Constitutional Engineering and Regulating Ethnic Politics in Singapore

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Abstract

Singapore is one of Asia's most culturally diverse and ethnically fractionalized countries. Given its diversity, the country's polity and party system ought to be highly fragmented and polarized. Yet, unlike its neighbouring states in the region, ethnic politics are disallowed and ethnic conflicts have been eliminated since 1970s. This paper examines how constitutional engineering and legal controls based on a racially discriminatory framework repressed ethnic politics and electoral competition in Singapore. By studying the effects of ethnic quotas for the legislature and public housing, it offers new evidence to show how quotas, used in conjunction with gerrymandering and malapportionment changed the spatial representation of ethnic voters, decimated ethnic parties and strengthened hegemonic party rule.

"(1) It shall be the responsibility of the Government to constantly care for the interests of the racial and religious minorities in Singapore. (2) The Government shall exercise its functions in such manner as to recognize the special position of the Malays, who are the indigenous people of Singapore, and accordingly it shall be the responsibility of the Government to protect, safeguard, support, foster and promote their political, educational, religious, economic, social and cultural interests and the Malay language."

Article 152, Singapore Constitution

"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."

Singapore National Pledge

1.   Introduction

Singapore is one of Asia's most culturally diverse and ethnically fractionalized countries (Fearon 2003). A former British colony, Singapore is an immigrant society with a majority of 74 percent Chinese and a substantial 13 percent Malay and 9.2 percent Indian minorities (Statistics Singapore 2011). A young nation of about 5 million people, it is a small island with no natural resources or hinterland. Located in a region that is surrounded by large Muslim neighbours, it has experienced low-intensity attacks from Indonesia during the *Konfrontasi*[1] campaign, ejection from the Malaysian Federation and two deadly racial riots in 1964 and 1969 after independence in 1963. These early tumultuous experiences left an indelible impression on the People's Action Party (PAP) leaders, who fought colonial, communist and communal forces before it rose to power and rule uninterruptedly for five decades. While labour strikes and racial unrests were rife in the early years, but by 1970s, ethnic politics and parties have been systematically wiped out.

This paper focuses on Singapore to show how constitutional engineering and the use of ethnic quotas dismantled socio-ethnic cleavages and repressed ethnic politics and electoral competition. In contrary to Lipset and Rokkan's "freezing hypothesis", Singapore's early cleavages were not deterministic or immutable (1967). What is remarkable about Singapore is the way in which the PAP government uses its legislative supermajority and incumbency advantage to pass a series of legal and electoral reforms to overtly protect ethnic minority rights and maintain racial harmony, but in the process, suppresses individual freedom and perpetuate hegemonic party rule.

As historical institutionalists contend, the origins of single or hegemonic parties are often found in the early political experiences and struggles that brought them into power (Huntington and Moore 1970; Slater 2010; Smith 2005). Unlike other Southeast Asian states such as Burma, the Philippines and Indonesia that are still grappling with ethnic violence, Singapore has adopted a wide range of intrusive institutional measures to manage ethnic

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[1] *Konfrontasi* refers to the Indonesia-Malaysia confrontation which lasted from 1962 to 1966. During Singapore's merger with the Malaysian Federation, Indonesia saboteurs planted a total of 29 bombs in Singapore and the most serious exploded in 1965 and killed three people.

relations. Aside from the use of legal constraints and coercion to quell labour strikes[2] and racial unrests, the PAP has actively de-pluralized and created "broker institutions" such as the creation of the People's Association– a statutory board based on state funds to build a wide network of para-political organizations at the grassroots to foster national identity. In addition, social-ethnic integration was also maintained through compulsory national conscription[3] and making English language the lingua franca (Brown 1994; Chiew 1985; Seah 1985).

In the late 1980s, the PAP government introduced two more schemes to manage ethnic relations in the country. To guarantee the political representation of ethnic minorities, the PAP government pushed through an electoral quota scheme (Group Representative Constituency, GRC) which brought a multi-member district party block vote plurality system to its formerly single-member district plurality system. The following year, the government imposed a racial quota on public housing (Ethnic Integrated Housing Policy, EIP) to prevent any ethnic minority group from exceeding 20 percent in one constituency. In the first-past-the-post electoral system based on territorial constituencies, the geographical distribution of voters is critical to the outcome of votes (Norris 2004). As a result of the quotas, ethnic minorities are spatially dispersed across 27 constituencies and relegated a minority status in each district and face difficulties raising support for issues particular to their community or ethnicity. Unlike Taiwan and Japan, where partisan alignment is linked to geographical distribution of voters, parties in Singapore are unable to localize its supporters to mobilize issues relating to race or religion.

The PAP's ability to dictate the parameters for public discourse on race and religion has given it a distinct advantage over its challengers (Gomez 2011; Rajah 2012). As this paper aims to demonstrate, the wide scope and jurisdiction of the draconian laws have empowered the incumbent leaders to silence dissent. Aside from with the arsenal of legal tools, the PAP, which was formed by a group of Cambridge educated, middle-class men have also used "soft power" to co-opt ethnic minorities into its ranks and assuage the feelings of resentment amongst the ethnic minorities through generous give-outs to the self-help ethnic organizations. While the PAP first emerged as a left-wing, Chinese dominant mass party, it has since remade itself into an inclusive, "catch-all" party for all Singaporeans of diverse backgrounds. As this paper found, Malay voters who were formerly resentful towards the PAP are now supporters of the ruling party. In fact, the 2011 General Election results show that the PAP has performed better in Malay dominant constituencies than in other Chinese dominant constituencies.

To explain how the PAP government eradicated ethnic based politics and regulate ethnic relations, this paper will: 1) briefly discuss the socio-ethnic cleavages in pre-independent Singapore and the implications of the racial riots on public policy; 2) outline the legal regulations that constrain ethno-religious conflicts, and 3) examine the impact of housing and ethnic quota on the spatial representation of ethnic voters and their voting behaviour. Finally, it concludes with discussions on the implications of its ethnic quotas on its hegemonic party system.

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[2] For the co-optation of the left-wing labour movement in Singapore, See (Fernandez and Loh 2008).
[3] Singapore introduced compulsory national service in 1967 based on Swiss and Israeli conscription schemes.

2.   Socio-Ethnic Cleavages and Racial Riots in the 1960s

Pre-independent Singapore had all the elements of value dissension. The struggle for independence was plagued by anti-colonial agitation, communist subversion and racial unrests. In the 1950s, Singapore was filled with immigrants from impoverished rural China, India and Malaysia as a result of unrestricted immigration policy (Huff 1994, 277). Rising Chinese nationalism polarized the multi-racial society. From late 1950s to early 1960s, immigrant ethnic groups were concentrated in the various parts of Singapore, forming enclaves. Due to legacy of British town planning, the ethnic groups were allocated in parts of the city which reflected the roles each group played in the economy (Sim, Yu, and Han 2003). The dominant Chinese group was prominent in the congested city core that developed into Chinatown, while the Malays gathered on the eastern fringes of the city, known as Geylang Serai. Another Malay grouping was also prevalent in the extreme west of the city, a former fishing village as fishing was the main livelihood of the indigenous Malays. On the other hand, Indians were found in four small groupings; the fourth of these developed along Serangoon Road, known today as Little India. See Figure 1 for the locations of ethnic enclaves.

  - Insert Figure 1 here -

Singapore's immigrant population was then spatially segregated and lacked national cohesion. Weak social fabric and tense relations with Indonesia and Malaysia also lent the country vulnerable to inter-racial misunderstandings and provocations by extreme nationalists, which cumulated to three racial riots in 1950[4], 1964 and 1969. In 1964, riots between Chinese and Malays broke out in Geylang Serai in two periods[5]. Soon, riots spread across Geylang, Joo Chiat and Siglap.[6] In 1969, seven days of riots were sparked when a Malay man was murdered by Chinese in Kampong Kedah, triggering another series of counter-attacks from Malays in Jalan Eunos. This riot was a spill-over from Sino-Malay riots in Malaysia where 196 people were killed and over 350 injured because of Malaysia's General Election (Quah 1985). In total, the two riots killed 36 people and injured 556. See Figure 1 for the locations of racial riots.

Experiences of Singapore's confrontation with Indonesia, painful separation from Malaysia and the racial riots in the 1960s left the PAP leaders with deep suspicions of the loyalty of Malays in Singapore and of the intentions of the Malays in neighbouring countries. The loyalty of Singapore Malay Muslims is of question as the government is fearful that in the event of war with neighbouring large Muslim states, Muslim soldiers will put their religion

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[4] In Dec 1950, a racial riot between ethnic Malays and the European and Eurasian communities was sparked by the custody battle between Maria's adoptive Malay family and her Eurasian parents. The Singapore court ruled that the adopted girl, Maria Hertogh was to be returned to her Catholic biological parents, after being raised a Muslim girl. See http://infopedia.nl.sg/articles/SIP_83_2005-02-02.html.
[5] The first incident occurred on 21 July during a Malay procession marking the Birthday of Islamic prophet Muhammad. The second incident was triggered in September when a Malay Trishaw rider was believed to be murdered by a group of Chinese in Geylang Serai.
[6] 22 people died and 461 were injured while around 3,000 people were arrested. For more on the 1964 riots see http://infopedia.nl.sg/articles/SIP_45_2005-01-06.html.

above their country.[7] In fact, the government excluded Malays from compulsory military conscription for a decade after the scheme was institutionalised and Malays are still absent from high-ranking, sensitive military positions still today (Huxley 2000; Walsh 2007).[8]

After independence, the PAP leaders were determined to make racial and religious harmony a key principle of governance.[9] They differentiated themselves from Malaysia, which adopted Lijphart's (1977) "consociationalist"[10] elite-power sharing model by promoting Malay nationalism and recognizing Malay "special position" through the *bumiputra* (son of the soil) policy. Under the Malaysian Constitution, Article 153 provided special rights to Malays in education, business, and the public service that were safeguarded by the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* (paramount ruler or the King).[11] Malaysian's consociationalist arrangement and affirmative actions were effective in averting confrontation between Malays and non-Malays. However, used in conjunction with coercive political controls, Malaysia's model also had an effect of restricting political competition (D. Mauzy 1993, 2006; Shoup 2011).

