views in a manner that would reflect on his/her professional integrity or would undermine the dignity of his/her profession.
3	The ASEAN journalism shall not demand or accept any payment, gift or other consideration by way of recompense for reporting what is not true, or withholding or suppressing the truth.
4	The ASEAN journalist shall honestly report and interpret the news, making sure to the best of his/her knowledge and ability, not to suppress essential facts or distort the truth through exaggeration or through wrong or improper emphasis.
5	The ASEAN journalist shall give any person aggrieved by his/her report or interpretation of the news the right of reply.

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[643] Laina Reveendran Greene: Regulating Telecommunications in ASEAN, p. 346, published in Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Information Highways in ASEAN, Policy and Regulations, Singapore, 1999, p. 330-354.
[644] Association of Southeast Asian Nations: Overview, http://www.aseansec.org/64.htm, Jakarta, 2000, accessed 2006.
[645] Association of Southeast Asian Nations: Report of the Ninth Meeting of ASEAN News Agencies, internally published only because marked as "confidential", Jakarta, 1987, p. 1-7; and Achal Mehra (Ed.): Press Systems in ASEAN States, Singapore 1989, p. 103-106.
[646] The "Code of Ethics for ASEAN Journalists" was drafted by members of the "Confederation of ASEAN Journalists' Code of Ethics Committee" in 1987 and adopted by the seventh "Assembly of the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists" in 1989. After K.S. Venkateswaran (Ed.): Media Monitors in Asia, Singapore, 1996, p. 111, 112.

6	The ASEAN journalist shall not violate confidential information or material obtained by him/her in the exercise of his/her calling.
7	The ASEAN journalist shall not identify his/her source, and shall resist any outside attempt to make him/her do so, when specifically so enjoined by his/her informant.
8	The ASEAN journalist shall refrain from writing reports which have the effect of destroying the honor or reputation of a private person, unless public interest justifies it.
9	The ASEAN journalist shall pay due regard to the multi-ethnic, cultural and religious fabric of ASEAN countries.
10	The ASEAN journalist shall not write reports, opinions or comments which would endanger the security of his/her country or foment armed confrontation between his/her country and any other ASEAN country, striving at all times, instead, to promote closer friendly relations among them.

Another and much better example is the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (APU), which has its roots in the "International Radio Telegraph Conference" held in 1903 in Berlin.[647] The non-profit organization was established in 1964 to facilitate the development of broadcasting in the region and is comparable to the European Broadcasting Union (1950, Eurovision) to a certain extent.[648]

One of its main projects is "Asiavision".[649] The platform was launched in 1984 for the daily exchange of news by satellite. Twice a day, from 8.30 until 9.00 GMT and from 12.15 to 12.30, it sets up a connection to the "AsiaSat 2" satellite. In addition, news flashes are arranged for breaking stories. In total, 9 000 news items are exchanged every year:[650]

"It has covered the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the continuing repercussions of the 11 September attacks. It was there when the tsunami struck, when earthquakes devastated Iran and Pakistan, when Hong Kong returned to Chinese sovereignty, when the Sri Lankan government and separatist rebels agreed to hold historic peace talks."[651]

In total, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union has more than 150 members in 55 countries today, although only some media companies in 14 Asian countries regularly make use of "Asiavision". Two of its active members are China Central Television (CCTV), which operates 16 channels in Mainland China, and Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB), which is the

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[647] Another example is the Asian Media Information and Communication Center (AMIC) in Singapore. It was established in 1971 with the support of the German Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the Government of Singapore on the campus of the Nanyang Technological University: "It aims to spearhead the development of media and communication expertise in the Asia-Pacific to foster socio-economic progress in the region." Therefore, it regularly holds conferences and publishes numerous books on media in Asia. Friedrich-Ebert Foundation: Development Cooperation, http://www.fes.de/fesenglish.pdf, Bonn, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006; and AMIC: About Us, http://www.amic-web.org/about.php, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2006.
[648] Stig Hjarvard: TV News Exchange, p. 202 et seq., published in Oliver Boyd-Barrett (Ed.): The Globalization of News, London, 1998, p. 202-226.
[649] Yrjo Lansipuro: Asiavision News Exchange, p. 46-52, published in *Media Asia*, volume 14, number 1, Singapore, 1987, p. 46-52.
[650] For further information about international cooperation in broadcasting and telecommunication, see Frank Shepherd: Technical Development of Broadcasting in the Asia Pacific Region, 1964-1984, place of publication unknown, 1984, p. 7, 8.
[651] Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union: ABU Profile, http://www.abu.org.my/public/compiled/p299.htm, Kuala Lumpur, 2003, accessed 2006.

largest producer of Chinese-language programs worldwide and operates two television channels in Hong Kong.[652]

The Media Corporation of Singapore joined the organization relatively early but did not make use of the system effectively until 1999, when *Channel News Asia* was started. Today, *Channel News Asia* is viewed in more than 15 million homes and hotels in around 20 countries across Asia and aims to be the "Voice of Asia".[653]

All this shows how standardization and cooperation among media companies from different countries can increase the regional and international flow of news. Nevertheless, there are still many provisos.

An organization that Singapore's media companies have not joined is the Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA). It was established on the initiative of UNESCO at a conference in December 1961 in Bangkok.[654] Its aim is to "secure direct and free exchange of news between the news agencies of a region inhabited by more than one half of the world's population".[655] In the beginning, the organization did not have enough financial means to realize its declared objectives. Its members paid an annual fee of only 20 US dollars. In 1967, it started publishing a newsletter. Two years later, it appeared weekly and each edition carried around 4 000 words of regional news.[656]

Meanwhile, two of its members, the Malaysian Bernama and the Indonesian Antara news agencies, signed an agreement for direct cooperation.[657] In 1977, this resulted in a proposal

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[652] China Central Television: CCTV International Overview, http://www.cctv.com/english/20040426/101728.shtml, Beijing 2004, accessed 2006; and Television Broadcasts Limited: TVB Milestones, http://www.tvb.com/affairs/faq/milestone/index_e.html, Hong Kong, 2006, accessed 2006.

[653] John Keshishoglou: Electronic Broadcast Media in Singapore and the Region, Singapore, 2005, p. 63; and Channel News Asia: About Us, http://www.channelnewsasia.com/cna/aboutus-new/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.

[654] Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies: About OANA, http://www.oananews.org/more.php?about=1, Kuala Lumpur, 2006, accessed 2006; and Press Trust of India: OANA, Towards Self-Reliance, published in *Media Asia*, volume 8, number 4, Singapore, 1981, p. 208-210.

[655] Compare with Anura Goonasekera: Third World and NIICO, p. 70, published in Neville Jayaweera (Ed.): Rething Development Communication, Singapore, 1987, p. 61-75; Robert Stevenson: Communication Development and the Third World, The Global Politics of Information, White Plains, 1988, p. 77-79; and Colin Legum: A Free and Balanced Flow, Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the International Flow of News, Lexington, 1978, p. 36, 37.

[656] Tan Jooi Long (Ed.): Guide to Asia-Pacific News Agencies, Kuala Lumpur, 1984, p. 14, 15.

[657] Andrew Szende: From Torrent to Trickle, Managing the Flow of News in Southeast Asia, Singapore, 1986, p. 37; Asok Mitra: Information Imbalance in Asia, p. 7, published in *AMIC Occasional Papers*, number 5, Singapore, 1975, p. 3-18; Rejal Arbee: Bernama in the Asean News Exchange, p. 22-26, published in *Media Asia*, volume 10, number 1, Singapore, 1983, p. 22-26; August Marpaung: Antara, Between Indonesia and the World, p. 27-30, published in *Media Asia*, volume 10, number 1, Singapore, 1983, p. 27-30; and Munir Majid: The Asean News Exchange, Experience of a Malaysian End-User, p. 21-32, published in *Media Asia*, volume 10, number 1, Singapore, 1983, p. 21-32.

for the establishment of a continent wide network. Five years later, in 1982, the "Asia News Network" (ANN) became fully operational. It links 24 news agencies in 20 Asian countries.[658]

Singapore does not participate in this network. One explanation is that Singapore has no news agency and, thus, cannot join the organization. But that is merely a technicality, because both leading media companies in Singapore (Singapore Press Holdings and Media Corporation of Singapore) operate internal news gathering systems comparable to the infrastructure of modern news agencies.

However, the "Asia News Network" is more symbolic than effective. This has various reasons but it does not help that there are a number of very similar services competing with it: The "Asean News Network", founded by the German computer specialist Wolfgang Holzem, distributes news written by journalists.[659] "Asia News Net", operated by the Thailand office of the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation, exchanges news between newspapers.[660] And the "Asia Net News", run by an Australian company of the same name, presents news from (media) business companies.[661]

None of them, however, can compete with professional services such as "Factiva", which is run by the Dow Jones & Reuters Company and provides an unrivalled collection of more than 9 000 authoritative sources, including all of the news agencies in Asia.[662] This is another reason why the international flow of news into (and out) Singapore has not become more just.

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[658] Tan Jooi Long (Ed.): Guide to Asia-Pacific News Agencies, Kuala Lumpur, 1984, p. 9; and S. Ali: ANN as a New Window on Asia, Some Personal Observations, p. 17-19, published in *Media Asia*, volume 10, number 1, Singapore, 1983, p. 17-19.

[659] Wolfgang Holzem: About Asean News Network, http://www.aseannewsnetwork.com/2005/04/about-asean-news-network.html, Regina, 2005, accessed 2006.

[660] Zhu Ling: About ANN, http://www.asianewsnet.net/level2_template5.php, Bangkok, 2002, accessed 2006.

[661] AsiaNet: Reaching Global Audiences, http://www.asianetnews.net/aboutUs.asp, Sydney, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

[662] Factiva: About Factiva, http://www.factiva.com/about/index.asp?node=menuElem1098, London, 2006, accessed 2006; compare with Ahmad Hassan: New World Information Order, The Role of the News Agencies of Asean, p. 11-14, published in *Media Asia*, volume 10, number 1, Singapore, 1983, p. 11-14.

<table>

(68) News agencies in Asia[663]							
Name	Country	Year	Staff	Partners	Clients	Languages	Homepage
Agence Khmer de Presse (AKP)	Cambodia (Phnom Penh)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	< 10	Khmer	/
Antara National News Agency (Antara)	Indonesia (Jakarta)	1937	200	6	> 50	Bahasa, English	antara.co.id
Asian News International (ANI)	India (New Delhi)	1978 (est.)	> 50	n.a.	n.a.	Hindi, English	aniin.com
Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BBS)	Bangladesh (Dhaka)	1972	176	7	50	English, Bengali	bssnews.net
Bernama News Agency (Bernama)	Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur)	1968	300	> 5 (est.)	> 50	Malay, English	bernama.com
Central News Agency (CNA)	Taiwan (Taipei)	1924	100 (est.)	> 20	> 100	Chinese, English	cna.com.tw
Korean Central News Agency (KCNA)	Korea (Pyongyang)	1946	n.a.	< 3 (est.)	< 10 (est.)	Korean, English, Russian	kcna.co.jp
Kyodo	Japan (Tokyo)	1945	> 1000	> 70	> 400 (est.)	Japanese, English	kyodo.co.jp
Lao News Agency (KLP)	Lao (Vientiane)	1968	n.a.	n.a.	< 10 (est.)	Lao, English, French	kplnet.net
Lankapuvath	Sri Lanka (Colombo)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	lankapuvath.com
Mongolyn tsakhilgaan medee (Montsame)	Mongolia (Ulaan Baatar)	1921	120	8	50 (est.)	Mongolian, Russian, Chinese	montsame.mn
Philippines News Agency (PNA)	Philippines (Manila)	1975 (est.)	150	4	> 40 (est.)	Tagalog, English	pna.gov.ph
Press Trust of India (PTI)	India (New Delhi)	1949	1300	> 2	450	Hindi, English,	ptinews.com
Thailand News Agency (TNA)	Thailand (Bangkok)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	mcot.org
United News of Bangladesh (UNB)	Bangladesh (Dhaka)	1988	200	6	100	English, Bengali	unbnews.com
Vietnam News Agency (VNA)	Vietnam (Hanoi)	1945	> 100	n.a.	> 30	Vietnamese, English, French	vnagency.com.vn
Xinhua	China (Beijing)	1932	> 10000 (est.)	> 10 (est.)	> 3000 (est.)	Chinese, English	xinhua.org
Yonhap News Agency (Yonhap)	Korea (Seoul)	1981	200	8	n.a.	Korean, Chinese, Japanese	yonhapnews.co.kr

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[663] Except "CNA" (Taiwan), all of the agencies mentioned are members of the Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA). The table is based on different sources, including Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies: OANA Members, http://www.oananews.org/more.php?agency=1, Kuala Lumpur, 2006, accessed 2006; and Fazal Qureshi: Asian News Agencies, Strategy for Link-Up, p. 75-81, published in *Media Asia*, volume 8, number 2, Singapore, 1981, p. 75-81.

Cases

5.1   Pressure on the local press: The *Nanyang Siang Pau* case

Some events in the development of the media in Singapore are so extraordinary – and in contrast to the MacBride Report - that they are worth investigating.[664] The three cases about to be described have two things in common: They all happened in quick succession in May 1971. From a historical point of view, it even seems like a single sequence of events.[665] And in all three cases, similar accusations were used, namely being involved in "black operations" which is a term used by a special branch of the police for activities directed against Singapore's (media) institutions from outside the country.[666]

The first incident began on 2 May 1971 at around 3 a.m., when police officers broke down the doors of the home of Lee Mau Seng, the former general manager of the Chinese-language *Nanyang Siang Pau* newspaper.[667] At about the same time, Tung Tao Chang, the editor-in-chief, and Ly Singko, the senior editorial writer were picked up at their residences. The next day, Quek Loong Seng, the newspaper's public relations officer, was also arrested.[668] All four were detained under the "Internal Security Act" (1960) which empowers the government - among other things – to preventively detain subversive persons.[669]

The authorities accused Lee Mau Seng of bringing Tung Tao Chang to the newspaper, under whose editorship the reporting allegedly had changed to one of "glamorizing communism and stirring up communal and chauvinistic sentiments over language and culture". In a statement published the next day, the authorities conceded that "Tung has for many years […] written strongly anti-Communist articles" but argued that the political opinion of the Chinese Muslim son-in-law of a former Kuomintang consul must have changed.[670]

According to the authorities, the propaganda began during the last quarter of 1970, just before an American ping-pong team visited China. "By April 28, the *Nanyang* had reached

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[664] Compare with Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 253 et sqq.
[665] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Zurich, 1971, p. 1.
[666] Ooi Giok-Ling: Singapore, p. 189, published in AMIC: Media and Democracy in Asia, p. 180-194; and Garry Rodan: Transparency and Authoritarian Rule in Southeast Asia, London, 1994, p. 20.
[667] The *Nanyang Siang Pau* newspaper was founded in 1923 by a multimillionaire rubber magnate. During the Japanese occupation, it was closed down. It resumed publication on 8 September 1945. Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 13.
[668] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Nanyang Siang Pau Detainees, Zurich, 1971, p. 2.
[669] Ang Peng Hwa: Mass Media Laws and Regulations in Singapore, Singapore, 1998, p. 303.
[670] After International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Nanyang Siang Pau Detainees, Zurich, 1971, p. 2.

the stage in the campaign when it was prepared to use conscious falsehoods to whip up communal fears. In its editorial of that day, the paper, under the pretext of criticism, openly incited communal hatred against the government."

Later, it branded the government as "pseudo-foreigners who forget their ancestors" which was understood as a "battle-cry that was once used by Malay chauvinists in Singapore against their multi-racial compatriots" and "by Boxers for Chinese Christian converts before they beheaded them during the Boxer Rebellion".[671]

On 3 May 1971, the chairman Lee Eu Seng issued a personal statement regarding the arrest of his brother and the three other detained executives, in which he categorically denied the accusations against the newspaper: "I have never allowed it to be influenced by any group or organization from either here or abroad […] It is necessary to state very clearly that in Singapore, the newspaper have a clear and definite duty to bring to the attention of the government (since there is no opposition in parliament to do so) the wishes, criticism and legitimate grievances of the general public."[672]

Meanwhile, the *Nanyang Siang Pau* emphasized in an editorial published on 4 May 1971 that it was "an independent newspaper, entirely non-partisan and non-sectarian, unbiased, having never taken part in any political party's activity, and never to get swept into the whirlpool of any political struggle between different sects."[673]

That afternoon, three ministers assured in a press conference that the "government was not against any newspaper which was critical of the government" and that there was "no change in [its] liberal attitude towards newspapers."[674] According to Foreign Minister Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, the authorities just wanted to stop the journalists stirring up racial sentiments and offered two unconvincing examples to prove their accusations. Nevertheless, the English-language *Straits Times* newspaper loyally stood alongside the authorities in an editorial published the next morning.

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[671] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Nanyang Siang Pau Detainees, Zurich, 1971, p. 2, 3; and Anthony Polsky: Lee Kuan Yew Versus the Press, p. 188 published in *Pacific Community*, volume 3, number 1, Singapore, 1971, p. 183-203.
[672] After International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Nanyang Siang Pau Detainees, Zurich, 1971, p. 6.
[673] After Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 44.
[674] Minister of Foreign Affairs Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, Minister for Culture Jek Yuen Thong and Minister for Home Affairs Wong Lin Keng. Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 44.

The relationship between the government and the *Nanyang Siang Pau* became increasingly tense.[675] Over the next few days, several statements were issued on both sides. On 23 May 1971, the newspaper even ran a blank editorial column to protest against the arrests. Two days later, the government issued an internal directive giving news reports about China priority in the paper, regardless of their length or importance, which proved nothing but spread further rumors.[676]

Meanwhile, several international organizations such as the executive committee of the International Press Institute called "on the Singapore government to release the detainees from the *Nanyang Siang Pau* or to bring them to trial in open court" and concluded that "freedom of the press has ceased to exist in Singapore" if the government fails to do so.[677]

According to Francis Seow, the authorities offered to release the detainees if the newspaper company agrees to change its editorial policy, but the remaining editors refused by arguing that they were "fighting for a principle".[678] Thus, the chairman Lee Eu Seng was also arrested on 28 January 1973 for allegedly "using his newspaper to incite the people against the government over [Chinese] culture". His printing license was revoked and he was detained for five years.

After two and a half years in prison, Lee Mau Seng publicly admitted his mistakes and was then released from prison. He immediately left the country. In Hong Kong, on the way to his destination Canada, he said that he had signed a "Russian Confession" to obtain his release: "I never understood the meaning of raw power and the nuances politics in Singapore until I was hit. This has been an education."[679]

What is remarkable about these detentions is that none of the five detainees were ever charged in court. This is particularly interesting in the case of Lee Mau Seng, because already on 3 May 1971 the authorities had divulged that he was not able to read or write in English. That brings up the question if he was really aware of what was being published - after he had already left the newspaper.[680] In contrast to the following two cases which also

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[675] Anthony Polsky: Lee Kuan Yew Versus the Press, p. 189 published in *Pacific Community*, volume 3, number 1, Singapore, 1971, p. 183-203.
[676] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 47.
[677] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Nanyang Siang Pau Detainees, Zurich, 1971, p. 52, 53.
[678] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 46.
[679] Far Eastern Economic Review: Predicting Unrest, Hong Kong, volume 82, number 48, 3 December 1973, p. 21.
[680] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Nanyang Siang Pau Detainees, Zurich, 1971, p. 4.

took place in May 1971, the *Nanyang Siang Pau* survived the crisis, because the authorities issued a printing license to another journalist.[681]

5.1.1   The *Eastern Sun* and *Singapore Herald* cases

Following the arrests of top executives at the *Nanyang Siang Pau*, Lee Kuan Yew held a speech at a community center on 9 May 1971. He did not name the *Eastern Sun* newspaper but indicated that he "received information that Chinese communist agents in Hong Kong had given a certain Singapore newspaper proprietor nearly eight million Hong Kong dollars".[682]

Five days later, the editor-in-chief and six other senior editorial staff of the *Eastern Sun* newspaper announced that they had resigned.[683] In a joint statement, they declared that they had discussed the sources of their income with the directors and were "completely satisfied that these sources do not influence the editorial policy" for which they were responsible. In the same statement, they indicated that management was worried that the newspaper would have to close down because of staff shortage if they leave. Nevertheless, they quit and hoped the government would understand that they "cannot work under this pall of distrust".[684]

The same day, Lee Kuan Yew issued a statement accusing managing director Aw Kow of accepting a loan of three million Hong Kong dollars at a "ridiculously low interest rate of 0.1 percent per annum" in early 1964 and a second loan on the same terms and conditions in September 1965. In return, Aw Kow allegedly agreed not to oppose the communist intelligence service on major issues, to take a neutral stand in minor issues and to be fair in editorial comments and the treatment of news.[685]

There is no doubt that Aw Kow accepted money, because the *Eastern Sun* ran heavy operating losses. The "contributor", however, is still not clear. Francis Seow argues that the loans were provided by the Bank of China in Hong Hong, which had a registered branch in Singapore at that time.[686] But Soh Yew Peng agrees with Lee Kuan Yew that the *Eastern*

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[681] The license was issued to Tan Chin Har. Lim Jim Koon (Ed.): Our 70 Years, 1923-1993, History of the Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore, Singapore, 1993, p. 85.
[682] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, The Eastern Sun, Zurich, 1971, p. 1.
[683] The *Eastern Sun* newspaper was launched in 1966. Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 5.
[684] It was signed by editor-in-chief Krishniah, chief-sub-editor Douglas, news editor Kaplan, chief reporter Chan, sub-editor Morrison, senior journalist Farquhar and sub-editor Carroll. International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, The Eastern Sun, Zurich, 1971, p. 2, 3.
[685] After Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 52, 53.
[686] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 52.

Sun was funded by a "communist intelligence service through its front organization in Hong Kong".[687] Lee Kuan Yew even writes in his memoirs that "Aw Kow admitted it was true".[688]

Maybe all of them are right. As a son of one of the famous "Tiger Balm" brothers, Aw Kow probably never had any difficulties obtaining loans in Hong Kong.[689] And the Bank of China had often been accused of having too close relations with the government on Mainland China.[690]

However, Aw Kow resigned and the *Eastern Sun* newspaper closed down on 16 May 1971. Interestingly, only Aw Kow's personal secretary, Julius Yeh Sai Fuh, was arrested and detained under the "Internal Security Act".

The case of the *Singapore Herald* newspaper is similar, but much more controversial. It started publishing in the summer of 1970 with support of the former journalist Donald Stevens who was the Malaysian chief minister of Sabah province at that time (formerly known as British North Borneo).[691]

From the beginning, it was had financial problems, but it had good prospects because its editor-in-chief, Francis Wong, provided a fresh and critical view in the reports.[692] It was pro-Singapore but not necessarily pro-People's Action Party. That is probably why the *Singapore Herald* got in trouble with the authorities.[693]

For example, in August 1970, the *Singapore Herald* reported that "long hair is a fashion – like bell-bottomed trousers, wide ties and boots. The streets of London are full of people whose looks conceal their collars. They include stockbrokers, electronics engineers and editors – all as straight as straight could be […] Singaporeans are notorious fashion-followers. It is an unfortunate trait. But there seems no reason why those who surrender to foreign style in the matter of hair should be singled out for displeasure."[694] In the same month, the Singapore Police cut three teenagers' hair.[695]

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[687] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 5.

[688] Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 215.

[689] Aw Kow was "known more as a playboy than a serious newspaper baron". Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 215.

[690] The Bank's tower in Hong Kong is one of the symbols of the handover of Hong Kong from Britain to China in 1997. Jan Morris: Hongkong, Geschichte und Zukunft der letzten britischen Kolonie, Bergisch Gladbach, 1991, p. 463 et sqq.

[691] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 6.

[692] Soh Tiang Keng: The Singapore Press, Its Role in a Multi-Racial City-State, Singapore, 1971, p. 4.

[693] Ivan Lim: The Singapore Press and the Fourth Estate, p. 104, published in Razak Abdul (Ed.): Press Laws and Systems in ASEAN States, Jakarta, 1985, p. 102-119.

[694] Singapore Herald: Hair and the Hippy, Singapore, 5 August 1970.

[695] Even the journalist Tan Cheng Guan criticized that the "editorial decision to publish so many letters critical of national service in the *Singapore Herald* was wrong". Tan Cheng Guan: A Responsible Press, Singapore, 1971, p. 22.

As a result of such controversies, the *Singapore Herald* was cut off from official news. Later, the authorities also stopped placing advertisements in the newspaper and instructed government departments to cancel their subscriptions.[696] According to Francis Seow, some headmasters even told their teachers and students not to bring the paper into school.[697]

Within a few months, the newspaper company was running out of money. The Chase Manhattan Bank extended its loans to the newspaper to 1.8 million Singapore dollars. On top of that, Sally Aw Sian, the Hong Kong-based newspaper publisher, invested 500 000 Singapore dollars in the company.[698] Soon after, Francis Wong had to go, probably as a gesture of good will to the prime minister.[699]

However, relations between the government and the newspaper became increasingly tense. When Lee Kuan Yew held his "black operations" speech at the community center on 9 May 1971, he doubted that the investments by Donald Stevens and Sally Aw Sian were free of political motives. He even gave the impression that the money was not theirs but came from some other unknown source.[700]

The *Singapore Herald* replied to this speech in an editorial on 12 May 1971, in which it assured that "there are no mysteries about this newspaper and there never have been".[701] Meanwhile, Donald Stephens wrote in a letter to Lee Kuan Yew: "I feel I should tell you that my only motive in putting money into the Herald is because I have been in the newspaper business before and because I believe Singapore to be a country where my investments would be safe."[702] But all this did not stop spreading the rumor that the *Singapore Herald* could be involved in a "black operation".

On 17 May 1971, Sally Aw Sian went from Hong Kong to Singapore for a meeting with the prime minister. She presented receipts for the money she remitted and confirmed that her interest was purely financial.[703] Meanwhile, the *Singapore Herald* foreign editor Bob Reece

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[696] Anthony Polsky: Lee Kuan Yew Versus the Press, p. 198 published in *Pacific Community*, volume 3, number 1, Singapore, 1971, p. 183-203.
[697] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 59.
[698] At that time, Sally Aw Sian was publisher of three of Hong Kong's biggest Chinese-language newspapers.
[699] He was replaced by Ambrose Khaw. Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 85.
[700] Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 216, 217.
[701] Singapore Herald: Nothing to Hide, Singapore, 12 June 1971.
[702] After Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 216, 217.
[703] On her way back to Hong Kong, Sally Aw Sian indicated that she does not know what will be the fate of the *Singapore Herald* now: "[…] Lee Kuan Yew seems however to have adopted an attitude of inexplicable hostility towards the Herald." International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, The Singapore Herald, Zurich, 1971, p. 19-21, 25-28.

and his wife, the features editor Adele Koh, were ordered to leave the country within 48 hours because their working permissions had not been extended.[704]

Two days later, the manager of the Chase Manhattan Bank in Singapore, Hendrik Kwant, was summoned to the prime minister's office. Without any notice, he was taken to a room where press representatives were waiting.[705] There, the prime minister explained the financial situation of the newspaper. He argued that the *Singapore Herald* would have exhausted 2.3 million Singapore dollars before the end of 1970 and sought an overdraft from the Chase Manhattan Bank: "By now, of course, the Herald is 830 000 dollars overdrawn with the bank", Lee Kuan Yew said.

Of course, this statement harmed the credit standing of the newspaper company. On 20 May 1971, the bank's solicitors obliged the *Singapore Herald* to repay loans totaling 1.03 million Singapore dollars within 48 hours. The staff offered to work without pay. A few days later, the Singapore National Union of Journalists launched a "Save the Herald" campaign. On one day alone, it received around 40 000 Singapore dollars in donations, advance subscriptions and payments by casual advertisers.[706]

However, the newspaper company failed to find another (local) investor and the authorities cancelled the printing license.[707] As a result, the newspaper ceased publication on 28 May 1971.[708] Both investors later repeated that it had been their money and it was invested without any political motive.

What is remarkable about these two cases is that foreign funding of newspapers was not forbidden at that time; the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" was passed three years later (1974).[709] In fact, there was foreign investment in all English-language newspapers. Only in the cases of the *Eastern Sun* and *Singapore Herald*, however, was this was a problem.

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[704] Anthony Polsky: Lee Kuan Yew Versus the Press, p. 194, published in *Pacific Community*, volume 3, number 1, Singapore, 1971, p. 183-203.

[705] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, The Singapore Herald, Zurich, 1971, p. 28.

[706] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 80.

[707] Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 216.

[708] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 6.

[709] The "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" was passed in 1974 and requires newspapers to be licensed; it regulates business and empowers the government to intervene in the market. Attorney-General's Chambers: Newspaper and Printing Presses Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_legdisp.pl?actno=2002-REVED-206, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

5.1.2 Effects of the arrests and closedowns of the two newspapers

In the arrests of four top executives of the *Nanyang Siang Pau* on 2 May 1971, the resignation of six senior editors of the *Eastern Sun* on 14 May 1971, the deportation of two editors of the *Singapore Herald* on 17 May 1971 and finally the end of publication of the latter two newspapers, two points were becoming very clear which are both in contrast to the MacBride Report.[710]

First of all, foreign publishers should only invest in Singapore if they can prove they have no political motives, although to prove something like this is almost impossible: "The Singapore government has a very keen interest to know what foreign capital comes in, for what purpose, and if it goes into newspapers, it's very anxious to know whether it is coming in to make money, sell news, sell advertisements or for other purposes."[711]

Secondly, local journalists should be very careful not to criticize the government, because they could be detained without trial under the "Internal Security Act" for stirring up sentiments or for being a communist: "Anyone who tries to work up communal feelings, on spurious and specious grounds, over fictitious dangers to Chinese language and culture, must be firmly dealt with."[712]

When the issue was discussed with the experts interviewed for this dissertation, the opinions differed. Many, however, agreed that freedom of the press in the sense of the International Press Institute has ceased to exist in Singapore.[713]

Henceforth, the mass media, was limited "to present Singapore's problems simply and clearly and then explain, how, if they support certain programs and policies, these problems can be solved", as Lee Kuan formulated it in a speech at the "International Press Institute Conference" on 9 June 1971 in Helsinki.[714]

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[710] Compare with the chapter "Democratization of Communication" in Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 265 et sqq.

