

# COMMANDING HEIGHTS

Lee Kuan Yew

(b. 1923)

*The first officially elected prime minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew served in office from 1959-1990, during which time he led his country through a period of remarkable economic growth and diversification.*

From "Lee Kuan Yew." Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2001.

Lee Kuan Yew [served as the] first prime minister of Singapore [from] 1959-1990. Born to a wealthy Chinese family, he studied at Cambridge, England, and was admitted to the English bar in 1950. After his return he became a popular nationalist leader, and in 1954 he formed the People's Action Party. Lee was a member of the delegation that negotiated Singapore's independence from the British in 1956-58. After his party's victory in the subsequent elections, he became prime minister in 1959. Lee brought Singapore into the Federation of Malaysia in 1963, but Malay fear of Chinese domination forced Singapore to withdraw in 1965. Under his increasingly restrictive rule, the city-state became a center of international trade and relative prosperity in Asia. Lee resigned as prime minister in November 1990, but retained his leadership of the ruling People's Action Party.

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