

ALIAS MOHAMED

# PAS' PLATFORM

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DEVELOPMENT  
AND CHANGE  
1951 - 1986

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## Preface

In Malaysian politics PAS has featured importantly as an Islamic theocratic party which, through its appeal to, at first Malay exclusiveness and later, religion, has influenced the minds of numerous Malays for more than four decades. Throughout the many years of its presence in the political arena, the party has provoked endless discussions among scholars, political opponents and the media. Since the 1970s, until today, PAS seems to have acquired a new dimension associated with Islamic resurgence the world over. It has given the party a new vigour and a fervent hope of existence that has already engendered a sense of uneasiness and discomfort in a nation of plural and diverse mix. The question that is often asked today is whether one can take comfort in the present national leadership's sanguine effort to keep the party at bay, or whether there is an amorous liaison between this party and some of the national leaders who, on account of their penchant for political extremism, or perhaps, a sense of insecurity, may conveniently bid for time to perpetrate the imponderables.

While this work does not provide answers to this provocative enquiry, it has brought to the fore the otherwise fragmented history of the party, its struggles and changing patterns of leadership spanning over four decades. As new developments have taken place since this study was completed in 1989, it must be emphasized that the present work is meant specifically to provide a useful perspective of PAS' policies and actions by focusing on the principles of the party's struggles, its strengths and weaknesses, its ambitions and intimate affinity with Islam and the Malays.

It is hoped that this book will help those, in particular non-Malays who still find PAS somewhat of an enigma, under-

stand better Malaysian politics today with specific reference to PAS' ultimate objective if indeed it has one.

This book is a revised version of a doctoral thesis submitted to the University of Malaya. In preparing this manuscript for publication, I wish to record my profound gratitude to Dato' Professor Dr. Khoo Kay Kim who supervised my work and also assisted me patiently in reading and editing this manuscript. I benefited immeasurably from the many stimulating discussions I have had with him at various stages of writing this work. To Professor Dr. J.M. Chandran, now with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, who supervised me initially and gave me the impetus to carry on, I express my heartfelt gratitude.

I must also mention Tan Sri Haji Abdul Samad Ismail, former Editorial Advisor of the New Straits Times Group, who took great pains in assisting me to obtain newspaper clippings from the New Straits Times Library in the course of my initial research on PAS during my stay in Canada in 1975-1976. It was Tan Sri Haji Abdul Samad's kind assistance too when he was Group Editor-in-Chief who provided me with a fellowship from the New Straits Times which made my graduate studies in Canada possible during this period and encouraged me immensely to continue my research for the doctoral degree from where I left off in 1976. While I owe my knowledge of academic discipline to Professor Dato' Khoo Kay Kim, it was Tan Sri Abdul Samad again whose influence helped me to take a deep interest in the field of journalism.

Last but not least, I am indebted to Mrs. Lau Beng Thye for her devoted industry in preparing this manuscript for publication. Without her untiring efforts this book would have been further delayed.

25 June 1994  
Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

Alias Mohamed



## Foreword

This is almost certain to be a controversial work. The subject dealt with lends itself to controversy. Among all the opposition parties in Malaysia, it is PAS that has displayed the greatest tenacity and capacity for survival. Beginning from 1955, when it captured the only seat against the overwhelming victory of the Alliance, until the present, it has remained the only party which can provide significant rivalry to UMNO.

PAS has diehard supporters within the country and it has drawn the sympathy of foreign scholars who usually have, one may say, an obsession with the need to adopt an anti-establishment stance.

Alias Mohamed's undisguised intention is to demonstrate that though, from the beginning, PAS has publicly stated that its ideology is Islam, in practice, from time to time, its programme for action has been quite pragmatic and, unavoidably, influenced by its leadership with significantly different predilections.

Explaining human foibles and idiosyncrasies is, manifestly, a difficult and hazardous preoccupation. One can lay no claim to being certain about anything. Those who attempt to do so by using a particular model of analysis is indulging in speculation as much as those who provide a personal perception of events. Kelantan's unique political behaviour is a case in point.

The subject is discussed not only among scholars but also the man in the street. Opinions differ. Even Kelantanese themselves (and Alias Mohamed himself is one) cannot claim to be able to give the ultimate correct answer. It would be presumptuous for any scholar to dismiss, in cavalier fashion, the explanation of another on the grounds that the latter's is based on "airy generalization" just because the answer given lacks the precision that one can expect from the physical sciences.

The important contribution of this work is that it is the only one which traces the development of PAS from the time of its foundation until the late 'eighties. Admittedly, Alias Mohamed has relied heavily on existing works (both published and unpublished) for a perception of PAS' history during, roughly, the first 25 years of its existence. But he has, nevertheless, attempted to provide his own interpretation and, in the process, provided also a proper structure for his discussion of events and developments which ensued until the elections of 1986 which saw PAS facing possible disintegration.

But, of course, PAS did not disintegrate. It returned with a vengeance in 1990 following a drastic leadership change. This phase of PAS' history deserves another study. Whoever decides to take up this challenge will, however, find that Alias Mohamed has provided a useful foundation for his work.

No scholar has the last word on any subject. To provide one's point of view, especially in writing, for public consideration is by itself a very commendable effort. For those who disagree with Alias Mohamed, there can be only one suggestion - give the public, in writing, your own.

Prof. Dato' Khoo Kay Kim  
University of Malaya  
June, 1994

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## Abbreviations

ABIM	<i>Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia</i> or Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement.
ACA	Anti-Corruption Agency. See NBI.
ALL	Alliance.
AMCJA	All-Malaya Council for Joint Action.
AMMYC	All-Malaya Malay Youth Congress.
AMNC	All-Malaya National Congress.
API	<i>Angkatan Pemuda Insaf</i> or Awareness Youth Movement.
AWAS	<i>Angkatan Wanita Sedar</i> or Awareness Women's Movement.
BMA	British Military Administration.
BN	<i>Barisan Nasional</i> or National Front or NF.
BPP	Borneo People's Party.
CCC	Chinese Consultative Committee.
CID	Criminal Investigation Department.
DAP	Democratic Action Party.
FELDA	Federal Land Development Authority. See LKTP.
GERAKAN	<i>Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia</i> or Malaysian People's Movement.
GMPR	<i>Gerakan Melayu Patani Raya</i> or Greater Patani Malay Movement.
HAMIM	Hizbul Muslimin.
IMP	Independence of Malaya Party.
IND	Independent Candidates.
ISA	Internal Security Act.
ITM	Institute of Technology MARA.
JSEAH	Journal of Southeast Asian History.