3. Constitutional Framework Governing Minority Rights

After Singapore's failed merger with the Malaysian Federation, many Malays in Singapore expected to benefit from the special rights for Malays enshrined in the 1957 Federation of Malaya Constitution. However, they soon realized that it was not part of the agreement and deep resentment ensued (Rahim 2008). For example, in 1972 GE, the PAP Malay candidates had a tough time winning votes against candidates from Malay parties such as the Pertubohan Kebangsaan Melayu[12] (PKMS) in Malay dominant constituencies in Kampong Kembangan and Geyland Serai. As a result of the British colonial legacy, Article 152 of Singapore Constitution makes it the responsibility of the government to recognize and care for the "special position of the Malays as the indigenous people of Singapore". But in practice, the PAP

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[7] As PM Lee Hsien Loong: "If there is a conflict, we don't want to put anybody in that position where he feels he is not fighting a just cause, and perhaps worse, maybe his side is not the right side"(Peled 1998, 123).

[8] Regular Malay soldiers were removed from combat posts. All eligible Malays were only called for to serve National service in 1985. Since 1990s, more Malay participation in the Singapore Armed Forces has been permitted. To date, very few Malays are admitted to the Air Force. See Walsh (2007) and (Petir 1987) .

[9] Racial Harmony Day is commemorated on 21st July each year, where students wear traditional costumes while soldiers watch documentaries to remind themselves of the lessons learnt from the race riots.

[10] Ljiphart defines four characteristics of a consociational democracy that includes: 1) a grand coalition among all ethnic groups, (2) mutual veto in decision making, (3) ethnic proportionality in the allocation of certain opportunities and offices and (4) segmental autonomy (1977, 1).

[11]Unlike the PAP, the UMNO government adopted the *bumiputera* policy to help Malays, the original settlers of Malaya. Article 153 provides for the use of quotas in the granting of scholarships, positions in the civil service, and business licences, as well as native reservations of land. Since 1970s, the Malaysian government also introduced a series of affirmative action policies in the business sectors known as the New Economic Policy to include subsidies for real estate purchases, quotas for public equity shares, and general subsidies to Bumiputra businesses. See Malaysian Constitution at: http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/details.jsp?id=6823.

[12] The PKMS started as a branch of Malaysia's UMNO party in Singapore in 1951. It had made efforts to provide affordable housing for Malays and performed credibly in the earlier years. The PKMS is widely viewed as a "Malay-first" party, as reflected in the party's constitution and slogan "Bersatu-Bersedia Berkhidmat" and "Merdeka" (Unity- Vigilance, Servce and Independence) (Articles 3 and 4). The party's primary objective is to safeguard the constitutional provision that grant special rights and privileges to Singapore Malays in Article 152 of the Singapore Constitution (Mutalib 2004).

government oscillates between giving preferential treatment to Malays and insisting on meritocracy and equal treatment to all by withdrawing free education to all Malay students[13] (Mutalib 2004; Rahim 2008).

Singapore's model of managing ethnic relations has been described as interactionist, rather than integrationist or assimilationist (Siddique 1990). This model acknowledges social heterogeneity and views the population to be composed of separate, distinct "races". In public policies, education, employment, housing, immigration, defence and national security policies are designed to ensure that each race retains and perpetuates its distinctiveness within a general framework of national interest. For example, all Singaporeans have to carry identity cards to declare their racial group based on Chinese, Malay, Indian or Others (CMIO) racial categories. Self-help groups[14] are organized based on racial lines while the immigration policies seek to maintain a Chinese majority in the national racial distribution.[15] To prevent the proliferation of ethnic enclaves, the government resettled the Malays from villages to high rise buildings and later, the Housing and Development Board – the largest provider of housing in Singapore imposed a racial quota of allocating public flats to ensure that each race would be represented in approximate proportion to its share of the total population in each housing estate in 1989 (also see Chua 1991, 1997).

There are inherent contradictions and tensions in Singapore's model of managing ethnic relations through "race-tinted" lenses. As a Nominated Member of Parliament Viswa Sadisivan said, these "apparent contradictions and mixed signals" sent by the government have unnecessarily emphasized rather then downplay racial differences (Oon 2009). Official procedures such as form-filling, government data collection that require the filling of one's "race" and use of ethnic housing quotas reinforced racial differences. Besides, some of these racially discriminatory practices contradict Article 12 of the Singapore's Constitution[16] that guarantees all persons equality before the law and are also inconsistent with "regardless of race, language and religion" tenet enshrined in the National Pledge. In 2002, the controversial suspension of four Muslim girls for wearing tudung (Islamic headscarf) to schools[17] was also seen to have violated the girls' freedom of religion guaranteed under Article 15(1). In 2010, a

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[13] In 1991, the government stopped the automatic exemption of all Malay students from paying tuition fees. It institutionalized a new tuition arrangement by giving an advance of $10 million to Mendaki – a Malay self-help group to subsidize the tuition fees of poor Malay students. Malay students whose family household exceeds the ceiling, as decided by the government have to pay tuition (Mutalib 2004, 210–1).

[14] Aside from Mendaki, a Malay self-help group, the other three self-help groups are the Eurasian Association, the Singapore Indian Development Association and the Chinese Development Assistance Council.

[15] In July 1989, the government offered permanent residency to 25,000 Hong Kong Chinese. More recently, to address the falling fertility rate of Chinese, the government relaxed immigration policy and allowed more Chinese from Mainland China to work, study and live in Singapore (N. Tan and Wong 2012).

[16] Article 12 (1) states that "All persons are equal before the law and entitled to the equal protection of the law. (2) Except as expressly authorised by this Constitution, there shall be no discrimination against citizens of Singapore on the ground only of religion, race, descent or place of birth in any law or in the appointment to any office or employment under a public authority or in the administration of any law relating to the acquisition, holding or disposition of property or the establishing or carrying on of any trade, business, profession, vocation or employment. See Singapore Constitution in http://www.servat.unibe.ch/icl/sn00000_.html

[17] Section 61 of the Education Act empowers the Minister of Education to regulate schools, including prohibiting students from wearing anything not forming part of an official school uniform.

United Nations fact finding mission[18] also found that the ethnic marginalisation; entrenchment of minority status through ethnic categorisations; the minority representation of the electoral quota system; the academic under-performance of Malay students and under-representation of minorities in the military, police and intelligence services and judiciary are pervasive, even today (Gomez 2011).

4.   Legal Controls Governing Race and Religion

To prevent the replay of ethnic unrests, the PAP introduced a wide range of laws and social control mechanisms that include: the Presidential Council for Minority Rights;[19] the Public Entertainments Meeting Act[20]; Miscellaneous Offences Act (MOA); Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Bill[21]; Internal Security Act[22], Singapore Societies Act[23], Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act[24] and Seditious Act[25] to maintain ethnic and religious harmony. Subsumed under nation-building rationale, the strict rules and legislations regulating public discourse have constrained freedom of expression and deprived the opposition of any space for mobilization. With more than 90 percent of legislative seats in Parliament, the PAP has no difficulty passing controversial bills. In fact, Singapore's constitution has been described as "flexible" (Thio and Tan 2009; Thio 2008).

Aside from the draconian Internal Security Act left by the British colonial government, the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act is the most unique and powerful invention that gives the government an exceptional jurisdiction to restrain leaders and individuals from carrying out activities that are "exciting disaffection against" the government or creating "ill will" between religious groups (see Rajah 2012, 219–254).[26] This Act also empowers the government to issue restraining orders, fine and jail individuals whose conduct or speech undermines religious

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[18] PAP leaders such as former PM Lee Kuan Yew has dismissed these legal contradictions and rejected the idea of racial equality for Singaporeans. Instead, he argues that it is necessary to have racial discriminatory framework as the National Pledge was only "an aspiration" and "not reality" (Oon 2009). Likewise, PM Lee Hsien Loong insists that race-based institutions and self-help groups are important despite the rise in interracial integration (Au-Yong 2012).

[19] This Council seeks to ensure that new laws do not discriminate against any race, religion or community.

[20] Outdoor protests are required to obtain a permit under the PEMA. The only outdoor place that does not require a permit is the Speaker's Corner created in 2000. See Public Entertainments and Meetings Act, Chapter 257 of Singapore Statutes Online at: http://statutes.agc.gov.sg. and Public Entertainment (Amendment) Bill 2000 at http://www.mha.gov.sg/basic_content.aspx?pageid=65.

