



Associated Press

James D. Bell, left, U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia, and Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore conferring yesterday.

U.S. Ambassador Rules Out Newsmen At Meeting With Singapore Premier

From News Dispatches

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SINGAPORE, Sept. 3 — When Singapore's Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, accused the United States last Tuesday of trying to bribe him to cover up an abortive CIA operation, the American Ambassador to Malaysia had been quick to deny it.

Today Lee and the Ambassador, James D. Bell, met at Lee's office, at Bell's request and in the wake of a virtual U.S. admission of the charge.

Neither man smiled as the two shook hands.

Lee suggested that newsmen, whom he had invited to cover the meeting, attend the

early stages of the talks to avoid "a lot of misunderstanding."

Bell cut in, "I have to discuss problems which I cannot talk about while the press are here."

Lee turned to the newsmen and shrugged. "I've nothing to hide," he said.

Bell remarked: "I wanted to discuss what we mentioned in our last meeting." That meeting had taken place before Lee's blast at the U.S., and Bell did not elaborate.

"You asked for the meeting," Lee replied, and motioned the newsmen away.

After half an hour, Bell left Lee's office and strode to the elevator. "Not a word," he told newsmen who asked him for comment. Lee left by another door with instructions that he was not to be disturbed.

The newsmen then asked Lee's secretary what had been discussed. "It is too delicate a matter," the secretary said. "You can only speculate. Your guess is as good as mine."