KMM	<i>Kesatuan Melayu Muda</i> or Young Malays' Association.
KMS	<i>Kesatuan Melayu Singapura</i> or Singapore Malay Union.
KMUF	Kelantan Malay United Front.
KNCS	Kelantan Civil Service.
KRIS	<i>Kekuatan Rakyat Istimewa</i> or Speical Strength of the Poeple.
LEPAS	<i>Lembaga Pembangunan Sastra</i> or Literary Development Council.
LEPIR	Lembaga Pendidikan Rakyat or Council for People's Education.
LKTP	<i>Lembaga Kemajuan Tanah Persekutuan</i> or Federal Land Development Authority. See FELDA.
MARA	<i>Majlis Amanah Rakyat</i> or People's Trust Council.
MATA	<i>Majlis Agama Tertinggi Malaya</i> or Malayan Supreme Religious Council.
MBRAS	Malayan Branch of Royal Asiatic Society.
MCP	Malayan Communist Party.
<u>MDU</u>	Malayan Democratic Union.
MAI	<i>Majlis Islam A'Laa Indonesia</i> or Council of Muslim Party of Indonesia.
MIT	<i>Majlis Islam Tertinggi</i> or Supreme Religious Council.
MNF	Malay National Front.
MNP	Malay Nationalist Party. See PKMM.
MSS	Malayan Security Service.
NEG	<i>Party Negara</i> .
NBI	National Bureau of Investigation. See ACA.
NEP	New Economic Policy.
NF	National Front. See <i>Barisan National</i> .

PAS	<i>Parti Islam Se Malaysia</i> or Pan Malaysian Islamic Party.
PBB	<i>Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu</i> or Bumiputera Party.
PEKEMAS	<i>Parti Keadilan Masyarakat</i> or People's Justice Party.
PEMAS	<i>Persatuan Melayu Semenanjung</i> or Peninsular Malay Union or PMU.
PEPERMAS	<i>Pusat Perekonomian Melayu Se Malaya</i> or All-Malaya Malay Economic Bureau.
PERNAS	<i>Perbadanan Nasional</i> or National Corporation.
PETA	<i>Pembela Tanah Ayer</i> or Defenders of the Fatherland.
PETRONAS	<i>Petroleum Nasional</i> or National Petroleum.
PIJ	Political Intelligence Journal.
PKI	<i>Parti Komunis Indonesia</i> or Indonesian Communist Party.
PKM	<i>Parti Komunis Malaya</i> or Malayan Communist Party. See MCP.
PKMM	<i>Parti Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya</i> . See MNP.
PKPM	<i>Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Pelajar-Pelajar Islam Malaysia</i> or Malaysian Islamic Student's National Union.
PMIA	Pan Malayan Islamic Association.
PMIP	Pan Malaysian Islamic Party or PAS.
PMK	<i>Persatuan Melayu Kelantan</i> or Kelantan Malay Association.
PMU	Peninsular Malay's Union.
PPMK	<i>Persatuan Persetiaan Melayu Kelantan</i> or United Kelantan Malays Association.
PPP	People's Progressive Party.
PRKM	<i>Pergerakan Rakyat Kalimantan Malaya</i> or Kalimantan People's Movement of Malaya.
PSRM	<i>Parti Sosialis Rakyat Malaysia</i> or Malaysian People Socialist Party.



PUTERA	<i>Pusat Tenaga Rakyat</i> or People's Power Bureau.
RIDA	Rural and Industrial Development Authority.
SCB	Special Crime Branch.
SEDC	State Economic Development Corporation.
SF	Social Front.
SMU	Singapore Malay Union. See KMS.
UMNO	United Malays National Organization.
USNO	United Sabah National Organization.

## Chapter 1

### *Introduction*

There is no denying that, hitherto, PAS has been a political party whose aims, philosophy, dreams and direction have been, by and large, difficult to understand. Its background, its early history, and the emergence of its leadership and the development of its ideology are still largely shrouded in obscurity and the party itself has been caught in a situation of having to "spew or swallow".<sup>1</sup>

For Islam, early twentieth century Malaya was a time for the strengthening of roots. It was also a time for the sifting of influences, as modern economy began to make in-roads and establish a new political foundation in what was once practically the undisturbed land of the Malays. At the time of the eruption of Arab nationalism in the Middle East, and later Indonesian nationalism, the Malays were not only disunited but plagued by the lack of a proper and credible conduit with which to voice their grievances. Influential Malay vernacular newspapers like the *Saudara*, *Warta*, *Lembaga* and, later, the *Majlis* were indeed owned and controlled by non-Malays of Arab, Arab-Malay and *Jawi Peranakan* (local born Muslims) descent.<sup>2</sup> Although these attempted to become an aggressive vehicle for the realisation of Malay nationalism, in due course, things took a radical turn<sup>3</sup> and the Malays were left with the feeling that the presence of Muslims of Indian and Arab

descent, like that of the Chinese, constituted a perilous political threat. For instance, in August 1939, as a follow-up of the mounting Malay demands for concessions in the affairs of government during the preceding years, Malay associations throughout Malaya and Singapore held a "national congress" in Kuala Lumpur in search of ways to strengthen and continue their efforts for the betterment of the Malays. But it ran into a dispute concerning the definition of 'Malay' as the Malays were unwilling to accept those who were not considered to be *Melayu jati* (true Malay).

Although the Islamic religion played a crucial role in shaping Malay traditional society, and, in the early twentieth century, it had become an important rallying point in the evocation of anti-colonial sentiments, evidence does not point to the early existence of a symbiosis between Islam and Malay politics. The earliest trace of Islam being shrewdly grafted on to any significant organized Malay political movement can perhaps be said to exist before the outbreak of the First World War and immediately after when pro-Turkey feelings ran high. But no Islamic political party emerged such as the *Sarekat Islam* in Indonesia.