[21] This bill aims at preventing foreign interference in Singapore politics. It forbids newspapers from receiving foreign funds and could restrict the sale of publications that are deemed to have interfered in domestic affairs. See *Chronicle of Singapore* (2009, 128 and 210).

[22] Section 8(1)(a) of the Internal Security Act allows the government the right to arrest and preventively detain individuals without trial for up to two years at a time in certain defined circumstances. It is one of the most draconian laws that allow the Singapore government to investigate security threats like international terrorism, foreign subversion, espionage and acts of violence or hatred using race or religion.

[23] See Societies Act, Chapter 311 of the Singapore Statutes Online at: http://statutes.agc.gov.sg.

[24] See Chapter 167A at Singapore Statutes Online at: http://statutes.agc.gov.sg.

[25] The Sedition Act, introduced in 1948, prohibits expressions that promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between different races. The Act was first used in 2005. See Subsection 3 of Sedition Act, 1985 and Chapter 290 of the Singapore Constitution at: http://statutes.agc.gov.sg.

[26] See Chapter 167A in the Singapore Constitution.

harmony or those who breach such orders (Jayakumar 2009). See list of legislations that govern race and religion in Singapore in Table 1.

- Insert Table 1 here –

Apart from these legal regulations to prevent expressions of ill-will between the races, "broker institutions" were also formed to promote racial harmony at the grassroots level. For example, the People's Association (PA) was created in 1960 to promote social cohesion. Under the PA's umbrella, a network of para-political institutions such as the Community Development Council, Community Centres and Central Joint Social Service Centre draw on state resources to promote inter-racial activities. However, these public funded activities exclude the opposition and are viewed as extensions of the PAP's activities to further partisan gains and perpetuate an unfair playing field (Kenneth Tan and A. Tan 2003; N. Tan 2011).

Most of the legal constraints as mentioned have been designed to empower the government to police race and religion in the public arena (IBA Report 2008; IBA 2011). Over the years, opposition leaders, journalists and dissenters have learnt self-censorship and avoid racial- religious issues for fear of prosecution or being branded for stoking communal sentiments (George 2012; Gomez 2000). Singapore's media is now confined by what is known as "OB markers" – a golfing term to mean "out-of bounds marker" to refer to topics that are permissible for public discussion. Parties and candidates are often reminded to keep race and religion separate from politics and not to mobilize members of church, temples or mosques to campaign for them (Hussain 2009). For example, the recent controversy regarding the Catholic Archbishop's sudden withdrawal of letter for supporting an anti-Internal Security Act [27]rally, showed the government's intervention to keep religion from politics (Au 2012; L. Lim 2012). The repatriating an Australian clergyman James Minchin from Singapore for interference in Singapore's domestic politics also appear more politically motivated than safeguarding "inter-religious and social harmony". Minchin is an author of a book on Lee Kuan Yew and had spoken in an opposition-organized political forum in 2011 (Heng 2012). Other foreigners such as Robert Amsterdam, an international lawyer for the opposition Singapore Democratic Party (SDP) have also been barred from entering Singapore (SDP 2012). These examples show the thin line between the separation of religion and politics and use of legal powers to suppress dissent.

With the advent of information technology, the tight grip has been extended to include discussions on chatrooms, blogging and social network sites[28]. In 2005, the Sedition Act was first used when three men were jailed for making seditious and inflammatory racist comments on the Internet. The next year, a man received a police warning for putting up offensive cartoons of Jesus Christ on his blog while three teenagers were arrested over racially insensitive remarks

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[27] In 1987, 22 Roman Catholic church activists and professionals were detained under the ISA. They were accused of being members of a Marxist conspiracy bent on subverting the government and replacing it with a Marxist state. See http://infopedia.nl.sg/articles/SIP_1578_2009-10-31.html and http://www.nytimes.com/1987/06/21/world/singapore-is-holding-12-in-marxist-conspiracy.html

[28] Singapore government engages in minimal Internet filtering, blocking only a small set of pornographic web sites. Instead, it employs a combination of licensing controls and legal pressures to regulate internet contents and limit the presence of objectionable content and conduct online (Hachigian 2002)

on Facebook. In Feb 2010, an evangelical Pastor was investigated for disparaging Buddhism and Taoism during a sermon that was posted on YouTube (Yen 2012). More recently, a Trade Union employee was sacked for posting a racist rant on her Facebook page for the noise caused by a Malay wedding in the void deck of a public flat. Shortly after, a local short satirical film "Sex, Violence and Family" was banned for racist stereotyping.[29] The PAP's demarcation of the parameters permissible for public discourse and racially discriminatory policies are counter-productive as they reify racial stereotypes of minority groups and stifle the understanding of the social issues facing Singapore (Gomez 2011). Yet, the PAP has dismissed any calls for more openness.[30]

The government's inconsistencies in the regulation of racial politics have displayed concerns with self-preservation rather than safeguarding the special position of minorities (Kassim 1974; Mutalib 2004, 2012; Rahim 2008). For example, it was observed that when the PAP's minority support was weak, especially in the 1960s, the leaders were quick to co-opt many Malay leaders into the higher party, grassroots and governmental positions. But once the support of minority voters was less critical, less concern was shown to protect Malays' rights. For example, in Rahim's study, she contends that:

> "Malay support was crucial to the political ambitions of the PAP during the tumultuous pre-merger and merger period, when its own political fortunes hang precariously in the balance. Expediently, the Malay was offered cultural goods, constitutional guarantees on the special position and rights of the Malays and promises to strengthen their relative socio-economic status. However, when the Malays were no longer as politically important to the political calculations of the PAP leadership after separation, they become less sensitive to the concerns of the community. In the event, the PAP government's obligations under Section 152 of the Singapore Constitution have been disregarded in the rhetorical fanfare of building multi-racial and meritocratic society." (Rahim 2008, 111)

Many co-opted PAP Malay leaders suffer from credibility problem and are mistrusted by the Malay community as they are seen to promote party policies, rather than advance the interest of Malay community (Mutalib 2004, 219, 2012, 82; Peled 1998, 120).[31] Aside from using minority elites to widen the PAP's support base, the model of managing ethnic relations also impacted electoral competition. The next part of this paper will focus on the effects of two key schemes, namely, the Group Representative Constituencies (GRCs) and Ethnic Integration Policy (EIP) that were overtly introduce to protect minority rights, but had resulted in less

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[29] The film first received an M18 rating (for those above 18 years old). But the film was suddenly banned at a last minute as one character made fun of Indians. See (Toh 2012).

[30] For example, in response to the UN Fact Finding Report, Singapore's Foreign Affairs defending its position and said:

> "Race, language and religion will always be sensitive issues in Singapore. This does not mean that they cannot be discussed, but a balance must always be struck between free expression and preservation of racial and religious harmony. This balance is only for the Singapore Government to determine because only the Singapore Government bears the responsibility should things go wrong. The UN bears no such responsibility and we see no reason to take risks for the sake of an abstract principle."(Lin 2010).

[31] Former PAP Malay MP Othman Wok and Yaacob Mohammed were branded by Malays as 'infidels' and have difficulties forming relations with Malays at the grassroots level (Mutalib 2012, 81–2).

representative electoral system. Studies elsewhere have shown how the GRC scheme increased the country's electoral disproportionality and concentrated the party system, extending the PAP's hegemonic rule (N. Tan, under review). Here, the focus will be on the GRC's effects on ethnic minority voters, candidates and parties.

5.   Group Representative Constituencies (GRC) and Ethnic Integration Policy (EIP)

From 1965 to 1987, Singapore was spatially divided into single-member constituencies (SMC) based on simple plurality electoral system. In 1988, an electoral quota or the GRC was introduced before the 1988 GE to include at least one ethnic minority candidate in a multi-member constituency. Under the GRC scheme, three SMCs were merged into one single-block. Each party contesting in the GRC has to field a multi-member team that consists of at least one ethnic minority of Indian, Malay or mixed ethnicity. To ensure adequate Malay parliamentary representation, three-fifths of the total number of GRCs are designated constituencies, where at least one of the candidates in each team has to be Malay; while the rest could be fielded by candidates of other ethnic minorities.

In the following year, the HDB institutionalized an ethnic quota or Ethnic Integration Policy (EIP) to ensure each race would be represented in approximate proportion to its share of the total population in each housing flat and estate. The aim of the quota is to prevent the formation of ethnic enclaves and to integrate the ethnic groups in the housing estates.[32]The HDB is the Singapore's biggest housing provider that had built more than 870,000 flats to house 85 percent of Singapore's population. The implementation of the EIP thus affects nearly all Singapore residents as each housing estate is curbed at 84 percent for Chinese, 22 percent for Malays and 10 percent for Indians or others, and three percent higher for each housing block.[33]

Despite the government's laudable intents, the ethnic quotas were not well received, not even by Malay community.[34] To begin with, the PAP's assumption that Singaporeans were voting along ethnic lines and concerned about the minority MPs' ability to return to the House was not backed by strong empirical evidence.[35] My study of the ethnic minority candidates in all single-member districts before 1988 finds that both the PAP and opposition parties have had no difficulties fielding ethnic minority candidates and winning in single-member districts. See Table 2 for the best performing minority candidates in SMCs from 1968-2011.

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[32] There are conflicting studies on the success of EIP. While some argue that the EIP prevented the formation of racial enclaves and increased social integration (L.L. Sim et al. 2003), others contend that the EIP has deepened the marginalization of the Malay and Indian underclasses rather than advanced their desegregation(Chih 2002a, 2002b).

