

# **Key Question** Why is the Malayan Emergency significant in our study of Singapore history?

## Big Question

Why is the Malayan Emergency significant in the study of Singapore history?

#### What is the Malayan Emergency?

- How did it happen?
- What took place?
- How did it end?

#### Why is it important?

- How did it affect Singapore?
- What political developments took place as a result of the Malayan Emergency?



#### The short story of the Malayan Emergency

Spread of communism
worldwide (Russia) → Rise
of Communist China
(Read: Communist ideology)



Inspired local communists & sympathisers, ideology appealed to the disillusioned & pro-communists (Recall: Post-JO, problems faced by the locals, unsolved by the British)



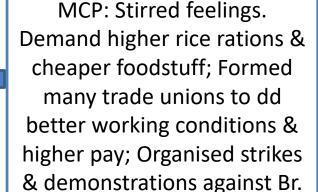
Ripe post-war conditions: MPAJA popular, interethnic tensions, limited trade, low wages, inflation, poor living conditions, failing economy

→ protestors punished harshly and deported by the British → Protestors increasingly militant.

#### Govt measures:

Passed laws
to prevent
TUs from
being ctrl'd by
the comm'ts;
allowed govt
to monitor
membership;
ensure \$ not
used for
comm't

activities



rule. 1947 = Year of Strikes



Enters MCP! Aim: End colonial rule in SG & Malaya. Replace with a communist govt. controlled by China. Had training, weapons, experience + prestige. Ruled in post-war vacuum. Legitimacy!



1946 Malayan Union: To give all citizens equal rights. **Rejected** by many Malays & rulers of various protected states under Br ctrl. → British withdrew proposal → Many Chinese felt betrayed since Ch. ppl bore brunt of fighting with JO.

**Result?** Workers lost interest in the comm't cause. B'cos unpaid during strikes; tired of the disorder; comm'ts actually not interested in fighting for workers' rights; some workers had obtained better paying jobs.



Comm'ts realised methods of stirring up anti-British feelings not successful. Turned to violence to drive the British out. Formed Malayan People's Anti-British Army (MPABA). MCP moved into the jungles and towns of Malaya and carried out attacks against the British government.

#### The short story of the Malayan Emergency

In Malaya... Communist Modus Operandi: Strike fear, use fear to control ppl. Make it difficult & costly for British to govern so that they will give up & leave.

What did the British do?!?

No way was Britain going to let the communists get their way! Cold War period. Democracy vs. Socialism, Capitalism vs. Communism. Zero sum game.

State of Emergency declared in Malaya & SG in 1948! Banned MCP; measures to ctrl communists from getting ppl's support; up no. of police (mainly Malays), soldiers, guards; intro IC to ctrl comm't movt.



Resettlement

into New

Villages

Operation Starvation (Food Denial)

Reorganised Police

Locals forced to choose side. Loyalty questioned. Issue of ideology & security/protection

Min Yuen: Civilian arm of the MCP; Fed info & supplied fd to comm'ts in jungle

Emergency meant police & soldiers had the powers to detain or arrest any suspected Communist without trial. Roadblocks and a strict curfew was introduced in areas of known communist activity.

By 1950s, communist strength significantly reduced. Fed Govt. of Malaya declared general amnesty to comm'ts. Surrendered members guaranteed immunity from prosecution. Chin Peng ctc'd Malayan govt for peace talks. Talks broke down when Chin Peng's condition for MCP to participate in Malayan politics unacceptable.



Emergency continued until 1960. Declared over. Communist threat under control.



Communism in Malayan jungles (mainly insurgency & guerrilla tactic) & Singapore (mainly infiltration into political parties & trade unions, influenced the many [Chinese] workers and students)

Templer 1951

> **Hearts &** Minds campaign

Relaxed Malayan Citizenship

Generous rewards

Basic amenities

Black & White Areas

#### SUMMARY: WHY WERE THE COMMUNISTS DEFEATED?

Weaknesses of the MCP	Effective British Policies
<ul> <li>Shortage of weapons (leftover)</li> <li>Shortage of food (supply cut)</li> <li>Shortage of manpower</li> <li>Inability to win the support of the locals (economic progress; largely Malay population, fear counter productive)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Identity Card Policy</li> <li>Briggs' Plan (Resettlement)</li> <li>Operation Starvation (food denial)</li> <li>Templer's 'Hearts and Minds' Campaign (psychological warfare)</li> </ul>