What emerged, however, was a radical but secular political association known as the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (KMM)<sup>4</sup>. Apprehensive that the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* might collaborate and join forces with their enemies, the British, in 1941, imprisoned KMM's activists. It fared no better under the Japanese Occupation and in June 1942 KMM was banned by the Japanese. The colonial government's uncompromising attitude must have driven many Islamic religious nationalists, who had any intention of staging a confrontation with the British, back to their reformist confines and their *pondok*. It ought to be noted that although KMM leaders such as Ibrahim Yaacob and Ishak Haji Muhammad were of different background from the religious elite, that is, the leading *ulama* of that era, among the early recruits of KMM, rather surprisingly, were students of the El-Ehya Asshariff School. In fact, through the students' initiative, a branch of KMM was established at Gunong Semanggol where El-Ehya was situated<sup>5</sup>. In February

1940, KMM's branch there had a committee consisting of Ustaz Osman Hamzah as Vice-Chairman, Sabri bin Abdul Kadir as Secretary, Ahmad Mahir (or Ahmad Yusuf, as he was sometimes called), Yahaya Nasir, Haji Abdullah, Abad Kaisar and Kassim Mohammad as Committee Members<sup>6</sup>. Ustaz Abu Bakar al-Bakir, El-Ehya's Principal, was the prime promoter of Malay nationalism at El-Ehya since its establishment in 1934. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, he had encouraged several El-Ehya's students to write to Malay newspapers such as *Utusan Melayu*, *Warta Negara* and *Warta Kinta*, to name a few, on topics such as Malay backwardness and its relation to the inadequacy of Islamic religious knowledge, and on such other subjects associated with the general welfare of the Malays. Among El-Ehya's contributors to these newspapers were Ustaz Osman Hamzah, Harun Fahmi, Yahya Nasir, Baharuddin Latiff and Sulaiman Najib<sup>7</sup>. Haji Ahmad Fuad bin Hassan, future leader of the Pan-Malayan Islamic Association (later renamed Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party or PAS), who was a senior student at El-Ehya, also took an active part in mobilising students towards activities connected with the Islamic religion and Malay nationalism. Haji Ahmad Fuad was known by the nickname of Dahmat al-Barik, at that time<sup>8</sup>.

The rise of Indonesian nationalism after the Japanese Occupation led to the formation of *Masjumi* by Muslim reformists on 7 November 1945. By early 1947 the political struggle of *Masjumi*<sup>9</sup> (or *Mashumi*, as it was spelt in Malaya), the influential Indonesian Islamic religious party, or at least the spirit of Indonesian Islamic political struggle, had spread to Malaya. In March 1947, a group of radical Malay nationalists and *ulama* gathered at El-Ehya Asshariff in Gunong Semanggol<sup>10</sup> "to discuss the position of Islam, Malay education and economy."<sup>11</sup> The three-day Religious Conference was attended and dominated, quite conspicuously, by members of the Malay leftist parties, such as the Malay Nationalist Party (MNP), the *Angkatan Pemuda Insaf* (API) and AWAS (*Angkatan Wanita Sedar*, the Women Section of MNP) as well as radical religious teachers and students of El-Ehya Asshariff.<sup>12</sup> Among the guests invited to the Conference were the Indonesian rep-

representatives of the *Masjumi* party - the party which was to have an important influence on Mohamad Asri bin Haji Muda (later Dato' and then Tan Sri) who rose to become the leader of PAS. Contact between Malayan (later Malaysian) *ulama* and their Indonesian counterparts who were driven out of Indonesia and sought refuge in Malaya during the Indonesian revolution made their collaboration in religious affairs possible. For example, in 1948, while attending a Literary Congress in Medan, Sumatra, as Malayan representative of the *Kongres Bahasa dan Persuratan* (Congress on Malay Language and Literature), Mohamad Asri was known to have "spent most of his time there contacting leaders of the Indonesian Muslim party, *Masjumi*"<sup>13</sup>.

*Masjumi* was formed in Indonesia slightly more than two years before the Malay nationalists held their first Religious Conference at El-Ehya Asshariff in March 1947. In tune with the political developments which prevailed both in Malaya and Indonesia at that time, the Malay nationalists, as if they were at the behest of, and in collaboration with, their Indonesian counterparts,<sup>14</sup> resolved to form the *Lembaga Islam Se Malaya* (All-Malaya Islamic Council),<sup>15</sup> which was later changed to *Majlis Agama Tertinggi Malaya* (MATA - Malayan Supreme Religious Council), to emulate the political party formed by the Indonesian *ulama*. The *Lembaga Islam Se Malaya* or MATA, had an Advisory Board consisting of Haji Fadhlullah Suhaimi of Johor and Singapore, Haji Abdullah Pahim, Haji Abdul Jalil Hassan and Ustaz Abu Bakar al-Bakir, all of whom were well-known religious personalities and possessed the necessary credentials befitting their role as advisers<sup>16</sup>. At the time it was formed, MATA was believed to have been directly modelled upon the Sumatran-based *Majlis Islam Tertinggi* (MIT - Supreme Islamic Council)<sup>17</sup> or the *Majlis Islam A'Laa Indonesia* (MIAI - Council of Muslim Parties of Indonesia) which was formed in Surabaya in September 1937<sup>18</sup>. By 1946, *Masjumi*, by virtue of its political foundation being originally laid by *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdatul Ulama*, had developed into one of the most powerful political parties in Indonesia. In West Sumatra, as elsewhere, it had a well-organized army, the

*Hizbullah* (Army of Allah) and a militia force called *Sabillah* (Path of Allah)<sup>19</sup>. Like MIAI, which was transformed into a political party (i.e. *Masjumi*), MATA, too, in early 1948, within a year of its birth, had been transformed into Malaysia's first Islamic party called *Hizbul Muslimin*<sup>20</sup>.

For its aims, MATA, which originally appeared apolitical, had its eyes squarely cast on the fundamental objective of taking over and re-organizing Islamic affairs (from the jurisdiction of the Sultans) and to unify the disparate *ulama*<sup>21</sup>. Since the establishment of El-Ehya Asshariff in 1934, radical Muslims like Abu Bakar al-Bakir, Ustaz Osman Hamzah, Yunus Yatimi, and later, during the war, Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi<sup>22</sup>, had continuously viewed the administration of religious affairs as a serious stumbling block to Islamic progress. After the Second World War, with the return of the British and the resulting controversy emanating from the Malayan Union proposals, it became clear to Islamic radical nationalists that UMNO (formed on 11 May 1946), the Malay Sultans and other Malay political groupings were too diverse to agree on efforts to consolidate the administration of Islam and to resolve issues pertaining to Malay economic advancement<sup>23</sup>. There was scant hope for initiative from the conservative *ulama* who were attached and subservient to the respective State religious councils, and therefore the Sultans, owing to the often vituperating religious differences between *Kaum Muda* (represented by reformists and radicals) and *Kaum Tua* (those who subscribed to the literal interpretation of the *Quran*)<sup>24</sup>.