[711] Lee Kuan Yew on 19 May 1971 in a press conference, after International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, The Singapore Herald, Zurich, 1971, p. 31; and Chen Ai Yen: The Mass Media, 1819-1980, p. 307, published in Ernest Chew (Ed.): A History of Singapore, Oxford, 1991, p. 288-311.

[712] Lee Kuan Yew on 22 May 1971 in a speech at a community center, after International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, The Nanyang Siang Pau Detainees, Zurich, 1971, p. 37; Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, Oxford, 1977, p. 322; and Basskaran Nair: Singapore, p. 89, published in Achal Mehra (Ed.): Press Systems in ASEAN States, Singapore, 1993, p. 85-90.

[713] See the documentation of the interviews.

[714] After Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 88.

5.2 Control over the local press: Merger of the Chinese-language press

On 20 April 1982, the newspaper industry was restructured by merging Singapore's two leading Chinese-language newspapers into a single holding company which was later named "Singapore News & Publications Ltd.".[715] According to an official press release, the aim of this move was to ensure the long-term viability of the newspapers in Singapore, "to pool their financial and manpower resources to achieve economies of scale essential for viability which will also help to raise journalistic standards".[716]

In fact, there was strong competition. From the very beginning, the *Nanyang Siang Pau* and the *Sin Chew Jit Poh* were keen rivals. When the communists came to power in China in 1949, the *Nanyang Siang Pau* was critical of Chiang Kai Shek (1887-1975), who had fled to Taiwan, while the *Sin Chew Jit Poh* supported the Kuomingtang.[717] However, they basically had the same target group, namely Chinese-educated citizens.

In the 1970s, both offered travel and shopping discounts, organized forums on topical issues, and sponsored community projects. The rivalry intensified in 1977, when the N*anyang Siang Pau* asserted that it had 1.9 million in cash while *Sin Chew Jit Poh* was said to have only 90 000 Singapore dollars in its reserves. This was the beginning of a "war with words", as Soh Yew Peng describes it.[718] But there is no indication, however, that this rivalry was harmful or that the Chinese-language press in general was in danger at the time.[719]

Having said that, an increasing number of parents had decided to send their children to English-language schools and having them taught in Chinese only as a second language. As a result, the market share of the Chinese-language press dropped from 59 to 49 percent between 1973 and 1976, while the market share of English-language press increased from 35 to 43 percent during the same period. In other words: While the proportion of the Chinese-language press declined by about ten percent, the proportion of the English-language press increased by around eight percent within a period of four years.[720]

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[715] Garry Rodan: Transparency and Authoritarian Rule in Southeast Asia, Singapore and Malaysia, London, 2004, p. 21; and AsiaOne: Singapore Press Holdings, http://www.asia1.com.sg/sph.html, Singapore, 1997, accessed 2005.
[716] After Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 119; and Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 27.
[717] After Chiang Kia-Shek failed to succeed over the communists in the Chinese Civil War between 1926 and 1949, he fled to Taiwan where he served as president of the Republic of China and director-general of the Kuomingtang.
[718] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 24.
[719] Compare with Soh Tiang Keng: The Singapore Press, Its Role in a Multi-Racial City-State, Singapore, 1971, p. 13, 14.
[720] Peter Chen: Mass Media and Communication Patterns in Singapore, Singapore, 1979, p. 17.

During this period, however, the total daily circulation increased, from 389 900 in 1970 to 615 512 copies in 1980, and so did the circulation of the Chinese-language press. The *Nanyang Siang Pau* and the *Sin Chew Jit Poh* saw their circulation more than double from 43 000 and 70 000 copies to 97 000 and 112 000 copies respectively between 1970 and 1980.[721]

(69) Circulation of the Nanyang Siang Pau and Sin Chew Jit Poh newspapers[722]		
Year	Nanyang Siang Pau	Sin Chew Jit Poh
1970	43 000	70 000
1971	60 000	72 000
1972	69 000	77 000
1973	62 000	84 000
1974	62 000	84 000
1975	67 000	85 000
1976	73 000	89 000
1977	73 000	96 000
1978	77 000	105 000
1979	83 000	110 000
1980	97 000	112 000

In view of these numbers, there must have been another reason for the merger of the Chinese-language newspapers. One official explanation is that the government intended to set up two competitive publishing houses that publish both English- and Chinese-language newspapers.[723]

Therefore, the authorities asked the Straits Times Press (STP) to stop publishing the profitable *New Nation* newspaper and "giving a helping hand" to its rival, the "Singapore News and Publishing Ltd." (SNP), launching the English-language *Singapore Monitor*. In return, the *Straits Times* was guaranteed no competition from a morning newspaper for the next three years.[724]

As a result, there were only two large publishing houses: The Straits Times Press concentrated on the publication of the English-language *Straits Times* morning newspaper and the "Singapore News and Publishing Ltd." started publishing the two Chinese-language *Lianhe Zaobao* and *Lianhe Wanbao* newspapers, and the English-language *Singapore Monitor* afternoon newspaper.[725]

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[721] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 25.
[722] The table is based on data provided in Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 25.
[723] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 16, 17.
[724] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 120.
[725] Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 92.

What is interesting about the merger is that in the year before, the People's Action Party had lost the Anson by-election.[726] As a result, the first opposition politician returned to parliament after a decade of one-party parliament. Many members of the People's Action Party including Lee Kuan Yew blamed inaccurate news reports for the narrow loss.

Thus, one could argue that the merger of the two leading Chinese-language newspapers in 1982 was an attempt to put the local media under more control.[727] This hypothesis is backed by the fact that three local banks became the main shareholders of the newly created "Singapore News and Publications Ltd.": the Overseas Union Bank (OUB), the United Overseas Bank (UOB) and the Development of Bank of Singapore (DBS). They were either indirectly (OUB, UOB) or directly (DBS) controlled by the government.[728]

However, things did not work out as planned. The *Singapore Monitor*, launched on "Lee's initiative" in July 1982, failed to compete with the *Straits Times* newspaper.[729] Three years later, in summer 1985, it was still only selling about 47 000 copies and had exhausted its base capital of 20 million Singapore dollars, plus another six million in loans from its parent company.[730] One of the reasons for the paper's failure was the lack of locally available English-language editors. And foreign editors, though less familiar with events in Singapore, were much more expensive.

5.2.1   Merger of the Chinese-language press with the English-language press

At this point, it required little more to establish a monopoly. As early as November 1984, the Straits Times Press and the "Singapore News and Publications Ltd." were merged.[731] This means that all newspapers except the small, family-run *Tamil Murasu* were put under one roof, the Singapore Press Holdings (SPH).

This "mega" or "shotgun merger", as the tiny opposition denounced it, was heavily criticized.[732] Even Toh Chin Chye, the former deputy prime minister, warned that Singapore

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[726] Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, Singapore, 1971, p. 138.
[727] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 17, 18.
[728] Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 92.
[729] John Heuvel: The Unfolding Lotus, East Asia's Changing Media, A Report of The Freedom Forum Media Studies center At Columbia University in the City of New York, New York, 1993, p. 138.
[730] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 7, 8.
[731] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 123.
[732] Compare with Meheroo Jussawalla: Media Mega-mergers Catching on in Southeast Asia, p. 183-187, published in *Media Asia*, volume 23, number 4, Singapore, 1996, p. 183-187.

was forcing its press into the role of an obeisant official mouthpiece, comparable to the Soviet Union's *Pravda* or China's *People's Daily*. The authorities, however, were able to convince the public.

"What is competition?" asked Sinnathamby Rajaratnam rhetorically: "It means one paper tries [to] kill the other. It will cost 40 million to 50 million dollars, some tell me it's 80 million, for the *Straits Times* to kill the *Monitor* and vice-versa. So you spend the money and, at the end of it, you have two corpses. What for? So why not use the money saved the train and pay journalists better, get the best men possible, raise standards as well as new publications. Because of competition, many newspapers have died, and that is bad."[733]

According to press releases, the principal reason for the merger was to pool resources in order to cut costs.[734] But not all of the experts interviewed for this dissertation were able to confirm that this was the only reason. It might be possible that the actual reason was to get full control over the local print media.

Earlier that year, the general election had shown that the Anson by-election was not a fluke, confirming the return of the opposition. The People's Action Party lost two of the 79 seats, although it was unopposed in 30 districts, and in seven districts the margin was very slim. The party was stunned that a minister was nearly defeated by a "poorly educated" candidate with "questionable attributes". What really shocked them, however, was that the People's Action Party lost 12.9 percent of the votes compared with the previous general election.[735]

Another indicator that the government wanted to tighten its control over the press is the composition of shareholders of the newly established Singapore Press Holdings, which had a capitalization of 660 million Singapore dollars. The major shareholders are local banks and statutory boards, notably the Overseas Union Bank (OUB), the United Overseas Bank, Development Bank of Singapore, Great Eastern Life Assurance and the Telecommunication Authority of Singapore - the latter being fully owned by the government at that time.[736]

At least the managers and editors realized that the merger of all newspapers except one into one holding company might result in the loss of benefits arising from competition. To prevent this, the operations were split into four sections of which the "English-Malay Newspaper

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[733] After Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 124.
[734] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 27.
[735] Singapore Elections: Index, http://www.singapore-elections.com/, Singapore, 2001, accessed 2005; and Elections Department Singapore: Past Parliamentary Election Results, http://www.elections.gov.sg/past_parliamentary.htm, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2005.
[736] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 123.

Division" and the "Chinese Newspaper Division" have become the two dominant. Each has retained a certain level of autonomy and every newspaper has still its own editorial style.[737]

5.2.2 Effects of the mega-mergers into the Singapore Press Holdings

In merging two leading Chinese-language newspapers (*Nanyang Siang Pau*, *Sin Chew Jit Poh*) in 1982, and then the Chinese-language press with the English-language press in 1984, three points were made very clear which all contrast to the MacBride Report.

First of all, journalists should avoid getting in trouble with their employer, because there is only one left in the entire newspaper business (and only one in the radio and television section). In 1995, even the small family-run *Tamil Murasu* newspaper was bought by Singapore Press Holdings.[738]

Second, since the government investment company Temasek has stakes in Singapore Press Holdings and all publishing houses are bound by the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" (1974) anyway, journalists should avoid getting into trouble with the government ("Internal Security Act"). And third, not only does the government have the power to restructure the media industry; it obviously also does not hesitate to enforce it.[739]

5.3 Trouble with the foreign press: The *Time* and *Asian Wall Street Journal* cases

In 1986 and 1987, the Singaporean government took a hard line with the foreign press. The problems started with the *Time* magazine, an American publication based in New York and regionally distributed from Hong Kong. On 2 September 1986, the *Time* magazine reported in its 8 September 1986 issue in an article entitled "Silencing the Dissenters" about the legal actions taken against the first opposition in the Singapore parliament after a decade of one-party parliament: Jusua Jeyaretnam had been found guilty by the courts on charges of

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[737] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 28, 29.
[738] Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Asian Communication Handbook, Singapore, 2003, p. 266.
[739] Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 95.

disposing assets to defraud creditors and giving false evidence – as a result, he was disqualified from running in the next election.[740]

From the government's point of view, the article contained the following three errors: First, the judge Michael Khoo did not "dismiss all the charges except for a minor technicality"; instead he convicted Jusua Jeyaretnam for disposing assets to defraud creditors. Second, the chief justice did not "overturn judge Khoo's ruling and sentenced Mr. Jeyaretnam to three months in jail"; instead he reversed the judge's acquittals on two charges of defrauding creditors and ordered a retrial by another judge on the charge of giving false evidence in which Jusua Jeyaretman was sentenced to three months in prison (later reduced to a fine). And third, the government had not "unexpectedly introduced" a constitutional amendment that, if passed, would deny the right for counsel for an M[ember of] P[arliament] cited for contempt"; because the British parliamentary practice in Singapore follows does not allow that anyway.[741]

On 3 September 1986, the press secretary in the prime minister's office James Fu sent a letter to the editor of the *Time* magazine in which he asked for correcting these details.[742] It is not known whether the editor responded but on 24 September James Fu sent a follow-up letter. The same day, *Time* magazine's bureau chief in Hong Kong, William Steward, called James Fu to discuss the matter. Soon after, James Fu sent a telex to him repeating his requests.[743]

Six days later, Joan Walsh explained to James Fu in a letter why the editors of the *Time* magazine did not want to publish the corrections. This document is not available to the author of this dissertation, but it is known that the editors tried to negotiate the issue by contacting Singapore's permanent representative at the United Nations Organization in New York.

However, James Fu insisted on the publication of his letter. The editors finally agreed to it on the condition that they could edit it before publication because it was a "standard practice to

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[740] Time Magazine: Silencing the Dissenters, 8 September 1986, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 21-22; and Amnesty USA: JB Jeyaretnam, The Use of Defamation Suits for Political Purposes, http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/singapore/document.do?id=BF56868404E3D63E802569A5007186A8, New York, 2006, accessed 2006.
[741] Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 3.
[742] James Fu: Letter to the Editor of the Time Magazine, dated 3 September 1986, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 25-26.
[743] Ministry of Information: Press Release, dated 15 October 1986, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 23-24

edit all letters published for reasons of space", as the chairman explained in a telex to Singapore's prime minister about two weeks later.

For Lee Kuan Yew and his secretary, this was not an option. On 15 October 1986, the *Time* magazine was declared to be a "gazetted publication" and its circulation was restricted from 18 000 copies per issue to 9 000 copies starting 19 October 1986 and to 2 000 copies per issue starting 1 January 1987.[744] This was possible because just a few months earlier, on 31 July 1986, the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" had been amended.[745]

On 27 October 1986, the *Time* magazine gave in and printed James Fu's letter in full length, adding that it did "not agree with all the corrections cited". About half a year later, the magazine's circulation was restored starting with its 13 July 1987 issue.[746]

The Hong Kong-based *Asian Wall Street Journal* was involved in a similar but much more controversial case. In its 12 December 1986 issue, Stephen Duthie criticized in an article entitled "Singapore Exchange Puzzles Financiers" the formation of the second securities market in Singapore, known as the "Stock Exchange of Singapore Dealing and Automated Quotation System" (SESDAQ).[747]

But the "tone of Mr. Duthie's remarks and his choice of words" were unacceptable to the government, especially whenever the government's role in the establishment of the market was mentioned. On 12 December 1986, Koh Beng Seng, the director of the Monetary Authority of Singapore, wrote a letter to the editor-in-chief in which he repudiated the "prejudice" of the author and accused him of publishing a "list of errors and submissions".[748]

According to the letter, one of the errors was that Stephen Duthie wrote that a "company controlled by Temasek Holdings was ordered to prepare for an immediate listing, even though the concern's merchant banker had recommended delaying listing by as much as a year" because, according to Koh Beng Seng, such a company did not exist.[749]

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[744] Ministry of Information: Press Release, dated 15 October1986, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 23-24.

[745] William Atkins: The Politics of Southeast Asia's New Media, London, 2002, p. 24.

[746] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 149.

[747] Asian Wall Street Journal: Singapore Exchange Puzzles Financiers, Mixed Signals Cloud Proposed Bourse's Aim of Spurring Small Firms, Hong Kong, 12 December 1986, p. 1.

[748] Koh Beng Seng: Letter to the Editor of the Asian Wall Street Journal, dated 12 December 1986, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 33-34.

[749] Asian Wall Street Journal: Singapore Exchange Puzzles Financiers, Mixed Signals Cloud Proposed Bourse's Aim of Spurring Small Firms, Hong Kong, 12 December 1986, p. 1.

The editor-publisher Fred Zimmerman replied on 2 January 1987: "In view of the seriousness of your allegations, we have conducted a thorough investigation of the matter. […] Our conclusion is that the article is fair and accurate. You give no evidence to support your contention that the article contains 'errors of fact', and we have not been able to uncover any such evidence, either. Your one specific allegation of error comes in paragraph 3, where you claim that no such company controlled by Temasek Holdings exists. We are satisfied that it does exist." But Fred Zimmerman did not give any details. Instead, he argued that Koh Beng Seng's letter itself contained several errors of fact.[750]

A hasty exchange of lengthy letters followed. On 17 January 1987, Koh Beng Seng rejected the allegations against him and repeated his own accusations of the A*sian Wall Street Journal*.[751] Six days later, Fred Zimmermann offered a meeting with the group's vice president Peter Kann for further discussion, but that was obviously not wanted by Koh Beng Seng.[752]

On 9 February 1987, the government declared the *Asian Wall Street Journal* to be a newspaper engaged in domestic politics and restricted its circulation from 5 100 to 400 copies per issue starting 16 January 1987. In addition, it issued a list of 143 libraries which should have priority in receiving the journal.[753]

It is the consequence of this case which is interesting: While all letters of correction were published in the Singapore newspapers and an advertisement was placed in the *Asian Wall Street Journal* stating that the Stock Exchange of Singapore does not share the views reported in Stephen Duthie's article, numerous organizations criticized the "gazetting" of the newspaper. One of them was the American Business Council in Singapore. On 10 February 1987, it issued a statement that executives in the United States of America "carefully consider the disadvantages of limited coverage of news affecting their operations."[754]

The next day, even a spokesmen of the U.S. State Department expressed regret over the restriction. In an article published in the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, he was quoted as saying: "Our support for free press is well known. We regret this action by the government of

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[750] Fred Zimmermann concluded that "we therefore cannot publish a letter attacking our staff members for unprofessional conduct, of which he is not guilty, and alleging errors that do not exist. We are willing to publish a letter from you, if you care to write it, stating your point of view on the subjects dealt with in the article." Fred Zimmermann: Letter to Koh Beng Seng, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 35-37.
[751] Koh Beng Seng: Letter to Fred Zimmermann, dated 17 January 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 38-39.
[752] Fred Zimmermann: Letter to Koh Beng Seng, dated 23 January 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 40.
[753] Ministry of Information: Restriction of Asian Wall Street Journal Circulation, dated 9 February 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 41-44.
[754] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 150.

Singapore and hope that a way can be found to resolve the circulation restrictions on the *Asian Wall Street Journal* and the earlier restrictions levied on the *Time* magazine."

The Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded to this "unprecedented interference in Singapore's internal affairs" in at least three "Aide Memoirs".[755] On 12 February 1987, it argued that "no foreign newspaper has an automatic, let alone and inalienable right to circulate in Singapore. Circulation is a privilege extended by the Singapore government. Foreign newspapers are sold here on terms and conditions by the government. They must publish government letters correcting grave errors of reporting."[756]

And on 13 March 1987, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed that "Singapore is not America, and we have no 'free and unrestricted press' in American usage, meaning that the press is free to publish or not publish what it chooses, however irresponsible or biased it may seem to be."[757]

Meanwhile, on 20 February 1987, the *Asian Wall Street Journal* offered to distribute the newspaper free of charge to all paying subscribers. The authorities agreed, providing that all advertisement spaces are left blank to prove that the newspaper's motive was altruistic.[758] But the *Asian Wall Street Journal* denied this offer on the ground that advertisements would be an integral part and there would be additional mechanical costs and scheduling problems. After confirming the technical infeasibility, the government offered to defray half of the additional costs, but this was also rejected by the publisher.

Thus, the authorities stated on 28 February 1987: "We do not want to leave any of your supporters befuddled with the idea that you are defending the freedom of information. You are not interested in the business community getting information. You want the freedom to make money selling advertisements. If your offer helps to dispel this myth, it has served its purpose" – the *Asian Wall Street Journal* did not reply.[759]

How tense the situation was is also shown by the fact that three years later the Singapore authorities refused entry to reporters from the *Asian Wall Street Journal* who wanted to attend the "Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference" being held there. Deputy Prime

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[755] Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 220.
[756] Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Aide Memoir, dated 12 February 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 45.
[757] Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Aide Memoir, dated 13 March 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 49.
[758] Far Eastern Economic Review: Rally to the Cause, Hong Kong, volume 135, number 12, 19 March 1987, p. 44.
[759] Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 8; and Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 221.

Minister Goh Chok Tong explained the reason to Dow Jones Vice-President Karen Elliot House on 23 July 1990: "[…] foreign correspondents do not have the right to be stationed in Singapore. This, like circulation of foreign newspapers here, is a privilege. The government sees no reason to grant it to foreign publications which have repeatedly tried to engage in domestic politics […]".[760]

In fact, it took several years until the restrictions were fully lifted. In the autumn of 1990, the circulation of the *Asian Wall Street Journal* was allowed to be increased to 2 500 copies per issue. In the summer of 1992, it was partially restored to 3 500 copies per issue. And in spring 1993, the circulation was fully restored to its pre-restriction level of 5 000 copies per issue; and a correspondent was allowed to be stationed in Singapore.[761]

5.3.1 The *Asiaweek* and *Far Eastern Economic Review* cases

The *Asiaweek* and *Far Eastern Economic Review* cases, also in 1987, are less controversial. In both cases, the trouble arose over the reporting about 22 people who were arrested under the "Internal Security Act" for being involved in a Marxist conspiracy.[762]

In the article published on 13 September 1987 in the Hong Kong-based *Asiaweek* magazine, the author defended the alleged conspirators as "socially-orientated liberals committed to creating a more democratic and equitably society."[763] It is no surprise that this caught the attention of the authorities. Errors were easy to find, because the article had been badly researched. The author even argued that Singapore's first crackdown against communists had occurred in 1963, which is not the case. In fact, detention without trial was introduced in 1948 and a larger crackdown of communists happened in October 1956.

On the following day, the press secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Chin Fook Leong, sent a letter to the editor correcting some points.[764] The magazine published the letter under the headline "A Distortion of Facts, You Say?" on 23 September 1987 in its 27 September 1987 issue and attributed it to Chin Fook Leong.[765] Not only did the magazine delete a few

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[760] After Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 161.
[761] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 164.
[762] Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 137.
[763] Asiaweek: Battle Against Leftism, Hong Kong, volume 13, number 37, 13 March 1987, p. 16-21.
[764] Chin Fook Leong: Letter to the Editor-in-Chief of the Asiaweek Magazine, dated 14 September 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 58, 59.
[765] Asiaweek: A Distortion of Facts, You Say?, Hong Kong, volume 13, number 39, 27 September 1987, p. 6.

sentences from the letter, it also added more than 470 words to it, lengthening it by more than half, without seeking any consent or at least disclosing this fact to the readers.[766]

Understandably, Chin Fook Leong protested and asked to publish a correction and his earlier letter in its original: "If you do not do so, the Singapore government will have no alternative but to draw its own conclusions."[767] The editor did not oblige. As a result, on 7 October 1987, *Asiaweek* was declared to be engaging in domestic affairs and its circulation was restricted from 10 000 to 500 per issue starting 11 October 1987.[768]

Four weeks later, on 6 November 1987, *Asiaweek* published both letters in their original form. Its circulation was partially restored to 5 000 copies per issue and further relaxed in 1990 to up to 7 500 copies per issue.[769] In 2001, however, the magazine ceased publication due to falling advertising revenues in Hong Kong and the region.[770]

Meanwhile, the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review* magazine reported about a meeting between the prime minister and the archbishop of Singapore regarding the arrest of the 22 conspirators.[771] The main problem was that the whole article was based on statements made by Father Edgar D'Souza, who was not personally present at the described meeting. The writer made this fact clear but this was not enough for the authorities. It was unhappy that the writer did not check Edgar D'Souza's statements and also did not try to get an official statement from the authorities.[772]

On 12 December 1987, press secretary James Fu wrote a letter to the editor on behalf of the prime minister in which he expressed his discontent. It was published in the next issue of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* on 24 December 1987; the editor, however, added a comment in which he repeated that Edgar D'Souza was the main source of the article.[773]

In the meantime, James Fu had sent another letter to the editor which was also published in the following issue, on 31 December 1987. In this lengthy article of more than two pages, James Fu furthered his line of questioning: "Did you check D'Souza allegations with

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[766] Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 9.
[767] Chin Fook Leong: Telex to the Editor-in-Chief of the Asiaweek Magazine, dated 24 September1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 63, 64.
[768] Ministry of Information: Restriction on the Circulation of Asiaweek in Singapore, dated 7 October 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 65, 66.
[769] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 164, 165.
[770] Asiaweek: From the Editors, http://www.pathfinder.com/asiaweek/closenotice.html, Hong Kong, 2001, accessed 2004.
[771] Far Eastern Economic Review: New Light on Detentions, Catholic Priest Answers Jayakumar's Allegations, Hong Kong, volume 138, number 51, 17 December 1987, p. 28.
[772] Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 10, 11.
[773] Far Eastern Economic Review: Credible Witness?, Hong Kong, volume 138, number 52, 24 December 1987, p. 3.

Archibishop Yong? Why did you not check them with me? Can you get D'Souza to swear on oath an affidavit that his statements are true, and that he has proof that they are true?" Below, the editor confirmed that "at no point in the 17 December report was there any suggestion of the *Review* making allegations or accepting D'Souza's version as fact".[774]

So the key question was whether "a newspaper can legitimately print anything it wishes, whether true, false or even defamatory, so long as it is able to quote a source who actually made the statement."[775] The position of the authorities, however, is clear: "No newspaper or journal can disclaim responsibility for untruths which it has published. It is the editor's responsibility to check the facts and verify the story before publication."

James Fu wrote basically the same thing in another letter which was published under the title "Duty to be Responsible" on 7 January 1988 in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*.[776] On the same page, the editor placed a comment entitled "A Ban by Another Name", stating the opposite point of view: "[…] if the Singapore government detains 22 people and describes them as involved in a Marxist plot to overthrow the Singapore government, we would probably reckon that was newsworthy and print it (as indeed we did), but that would in no way imply that we believed the allegations or were presenting the alleged plot as a fact. The same principle applies to Edgar D'Souza's claims".[777]

Already on 26 December 1987, however, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* had been declared to be engaged in domestic politics and its circulation was restricted from 9 000 copies to 500 copies per issue starting 29 December 1987.[778] The two main reasons, as announced, were that it had "insinuated that the prime minister used his influence to prevent the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation and *Straits Times* from reporting some of the Archbishop's words at the press conference" and that it had "suggested that the prime minister had cheated and tricked the Archbishop into a press conference."[779]

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[774] Far Eastern Economic Review: Unproven Charges, Hong Kong, volume 138, number 53, 31 December 1987, p. 3.
[775] Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 220.
[776] Far Eastern Economic Review: Duty to be Responsible, Hong Kong, volume 139, number 1, 7 January 1988, p. 11.
[777] Far Eastern Economic Review: A Ban by any other Name, Hong Kong, volume 139, number 1, 7 January 1988, p. 11.
[778] A few weeks later, on 28 January 1988, the Singapore government placed an advertisement in the *Far Economic Review* headlined "Telling it like it is?" in which it repeated its main questions to readers. In addition, the Singapore government responded to a statement by a spokesman of the US embassy in Singapore by reminding in an "Aide Memoire" on 16 January 1988 not to interfere in Singapore's internal affairs. Far Eastern Economic Review: Telling it Like it is?, Hong Kong, volume 139, number 4, 28 January 1988, p. 39; and Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Aide Memoir, dated 16 January1988, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 87.
[779] Ministry of Information: Ministry of Communications and Information Press Release, dated 26 December1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 76-78.

Regarding the latter, Lee Kuan Yew even filed a libel suit against chief editor Derek Davies and staff writer Michael Malik.[780] On 30 November 1989, the court awarded him 230 000 Singapore dollars. On top of that, several reporters of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* were either refused the extension of their working permission or denied entry to the country. For example, Nigel Holloway, a resident correspondent who had lived in Singapore for four years, was refused extension of his employment permit in 1987. Also, Rodney Tasker, their chief reporter, was turned away at Changi Airport in 1988.[781]

(70) Selection of ten foreign journalists expelled from Singapore[782]		
Year	Name	Media organization
1971	Anthony Polsky	Reuters / New York Times
1972	Kerg Loong Seng	Nanyang Siang Pau
1972	Malcolm Caldwell	New Nation
1983	Patrick Smith	Far Eastern Economic Review
1986	Marilyn Odchimar	Reuters
1987	Nigel Holloway	Far Eastern Economic Review
1988	John Berthelsen	Asian Wall Street Journal
1989	N. Balakrishnan	Far Eastern Economic Review
1995	Ian Stewart	South China Morning Post
1995	Charles Wallace	Los Angeles Times

5.3.2   Effects of the circulation restrictions and charges against journalists

In restricting the local circulations of international magazines, filing libel charges against foreign journalists and refusing to extend the working permits of reporters, four points were made very clear of which only the "Right to Reply" is compatible to the MacBride Report.[783]

First of all, foreign journalists should avoid writing about delicate issues in Singapore in international publications: "Singapore's domestic debate is a matter for Singaporeans. We allow American journalists in Singapore in order to report Singapore to their fellow countrymen. We allow their papers to sell in Singapore so that we can know what foreigners are reading about us. But we cannot allow them to assume a role in Singapore that the American media plays in America, that of invigilator, adversary, and inquisitor of the administration."[784] Or even more blunt: "If you are foreign newspaper, you should not employ

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[780] Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 222.
[781] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 164, 167, 179-185.
[782] The table is based on information provided in Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 179-185.
[783] According the report, the media should grant government the right of correction. Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. XVIII.
[784] Lee Kuan Yew: Form Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 223.

a Singaporean as your chief correspondent because we don't want foreign newspapers to interfere in our domestic politics."

Secondly, local journalists working for international publications should also better be careful when reporting about delicate issues in Singapore: "[…] if you are a Singaporean writing for a foreign newspaper which circulates in Singapore, this may then become a way by which you use a foreign newspaper to meddle in Singaporean politics, please start a Singaporean newspaper. They are regulated differently. We give different access and we expect different responsibilities from local newspapers."

