

How The BBC Covered The Death Of Lee Kuan Yew

I listened to the BBC coverage of the death of Lee Kuan Yew. It was all about how he had taken this sleepy backwater and transformed it into a rich and powerful city-state, gleaming with skyscrapers, and had done so by imposing strict rules to govern many areas of life, with punishment for spitting and contributing to general disorder. So far so obvious – it's the standard line on Lee Kuan Yew. And one of those reporting, a certain Ben Brown, mentioned his worry about the "Communists." Neither Ben Brown, nor an Indian lady from Singapore who followed, mentioned the chief worry of Lee Kuan Yew, and the reason for Singapore becoming independent from Malaya (or Malaysia, as it became) in the first place: the impossibility of living under Muslim rule. It was only when Singapore, largely Chinese-populated, broke away, under Lee Kuan Yew's leadership, that it began to develop.

All his political life, Lee Kuan Yew was aware of the need to keep the Muslim population in check. The laws he had passed, the regulations he enforced, were directed in large part to that end. He knew about Muslim efforts to convert others, and he made sure that any convert had to immediately register with the government, so such efforts could be monitored, and then countered, by the government. A study of all the ways that Lee Kuan Yew dealt with Muslims, and took careful note of, and combatted, their natural aggressiveness and steady machinations, would be instructive for Western leaders, who have the same problem.

Of course I doubt this will be on the BBC tomorrow, or in the obituaries that will appear.

But that's okay. Let's jog our memories about Lee Kuan Yew, that realist, and the Muslims, [here](#).