[33] When Chinese quotas are reached, non-Chinese sellers cannot sell to Chinese buyers because the transaction increases the Chinese proportion above the Chinese quota. The government also imposed similar quota scheme on immigrants to prevent the congregation of permanent residents and foreigners living in one area (Chih 2002b; Saad 2010; Sim, Yu, and Han 2003). Also ee See HDB website http://www.hdb.gov.sg.

[34] The PKMS, a Malay party saw the GRC as a "PAP ploy to force it to merge with others and make Malays abandon the PKMS in favour of the PAP Malay leaders" (Mutalib 2004, 216–7).

[35] Even to date, PM Lee Hsien Loong insists that even between Chinese, dialect group of the candidate makes a difference and minorities will "always be at a disadvantage" (Lee 2011).

- Insert Table 2 here -

What is more significant is that the vote shares of PAP minority candidates were declining in every election, slipping from a high of 83 per cent in 1968 to a low of 66 per cent by 1988 GE. On the other hand, the vote shares of opposition minority candidates were climbing, especially in the 1980s. In 1984 GE, the election before the GRC was introduced, ethnic minority candidate were in fact most competitive, with more than nine minority candidates (from both the Workers' Party, WP and the PKMS) earning more than 35 percent vote shares. See Table 3 for the best performing ethnic minority opposition candidates in SMDs. Also see Appendix A for the acronyms and list of political parties in Singapore.

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In 1981 Anson by-election, the PAP actually lost its hegemony and one seat, when its Chinese candidate was beaten by J.B. Jeyaratnam, an Indian lawyer from the WP. The success of J.B. Jeyaratnam in a Chinese dominant constituency showed that the Singaporean voters were more concerned with issues such as housing prices rather than candidate's ethnicity[36]. Amongst the opposition parties, the WP has been fielding minority candidates and performing relatively well, earning more than 35 percent of vote shares in 1972, 1976, 1980 and 1984 GEs. The significant drop in the vote share of PAP minority candidates could explain why the PAP was worried of its own minority candidates and refrained from fielding any in SMDs for 15 years, until the 2011 GE.[37]

On average, Indian candidates tend to perform better than Malay candidates. Perhaps what the PAP could have explained clearer is that its own Malay candidates are not receiving as much electoral support and were more worried of their own Malay MPs are having problems building rapport in Chinese dominant constituencies. As mentioned, PAP Malay MPs are usually from the educated or middle-class background. They suffer from credibility problem and do not connect as well with the working class Malay voters (Mutalib 2012; Rahim 2008).

Aside from the weak evidence that Singaporeans were voting on ethnic grounds, the fact that an electoral quota was introduced for minorities and not for women is also controversial. Comparatively, women were more severely underrepresented than ethnic minorities in the 1980s. With more than 45 percent of women in the electorate, there were less than 5 percent of women MPs for two decades. Comparatively, ethnic minorities have contested in all elections and enjoyed an average of 23 percent legislative representation from 1968 to 1988. Yet, despite this disparity, an ethnic quota rather than a gender quota was imposed.[38] See Figure 2 for the legislative representation of ethnic minorities and women in Singapore.

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[36] The fact that Michael Palmer, an Eurasian PAP candidate won in Punggol East SMC in 2011 GE, was another example of how charisma could matter more than ethnicity in Singapore.

[37] The PAP's minority candidates typically earned an average of 76 per cent of vote shares. Many PAP minority candidates have had been able to win seats without having to face contests in 1968, 1972, 1976 and 1980 GEs. However, this phenomenon has abated in recent years.

[38] When questioned by the present author of the rationale behind the "conflicting signals" and double standards toward gender and ethnic representation, a former Minister in the PM's office, Lim Hwee Hua argued that: "[gender] quotas can be self-defeating and detract from the true basis of merit" and failed to offer a

- Insert Figure 2 here -

As Figure 2 also shows, the overall minority representation was not severe before the GRC scheme. After the GRC was introduced, ethnic minority representation dipped from 19 percent in 1984 to 16 per cent in 1988. The intended effect of the GRC only kicked in after 1991, moving the total legislative minority representation to a high of 27.6 percent by 2011, exceeding the national ethnic minority average of 25.9 percent. The GRC guarantees about 17 percent of legislative seats for the minorities. However, because the PAP fields more than one minority candidate in the multi-member team in safe seats, the actual minority legislative representation was raised to 27.6 percent by 2011. This suggests that candidate selection at party organization level may matter more than electoral quotas in boosting minority representation.

The ethnic quotas have changed the way parties field their minority candidates and altered the relationship between a MP and his constituents. Minorities are now "forced" to stand in GRCs as part of a team rather than in SMDs – where he can no longer claim to represent minority interests in a multi-member constituency. As PM Lee Hsien Loong said in response to the election of first opposition Malay MP in 2011 GE: "The Malay MPs all play a dual role. They're leaders of the Malay community, but they also represent all constituents of all races"(Hussain 2012). The housing ethnic quota means that all ethnic minority groups would always retain its minority status in each housing estate, both in numbers and in electoral strength. This implies that no minority candidate can hope to win the election by mobilizing minority issues, as the majority of the constituencies would be made up of Chinese. As Figure 3 shows, PAP stopped fielding minority candidates in SMCs after 1988. Realizing the difficulties of contesting against PAP Chinese candidates in Chinese majority constituencies, the opposition parties also stopped fielding minority candidates in SMCs after 1997.

-    Insert Figure 3 here –

The ethnic quotas also have disastrous impact on ethnic parties such as the PKMS which has survived largely on promoting rights and Malay interests (Mutalib 2004). The distribution of ethnic minorities in 27 electoral constituencies through the EIP has deprived parties such as the PKMS of mobilization bases. Presently, there is no constituency where Malays are numerous enough to form the majority in a single seat constituency or even come close in a multi-member constituency. The PKMS had traditionally enjoyed Malay support and could have possibly win in Malay dominant constituencies such as Geylang Serai and Kampong Kembangnan, which had about 40 percent Malays before the EIP. For example, in 1989, the Parliament was told that if no ethnic housing quota was introduced, Malays would have constituted 43 percent in Bedok while Chinese will comprise 93.1 percent in Bukit Merah (Mutalib 2004, 213).

convincing answer to explain why ethnic minorities cannot be elected based on merit in Singapore. See the exchange between the present author and former Minister of PM's Office and Chairman of PAP Women's wing in (H. H. Lim 2009; N Tan 2009).

With the myriad of rules governing public discourse of race and religion, parties can no longer champion ethnic or communal causes. Essentially, the GRC scheme ensures that parties are inclusive, broad based, representative and focused on national issues to stand any chance of winning. It is thus no surprise that the PKMS has to work in an alliance with other parties such as the SDP and the Singapore Democratic Alliance since 2001. Now, the PKMS is a spent force. Apart from being systematically marginalized by the PAP, the party has been weakened by constant leadership struggles and poor party organization. Indeed, the party has failed to win any seat in the post-independent period, even in former Malay enclaves.

Aside from the PKMS, other parties that have attempted to raise racial or communal issues have met with dire outcomes. The prosecution of WP candidate, lawyer Tang Liang Hong, who contested in Cheng San GRC in 1997 GE is perhaps the most infamous example of how campaigning on racial and religious issues could lead to legal tussles. During the campaign, Tang was accused of being a "Chinese chauvinist" and "anti-Christian" for suggesting that the PAP government was stacked with many English-educated, Chinese Christians (D. K. Mauzy and Milne 2002, 134–5). After Tang's team was narrowly defeated, earning 45.2 percent of vote shares, Tang was sued by Lee Kuan Yew and six other leaders for defamation and making false statements about the integrity of PAP leaders.[39] He remains in exile in Australia till today.

6.   Gerrymandering and Malapportionment

Simple plurality electoral system creates a high vote threshold for smaller parties with support that is spatially dispersed across many constituencies (Norris 2004, 44). Nationally, the total Malay voting population is less than 17 percent of the total Singapore electorate. As the following sections show, the ethnic quotas, used in conjunction with gerrymandering and malapportionment have changed the spatial representation of ethnic voters and altered electoral outcomes in many constituencies since 1988.

In Singapore, the Elections Department is responsible for managing the elections and recommending electoral boundary changes is a branch under the PM's office. Electoral boundary changes do not require constitutional changes as they are specified in the terms of reference of the Electoral Boundaries Committee, comprising of five senior civil servants that redraws the boundaries before an election. In 1958, the rationale behind the redrawing of boundaries was spelled out in a 42-page report. However, this practice has changed in the last few decades. Now, the report only contains seven pages, with explanations reduced to one paragraph that explain the changes as reflection of "current configurations and population changes since the last boundary delineation exercise" (Li 2010).

Singapore's opaque electoral boundary redrawing process stands in stark contrast to other Westminster Parliamentary systems such as in the U.K. where the Boundary Commissions are non-departmental, electoral redistribution proposals are published and public inquiries are held if critical representations are received before the final proposal is made to the Parliament (Johnston 1986, 280–1). The fact that the Singapore's Election Commission and Electoral

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[39] Tang left the country for Australia after the election and has not returned to Singapore since.