Thirdly, in case a local or foreign journalist reports in an international publication about domestic affairs, the authorities reserves the right to reply: "All that the Singapore government is asking is that where it disputes the facts, it should have the right to have its views published and published in the way it chooses to present them."

Fourthly, the authorities decide whose foreign correspondents may stay and work in Singapore: "[…] foreign correspondents do not have the right to be stationed in Singapore. This, like circulation of foreign newspapers here, is a privilege."[785]

Interestingly, the authorities explain all this with the "free flow of information". From its point of view, publications are impeding the free flow of news when they refuse publishing correction letters. But the restrictions on circulation are not considered hindering the flow of news, since the publications are not entirely banned.

The photocopying of articles, for instance, is explicitly allowed. Since the amendment of the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" on 27 January 1988, the information minister can approve the reproduction of a gazetted foreign publication by any person for sale and distribution, subject to the condition that all advertisements are blanked out.[786] In the same year, 17 persons applied for and were granted such a "Reproduction License", even though any such reproduction without explicit consent of the publisher interferes with the "Copyright Act" (1987) as well as other internationally accepted laws.

When the experts interviewed for this dissertation were asked whether sales restrictions are a proper way to deal with single articles in international magazines, they all agreed that the government acted within its legal bounds.[787] Tan Ern Ser, for instance, even fully

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[785] After Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 161, 164, 181, 192.
[786] Ang Peng Hwa: Mass Media Laws and Regulations in Singapore, Singapore, 1998, p. 303.
[787] See the documentation of the interviews.

understands that the authorities restrict magazines if the editor refuses to publish the "view of the government". Only two respondents had the opposite opinion. One was even disappointed that the international media did not boycott Singapore.

There is no doubt, however, that the authorities wanted to "send out a message", as Ang Peng Hwa put it. For Soh Yew Peng, it was an "international PR-statement" not to mess with local policies. And for PN Balji, it even showed the world how the media can be controlled, namely by circulation restrictions. But Cherian George doubts that it was "really a smart thing to do" because Singapore's reputation suffered.[788]

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[788] Compare with William Hachten: The Growth of Media in the Third World, African Failures, Asian Successes, Salem, 1993, p. 78.

Impact

7.1   The local print media

As a result of the political, economical and technological developments, the press has greatly improved in Singapore. Since the establishment of its first two newspapers, the *Prince of Wales Island Gazette*, which appeared in 1805 on the Malay island Penang, and the *Singapore Chronicle*, which was founded in 1823, more than 60 newspapers have been started. A large number was launched during the "Golden Age" of newspaper publishing from the mid-19th century onwards.[789]

	(71) Newspapers launched in Singapore between 1805 and 2005[790]		
Year	Name	Place of publication	Language
1805	Prince of Wales Island Gazette	Penang	English
1823	Singapore Chronicle	Singapore	English
1835	Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser	Singapore	English
1845	Straits Times and Singapore Journal of Commerce	Singapore	English
1856	Straits Guardian	Singapore	English
1858	Shipping Gazette	Singapore	English
1868	Straits Produce	Singapore	English
1876	Jawi Perankan	Singapore	Malay
1876	Singai Varthamani	Singapore	Tamil
1881	Lat Pau	Singapore	Chinese
1883	Straits Intelligence	Singapore	English
1886	Singapore Herald	Singapore	English
1988	Sekolah Melayu	Singapore	Malay
1888	Sangai Nesan	Singapore	Tamil
1890	Sing Po	Singapore	Chinese
1896	Malay Mail	Kuala Lumpur	English
1898	Thien Nan Shin Pao	Singapore	Chinese
1899	Jit Shin Pau	Singapore	Chinese
1903	Straits Echo	Penang	English
1904	Times of Malaya	Ipoh	English
1904	Thoe Lam Jit Poh	Singapore	Chinese
1905	Eastern Daily Mail	Singapore	English
1906	Nanyang Chung Wei Po	Singapore	Chinese
1906	Al-Imam	Singapore	Malay
1907	Chong Shing Yit Pao	Singapore	Chinese
1907	Utusan Melayu	Singapore	Malay
1909	Sin Chew	Singapore	Chinese
1909	Sun Pao	Singapore	Chinese
1911	Neracha	Singapore	Malay
1913	Malaya Tribune	Singapore	English
1913	Zhen Nan Ri Bao	Singapore	Chinese
1914	Lembaga Melayu	Singapore	Malay
1923	Nanyang Siang Pau	Singapore	Chinese
1929	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Singapore	Chinese
1930	Warta Malaya	Singapore	Malay
1935	Tamil Murasu	Singapore	Tamil
1935	Sin Chung Jit Poh	Singapore	Chinese
1938	Utusan Malayu	Singapore	Malay

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[789] Charles Moses: Mass Communication in Asia, A Brief History, Singapore, 1978, p. 3 et sqq.
[790] During World War II, many newspapers were closed down or renamed. In total, the Japanese Syonan Newspaper Association distributed 15 publications in Singapore.

1945	Hwa Chiaw Jit Pao	Singapore	Chinese
1945	Shin Min Chu Pao	Singapore	Chinese
1946	Kong Pao	Singapore	Chinese
1946	Tan Kah Kee	Singapore	Chinese
1950	Singapore Tiger Standard	Singapore	English
1957	Berita Harian	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
1960	Min Pao	Singapore	Chinese
1961	Shin Sheng Yit Pao	Johore Bahru	Chinese
1962	Malayan Times	Kuala Lumpur	English
1964	Tamil Malar	Singapore	Tamil
1965	Daily Citizen	Singapore	English
1966	Eastern Sun	Singapore	English
1967	Shin Min Daily News	Singapore	Chinese
1970	Singapore Herald	Singapore	English
1971	New Nation	Singapore	English
1976	Business Times	Singapore	English
1980	Kuai Bao	Singapore	Chinese
1982	Singapore Monitor	Singapore	English
1982	Xin Yi Dai	Singapore	Chinese
1983	Lianhe Zaobao	Singapore	Chinese
1983	Lianhe Wanbao	Singapore	Chinese
1988	The New Paper	Singapore	English
1991	Friday Weekly	Singapore	Chinese
2000	Today	Singapore	English
2000	Weekend Today	Singapore	English
2001	Thumbs Up	Singapore	English

The leading English-language newspapers were the *Singapore Free Press* (1835-1933), *Straits Times* (1845-), *Eastern Sun* (1966-1971), *Singapore Herald* (1970-1971), *Business Times* (1976-), *Singapore Monitor* (1982-1985) and the *New Paper* (1988-); three of them survived. The most important Chinese-language newspapers were the *Lat Pau* (1881-1932), *Nanyang Siang Pau* (1923-1982), *Sin Chew Jit Poh* (1929-1982), *Shin Min Daily News* (1976-), *Lianhe Zaobao* (1983-) and *Lianhe Wanbao* (1983-); three of these also survived. Among the leading Malay-language newspapers were the *Jawi Peranakan* (1876-1895), *Utusan Melayu* (1907-1921) and *Berita Harian* (1957-); of these only the latter survived. And among the Tamil-language press, only the *Tamil Murasu* (1935-) ever reached a daily circulation of a few thousand; it still exists today.

Not only has the number of newspapers increased but also their circulation, frequency of publication and number of pages published per issue. Some reasons for this are the overall population growth (from 1 886 900 in 1865 to 4 017 700 people in 2000), a rapidly increasing literacy rate (from less than 40 to more than 90 percent) as well as increases in purchasing power (the GDP per capita rose from 1 567 Singapore dollars in 1965 to 39 723 in 2000) and

advertising revenues (from around 177 million Singapore dollars in 1980 to 753 million Singapore dollars in 2000).[791]

To illustrate this: In the early days of print media in the region, newspapers such as the English-language *Singapore Free Press* had four to six pages and appeared weekly or bi-monthly with a daily circulation of a few hundred copies only. Today, newspapers such as the English-language *Straits Times* usually feature more than sixty (on weekdays) or even one hundred pages (on weekends) and have a daily circulation of several hundred thousand copies.[792]

(72) Number, frequency, pages and circulation of the newspapers[793]				
Year	Number of newspapers	Frequency of Publication	Average number of pages	Combined circulation
1965	8	Weekly, daily	> 10	> 300 000 (est.)
1970	9	Daily	> 20	389 900
1975	10	Daily	> 20	449 001
1980	10	Daily	> 30	615 512
1985	10	Daily	> 30	713 866
1990	8	Daily	> 40	813 484
1995	8	Daily	> 50	1 005 307
2000	10	Daily	> 60	1 100 859
2005	10	Daily	> 60	1 197 301

Four aspects are remarkable in the development of the press in Singapore: First of all, the owners, editors and readerships changed over the time. During colonial times, all important newspapers in Singapore were founded, owned, run and read by the British. Today, all newspapers in Singapore are owned, run and primarily read by Singaporeans.

Secondly, despite all these changes, the newspapers can still be grouped in the same way as before – by language. There has never been a seriously attempt to establish a bilingual or a trilingual newspaper. Instead, newspapers still target one language group only. The reason is that most people prefer or are used to newspapers written in their native language.

As a result, there is still an English-language press for the English-educated who are generally better situated. There is a Chinese-language press for the large number of

[791] Singapore Department of Statistics: Population, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/population.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; Singapore Department of Statistics: Per Capita GDP at Current Market Prices, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/gdp.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 166; and ACNielsen Singapore: Nielsen Media Research Records Sluggish Ad Spend in Singapore in 2001, http://www.acnielsen.com.sg/news.asp?newsID=85, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[792] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 6, 7.
[793] The table is based on different sources, including Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 130; Peter Chen: Mass Media and Communication Patterns in Singapore, Singapore, 1979, p. 53; and Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Asian Communication Handbook, Singapore, 2003, p. 266.

Chinese-educated. There is a Malay-language press for the fewer Malay-educated who are generally not so well situated. And there is a tiny Tamil-language press for the very few Tamil-educated.[794]

(73) Number and circulation of newspapers in Singapore, by language[795]		
Language	Number of newspapers	Combined circulation
English	4	551 463
Chinese	3	570 775
Malay	2	65 103
Tamil	1	9 960
Total	10	1 197 301

Thirdly, there was a shift in the production and distribution of newspapers. In the early days, all newspapers in the region appeared either in the late afternoon or evening. The first to make this change was the *Singapore Free Press* in 1905.[796] Today, the majority of the newspapers are published in the morning and they differ from the newspapers published in the afternoon.

The newspapers published in the morning are generally more serious and have a higher number of total pages. Newspapers published in the afternoon are the English-language New Paper and the Chinese-language *Lianhe Wanbao* and *Shin Minh Daily News*. Only for the Malay- and Tamil-speaking, there is no afternoon or evening paper.

(74) Time of publication of daily newspapers in Singapore[797]		
Time of publication	Number of newspapers	Combined circulation
Morning	7	780 164
Evening	3	363 688
Total	10	1 143 852

And fourthly, the market obviously suffers not only from lack of competition but also innovation, especially since 1984 when all newspapers in Singapore were merged into Singapore Press Holdings (SPH). During the past 25 years, only one afternoon paper (*New Paper*, 1988), one weekly paper (*Friday Weekly*, 1991) and one monthly paper (*Thumbs Up*, 2001) were launched by Singapore Press Holdings as well as a free advertising sheet (*Today*, 2001) and its Sunday edition (*Weekend Today*, 2001) started by the Media

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[794] Compare with Peter Chen: Mass Media Communication Patterns in Singapore, Singapore, 1978, p. 16, 17.
[795] The table is based on data provided in Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 167.
[796] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 65.
[797] The table is based on data provided in Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 167.

Corporation of Singapore (MediaCorp).[798] From a historical point of view, this is relatively scarce. In comparison: Until the mid-1980s, a new paper was launched on average every three years by a different publisher.

Today, the dominant newspapers are the English-language newspapers *Straits Times* (circulation: 380 197 copies) and *New Paper* (115 915), the Chinese-language newspapers *Lianhe Zaobao* (184 445), *Lianhe Wanbao* (124 134) and *Shin Minh Daily News* (12 639), the Malay-language *Berita Harian* (58 503) and the Tamil-language *Tamil Murasu* (8 504).[799]

Apart from the less important free advertising sheet *Today* (55 000), published by Media Corporation of Singapore, all newspapers in Singapore are published by Singapore Press Holdings.[800] In both companies, the government has a say (i.e. through the investment company Temasek).

(75) Publisher, language, frequency, distribution and circulation of local newspapers[801]					
Name	Publisher	Language	Frequency	Distribution	Circulation
Straits Times	SPH	English	Mon-Sat	Morning	380 197
Sunday Times	SPH	English	Sun	Morning	388 796
Business Times	SPH	English	Mon-Fri	Morning	27 515
New Paper	SPH	English	Mon-Sat	Afternoon	115 915
New Paper*	SPH	English	Sun	Morning	154 004
Lianhe Zaobao	SPH	Chinese	Mon-Sat	Morning	184 445
Lianhe Zaobao*	SPH	Chinese	Sun	Morning	194 640
Lianhe Wanbao	SPH	Chinese	Mon-Sat	Afternoon	124 134
Lianhe Wanbao*	SPH	Chinese	Sun	Afternoon	123 634
Shin Minh Daily	SPH	Chinese	Mon-Sat	Afternoon	123 639
Shin Minh Daily*	SPH	Chinese	Sun	Afternoon	121 234
Friday Weekly	SPH	English	Fri	Morning	62 532
Thumbs Up	SPH	English	Monthly	Morning	29 944
Berita Harian	SPH	Malay	Mon-Sat	Morning	58 503
Berita Minggu	SPH	Malay	Sun	Morning	66 000
Tamil Murasu	SPH	Tamil	Mon-Sat	Morning	8 504
Tamil Murasu*	SPH	Tamil	Sun	Morning	15 232
Today	MediaCorp	English	Mon-Sat	Morning	55 000
Weekend Today	MediaCorp	English	Sun	Morning	55 000

The same generally applies to magazines published in Singapore. The overwhelming majority is either published by the Singapore Press Holdings or Media Corporation of

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[798] Singapore Press Holdings: SPH Newspapers, http://www.sph.com.sg/newspapers/straitstimes.html, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; and Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp Publishing, http://www.corporate.mediacorp.sg/publishing/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[799] The circulation numbers are taken from Singapore Press Holdings: SPH Newspapers, http://www.sph.com.sg/newspapers/straitstimes.html, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[800] Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp Press, http://www.corporate.mediacorp.sg/press/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[801] Sunday editions are separately listed. Circulation numbers are from the year 2004. The table is based on different sources, including Singapore Press Holdings: SPH Newspapers, http://www.sph.com.sg/newspapers/straitstimes.html, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; and Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp Press, http://www.corporate.mediacorp.sg/press/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.

Singapore. Some of these include *UW* (circulation: 80 000 copies), *Her World* (70 000), *Female* (60, 000) and *Elle* (< 55 000), *Lime* (< 40 000) and *Manya* (< 89 000) respectively.[802]

(76) Publisher, language, focus, frequency and circulation of local magazines[803]					
Name	Publisher	Language	Focus	Frequency	Circulation
8 Days	MediaCorp	English	Entertainment	Weekly	< 139 000
Asian Diver	MediaCorp	English	Diving	Unknown	< 120 000
Citta Bella	SPH	English	Women	Monthly	30 000
Club Pets	Citrus Media	English	Pets	Bi-Monthly	Unknown
Eat!	SPH	English	Food	Unknown	30 000
Elle Singapore	MediaCorp	English	Women	Monthly	< 55 000
Family	MediaCorp	English	Family	Monthly	< 90 000
Female	SPH	English	Women	Monthly	60 000
Female Brides	SPH	English	Brides	Bi-annually	25 000
Female Business	SPH	English	Businesswomen	Quarterly	25 000
FHM	MediaCorp	English	Men	Monthly	< 56 000
First	Sterne Lears	English	Movies	Monthly	Unknown
Her World	SPH	English	Women	Monthly	70 000
Home Concepts	Sun Business	English	Interior	Monthly	Unknown
Her World Brides	SPH	English	Brides	Quarterly	13 000
Home & Décor	SPH	English	Living	Monthly	27 000
Icon	SPH	English	Luxury	Unknown	40 000
I-Weekly	MediaCorp	Chinese	Entertainment	Weekly	< 229 000
Kids Company	MediaCorp	Chinese	Children	Monthly	< 40 000
Lime	MediaCorp	English	Youth	Weekly	< 37 000
Manya	MediaCorp	Malay	Lifestyle	Unknown	< 89 000
Maxim	SPH	English	Men	Monthly	45 000
Men's Health	SPH	English	Men	Monthly	30 000
Mothers & Baby	MediaCorp	English	Mothers	Unknown	< 30 000
New Man	Sun Business	English	Men	Monthly	Unknown
NuYou	SPH	Chinese	Beauty	Unknown	25 000
NuYou Times	SPH	Chinese	Watches	Annually	20 000
Port O' Call	Sun Business	English	Travel	Bi-Annually	Unknown
Seventeen	SPH	English	Teens	Monthly	40 000
Se Xiang W	Sun Business	Chinese	Cooking	Monthly	Unknown
Shape	SPH	English	Lifestyle	Monthly	40 000
Simply Her	SPH	English	Women	Unknown	40 000
Smart Investor	Sun Business	English	Investment	Monthly	Unknown
Space	Sun Business	English	Architecture	Unknown	Unknown
Style	MediaCorp	English	Lifestyle	Unknown	< 56 000
Style Weddings	MediaCorp	English	Weddings	Unkown	< 48 000
The Peak	SPH	English	Showbiz	Unknown	14 000
Today's Parents	Sun Business	English	Parents	Unknown	Unknown
Torque	SPH	English	Autosport	Monthly	25 000
UW	SPH	Chinese	Lifestyle	Weekly	80 000
Young Parents	SPH	English	Parents	Monthly	13 000

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[802] Circulation numbers of the magazine Elle, Lime and Manya are estimated because only the numbers of readers are available. They were provided by Rachel Yeo: Frequencies and Circulations of MediaCorp Magazines, Email to Alexander Haentzschel, Singapore, 7 March 2006, accessed 2006.
[803] The table is based on different sources, including Singapore Press Holdings: SPH Magazines, http://www.sph.com.sg/magazine/cittabella.html, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; and Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp Publishing, http://www.corporate.mediacorp.sg/publishing/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.

7.2   Local electronic media

Radio, television and other electronic media have improved similar, even though they were introduced much later and require the purchase of equipment on the consumer side. Since the establishment of the British Malaya Broadcasting Corporation in 1936, more than thirty radio and television channels have started broadcasting.[804]

Quite a number was launched in the period from 1980 until 1994, when the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) restructured the industry.[805] Some of these include the English-language channel *Class 95 FM* (1990), the Chinese-language channel *Yes 93.3 FM* (1993) and the Malay-language channel *Ria 89.7 FM* (1990). All of them are still in operation and belong to the successor of the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation, known as MediaCorp Radio since 2004.[806]

And most television channels in Singapore were started during the period between 1994 and 2001, when the Radio Corporation of Singapore (RCS) was in charge. Some of these are the English-language cable *Channel News Asia* (1999), the Chinese-language free-to-air *Channel U* (2001) and the Malay- and Tamil-language channels *Prime 12* (1995, today known as *Suria*) and *Premiere 12* (1995, today known as *Central*).[807]

Not only has the total number of radio and television channels increased, but also their accessibility and airtime. Some reasons for this are Singapore's rising purchasing power (the GDP per capita rose from 1 567 Singapore dollars in 1965 to 39 723 in 2000), falling costs for equipment (to around 30 Singapore dollars for a basic radio and around 180 Singapore dollars for a small television set), increasing advertising revenues (from around 177 million Singapore dollars in 1980 to 753 million Singapore dollars in 2000), the expansion of existing networks (e.g. "Singapore One"), the introduction of new technologies (e.g. stereo) to standardization ("Frequency Modulation", FM) and cooperation ("Asiavision").[808]

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[804] Drew McDaniel: Broadcasting in the Malay World, Radio, Television and Video in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, Norwood, 1994, p. 22 et sqq.
[805] Anura Goonasekera (Ed.): Asian Communication Handbook, Singapore, 2003, p. 267.
[806] Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp Radio, http://www.corporate.mediacorp.sg/radio/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[807] Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp TV, http://www.corporate.mediacorp.sg/tv/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; and Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp TV 12, http://www.corporate.mediacorp.sg/tv12/index.htm, Singapore, 2006
[808] Singapore Department of Statistics: Per Capita GDP at Current Market Prices, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/hist/gdp.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005; Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1994, p. 166; and ACNielsen Singapore: Nielsen Media Research Records Sluggish Ad Spend in Singapore in 2001, http://www.acnielsen.com.sg/news.asp?newsID=85, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

To illustrate this: In the early days of broadcasting, only around eight percent of the total population owned a radio and only three percent had a television set. Back then, the radio and television stations broadcasted until 10 p.m. only. Today, the radio channels broadcast around the clock and the television interrupt their programs only for two or three hours late at night; both can be received by almost everyone.[809]

(77) Radio and television licenses plus transmission hours per week [810]						
Year	Radio licenses	Radio licenses per 1 000 people	Radio transmission hours per week	Television licenses	Television licenses per 1 000 people	Television transmission hours per week
1965	140 589	75.4	294	62 921	33.7	69
1970	236 856	114.2	581	156 848	75.6	107
1975	344 690	152.3	560	280 479	124.0	107
1980	459 004	190.3	639	397 155	164.5	113
1985	590 643	230.9	658	481 908	188.4	149
1990	/	/	1 218	582 540	191.2	172
1995	/	/	1 878	652 970	196.5	336
2000	/	/	2 499	761 000	233.0	710

Three aspects are remarkable in the development of broadcasting in Singapore: First of all, although control over broadcasting had been handed over from Britain to Singapore, most channels still target on one language group only. As mentioned before, the reason for this is that most people prefer or are accustomed to programs in their native language.

As a result, there are English-language radio and television channels for the English-educated who are generally better situated. There are Chinese-language radio and television channels for the large number of Chinese-educated. There are Malay-language radio and television channels for the much fewer Malay-educated who are generally not so well situated. And there are only few Tamil-language radio channels and not even a full television channel for the very few Tamil-educated.

Secondly, since radio is generally preferred over television in the morning and television over radio in the evening, radio is the dominant electronic media during the daytime and television in the evening. As far as information about current events is concerned, there is only one television news channel which is in English (*Channel News Asia*, 1999).[811] This means that

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[809] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 36.
[810] The actual number of radio and television sets is higher because the licenses permit its holders to use one or more radio or television sets on their premises. The table is based on data provided in Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning in Singapore, Honolulu, 1983, p. 36.
[811] Established in 1999, *Channel News Asia* markets itself as a pan-Asian television channel providing news and information on global developments from an Asian perspective. In Singapore, it can be received via cable only. Channel News Asia: About Channel News Asia, http://www.channelnewsasia.com/cna/aboutus-new/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.

only those educated in English are regularly served with news by television during the day. All others must rely on radio (or newspapers).

Thirdly, apart from a very short period of time between 2001 and 2004, when Singapore Press Holdings challenged the well-established Media Corporation of Singapore, there was never competition in television broadcasting.[812] Even in radio broadcasting there is only very little competition because the English-language channel *Power 98 FM* and the Chinese-language channels *Dongli 88.3 FM* (both aired by "SAFRA") and *UFM 1003* (aired by Union Works) target the same relatively small group of national and professional servicemen.[813]

Whether this lack of competition has an impact on the variety and quality of electronic media is hard to say, because there is no such specific data available and comparisons with other countries might not be valid. One could argue that the deregulation of other sectors generally led to increasing variety, falling prices and better services.

An example is the telecommunication sector that was opened up in the 1990s. As a result of the competition between the dominant Singapore Telecommunication and its competitor Star Hub, prices for mobile communication and Internet dial-up access fell to almost zero, while availability and speed of transmission increased.[814]

However, Star Hub (mobile communication, Internet access) is substantially owned (at least to 63 percent) by the government investment company Temasek, which also has a stake (56 percent) in Singapore Telecommunication (fixed and mobile communication, Internet access).[815] As well, Temasek owns 100 percent of the Media Corporation of Singapore (radio, television) and at least one percent of Singapore Press Holdings (newspapers, magazines), which operates at least twenty web radio channels and the most frequented

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[812] In 2001, the Singapore Press Holdings challenged the Media Corporation of Singapore by launching two free-to-air television channels, *Channel U* (Chinese) and *TV Works* (English, later renamed in *Channel I*). The venture did not last long. Singapore Press Holdings had to endure such heavy losses that it ended up following the recommendation of the Singapore Broadcasting Authority to merge SPH Media Works with the Media Corporation of Singapore.. As a result, there is only one large television operator left.
[813] "SAFRA" was established in 1972 in order to foster a cohesive fighting force. And Union Works is a joint venture by NTUC Media and Singapore Press Holdings. SAFRA: About SAFRA, http://www.safra.sg/aboutus/index.shtml, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; Union Works: Home, http://www.unionworksonline.com.sg/, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; and NTUC Media: About Us, http://www.ntucmedia.org.sg/, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.
[814] International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2006, p. 12.
[815] Star Hub: Company Information, http://www.starhub.com/corporate/aboutus/index.html, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006

Internet portal (*Asia One*) respectively.[816] So even in the telecommunication and Internet market, competition is more imaginary than real.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">**(78) Selection of three popular local websites in Singapore[817]**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Name</td><td>Operator</td><td>Language</td></tr>
<tr><td>AsiaOne</td><td>Singapore Press Holdings</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pacific Internet</td><td>Pacific Internet</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>SingTel</td><td>Singapore Telecommunication</td><td>English</td></tr>
</table>

Today, the leading radio channels are the English-language channels *Class 95 FM* (weekly reach: 588 000 listeners), *938 Live!* (364 000) and *Perfect Ten 98.7 FM* (346 000), the Chinese-language channels *Yes 93.3 FM* (897 000), *Capital 95.8 FM* (743 000) and *Love 97.2 FM* (648 000), the Malay-language channels *Warna 94.2 FM* (350 000) and *Ria 89.7 FM* (193 000) and the Tamil-language channel *Oli 96.8 FM* (206 000) – all of them are operated by MediaCorp Radio.[818]

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">**(79) Free-to-air radio channels in Singapore[819]**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Name</td><td>Operator</td><td>Language</td></tr>
<tr><td>938 LIVE!</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>Capital Radio 95.8 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>Chinese</td></tr>
<tr><td>Class 95 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>Dongli 88.3</td><td>SAFRA Radio</td><td>Chinese</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gold 90.5 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>International Channel 96.3</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>French, German, Japanese</td></tr>
<tr><td>Love 97.2 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>Chinese</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lush 99.5 FM</td><td>MediaCorp</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>Oli 96.8 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>Tamil</td></tr>
<tr><td>Perfect Ten 98.7 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>Radio Singapore International</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>English / Chinese / Malay / Bahasa</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ria 89.7 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>Malay / Bahasa / English</td></tr>
<tr><td>Power 98 FM</td><td>SAFRA Radio</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>Symphony 92.4 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>UFM 1003</td><td>UnionWorks</td><td>Chinese</td></tr>
<tr><td>Warna 94.2 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>Malay</td></tr>
<tr><td>WKRZ 91.3 FM</td><td>UnionWorks</td><td>English</td></tr>
<tr><td>Yes 93.3 FM</td><td>MediaCorp Radio</td><td>Chinese</td></tr>
</table>

And the leading free-to-air television channels are the English-language *Channel 5* (market share in the third quarter of 2005: 12 percent) and the Chinese-language *Channel 8* (50.6)

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[816] Temasek Holdings: Our Investments, http://www.temasekholdings.com.sg/our_investments/our_investments.htm, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2006; and Singapore Press Holdings: Shareholding Statistics, http://www.sph.com.sg/invrel/files/2004/144.pdf, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2006.

[817] The data is from the year 2000, provided by Nielsen published in International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 15.

[818] Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp Radio, Station Profiles, http://www.mediacorpradio.sg/stationsprofile.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

[819] The table is based on different sources, including AsiaWaves: Radio Stations in Singapore on FM, Shortwave and DAB, http://www.asiawaves.net/singapore-radio.htm, place of publication unknown, 2005, accessed 2006.

and *Channel U* (18.1), the Malay-language channel *Suria* (5.6) and the "channel of choice for the kids, Indian and arts communities" named *Central* (10.4). They have a combined market share (except *CNA*, 3.4) of 100 percent. All are broadcasted by MediaCorp TV and MediaCorp TV12 respectively – there is only little difference.[820]

(80) Free-to-air television channels in Singapore[821]		
Name	Operator	Language
Central	MediaCorp TV12	Tamil
Channel 5	MediaCorp TV	English / Chinese
Channel 8	MediaCorp TV	Chinese / English
Channel U	MediaCorp TV	Chinese
Suria	MediaCorp TV12	Malay

(81) Non-free-to air radio and television channels in Singapore[822]		
Name	Operator	Language
Channel News Asia	MediaCorp TV	English
SmartRadio DAB-Block 7B	MediaCorp Radio	English / Chinese
TVMobile	MediaCorp TV	English / Chinese

7.3 Foreign print and electronic media

Over the years, an increasing number of foreign media have become available in Singapore. During colonial times, relatively few foreign publications were imported on an irregular basis for the British living in the city. The majority of foreign publications came from London. Today, more than fifty foreign publications are regularly available, a large number of which comes from Hong Kong.[823]

(82) Selection of foreign newspapers available in Singapore[824]		
Name	Language	Country of origin
Abante	Tagalog	Philippines
Apple Daily	Chinese	Hong Kong SAR
Asahi Evening News	English	Japan
Asahi Shimbun	Japanese	Japan
Bangkok Post	English	Thailand
Bild Zeitung	German	Germany

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[820] Media Development Authority: TV Viewership Statistic for Third Quarter 2005, Local Free to Air Market Share, http://www.mda.gov.sg/wms.www/resources.aspx?sid=701, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[821] The table is based on different sources, including AsiaWaves: TV Stations in Singapore, http://www.asiawaves.net/singapore-tv.htm, place of publication unknown, 2005, accessed 2006.
[822] The table is based on different sources, including AsiaWaves: Radio Stations in Singapore on FM, Shortwave and DAB, http://www.asiawaves.net/singapore-radio.htm, place of publication unknown, 2005, accessed 2006.
[823] Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 171-173.
[824] The table is based on different sources, including Ministry of Information: Create, Connect@Sg, Arts, Media and Infocomm in Singapore, Singapore, 2002, p. 171-173.

