

ASIAN CHIEF URGES U.S. TO PERSEVERE

But Lee of Singapore Asks Restraint on Vietnam War

Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore said yesterday that the United States should persevere with restraint in the Vietnam war.

He said he had no doubt that President Johnson and Secretary of State Dean Rusk faced the struggle with this attitude. But speaking of the American public, he said:

"You must demonstrate whether you as a people have got that resolution, stamina, that perseverance and, most important of all, infinite patience and the capacity to hold back your desire to settle this quickly and get it over with."

Interviewed on the N.B.C. television program "Meet the Press," the 44-year-old Prime Minister, was asked whether he advocated a halt in the bombing of North Vietnam. He replied that the United States should "take great care that there is no miscalculation—not only of the North Vietnamese but of the Russians and the Chinese." He added that there was some point at which the Russians and the Chinese would decide "that their own national interests are at stake and they will respond."

No 'Decisive Change'

The bombing of the North, he said, could be reduced or stopped "without any decisive change in the course of the war." A bombing halt would not necessarily bring North Vietnamese leaders to the conference table, he added.

"Why should they go to the conference table?" he asked. "To help President Johnson win the election?"

Asked whether the cause of non-Communist Asians would be helped if Singapore sent a token force to the aid of South Vietnam, Mr. Lee replied:

"I don't see it as the duty of an elected Prime Minister of Singapore—not a client state of the United States—to go and involve his country in a situation which can end disastrously for his whole people."

Mr. Lee said the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization had proved ineffective, mainly because member nations had not pledged to treat an attack against one member as an attack against all. Such a pledge, he noted, is a part of the charter of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.