Boundaries Commission are not independent poses an obvious conflict of interest and invite criticism of gerrymandering and malapportionment to the ruling party's advantage.[40]

In fact, early studies show that gerrymandering and re-apportionment had begun as far back in 1960s. For example, Rahim argued that since late 1960s, Malay enclaves were re-apportioned to reduce the chances of candidates from Malay parties from getting elected (2008). For example, re-apportionment led to the abolition of the Malay Southern Islands constituency and "cracking up" of Geylang Serai into two, with both sections merged with other constituencies containing large numbers of Chinese voters (Tan and Grofman, work in-progress). Besides, the redrawing of the boundaries of Kampong Kembangan and the creation of an adjacent new constituency also had the effect of splitting the impact of Malay strongholds. In addition, another reboundary delineation in 1971 also counteracted the rising numerical Malay representation in Kampong Kembangan.

If ethnic housing quota was not implemented, the formerly dominant Malay estates could have more than 40 percent of Malay residents and voters. Under this condition, the PKMS or parties who fielded Malay candidates could stand a good chance of winning. However, since the GRC scheme has been introduced, most of the SMCs where opposition ethnic minority candidates have enjoyed strong opposition support have been submerged into larger Chinese majority constituencies or merged with other PAP strongholds to form new GRCs. For example, in 1984 GE, SMCs such as Anson (56%), Jalan Kayu (48.8%), Kampung Kembangan (44%), Kolam Ayer (42%), Kampong Ubi (36.3%) and Jalan Besar (35.6%) where ethnic minority candidates have earned more than 35 percent of opposition vote share have either been split up or merged into larger GRCs such as Aljunied, Marine Parade, Cheng San GRCs with higher Chinese population districts. As earlier mentioned, Anson constituency that was won by the WP in 1981 by-election and 1984 GE was also split into two, divided between Tanjong Pagar constituency, a Chinese dominant stronghold held by former PM Lee Kuan Yew and to Kreta Ayer GRC, another Chinese dominant constituency. See Table 4 for the table that shows list of minority opposition candidates and the SMDs that have been dissolved.

- Insert Table 4 here-

The sizes and composition of the constituencies have changed every election since 1988. My study found that on average, the PAP's total vote shares have increased for both GRCs and SMCs after the redrawing of boundaries and expansion of constituency sizes. The comparative study of the average total vote shares of the PAP and the opposition vote shares in the dissolved and newly created constituencies from 1988 to 2011 GEs show that on average, the PAP gained 5.5 percentage points in newly created GRCs and 2.5 percentage points in newly created SMCs. Gerrymandering and expanding the GRCs have raised the vote share of the PAP from 57.8 percent (1988-1997) to 63.5 percent (1988-2011). Comparatively, dissolving and merging SMCs have only boosted the PAP's vote share slightly from 65.3 to 67.7 percent. See

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[40] As James Madison reminds us: "No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would be certainly bias his judgement, and not improbably, corrupt his integrity. With equal, nay with great reason, a body of men are unfit to be both judges and parties at the same time…" (The Federalist, No.10).

Table 5 for the average vote shares of the PAP and opposition parties in newly created constituencies and dissolved constituencies.

- Insert Table 5 here -

This implies that redrawing electoral boundaries and changing the composition of the GRCs offers more room for manipulation and is more effective in depressing opposition vote shares than changes with SMCs. This could explain why the PAP has been enlarging the sizes of the GRCs from three members per team to a high of five and six by 1997. Now, about 90 percent of 87 constituencies are composed of GRCs. The total number of SMCs has reduced from 79 in 1984 to a low of 9 by 2006. See Table 6 for the distribution and composition of SMCs and GRCs (1988-2011).

- Insert Table 6 here -

Apart from enlarging the magnitude of the GRCs, the Electoral Commission has also split up"un-performing", pro-opposition GRCs up by "cracking" them and absorbing them into other larger GRCs (e.g. the splitting of Cheng San GRC into three parts in 1997). Most of the GRCs with more than 40 percent of opposition support have experienced redistribution into neighbouring larger GRCs. For example, hotly contested GRCs such as Cheng San, Eunos, Bedok and Tiong Bahru GRCs have been eliminated over the years. Likewise, many SMCs that have experienced close fights such as Braddell Heights, Bukit Batok, Changi, Nee Soon South and Paya Lebar with the opposition parties gaining more than 45 per cent have all mysteriously disappeared.

Singapore's Election Boundary Commission does not explain why certain GRCs were dissolved or new ones were created. Besides, no details on the ethnic or demographic background of each constituency have ever been provided. For example, in the 2011 GE, to appease public dissatisfaction with the lack of contest in larger GRCs, eight of out 12 SMCs were randomly created, increasing the total number of SMCs from nine to 12. As Figure 4 shows, these SMCs are oddly shaped and have disproportionate sizes. Some new SMCs are also strangely located in the middle of GRCs such as Bukit Panjang SMC, Hong Kah North and Radin Mas – which were former PAP strongholds, before the GRC scheme was introduced. The opaque boundaries redrawing process and random formation of new constituencies disadvantage the opposition parties as they face difficulties strategizing where to mobilize their ground and build support.

- Insert Figure 4 here -

As Figure 4 shows, the population sizes of the new SMCs vary quite widely which indicates that partisan malapportionment is occurring. For example, the largest SMC Punggol East has a population size of 33, 281, while the smallest SMC Potong Pasir has only 17, 327 population. The range of voters that a MP has to serve in SMCs can differ by nearly 48 per cent. See Figure 4 for the locations and shapes of the SMCs for the 2011 GE. While no objective standard has been identified or used for malapportionment, in general, each electoral constituency is expected to be as near to the electoral quota as much as possible (Johnston

1986, 279). Electoral quota refers to the total electorate of the country divided by the number of constituencies prior to redistribution.

As Table 7 shows, the degree of deviation from the electoral quota was most severe in the 1988 GE, where the total electoral in the largest constituency could be 64 per cent more than the electoral quota, while the smallest is 65 per cent less. The plus or minus 30 per cent from ideal thus provides great room for manipulation (Tan and Grofman, work in progress). While the large deviations from the electoral quota have reduced over the years, but the redistribution of electorate in the 2011 GE are still 30 percent above the electoral quota. Another way to study malapportionment is to consider the ratios of the largest to smallest constituency. As Table 7 also shows, the ratios of largest to smallest districts are at their maximum or even higher than is technically allowable. The ratio of the largest constituency over smallest constituency was at a high of 4.7 in 1988 GE and reduced to 2.1 by 2011 GE.

- Insert Table 7 here -

7.   Changing Spatial Representation of Ethnic Voters and Voting Behaviour

A key aim of the EIP is to eliminate ethnic enclaves and disperse constituencies with too many Malays or Indians. Regular malapportionment before election helps to achieve this aim. There are no official statistics or historical data on the demographic breakdown of each constituency for temporal comparison. But based on demographic data of residents in the housing estates from the Singapore Census Report 2010 and recent 2011 GE results, we can estimate the density and socio-ethnic demography in each housing district and have a snap shot view of their voting behaviour and electoral support for the PAP and opposition parties.

My study shows that both ethnic quota schemes have successfully redistributed the ethnic groups and altered their voting behavior. Here, Figure 5 has mapped out the locations of the various ethnic groups with higher than HDB allowable quotas of ethnic resident population than the rest of the other districts. The new Malay enclaves are now dispersed throughout the island reduced to less than 20 percent in most housing districts, except in Tampines, which still has about 23 per cent of Malay residents, above the national average of 14 per cent.

- Insert Figure 5 here –

The 2011 GE electoral results and demographic study of the constituencies based on 2010 Census Report show that constituencies with higher Chinese populations have the highest support for the opposition parties. On the other hand, constituencies with higher Malay population in Sembawang, Pioneer and Hong Kah North (except Tampines, which is geographically located near opposition strongholds in the North Eastern part of Singapore) have displayed stronger support for the PAP in 2011 GE. See Figure 5 the locations of new ethnic enclaves and Table 8 for the estimated population of ethnic residents in the constituency and their support for opposition parties.

- Insert Table 8 here

For 2011 GE, the results show that the districts with more than 80 percent large Chinese working class majority, located in the Northeastern part of Singapore are largely more pro-opposition. For example, the opposition WP won the Aljunied GRC with a 54.7 per cent vote share and brought five opposition MPs to the house for the first time since the GRC scheme was introduced in 1988. While Hougang SMC (64.8%) continued to be retained by the opposition, Potong Pasir was lost to the PAP by a very narrow margin (49.6%). On the other hand, Indian majority districts show mixed results. While both Moulmein-Kallang GRC (41.5%) and Mountbatten SMC (41.4%) show strong support for the opposition, the two SMCs in Whampoa and Yuhua were more supportive of PAP.

Essentially, these findings contradict Fetzer's (2008) based on 2006 GE that found Malay voters to be less supportive of the PAP than the Indian voters based on the study of the electoral votes of the PAP in Malay designated and Indian designated GRCs. By expanding the demographic study to include SMCs, we can see that Malay voters have turned from being suspicious of the PAP to being supporters, more so than the Chinese working class voters, from the Northeast region and Indian voters in the Eastern region. It is no wonder even after Lee Kuan Yew's insensitive remarks about Malay's non-integration that sparked a public outcry, the PAP leaders were still confident that they enjoy Malay support (see Chan 2011).