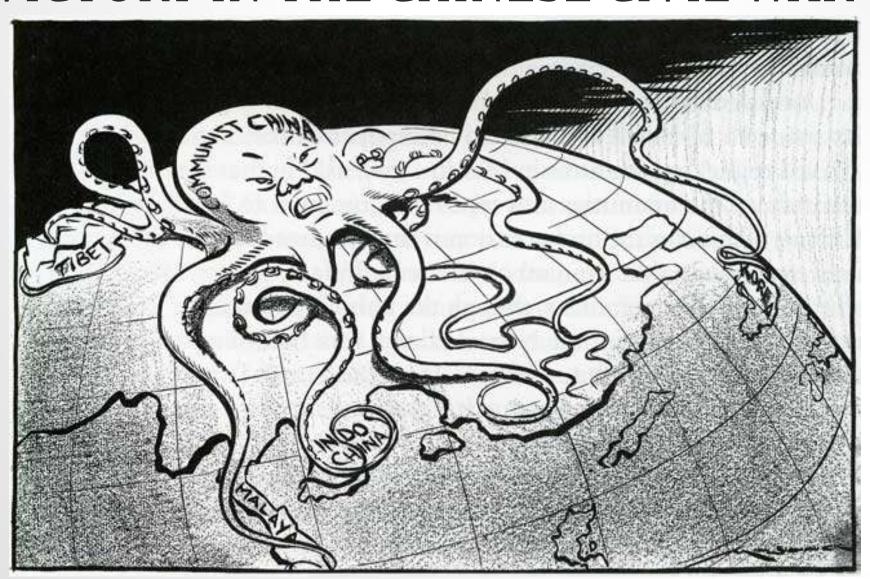
## THE MALAYAN EMERGENCY

Making sense through pictorial sources

#### THE RISE OF COMMUNIST CHINA, 1949



# A BRITISH CARTOON ON THE CCP'S VICTORY IN THE CHINESE CIVIL WAR

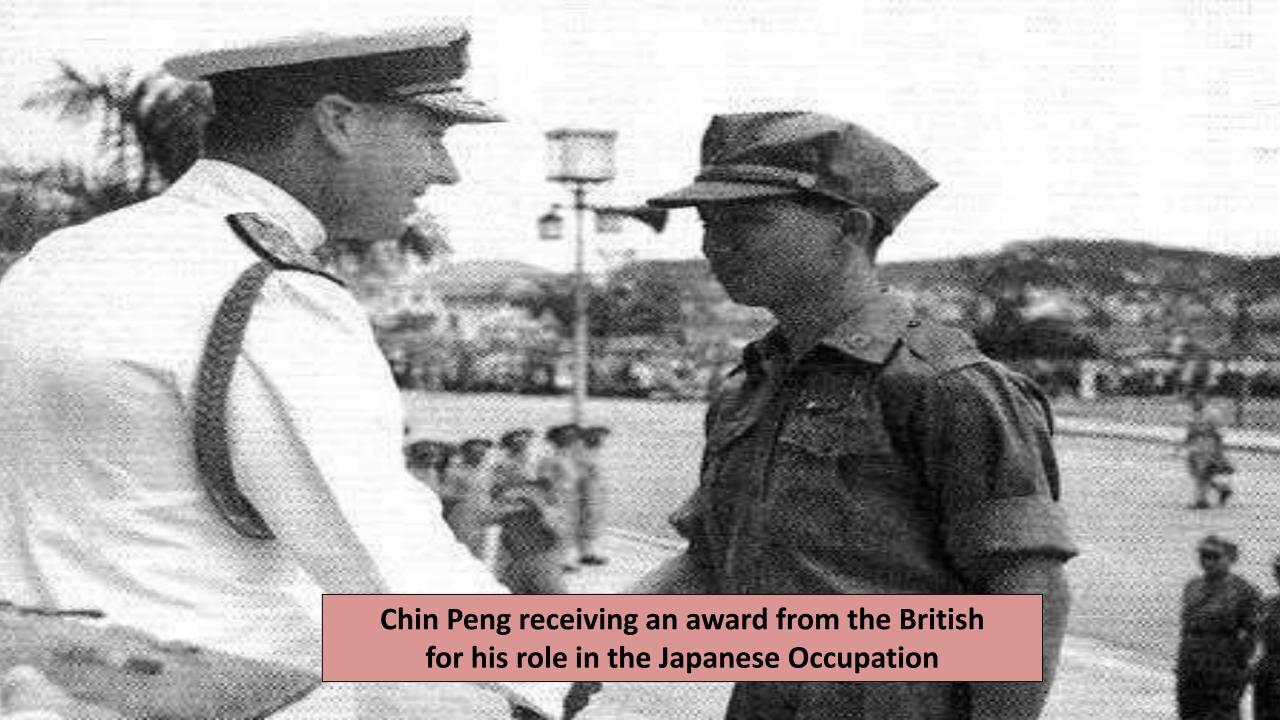


#### MALAYAN COMMUNIST PARTY (MCP) TO SAVE THE DAY!



bune by local cartoonists on pages 4 and 8.







# The Straits Cimes

MALAYA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER: ESTABLISHED 1845

THES. PR. PAGES

SANGAPORE, THURSDAY, MAY 1, 1915.

## NOW IT'S \$250,000 FOR PUBLIC

ENEMY No. 1 -if brought in alive

EUALA LUMPUR, Wednesday.

THE FEBRUARY TION GOVERNMENT today announced a reward of \$150,000 for "bringing in alles" or giving information leading to the capture of the leading Malayan Communist tereprist, Chin Peng.

The new reward is these times the reward of \$50,000 affered for

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THES IN CHIN PROG. The brains believe the beverariges in Malaga, are in murtis \$250,500 to anyone who has beloresables which will lead to little sandane.

AS LABOURERS WORK ROUND THE CLOCK-

#### GEN. TEMPLER MAKES THE CLERKS JUMP

QUARTLED clocks jumped to their less to Sagai 1) Sambillan State Secretaria; in Secretary looks no the High Commissioner, ties, Great Trought surface a surprise visit, without through their

**Public Enemy Number 1** 

#### 73,000 OUT IN SINGAPORE'S FIRST Law GENERAL STRIKE

#### nplainant Under olice Escort

e complainant in a case of d robberry who failed to ar in the Superior Court Wing Commander F. A. s yesterday morning was tht into court in the afterunder police escort.

ed for an explanation. uan, a shopkeeper, T. M. Mohamed, said he had arrangement to sail for and the ship was scheto leave at 4 pm. He sot want to risk missing

President of the Court Shalk he was a lucky instead of sailing for he might have been to prison. Immediately testifying Shaik hurriedthe court.

