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Population Policies and Programmes in Singapore

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Saw Swee-Hock

Population Policies and Programmes in Singapore



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Preface

Population Policies and Programmes in Singapore is a vastly expanded version of my earlier book published some twenty-five years ago by Oxford University Press under the old title of *Population Control for Zero Growth in Singapore*. This revised edition of the book has been divided into two distinct sections — Part One: Antinatalist Period and Part Two: Pronatalist Period. The former deals with the period when the main concern was the need to lower the high and above-replacement fertility in the early years, and the latter covers the more recent period when the focus of attention was centred on preventing fertility from continuing to move forward at a level too low below-replacement fertility. The chapters included in Part One have been reproduced, with some revisions, from my earlier book, while Part Two contains the new chapters and appendices.

The enlarged book has therefore been structured in such a manner as to present a comprehensive account of the initiatives undertaken by the government to influence the course of fertility, and hence the rate of population growth, in the island state of Singapore during the last four decades or so. The book may be viewed as a case study of the public policy of a country in the area of population with regard to fertility and population growth. Hopefully, the book will enable the people of Singapore to comprehend the fundamental population issue of the day and to recognize the rather low below-replacement fertility, coupled with its adverse consequences, that will persist during their whole lifetime. More specifically, the book will be useful to married couples with children or planning to have babies since it constitutes a convenient source of detailed information on all the existing pronatalist incentives, financial or otherwise, that they are entitled to claim.

In the preparation of the two editions of the book, I was fortunate to receive the valuable assistance of many organizations and individuals.

My thanks go to the Government Statistics Department, the then Family Planning and Population Board, and the Family Planning Association for supplying me with the statistical data and other relevant materials. My research has been enormously facilitated by the conducive facilities offered at the London School of Economics Library, the National University of Singapore Library, and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. I wish to thank Mr K. Kesavapany, Director of ISEAS, for his generous hospitality and for providing me with a research assistant, Mr Benjamin Loh, while I was deeply immersed in writing the latest edition of the book. My thanks are also due to Mrs Triena Ong, Managing Editor of ISEAS Publications Unit, for her tireless effort in bringing out this book so expeditiously. Finally, I am indebted to my wife, Cheng Siok Hwa, for reading and commenting on the manuscripts of both editions. Needless to say, any opinions and shortcomings in the book are entirely my own.

Saw Swee-Hock