8.   Conclusion

There are useful lessons to be drawn from Singapore's case of using legal institutions to regulate inter-ethnic relations. Singapore's model of regulating ethnic relations through a wide variety of innovative legislations shows how multi-ethnic societies need not be plagued by polarizing politics and ethnic conflicts. As the first part of this paper has tried to demonstrate, constitutional engineering by the PAP government based on a racially discriminatory framework has helped to eliminate ethnic riots and repressed ethnic politics. This has been facilitated by the PAP's legislative supermajority, which could easily passed draconian laws to prevent politicization of ethnic or religious issues.

However, Singapore's social and ethnic harmony has been achieved in the expense of limited individual rights and freedom. The legal constraints designed to empower the government to police race and religion have also muffled dissent and stifled civil society. At times, the clamp down on public discourse seemed more self-serving than for the preservation of social and ethnic harmony. The prosecution of Lawyer Tang Liang Hong and barring of James Minchin from Singapore are just some examples to show the thin line between the separation of religion and politics. The use of rule of law for partisan gains is typical of regimes that rely on law for stability. As William Dobson reminds us: "Today's twenty-first century authoritarianism crave the type of legitimacy that only the law can provide. For regimes that seek to mask their true nature behind a façade, the law is one of the most powerful weapons they can wield. It offers the government the pretense it requires to accomplish its aims, all without stepping out of the shadows."(2013)

The second part of this paper has focused on the effects of Singapore's ethnic quotas on housing and legislative representation to demonstrate the redistributive power of institutions. It has attempted to build on limited available data to show how ethnic quotas, coupled with

gerrymandering and malapportionment have changed the spatial representation of ethnic voters, eliminated ethnic parties and boosted the incumbent's vote share. As a result of the GRC and EIP schemes, ethnic enclaves have been effectively dispersed while ethnic parties have been decimated and ethnic party-voter alignment links, severed.

What is significant is that despite the racially discriminatory policies and framwork, Malay voters have turned from being resentful of the PAP to supporters of the regime. The snap shot study of the 2011 GE electoral results and demographic study of the constituencies based on 2010 Census Report show that constituencies with higher Malay populations are more pro-PAP while the Chinese working class constituencies in the Northeastern region are more pro-opposition. However, as Rahim's (2008) observed, the support of the Malay voters is conditional. More work thus lies ahead to examine the linkages between the PAP and its ethnic voters and the effectiveness of non-legal means such as the use of para-political organizations and other pork barrelling activities for partisan gains.

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Figure 1: Locations of Ethnic Enclaves and Riots in the 1960s
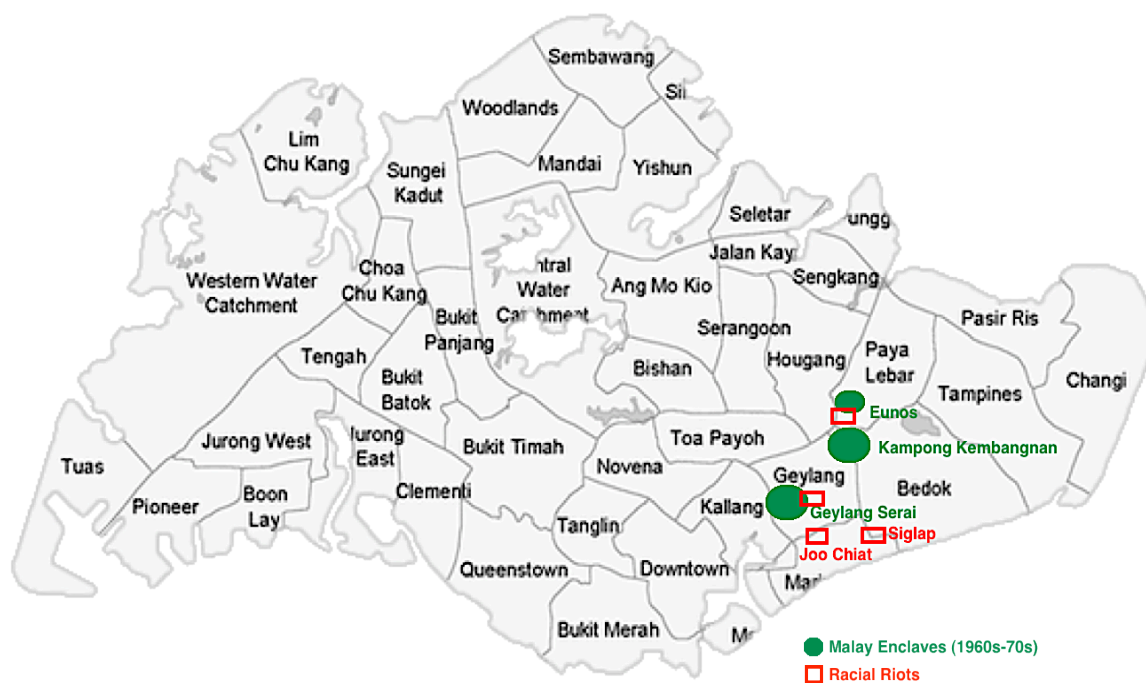
Source: Compiled by author

Table 1: Key Legislations and Initiatives that Regulate Race and Religion

Year	Legislations
1949	Inter-Religious Organization[41] (IRO) formed
1960	Trade Union Bill passed
1960	The People's Association formed
1965	Constitution Commission[42]
1970	Presidential Council for Minority Rights[43] (PCMR) formed
1970	Amendments to the Penal Code[44] passed
1979	Public Entertainments Meeting Act (PEMA) passed
1985	Seditious Act passed
	Singapore Societies Act passed
1986	Newspaper and Printing Presses (Amendment) Bill passed
1988	Group Representative Constituency Scheme introduced
1989	Ethnic Integration Housing Policy (EIP) implemented
1990	Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act (MRHA) passed
1997	Community Development Council[45] formed
	Central Joint Social Service Centre[46] (JSSC) formed
2003	Declaration on Religious Harmony[47] initiated
2009	Public Order Act passed

Source: Compiled by author

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[41] IRO conducts inter-faith prayers and blessings at launching ceremonies of public and private institutions. See IRO website at http://iro.sg/about-iro/about-iro.html

[42] The Constitution Commission was created to ensure that the rights of all racial, linguistic and religious minorities were safeguarded in the Constitution (P. Lim 2009, 77).

[43] A new non-elected government body set up to scrutinize the bills passed by the Parliament to ensure that they do not discriminate against any racial or religious community (Mak 1992).

[44] Introduced into the Penal Code to increase the punishment if the person commits "racially or religiously aggravated" offences and be jailed for up to three years and fined up to S$7,500.

[45] In 1997, nine CDCs, each headed by a Mayor, were set up for Singaporeans to look after their own community needs. These were later re-organised into five CDCs in January 2002.

[46] Operational by 1997, the JSSC is a joint body that enables self-help groups and community organisations to pool resources to promote multi-racialism. Renamed OnePeople.sg. in 2007

[47] Singaporeans are encouraged to recite the Declaration during Racial Harmony Celebrations every July so to affirm the values that helped to maintain religious harmony in Singapore

Table 2: Best Performing PAP Minority Candidates in SMDs (1968-2012)

GE	Party	Best Performing PAP Minority Candidates	Race	Votes	Vote Share (%)	Constituency
1968	PAP	Rahmat Bin Kenap	Malay	9363	83.01	Geylang Serai
	PAP	Yaacob Bin Mohamed	Malay	9797	81.37	Kampong Ubi
1972	PAP	Abdul Aziz Bin Karim	Malay	12,626	79.8	Kallang
	PAP	Abdul Rahim Bin Ishak	Malay	11,456	78.60	Siglap
1976	PAP	Rajaratnam Sinnathamby	Indian	13,114	80.1	Kampng Glam
	PAP	Abdul Rahim Bin Ishak	Malay	9,733	78.2	Siglap
1980	PAP	Chengara V. Devan Nair	Indian	11,564	84.1	Anson
	PAP	Sidek Bin Saniff	Malay	16,995	80.4	Kolam Ayer
1984	PAP	Vasoo Sushilan	Indian	10,299	74.70	Bo Wen
	PAP	Jayakumar Shanmugam	Indian	10,979	68.90	Bedok
1988	PAP	Abdullah Bin Tarmugi	Malay	12,101	73.70	Siglap
	PAP	Dhanabalan Suppiah	Indian	13,097	66.10	Kallang
1991						
1997		No PAP ethnic minority candidate				
2001						
2006						
2012	PAP	Michael Palmer	Eurasian	16994	54.50	Punggol East

Source: Data from Singapore Elections.

Table 3: Best Performing Opposition Minority Candidates in SMDs (1968-2011)

GE	Party	Best Performing Opposition Minority Candidates	Race	Votes	Vote Share (%)	Constituency
1968	Ind.	M. P. D. Nair	Indian	1,391	15.09	Farrer Park
1972	PKMS	Ahmad Bin Haji Taff	Malay	4,978	39.80	Geylang Serai
	WP	Madai P.D. Nair	Indian	5,137	36.9	JalanKayu
1976	WP	J.B. Jeyaretnam	Indian	7,177	40.1	Kampng ChaiChee
	WP	Madai P.D. Nair	Indian	5,544	38.4	Jalan Kayu
1980	WP	J.B. Jeyaretnam	Indian	8,141	47.00	Telok Blangah
	WP	Madai P.D. Nair	Indian	6,855	31	JalanKayu
1984	WP	J.B. Jeyaretnam	Indian	9,909	56.80	Anson
	WP	Madai P.D. Nair	Indian	11,414	48.80	Jalan Kayu
1988	SDP	Abdul Rasheed B.A.K.	Indian	12,017	40.10	Punggol
	WP	A. L. Sundram	Indian	6,707	33.90	Kallang
1991	WP	Gopalan Nair Pallichadath	Indian	4, 046	35.40	Bukit Merah
	PKMS	Sahid Bin Sahooman	Malay	3,686	26.70	Boon Lay
1997	SPP	Syed Farid Bin Wajidi	Malay	1,506	6.40	Bukit Gombak
2001						
2006		No opposition ethnic minority candidate				
2011						

Source: Data from Singapore Elections. *Ind – Independent. See Appendix A for acronyms of political parties.