Boston Globe	English	United States
Chicago Tribune	English	United States
China Daily	English	China
China Post	English	China
Daily Express	English	United Kingdom
Daily Mail	English	United Kingdom
Daily News	Thai	Thailand
Daily Telegraph	English	United Kingdom
Financial Times	English	United Kingdom
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	German	Germany
Handelsblatt	German	Germany
Hong Kong Standard	English	Hong Kong SAR
Indonesian Observer	English	Indonesia
Indonesian Times	English	Indonesia
International Herald Tribune	English	United States
Jakarta Post	English	Indonesia
Joongang Daily News	Korean	Republic of Korea (South Korea)
Kompass	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Kyoto Shimbun	Japanese	Japan
La Gazetta Dello Sport	Italian	Italy
La Republica	Italian	Italy
Los Angeles Times	English	United States
Mainichi Daily	English	Japan
Mainichi Shimbun	Japanese	Japan
Ming Pao	Chinese	China
New York Times	English	United States
Philippine Star	English	Philippines
Philippine Daily Inquirer	English	Philippines
Republika	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
San Francisco Chronicle	English	United States
South China Morning Post	English	Hong Kong SAR
Suara Pembaruan	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Sueddeutsche Zeitung	German	Germany
Sydney Morning Herald	English	Australia
Tamil Nation	Tamil	India
Thairat	Thai	Thailand
The Asian Wall Street Journal	English	Hong Kong SAR
The Hindu International	English	India
The Japan Times	English	Japan
The Korean Time	English	Korea
The Nation	English	Thailand
Thina Thanthi	Tamil	India
United Daily News	Chinese	Taiwan
Washington Post	English	United States

The leading foreign publication in Singapore is the English-language *Asian Wall Street Journal* (regional circulation: 80 000 copies).[825] The Asia-Pacific edition of the *Wall Street Journal* (with headquarters in New York) is edited in Hong Kong and had a bad experience regarding distribution to Singapore: From 1987 until 1993, the *Asian Wall Street Journal* was prohibited from circulating more than 400 copies per issue in Singapore because it had run a critical article about the "Stock Exchange of Singapore Dealing Automated Quotation System" and refused to publish a "correction letter" by the authorities in Singapore.[826]

Other important foreign newspapers in Singapore are the English-language *South China Morning Post* (regional circulation: 120 000 copies) and *the Financial Times* (13 000). Among

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[825] Wall Street Journal: Rate Card, Asian Wall Street Journal, Hong Kong, 2005, p. 2.
[826] Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 5-8.

the leading journals are the *Time* magazine (290 000), *Newsweek* (210 000) and *The Economist* (90 000).[827] All of them are edited in Hong Kong (or a have a regional office there) and also had there distribution curtailed in Singapore because each of the journals was "gazetted" for a while.[828]

Interestingly, many of these publications are printed in Singapore. Some examples of foreign publications printed by Singapore Press Holdings are the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *International Herald Tribune*, *Sunday Express*, *USA Today* and the Egyptian newspaper *Al Ahram*. Others use Singapore as a regional distribution hub, such as *Time* magazine and the journal *The European*.[829]

Nevertheless, foreign newspapers and magazines in Singapore are generally more expensive than they are at their main place of publication. This is not due to additional transport costs or outsourcing but rather due to the low demand for such publications. Non-English language publications in particular are read by foreigners only, because relatively few "locals" are able to read publications in languages such as German, French or Swedish.[830]

Completely free (presumed that the license fee is paid), easier to receive (provided that a receiver is available) and much more in demand is listening to foreign radio channels. In total, more than thirty foreign free-to-air radio channels can be received with an ordinary radio set. Most of those channels originate from Malaysia and Indonesia, what is related to the small size and location of Singapore between Malaysia and Indonesia. Some are even located directly behind the border and direct their signal towards the city state, although this is sometimes denied. Some examples are the Malay-language channel *FMJB 107.5*, which is based in the Malaysia border town Johor Bahru, and the Bahasa-language channel *Batam FM*, which is based in the city of Nagoya on the Indonesian island of Batam offshore of Singapore.[831]

(83) Selection of foreign free-to-air radio channels available in Singapore[832]		
Name	Language	Country of origin
Batam FM	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia

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[827] Storymaker: Medienfuehrer China, Tuebingen, 2006, p. 5 et sqq.

[828] In 1987, the circulation of the *Time* magazine was restricted from 18 000 to 2 000 copies per issue, and the *Asian Wall Street Journal* from 5 000 to 400. In the following year, the circulation *of Asiaweek* was restricted from 10 000 to 500 copies per issue, and the *Far Eastern Economic Review* from 9 000 to 500.

[829] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 24.

[830] The preferred foreign language in Singapore is Spanish.

[831] FMJB: Selamat Datang Ke Laman Web FMJB, http://www.rtmjb.net.my/fmjb/main.htm, Nagoya, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

[832] The table is based on different sources, including AsiaWaves: Radio Stations in Singapore on FM, Shortwave and DAB, http://www.asiawaves.net/singapore-radio.htm, place of publication unknown, 2005, accessed 2006.

BBC World Service	English	United Kingdom
FMJB 107.5	Malay	Malaysia
Gress Radio 88.0 FM	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Hitz.fm	English	Malaysia
Hope 107 FM	English / Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Hot 90.1 FM	Malay	Malaysia
Light & Easy	English	Malaysia
Minnal FM	Tamil	Malaysia
Mix FM	English	Malaysia
Muzik FM	Malay	Malaysia
My FM	Chinese	Malaysia
Nasional FM	Malay	Malaysia
Panorama 107.7 FM	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Paradise Radio	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Radio Batam	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Radio Era Baru FM	Chinese	Indonesia
Radio Discovery Minang	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Radio Malaysia Johor FM	Malay	Malaysia
Radio Republik Indonesia	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Radio Wira 91.7 FM	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Red 104.9	English / Malay	Malaysia
Selat 87.6 FM	Malay	Malaysia
Sinar 87.8 FM	Malay	Malaysia
Sing FM	Chinese / English	Indonesia
Suara Johor Best	English / Malay	Malaysia
THR FM	English / Hindi / Tamil	Malaysia
TraXX FM	English	Malaysia
XFresh FM	Malay	Malaysia
Zoo 101.5	Bahasa Indonesia / Tagalog	Indonesia

Even a number of foreign television channels can be received with ordinary sets. Most of these also originate either from Malaysia or Indonesia, due to the same reasons. Some examples are the three channels operated by Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM, also known as *TV1*, *TV2*, and *TV3* or *TV Tiga*) and *Televisi Republik Indonesia* (TVRI).[833]

(84) Selection of foreign free-to-air television channels available in Singapore[834]		
Name	Language	Country of origin
8TV	English	Malaysia
Batam TV	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
NTV7	Malay / English / Chinese / Tamil	Malaysia
RCTI	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
SCTV	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
TPI	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
TV 1	Malay	Malaysia
TV 2	English / Malay / Chinese	Malaysia
TV 3 ("TV Tiga")	Chinese (Cantonese)	Malaysia
TVRI	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia

More challenging and costly is receiving television channels from overseas, because ordinary citizens are not allowed to make use of satellite dishes. Since the establishment of

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[833] Radio Televisyen Malaysia is the state-owned broadcasting network in Malaysia. Televisi Republik Indonesia is the oldest television station in Indonesia, and was the only television station there until 1989. Radio Televisyen Malaysia: RTM History, http://www.rtm.net.my/english/web/history.htm, Kuala Lumpur, 2004, accessed 2005.
[834] The table is based on different sources, including AsiaWaves: TV Stations in Singapore, http://www.asiawaves.net/singapore-tv.htm, place of publication unknown, 2005, accessed 2006.

the "Singapore One" network in the late 1990s ("Singapore Cable Vision"), however, more than thirty overseas channels can be received.[835]

The leading ones are the English-language channels *CNN*, *CNBC* and *BBC World*. They originate from the United States and the United Kingdom respectively. Besides a television set, a cable connection is required. Some programs, such as the English-language channels *HBO*, *Star Movies* and *ESPN*, must even be ordered separately. They also all originate from the United States.

(85) Selection of foreign cable television channels available in Singapore[836]		
Name	Language	Country of origin
Asia Plus	Chinese	Hong Kong SAR
AXN	English	United States / Japan
BBC World	English	United Kingdom
Bloomberg Television	English	United States
Cartoon Network	English / Chinese / Hindi / Malay	United States
CCTV-4	Chinese	China
CCTV 9	Chinese	China
Celestial Movies	Chinese / English subtitles	Hong Kong SAR
CNBC	English	United States
CNN	English	United States
CTI TV	Chinese	Taiwan
Disney Channel	English	United States
ESPN	English	United States
Hallmark	English	United States
HBO	English	United States
MTV Mandarin	Chinese	United States / China
MTV SEA	English	United States / Singapore
NHK World Premium	Japanese	Japan
Nickelodeon	English	United States
Phoenix	Chinese	Hong Kong SAR
Star Chinese Movies	Chinese	United States / Hong Kong SAR
Star Movies	English / Chinese subtitles	Unites States
Star Plus	Hindi	United States / India
Star Sports	English	United States
Star World	English	Hong Kong
Sun TV	Tamil	India
TV5 Monde	French	France
TVB 8	Chinese	Hong Kong SAR
TVBS-Asia	Mandarin	Taiwan
TVRI	Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia

The same generally applies to the Internet. Among the most popular foreign websites accessed from Singapore are the search engine Google (unique visitors per month from Singapore: unknown) and the portals Yahoo (278 629), MSN (238 014), AOL (146 486),

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[835] Larry Press: The Internet in Singapore, A Benchmark Report, http://mosaic.unomaha.edu/SINGAPORE_2000.pdf, Omaha, 2000, accessed 2005, p. 7, 8.
[836] The table is based on different sources, including Starhub: Channel Tiers, http://cabletv2.starhub.com/portal/site/CableTV/menuitem.68fd6b4cf1ef60cc5c180e109c108a0c/?vgnextoid=e3f7553eb8e74010VgnVCM100000c901a8c0RCRD&vgnextfmt=ItemCMId%3Ac5e0f57d90dc4010VgnVCM100000c901a8c0RCRD, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

Lycos (131 304), Altavista (81 404) and Excite (66 351). All of them originate from the United States and are almost entirely in English.

(86) Selection of foreign websites frequently accessed from Singapore[837]		
Name	Language	Country of origin
Altavista	English	United States
AOL	English / Japanese	United States
Excite	English	United States
Google	English / Chinese / Malay / Tamil	United States
Lycos	English	United States
MSN	English / Chinese	United States
Yahoo	English / Chinese	United States

7.4   The local sources

Because there is no national news agency in Singapore, despite the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems explicitly recommended establishing one, the journalists must obtain all information themselves.[838] The most important local sources are the authorities. The police departments, for instance, regularly inform the press about crimes in the city, and the parliament issues new or amended bills. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs alone issues at least 25 press releases per month.[839]

In this context, the press secretary in the prime minister's office plays a dominant role. It is not exactly known to the author of this dissertation how many press releases he issues but he is the only one who sends out comments on all kinds of subjects. Having to report to the prime minister, the secretary traditionally also keeps in touch with the press officers of the other ministries and statutory boards. This means that nothing important is issued without the approval of the prime minister's office.[840]

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[837] The data is from the year 2000. The table is based on different sources, including International Telecommunication Union: The E-City, Singapore Internet Case Study, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/singapore/material/Singapore.pdf, Geneva, 2001, accessed 2005, p. 15.

[838] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 255.

[839] Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Press Releases, http://app.mfa.gov.sg/internet/press/default.asp, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.

[840] A collection of press releases by ministries and statutory boards can be found at Singapore Government: Singapore Press Releases on the Internet (SPRINTER), http://www.sprinter.gov.sg/, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">(87) Number of press releases issued per month by ministry[841]</td></tr>
<tr><td>Name</td><td>Abbreviation</td><td>Press releases per month</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Community Development</td><td>MCYS</td><td>> 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Defense</td><td>MINDEF</td><td>> 5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Education</td><td>MOE</td><td>> 5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Finance</td><td>MOF</td><td>> 5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td><td>MFA</td><td>> 25</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Health</td><td>MOH</td><td>> 4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Home Affairs</td><td>MHA</td><td>> 5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Information</td><td>MICA</td><td>> 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Law</td><td>MINLAW</td><td>> 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Manpower</td><td>MOM</td><td>> 5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of National Development</td><td>MND</td><td>> 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Environment</td><td>NEWR</td><td>> 4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Trade and Industry</td><td>MTI</td><td>> 7</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ministry of Transport</td><td>MOT</td><td>> 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Prime Minister's Office</td><td>PMO</td><td>Unknown</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">(88) Selection of ten statutory boards issuing press releases[842]</td></tr>
<tr><td>Name</td><td>Abbreviation</td><td>Press releases per month</td></tr>
<tr><td>Agra-Food and Veterinary Authority</td><td>AVA</td><td>< 3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Central Provident Fund Board</td><td>CPF</td><td>< 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Department of Statistics</td><td>DOS</td><td>> 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Economic Development Board</td><td>EDB</td><td>> 8</td></tr>
<tr><td>Housing Development Board</td><td>HDB</td><td>> 4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infocomm Development Authority</td><td>IDA</td><td>> 3</td></tr>
<tr><td>International Enterprise Singapore</td><td>IE Singapore</td><td>> 5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Monetary Authority Singapore</td><td>MAS</td><td>> 4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Singapore Civil Defense Force</td><td>SCDF</td><td>< 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Singapore Police Force</td><td>SPF</td><td>> 20</td></tr>
</table>

Unlike journalists in other countries, the journalists in Singapore seldom question the information provided by the authorities. That has several reasons. One is the specific role

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[841] The table is based on data provided in Ministry of Community Development: Press Releases, http://app.mcys.gov.sg/web/corp_press.asp?szMod=corp&szSubMod=press, Ministry of Defence: News Releases, http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/news_and_events/nr.html; Ministry of Education: Press Releases, http://www.moe.gov.sg/press/press_releases.htm; Ministry of Finance: Press Statements, http://app.mof.gov.sg/news_press/index.asp; Ministry of Health: Press Releases, http://www.moh.gov.sg/corp/about/newsroom/pressreleases/index.do; Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts: Press Releases, http://app.mica.gov.sg/internet/pressroom/press_releases.asp; Ministry of Law: Latest News, http://notesapp.internet.gov.sg/__48256DF20015A167.nsf/LookupWebPagesByComponentName/LatestNews; Ministry of Manpower: Press Room, http://www.mom.gov.sg/PressRoom/; Ministry of National Development: Press Releases, http://www.mnd.gov.sg/newsroom/newsreleases/newsreleases.htm; Ministry of Environment: News, http://app.mewr.gov.sg/press.asp?cid=126&nid=126&id=SAS471; Ministry of Trade and Industry: Press Releases, http://app.mti.gov.sg/default.asp?id=27; Ministry of Transport: Newsroom, http://www.mot.gov.sg/news.htm; all published in Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[842] The table is based on data provided in Agra-Food and Veterinary Authority: Press Releases, http://www.ava.gov.sg/javascript/m7-option12.html; Central Provident Fund Board: News Releases, http://www.cpf.gov.sg/cpf_info/goto.asp?page=Index_News.asp; Department of Statistics: Media Releases, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/press/press.html; Economic Development Board: Latest News, http://www.edb.gov.sg/edb/sg/en_uk/index.html?loc=home; Housing Development Board: Press Releases, http://www.hdb.gov.sg/fi10/fi10296p.nsf/PressReleases?OpenView; Infocomm Development Authority: Press Releases, http://www.ida.gov.sg/idaweb/media/media_date.jsp?pagecategory=*.mr:media; International Enterprise Singapore: News, http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/index_ie.jsp?vert=CO&secfield=5&catfield=89; Monetary Authority Singapore: News Archive, http://www.mas.gov.sg/masmcm/bin/pt1Press_Releases_Current_Year.htm; Singapore Civil Defence Force: News, http://www.scdf.gov.sg/General/News/index.html; Singapore Police Force: Media Releases, http://www.spf.gov.sg/mediarelease/2004/2004.htm; all published in Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.

and behavior of journalists in Singapore. Another reason is the involvement of the government in the media. Both aspects contrast to the MacBride Report and are discussed in the following chapters of this dissertation.

In addition, businesses regularly issue press releases. The information provided by the 50 largest companies listed in the "Straits Times Index" (STI) is highly regarded, because these companies are to a certain extend representative of the economy.[843]

(89) Number of press releases issued by 15 companies[844]		
Name	Business	Press releases per month
Capitaland	Property	> 10
DBS Group	Banking	> 2
Keppel Corporation	Offshore and marine, property	> 10
Mobile One	Telecommunications	> 2
Neptune Orient Line	Logistics	> 2
Oversea Chinese Banking	Banking	> 2
Parkway Holdings	Healthcare	> 2
Sembcorp	Marine, engineering and IT	> 2
Singapore Airlines	Transportation	> 3
Singapore Petroleum	Energy	> 2
Singapore Post	Logistics	> 3
Singapore Press Holdings	Media	> 5
Singapore Telecommunication	Telecommunications	> 8
Starhub	Telecommunications	> 3
United Overseas Bank	Banking	> 4

Interestingly, a significant number of these companies were state-owned for a long time and are now at least partly owned by the government's investment companies. Temasek, for example, has stakes in companies such as Capitaland (43 percent), Keppel Corporation (> 17) and Singapore Telecommunication (56).

(90) Key investments of the government investment company Temasek[845]			
Sector	Company	Service	Shares
Media	Media Corporation of Singapore	Radio, television, web radios	100.0
	Singapore Press Holdings	Newspaper, magazines, websites	> 1.0
Telecommunication	Singapore Telecommunication	Fixed and mobile communication	56.0

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[843] Established in 1988, the "Straits Times Index" is a market value-weighted stock market index based on the stocks of 50 representative companies listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange.
[844] The table is based on data provided in Capitaland: News Room, http://www.capitaland.com/en/NewsRoom/; DBS Group: Newsroom, http://www.dbs.com/newsroom/; Keppel Corporation: News and Publications, http://www.kepcorp.com/press/; Mobile One: News Archive, http://m1.com.sg/M1/site/M1Corp/menuitem.ead3d032c9b3f177f15a947b3f2000a0/; Neptune Orient Line: Newsroom, http://www.nol.com.sg/newsroom/news.html; Overseas Chinese Bank: Media Releases Archive, http://www.ocbc.com.sg/global/newsroom/; Parkway Holdings: Corporate Announcements, http://www.parkway.com.sg/news_corporate.jsp; SembCorp Industries: Media Relations, http://www.sembcorp.com.sg/media_corporate.htm?subFold=Corporate; Singapore Airlines: News Releases, http://www.singaporeair.com/saa/en_UK/content/company_info/press_release/; Singapore Post: News Releases, http://www.singpost.com.sg/singpost_04media_NewsRel.htm; United Overseas Bank: UOB Newsroom, http://www.uob.com.sg/pages/personal/newsroom.html; all published in Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[845] The table is based on data provided in Temasek Holdings: Our Investments, http://www.temasekholdings.com.sg/our_investments/our_investments.htm, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2006.

	SingTel Optus	Access to own and other satellites	56.0
	Star Hub	Mobile communication, internet access	63.0
Financial Services	Development Bank of Singapore	Loans and guarantees	28.0
Property	Capitaland	Buildings	43.0
	Keppel Land	Land	17.0
Transportation	Neptune Orient Lines	Shipment	57.0
	PSA International	Handling of the port	100.0
Energy	Singapore Power	Electricity	100.0
Engineering	SembCorp Industries	Planning and construction	51.0
	Keppel Industries	Planning and construction	32.0

Information provided by social groups tends to be less interesting to journalists in Singapore. The main reason for this is the marginal importance of most registered societies. There is a house rabbit society, a hamster society and several societies for different breeds of dogs. Others have been inspired by passions for certain activities such as singing, dancing or riding. One such group is the Singapore branch of the "Harley Davidson" fan club which was established in 1995 and currently has around 250 members.[846]

Another reason is that only few societies have the financial means to send out press releases on a regular basis. The only way to get media attention is by doing something extraordinary. A good example of this is "The Roundtable" group, founded in the early 1990s by 25 young professionals to discuss political issues. In 1998, they compiled an analysis of the general election in which they disagreed with the campaign tactics of the ruling People's Action Party. The report was published in the *Straits Times* newspaper and even a minister responded by pointing out where he thought the analysis was wrong.[847]

Three aspects with regard to registered societies in Singapore are worth mentioning. First of all, the total number of societies increased steadily from 2 900 in 1980 to 5 400 in 2000. Since then, around 200 societies have been registered every year. This fact is cited by some as evidence that civil society in Singapore is getting stronger.[848]

Another aspect is that a large number of societies are only open to people from specific ethnic groups. One such example is the "Singapore Ceylon-Tamils Association" which was founded in 1909 and manages a temple in the heart of the city. Another example is the "Chinese Swimming Club" which was founded in 1905 and has become a favorite for the annual crown of the Singapore Swimming Club. Both are among the largest societies in Singapore, with more than 1, 000 members each, and exclusively accept Tamils and Chinese respectively as ordinary members.

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[846] Alicia Wong: Lawful Assembly, Singapore, 2003, p. 12-13.
[847] Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 162.
[848] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 9.

(91) Selection of non-ethnic and ethnic registered societies in Singapore[849]	
Non-ethnic societies	Ethnic societies
Basketball Association of Singapore	Chinese Sports Association
Buddhist Union	Chinese Swimming Club
Children's Aid Society	Filipino Association of Singapore
Republic of Singapore Flying Club	Malay Sports Association, Singapore
Rotary Club of Singapore	All Malaya Muslim Missionary Society
Singapore Badminton Association	Singapore Ceylon-Tamils Association
Singapore Chess Club	Singapore Chinese Football Club
Singapore Recreation Club	Singapore Indian Association, The
Singapore Swimming Club	Singapore Malay Football Club, The
Youths Improvement Association, The	Singapore Malayalee Hindu Samajam

Needless to say, the "Registrar of Society" can reject proposals without any reason. As a result, neither Amnesty International nor Greenpeace are active in Singapore. Even the gay movement People Like Us was refused registration in 1999.[850] Since the 1988 amendment of the "Societies Act", societies can even be de-registered if they make statements beyond the scope of the constituency. So not even people assembled in registered groups can express their thoughts freely, although this one of the central points of the MacBride Report.[851]

Apart from these registered groups, there is no real "civil society" in Singapore, because the 1967 "Societies Act" requires all groups of more than ten people to be registered. As a result, the government, government-linked companies and government-registered societies are the only local sources regularly available to the media and journalists.

7.5   Foreign news wires

Since several foreign publications (*Time*, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Asiaweek*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*) have been "gazetted" in 1986 and 1987, foreign journalists generally avoid critical reporting of Singapore's "domestic affairs".[852] This means that there is practically no outside view of what is happening in Singapore.

At the same time, there is virtually no independent reporting on world events, because Singapore's journalists depend almost entirely on foreign sources and international wires

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[849] The table is based on data provided in Registry of Societies: Registry of Societies Electronic System, https://www.psi.gov.sg/NASApp/tmf/TMFServlet?app=MHA-SIR-RO-HOME&isNew=true, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.
[850] Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, p. 131; and David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 8, 9.
[851] Attorney-General's Chambers: Societies Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_getcont.pl?actno=1967-REVED-311&doctitle=SOCIETIES%20ACT%0a&date=latest&method=part, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[852] Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 1.

services when they report on events in other countries. This was so during colonial times and is still true today.

Until the early 20th century, a significant number of news items were taken from newspapers in London or Calcutta (where the British East India Company was based). In 1919, the media and journalists started using the wire service of the British news agency Reuters.[853] In 1946, the *Straits Times* (followed by the other newspapers in Singapore) also subscribed to the wire services of the American agencies Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI). Together, they possessed more than 4, 000 correspondents or stringers in over 110 countries during the 1980s and each issued a daily average of between 1.5 to 17 million words.[854] Today's numbers are even higher.

(92) Editorial strength of Associated Press outside the United States in the 1970s[855]		
Country	City	Number of editorial staff
United Kingdom	London	40
France	Paris	26
Brazil	Rio de Janeiro / Sao Paulo	21
Japan	Tokyo	16
Lebanon	Beirut	15
Vietnam (South)	Saigon	14
Italy	Rome	13
Argentina	Buenos Aires	11
Egypt	Cairo	9
Hong Kong	Hong Kong	8
Austria	Vienna	6
Thailand	Bangkok	6
Belgium	Brussels	5
Indonesia	Jakarta	3
Philippines	Manila	3
Taiwan	Taipei	3
Netherlands	Hague	3
Greece	Athens	3
USSR	Moscow	3
Columbia	Bogota	3
Australia	Canberra	2
Korea (South)	Seoul	2
Cambodia	Phnom Penh	2
Singapore	Singapore	2
Bangladesh	Dacca	2
Malaysia	Kuala Lumpur	1
Norway	Oslo	1
Denmark	Copenhagen	1
Kenya	Nairobi	1
Czechoslovakia	Prague	1

This is reflected in Singapore's newspapers. Already by 1978, Wilbur Schramm showed that nearly 85 percent of all articles published in the English-language *Straits Times* were taken

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[853] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 145 et sqq.
[854] Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 17.
[855] The table is based on data provided in Oliver Boyd-Barrett: The International News Agencies, London, 1980, p. 48.

or based on information provided by international wire services. The situation was similar in the other newspapers in Singapore. Around 90 percent of all articles published in the Chinese-language newspaper *Nanyang Siang Pau* was taken from wire services. Compared to other newspapers in the region such as the *Philippine Daily Express*, this is an extremely high percentage. The same can generally be said for the electronic media, as the 1983 results of Rolf Scheller show.[856]

(93) Percentage of stories originating from international wire services[857]			
Name	News from international wire services	News from national wire services	News from own correspondent
Bangkok Post	93.0	2.3	0.0
Korea Times	95.2	1.2	1.2
Nanyang Siang Pau	90.3	0	7.3
Philippine Daily Express	53.9	3.4	3.4
South China Morning P.	94.7	0	2.3
Straits Times	84.8	0	7.6

(94) Percentage of imported and domestic television hours[858]			
Country	Imported	Domestic	Total output in hours
Malaysia	71	29	4 550
Philippines	29	71	12 800
Singapore	78	22	4 100

Two of the reasons for the high use of wire services are the interest of the readers in foreign affairs and the general assumption that Western wire services and publications are "very useful".[859] As mentioned before, the Hong Kong-based *Asian Wall Street Journal* and the *International Herald Tribune* are the most regarded.

(95) Interest in newspapers (based on a study on one daily in Manila)[860]		
	Foreign	Domestic
Proportion of content	28	27
Proportion of reading	54	53

(96) Wire services rated by experts as "very useful"[861]		
Name	Number of responses	Percentage of respondents
Agence France–Presse	12	32
Associated Press	14	38
Bernama News Agency	7	19

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[856] Wilbur Schramm: International News Wires and Third World News in Asia, Hong Kong, 1978, p. 48.
[857] The table is based on data provided in Wilbur Schramm: International News Wires and Third World News in Asia, Hong Kong, 1978, p. 48.
[858] The table is based on data provided in Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 67.
[859] Compare with Oliver Boyd-Barrett: The Globalization of News, London, 1998, p. 1 et sqq.
[860] The table is based on data provided in Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 62
[861] The tables are based on data provided in Andre Szende: Perception of News Flows in ASEAN, Singapore, 1983, p. 27.

Reuters	23	62
United Press International	10	27

(97) Foreign publications rated by experts as "very useful"		
Name	Number of responses	Percentage of respondents
Asian Wall Street Journal	15	41
BBC	10	27
Far Eastern Economic Review	13	35
International Herald Tribune	8	22

A third reason is that foreign correspondents employed by Singaporean publications generally only play a marginal role. In the early 1980s, for example, the *Straits Times* only employed three full-time foreign correspondents (in Bangkok, Tokyo and Washington D.C.), three part-time correspondents (in Kuala Lumpur, Manila and Melbourne) and a regional reporter who was based in Singapore but traveled a lot to Indonesia and Malaysia – the *Straits Times* traditionally employs more foreign correspondents than any other media outlet in Singapore.

In the meantime, the number of Singapore correspondents living abroad has increased to approximately 40 (not including stringers, cameramen and technicians). The *Straits Times* newspaper even has two correspondents covering different parts of China and one each in Japan, Korea and India.[862] But their output is very low in comparison to the high volume of text the international wire services produce. Reuters alone provided over 2.5 million news items from 209 countries in 18 languages in 2004.[863]

The composition of the wire service market has changed over time. In 1968, the Lao News Agency was established. Four years later, the Philippines News Agency was founded. And in 1988, the United News of Bangladesh agency was launched.[864] Unfortunately, media outlets and journalists in Singapore still do not make use of these services effectively. None of the Singapore media participates in exchange systems such as the "Asia News Network" (ANN), which was established in 1982 by the Organization of Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA).[865]

As a result, Reuters (United Kingdom) and the Associated Press (United States) are still the two dominant wire services for media and journalists in Singapore, followed by the English-language services of the Agence France-Presse (AFP, France), Itar-Tass (Russia), Kyodo

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[862] The information was provided by Cheong Yip Seng during the interview with the author of this dissertation.
[863] Reuters: Key Facts, http://about.reuters.com/aboutus/overview/facts/index.asp, London, 2005, accessed 2005.
[864] All of the mentioned agencies are members of the Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA). Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies: OANA Members, http://www.oananews.org/more.php?agency=1, Kuala Lumpur, 2006, accessed 2006.
[865] Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies: About OANA, http://www.oananews.org/more.php?about=1, Kuala Lumpur, 2006, accessed 2006.

