

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Singapore is well-known by its small but busy city, which is positioned at 9 over 10 countries in the world. There are over 5 million people live in Singapore and over 8 million visitors who come to Singapore to enjoy this urban country (Rawat, 2014). Besides keeping the interaction with the visitors by its excursions and dazzled cultures, Singapore also keeps innovating the development of their human resources while increasing the infrastructure sector at the same time, in which by this way makes Singapore keeps moving forward.

The rapid growth of infrastructure facilities encourages investors to put investment in Singapore. Singapore is famous by its hospitality for businessman to invest their company in Singapore of which country has no additional tax for the assets. Foreign ownership is recognized by the government. There is no inheritance tax and foreign citizens are able to get a bank loan of up to 70 percent, bank lending rates under two percent, and transparant regulation of property sales (Diela, 2014). These conditions becomes the reason why Google, Microsoft, and Kellogg's build their offices in Singapore which underlies Singapore to be dubbed as one of the busiest ports and airlines.

Behind its purpose to give a huge profits to the investors and a pleasure excursions to the visitors to increase the economic sector, Singapore's commitment overall is to make the country a safe place for all where people could live, work and play safely in the country (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2002). Both

for its citizen and foreign citizen. Thus, the security becomes a prominent goal for Singapore to help the country maintain its economic, politics and also social affairs.

Discussing about its commitment to safeguard the country, according to the Economist's Intelligence Unit, from 5 security factors: digital security, health security, infrastructure security, and private security, Singapore is placed as the second highest secure country after Japan (Economist, 2015). Also, from the economic sector, by its GDP per capita in 2015, Singapore is placed in the first row with \$88,485 (List of Countries by projected GDP (PPP) per capita (2015-2020), 2015). From this two facts, it can be approved that Singapore has committed to promote a peaceful regional environment to also support its economic sector and as whole to uphold its sovereignty (Singapore Government, n.d).

However, by how transparant Singapore to the foreigner, it makes the country worry about its security defenses. Moreover, about the issue of international terrorism which this case is closely related to the tragedy of 9/11 attack in New York, United States of America. Due to that tragedy, it is inevitable that every country in uproar maintains its national security. The simple reason behind its changing is a crime againts humanity which create an awareness that even a superpower country could be defeated by a single attack, even two at once. The fact of the tragedy somehow involved a change in some Asian countries. As assumed by Rohan Gunaratna, A European specialist, there has been a shift in terrorism; the geography has changed and it has moved from Middle East to Asia

(Radio Australia, 2012). In fact, Asia become the target place for terrorist for recruiting and operating their action, for example Indonesia (Gibson and Gutteridge, 2012). That is why Asia, including Southeast Asia recently starts to maintain their national security, and to upgrade its security defenses to prevent such crime.

The Pentagon and the World Trade Center back then were powerful symbols of economic and military based. Knowing the fact that in recent years the world has put their eyes to Singapore, it believes the country could be a target and attacked at any possible time. Especially, the fact that the country has a good relations with the United States, it would become one of the reasons for the terrorist groups to do their mission in Singapore. Additionally, due to its position which is flanked into 2 homegrown terrorists, which are Indonesia and Malaysia, Singapore is afraid that its region could become another homegrown for the terrorism in which it would be harmful for the welfare of Singapore, including its relation with foreign companies which invest their investment in the region as stated previously.

In fact, Singapore is one of the targets of Jamaah Islamiyah, the Indonesian based terrorist groups. This radical group specifically purposed to build an islamic country involving some countries around the region, such as, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, the southern Philippines and Indonesia in which, this radical group already spreads their member to handle each of selected country to plan their mission, including in Singapore. In addition, the leader of Jamaah Islamiyah Singapore is Mas Slamet Kastari who became Singapore's most wanted

man in 2008 (Ali, 2014). Beside Jamaah Islamiyah, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, the current terrorist group should be taken into account because this group has been done unexpected attack in some countries such as countries in North America, Europe, Middle East, North Africa and etc. This group might be targeting Singapore as well in other opportunity.

