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NOTES

Singapore's Separation from Malaysia

All those who welcomed the formation of Malaysia must have had a feeling of

shock and regret to learn on the morning of August 9, that it has been decided that Singapore should cease to be a part of Malaysia and become independent. Yet with all the bitterness and misunderstanding that appeared to have arisen in the past few months, it might be that our leaders were wise to decide that the two territories should be independent, so that they can co-operate with each other better for the peace and happiness of their peoples.

We sincerely hope that separation will lead to better relations between the two territories, its leaders and its peoples. As lawyers and those interested in the law and its administration and development, we hope in particular that the two territories will still be able to work together to bring about a common system of law. After all, even the rebellion of the American State from the British Crown did not end the close ties between the common law systems in the two countries. We have always advocated a closer link between the laws and legal systems of the Federation and Singapore. We were sorry that even with the coming of Malaysia the differences between the two territories could not be removed or minimised. As one example only we might mention that the amendments proposed to the Criminal Procedure Code this year were to apply only to the States of Malaya. Moreover the unification of the Bars of the two territories, which everyone seemed to agree would be a good thing, had not yet come into being. We hope that separation will not mean the end of these efforts to bring the law and the legal systems of the two territories closer together. Tied together by bonds of fraternity and a common history, we cannot afford to isolate ourselves from each other. Let us hope and pray that our leaders and people will do everything possible to remove all the small differences between us, so that the two territories can co-operate and work together for the peace, happiness and prosperity of the peoples of the greater, and we hope a not too distant future, Malaysia.