(Japan), Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA, Germany), and the Chinese-language service of Xinhua (Mainland China). In addition, the *Straits Times* often takes articles which have earlier been published in the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*.

(98) Foreign news agencies and media relevant to the journalists in Singapore		
Name	Type	Country
Agence France-Presse (AFP)	News agency	France
Antara News Agency	News agency	Indonesia
Associated Press (AP)	News agency	United States
BBC World	Radio / Television	United Kingdom
Bernama News Agency	News agency	Malaysia
CNN	Television	United States
Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA)	News agency	Germany
Financial Times	Newspaper	United Kingdom
Itar-Tass	News agency	Russia
Kyodo	News agency	Japan
New York Times	Newspaper	United States
Press Trust of India	News agency	India
Reuters	News agency	United Kingdom
Wall Street Journal	Newspaper	United States
Washington Post	Newspaper	United States
Xinhua	News agency	China

Although this goes beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is interesting to note what news items international agencies generally cover. In terms of numbers and placement, the highest priority is given to news provided by institutions and companies located in the United States, such as the White House, World Bank and Microsoft.

(99) Selection of 40 often mentioned sources		
Name	Type	Country
AOL Time Warner	Company (media)	United States
BP	Company (oil)	United Kingdom
Citigroup	Company (finance)	United States
Coca Cola	Company (beverages)	United States
DaimlerChrysler	Company (cars)	Germany
Deutsche Bank	Company (finance)	Germany
European Union	Government	Belgium
Exxon Mobil	Company (oil)	United States
Frankfurt Stock Exchange	Stock exchange	Germany
General Motors	Company (cars)	United States
HSBC	Company (finance)	United Kingdom
Hong Kong Stock Exchange	Stock exchange	Hong Kong SAR
Hyundai	Company (cars)	Republic of Korea (South)
IBM	Company (computer)	United States
Intern. Atomic Energy Agency	Organization	Austria
London Stock Exchange	Stock exchange	United Kingdom
Microsoft	Company (software)	United States
Mitsubishi Motors	Company (cars)	Japan
New York Stock Exchange	Stock exchange	United States
North Atlantic Treaty Organization	Organization	Belgium
Office of the President	Government	Indonesia
Office of the Prime Minister	Government	Japan
Org. for Security and Coop.	Organization	Austria
Pentagon	Government	United States
PNB Paribas	Company (finance)	France

Prime Ministers Office	Government	United Kingdom
Politburo of the Communist Party	Party	China
Procter and Gamble	Company (consumer products)	United States
Royal Dutch Shell	Company (oil)	Netherlands / United Kingdom
Siemens	Company (conglomerate)	Germany
Sony	Company (electronics)	Japan
Sun Microsystems	Company (computer)	United States
Tokyo Stock Exchange	Stock exchange	Japan
Total	Company (oil)	France
United Malays Organization	Party	Malaysia
United Nations Organization	Organization	United States
Volkswagen	Company (cars)	Germany
White House	Government	United States
World Bank	Organization	United States
World Trade Organization	Organization	Switzerland

7.6   Transmission of news

As far as the transmission of local news is concerned, relatively little has changed. The most common methods of informing journalists still have to do with holding press conferences or sending out press releases. Until the early 1970s, press releases were usually either sent through the postal service (pigeons were never regularly used in Singapore) or directly delivered to the newsrooms.[866] By the mid-1990s, fax transmissions was becoming increasingly popular. Since then, however, fax is often replaced by e-mail.

The efficiency of transmission of foreign or international news has greatly improved over the time. In Singapore's early days, news from overseas usually arrived by ship. This is the reason why the first newspapers were called *Shipping Gazette* (1858) or *Straits Produce* (1868).[867] The editors took the news from the papers the captains had carried along. Until the 1850s, this kind of transmission was very slow. It became much faster with the introduction of steam ships in 1842 and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Due to their steam engines, ships no longer needed to adjust their schedule around the monsoon season and so did not need to navigate around the African horn in order to travel between the ports in Western Europe and Southeast Asia.[868]

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[866] In 1965, there were 39 post offices and 28 postal agencies dealing with nearly 158 million items per year. Today, the Singapore Post operates more than 60 offices, around 80 authorized postal agencies, nearly 200 self-service automated machines, more than 660 stamp vendors and over 800 post boxes throughout the city. It processes 2.4 million local and overseas items per day or about 830 millions items a year. Government Printing Office: Singapore Year Book 1965, Singapore, 1965 p. 282; Singapore Post: About Us, Introduction, http://www.singpost.com/singpost_06about.htm, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005; and Singapore Post: How Your Mail Gets Delivered, http://www.singpost.com/singpost_06about_how.htm, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[867] Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 1-4.
[868] Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 11; and Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of The Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 16.

In 1842, telegraphy was introduced in Singapore, and in the following years, submarine cables were laid connecting Singapore with Hong Kong (1869), Penang and Madras (both 1872). For a long time, cabled news was very expensive.[869] The *Straits Times* newspaper was the first to start using it on a regular basis in the early 20th century. By 1952, this technology was even used for photo transmission. And in the 1970s and 1980s, thermo fax was becoming popular for the transmission of words.

In the meantime, computers (1969) and satellites (1972) were installed.[870] Today, all news agencies use combinations of computers and satellites for the transmission of news to the media and journalists. Some such as "Factiva" (owned by Reuters) provide their services via e-mail or the Internet, which were introduced in Singapore in 1987 and 1991 respectively.[871] Only ships are no longer used, because even foreign magazines are flown in by plane nowadays.

(100) Vehicles for the transmission of news to the media and journalists in Singapore			
Vehicle	Invention	Introduction in Singapore	Usage
Postal service	~ 2400 B.C.	1819	Local / Regional
Ships	n.a.	1819	Regional / Global
Steam Ships	1737 A.D.	1842	Regional / Global
Telegraphy	1837	1869	Regional / Global
Telephony	1875	1879	Local / Regional / Global
Telefax	1848	1879	Local / Regional / Global
Air planes	1849	1929	Regional / Global
Satellites	1957	1972	Regional / Global
Email	1971	1987	Local / Regional / Global
World Wide Web	1991	1991	Global / Regional / Local

The dissemination of news from newsrooms to the general public is described in other chapters of this dissertation. However, the tremendous impact of the expansion of the postal service, the introduction of radio (*Radio Singapura*, 1933) and television (*Channel 5*, 1967) broadcasting, the establishment of an island-wide cable system ("Singapore Cable Vision", 1993) and the launch of the first public Internet access providers (TechNet, 1992) cannot be emphasized enough.[872]

(101) Vehicles for the dissemination of news to households in Singapore			
Vehicle	Invention	Introduction in Singapore	Requirements
Newspaper	1621	1823	Printing Press
Magazine	1731	1830	Printing Press

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[869] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 64.
[870] K.S. Raman: IT Applications and their Impacts in Singapore and other Asian NIEs, p. 116, published in Meheroo Jussawalla (Ed.): Information Technology and Singapore Society, Singapore, 1990, p. 108-123; and Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning Singapore, Norfolk, 1983, p. 21.
[871] Factiva: About Factiva, http://www.factiva.com/about/index.asp?node=menuElem1098, London, 2006, accessed 2006.
[872] For further information, see the chapter about the technological development.

Radio	1896	1936	Radio station / set
Television	1926	1963	Television station / set
Newsletter	1972	1988	Internet access
Website	1991	1994	Internet access / browser
Teletext	1970	1994	Television station / set

(102) Selection of 15 countries ranked in the 2005 Information Society Index[873]					
Country	Computer	Telecom	Internet	Social	Total
Denmark	249	161	271	355	1 035
Sweden	194	167	285	364	1 009
USA	253	146	247	347	993
Korea	148	269	277	268	963
Singapore	233	256	251	245	984
Hong Kong	191	284	217	207	899
Japan	214	118	233	268	833
Taiwan	103	245	235	236	819
Malaysia	113	98	129	176	516
Thailand	59	64	103	187	414
China	57	72	125	133	388
Philippines	43	54	57	173	328
India	41	18	99	123	281
Indonesia	25	18	42	119	204
Vietnam	25	25	29	121	199

7.7 Regulations binding the media and journalists

In addition to other obstacles, there are a number of laws affecting the news flows in Singapore. The "Official Secrets Act" (1935) punishes the disclosure of official documents. The "Judicial Proceedings Act" (1960) prohibits reporting on pending cases (e.g. divorces). And the "Singapore Armed Forces Act" (1972) prohibits national servicemen to speak on the record without written consent of the authorities.

(103) Selection of laws which can be used to restrict the distribution of media[874]			
Title	Meaning for the media	Passed	Modified
Broadcasting Security Act	Requires radio and television media to be licensed, regulates businesses and empowers the authorities to intervene	1994	2002
Films Act	Regulates the possession, distribution and exhibition of films, and establishes the "Board of Film Censors"	1981	2002
Internal Security Act	Provides the internal security of Singapore by empowering the government to ban publications prejudicial, etc.	1960	1997
Maintenance of Harmony Act	Empowers the government to restrain the publications of religious leaders who cause ill-will between religions	1990	1992
Newspaper and Print. Presses Act	Requires newspapers to be licensed, regulates businesses and empowers the government to intervene	1974	2002
Penal Code	Prohibits the sale of obscene books, defamation, decency and	1871	1998

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[873] The table is based on data provided in The World Paper: The 2005 Information Society Index, http://www.worldpaper.com/2005/june/1a.html, Boston, 2005, accessed 2005.
[874] The table is based on information provided in Ang Peng Hwa: Mass Media Laws and Regulations in Singapore, Singapore, 1998, p. 5-574; and Attorney-General's Chambers: Singapore Statutes Online, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

	morals, etc.		
Undesirable Publications Act	Prohibits the importation and distribution of undesirable publications such as pornography, etc.	1967	2003

The most restrictive of these is the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" (NPPA), which was passed in 1974, strengthened in 1986, and amended in 2005.[875] It regulates the print media in two ways: First of all, it requires all printing presses and publications to be licensed. These licenses must be renewed annually, and can be refused or revoked by the authorities without reason. Since the 1986 amendment, even foreign publications must abide by it. This means that there is no longer a right to circulate publications, as recommended in the MacBride Report - it is a privilege granted by the authorities.[876]

Furthermore, the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" puts the management of the local media effectively under control of the authorities by employing a system of "management shares" which grant voting rights 200 times that of ordinary shares. Since the 1977 amendment bares anyone from holding more than three percent of ordinary shares, at least one percent must be "management shares", and those "management shares" can only be held by persons approved by the minister, the authorities have practically a say in all important decisions.[877]

There are two main effects of this: Everyone takes care not to get in trouble with the authorities, because resistance is useless, and even those who could afford it hesitate to establish a media company to challenge the two monopolies, because the chance of success is very low and the risk of getting one's license revoked very high, not to mention the fact that the authorities would be directly involved in all major decisions anyway.

The same situation generally applies to radio and television because both are regulated by the "Broadcasting Act" of 1944, lastly amended in 2005. Even film-makers practice self-

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[875] Attorney-General's Chambers: Newspaper and Printing Presses Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_getdata.pl?actno=2002-REVED-206&doctitle=NEWSPAPER%20AND%20PRINTING%20PRESSES%20ACT%0a&date=latest&method=part&seg id=1041301230-000004, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[876] Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Aide Memoir, dated 12. February 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 45.
[877] Ang Peng Hwa: Media Ethics in Singapore, Pushing Self-Regulation in a Tightly Controlled Media Environment, p. 81, published in Vekat Iyer (Ed.): Media Ethics in Asia, Singapore, 2002, p. 80-89; and Yawning Bread: Control of the Press, the One Percent Lever, http://www.yawningbread.org/arch_2001/yax-239.htm, Singapore, 2001, modified 2002, accessed 14 April 2003.

censorship because all movies must be first submitted to the "Board of Censors" before public screening, according to the "Films Act" of 1981, lastly amended in 2002.[878]

Only publishing on the Internet and other digital devices such as mobile phones is more or less unrestricted. The main reason is that registration of digital media and its contents would not be effective. Webmasters could easily transfer the files to a server abroad and so evade the sphere of influence of the Singaporean authorities. The only way to regulate the Internet effectively is by forcing the access providers to filter certain keywords and block "harmful" sites. In total, around 100 websites are blocked in Singapore.[879] Among them are several porn websites such as *Playboy.com* but also the cartoon collection *Chick.com.*

(104) Selection of websites blocked in Singapore[880]	
Name	Content
Cannabis.com	About hemp, cannabis and marijuana
Chick.com	Cartoon gospel tracks
ForMatureAudiencesOnly.com	Links to porn websites
Penthouse.com	Photos of nude women
PersianKitty.com	Links to porn websites
Playboy.com	Photos of nude women
Sex.com	Links to porn websites

7.8 The role of journalists and self-censorship

In such an environment, the freedom of the press is very limited. Journalists can question the actions of the government but must be careful to avoid harsh criticism of the authorities. Doubting the legitimization of the ruling People's Action Party demands quite a lot of courage and questioning the system as a whole courts disaster. In such cases, the risk of losing one's job or being prosecuted is extremely high.

In other countries, particularly those in the "West", many people would be unsatisfied with such a situation, but Singapore is different. There is simply no liberal tradition of media and communications there. During colonial times, the local media were founded, owned,

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[878] Attorney-General's Chambers: Broadcasting Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_getdata.pl?actno=2003-REVED-28&doctitle=BROADCASTING%20ACT%0a&date=latest&method=part&segid=1059635718-000005; and Attorney-General's Chambers: Films Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_getdata.pl?actno=1998-REVED-107&doctitle=FILMS%20ACT%0a&date=latest&method=whole; both published in Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[879] The estimation is by Ang Peng Hwa; see the documention of the interviews.
[880] The table is based on data provided in Open Net Initiative: Internet Filter in Singapore, http://www.opennetinitiative.net/studies/singapore/ONI_Country_Study_Singapore.pdf, St. George, 2005, accessed 2006, and the mentioned websites.

operated and read by the British colonialist, and they were committed to the British habits.[881] Today, the local media are owned, run and read by Singaporeans, and committed to being Singaporean. Most of the (local) experts interviewed for this dissertation, however, defend and some even actively support Singapore's strict media laws and codes.

Over the years, a number of codes of conduct and media concepts were implemented in Singapore.[882] The codes of conduct are less relevant but the media concepts have some impact on the society. They are based on some general assumptions. One is that in Asian or Chinese societies in particular, the system is more important than the individual. That is often credited to Confucius (551-479 B.C.) and emphasized in the "Core Values" by Lee Hsien Loong (1999).

Another assumption is that in a multicultural society like Singapore, ethnic and religious matters can easily become "explosive issues". As the classic example, the 1950 "Maria Hertogh Riots", during which 18 people got killed and more than 170 people were injured, is usually used by academics, politicians and journalists for defending the system.[883]

(105) Codes of conduct introduced in Singapore		
Name	Publisher	Year
Code of Professional Conduct	Singapore National Union of Journalists	1975
Code of Advertising Practice	Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore	1976
Code of Ethics for ASEAN Journalists	Confederation of ASEAN Journalists	1989
Internet Code of Practice	Singapore Broadcasting Authority	1996

(106) Media concepts in Singapore		
Name	Creator	Year
Development Journalism	Press Foundation of Asia	1967
Asian Values in Journalism	Lee Kuan Yew	1976
Core Values	Lee Hsien Loong	1988
Next Lap	Goh Chok Tong	1990
OB Markers	Unknown, maybe Lee Hsien Loong	1995
Create.connect@sg	Ministry for Information	2000

As a result, it is often believed that the journalists in Singapore have more responsibility than journalists in other (Western) countries. To many foreigners and some locals, this concept is often difficult to understand. From their point of view, "a journalist is a journalist" and "there is only good and bad journalism", as one of the experts interviewed for this dissertation

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[881] Soh Tiang Keng: The Singapore Press, Its Role in a Multi-Racial City-State, Singapore, 1971, p. 4.
[882] Ang Peng Hwa: Media Ethics in Singapore, Pushing Self-Regulation in a Tightly Controlled Media Environment, p. 89, published in Yenkat Iyer (Ed.): Media Ethics in Asia, Addressing the Dilemmas in the Information Age, Singapore, 2002, p. 80-89.
[883] Tom Hughes: Tangled Worlds, The Story of Maria Hertogh, Singapore, 1980, p. 1 et sqq.

suggested. But the discussions about "Asian Values in Journalism" show that there are different perceptions.[884]

One of the latest and most remarkable concepts introduced in Singapore has become known as "OB Markers", a term used in golfing. It refers to the limits of a wide range of topics citizens and journalists can discuss without getting themselves into trouble. Diane Mauzy even argues that it represents a "trial-and-error approach" that allows for more commentary and gradually increasing openness.[885] The opposite point of view, that "OB markers" lead to even further self censorship, is also convincing, because no one exactly knows what is allowed and what is not.[886]

However, there is a high level of self-censorship in Singapore. Some issues are completely ignored and others are handled with great care.[887] Examples of self-censorship can be found in almost every issue of Singapore's newspapers.[888] The argumentation of Cheong Yip Seng is even more revealing. When asked whether he would report a supposed street fight between Chinese and Malay where some people got killed, the editor-at-large answered: "Very simple, I wouldn't carry it. […] Publishing the story would mean the whole city get to know. There is no guarantee that people wouldn't misinterpret it."[889]

Nevertheless, the public trust in the news provided by journalists is extremely high. The most important sources of information, according to the Study on Usage and Impact of the *Internet in Singapore*, are newspapers, television and radio – they are regarded as being even more important than what relatives, friends and colleagues say. More than 76 percent of Singaporeans trust news put forth by the media. Interestingly, the trust in news provided by the government is almost as high.

(107) Media rated as an "important" source of information[890]		
Medium	Internet-users (in percent)	Non-internet-users (in percent)
Newspaper	86.6	78.8
Radio	69.4	64.7

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[884] Owais Aslam Ali: Freedom of the Press and Asian Values in Journalism, Paper Presented at the Seminar on Asian Values in Journalism Held in Kuala Lumpur from 24 to 25 August 1995, place and date of publication unknown, probably Singapore, 1995, p. 1-6.
[885] Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, Singapore, 1971, p. 141.
[886] Compare with the discussion in Young PAP: Discussion Forum, http://www.youngpap.org.sg/phpbb/viewtopic.php?t=6871&start=0, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[887] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 208-215; and Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 51, 52.
[888] See also James Gomez: Self Censorship, Singapore's Shame, Singapore, 2000, p. 55 et sqq; and James Gomez: Publish and Perish, The Censorship of Opposition Party Publications in Singapore, Singapore, 2001, 12 et sqq.
[889] After David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 19.
[890] The tables are based on data provided in Eddie Kuo: Internet in Singapore, A Study on Usage and Impact, Singapore, 2002, p. 48-60, 61-62, 66-67, 68-69.

	73.7	74.0
Television	73.7	74.0
Internet	71.2	22.7

(108) Other "important" sources of information		
Medium	Internet users (in percent)	Non-internet-users (in percent)
Colleagues	52.5	51.1
Friends	65.2	72.2
Relatives	66.4	79.8

(109) Trust in news by medium		
Medium	Internet-users (in percent)	Non-internet-users (in percent)
Newspaper	78.6	76.7
Radios	75.6	74.2
Television	76.7	76.7
Internet	59.9	46.8

(110) Trust in news by other institutions		
Institution	Internet-users (in percent)	Non-internet-users (in percent)
Religious organizations	41.0	41.6
Business companies	45.4	39.0
Government	71.2	70.3

7.9 Intimidation in an atmosphere of fear

Some authors such as James Gomez try to make their readers believe that there even is "Surveillance and Intimidation" in Singapore. But this can hardly be confirmed because the examples given by James Gomez are not convincing.

In his latest book, James Gomez quotes an e-mail dated 23 May 2001 in which someone called Robert Ho praises the Think Center (which was founded by James Gomez) as "one of the liveliest" non-profit websites "carrying both thoughtful, even profound articles". According to James Gomez, the sender of this e-mail was arrested by the police for inciting violence through the Internet six months later. James Gomez gives the impression that those events (the e-mail and the arrest) are somehow related but there is no evidence of this.[891]

However, there is no doubt that there is an atmosphere of fear in Singapore, even though the colonial times ended long time ago. Over the years, dozens of people were detained without trial under the "Internal Security Act" (1960) which allows the authorities – among other

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[891] James Gomez: Internet Politics, Surveillance and Intimidation in Singapore, 2002, p. 74.

things – the preventive arrest of those regarded as subversive persons.[892] Particularly in the period between 1963 and 1975, many political activists and trade unionists were detained. During "Operation Cold Store" in February 1963, at least 107 leaders of the opposing Barisan Sosialis party and other leftists were arrested.[893]

(111) Selection of ten political prisoners arrested between 1963 and 1975[894]	
Name	Year
Lim Hock Siew	1963
Chua Kee Seng	1965
Chong Meng Kee	1966
Wong Sin Yah	1967
Ng Chek Boon	1969
Ang Choon Hong	1970
Leong Chee Fook	1971
Lee You Seng	1973
Yeo Kwee Hua	1974
Tan Keng Chuan	1975

The best example of a "political prisoner" is a former member of parliament from the Barisan Sosialis party: Chia Thye Poh was arrested on 28 October 1966 for participating in demonstrations and strikes. Although he denied the allegations, he was detained for 23 years without trial. On his release in 1989, he was prohibited from participating in any political activities, issuing any public statements and from joining any association without the permission of the authorities. For three years after his release, he was required to live on the island of Sentosa, off Singapore's coast. The restrictions on him were not lifted until 1998 or 1999. At that time, he was 58 years old and therefore not dangerous to the government anymore.[895]

Journalists such as the former general manager, the editor-in-chief and the senior editorial writer of the Chinese-language *Nanyang Siang Pau* newspaper were also arrested under the "Internal Security Act". They were accused of bringing Tung Tao Chang to the newspaper, under whose editorship the reporting allegedly changed to one of "glamorizing communism and stirring up communal and chauvinistic sentiments over language and culture".[896]

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[892] Attorney-General's Chambers: Internal Security Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_getcont.pl?actno=1963-REVED-143&doctitle=INTERNAL%20SECURITY%20ACT%0a&date=latest&method=part, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.
[893] Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 28; and Pang Cheng Lian: Singapore's People's Action Party, Its History, Organization and Leadership, Singapore, 1971, p. 17.
[894] The table is based on data provided in Devan Nair: Socialism That Works, The Singapore Way, Singapore, 1976, p. 263-267.
[895] Amnesty USA: Restrictions on Singapore's Longest Serving Political Prisoiners Lifted, http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/singapore/document.do?id=7FDB4BA4D28D180E8025690000693363, New York, 1998, accessed 2005.
[896] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Nanyang Siang Pau Detainees, Zurich, 1971, p. 2.

In cases where the "Internal Security Act" does not apply, other laws are applicable. For example, in autumn 1992, the journalist Patrick Daniel, who worked for the English-language "Business Times" newspaper at the time, was accused on nine counts of breaching the "Official Secrets Act" (1935). He was fined the maximum amount of 2 000 Singapore dollars on each charge, or 18 000 Singapore dollars in total.[897]

(112) Selection of laws feared by the people[898]			
Title	Meaning for the people	Passed	Modified
Penal Code	Punishes all kinds of criminal offences	1871	1998
Official Secrets Act	Prohibits the disclosure of official documents and information	1935	2005
Sedition Act	Punishes the sedition, including spreading disaffection against the government	1948	1985
Internal Security Act	Provides the internal security of Singapore by empowering the government to detain people without trial	1960	1997
Maintenance of Harmony Act	Prohibits causing ill-will between the religions	1990	1992

At worst, people in Singapore can be accused under the "Penal Code" or the "Misuse of Drugs Act", both of which contain a series of presumptions which shift the burden of proof from the prosecution to the accused.[899] While smaller drug offences are usually fined with imprisonment and strokes of the cane, there is a mandatory death penalty for heavier drug offences. This means that in these cases, judges have no other option than to hand down a death sentence to those convicted.

To illustrate this: In April 1995, Poong Yuen Chung, an 18 year old Chinese shop assistant from Hong Kong, was executed after smuggling (without her knowledge?) heroin into the country. In April 1996, Rozman Jusoh, a 24 year old Malaysian worker, was hanged because he had tried to sell 1.04 kilograms of cannabis. In September 2000, Thiru Selvam, a 28 year old Singaporean, was executed because the drug addict had been found with 800 grams of cannabis. In September 2001, Zulfikar Bin Mustaffah, a 32 year old Singaporean, was executed because the drug addict had possessed 70 grams of heroin. And in September

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[897] Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998, p. 218.
[898] The table is based on information provided in Ang Peng Hwa: Mass Media Laws and Regulations in Singapore, Singapore, 1998, p. 5-574; and Attorney-General's Chambers: Singapore Statutes Online, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[899] Attorney-General's Chambers: Penal Code, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_getcont.pl?actno=1872-REVED-224&doctitle=PENAL%20CODE%0a&date=latest&method=part; and Attorney-General's Chambers: Misuse of Drugs Act, http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_getcont.pl?actno=2001-REVED-185&doctitle=MISUSE%20OF%20DRUGS%20ACT%0a&date=latest&method=part, both published in Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.

2003, Vignes Mourthi, a 23 year old Malaysian, was hanged because the cross border commuter had carried a bag (unaware of the content?) containing 27 grams of heroin.[900]

What many people fear is not so much the death penalty itself, but the lax handling of it. In September 2003, the Prime Minister at the time, Goh Chok Tong, said in an interview with the *BBC* that about 70 to 80 people had been executed in the previous months. Asked why he did not know the precise number, he answered: "I've got more things to worry about."[901]

To make this clear: According to Amnesty International, Singapore has the world's highest per capita execution rate (13.57 executions per one million people). In the period from 1990 until 2000, at least 340 people were killed.[902] Interestingly, a significant proportion came from countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia or Bangladesh and only very few from "Western" countries. Only in one case, when a domestic helper from the Philippines was executed in 1995, did an execution of a foreign national lead to a diplomatic crisis.[903]

(113) Executions in Singapore between 1990 and 2000[904]				
Year	Murder	Drug Trafficking	Firearms	Total
1990	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
1991	1	5	-	6
1992	13	7	1	21
1993	5	2	-	7
1994	21	54	1	76
1995	20	52	1	73
1996	10	40	-	50
1997	3	11	1	15
1998	4	24	-	28
1999	8	35	-	43
2000	4	17	-	21
Total	> 89	> 247	> 4	> 340

Apart from criminal trials, civil lawsuits can be filed to bring someone down. The most cited example is the case of Jusua Jeyaretnam, who was the first opposition candidate to become a member of parliament after a decade of one-party parliament. Just for saying during an election rally in 1997 that "Mr. Tang Liang Hong has just placed before me, two reports he has made to the police against, you know, Mr. Goh Chok Tong and his people", eleven suits were filed against him by members of the ruling People's Action Party. They argued that this innocuous sentence would imply and be understood to mean that the plaintiffs were guilty of

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[900] Amnesty International: Singapore, The Dealth Penalty, A Hidden Toll of Executions, http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA360012004?open&of=ENG-SGP, London, 2004, accessed 2006.
[901] Agence France-Presse: PM Goh says only 10 people executed not 80, Singapore, 15 September 2003.
[902] Amnesty International: High Execution Rate Shrouded in Secrecy, London, 2004, p. 1.
[903] Flor Contemplacion was executed for murder, despite many Filipinos believing that she was innocent or at least suffering from insanity if she actually did commit the murder. Asiaweek: Beyond the Rage, Lessons from the Case of Flor Contemplacion, Hong Kong, 07 April 1995, p.17.
[904] The table is based on data provided in Amnesty International: Singapore, The Dealth Penalty, A Hidden Toll of Executions, http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA360012004?open&of=ENG-SGP, London, 2004, accessed 2006.

an act serious enough to merit a police report. The court ordered Jusua Jeyaretnam to pay 20 000 Singapore dollars. Later, the High Court even upped the damages to 100 000 Singapore dollars. Three years later, Jusua Jeyaretnam was expelled from parliament for being bankrupt.[905]

Understandably, many people find the current situation frightening and therefore try to avoid any discussion with the authorities. This is one of the reasons why the non-profit organization "Freedom House" (located in the United States) has never ranked Singapore as a "free" country having a "free flow of news".[906] Other reasons, such as the dependence of journalists and the media on the government, have been described in the previous parts of this dissertation.

(114) Political and civil rights in Singapore, Ratings by Freedom House[907]			
Year	Political rights	Civil rights	Status
1972	5	5	Partly free
1973	5	5	Partly free
1974	5	5	Partly free
1975	5	5	Partly free
1976	5	5	Partly free
1977	5	5	Partly free
1978	5	5	Partly free
1979	5	5	Partly free
1980	5	5	Partly free
1981	4	5	Partly free
1982	4	5	Partly free
1983	4	5	Partly free
1984	4	5	Partly free
1985	4	5	Partly free
1986	4	5	Partly free
1987	4	5	Partly free
1988	4	4	Partly free
1989	4	4	Partly free
1990	4	4	Partly free
1991	4	4	Partly free
1992	4	5	Partly free
1993	5	5	Partly free
1994	5	5	Partly free
1995	5	5	Partly free
1996	4	5	Partly free
1997	5	5	Partly free
1998	5	5	Partly free
1999	5	5	Partly free
2000	5	5	Partly free

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[905] Amnesty International: International Trial Observer to Attend Court of Appeal as Former Opposition Leader JB Jeyaretnam Faces Possible Expulsion from Parliament, http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA360052001?open&of=ENG-SGP, London, 2001, accessed 2005; and Amnesty USA: JB Jeyaretnam, The Use of Defamation Suits for Political Purposes, http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/singapore/document.do?id=BF56868404E3D63E802569A5007186A8, New York, 2006, accessed 2006.
[906] Adrian Karatnycky: Freedom in the World, The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 2001-2002, New York, 2002, p. 532-536.
[907] The table is based on data provided in Freedom House: Freedom in the World, Country Ratings, 1972-2004, http://www.freedomhouse.org/ratings/index.htm, Washington D.C., 2002, accessed 2005.