The Malay radicals' dissatisfaction with the British, their anti-feudal sentiment and their tendency to distrust UMNO leaders (in spite of the fact that at the Religious Conference in El-Ehya the UMNO flag was hoisted as a mark of respect to the party)<sup>25</sup>, were deep-rooted. By mid-1947, it became obvious that cooperation between the competing nationalists was difficult.<sup>26</sup> UMNO not only did not send representatives, but also seemed to have successfully persuaded the conservative *ulama* under its influence to boycott the Religious Conference<sup>27</sup>. It was clear that experiences with UMNO and Dato' Onn's reference to MATA as a danger to the Malays<sup>28</sup>

seriously alienated the radical religious elites. Muslim revolts in Java and Sumatra must have been the reason for Dato' Onn's apprehension of MATA. He feared their repetition in Malaya. In June 1947, he warned: "Formerly the danger arose from the jungle (i.e. the Chinese Resistance Forces which emerged from the jungle after the Japanese surrendered), now, it descends from the mountain (i.e. Gunong Semanggol, headquarters of MATA)." Dato' Onn's worry seems warranted because, according to the British Intelligence report in January 1948, "there are now in Malaya over 2,000 Malays who have been subjected to intensive anti-Anglo/American and Pan-Islamic propaganda"<sup>29</sup>. MATA's trouble with UMNO and the authorities seemed to have given it no choice but to develop, as days went by, "withdrawal" tendencies which, in 1948, took the authorities rather by surprise when it, like *Masjumi* in Indonesia, resorted to the formation of a political body – *Hizbul Muslimin*.

MATA could not have been placated by what they considered the ambivalent and slow-to-act attitude which certain Malay leaders adopted in the face of the Malayan Union threat to their religion in 1946, particularly with regard to the establishment of an "Islamic Religious Council to be chaired by a British Governor who was a Christian"<sup>30</sup>. Realising the powerless position of the conservative *ulama* and the reticent attitude of the Sultans, the MATA Conference at Guar Champedak resolved to request the Sultans to surrender the administration of religious affairs to them<sup>31</sup>. Together with its determined attempt to put Islamic affairs under its purview, MATA also resolved to lodge an official protest against the removal of Haji Mohd. Amin as *Kadhi* for Bandar Baru, Kedah<sup>32</sup>.

MATA's gradual, but steady, inclination towards a confrontational position with UMNO towards the end of 1947 was highlighted by an article in *Utusan Melayu*<sup>33</sup> entitled *Agama Islam dipergunakan sebagai alatan Penjajahan* ("Islamic Religion is used as an instrument of Colonialism"). In this article, MATA expressed the hope that it could count on the setting up of its many committees and bodies in its preparation to

facilitate the smooth running of the religious administration which it intended to take over. While in Johor, UMNO's stronghold and Dato' Onn's home state, MATA made a statement implying that as far as the Islamic religion was concerned, it would support the Sultans only if the administration of religious affairs was in accordance with Allah's law and the teachings of the Prophet<sup>34</sup>. This statement came at a time when it was obvious to the various Malay political factions that compromise could only mean the sacrifice of their policies. In fact, so optimistic were MATA leaders that they loudly proclaimed that the "movement based at Gunong Semanggol represents the most lofty independence struggle for the Malays in the future."<sup>35</sup>

The opportunity for MATA to realise its Islamic aspirations came on 23 February 1948 when it became increasingly clear to its leaders that nonchalance and lack of power on the part of the Sultans had helped to reduce the conservative *ulama* to a position of "blind loyalty" and feudal worship<sup>36</sup>. On that day there was formed a Steering Committee which decided to call for a Malay Congress with the intention of forming an Islamic political party. The Committee included in its list of would-be participants PEPERMAS or *Pusat Perekonomian Melayu SeMalaya* (All-Malaya Malay Economic Bureau),<sup>37</sup> LEPIR, MNP, PRKM/PRGM, Seberkas, UMNO, *Lembaga Kesatuan Melayu Johor* (Council for the Union of Johor Malays) and representatives of *Gerakan Melayu Patani Raya* (GMPR or Greater Patani Malay Movement)<sup>38</sup>. The Committee was also vested with the responsibility of including three fundamental issues for discussion at the Congress scheduled to be held for four days from 13 – 16 March 1948. The three issues were: the formation of an Islamic party, the setting up of an economic bureau for Malays to look into the affairs of mining and plantations as well as cooperatives and banking in order to strengthen Malay economy, and, thirdly, the establishment of an Islamic College or University.<sup>39</sup> The Committee comprised Abu Bakar al-Bakir (adviser), Haji Ismail Darus, (chairman), Haji Mohd. Isa, Ustaz Osman Hamzah, Mukri Wafir, and others who were representatives of the *Barisan Tani* (Peasants' Front,



a communist front organization), API, MNP, MATA, PEPER-MAS and LEPIR. Haji Mohd. Isa represented *Barisan Tani* which was formed by Abdullah C.D., the Malay leader of the Malayan Communist Party, in order to woo Malay farmers into the party. At that time, *Barisan Tani* had a branch in Gunong Semanggol with Ahmad Mohd. Saman as Chairman. Others on the party committee were Abdul Hamid Mohd., Ismail Nayan, Ustaz Ishak Raji (a teacher at El-Ehya), Haji Mohd. Isa, Omar Mohd. Noh, Haji Kechil, Ibrahim Jaafar, Said Salleh, Mohd. Kasa and Puteh Andak. Haji Mohamad Asri bin Haji Muda was present at the meeting as a member of the committee representing MNP/API.<sup>40</sup>

Among the foreign guests to be invited to the Congress were three distinguished Indonesian *ulama*. They were Kiyai Masyhur, a West Sumatran leader of *Masjumi*, Tengku Osman, a Middle-East educated *ulama* from Medan, and Haji Shamsuddin Mustaffa, a *Mufti* (Muslim priest) from Siak, Indonesia.<sup>41</sup> The Congress bore the three main themes of Muslim unity, Muslim progress and pan-Islamism.<sup>42</sup> As expected, when the big day arrived, the Congress was clearly dominated by leftists and El-Ehya religious radicals. Among the familiar names who attended the Congress were Abdul Rashid Mydin (MCP), Musa Ahmad (MCP/*Barisan Tani*), Ahmad Boestamam (API), Ishak Haji Muhammad (MNP) and Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi, who was then MNP's Adviser. Others were religious teachers who had long dissociated themselves from UMNO and the *ulama* under the influence of Malay Sultans. There were also representatives of several Malay organizations, including *Persatuan Persetiaan Melayu Kelantan* (PPMK) and *Gerakan Melayu Patani Raya* (GMPR). Daud Jamil (who was later to be active in Kelantan PAS, and became Dato Haji Mohamad Asri's close confidante), represented both PPMK and GMPR at the Congress. Gerald de Cruz, leader of the Malayan Democratic Union (MDU), was also present.<sup>43</sup> Only representatives of UMNO and the establishment *ulama*, except the *Kadhi* of Teluk Anson, were conspicuously absent.