man who robbed Shalk, one Chinese named Lim Pob. was sentenced to years' rigorous Imprison-

provecution conducted A P. Raja, said that ed five others, armed with ers, broke into Shalk's in Dunlon Street on the of Dec 26 and got away 900 in each and jewellery. the later identified the acas one of his customers

#### The Stage Club

Stone Club is holding its first meeting tomorrow at \$15 p.m. es Cirls School. Members are to use the Victoria Street to the School.

#### ew Year Service

per will be held at the Stratts Methodist Church, Europong on Chinese New Year's Day,

#### "Not Will Of The

#### Majority" -B.M.A. Statement been arred on various serious

From a comparatively small beginning, Singa- to penalize the public by interpore's general strike assumed major proportions in the course of the day, involved nearly 173,000 workers (according to Singapore General Labour Union figures), and practically paralyzed all trade, business and amusements in the city by last night. Police are standing by and troops mount special guard at certain important institutions and buildings.

Apart from small isolated incidents, the day passed peacefully. "We have asked strikers not to show any force," said a Labour Union representative. He said the strike might last until such time as a satisfactory answer was received from the authorities to the petition presented on Monday.

Singapore streets were unusually dark and deserted last night. All eating shops, stalls and other businesses normally doing a brisk trade at night were closed. The town's principal amusement parks and cabarets were also closed. A total of 28 cinema houses. including all the big public cinemas, were shrouded in darkness.

All Singapore Traction Co buses were absent in the morning, and later in the day privatelyowned public transport huses stadue by want out the road

Together with them went an estimated 30 000 intinerant hawkers. DECEMBER ASSESSED.