Furthermore, by that phenomenon, Singapore will not be silent into this global problem because, terrorist activity does not only distract the infrastructure but also the harmony that belongs to a diverse community in a country. For this reason, Singapore certainly will keep the country safe from such harmful activities that will undermine the prosperity of Singapore because, to make Singapore a safe place for all is its prominent goal.

Discussing about the threat of terrorism, this phenomenon however is not visible for Singapore, yet it experiences some threats a couple of times back then. The first attack was in 1965 which was called The MacDonald House Bombing. This attack was due to Indonesia opposing Singapore's merger with Malaya to build a federal Malaysia, and it was done by Indonesian Operatives. The other one was in 1974 called The Laju Incident. It was done by the Japanese Red Army and the Population Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). They tried to disrupt the oil supply from Singapore to South Vietnam. JRA & PFLP hijacked the ferryboat and 5 crew were hold hostaged. In the end, however, the government could have a negotiation and realeased the hostage but in exchange the terrorist groups left Singapore to Kuwait safely. Next was in 1991 when Singapore Airlines Flight 117 was hijacked by Pakistan People Party (PPP). This group

demanded the release of their former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's husband and also the other PPP members. However, it was ended successfully by Singapore by storming the plane. The hijacker was killed and all the passengers and crew that injured were freed (Corsi, 2008).

Internal Security Department (ISD) is one of the departments that take care the security issues that is potentially harmful for the safety of the country. This department carries a law for the government to prevent the national security from being threatened such as espionage, foreign subversion, any acts that undermine the race or religions and also terrorism (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2002). It is entitled The Internal Security Act (ISA). This ISA has two features which are 'preventive detention' and 'restriction order' in which, the key power of the ISA is placing of an individual under the 'preventive detention' for a renewable period of up to two years at a time without trial in open court (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2002).

Historically, Internal Security Act Singapore (ISA) derived from the emergency regulations of the British colonial to fight against the communist insurgent during the Malayan Emergency. Then, the emergency regulations was replaced by the Preservation of Public Security Ordinance in 1955 in which the Ordinance was used to dealt with Angkatan Revolusi Tentara Islam Singapura who wanted to use violence to overthrow the government (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2002). Then in 1963, the Ordinance was replaced by ISA and the legislation was retained after Singapore gained independence on 9 August 1965 (Foo, 2014).

One of the works done by ISD was in december 2001. Its department sucessfully prevented Singapore's JI branch from launching a series of bomb attacks targeting foreign embassies and the also tried to distrust U.S. buildings in the country. ISD detained a total of 13 JI members including their spiritual leader, Ibrahim Maidin (Yuit, 2009). Another operation under the ISA was in 2013 when the eldest son of former JI leader Mas Selamat bin Kastari, Masyhadi Mas Selamat, was arrested in Central Java, Indonesia and deported back to Singapore. He was then taken care under the ISA which subsequently placed him on a two-year detention order from his alleged involvement in terrorist activities.

Although Singapore has succeed to prevent such threat to happen in the region, the use of its Internal Security Act provokes pro and more on contra. Those who support believe that the government choice is the best to cut down the terrorist activities before they implement their plans. However, the contra side which mostly come from opposition party and human right defender, say that the power given by ISA will be misused by the government to use it to againts other crimes than terrorism the use of Malaysia's Internal Security Act that had been abolished in 2012 for which the purpose of the law was misused. Another statement comes from human right defender that says the government will violate the human rights that belongs to each person by doing what is called as 'preventive detention'. Other statement also said that although some evidences are well collected for a person by their indication to terrorist activity, it is not enough to detain him without trial.

Especially, for a democratic country like Singapore, it will be harmful for its legitimacy if they choose such repressive approach to counter terrorism. Additionally, a place for a diverse community like Singapore, it would be harmful for its society because terrorist phenomenon itself is a sensitive issue. The government should consider a proper action to conduct its counter terrorism that will not rise a sensitive respond from the society as s it happens in Italy, Germany Israel and Northern Ireland. These countries use repressive approach to counter terrorism and it leads public support to the terrorist groups (Daxecker and Hess, n.d) .