When it was Rashid Mydin's turn to take the stage, the Congress' proceedings became overtly anti-British in tone and

substance. As proof of British cruelty and blatant disregard for Malays, Rashid Mydin showed pictures portraying the former's acts of injustice. Dr. Burhanuddin, MNP's adviser, in his speech touched on the impending change the ulama would have to accept in concert with the evolution of Malay society which was taking place in the fields of education and economy. He said that these changes were important as they would lead to Malay progress, religious development and political independence. However, he stressed that the newly formed Federation of Malaya (on 1 February, 1948) would not necessarily guarantee the independence that the Malays hoped to achieve.<sup>44</sup>

Like Rashid Mydin, Musa Ahmad and Ishak Haji Muhamad, true to their socialistic inclinations, also spoke on the ill-treatment suffered by Malay farmers and labourers and on the evils of British capitalism.<sup>45</sup> The Congress took exception to the Dutch economic blockade of Indonesia by lodging a protest against the action on the third day of the meeting.<sup>46</sup> On the second day of the Congress, 14 March 1948, the MATA Conference was officially opened accompanied by the singing of the *Masjumi* song, "*Selamat Masjumi*", implying that the Islamic party to be formed shortly espoused the sentiment and bore the stamp of the Indonesian Islamic party.

The name *Hizbul Muslimin* was first proposed by Ustaz Abu Bakar al-Bakir and supported strongly by Ustaz Abrab Tamimi, another close confidante of Dr. Burhanuddin (and later Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri bin Haji Muda). *Hizbul Muslimin* means 'Muslim Party' in Arabic. As it was heavily inspired by the *Musjumi* of Indonesia, and by virtue of the fact that some of their leaders, including Abu Bakar al-Bakir and Haji Mohamad Asri, were in constant contact with Indonesian *ulama* and nationalists, its name and formation were accepted almost without opposition. In the minds of the delegates, the party perfectly fitted the Islamic aspirations and struggles of most Islamic parties and movements, including *Ikhwan Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood), formed by Hassan al-Banna in Egypt. It bore a close affinity in sound to the term *Ikhwan Muslimin*.<sup>47</sup>

From the start, *Hizbul Muslimin* strove to consolidate

Islam's position in Malaya. The party's overriding objective was to lay claim to Islam as the most important instrument in the achievement of independence for the Malays in order to create "Darul Islam", that is to say, a nation based on Islam. In striving towards this end, the party had taken into consideration the reality that Malaya was a plural society. It was also aware of the difficulties faced by Masjumi in the course of its political struggles in Indonesia. In order to prepare itself for the attainment of its objectives, it set up two Committees for the purpose – the *Hizbul Muslimin* Party Committee and the Constitutional Committee. The Party Committee consisted, initially, of Ustaz Abu Bakar al-Bakir, Chairman; Haji Ariffin bin Haji Alias, First Deputy Chairman, and Daud Jamil, Second Deputy Chairman. For the Constitutional Committee, additional names were added besides those from the Party Committee. They were Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi, Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri, Abrab Tamimi and Osman Hamzah.

In order to ensure the smooth running of the party, the Congress resolved to incorporate MATA into the party and it was to be its Department of Islamic Religion. PEPERMAS, the economic bureau, and LEPIR, the Council for Malay education, were to be similarly absorbed into the party, thus enabling it to realise the long-aspired objectives of El-Ehya Asshariff's architects, namely Abu Bakir al-Bakir and Dr. Burhanuddin, as well as those of their supporters consisting of El-Ehya's teachers and religious radicals. As the party's objective was to seek alliance with Muslim religious and political movements in and outside Malaya, *Hizbul Muslimin* set up a Palestinian Aid Committee to look into the affairs of the Palestinian struggle. The Committee would also dedicate itself to the cause of the Muslims in the southern provinces of Thailand. Dr. Burhanuddin again appeared on the Aid Committee as a "state representative" of Singapore.<sup>48</sup> For his relentless role in encouraging Malay education, and in recognition of his efforts, Dr. Burhanuddin was appointed as LEPIR's Chairman of Education and Planning Committee. His first task was to study the possibility of setting up a college or university to be called "University Hang Tuah",<sup>49</sup> which, as the

name suggests, is clearly devoid of implicit Islamic affinity and reference. Hang Tuah was a legendary Malay hero who was believed to have championed not the Islamic religion but the feudal system.

Haji Mohamad Asri, who was to become PAS President after the death of Dr. Burhanuddin in 1969, had been active in the campaign to build *Sekolah Rakyat*<sup>50</sup> (i.e. People's Schools) built out of the people's own initiatives and devoid of government aids apart from the meagre allocations provided by the respective state Islamic Religious Councils) throughout Malaya. At LEPIR's Conference, he had occasion to criticize certain Religious Councils for shirking their duty – they did not support the *Sekolah Rakyat*, though the Councils "never fail to collect tithes" from the people.<sup>51</sup> After the formation of *Hizbul Muslimin*, Haji Mohamad Asri's political activities increasingly gained attention as he became a member of the party's group which organised tours throughout the country in an effort to spread its wings to the villages and towns. As Personal Secretary to the party President, his position provided him with vast opportunities to acquire experience and enlarge his contacts. It must have been his involvement with *Hizbul Muslimin*, through the gruelling period of the party's brief existence, that he not only shaped his outlook and political conviction, but also his skill as an able and much revered orator in the later part of his career.