Conclusion

8.1 Why the idea of the "New World Information Order" is unrealistic and outdated but still useful to devise a new vision

Half a century ago, scientists discovered that there are imbalances in the flows of news. These findings soon reached the international community. Already in the 1970s, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) organized several hundred conferences, symposia and workshops. At those events, many experts dreamed of a world, where the exchange of news is "more just and more efficient" and where everyone has the "right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers".[908] Therefore, a "New World Information Order" should be introduced.

But, as in other "Cold War" debates, the positions differed and three principal parties formed: the "West" led by the United States, the "Socialist Bloc" led by Russia and the less organized "Third World". Each had a different background and was applying its own theoretical framework (e.g. Lenin's perception of the press).[909] And in the case of the "Third World", the positions were not even expressed with a single voice. So it is not surprising that even the UNESCO itself, particularly the management and the rising influence of the "Third World" in the organization, was coming under attack.[910]

In order to achieve at least some basic agreement, the management of UNESCO suggested to the participants of the19[th] General Assembly held in 1976 in Nairobi the assignment of the "International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems" chaired by Seán MacBride.[911] Together with 15 other experts, he analyzed communication problems in contemporary societies for nearly four years.

In their ensuing report entitled "Many Voices, One World" (1980), they did not come to a single conclusion but made 82 recommendations. In general, they recommended that developing countries restructure their media systems and that industrialized countries

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[908] United Nations: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, As Adopted and Proclaimed by the General Assembly Resolution 217 A (III) on 10 December 1948, http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html, New York, date of publication unknown, accessed 2004.
[909] Inger Oesterdahl: Freedom of Information in Question, Freedom of Information in International Law and the Calls for a New World Information and Communication Order, Uppsala, 1992, p. 130 et sqq.
[910] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 18; and William Preston: Hope and Folly, The United States and UNESCO 1945-1985, New York, 1989, p. 148 et sqq.
[911] UNESCO: Records of the General Conference, Nineteenth Session, Held in Nairobi from 26 October until 30 November 1976, Paris, 1977, p. 54 et sqq; and Nobel Prize Foundation: Seán MacBride, Curriculum Vitae, http://nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/1974/macbride-cv.html, Stockholm, year of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

support these efforts with knowledge as well as financial and technical means. One of the main goals was to increase the diversity and availability of media and news by improving the overall conditions of the press. Among other things, the commission recommended the establishment of national news agencies, training centers for professionals, archives and libraries.[912]

On the following occasion, the UNESCO members more or less agreed to implement the recommendations, but how the report was interpreted and used by the members differed. While some understood it as a manifesto against the overwhelming media power of the former colonialists, others used the opportunity to point to the violations of "Human Rights" in the "Third World".[913]

At the height of the conflicts, three countries withdrew from UNESCO: the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Singapore. As a result, the organization was plunged into its worst crisis ever, which led to fundamental changes on all levels, including the adoption of a new strategy and the appointment of a new director-general.

This development shows that there was never a chance to realize the "New World Information Order". One might even argue that already the discussions about it were just a continuation of other Cold War debates. Then, the assignment of the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems would have been just horseplay.

More importantly, the vision of the "New World Information Order" assumes that there could be a single solution for all the communication problems affecting more than four billion people with different cultural backgrounds and varying political, economical, technological and social problems. Obviously, this was very presumptuous. Today, no one would seriously try to carry out such an untenable plan.

From today's point of view, however, the vision of a "New World Information Order" is not only unrealistic but also outdated. Apart from the fact that no one believes in it anymore, the main reason is that the overall state of affairs has changed. When the ideas were discussed, the political world was bi-polar or tri-polar. In the meantime, the "Cold War" came to an

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[912] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 253 et sqq.
[913] Jadwiga Pastecka: The Right to Communicate, A Socialist Approach, published in UNESCO: The New World Information Order, Document Prepared for the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, number 39, Paris, date of publication unknown, no page numbers; William Fore: NWICO, From an American Perspective, p. 12, published in Teresita Hermano (Ed.): Communication Challenges of Our Time, An Asian Perspective, Papers and Reports Presented at the 1984 Manila Conferences on Communication Issues and Curriculum Development, Manila, 1984, p. 9-16; and Narinder Aggarwala: NIIO, A Hope or a Nightmare?, p. 44-53, published in *Media Asia*, volume 12, number 1, Singapore, 1985, p. 44-53.

abrupt end and hence the number of players has increased. Today, it would be necessary to put every single issue on the table again and UNESCO would certainly not provide it anymore.

Furthermore, Seán MacBride and his co-authors woefully underestimated some issues, particularly (personal) computers. They did not anticipate that the prices for hardware would fall so fast, that usage of software would become so simple and that computers would be connected to form networks (Internet, World Wide Web). Another technology that is fully neglected in the report is mobile communication (cellular phones).[914] Both have substantially changed the way people interact and news is transmitted.

Nevertheless, many general thoughts of the report Many Voices, One World are still up-to-date. The reason is that the authors did not regard communication as an isolated phenomenon. Instead, they also took the historical dimensions into account. The development of the press, for instance, was considered starting with the invention of movable type by Johannes Gutenberg (invented in 1448). Similarly, the development of telephony was considered starting with the patent of Alexander Graham Bell (1867).[915]

On this very broad level, relatively little has changed over the last two or three decades: Newspaper, radio and television are still the leading mass media. In large cities, mass media are generally more easily available and more prevalent than in rural areas. This disparity also applies to industrialized and developing countries. Even the dominance of the "Big Four" transnational news agencies is unchanged, although one has practically disappeared (United Press International) and others have gained influence (e.g. Deutsche Presse Agentur).[916]

More importantly, the report questions in what culture, communication and media system the people want to live in, how they want to be informed and inform, and what would be necessary for it. This central and timeless question is, of course, still very useful.

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[914] Compare with Seán MacBride: Many Voices, one World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p 64-66.
[915] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, one World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 10, 11.
[916] Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 16.

8.2   How the mass media have developed in Singapore

In Singapore, culture, communication and media have always been delicate issues. During colonial times, only the British and other Europeans were said to have culture or to be civilized.[917] The reason is that they were generally higher educated, better off economically or at least stronger armed than the Muslim Malay fishermen. As a result, they regulated and controlled the communication and media.[918]

A gradual change began in the 1860s, when the number of Chinese arriving exceeded the number of Malays, because the Chinese imported many valuable goods (i.e. porcelain, paper, ink) and practiced their traditions in the public sphere (i.e. festive processions). Henceforth, the society was split into four distinct groups: The higher classes were the British, followed by the Chinese, with Malays and Tamils being the lowest classes.[919]

Since Singapore's independence (1963) and its separation from Malaysia (1965), all people are equal under the law, but culture is still closely related with ethnicity (appearance) and heritage (country of origin of the ancestors) – compare with the modern definition of culture by Edward Hall according to which culture is not inherent but must be learnt.[920] In practice, the Chinese dominate today. Some Chinese even believe that they are more civilized because the Chinese culture is said to be more than 5 000 years old.

Such racial slurs are the reason why any expressions of culture (i.e. theater plays) are looked upon with some skepticism. Since the riots in the 1950s ("Maria Hertogh Riots") and 1960s ("Mohammed Sultan Riots"), it is even feared that ethnic matters (understood as being culture) and religion (as an integral part of culture) can become "explosive issues" because it is believed that Singapore's multicultural society is "fragile like an egg and therefore the government must hold it firmly that it does not drop and break".[921] Therefore, the press was accordingly shaped.

In terms of numbers, the press in Singapore has greatly improved. There are now ten daily newspapers with an average number of around 60 pages on weekdays and around 100 pages on weekends. The combined daily circulation is more than 1.1 million copies. This development is largely attributed to the growth of the population, the increases in purchasing

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[917] Kishore Mahbubani: Can Asians Think?, Singapore, 1998, p. 17.
[918] For further information, see the part "Circumstances".
[919] Song Ong Siang: One Hundred Years History of the Chinese in Singapore, London, 1923, p. 6 et sqq.
[920] Edward Hall: Verborgene Signale, Ueber den Umgang mit Japanern, Hamburg, 1985, p. 22, 16.
[921] John Heuvel: The Unfolding Lotus, East Asia's Changing Media, A Report of The Freedom Forum Media Studies center At Columbia University in the City of New York, New York, 1993, p. 135.

power and advertising revenues, the expansion of existing communication infrastructures (i.e. the postal system) and the introduction of new technologies (i.e. full page make-up). Unfortunately, the role of the media as regulated by legislation (i.e. "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act") as well as the introduction of several concepts (i.e. "Asian Values in Journalism"), has narrowed.

During colonial times, all important newspapers in Singapore were founded, owned, managed and read by the British. The "Golden Age" of newspaper publishing began in the mid 19th century when the *Straits Times* (1845) and a number of other newspapers were launched. The "good old days", when the editor was the proprietor, lasted until the conversion of the *Straits Times* into a private company in 1900. Newspaper publishing was becoming a big business then. Even a rubber multimillionaire invested in it (Tan Kah Kee in 1923 in the Chinese-language *Nanyang Siang Pau* newspaper).[922]

Except for the brief period of Japanese occupation (1942-1945) when all newspapers were closed down or renamed by the Syonan Newspaper Association, the press supported the British. When the *Straits Times* was revived, it ran the headline "Singapore is British Again – Our Day of Liberation". One of the reasons is that the press had a "useful job to do" in this "phase of rehabilitation".[923]

If any, the press played only a marginal role in the struggle for independence. This explains why the "mouthpiece of British colonial interests" (meaning the *Straits Times*) was running into trouble with politicians such as Lee Kuan Yew. As soon as his People's Action Party won the next election and he became prime minister, the "birds of passage" scooted to Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) to "proclaim from there that they would die for the freedom of the press in Singapore".[924] But the *Straits Times* returned to Singapore as soon as the city separated from the Federation of Malaysia (1965) and supported the People's Action Party in the nation-building process then.

Henceforth, the press was put increasingly under pressure. In 1970, the last "expatriate manager" of the *Straits Times* fled from the country. In the following year, four top executives of the Chinese-language *Nanyang Siang Pau* were arrested for being involved in a "black

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[922] Soh Tiang Keng: The Singapore Press, Its Role in a Multi-Racial City-State, Singapore, 1971, p. 4; and Soh Yew Peng: The Development of Singapore's Modern Media Industry, Singapore, 1998, p. 13.
[923] Straits Times: Singapore Diary, Singapore, 3 October 1945, after Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 143.
[924] Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 262.

operation". For the same reason, the *Singapore Herald* and *Eastern Sun* were closed down.[925]

The control over the press was further extended in 1982 when the two leading Chinese-language newspapers, *Nanyang Siang Pau* and *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, were merged. The government explained this move by citing economic problems but its *Singapore Monitor* experiment did not work out.[926] Two years later, the Chinese-language press was merged with the English-language press (1984).

As a result, all newspapers (the *Tamil Murasu* was acquired in 1995) belong to one single holding company (Singapore Press Holdings) which is legally (through the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act") as well as financially (through the investment company Temasek) controlled by the government. Today, however, the duty of the Singapore press is reduced "to inform, to educate, to activate, and to entertain".[927]

Basically the same applies to radio (1936) and television (1963). Broadcasting was introduced by the British, taken over by the Japanese during World War II, and later handed over to the local authorities. They renamed the main broadcasting institution four times, but (except the short period between 2001 and 2004) there was no competition.[928] Apart from four less important radio channels, all radio and television channels are now operated by one single company (Media Corporation of Singapore) which belongs to a government investment holding company (Temasek). The latter is even true for Singapore Telecommunication and Star Hub.

Meanwhile, even four foreign publications (*Time*, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Asiaweek*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*) were restricted in circulation because they had rejected publishing "correction letters" by the government ("Right of Reply").[929] In curtailing the circulation of foreign periodicals, several points were made very clear. The most important one is that journalists should be careful when they write about Singapore in order not to get in trouble with the authorities.[930]

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[925] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Zurich, 1971, p. 1 et sqq.
[926] Kokkeong Wong: Media and Culture in Singapore, A Theory of Controlled Commodification, Creskill, 2001, p. 92.
[927] Times Organization Group of Newspapers: Editorial Politics, Singapore, 1977.
[928] In 2001, the Singapore Press Holdings challenged the dominant Media Corporation of Singapore by launching two free-to-air television channels, *Channel U* (Chinese) and *TV Works* (English, later renamed in *Channel I*) but the channels were turned over to the Media Corporation of Singapore in 2004.
[929] International Press Institute: The Singapore Government and the Press, Zurich, 1971, p. 3 et sqq.
[930] Diane Mauzy: Singapore Politics Under the People's Action Party, London, 2002, Singapore, 1971, p. 141.

So the total numbers of newspapers, radio and television channels, and even telecommunication services have been increased in the last few decades but the diversity of news and opinion has not expanded at the same rate, since there are only monopolies left. The Singapore Press Holdings publishes all newspapers (except for a free advertising sheet) and the Media Corporation of Singapore operates all (except four unimportant) radio and television channels in Singapore. And the Singapore Telecommunication and Star Hub share (with Mobile One) the bulk of the telecommunication and Internet access market.

In each of these companies, the government investment company Temasek has a controlling interest (between one percent "management shares" and 100 percent ordinary shares).[931] Needless to say, the government also legally wields power over the media. Among other things, the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" (1974) and the "Broadcasting Security Act" (1994) empower the authorities to revoke licenses without explanation.

A controversially discussed question is whether this understanding of culture, communication and media is still up-to-date. Some of the experts interviewed argue that the "egg" is not as fragile as it used to be.[932] However, the tight rules strongly affect the flows of news into, within and out of Singapore.

8.2.1 How news are disseminated into, within and out of Singapore

Although Singapore is actually an export economy (the total external trade is even greater than the entire gross domestic product), the highly industrialized "information society" is an importer of news.[933] The inflow of news is much larger than the outflow.

In the past few decades, this gap has even widened. The reason is that the growing population in the small city-state increasingly demands foreign news, but produces relatively little news itself. Today, there are more foreign media and news available in Singapore than ever before, but the exports of media and news from Singapore have not been increased at the same rate.

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[931] Temasek Holdings: Our Investments, http://www.temasekholdings.com.sg/our_investments/our_investments.htm, Singapore, 2004, accessed 2006.
[932] Cherian George: Singapore, The Air-Conditioned Nation, Essays on the Politics of Comfort and Control, 1990-2000, Singapore, 2000.
[933] Gavin Peebles: The Singapore Economy, Glos, 1996, p. 159.

To illustrate this: In Singapore, the newspapers are full of foreign news. In addition, there are at least fifty foreign newspapers regularly available in Singapore. Also, the local radio and television channels broadcast foreign news nearly every hour. Even most songs and movies are from overseas. In addition, there are more than thirty foreign free-to-air radio and a dozen foreign free-to-air television channels available in Singapore, not to mention the more than thirty foreign channels available through the cable system.[934]

But there is only one radio channel (*Radio Singapore International*) and one television channel (*Channel News Asia*) broadcasted to a wider region, and they often report more foreign than local news due to the demand abroad. Not even Singapore's leading English-language *Straits Times* newspaper is regularly available in Kuala Lumpur, although Malaysia's capital is just around 400 kilometers away.[935]

As an importer of media and news, Singapore depends heavily on the supply. One might even say that Singapore is exposed and vulnerable to incoming news flows because it can just regulate some streams (i.e. the distribution of foreign magazines through circulation restrictions) but not the (content) supply itself (i.e. the reporting in the foreign publications).

However, the overwhelming majority (approximately around 80 percent) of imported news is transmitted by a handful of transnational agencies.[936] The most relevant of these are Reuters (regularly used since 1900) and the Associated Press (used since 1946) which are based in London and New York respectively.

Until 1900, foreign news was usually taken from the newspapers which were carried by ship. Between 1900 and the establishment of the Sentosa Earth Station in 1972, telegraphy (undersea cables) was the main vehicle.[937] Since then, news are increasingly transmitted through two geostationary Intelsat IV communication satellites (one above the Pacific Ocean, the other one above the Indian Ocean) or undersea cables and is directly fed into the computer article management systems.

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[934] AsiaWaves: Radio Stations in Singapore on FM, Shortwave and DAB, http://www.asiawaves.net/singapore-radio.htm, place of publication unknown, 2005, accessed 2006; AsiaWaves: TV Stations in Singapore, http://www.asiawaves.net/singapore-tv.htm, place of publication unknown, 2005, accessed 2006; and Starhub: Channel Tiers, http://cabletv2.starhub.com/portal/site/CableTV/menuitem.68fd6b4cf1ef60cc5c180e109c108a0c/?vgnextoid=e3f7553eb8e74010VgnVCM100000c901a8c0RCRD&vgnextfmt=ItemCMId%3Ac5e0f57d90dc4010VgnVCM100000c901a8c0RCRD, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.
[935] Due to an agreement between the *Straits Times* (Singapore) and the *New Straits Times* (Malaysia).
[936] Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 16.
[937] Eddie Kuo: Communication Policy and Planning Singapore, Norfolk, 1983, p. 21.

The importation of foreign print media has improved similarly. During colonial times, most foreign publications were imported from London. Until the introduction of steam ships (1842) and the opening of the Suez Canal (1869), the speed of travel was very slow and the routes were very long. Since the establishment of the Selatar Airport in 1929, foreign publications are usually delivered by plane. Today, most foreign publications in Singapore arrive at Changi Airport (1955). A large number comes from Hong Kong. Two examples are the *Financial Times (Asia)* newspaper and the *Newsweek* magazine.

The increasing availability of foreign electronic media is also remarkable. Since the Japanese used a wireless station on the Malay island Penang in 1942 to urge the citizens in Singapore to protect themselves from the B29 bombers, Singapore is increasingly exposed to foreign broadcasts.[938] Nearly all originate from Malaysia or Indonesia due to Singapore's small size and its location between those two countries. Some stations are even located directly behind the border (e.g. *FMJB 107.5* in the Malaysian border town Johor Bahru and *Batam TV* in the city of Nagoya on the Indonesian island of Batam) and send their signal towards Singapore.[939]

As a result, the inflow of regional news has rapidly increased in the last two decade. But even foreign regional news are often produced or at least disseminated by transnational news agencies because the media in Malaysia and Indonesia also heavily depend on the wire services of Reuters and Associated Press.

(115) Simplified schema of the flow of media and news into Singapore		
Origin	Carrier / medium (example)	Volume
New York	Associated Press / New York Post	Very high
London	Reuters	Very high
Hong Kong	South China Morning Post	Very high
Johor Bahru	FMJB 107.5, etc.	Very high
Batam	Batam TV, etc.	High
Paris	Agency France Press	High
Washington D.C.	Washington Post	High
Berlin	Deutsche Presse Agentur	Medium
Beijing	Xinhua	Medium
Moscow	Itar-Tass	Medium
Tokyo	Kyodo	Medium

(116) Simplified schema of the flow of media and news out of Singapore		
Destination	Carrier / medium (example)	Volume
Asia in general	Channel News Asia	Medium
Malaysia in particular	Radio Singapore International	Medium

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[938] Mary Turnbull: A History of Singapore, 1819-1975, London, 1977, p. 164.
[939] FMJB: Selamat Datang Ke Laman Web FMJB, http://www.rtmjb.net.my/fmjb/main.htm, Nagoya, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

Indonesia in particular	Radio Singapore International	Low
European Union	Reuters, Agency France Press	Very low
United States	Associated Press, Reuters	Very low

Relatively little has changed in the dissemination of news within the city, although the number, frequency, volume and circulation of newspapers and magazines as well as the number, availability and airtime of radio and television channels have been increased since the country's independence (1963) and its separation from Malaysia (1965). There are still four major streams of information along ethnic lines because each of the four language groups (English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil) has her own distinct newspapers, magazines, radio and television channels.

During colonial times, newspapers were only delivered in the afternoon or evening. In the meantime, most newspapers have switched to morning publication. In addition, radio (1936) and television (1963) were introduced. As a result, the dissemination of news has become more diverse. In the early morning, radio is the main medium for news consumption, followed by newspapers. In the evening, television is usually preferred over the others.[940]

The best informed are the English-educated citizens, particularly young, male businessmen. The reason, apart from their higher purchasing power, is that four of the ten daily newspapers or half (551 463 copies) of the combined newspaper circulation (1 197 301), as well as nine of the 18 radio channels and the largest television channel are in English.[941] Since 1999, there is even an English-language television news channel available (*Channel News Asia*).[942] The least informed are the relatively few Tamil-educated, particularly elderly women.[943] There is not even an afternoon newspaper serving this group.

Characteristic is also the top-down direction. During colonial times, the British administration provided the most important news and controlled the media. Today, the Singapore government is the main source of news and controls the media even more effectively than the British did. What in other countries is described as "civil society" hardly exists in Singapore, because even registered societies have little influence. As a result, there are almost none news flows from the bottom upwards (see the "Feedback Groups").

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[940] Peter Chen: Mass Media Communication Patterns in Singapore, Singapore, 1978, p. 16, 17; and Mary Turnbull: Dateline Singapore, 150 Years of the Straits Times, Singapore, 1995, p. 65.
[941] Singapore Press Holdings: SPH Newspapers, http://www.sph.com.sg/newspapers/straitstimes.html, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006; and Media Corporation of Singapore: MediaCorp Press Ltd., http://www.corporate.mediacorp.sg/press/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[942] Channel News Asia: About Channel News Asia, http://www.channelnewsasia.com/cna/aboutus-new/index.htm, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[943] Yen Ling Tan: Old People and New Media in Wired Societies, Exploring the Socio-Digital Divide in Singapore, p. 95-116, published in *Media Asia*, volume 30, number 2, Singapore, 2003, p. 95-116.

(117) Simplified schema of the flow of media and news within Singapore		
Direction	Example	Volume
Top to bottom	From the government to the people	Very high
Bottom to top	From the people to the government	Very low
Elder to younger	From parents to children	Very high
Younger to elder	From children to parents	Low
Richer to poorer	Businessmen to workers	High
Poorer to richer	Workers to businessmen	Very low
Higher educated to less educated	Teachers to students	Very high
Less educated to higher educated	Students to teachers	Very low
English- to non-English-educated	English- to Chinese-educated	Very high
Chinese- to non-Chinese-educated	Chinese- to Tamil-educated	High
Tamil- to non-Tamil-educated	Tamil- to Chinese-educated	Very low

Recent developments also give insights. Since 1994, the Internet is accessible to the public. As a result, not only has the inflow of foreign news heavily increased but also the exchange of news within Singapore, particularly due to mobile communication.[944] In December 2005, the total number of mobile phone subscriptions (4 256 800) was almost as high as the total population (4 351 400).[945]

Another recent development is that the facilities in Singapore are increasingly used to disseminate news to other countries. Some of the publications printed and distributed from Singapore are the *Asian Wall Street Journal* and the *Time* magazine.[946] The news agency Reuters and the large British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) have moved their regional offices from Hong Kong to Singapore. Singapore Telecommunication has even attracted downstream customers from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Brunei, Indonesia and the Philippines.[947]

(118) Simplified schema of the flow of media and news through Singapore		
Destination	Carrier / medium (example)	Volume
Asia in general	Reuters	High
Malaysia in particular	Time magazine, etc.	Medium
Indonesia in particular	Time magazine, etc.	Medium

Thus, the central thesis of this dissertation can be confirmed: The news flows in Singapore have become much more efficient but not more just in the past several decades, because the major obstacles to freedom of the press (i.e. post-publishing censorship) have not been removed. In fact, the regulations (i.e. "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act") were even tightened, monopolies were established (Singapore Press Holdings, Media Corporation of

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[944] Madanmohan Rao: The Wireless Tsunami, An Asia-Pacific Panorama, p. 63-70, published in *Media Asia*, volume 30, number 2, Singapore, 2003, p. 63-70.
[945] Department of Statistics: Transports and Communication, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/keystats/annual/yos/yos115.pdf, Singapore, 2006, accessed 2006.
[946] David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 24.
[947] Larry Press: The Internet in Singapore, A Benchmark Report, http://mosaic.unomaha.edu/SINGAPORE_2000.pdf, Omaha, 2000, accessed 2005, p. 24.

Singapore) and concepts to further bind the press were introduced (e.g. "OB Markers"). Therefore, it is still worth discussing the imbalances in news flows there, even though the idea of the "New World Information Order" is unrealistic and outdated now.

\(119\) Milestones in the development of news flows in Singapore	
Year	Event
1805	The *Prince of Wales Gazette* newspaper appears on the Malay island Penang
1819	A postal office is opened in the former Parliament House
1823	The *Singapore Chronicle* is launched as the city's first newspaper
1824	The first books are printed by missionaries
1835	The *Singapore Free Press* newspaper is started
1842	Steam ships are introduced so that ships do not depend on the monsoon season anymore
1845	The *Straits Times* newspaper is launched
1869	The Suez Canal is opened so that ships must not travel around the African horn anymore
1869	Telegraphy is introduced and the first submarine cable to Hong Kong is installed
1870	Editors of the *Straits Times* make use of the Reuters news services
1879	Telephony is introduced
1904	During the Russian-Japanese War, the local demand in international news increases
1921	The first libel case against a journalist is filed
1923	The *Nanyang Siang Pau* newspaper is launched
1929	The *Sin Chew Jit Poh* newspaper is started
1929	Selatar, the country's first regular airport is opened
1935	The "Official Secrets Act" prevents the disclosure of official documents and information
1936	The British Malaya Broadcasting Corporation is established and *Radio Singapura* is launched
1937	The first overseas phone call is made from Singapore
1941	Japanese troops invade the city and take control over all mass media
1945	The *Straits Times* and several other newspapers are revived
1946	The *Straits Times* subscribes to the Associated Press
1950	Due to reporting in the press, the "Maria Hertogh Riots" break out
1955	Changi International Airport is opened
1959	The *Straits Times* moves its headquarters to Kuala Lumpur
1960	The "Internal Security Act" empowers the authorities to detain people prejudicial
1963	Television is started as a pilot project. Later, the first television channel is launched
1964	The first computer is installed
1965	Singapore separates from the Federation of Malaysia
1967	The new country joins several international organizations
1968	The People's Action Party wins all seats in the parliament
1971	Two newspapers are closed down and several journalists are detained without trail
1971	Singapore makes use of the Maritime Satellite System
1972	Singapore's first satellite earth station receives signals from Intelsat IV over the Indian Ocean
1973	Transponders are leased in order to connect to the Indonesian Palapa system
1973	The *Straits Times* moves back to Singapore and henceforth supports the People's Action Party
1974	A facer-canceller table is put into operation at the Singapore Post office
1974	Color television is introduced
1974	The "Newspaper and Printing Press Act" regulates the media industry
1975	The British Broadcasting Corporation sets up a relay station in order to broadcast BBC World
1975	The Singapore National Union of Journalists introduces a "Code of Professional Conduct"
1976	Full international direct dialing becomes available
1978	The 2-digit postal code system is changed to a 4-digit system
1982	Two leading Chinese-language newspapers are merged into one single holding
1984	The Chinese-language press is merged with the English-language press into one single holding
1987	Four international magazines are restricted in circulation
1987	The first e-mail is received in Singapore
1988	The first cellular mobile radio system is introduced
1994	Internet access becomes available to the public
1995	"OB Markers" are introduced
1996	The Singapore Broadcasting Authority issues the "Internet Code of Practice"
1997	The internet top level domain "sg" is introduced
1998	The country's first satellite *ST-1* is launched
2000	The Singapore Cable Vision is connection 99 percent of all households with Singapore One

2001	Singapore Telecommunication buys the second largest telecommunication operator in Australia
2004	Singapore Telecommunication, Star Hub and Mobile One roll out 3G-networks

8.3 Which aspects of the "New World Information Order" are still relevant regarding Singapore

Though the "New World Information Order" was never introduced, because it is unrealistic and now outdated, it had some impact. Already the discussions about it led to the establishment of several national news agencies (i.e. United News of Bangladesh, 1988).[948] Even the tiny-city state Singapore benefited from the UNESCO programs and also followed some of the recommendations published in the report Many Voices, One World.

Already in 1968, an assistant UNESCO director-general in charge of communication (his name is unknown) visited Singapore in order to discuss the communication problems in Singapore with the deputy prime minister, the minister of finance and officials from the Economic Development Board.[949]

Shortly after, an UNESCO expert in archives administration, whose family name is said to be Verhoeven, was assigned to the National Library to survey the archives and records in the departments. It is primarily his doing that the National Archives of Singapore were established and that the National Library was able to focus on public services. As a result, both the number of books and the number of library memberships increased.[950]

Meanwhile, the Singapore government applied to the UNESCO "Program of Participation" and was awarded some fellowships. These financial means were used by Ang Kok Peng, a scientist and politician, to teach a course at the National University of Singapore at which 24 people from eight countries participated.

One might even argue that the establishment of the Asian Media Information and Communication Center (AMIC) on the campus of Nanyang Technological University is an outcome of the discussions about the "New World Information Order". It generated so much

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[948] Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies: OANA Members, http://www.oananews.org/more.php?agency=1, Kuala Lumpur, 2006, accessed 2006.
[949] Unknown: Letter from the Assistant Director-General in charge of communication to the Director-General about a technical inspection mission to Singapore, dated 8 April 1968, Paris, not published yet.
[950] Victoria School: National Archives of Singapore, http://itclub.vs.moe.edu.sg/cyberfair2003/landmarks/nationalarchives.html, Singapore, 2003, accessed 2005; and National Archives of Singapore: About NAS, http://www.nhb.gov.sg/NAS/AboutNAS/AboutNAS.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

interest that the Friedrich Ebert Foundation of Germany decided to finance media institutions abroad.[951] Today, AMIC is the premier research center in Asia with more than 65 000 items.