However, as long as it is used and despite of being accused by some side, Singapore government still considers that ISA is still relevant to be used to fight againts terrorism. As supported by Minister for Home Affairs, Wong Kan Seng, on 14 March 2003 in his statement in the parliament that; “

“No one can guarantee that a terrorist attack will not happen here. Our approach must be to make it extreamly difficult for terrorist to carry out their evil deeds at the same time be well prepared and ready to deal with the repercussion if such an attack does happen” (Centre, The Fight Against Terror, 2004).

Thus, the writer would like to elabrote the reason from Singapore by choosing the Internal Security Act to safeguard the country.

B. Research Question

From the background elaborated previously, the research question is:

“Why does Singapore use Internal Security Act (ISA) to Counter Terrorism?”

C. Theoretical Framework

In order to answer the research question of this thesis, the writer will use the concept of Counter-terrorism and Rational Actor Theory.

1. Counter-terrorism

Counterterrorism can be considered as a mix of public and foreign policies designed to limit the actions of terrorist groups and individuals associated with terrorist organizations in an attempt to protect the general public from terrorist violence (Omelicheva, n.d).

The term terrorism is taken from a Latin word that means “to frighten”. It was during the France Revolution that terrorism was defined as the brutal and excessive force by way of chopping off 40,000 people accused of anti-government activities by the government (Museum, 2017). After that, the term of terrorism is developed by its history and they are used to define as the act of violence by the government or anti-government (Saefullah, 2009).

However, after the 9/11 tragedy, counter-terrorism is then known and is predicted as an action that needs to be implemented and become a country’s priority. Further, the United States under Bush Administration introduced the “War on Terror” to fight against terrorism. The term “war on terror” involves an open and covert military operations, new security legislation, and efforts to block the financing of terrorism and more (Forum, n.d). However, experts on security issues believe that while countering terrorism, human rights and law enforcement need to be implemented together in order not to undermine the purposes of the implementation of counterterrorism itself and also to secure and preserve the

society. In addition, experts state that it is hard to find a single tool on dealing with the terrorist threats and their activities because their movement is greater than before. The counterterrorism standards is now moving on to involve all actors such as government, state, local law enforcement agencies and is assisted with the military assistance whenever needed, it also need the society itself to encounter the terrorism.

Counterterrorism itself is divided into several approaches which are *first, approaches known as Coercive Counterterrorism* which relies on the state's monopoly on the use of violence for instance the implementation of hard power. *Second, is the Proactive Counterterrorism* which stands to prevent terrorism before it happens through the merging of internal and external security, the mandates of domestic police, through security intelligence agencies, and also through the border and customs officials that have all coalesced around the problem of tracking the movement of people, goods and money. Third, is the Persuasive Counterterrorism which consists of propaganda, psychological warfare, "hearts and minds" campaigns, and the idea of providing incentives for terrorists to eliminate violence and seek nonviolent ways instead all refer to this notion of counterterrorism as a form of communication, where different messages are conveyed to different audiences. Fourth, is the Defensive Counterterrorism which assumes the inevitability of some kind of terrorist attack and prepares it by affecting the variables that determine the root of the attack and identity of its target. In this approaches, it consists of two basic approaches: preventing attacks and mitigating attacks. Lastly is the fifth approaches known as Long-Term

Counterterrorism that refers to initiatives that do not promise quick fixes, but play out in the long term to create a good result. This approach also includes the realm of 'root causes' and more structural factors that can create a suitable climate for the promotion and use of terrorism (Crelinsten, n.d).

From several approaches described above, Singapore can be categorized using the Coercive Counterterrorism. This approach adopts forceful measures such as military aggression, anti-terrorist legislation and detainment in order to force and intimidate terrorists into submission (Williams, 2015). Singapore believes terrorist attack does not only kill, injure people, and damage the infrastructure but it also spreads the fears and uncertainty about what happens next. In fact, there is no single actor who can detect this global threat.