By August 1948, *Hizbul Muslimin* had its branches spread out in earnest to all the Peninsular states but not Singapore. Where it was devoid of contact with ex-students and teachers of El-Ehya in order to set up branches, the party turned to establish leftist parties like *Pembela Tanah Ayer* (PETA Defenders of the Fatherland) or *Giyu Gun*,<sup>52</sup> API and MNP for a helping hand. It also obtained the assistance of *Pergerakan Rakyat Kalimantan Malaya* (PRKM) to enable it to explain its policies and objectives to the Malay masses.<sup>53</sup> However, as though it was destined to meet its doom soon, *Hizbul Muslimin*'s otherwise meteoric rise was suddenly impeded by unforeseen circumstances. By June that year the communists had commenced armed insurrection against the Government.

On 18 June 1948, the British government responded by instituting Emergency measures against the communists, thus also restricting greatly *Hizbul Muslimin's* plans to expand and enlist support from among the Malays.

The MCP's armed struggle notwithstanding, the colonial government's policy, after the birth of the Federation of Malaya on 1 February 1948, would not have tolerated organized opposition as mounted by *Hizbul Muslimin* and other leftist parties. At any rate, British surveillance of Malay radical tendencies began as soon as leftist parties were formed after the end of the War, thanks to their efficient intelligence network which was already well in place before the out-break of the War. This led to a confrontation with the returning British power. Even as late as March-June 1948, several police raids were conducted on the offices of *Barisan Tani*, PETA and MNP as well as the houses of their party members. In early June 1948, about 300 people were detained by the police in connection with suspected subversive activities.<sup>54</sup> As opposition to the Federation of Malaya Agreement became more open and vocal, political parties, which otherwise would have been more cautious in their choice of alliances, grew increasingly impatient to strike a blow at the colonial administration. In the process they became the victims of their own indiscreet actions; many Malay radicals, for example, fell prey to communist influence. As Gordon P. Means appropriately describes it:

The outbreak of the Emergency caught the Malay radical nationalists in much the same political dead end as the Malayan Democratic Union. In their opposition to the Federation Agreement, these parties had become associated with the Communist Party in a militant approach to politics. Yet, the Communist insurrection was not the kind of revolution radical Malay nationalists had in mind. A few Malays who had been active in API and PERAM joined the Communist insurgency, while the majority of the members of MNP became frustrated political malcontents who did not want to be committed to support either the British or the communists.<sup>55</sup>

The events which had just developed compelled the MNP to issue a statement cautioning its members against acts which could be construed as subversive by the authorities. Ostensibly conscious of the communist ploy to confuse the authorities, the party stressed that its political creed was based solely on nationalism. MNP's pacifying effort, however, seemed not to deter the British from detaining its members, including its President, Ishak Haji Muhamad whom they arrested on 23 July 1948.<sup>56</sup> About a year previously, in April 1947, API, likewise, had suffered a major setback as a result of British counter-measures against burgeoning radicals.<sup>57</sup>

In addition to the British concern at the serious threat that the anti-colonial movement had begun to pose, *Hizbul Muslimin* was faced with strident opposition from UMNO.<sup>58</sup> Since its inception, the party had constantly become a source of irritation to UMNO leaders who feared that it might have the potential to supplant the role that UMNO had been playing in Malay society, which was already divided by an array of political ideologies, state loyalties and cultural roots. As mentioned earlier, because of its radical posture, *Hizbul Muslimin* was referred to by Dato' Onn, UMNO's President, as a party of "reds" (communists).<sup>59</sup> Malay Sultans too, fearing republicanism and the prospect of being dumped into oblivion not unlike their Indonesian counterparts, toured the village mosques to persuade the *rakyat* (people) not to associate with *Hizbul Muslimin*. Their efforts were keenly supported by the *Kadhis*, who now had an opportunity to retaliate against the religious radicals. The pressure that was being heaped upon the party, therefore, left it with little choice but to slow down in its opposition to the Government. Disunity of actions, divergent of purposes and conflict in objectives with UMNO and the conservative *ulama* eventually led *Hizbul Muslimin* to steer itself away from leftist and militant tendencies. With the impending collapse (and eclipse) of MNP, the leaders of *Hizbul Muslimin* abandoned their positions and hurriedly sought sanctuary in *Lembaga Pendidikan Rakyat* (LEPIR) as well as existing religious institutions<sup>60</sup> to pursue, what increasingly appeared to be, a lost cause. By the end of July 1948, *Hizbul*

*Muslimin's* fate was ultimately sealed. Three of its leaders – Ustaz Abu Bakar al-Bakir (who had successfully master-minded the MaJay Islamic movement from its humble beginnings at *El-Ehya Asshariffin* in 1934), Abrab Tamimi (an Indonesian immigrant who had succeeded in creating an impact on the future life of Haji Mohamad Asri)<sup>61</sup> and Abdul Rauf bin Nur – were arrested on charges of participating in illegal activities. Abrab and Abdul Rauf headed the propaganda departments of *Hizbul Muslimin* and were responsible for its expansion throughout Malaya. The British also rounded up four other leaders of *Hizbul Muslimin*. They were Ustaz Abdul Wahab Nur, Mohamad Abas, Mohd. Nor Haji Mokhtar and Abdullah Hakim. In December 1949, the authorities made another swoop on “political undesirables”, arresting a total of 107 people in the Krian District in Perak.<sup>62</sup> Although it was believed that those arrested were members of the MNP and API, it did serve the authorities’ purpose in putting an end to *Hizbul Muslimin* and its political ambitions.

## CHAPTER I - NOTES

1. The Malay proverb, *diluah mati anak ditelan mati bapa* means a situation in which one is caught having to make an utterly difficult decision. Either way one is bound to suffer from one’s action.
2. See W.R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Press, 1967), p.33. So serious was this problem that in 1938 a group of Malays led by Daud bin Mohd. Shah, President of the *Kesatuan Melayu Singapura* (KMS - Singapore Malay Union), started a discussion on the feasibility of founding a solely Malay-owned newspaper. The discussion led to the founding of *Utusan Melayu*, a Malay daily, on 29 May 1938 with Abdul Rahim Kajai as its first editor. See *ibid.*, pp.174-175. For an account of the history of *Utusan Melayu*, see Alias Mohamed, “Utusan Berjuang Sepanjang Zaman”, *Utusan Malaysia*, 29 May 1989.