More importantly, the postal system - the backbone of communication - was expanded. As a result, the number of mail items increased by more than five times (from 158 million in 1965 to 830 million in 2005).[952] Today, there is a post office or at least a mailbox along all main roads.

Also the education system was expanded. As a result, the literacy rate increased from 72 percent in 1965 to more than 90 percent in 2005, and the number of students at higher education institutions from 8 315 in 1965 to more than 100 000 in 2005.[953] Today, there are enough schools and teachers for all students (in the average, one teacher per 25 students).

But only those recommendations were implemented which were considered to be in the specific interest of Singapore (and it's ruling People's Action Party). To the present day, there is no national news agency, although it would have been easy to establish one when the two leading Chinese-language newspapers were merged (1982) and the Chinese-language press was merged with the English-language press (1984).

More importantly, citizens in Singapore do still not have the "right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". Community presses, for instance, are still not allowed without explicit approval from the authorities. Instead, there are narrow definitions of what is news ("Duty of the Press"), what should be published ("Asian Values in Journalism"), what may be debated ("OB Marker") and an unquestioned reverence for authority (which is often attributed to Confucianism).[954]

This is quite remarkable, because Seán MacBride and his co-authors explicitly recommend the abolishment of all kinds of censorship. Therefore, monopolies established by political action should be broken up, bureaucratic and judicial obstructions removed, and parliamentary privileges curtailed.[955] Instead, the opposite was done in Singapore: In the same year, the government decided to withdraw from UNESCO, all newspapers were

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[951] Friedrich Ebert Foundation: Development Cooperation, http://www.fes.de/fesenglish.pdf, Bonn, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006; and AMIC: About Us, http://www.amic-web.org/about.php, Singapore, 2004, modified 2005, accessed 2006.
[952] Singapore Post: How Your Mail Gets Delivered, http://www.singpost.com/singpost_06about_how.htm, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2006.
[953] Government Printing Office: Singapore Year Book 1965, Singapore, 1965 p. 225, 236-238.
[954] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, one World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 138.
[955] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, one World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 139.

merged into one single holding company (Singapore Press Holdings) and all radio (except four less relevant) plus all television channels were merged into another (Media Corporation of Singapore). One and a half years later, the "Newspaper and Printing Presses Act" was amended in such a way that even foreign publications can be "gazetted" (and four international publications were indeed restricted in circulation). Also, some other regulations have even been tightened.

A major obstacle is the strict legislation which undermines the freedom of speech ("Societies Act") in general and the freedom of the press in particular ("Newspaper and Printing Presses Act", "Internal Security Act", "Official Secrets Act"). Another obstacle is the financial involvement of the government in the mass media (i.e. through "management shares" held by Temasek). Further obstacles are the atmosphere of fear ("see enemy hiding behind every tree") and the unwritten rules ("OB Marker").[956] Among the people, there is even an unquestioned reverence for authority which is closely related to the general feeling that the Singapore society is "fragile like an egg" ("Maria Hertogh Riots").

Thus, some aspects of the "New World Information Order" are still useful regarding Singapore, particularly those outlined in the report "Many Voices, One World" and dealing with press freedom. Apart from the 82 recommendations, notably parts I, III and V of the report discuss the "right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers".[957] Besides, they provide background information about other topics such as on concentration of ownership, censorship, democratization of communication, the rights and responsibilities of journalists, and even codes of professional conduct.

However, the review of the discussions regarding the "New World Information Order" combined with the example of the development of news flows in Singapore prove Rupert Murdoch's statement: "Never has the flow of information and ideas, of hard news and reasoned comment, been more important."[958]

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[956] Young PAP: Discussion Forum, http://www.youngpap.org.sg/phpbb/viewtopic.php?t=6871&start=0, Singapore, 2005, accessed 2005.

[957] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, one World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 3-40, 203-251.

[958] The quoted statement by Rupert Murdoch was published in The Guardian: Internet Means End for Media Barons, Says Murdoch, http://media.guardian.co.uk/site/story/0,,1730382,00.html, London, 14 March 2006, accessed 2006.

Annex

Documentation of the interviews (in chronogical order)

Date and Time	Name	Position	Organization	Focus of the interview
November 22nd, 2004, 3.15-4.00 p.m.	Eric Thompson	Assistant Professor	Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore	Society and culture in Singapore
November 22nd, 2004, 4.15-5.00 p.m.	Tan Ern Ser	Associate Professor	Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore	Understanding Singapore Society
November 25th, 2004, 10.00-11.25 a.m.	Michael T.H. Lim and Koh June May	Director and Senior Marketing Manager	Media Development Authority	Delevopment of media in Singapore
November 25th, 2004, 4.00-5.30 p.m.	Viswa Sadasivan	Chairman, Producer	The Right Angle Group	Independent media in Singapore
November 26th, 2004, 5.30-6.30 p.m.	Crispin Maslog	Professor	School of Communication, Nanyang Technological University	History of mass media in Southeast Asia
November 28th, 2004 10.00-11.15 a.m.	James Gomez	Book author, politician, activist	Think Centre Asia	Press freedom and freedom of speech
November 29th, 2004, 10.00-11.00 a.m.	Krishnasamy Bhavani	Director and Press Secretary to Minister	Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts	Media regulations in Singapore
November 29th, 2004, 3.15-4.30 p.m.	Ang Peng Hwa	Associate Professor, AMIC-Chairman	Asian Media Information & Communication Centre	Development of media in Singapore
November 29th, 2004, 4.45-6.45 p.m.	Cherian George	Assistant Professor	School of Communication, Nanyang Technological University	Society and culture in an *Air-Conditioned Nation*
November 30th, 2004, 3.10.-4.30 p.m.	Patrick Daniel	Managing Editor	The Straits Times, Singapore Press Holding	The role of the press in Singapore
November 30th, 2004, 4.45-7.30 p.m.	Soh Yew Peng	Lecturer, book author	School of Film & Media Studies, Ngee Ann Polytechnic University	The development of Singapore's modern media industry
December 1st, 2004, 9.40-11.15 p.m.	PN Balji	Director, former Editor-in-Chief	Bang Public Relations PTE LTD.	The role and influence of print media in Singapore
December 3rd, 2004, 10.30-11.45 a.m.	Cheong Yip Seng	Editor-at-large, former Editor-in-Chief	English-Malay Newspaper Division, Singapore Press Holding	History of the *Straits Times*
July 21nd, 2005, 16.00-18.00 p.m.	Arun Mahizhnan	Deputy Director	Institute of Policy Studies	Development of the press in Singapore

Questionnaire used as a guideline during the interviews

Academic background

As part of his dissertation about the development of transmitting news in Singapore, the author is interviewing selected academics, politicians and professionals.
This questionnaire serves as a guideline for the interviews.

Instructions for use

The questions may be answered with "Yes" or "No". It is also possible to answer "Both" (Yes and No) or "Neither" (neither Yes nor No). In case someone does not know the answer, "Don't know", or if someone prefers not to answer a question at all, "No answer" should be ticked. If possible, the reason for each answer should be noted.

Personal data

○ Academic   ○ Politician   ○ Professional

 Full Name:
_____

 Position:
_____

 Institution/Company:
_____

 Date and place of the interview:
_____

Questions

1.) Founded by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819, is seems that in Singapore the colonialists arrived before the menials. Is the former British colony a Western state?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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2.) After independence, Singapore joined the Federation of Malaysia. Are the people of Singapore part of the Malay nation?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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3.) The majority of people living in Singapore are ethnically Chinese. Is Singapore a Chinese society?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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4.) Founded, owned, run and read by British, it seems that the English-language newspaper _Straits Times_ served for a long time British interests only. Is that true?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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5.) In 1959 its editor Leslie Hoffmann and Lee Kuan Yew were fighting over the freedom of press. The secretary-general of the People's Action Party (PAP) threatened that "any newspaper that tries to sour up or strain relations between the Federation and Singapore after May 30 will go in for subversion." May this be seen as the first attempt to put the media under political control?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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6.) Soon after Singapore's separation from Malaysia in 1965 "The Straits Times Press" was divided into three separate companies. The one that continued to publish "The Straits Times" in Singapore did a complete turnaround and henceforth supported the PAP. Was that surprising?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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7.) In 1980, Seán MacBride recommended on behalf of UNESCO the establishment of a "more just and more efficient information order". This report was reviewed by numerous academics located in Singapore. It even seems that the Singaporean government followed several recommendations. Can you confirm that the MacBride-report has had impact on academic research and political decisions in Singapore?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

8.) One of the recommendations by Seán MacBride that the Singaporean government did not follow was the introduction of press freedom in Western sense. Is this the reason why Singapore withdrew from UNESCO?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

9.) In 1984 all local newspapers (except the small *Tamil Masura*) were merged into the Singapore Press Holdings. The principal reason, as announced in the media, was to cut costs. Can you confirm that this merger was not politically motivated to cement the power of the PAP?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

10.) In the following years foreign magazines came under pressure. The government restricted the sale of the *Time* magazine, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Asiaweek*, and *Far Eastern Economic Review* because they had published "untrue" information and refused to publish letters by the government without editing them. Are such restrictions a proper way to deal with single articles in international magazines?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

11.) During the 1990s "Asian values" was a major topic. Several academics argued that "Asian values" apply notably to journalists. Do you think "Asian" journalists have more responsibility than "Western" journalists"?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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12.) While in other countries the media are watchdogs of the government, it seems that in Singapore the government is the watchdog of the media. Is that true?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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13.) Both the government and the media continuously repeat that the "Singaporean society is fragile like an egg and therefore the government has to hold it firmly, that it doesn't drop and break". Is this perception of the society correct?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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14.) In multicultural Singapore, ethnic matters (race) and religion are considered to be "explosive issues". Thus, any inflammatory discussion of these topics is illegal. Do you believe that street disorders could arise due to reporting in the media?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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15.) Supposing a street fight broke out between Chinese and Malay and some people got killed, the editor of the *Straits Times* was asked if he would carry this story on the first page. Cheong Yip answered: "Very simple, I wouldn't carry it. […] Publishing the story would mean the whole city gets to know. There's no guarantee that people wouldn't misinterpret it." Do you share his view that concealing such a story is more important than publishing it?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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16.) Today, Singapore is the leading media hub in Southeast Asia. It has several submarine cables and three satellite earth stations. One might suppose that numerous media companies in other countries could not publish or broadcast without the Singaporean infrastructure. Is that true?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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17.) Although Singapore has excellent domestic facilities, the access to media is limited. Ordinary inhabitants are not allowed to use satellite dishes and numerous Internet sites are technically blocked. Would you call these rules restrictive?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

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18.) Practically, there is only one employer in the media industry because all newspapers belong to one holding group which is under government control. Thus, the staff must be very careful not to "bite the hand that feeds them". Is "self-censorship" among journalists common?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

19.) In comparison with their local colleagues, the hundreds of foreign journalists serving media outside Singapore enjoy much more press freedom. Do you think it is strange that the news flow through and out of Singapore is much less controlled and restricted than the news flow into and within the city?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

20.) Within the city, several news streams may be observed. Each ethnic group has its own newspaper, radio and television station. Each religion has its own spokesmen and listeners. Younger people prefer other media in contrast to elder people. Can you identify any further streams?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

21.) In countries where English is the only language that all people understand, English-language newspapers usually have much more impact on the public opinion than other print media. Does this apply to Singapore as well?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

21.) In the late 1990s, computer specialists and "human right activists" believed that Internet may let more people participate in public discussions. Thus, the whole flow of news would become more just. Do you believe that this will come true anytime?

○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Both   ○ Neither   ○ Don't know   ○ No answer

22.) More than two decades ago, Seán MacBride had demanded a "more just and more efficient information order". Regarding Singapore, do you think the flow of new has became more just and more efficient in the meantime?

○ Yes ○ No ○ Both ○ Neither ○ Don't know ○ No answer

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Further remarks

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Transcript of a conversation with John A. Lent

About John A. Lent

John Anthony Lent was born on 8 September 1936 in East Millsboro, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. He studied at Ohio University from which he received a Bachelor and a Masters of Science in Journalism. He received a Ph.D. in mass communication from the University of Iowa. He taught at the University of Western Ontario, where he held the first Rogers Chair in mass communication, at Universiti Sains Malaysia, where he developed the first communication studies program in Malaysia, at the University of Wyoming, Marshall University, Wisconsin State University, West Virginia Institute of Technology, De La Salle College (Philippines), where he held a Fulbright Scholarship, and at the University of Toronto Archaeological Field School.

Since 1974, John A. Lent is affiliated to Temple University in Philadelphia and, since 1976, is Professor of Communication there. In addition, he has held numerous positions, editorships and memberships and was awarded a number of prizes, scholarships and other honors.

In the last 42 years, John A. Lent has done research in more than fifty countries, published more than 70 books and hundreds of articles, most of them about mass communication in Asia.[959] He pioneered in fields such as Asian mass communication, Caribbean mass communication, popular culture and comic art. His extensive bibliography about "The New World and International Information Order", published 1982 in Singapore, is one of the main resources of this dissertation.[960]

About the conversation

The conversation was audio taped on Monday, 18 July 2005, 4.00 -4.30 p.m, at the "14th Annual Conference" of the Asian Media Information and Communication Center which was held from 18-21 July 2005 in Beijing, China. The comments in the footnotes were later added by the author of this dissertation and do not necessarily reflect the perspective or opinion of the respondent.

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[959] Temple University: John Lent, http://astro.temple.edu/~jlent/, Philadelphia, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.
[960] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982.

The conversation

No one covered the debate about the New World Information Order in the 1970s as precise and detailed as you did. When you look back, what do you think about it?

John A. Lent: *First of all, the discussion started before the Seventies. There were some people who were talking about some of these issues, Herb Schiller for instance.[961] I got involved in it in 1974. The IAMCR met in Leipzig, Germany, and I was asked to present a paper.[962] I presented a paper on what I call the "Four Conundrums".[963] They liked it quite a bit and apparently shared it with Masmoudi who was working with the Non-Aligned-Countries Movement.[964] I didn't know until many years later that some of the points in my paper were used setting up the "New World Information Order", as well as some of the points made by other people.[965] The way I understood it, it mainly came out of the Non-Aligned-Countries Movement. Of course, UNESCO was also working in that area.*

As for what I thought/think about it: It was a very vibrant time. There was so much concern about some of the issues: the quality of news, the news flow, media/cultural imperialism, development communication, etc. If there is anytime that these crucial issues were taken seriously, then it was that time because the NWICO became such an issue. You know, it was even picked up by the mainstream media in the United States; they were reacting against it. I thought it was a very important time. But suddenly all of it was dropped. At the end of the Seventies, there was this rush to new technology. It seems that some of the issues that were

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[961] Herbert Schiller: Mass Media and American Empire, New York, 1969.

[962] The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) is a professional organization in the field of media and communication research. It was established in 1957. IAMCR: Welcome to IAMCR, http://www.iamcr.net/thtm/whateng.htm, place and date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

[963] The paper was presented on 19 September 1974 in Leipzig, German Democratic Republic, in the "Working Group on Mass Media and Developing Nations" at the "International Scientific Conference" which was headlined with "The Contribution of the Mass Media to the Development of Consciousness in a Changing World" and sponsored by International Association for Mass Communication Research. The paper was published several times, for example in Oldrich Bures (Ed.): Developing World and Mass Media, Prague, 1975, p. 36-55.

[964] The Tunisian politician Mustapha Masmoudi had quit his post as Minister of Foreign Affairs six months before the conference. Soon after, he became the most popular representative of the Non-Aligned-Countries Movement, an international organization of over 100 states which considered themselves not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc.

[965] In July 1978, Mustapha Masmoudi presented a draft paper at the third session of the "International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems". Mustapha Masmoudi: The New World Information Order, as presented at the third session of the "International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems" in July 1978, p. 13, published in UNESCO: The New World Information Order, Document Prepared for the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, Paris, number 31, date of publication unknown, no page numbers.

so important throughout the Seventies that had been germinating for years were put on a back burner. So many of the things that people were thinking about, and trying to do something about, no longer were that important. And, of course, some of that happened when the United States pulled out of UNESCO. If I am not mistaken, the US contributed something like a third of the budget.[966] So the number of conferences dwindled compared to the Seventies when there were so many conferences everywhere.[967] They put it all on the back burner.

I remember that you wrote at this time that too many people spend too much time on too many conferences…[968]

John A. Lent: *Yeah, right, right… (He is laughing).*

… One might even argue that all these discussions have more damaged than helped because in the end, UNESCO was isolated, etcetera.[969]

John A. Lent: *Perhaps there was too much discussion, with harmful effects. There was a lot of misunderstanding. A lot of it was caused by the watchdogs of freedom of expression. Individual's issues were not UNESCO's issues and were not Non-Aligned-Country's issues. But at these conferences were also government officials and they voiced their opinions. And it seems that that was what was picked up by the U.S. mainstream media. It was generating a backlash on some of the issues.*

When I was listening to the discussions this morning, I had the impression that some of the terms used are basically the same that were used in the Seventies and Eighties.[970] Is the debate still going on or is it another, absolutely new discussion?

John A. Lent: *To a certain degree, I think, the debate is still going on. It was not forwarded from the Seventies. A lot has been replaced or covered over. Today, there is much more enthusiasm for new technologies,*

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[966] The United States of America had carried at least 25 percent of the UNESCO budget and withdrew in 1984.

[967] Alone in the year 1977, at least twenty conferences had been held in different countries.

[968] John A. Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 18.

[969] Compare with Wolfgang Kleinwaechter: USA gegen UNESCO, Szenarium einer Epressung, Berlin, 1985, p. 38.

[970] In the morning of the first day of the "14th AMIC Annual Conference, John A. Lent, along with with Abdul Waheed Khan, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, and other distinguished experts held a forum on "Opportunities and Challenges for the Millennium".

digitalization, globalization, etcetera. Some of the terms of the Seventies have been going out and others introduced. Besides, there have been people who made some serious criticism about cultural imperialism and some of the other issues of the 1970s' debate. It is true that there were shortcomings of some of that theory. But to pull it all out of public discourse on the basis of some of this criticism and to say that it is no longer a relevant issue, to me is ridiculous. There are people who argue that culture/media imperialism is no longer relevant because you have the active audience and all this sort of thing. But it is very relevant. Look around, you are in Beijing. You see media imperialism and you see it very strongly.[971]

That is why I am writing my dissertation about it.

John A. Lent: *I think it has a lot of relevance, perhaps more relevance today than back then because of the rapid spread of information and entertainment and also because the divide between have and have not has even gotten wider with the new information technology coming in. People continue to talk about the "Global Village", but we are already beyond this issue.[972] The "Global Village" is only for a small part of the world population. Fifty to sixty percent of the Earth's population have never touched a telephone, not to speak about computers. There are still the Have and the Have-Not. Now they call it "Digital Divide" and things like that.[973] But those are the same issues to me, with new terms. There was a twist in policy. People feel that there shouldn't be a negative reaction to these issues. They try to see it positive.*

For several decades, you have observed the development of media in Asia. Has anything changed?

John A. Lent: *Tremendous changes, sure. When I started out in 1964, television was still new in many parts of Asia.[974] You did not have the multitude of*

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[971] In China, the mass media is still strictly under control of the communist party, although the government is lifting the regulations now.
[972] The term "Global Village" was coined by Marshall McLuhan.
[973] "Digital Divide" is mostly used to describe the socio-economic gap between people or communities who have access to new media and those who do not. It does usually not refer to the contents or its sources.
[974] In the mid-1960s, only about twenty countries in the world had a regular television service.

channels that you have today.[975] In summer 1965, I spent some time at the Asahi Shimbun newspaper in Tokyo and I was so impressed by the fact that they had gotten involved in so much technology that was not used in the West.[976] It was there in the West, but it wasn't being used. Asahi Shimbun was transmitted by facsimile from one city to another.[977] The newsroom was computerized. But that paper was an isolated case. In Pakistan, newspapers were still using hand-set types. The whole technology has changed.

Of course, the re-imitation of the West is there too, at this time. There was always a high percentage of Western content in television in Asia. The difference today is that you do have many more local programs. But I still believe that the West has high influence. You have to look at the sources of those programs. They may be local in the sense that they use local talents, but the concepts are still Western. Look at "Who wants to be a millionaire".[978] It is broadcast in forty different versions in forty different countries.

So there is still a lot of imitation which to me is a type of cultural/media imperialism. There are many changes. The cities are much bigger than they were forty years ago. As a result, the newspapers are much bigger in terms of circulation. But the major media are still produced in the big cities, as they always have been and deal with urban issues.[979]

Has the understanding and the role of media changed in Asia?

John A. Lent: *You mean, in terms of freedom of expression? I think so. There has been an increase of freedom in many countries because the governments have changed. There was no elected government in Taiwan in 1964.[980] In 1965, I was living in the Philippines where they elected Ferdinand Marcos*

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[975] In countries with an "Open-Sky-Policy", such as Indonesia, more than one hundred television channels are available.

[976] The Asahi Shimbun is the second largest newspaper in Japan. Today, it has a circulation of more than eight million copies. Asahi.com: About the Asahi Shimbun Company, http://www.asahi.com/shimbun/honsya/e/, Tokyo, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

[977] In Europe, the "Leonardo" system is used for it.

[978] "Who wants to be a millionaire?" is a television game show which offers cash prizes for correctly answering multiple-choice questions. It was first aired in England in 1998 and adopted in numerous countries in Asia, from Japan to India. ITV.com: Millionaire, The TV Show, http://millionaire.itv.com/millionaire/tvshow.php, London, date of publication unknown, accessed 2005.

[979] Particularly in the Philippines, the gap between rural and urban areas is very obvious.

[980] Back then, Taiwan was under control of the Kuomingtang who had fled from Mainland China in 1949.

for the first of two elected terms and then his long dictatorship began.[981]
South Korea was under dictatorship, Pakistan under martial law.[982]
Remember, China was under Mao at that time.[983] All that has changed.

Now the governments are different in many of these countries. There are
more elected governments and there is more people's participation. That
is reflected in the media, and in the concepts of the media. I did a little
study in the early Seventies in a number of countries in Asia.[984] I wanted
to know which newspapers use editorial cartoons. At this time, there were
no parodies of the heads of state, no caricature picture of leaders. There
were no caricatures out of respect for the elders or out of respect for the
leaders. There is still a sense of that today. We still see hardly any
caricatures in Asia. In Taiwan, you did not see any caricatures of
government officials until 1987.[985]

But it has been generally recognized that the media play an important
role in society. In the 1960s, there was no AMIC. There were no large
media organizations. That comes mainly in the Seventies and after.[986]
And that has changed the whole world. Yes, there is much more freedom
now.

More than two decades ago, Seán MacBride demanded a more just and more efficient
information order. Regarding Singapore, do you think that this vision has come true?

John A. Lent: *In a very limited way, yes. During the time of Lee Kuan Yew, there*
                 certainly wasn't much press freedom.[987] There was no open dialogue. In
                 my case, I ran into trouble with the Singapore government for running an

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[981] Ferdinand Marcos (1917-1989) was the tenth President of the Philippines. After a series of bombings in Manila, he declared martial law in 1972 and assumed full dictatorial control a few months later. He was removed from office by a peaceful revolution on the main highway in Metro Manila in 1986.

[982] In 1961, a military coup led by general Park Chung Hee turned South Korea into a dictatorship that lasted 18 years. At that time, Pakistan was also run by a military government.

[983] Mao Zedong (1893-1976) was the chairman of the Politburo and of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. In 1958, he launched the "Great Leap Forward" campaign which caused a major economic disaster and famine during which 30 million people died. In the mid-1960s, he had the idea of a "Cultural Revolution" during which at least one million people were murdered and many more were imprisoned.

[984] John A. Lent presented the results at a cartoon exhibition in Kuala Lumpur in 1973.

[985] In 1987, martial law was lifted in Taiwan. As a result, several opposition parties were formed. One, the Democratic Progressive Party with its candidate Chen Shui-bian, succeeded in 2000.

[986] The Asian Media Information and Communication Center, located at the "School of Communication and Information" of Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore was established in 1971 with the support of the government of Singapore and the German Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation.

[987] Lee Kuan Yew was the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore from 1959 to 1990. Now, his son, Lee Hsien Loong, is running the government.

article about the lack of freedom of the press there. Together with two others, I was locked in as being Marxist or Communist. It became a pretty important issue which led to Singapore being expelled or asked to leave the Socialist International, partly over these articles of the three of us.[988] So you couldn't criticize the lack of press freedom without suffering consequences. I think that would be gone now, to a limited degree. But the media are still owned and controlled by the state. And, I believe, the senior minister has still some impact. I don't think he has completely left the scene. But it is different now. It has improved, slightly.

One of the questions raised in my dissertation is why Singapore withdrew from UNESCO in the heat of the NWICO debate. Some argue that Singapore just followed the example of the United States, but others assume that it was because of economic reasons.[989] What do you think?

John A. Lent: *I always heard that Singapore was following the US example, but I always find it difficult to understand because Lee Kuan Yew was very critical of the West and the Western media. The Singapore government regularly filed libel charges against Western media and even cut their circulations.[990] I wondered whether there was some sort of economic pressure from the United States. But if so, why Singapore and why not other countries? The idea of the money, however, does not make any sense to me, because 18 to 19000 US Dollars is nothing, very little money.[991] It was a very strange thing. I have no idea what was happening.*

Do you expect that Singapore is going to open up?

John A. Lent: *I don't think they are going to open up. They will open up as much as necessary to continue to push forward the concept of being a communication hub. It has been pushed now for 15 years, maybe longer.*

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[988] Singapore quit from the Socialist International in 1976 as the result of some of the other parties' efforts to get it expelled from the organization was gathering steam. Phua Kai Lit: Thorstein Veblen's Singapore?, http://phuakl.tripod.com/eTHOUGHT/Veblen.html, place and date of publication unknown, probably Singapore, 2000, accessed 2005. Further information about the incident can be found in Devan Nair: Socialism that Works, The Singapore Way, Singapore, 1976, p. 131 et seq.

[989] Compare with the article in this dissertation about Singapore's withdrawal from UNESCO.

[990] Over the years, the Singaporean government reduced the circulation of following international print media: *Time* magazine, *Newsweek*, *Asiaweek*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*.

[991] Singapore never had to carry more than 0.1 percent of the overall expenses of UNESCO, approximately 19 000 to 38 000 US-Dollar per annum.

The same is happening in other countries looking for economic advance. In many aspects, Singapore serves as a model: How much freedom and how many civil rights are good and how those can be controlled…

Apart from that, I would like to know why you became so interested in comic art.

John A. Lent: *In the mid 1960s, when I was in the Philippines, I was more interested and concerned to pull together some of the first materials on newspapers and broadcasting. I thought that this would be something for the future. I have had a lot of pleasant and very productive interviews with all types of media people, nearly in every country in Asia, and I am honored and gratified with how much time a lot of these people spent with me. But with the cartoonists it was different because no one had looked at them before. And so, when someone from academia was coming in, he was welcomed with open arms, and I was. Over the years, increasingly, I became aware of the important role comic art plays in society. Also, I found it to be a field not studied, and I have usually sought out areas new to academia.*

Professor Lent, thank you very much for this conversation.

Transcript of a conversation with Francis T. Seow

About Francis Seow

Francis T. Seow was born on October 11, 1928 in Singapore. He is a barrister-at-law having been called to bar by the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple Inn. Until 1971, he held several key posts in the Singapore legal service, including that of solicitor general. Later, he became president of the Singapore Law Society.

In 1988, Francis Seow was one of the three candidates of the opposition Workers' Party running in the general election. Although the People's Action Party has dominated Singapore politics since 1959, his prospects were promising given his high name recognition and his reputation as an advocate. But, shortly before Polling Day, he was arrested under the Internal Security Act. The authorities alleged that he had illegally received funds from the United States of America, in particular the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), to enter into elective opposition politics. However, he was detained without trial for 72 days and, according to him, treated badly. Amnesty International named him a "Prisoner of Conscience".

While still under detention, the authorities were preparing a trial for alleged tax fraud and and tax evasion against him. Meanwhile, Francis Seow was invited by New York-based Human Rights Watch to visit the United States of America to celebrate its 10th anniversary where since then he has remained in self-imposed exile, after learning that the government was changing the laws expressly to his detriment.

In 1989-90, he became the Orville Schell fellow at Yale Law School, and later a fellow at the Human Rights Program and the East Asian Legal Studies Program, both at Harvard Law School, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. While based there, he wrote several books, including *To Catch a Tartar, A Dissident in Lee Kuan Yew's Prison*, in which he describes the circumstances of his arrest on the authoritarian rule of then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. In another book, *The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited*, he describes the stifling pressure on the press in Singapore. It is one of the main sources of this dissertation.[992]

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[992] Francis Seow: To Catch a Tartar, A Dissident in Lee Kuan Yew's Prison, New Haven, 1994; and Francis Seow: The Media Enthralled, Singapore Revisited, Boulder, 1998.

About the conversation

The conversation was done by email. The questions were sent to Francis Seow on 13 March 2006 at 6.44 a.m (GMT+1). He replied on the same day at 9.52 p.m (GMT+1). Due to the medium, it cannot be guaranteed that it was really Francis Seow who replied but his answers give little reason for doubt. However, the comments in the footnotes were later added by the author of this dissertation and do not necessarily reflect the perspective or opinion of the respondent.

The conversation

Mr. Seow, you were arrested in 1988 under the Internal Security Act. What do you think was the main reason for it?

Francis Seow: *I presented a real and credible opposition threat to Lee Kuan Yew and his government.*

You were detained for 72 days. How were you treated in prison?