Up to last night, a list of the strikers is given as follows: Muni-

Inital workers 2,800, transport workers, 17,000, technical workers. 8,000, shippard workers, 14,000, hawkers, 30,000, agricultural workers, 20,000, naval base 5,000. shookeepers. 60,000, cabaret dance hostesses, 800, cinema employees, 600, domestic staffs of European houses. 2 000, rubber factory workers, foot statue of Christ mounted on the period corn of cipal labourers, about 10,000 hos- 1,000 labourers to Chanet 300 top.

has no connec in with wages or conditions of labour. It is merely an attempt to subvert the law and to coerce the authorities into the release of persons, who have

The only effect of the sirike is ruption of essential servicestransport, distribution of food, etc., and preventing people " -m earning their livelihood.

The strike is not by the will of the majority, but through the intimidation of a small minority which is seeking its own ends.

#### 40 Cts. Rubber Will Not Affect Malava

A Washington report announces the completion of price negottations for the purchase of natural rubber from Br.tish, Dutch and French areas in the Far East at 201/2 cents (U.S.) a pound for standard top grades delivered free on board oceangoing steamers at Fur Eastern ports.

This price works out to spproximately 40 cents (Straits) as against the fixed price of 36 cents a pound for Malayan rubber.

The increased price does not affect Malaya, it is officially stated, as the margin goes towards meeting handling charges, cost of transport and duty.

#### Memorial Unveiled

Straits Times Corr., TAIPING, Jan. 27 .- At a simple ceremony in front of the Church of St. Louis, Taiping, this morning, Major-General O. N. Wood, Commander, 25 Indian Division, unvelled a massive monument with a six-

A panel lawyers, ap-Governmen Indians bei collaboratio here shortl Representa Governmen nounced a yesterday.

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### THE EMERGENCY: 1948 to 1960

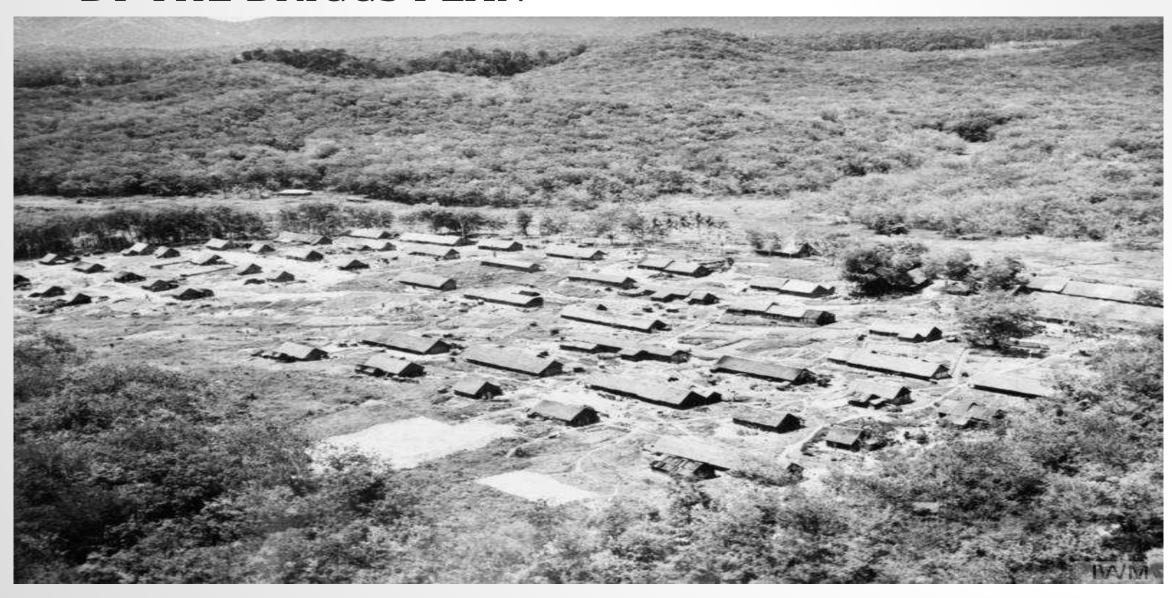


Government troops searching for communist guerillas.