Figure 2: Legislative Representation of Minorities and Women (1968-2011)

Legislative Representation of Ethnic Minority and Women in SIngapore (1968-2011)

Pre GRC / Post GRC

% of Female MPs — % of Ethnic Minority MPS
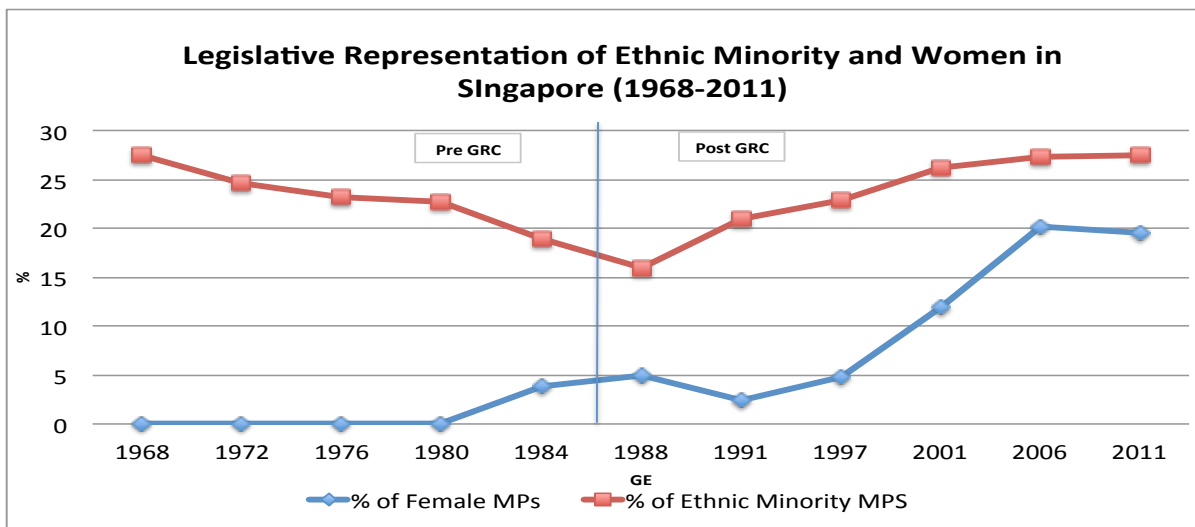
Figure 3: Number of Ethnic Minority Candidates in SMCs (1968-2011)

Ethnic Minority Candidates in SMCs

Pre-GRC / Post-GRC

PAP Minority — Opposition Minority — Independent Minority
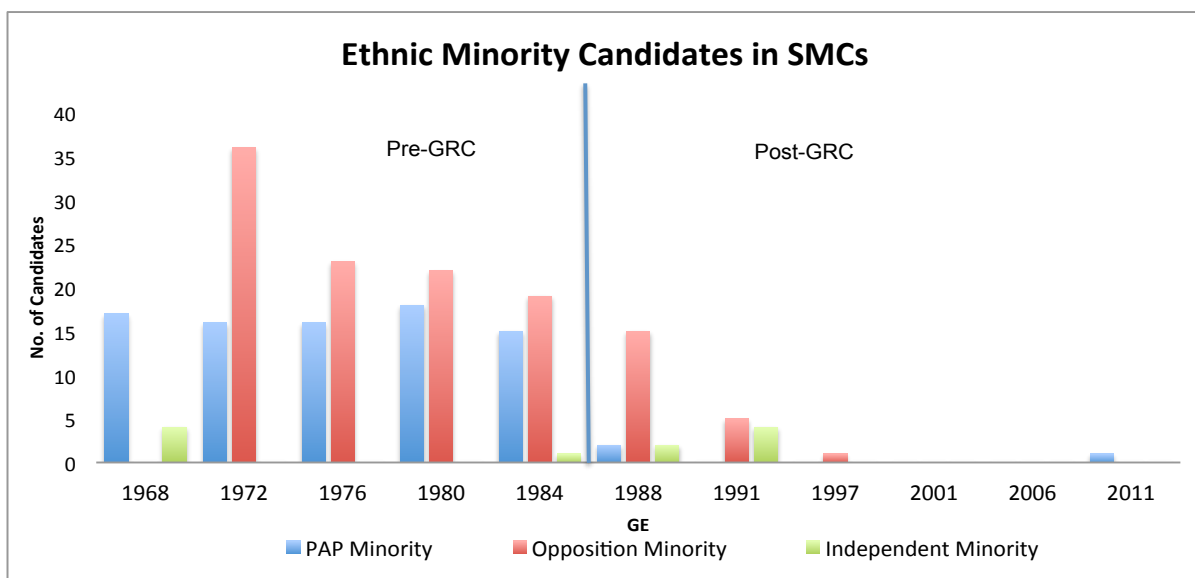
Table 4: Minority Opposition Candidates and Dissolved Single Member Constituencies After 1984

Party	Candidate	Vote Share %	Race	SMD in 1984	Changes after 1988 GE
WP	John Cruz Corera	33.2	Eurasian	Alexandra	Remained
WP	Joshua Benjamin Jeyaretnam	56.8	Indian	Anson	Split into Tanjong Pagar, Kreta Ayer GRCs
JPS	Suib Bin Abdul Rahman	24.6	Malay	Ayer Rajah	Remained
UPF	Shaikh Ahmad B. S. Salim	25.3	Malay	Bo Wen	Disappeared
SUF	Reveendran Sasi	30.4	Indian	Boon Lay	Remained
WP	Mohd Taib Bin Saffar	33.7	Malay	Brickworks	Brickworks GRC
SUF	Mohamed Mansor B. A. Rahman	34.4	Malay	Geylang Serai	Marine Parade GRC
WP	Madai Puthan D. Nair	48.8	Indian	Jalan Kayu	Cheng San GRC
WP	Balakrishnan Ananthan	35.6	Indian	JalanBesar	Jalan Besar GRC
WP	A. L. Sundram	35.1	Indian	Kallang	Remained
WP	Mohamed Jufrie B. Mahmood	44.3	Malay	Kampong Kembangan	Aljunied GRC
PKMS	Abdul Rahman B. Mohamed Zin	36.3	Malay	Kampong Ubi	Aljunied GRC
UPF	Harbans Singh	24.2	Indian	Kebun Baru	Remained
WP	Royston George Scharenguivel	42.1	Eurasian	Kolam Ayer	Jalan Besar GRC
WP	George Benjamin Armstrong	33.2	Eurasian	Leng Kee	Remained
SUF	Gertrude Magdeline De Gracias	29.1	Eurasian	Marine Parade	Marine Parade GRC
Ind	Stanley MARIADASS	22.6	Indian	Sembawang	Sembawang GRC
UPF	Kasim Bin Ibrahim	27.7	Malay	Tampines	Tampines GRC
WP	Murugason Rajaratnam	45.0	Indian	Telok Blangah	Remained
UPF	Munjeet Singh	23.3	Indian	Yio Chu Kang	Remained

Source: Data from Singapore Elections.
*Bold: Candidates with more than 35 percent vote share.

Table 5: Average Vote Shares of the PAP and Opposition Parties in All Newly Created Constituencies and Dissolved Constituencies since 1988 to 2011

|	Dissolved GRCs (%)	Newly Created GRCs (%)	Diff-erence	Dissolved SMCs (%)	Newly Created SMCs (%)	Diff-erence
Average Total PAP Vote Share	57.8	63.3	+5.5	65.3	67.7	+2.4
Average Total Opp. Vote Share	42.3	36.7	-5.6	34.4	32.0	-2.4

Source: Calculated based on data from Singapore Elections.
*For the complete data of the new and dissolved GRCs and SMCs, see Appendixes A & B enclosed.

Table 6: Distribution of SMC and GRC Seats (1984-2001)

Date of GE	Total Seats	SMC seats (%)	GRC seats (%)	Make Up of GRCs
22 Dec 1984	79	79 (100)	-	-
23 Sep 1988	81	42 (51.9)	39 (48.1)	13 x 3-MP GRCs
31 Aug 1991	81	21(25.9)	60 (74.1)	15 x 4-MP GRCs
2 Jan 1997	83	9 (10.8)	74 (89.2)	15 5 x 4-MP GRCs 6 x 5-MP GRCs 4 x 6-MP GRCs
3 Nov 2001	84	9 (10.7)	75 (89.3)	14 9 x 5-MP GRCs 5 x 6-MP GRCs
6 May 2006	84	9 (10.7)	75 (89.3)	14 9 x 5-MP GRCs 5 x 6-MP GRCs
7 May 2011	87	12 (13.8)	75 (86.2)	15 2 x 4-MP GRCs 11 x 5-MP GRCs 2 x 6-MP GRCs

Source: Compiled based on data from Singapore Elections Department.