Singapore indeed does not have a lot of records for terrorist attack except several threats such as bombing, hijacking, and disruption. However, Singapore realises now the threats nowadays are strikingly different. This becomes emergent that the attack becomes more possible and becomes a matter of time until it receives the attack. To do so, what Singapore does is that they create a new security environment inside the country involving the government ministries and also public engagement.

Thus, under the Internal Security Act (ISA), the law allows the government to act against dangers for the safety and security of Singapore. It also allows the government to stop illegal groups that may harm the internal security. One of the features of the ISA is '*preventive detention*' which means that the ISA allows the

government to detain a person who poses an active threat to Singapore without going to court for a period of up to two years (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2002).

Besides “Preventive Detention”, ISA also includes what is called “Restriction Order” in which the Minister for Home Affairs uses another alternative to handle the suspected instead of detaining the person by restricting the activities, employment and also the residence, the restriction order;

”Requiring the person to notify the authorities of his or her movements; and prohibiting him or her from addressing public meetings; from holding office in, taking part in the activities of, or acting as adviser to, any organization or association; from taking part in political activities; or from travelling to any part of Singapore or abroad” (Qiqi, 2016).

Essentially, under the Internal Security Act, it allows the government to move quickly and decisively against the threats of its National Security.

As stated above, it is clearly described that Singapore chooses Coercive Counterterrorism to fight against the terrorist which has its own pros and cons among the researches. Most of the researcher, state actors and public identify whether a coercive or repressive action is fit to counter the terrorist because the measures must implement human rights and law enforcement together and run simultaneously and proportionally. As an example, Italy was one of the governments that used a repressive policy to eradicate the terrorist group in the country, but some researchers believe, however, that this action is not absolutely productive even produce more harmful situation, for instances the increase of support for its terrorist group and also radicalizing individuals (Daxecker and Hess, n.d).

However, some studies also elaborate that the use of coercive measures is suitable for non-democratic country in which the government is less concerned about the legitimacy of its actions and also the public opinion, yet they also have more control over the media. Unlike the democratic country, the legitimacy of its actions and public opinion and support matter because coercive and repressive actions contradict the values of the nation and it can lead a backfire and intensify the support for the terrorist group (Daxecker and Hess, n.d).

2. Rational Actor

In making a policy for the national interest which covers all level of the nation states, a comprehensive decision is crucial in order to make all the instruments relevant and proportional especially when it comes to foreign policy which is not only about what are inside the country but also what are outside. Responding to the statement above, one of the expertise Graham T. Allison in 1971 introduces 3 models of foreign policy decision making process, that are Rational Actor Model, Organisational Behaviour, and Governmental Politics Model. These models are described based on their level of analysis. In this case, the author would like to use the Rational Actor Model which is believed as Singapore model for its foreign policy decision making process.

This model of decision making process is dominated by the dominant actor like the President or Prime Minister. The decision is taken by the President and the Prime Minister by using decisive choice and by calculating the profit and the possibility losses. Also, this process is taken by the President and Prime Minister by using rational thinking and whether the decision is profitable or not which

means there will be a lot of alternative considerations and choices created before the final decision to be sorted and counted which one is the most rational choice.

This model comprises four concepts, (Kafle, 2011) that are

First, goals and objectives; refer to the interest and values of the agent that are translated into a payoff or utility or preference function, which represents the desirability or utility of alternative sets of consequences. Second, Alternatives; is explained that “the rational agent must choose among a set of alternatives displayed before her or him in a particular situation”. It further takes its alternative choice for the output of the decision. Third, Consequences; which further takes rational actors to consider that to each alternative is attached a set of consequences or outcomes of choice that will ensue if that particular alternative is chosen. Fourth, Choice; rational choice consists simply of selecting that alternative whose consequences ranks highest in the decision maker’s payoff function; value maximizing choice within special constraints (Kafle, 2011).