Francis Seow: *Badly.*

After your release, you fled from Singapore. Why?

Francis Seow: *I was being closely monitored by the State's security apparatchiks. Furthermore, bogus tax charges, which later grew into a few hundred charges, were leveled at me and, given my knowledge of the way the judiciary operated, I knew I would end up in prison, where Amnesty International, the Human Rights Watch, NY, amongst others, would not be able to intervene on my behalf as they had done earlier under the internal security laws. Overriding all this, the laws were changed that would effectively denied me rights of appeal to the Privy Council in London.*

In absentia, you were convicted for tax evasion. Were you guilty?

Francis Seow: *Absolutely not.*

Meanwhile, the Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER) published the article "New Light on Detentions".[993] Do you think it was alright to publish the article, although it was based on one source only?

Francis Seow: *Why not, if the source is credible, as, indeed, it was.*

Generally speaking, may a paper legitimately publish anything it wishes, whether true or false, so long as it is able to quote a source that actually made the statement?[994]

Francis Seow: *No. There is a duty on the newspaper to ensure that the source is credible and reliable before it publishes the news.*

The press secretary to the prime minister's office sent several "correction letters" to FEER and other foreign publications which had run stories on different subjects.[995] The editors of FEER published the letters but the editors of Asian Wall Street Journal (AWSJ) didn't. Who behaved correctly?

Francis Seow: *Editors enjoy the right as a general rule to publish or not letters sent to them. FEER, however, published those so-called "correction letters" as a concession to the Singapore government which, unfortunately, nit-picked its articles, essays etcetera.*

Generally speaking, should governments have a "Rght of Reply", if a paper publishes false information about it?[996]

Francis Seow: *This concept of a "Right of Reply" is essentially Lee Kuan Yew. It has some merit but not in the way Lee abused this so-called right.*

In 1986 and 1987, FEER, AWSJ and two other foreign magazines were declared to be

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[993] In December 1987, the magazine reported on a meeting between the prime minister and the archbishop of Singapore in connection with the arrests of 22 Leftists (one of them asked Francis Seow for legal assistance but he was unable to help due to his own arrest). The government was unhappy with this article, because it was completely based on statements by Father Edgar D'Souza, who was not present at the meeting. Far Eastern Economic Review: New Light on Detentions, Catholic Priest Answers Jayakumar's Allegations, Hong Kong, volume 138, number 51, 17 December 1987, p. 28.

[994] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Singapore, 2000, p. 220.

[995] The first letter by James Fu to the editor of the magazine was dated on 12 December 1987 and appeared in the following issue. Far Eastern Economic Review: Credible Witness?, Hong Kong, volume 138, number 52, 24 December 1987, p. 3.

[996] Lee Hsien Loong: When the Press Misinforms, Speech Delievered on 26 May 1987 at the 40th World Congress of Newspaper Publishers in Helsinki, p. 92, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 91-99.

*publications engaged in Singapore's "domestic affairs" and its circulations were restricted
to a few hundred copies.[997] Do you think these actions were adequate?*

Francis Seow: *I do not understand this question. If you mean whether their circulation
restrictions were justified, the answer is no. And were they "engaged in
Singapore's domestic affairs", the answer is also no. Lee wanted foreign
newspapers to publish sycophantic news and reports to buoy up his
government and its actions.*

*Generally speaking, should governments be empowered to restrict the circulation of a
foreign publication?*

Francis Seow: *No, unless they are autocratic or dictatorial. Singapore, while not exactly
communist, was certainly dictatorial in its actions.*

*Should there be a right to distribute foreign publications or should it be a privilege
extended by the respective government?[998]*

Francis Seow: *It all depends on the kind of government and its policy.*

*Some experts I interviewed argue that Lee Kuan Yew showed the world in 1987 how the
media can be controlled, namely by restricting circulation. Do you agree with this
perception?[999]*

Francis Seow: *Yes.*

*They also argue that these cases tell more about the Western media than the Singapore
government because in the end, all media tried to get their circulations restored, instead of
boycotting Singapore. Do you agree with this perception?*

Francis Seow: *A cynical but, regrettably, true perception of the foreign media.*

Would you like to return to Singapore anytime?[1000]

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[997] The circulation of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* was restricted from 9 000 to 500 copies per issue, *Asiaweek* from 10 000 to 500, the *Asian Wall Street Journal* from 5 000 to 400 and the *Time* magazine from 18 000 to 2 000.
[998] Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Aide Memoir, dated 12 February 1987, published in Ministry of Information: Singapore and the Foreign Press, Singapore, 1988, p. 45.
[999] For a list of the experts interviewed, see the documentation in the annex of this dissertation.

Francis Seow: *Of course. Singapore is the country of my birth. My family has been in Singapore for many generations, very much longer than Lee Kuan Yew's family. But I cannot return because of the way Lee Kuan Yew has manipulated and mangled the laws of Singapore against me.*

Imagine you meet Lee Kuan Yew again, what would you say to him?

Francis Seow: *Hello. I am still around, notwithstanding all your efforts to suppress me.*

Mr. Seow, thank you very much for this conversation.

[1000] It is not clear whether Francis Seow is still a Singapore citizen. In an interview with the *Straits Times* newspaper, he was asked about his feelings on losing citizenship. He answered: "Now, this is another inane question. I do not know that I had 'lost' my citizenship. This question is best addressed to the Singapore government. I have not been informed that I have 'lost' my natural born right of citizenship." Straits Times: Unknown, 19 October 2003, published in Singapore Window: Transcript of Francis Seow's ST Interview, http://www.singapore-window.org/sw03/031019fs.htm, Singapore, date of publication unknown, accessed 2006.

News flow in Southeast Asia

From the early 1980s to present: The development of transmitting news in the ASEAN-region towards a 'more just and more efficient information order'   (Ph.D. Proposal)

In recent years politicians as well as academics have discussed a process called 'globalisation'. Within this debate 'Digital Divide' has become a major topic. While some argue that the gap between those with access to media and the poor is growing, others a sure that never before in the history so many people had access to media and that this trend would continue. However, the topic is far more complicated, because access to media does not guarantee manifold information - and this is exactly the problem.

Still, up to 90 percent of the international news flow is handled by the so-called "Big Five" transnational news agencies, of which four are either American or British and one is in Russian hands.[1001] So not one of the important transnational news agencies was founded in or belongs to a developing country. This means, almost every single piece of news that crosses a national border is transmitted through the newsrooms in Western media capitals like New York or London – and there it can easily be controlled and modified.[1002]

Imbalances in the international flow of news

Already in the 1950s and 60s scientists discovered an imbalance in the international flow of news.
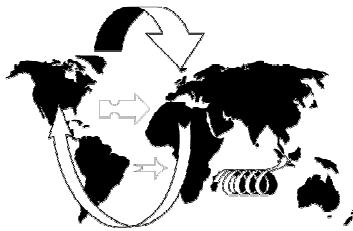
Between North and South the imbalance is characterized by the transfer of information and values from industrialized to developing countries through transnational agencies as well as the tremendous distinctions in the availability of media and access to news.

In industrialized countries only few information about less developed countries is available and in those few available news developing countries are often described as less successful, underdeveloped and poor, while industrialized countries are generally credited with such praising adjectives as successful, developed and cultivated.

But even between South and South itself the transfer of news is dominated by transnational agencies, although the report originates from the same or a neighbouring country.

Focus: The development of transmitting news in the ASEAN-region towards a more just and more efficient information order since the early 1980s

Purpose: To prove that the resolutions of the United Nations have not been transposed into the national policies as Seán MacBride originally recommended

Intention: To show that the transfer of information has only become more efficient, but not more balanced

Question: Is it still worth continuing the efforts towards a more just and more efficient information order?

Thesis: The construct of the "New World Information Order" is illusive and completely outdated, but still useful to devise a new vision for the further development of the media systems and cultures

Substantial changes in the Asian media systems

Therefore, the United Nations assigned in 1979 Seán MacBride to chair the 'International Commission for the Study of the Communication Problems'. In his ensuing report he recommended to developing countries to restructure their media systems and to industrialized countries to support this "revolution". Thus, a so-called "New World Information Order was supposed to be established.[1003]

Basically, all member countries agreed to transpose his recommendations into their national policies. But the perceptions of the report differ: While some understand it as a manifest against the overwhelming media power of former colonialists, others use it to remind on the violations of 'human rights' in the 'Third World'. [1004]

However, in Southeast Asia the vision of a more just and more efficient information order has had several effects:

- Creation of several academic institutions, notably in Singapore
- Foundation of national news agencies in almost every country
- Establishment of the 'Asia Pacific News Network' (ANN)
- Foundation of several hundred newspapers and radio stations
- etc.

But a system that would deserve to be called a "New World Information Order" is still not achieved. In fact, some facts indicate that the news flow in Southeast Asia is not becoming more just, but more dependent from the Western hemisphere.

Latest news:

May 2003: The 'Asia-Pacific News Network' (ANN) has never launched own satellites, as some authors predicted in the 1990s. Instead, ANN rent a satellite from competitor Associated Press. This explained a representative of the 'Asia-Pacific News Agencies' (OANA) in a conversation with the author of this text.

June 2003: Practically, ANN does it not exist anymore, because OANA members exchange their news now via Internet. For all others the wire is available on Factiva.com - this company belongs to competitor Reuters.

July 2003: The OECD warns media groups not to control the Russian media scene and not to interfere in domestic issues, because new democracies are very fragile.

August 2003: Reuters plans to move 1 300 jobs to Bangalore and Hyderabad, India. This is one tenth of the whole workforce of Reuters. The reason: In India labour is much cheaper than in Western countries.

[1001] Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 2 et sqq.
[1002] Jeremy Tunstall: The Media are American, Anglo-American Media in the World, London, 1977, p. 7 et sqq.
[1003] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980, p. 253-274.
[1004] John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982, p. 1-19.

Should Singapore rejoin UNESCO?

Why Singapore withdrew from UNESCO and has still not rejoined

Abstract

The Republic of Singapore withdrew from UNESCO soon after the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain in late 1985. During that time, the idea of the "New World Information Order" was a major topic in UNESCO. In this article the author analysis Singapore's stake in this discussion, the reasons for the withdrawal and asks, why Singapore has still not rejoined UNESCO, although the international flow of news is no longer an issue and the USA as well as the UK already came back.

Since the foundation of the "United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation" (UNESCO) in 1945, ten countries cancelled their memberships. The most dramatic withdrawal was the one by the United States of America (USA) in 1984. At that time, the USA as one of two superpowers played a major role in international relations and carried 25 percent of all expenses of the organisation.[1005] Soon after its withdrawal the United Kingdom of Great Britian (UK) and the Republic of Singapore followed.[1006] As a result, UNESCO plunged into its worst crisis ever, which led to fundamental changes on all levels - including the adoption of a completely "new strategy"[1007] in the late 1980s.[1008] Britain rejoined in 1997. About a year ago, in October 2003, even the USA returned.[1009] In fact, all countries that withdrew from UNESCO at some point rejoined sooner or later – with one exception: Singapore.

The reason for Singapore's withdrawal is not clear because the official letter of resignation is not available in the archives of the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.[1010] It is even doubtful, who formulated the withdrawal. It can only be testified that the Director General replied[1011] and probably asked for further explanations – but Singapore never officially answered.[1012] Strange, because in the beginning the relation between Singapore and UNESCO looked quite promising and both sides benefited from it. When Singapore split from Malaysia and became independent in 1965, the tiny city state on the southern tip of the peninsula needed international approval. Thus, Singapore joined the United Nations as well as its sub-

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[1005] The total budget (regular budget plus extra budgetary funds) of UNESCO in 1985 was 267.5 million US-Dollars. The withdrawals of USA, UK and Singapore meant a 30 percent reduction of contributions. UNESCO: UNESCO 1945-1995, A Fact Sheet, Paris, 1995, p. 1-5.

[1006] The withdrawal of Britain and Singapore became effective on 31 December 1985.

[1007] Concerning UNESCO's engagement in the discussion about the international flow of news.

[1008] As soon as Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow (Senegal) was replaced by Federico Mayor (Spain) in 1987.

[1009] Compare with Brett Schaefer: Not the Time for the United States to rejoin UNESCO, http://www.heritage.org/Research/InternationalOrganizations/BG1405.cfm, Washington D.C., 2001, accessed 2004.

[1010] The author of this article researched in the archives at the UNESCO headquarters in February and September 2004.

[1011] On 14 January 1988 the Director-General wrote a letter to the authorities of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Republic of Singapore to bring resolution 24 C/28 to their attention.

[1012] The authorities of the UK and the USA replied on 28 January and 18 February 1988. Therein, they briefly reiterated the reasons for the withdrawal from the organisation and stated that they would be following the reform process at UNESCO closely and with an open mind. Only "the authorities of Singapore did not reply the Director's General letter". UNESCO: Executive Board; Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its 134th session, Paris, 1990, p. 7.

organisation and established national commissions for both four years later.[1013] One of the presidents, who headed the UNESCO "Singapore National Commission", was Deputy Prime Minister Goh Keng Swee.[1014]

Several documents, ranging from letters to hotel bills, verify that Singapore originally intended to cooperate with the UNESCO headquarter in Paris.[1015] Singapore even applied to the "Programme of Participation" and was awarded a few fellowships.[1016] As one of the results, the scientist and politician Ang Kok Peng[1017] was able to hold a course at the National University of Singapore that 24 participants from eight countries attended. After an official visit to Singapore, an Assistant Director-General in charge of communication even reported in a letter to the Director-General on 8 April 1968 that Singapore's "desire to cooperate with UNESCO is strong, and the mission was given a warm welcome, particularly among those concerned with science and in the Economic Development Board. The Deputy Prime Minister gave me a long audience, while the Minister of Finance presided over a lunch 'in our honour' (it was also a working lunch)."[1018]

One UNESCO official who knows Singapore well but seems to have some provisos against the Singaporean government believes that Singapore by nature is not compatible to UNESCO. In his opinion, the laws of one of the most restrictive countries in the world, where even the import and consumption of chewing gum be punished with high penalties,[1019] are just too different from the liberal statutes of the international community.[1020] But another official, who represented a large country at the time of Singapore's withdrawal, believes that Singapore simply followed the USA and the UK, either without any reflection or due to political pressure by one of these two countries.[1021]

Anyway, these two officials have something in common: Both would not speak about the withdrawal of Singapore on a public occasion without explicit permission of the Director-General and also wish that their names are not mentioned in this article. From a historical point of view, it even seems that UNESCO generally avoids speaking about the withdrawal of smaller member states. Back in the 1980s the staff was just too afraid that further countries might follow the example of the USA and this certainly still has some impact.[1022] It might also explain why today information about the withdrawal of Singapore is so scarce.

However, although their assessments differ, the two officials agree in one aspect: None of them believes that Singapore withdrew from UNESCO due to economical reasons alone, as

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[1013] The inaugural meeting of the National Commission had taken place on 28 February 1969 and was housed in the Ministry of Education. For further information see UNESCO: Collective Consultation of Secretaries of National Commissions, Report of the Singapore National Commission for UNESCO, Paris, 1971.
[1014] As an internal record card of UNESCO testifies that was created in March 1968 to serve as a name list and was several times updated until March 1983.
[1015] All these documents are available for academic researchers in the archives of the UNESCO headquarter in Paris.
[1016] Catherine Kerlouegan: N.N., dated 8 June 1971, Paris, not published yet.
[1017] Ang Kok Peng, who died on 9 October 1997, was a long-serving member of the National University of Singapore, served as Singapore's first ambassador to Japan and for two terms as Minister of State. He held uncontested for 12 years the so-called "Buona Vista Seat" in the parliament.
[1018] N.N.: Letter from the Assistant Director-General in charge of communication to the Director-General about a technical inspection mission to Singapore, dated 8 April 1968, Paris, not published yet.
[1019] Another example for the restrictive laws in Singapore is the death penalty for trafficking of drugs.
[1020] Compare with UNESCO: Constitution of the United Nations, Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as adopted in London on 16 November 1945 and several times amended, published in UNESCO: Manual of the General Conference, http://unesdoc.UNESCO.org/images/0012/001255/125590e.pdf#constitution, Paris, 2002, p. 7 et sqq, accessed 2004.
[1021] Although he is unable to prove this thesis "without access to the information of intelligence services".
[1022] Some people suggested that Japan, for instance, should withdraw from UNESCO, too.

some tried to make the public believe.[1023] Singapore never had to carry more than 0.1 percent of the overall expenses (approximately 19 000 to 38 000 US-Dollar per annum) and back then the Singaporean economy (as well as the national budget) was growing rapidly (in some years the economy grew even more than seven percent annually). Instead, they both believe that Singapore's withdrawal must have had been related to the withdrawal of the USA, although a direct connection cannot be proven (yet).

According to several sources and numerous interpretations, the reason, why the USA withdrew from UNESCO is threefold: Notably during the presidency of Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow UNESCO was more and more controlled by so-called "Third World"-countries. The more "Third World"-countries joined the organisation, the more delegates from "Third World" countries participated at the general conferences and dominated the discussions.[1024] While the USA paid the largest amount of all, countries like Brazil and Mexico used the opportunity to promote their own ideas and interests. Furthermore, the mismanagement of the organisation damaged the image of UNESCO. It was said (and later to a certain extent proven) that some officials were not appointed on the basis of skills and knowledge alone, but due to personal relationships and political interests.[1025]

This growing conflict accumulated in the very heated discussion about a "New World Information Order". Seán MacBride, one of the co-founders of Amnesty International and honoured with the Nobel Prize a few years later, had recommended on behalf of UNESCO to establish a completely new "more just and more efficient information order".[1026] Thus, industrialized countries should share their overwhelming power in the international flow of news and developing countries should enhance their own media structures to become strong competitors. In the very beginning, all countries concerned agreed (more or less) to transpose these recommendations into their national policies. But the more details had to be discussed, the more the perceptions of the famous MacBride-report differed. At the end of everyone's tether, developing countries understood the report as a manifest against the overwhelming media power of former colonialists, while the USA used it as an opportunity to remind on the violations of "human rights" in the "Third World".[1027] After a while, these fundamental differences were insurmountable - and resulted in the withdrawal of the USA, followed by the UK and Singapore.[1028]

It is arguable whether Singapore was still a "Third", a "Second" or already a "First World" country by that time, but there can be no doubt that Singapore was still in a developing stage. Thus, one might guess that Singapore supported the position of other developing countries, like its immediate neighbour Indonesia for instance.[1029] But this was not the case,

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[1023] At the 122nd session of the Executive Board, held in autumn 1985, the participants "pointed out that a distinction should be made between the reason for the notice of withdrawal issued by the United Kingdom and Singapore. The latter was a Third World country and its intended withdrawal was based exclusively on economic considerations; it had in no way challenged UNESCO's programme or policies". UNESCO: Executive Board; 124th; 1986; Summary records, Paris, 1986, p. 38, 237. Compare with a speech, in which Australia's Prime Minister addressed UNESCO. Gough Whitlam (Ed.): Speeches & Statements, Australia and New Zealand in the UNESCO, UNESCO 50th Anniversary Celebrations, Parliament Buildings, http://whitlam.alp.org.au/UNESCO.html Wellington, 1996, accessed 2004.
[1024] Further information can be found in almost any publication about the "New World Information Order". A useful bibliography is John Lent: The New World and International Information Order, Singapore, 1982.
[1025] Compare with UNESCO: UNESCO 1945-1995, A Fact Sheet, Paris, 1995, p. 1-5.
[1026] Seán MacBride: Many Voices, One World, Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow, Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information Order, Paris, 1980.
[1027] Rolf Scheller: News Flow in Asia, A Study of 10 Countries, Singapore, 1983, p. 16 et seq.
[1028] Britain and Singapore confirmed their withdrawal immediately after the twenty-third session of the conference and the board held a special session in February 1985 in order to study ways of dealing with that situation. UNESCO: Report of the Director-General on the activities of the Organization in 1984-1985 communicated to Member States and the Executive Board in accordance with Article VI.3.b of the Constitution, General Conference, 24th, 1987, Paris, 1987, p. XXXIV.
[1029] The "Kuala Lumpur Declaration" (adopted by the Intergovernmental Conference on Communication Policies in Asia and Oceania), for instance, was formulated just a few miles away from Singapore.

because the main interest of Singapore was (and certainly still is) economical development – from "Third World to First".[1030] In opposition to Indonesia for instance, which demanded the establishment of the "New World Information Order" as early as in the 1970s,[1031] Singapore never accused its former colonialists or asked for large scale reparation. Instead, Singaporean officials presented themselves as being highly educated and well equipped, which impressed numerous investors. Subsequently, Singapore kept calm; not a single document proving that Singapore officially participated in the controversial discussion between industrialized and developing countries has been found (so far). It is also hard to believe that Singapore was annoyed by the mismanagement of the organisation, because its stake in UNESCO was so small that Singapore was never really affected.

Does this consequently mean that Singapore withdrew from UNESCO due to the discussion about the "New World Information Order"? Not necessarily. It is difficult to prove this thesis on the basis of official documents.[1032] But it is worth analysing the concrete steps that were taken within this context: As early as in 1971, the Singaporean government established (with support of the German Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation) the "Asian Media Information & Communication Centre" (AMIC), a premier centre for information, research and promotion of mass communication that contains one of Asia's largest collections of materials on communication (with more than 65 000 records today). During that period the discussion about the "New World Information Order" was already very heated, especially among academics. As a consequence, dozens of articles about the gaps in the international flow of news were published in the centre's main publication, the quarterly magazine "Media Asia".[1033] The Ministry of Education "followed up the recommendations of the UNESCO consultant on the establishment of a National Archives and Records Centre." The Chief of the Press and Publicity section of the ministry even enquired into the possibility of UNESCO's help in organising diploma or degree courses in cooperation with the university.[1034]

From a historical perspective, it seems that most recommendations by Seán MacBride on behalf of UNESCO were sooner or later implemented in Singapore – with one exception: The Singaporean government did not allow press freedom in "Western sense".[1035] Instead, a discussion about "Asian values in journalism"[1036] and a process of centralisation began: All newspapers were merged into the "Singapore Press Holding", in which the government has a high stake.[1037] In addition, the government passed a series of laws that directly bind the press, put newspapers under (in)direct control of a ministry, permit the government only to establish and operate broadcasting stations and enabled the government to ban or restrict any "subversive" publication or movie.[1038] As a result, press freedom in Singapore is very limited and self-censorship among journalists quite common.[1039] This is an important indication, if one tries to understand the withdrawal of Singapore from UNESCO.

[1030] Lee Kuan Yew: From Third World to First, The Singapore Story, 1965-2000, Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, 2000.
[1031] Mr. Mashuri, the Minister of Information of the Republic of Indonesia in August 1977 in Tunisia, for instance.
[1032] In fact, only one official document has been found (so far) proving that Singapore withdrew from UNESCO due to the discussion about the "New World Information Order".
[1033] For example Vijay Menon: Information Flow in Asia, An Overview, published in *Media Asia*, 2 December 1985, p. 64 et sqq.
[1034] Quoted after a letter from an Assistant Director-General in charge of communication to the Director-General, dated 8 April 1968, Paris, not published yet.
[1035] Compare with Wimal Dissanayake: Communication Theory, The Asian Perspective, Singapore 1988.
[1036] Murray Masterton: Asian Values in Journalism, Singapore, 1996.
[1037] It started in March 1983, when the Chinese-language newspapers Sin Chew Jit Poh and Nanyang Siang Pau, originally family-owned, were merged to form Singapore News and Publication Ltd. For further information see David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 16.
[1038] The "Newspaper and Printing Press Act" from 1974 (Amendment in 1979), for instance. For further information see Abdul Razak (Ed.): Press Laws and Systems in ASEAN States, Jakarta, 1985, p. 359-428.
[1039] In 2002 Freedom House ranked Singapore again only as "partly free". Adrian Karatnycky: Freedom in the World, The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 2001-2002, New York, 2002, p. 532-536.

Whether one follows this argumentation or not, Singapore's restrictive media system might be one reason why the country has still not rejoined UNESCO. In other countries sooner or later pressure groups or lobbies would arise. But in Singapore, where former Prime-Minister and now Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew is able to reach each of his menials by bike in thirty minutes, pressure groups are generally rare.[1040] The media are not tired to repeat continuously that the "Singaporean society is fragile like an egg and therefore the government has to hold it firmly, that is doesn't drop and break."[1041] Certainly, for the past few years, the government has been promoting creativity (or what the politicians believe to be creativity), but Singaporeans are (still) not used to express such "creative" ideas like the return into UNESCO if it is not the official opinion of the government (yet).[1042]

It is hard to understand why Singapore has (still) not rejoined UNESCO,[1043] because both sides would benefit from it: The city state would gain further international recognition, it could use the forum to foster its international relations and to promote its interests, if helpful even against Malaysia in the essential question of water supply (water supply is one of the main issues UNESCO deals with). And the desire of UNESCO is to represent the entire world.[1044]

Therefore, UNESCO already works on the return of Singapore. In an internal memorandum Françoise Rivière informed the staff of UNESCO on 16 February 2000 that the Director-General "has requested Mrs Hilary Wiesner […] to assist him in his efforts to encourage the United States and Singapore to rejoin UNESCO". Soon after, the Director-General praised Singapore as a good example.[1045] On 31 January 2003 the Director-General Koichiro Matsuura mentioned that he "wrote a letter to the President of Singapore attaching the Board's decision urging Singapore to return to membership of UNESCO." Subsequently he sent an Assistant Director-General to Singapore to speak directly with the authorities there. Finally, he even assured that "we are in contact with Singapore on this question".[1046]

The discussion about the "New World Information Order" that led to the withdrawal of the USA and UK is no longer an issue: Although some academics and politicians are disappointed, UNESCO does not try to interfere in the international flow of news anymore. Consequently, there is no reason why Singapore should not rejoin UNESCO. Nevertheless, up to now signals are rare that Singapore might rejoin the international organisation sometime in the future. As a result, Singapore is the only important country that is currently not member of UNESCO.[1047]

[1040] At the end of the 1980s less than 4000 societies were registered in Singapore. This is a very small number, if one considers that any group or association of ten or more people is required to be registered under the Societies Act. For further information see David Birch: Singapore Media, Communication Strategies and Practices, Melbourne, 1993, p. 9, 10.

[1041] Jon Vanden Heuvel: The Unfolding Lotus: East Asia's Changing Media, New York, 1993, p. 130 et sqq.

[1042] Compare with the chapter about "Political Culture" in James Gomez: Self Censorship, Singapore's Shame, Singapore 2000, p. 7 et sqq.

[1043] Singapore does not even have a permanent observer at the UNESCO headquarter as the USA always have had.

[1044] Compare with UNESCO: Millennium Development Goals, UNESCO's Millenium Goals, http://portal.UNESCO.org/en/ev.php@URL_ID=3694&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, Paris, 2000, accessed 2004.

[1045] At the opening session of the International Symposium on Science and Technology on 20 April 2002 in Bahrain the Director-General praised Singapore as an example for a geographically small country that has succeeded reaping the benefits of the advances in science and technology. UNESCO: Address by Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, […], at the opening session of the International Symposium on Science and Technology, 20 April 2002, Bahrain/Paris, 2002.

[1046] UNESCO: Address by Mr. Koichiro Matsuura […] on the occasion of the information meeting with Executive Board, 31 January 2003, Paris, 2003.

[1047] In total, only five countries are not member of UNESCO. The Holy Sea and Lichtenstein, for instance.

14th AMIC Annual Conference

"Media in Society: Transformations and Transitions" was the title of the "14th Annual Conference" of the Asian Media Information and Communication Center, co-organized by the Communication University of China. It was held in July 2005 at Kunlun Hotel in Beijing, China. During the four days, a variety of topics were discussed in plenary and parallel sessions including media education, media ethics and alternative media such as weblogs. The key focus, however, was on the impact of the media on societies across Asia, and how media organizations are transforming in response to changes in the political, economic and technological landscape, particularly in Mainland China, where the media face many difficulties.

The quality of both the presentations and discussions was very high which is not surprising considering that the Asian Media Information and Communication Center, located at the School of Communication and Information of Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, is one of the most prestigious and best equipped institutions in the field of communication. It was established in 1971 with the support of the government of Singapore and the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation which also sponsored the annual conference. The charity-registered organization is chaired by Ang Peng Hwa, supported by an executive committee including Eddie Kuo and Arun Mahizhnan, and managed by Secretary-General Indrajit Banerjee. All of them have been researching for several years on communication in Asia and gave good impressions of their lines of thought and the results of recent analysis. Very impressive was the presence of John Lent who had contributed outstanding publications about news flow in the 1970s but spoke this time about the relevance and meaning of comic art, another subject in which he has been specializing for some years. He argued that comics reflect the opinions of ordinary citizens in an extremely creative manner, but cartoonists are becoming fewer because many media companies prefer buying cheap drawings from syndicated agencies instead of employing artists.

Although the overwhelming majority of the more than two hundred participants from all over the world are related to universities, the conference was not a dry scientific gathering. In fact, it was very lively and inspiring. David Plott for instance, who had long served as deputy chief editor at the *Far Eastern Economic Review* but recently took up a teaching position at the University of Hong Kong, explained the current situation of journalists. Also Cherian George, whose book about *The Air-Conditioned Nation* is very popular in Singapore, shared his previous working experiences at the *Straits Times* newspaper. In a plenary session about youth and media he even presented the progressive agenda of a newspaper for children he

has recently launched: "We practice values-driven journalism, always putting children's needs ahead of commercial self-interest."

If there is anything one can criticize, then that this conference just takes place annually, not more often. The next one, however, will be in summer 2006 in Penang, Malaysia. Further information about it can be found on time at www.amic.org.sg.

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Eidesstattliche Versicherung

Hiermit versichere ich, die vorliegende Arbeit auf der Grundlage der angegebenen Hilfsmittel selbstaendig angefertigt zu haben.

Carl Alexander Haentzschel

Berlin, den 15. Mai 2006