**Figure 4: Location of Constituencies for 2011 GE**
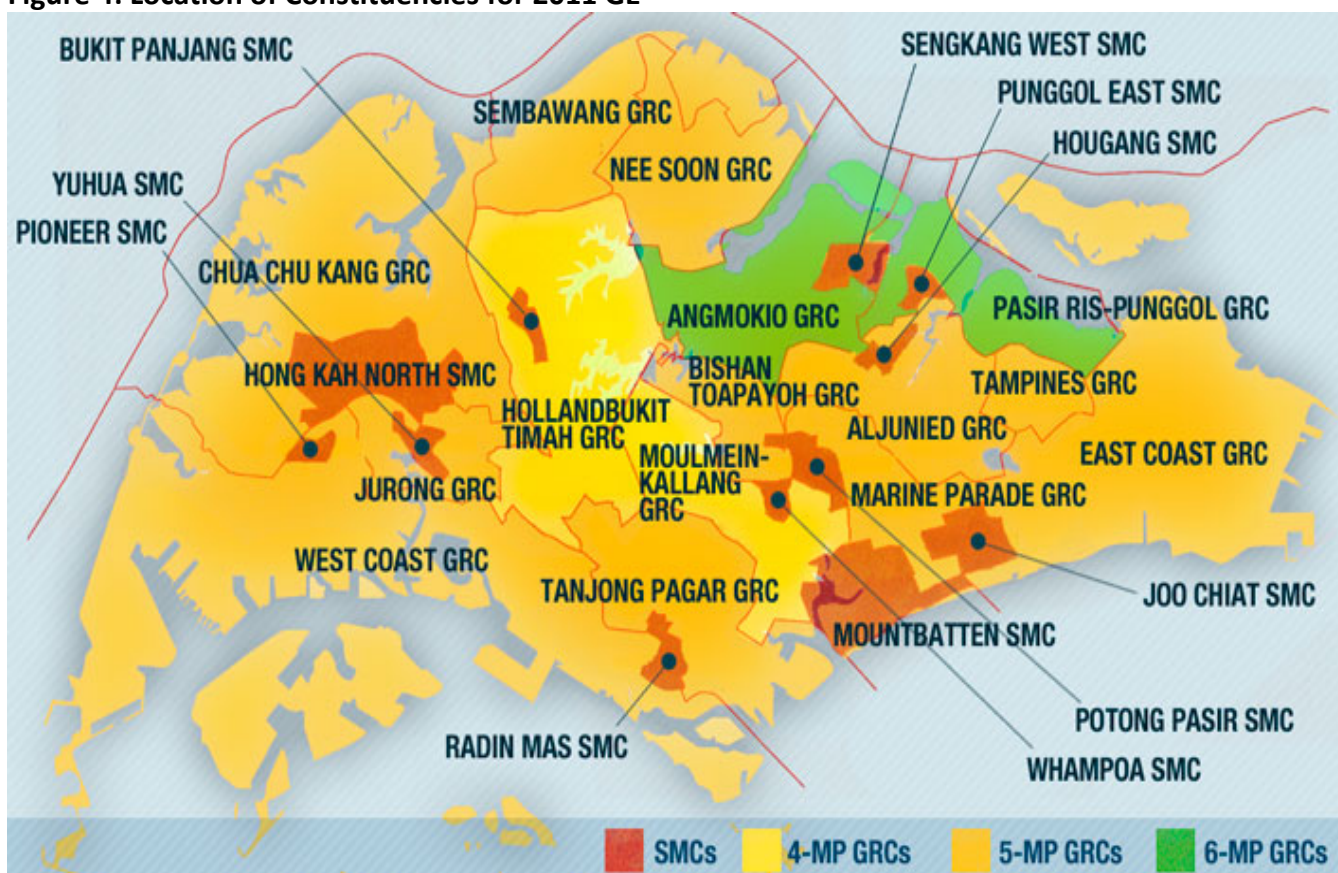
Source: Today Online, 2011.

Table 7: Distribution of SMC and GRC Seats (1984-2001)

GE	Total Seats	Total Electorate	Electoral Quota (EQ)	Largest Constituency	Deviation from EQ (%)	Smallest Constituency	Deviation from EQ (%)	Ratio
1988	81	1,669,013	20,605	33,824	64	7,248	-65	4.7
1991	81	1,692,384	20,894	31,246	50	11,998	-43	2.6
1997	83	1,881,011	22,663	31,358	38	17,981	-21	1.7
2001	84	2,036,923	24,249	33,329	37	16,616	-31	2.0
2006	84	2,159,721	25,711	32,586	27	15,888	-38	2.1
2011	87	2,350,873	27,022	35,814	33	17,327	-36	2.1

Source: Compiled based on data from Singapore Elections Department.

Figure 5: Locations of New and Old Ethnic Enclaves, 1960s and 2011.
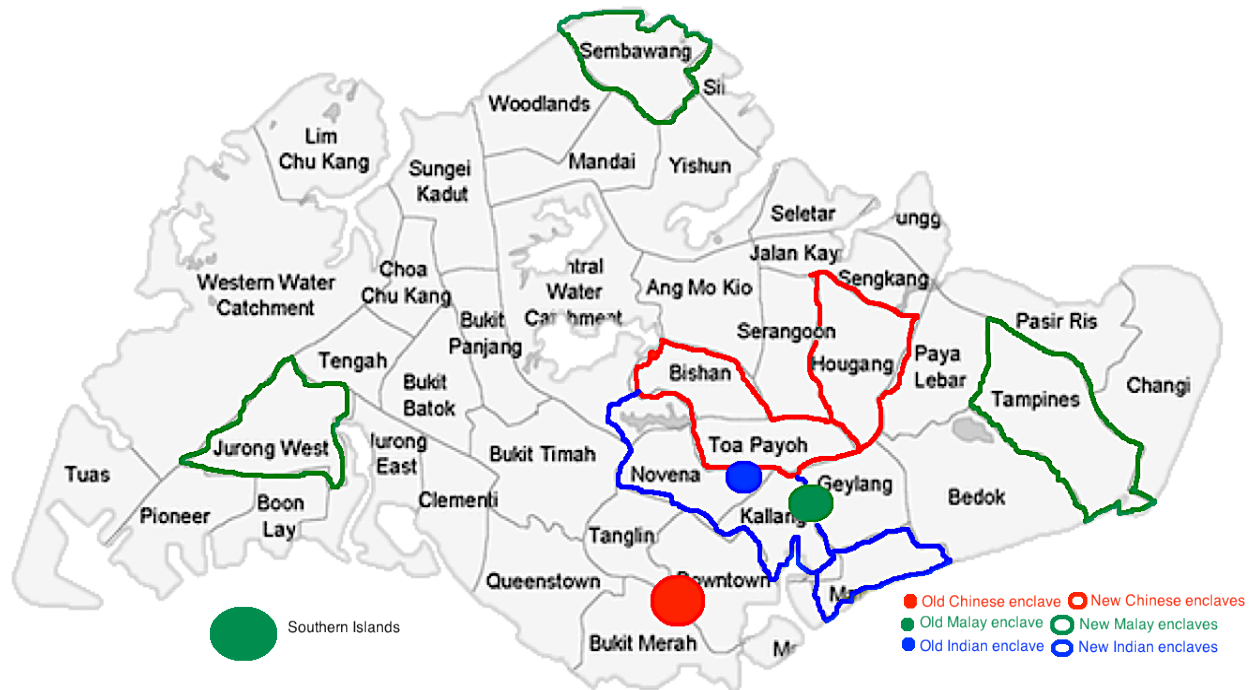
Source: Based on data from Singapore Census Report 2010 (Statistics Singapore 2011) and Straits Times constituency reports.

Table 8: New Ethnic "Enclaves" and Opposition Support in 2011 GE

Chinese Dominant Districts	Estimated Ethnic Group Share %	Opposition Vote Share (%)
Aljunied	84.2	54.7
Bishan Toa-Payoh	83	43.07
Hougang	83.1	64.8
Potong Pasir	84	49.6
Malay Dominant Districts		
Tampines	23.4	42.8
Sembawang	21	36.1
Pioneer	19.5	39.3
Hong Kah North	18.9	29.3
Indian Dominant Districs		
Moulmein-Kallang	13.7	41.5
Mountbatten	22	41.4
Whampoa	13.4	33.9
Yuhua	13.4	33.1

Appendix A: List Of Active Political Parties In Singapore

	Name	Acronyms	2011 GE Vote Share (%)	Date of Registration
1	National Solidarity Party	NSP	12	6 March 1987
2	People's Action Party	PAP	60.1	18 February 1961
3	Pertubohan Kebangsaan Melayu Singapura (Singapore National Malay Organization)	PKMS/SMNO	As part of SDA	20 February 1961
	Reform Party	RP	4.3	3 July 2008
5	Singapore Democratic Alliance	SDA	2.8	2 July 2001
6	Singapore Democratic Party	SDP	4.8	8 September 1980
7	Singapore People's Party	SPP	3.1	21 November 1994
8	The Workers' Party	WP	12.8	30 January 1961

Source: *Singapore Yearbook* 2008, available at http://www.sg/SG_Yrbook2008/Gov&Politics.html and *Singapore Elections* website at http://www.singapore-elections.com/political_parties.html