LT. Gen Sir Harold
Briggs, British
Director of
Operations in
Malaya (1951-1952)



# A PHOTOGRAPH OF A "NEW VILLAGE" SET UP BY THE BRIGGS PLAN

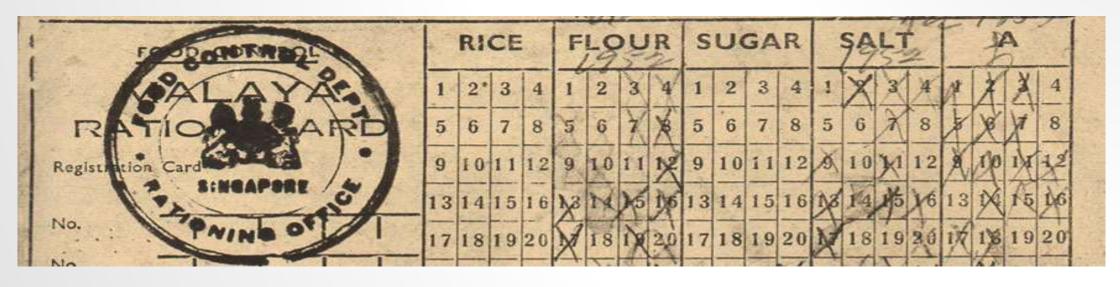


#### Resettlement

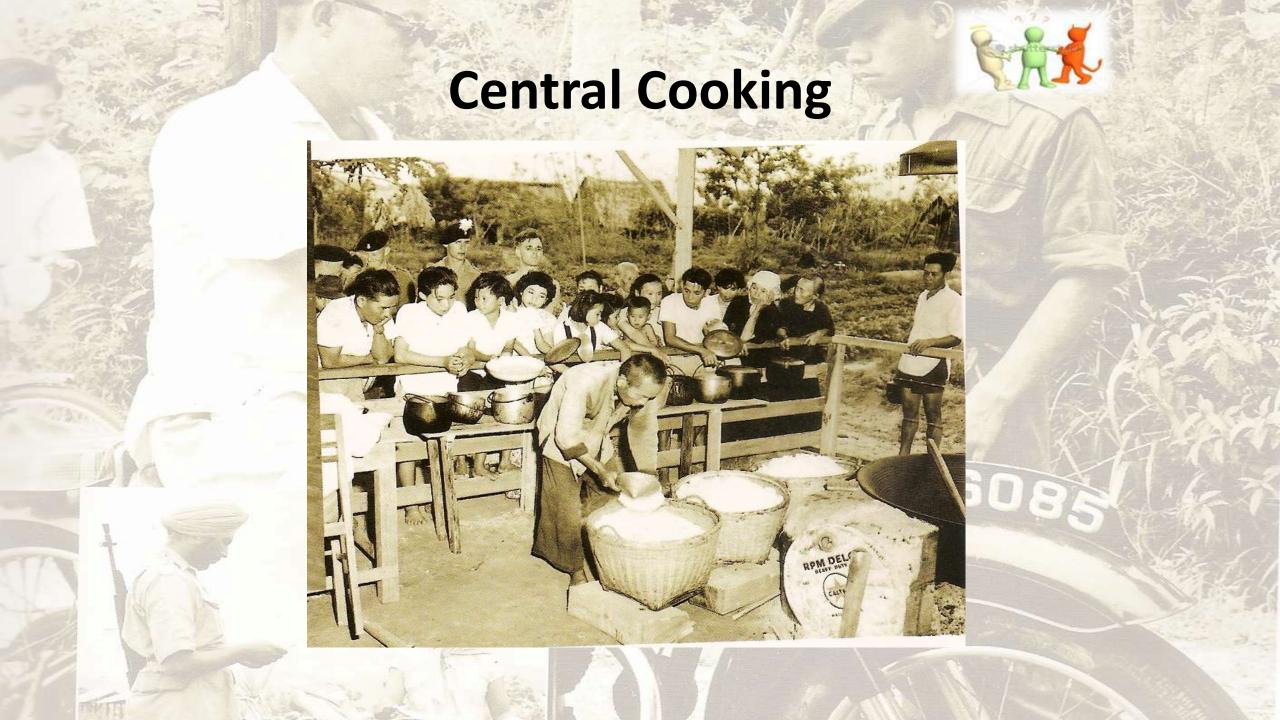


At the railway station they are given meals. Here inhabitants of Busut in south Selangor, waiting to be moved to a resettlement camp, eat a meal prepared at the Station Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. Courtesy of Dept of INFO.