As described in the previous theory, coercive measures leaves a lot pros and cons among the researchers. Some believe that if the government run counter terrorism effort by using the hard-line policies, the policies become a victim to the government’s own values. Researchers also argue that the groups deliberately engage violent activity to make the government eager to use repressive approach to gain more support from the people to them.

However, the other side believes this issue would be deminished if only government adopts hard-line policies. Some studies even stand on repressive approach which becomes an effective strategy to fight on terrorist group, for instance, the existence of Islamist militant groups in Egypt which was successfully defeated by using the strict security policy by the government eventhough the policy abused human right. It becomes an example of how coercive measures

cannot be blamed and deserves to be implemented. Due to those facts, this shows how Singapore considers this issue as highly important. Promoting a peaceful regional environment is not merely a commercial to invite visitors to come to Singapore, but to make the country safe which means it can uphold their sovereignty as a nation. For this reason, any possible threats for its national security must be undertaken seriously, quickly and decisively. That is why Singapore creates a national policy that could manage the security issue that disrupts the safety of the country which works doubled and would successful to guard its safety.

Singapore chooses Internal Security Act (ISA) to safeguard the country because Singapore believes that it is the only way to cut down the violent activities by its decisive actions in which the Internal Security Act is deliberately made to move directly in tackling down those issues. However, there are many protests stating that ISA is abusing human rights and could be misused by the term itself. However, as the first time Singapore extended this policy from Malaysia, Singapore believes that ISA is the perfect measures from all. It may get a lot of protests and receive rejection but it can work well to diminish the threats. On the other hand, by the role of ISA, the government could ensure that there is no such misuse for the ISA and human rights will always be taken into account. Here, ISA can be a tactical policy that works not only proactively, but also defensively to control the crisis in the country especially in terrorism which does not only works to defeat the existing terrorist groups but also as a long term effort to decrease and discontinue terrorist groups and their roots.

D. Hypothesis

Based on theory and issues above, the hypothesis can be raised that Singapore use Internal Security Act (ISA) to counter-terrorism because Singapore believe Internal Security Act is a rational choice to fight against terrorism and also an effective way to eradicate them because it allows the government to act promptly and decisively on their security threats from forming and growing. It can also help Singapore to run its total approach mission to counter terrorism.

E. Purpose of Writing

The purposes of this undergraduate thesis research are to find out several main points below:

1. Ensuring whether the role of Internal Security Act used by Singapore can work properly in countering the terrorism. Although there are many pros and cons towards it, Singapore believes ISA is the effective way to eliminate the growth of terrorism.
2. Analyzing how Singapore is engaged in tackling the problem of security of their country.

F. Scope of Research

Scope of research is necessary for the researcher to limit the analysis and to accomodate the data information. Thus, the researcher will restrict the data for the role of Singapore government in countering the terrorism in the scope of time from 2001 to 2016. During the years taken, terrorism occurence in Singapore started around 2001 which became a major issue and getting more crucial around 2014

and continued until 2016. Thus, in recent years counterterrorism become more critical.

E. Research Method

In this research, the author will use the descriptive and evaluative analysis. The descriptive analysis will elaborate the facts about the cases that had occurred using the empirical data and evaluative analysis. Both the empirical data and evaluative analysis will help the author to analyze specific policies that have been applied and will evaluate the succes of its policy.

F. System of Writing

This undergraduated thesis will be divided into four chapters with different discussion based on the issue, which consists of:

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CHAPTER I, elaborates the introduction which consists of the background of issue, research question, theoretical framework, hypothesis, scope of research, and the outline itself.

CHAPTER II, explains some approaches and instances of regional security effort from Singapore to counter terrorism.

CHAPTER III, describes about the dilemma that Singapore has by countering terrorism.

CHAPTER IV, elaborates the reason why Singapore chooses ISA as an effective way to combat terrorism.

CHAPTER V, will be the conclusion from each discussion in each chapter.