# THE BRIGGS PLAN – OPERATION STARVATION



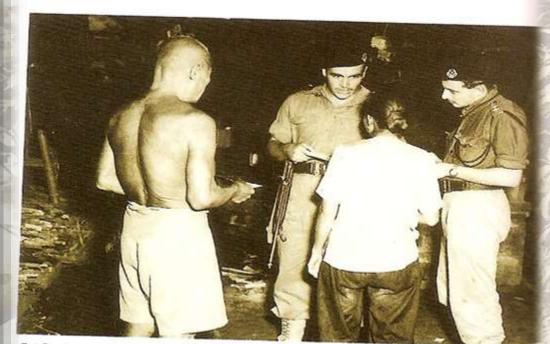
- "Food denial" programme to starve the Communists
- Through this, the British sought to tightly control the movement, sale and transport of all food supplies by issuing food ration cards and introducing central cooking.



#### **Operation Starvation**



A method of rice smuggling by strapping the rice bundle to the leg or the waist: this Chinese lady is caught trying to smuggle rice at the Simpang Rengam, Johore check point. Courtesy of National Archives.



I/C check carried out at night. Courtesy of Police Museum.

## Spotlight! Min Yuen

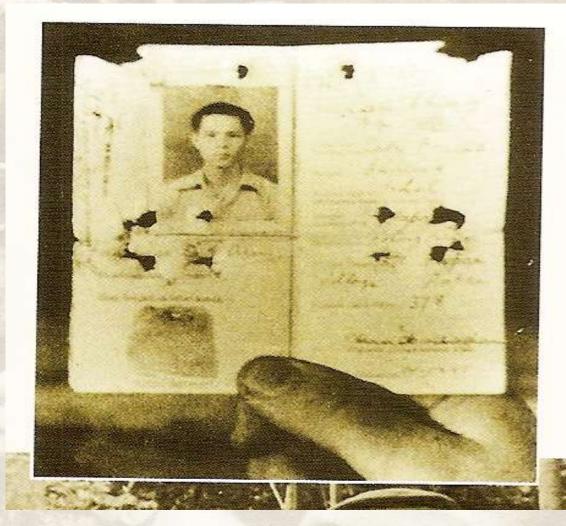
#### Who are they?

- ✓ Civilian arm of the MCP
- ✓ Fed information to communists in jungle
- ✓ Supplied food to the communists also
- Government's target
- ❖ What did the government do ?



## **Identity Cards**









# Caught in the Middle

- Even with the strict measures in place, the Chinese Peasants still vulnerable in the plantations and jungle when at work
- For them, it was an issue of <u>Protection</u>
  - against the threat of murder, abduction and looting of their food stocks
  - overt support for a govt which couldn't protect them was a luxury they couldn't afford
- MCP assassinated Henry Gurney (Br High Commissioner) → demoralised British & locals, motivated the communists

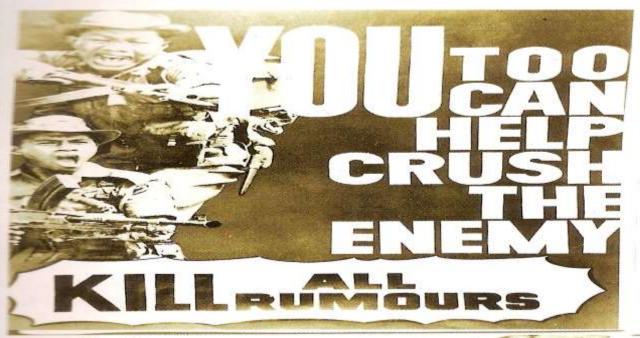


Lt. Gen. Sir Gerald Templer, British High Commissioner in Malaya, 1951-1954

> Templer of Malaya: The Jungle has been neutralized.

Templer's entry into Malaya was a turning point!

#### POSTER CAMPAIGN









#### REWARDS for information

Substantial REWARDS will be paid to all who co-operate with the authorities in providing information about Intimidators and Gangsters.

The source of all information given to the Police is kept Secret.

Up to \$2,000 have been paid to a person who has given useful Information.

Communicate with the Police by every means possible.

Useful Information

EARNS

CASH

#### EMERGENCY REGULATIONS

are

## NOW IN FORCE

HOW DO THEY
AFFECT

YOU?

# But how did the Malayan Emergency affect the political development of Singapore?

What was the modus operandi of the communists in Singapore? How was life in Singapore impacted? Tune in to lessons on the Political Developments in the 1950s. ©