3. See W.R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, Ch.7, pp.211-247, especially pp.244-245.
4. The KMM was formed in 1938. Anti-British in its stance and inspired by Indonesian revolution, KMM preached an ideology which sought to overthrow the monarchy and expel the British. Its immediate goal was to form a union of Malaya with a yet to be formed independent Indonesia. See Gordon P. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, 2nd ed. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976) p.23. For KMM's role in Malay politics and its association with Malay radical intelligentsia, see W.R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, pp.221-230.
5. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *Maahad Il-Ihya Assyariiff Gunung Semanggol, 1934-1935* (Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Sejarah, Universiti Malaysia 1976), pp.77-78.
6. See *ibid.*, p.77.
7. *Ibid.*, p.73.
8. *Ibid.*, p.74
9. For a detailed study of *Masjumi*, see for instance, Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun* (The Hague & Bandung: W. Van Hoeve, 1958) and George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963).
10. See A.J. Stockwell, *British Policy and Malay Politics During the Malayan Union Experiment, 1942-1998*, Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (MBRAS), Monograph No.8, 1979, p.138.
11. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *Maahad Il-Ihya Assyariiff Gunung Semanggol, 1934-1959*, p.10.
12. See Safie bin Ibrahim, *The Islamic Party of Malaysia*, (Pasir Putieh, Kelantan, 1981), p.9.
13. See J. Funston, *Malay Politics in Malaysia: A Study of UMNO and PAS* (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann Educational Books, 1980), p.124.



14. This was certainly not the first time such collaboration existed. Under the leadership of Ibrahim Yaacob, the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (KMM) had made serious efforts to unite Malaya with Indonesia. During the heyday of the Malay Nationalist Party (MNP), similar efforts were tried, first by Mokhtaruddin Lasso (or Mokhtar Uddin), founder-President of the MNP, and then by Dr. Burhanuddin, its second President and later President of PAS, to obtain independence for Malaya under Indonesian ambit.
15. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, pp.119-120.
16. See *ibid.*, p.149.
17. See *ibid.*
18. For an account of its formation, see Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, p.90 and M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia* (London: MacMillan Education Ltd., 1981) p.194.
19. See Audrey R. Kahin, "West Sumatra: Outpost of the Republic", in Audrey R. Kahin, ed., *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution – Unity from Diversity* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), pp.159-160. See also M.C. Ricklefs, *op.cit.*, p.196.
20. See A.J. Stockwell, *British Policy and Malay Politics*, p.139.
21. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, p.118.
22. During the Occupation Dr. Burhanuddin served the Japanese Military Administration Headquarters in Taiping, Perak, as Adviser of Malay Customs and Culture. See J. Funston, *Malay Politics*, p.119 and Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, pp.87 and 109.
23. A large part of the deliberations on the second day (23 March 1947) of the Religious Conference, which gave birth to *Pusat Perekonomian Melayu SeMalaya* (PEPERMAS or All-Malaya Malay Economic Bureau), was devoted to economic issues affecting the Malays. It called for the institution of special privileges in trade and commerce for the Malays, a special body to administer Malay economy and the need for Malay majority representation

in the State Councils and such other bodies to be set up from time to time. See *ibid.*, pp.113-115 and also Firdaus Haji Abdullah, *Radical Malay Politics: The Origins and Early Developments* (Kuala Lumpur: Pelanduk, 1985), pp.38-46.

24. See W.R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* and "Kaum Muda-Kaum Tua: Innovation and Reaction Amongst the Malays, 1900-1941", in K.G. Tregonning, ed., *Papers on Malayan History* (Singapore, 1962). For evidence of similarity of views between those held by Indonesian *Kaum Muda* and those espoused by their Malaysian counterparts, and their sharing of anti-imperialist platform with the followers of the *Wahabi* movement in the Middle East, see Khoo Kay Kim, "Survey of Early Malaysian Politics", *Solidarity* (Philippines, October 1971). See also G.P. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, p.230 and Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, p.118.
25. This Conference was held slightly over a year after the birth of UMNO, and so the memory of its attack on the Malayan Union was still fresh in the minds of the Malays. But, as the Conference was dominated by Malay leftists and religious radicals, they also displayed "Sang Saka Merah Putih", the Indonesian nationalist flag, apparently with the intention of driving home the message that Malaya and Indonesia were one and inseparable. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, p.111.
26. At the UMNO General Assembly in Kota Bharu soon after the MATA Conference on 24 March 1947, Saberkas (a Kedah state-based organization) and Kesatuan Melayu Muar's representatives, walked out of the meeting in protest against UMNO's disapproval of MATA's actions. The latter had criticized the Civil Court judge's ruling on bigamy committed by a Muslim woman and the termination of the services of Haji Mohd. Amin, Kadhi for Bandar Baru, Kedah, by a "non-Islamic authority". See Nabir Haji Abdullah, *ibid.*, pp.123 and 133.
27. See *ibid.*, pp.121-122.
28. See A.J. Stockwell, *British Policy and Malay Politics*, p.139.

29. Quoted by A.J. Stockwell from the Malayan Security Service file and Political Intelligence Journal (MSS/PIJ). Ibid.
30. See Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid, "Malayan Union: Penubuhannya" in Zainal Abidin bin Wahid, ed., *Sejarah Malaysia Sepintas Lalu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka, 1971), p.127.
31. At MATA's Second Conference in Guar Champedak, Kedah, from 12-13 July 1947, its Conference Chairman, Tuan Husin Bakar Rafik, in his speech, spoke of criticisms which alleged that MATA was infiltrated by communist elements and that it received support from alien races outside the country. Reminiscing MNP's fate (which both the authorities and UMNO branded as communist-inspired), he denied that MATA had anything to do with such influences as alleged by its enemies. See *Utusan Melayu*, 2 and 25 July 1947. But it was difficult to defuse UMNO's suspicion because among the participants who attended MATA's Second Conference were members of PUTERA (*Pusat Tenaga Rakyat*), API, MNP and PRKM (*Pergerakan Rakyat Kalimantan Malaya*). The last-mentioned consisted of Indonesians who had settled down in Malaya and who had connections with and supported the Indonesian struggle against the Dutch prior to its independence. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, op.cit., p.133.
32. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, op.cit., p.133.
33. See *Utusan Melayu*, 1 and 12 November 1947.
34. See ibid., September 1947.
35. See ibid., 5 September 1947.
36. See ibid., 28 January 1948, 18 February 1948 and 20 February 1948.
37. Formed on 23 March 1947 at the Religious Conference discussed earlier, that is, one day before the formation of MATA. Whilst MATA became the "religious" objective of the Conference, PEPERMAS represented its "economic" spearhead and LEPIR (Lembaga Pendidikan Rakyat or Council for

People's Education), took up the cause of "education" for the Malays. For a discussion of the roles and activities of PEPER-MAS, MATA and LEPIR, see Firdaus Haji Abdullah, op.cit., pp.38-46.

38. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, op.cit., pp.159-160.
39. Ibid., p.160.
40. See A.J. Stockwell, op.cit., pp.137-138 and Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, op.cit., pp.156 and 160-162.
41. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, op.cit., p.162.
42. Ibid., p.163. See also *Utusan Melayu*, 1 March 1947, 9 March 1947 and 9 February 1948.
43. See Nabir wbin Haji Abdullah, op.cit., p.166. The MDU was a radical Singapore party formed on 21 December 1945. The party was believed to have been formed by MCP with the intention of making it a multi-racial, "broad-based, nationalist political party, emphasizing a moderate programme of democratic socialism leading to independence. See M.R. Stenson, *Industrial Conflict in Malaya: Prelude to the Communist Revolt of 1948* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p.60. See also Cheah Boon Kheng, *The Masked Comrades: A Study of the Communist United Front in Malaya, 1945-1948* (Singapore: Times Books International, 1979); Yeo Kim Wah, "A Study of Three Early Political Parties in Singapore, 1945-1955", *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol.X, No.1 (March 1969) and Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, ed., "The Malayan Democratic Union" (Kuala Lumpur, 1970, mimeographed).
44. See Nabir Haji Abdullah, op.cit., pp.165-167.
45. Ibid., pp.174-175.
46. Ibid., p.177.
47. Ibid., pp.168-169.

48. Ibid., pp.171-173.
49. Ibid., pp.179-180. See also *Utusan Melayu*, 24 March 1948. Note that the name chosen was that of a warrior.
50. For a brief account of the growth and development of Sekolah Rakyat in Kelantan, see Othman bin Ismail, *Education in Kelantan*, State Education Office, Kota Bharu, 1975.
51. See Nabir Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, pp.178-179. See also *Utusan Melayu*, 1 March 1948, which criticized the Religious Councils for their monopolistic inclination and for the imprudent use of tithes collected from the people.
52. It consisted of Malay youths who had been influenced by Japanese propaganda to think in militarist and radical nationalist terms. After the war, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) tried to exploit the nationalistic mystic of PETA by adopting that name for its ancillary organization designed to recruit Malay radicals into the communist fold. Leaders of the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (KMM) (outlawed by the Japanese in June 1942) attempted to influence PETA to enter into a secret alliance with the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). See Radin Soenarno, "Malay Nationalism, 1900-1945", *Journal of Southeast Asian History* (JSEAH), Vol.I, No.1 (March 1960), pp.23-24.
53. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, pp.186-187.
54. See *Utusan Melayu*, 2 March 1948, 23 April 1948, 12 May 1948 and 14 Jun 1948. For a detailed account on the profiles of leftist parties, see Khoo Kay Kim, 'The Beginnings of Political Extremism in Malaya, 1915-1935' (Ph.D. thesis, Department of History, University of Malaya, 1973).
55. See G.P. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, p.93.
56. See *ibid.* p.194.
57. *ibid.*, p.92.

58. See J.A. Stockwell, *op.cit.*, p.139 and also Firdaus Hj. Abdullah, *op.cit.*, p.45.
59. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, p.188.
60. See *ibid.*, p.188.
61. In a rare confession to researchers, Dato' Asri admitted that Abrab, and not Abu Bakar al-Bakir, Dr. Burhanuddin or Zulkiflee Mohamad, as many would like to believe, had been "the single most influential person responsible for shaping his political outlook." See Firdaus Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, p.43.
62. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *op.cit.*, pp.198, 200 and 201.

## Chapter II

# ***PAS: The Early Years***

### **The Formation of PAS**

The sudden crippling of *Hizbul Muslimin* in 1948 after four months of existence led to not only a temporary lacuna in the Islamic political movement but to protracted inactivity on the part of the Malay religious forces in MaLaya. The power and influence of the moderate UMNO had indeed taken a toll on the anti-British politics of the Islamic religious movement. But the leaderless *EL-Ehya Asshariff*, temporarily led by Ustaz Khaidir Khatib, a low-profiled and colourless political figure, also suffered from the dispersion of *Hizbul Muslimin*'s remaining supporters in the school.

However, in 1951, after about four years of being driven into virtual seclusion, EL-Ehya, the pulse of *Hizbul Muslimin*'s political movement, began to see a new flicker of hope. By this time, Dato' Onn, UMNO President, began to feel uncomfortable because of vocal non-Malay demands for participation in the government of an independent Malaya. After all, it was his idea that UMNO should also open its party membership to non-Malays. To strike a balance between the indigenous influence (represented by the Malays) and alien representation

(mainly Chinese) in the new government, he felt that it would be ideal for the religious element also to be given a place, now that the core of the religious radicals had been in detention.

It must have been clear to Dato' Onn that, without the broadest support from the Malays, independence would have less significance to the party. In fact, government's "change of heart" towards the radical *ulama* could be seen, at this juncture, from the fact that the Perak State Islamic Religious Council, part of the establishment, actually sent representatives to meet Ustaz Abu Bakar al-Bakir in the Taiping (Perak) detention camp and offered him a position in the state religious department. But Ustaz Abu Bakar al-Bakir politely refused the offer in preference to his intention to revive El-Ehya School upon release from detention. The government's change of attitude was also reflected by its decision, despite his intention, to release him in October 1952<sup>1</sup>.

In the meantime, confronted by the reality of Malay disunity and the increasingly audible non-Malay voice in Malayan politics, the need for the Malays to close ranks was urgently and widely felt. For a time, this task of achieving unity fell on Dato' Onn's shoulders, until it became clear that even the man who used to command massive Malay support against the Malayan Union had begun to lose his charisma. Malay leaders' opposition to his proposal to include non-Malays as UMNO members led him to resign from the party and form Independence of Malaya Party (IMP). From then on, it was a losing political battle for him and a total eclipse for his IMP as well as its successor, the *Parti Negara*. Such was the political climate which saw El-Ehya's gradual return to activity in 1950-1951.

The first indication of UMNO's compromising gesture towards El-Ehya's religious radicals came in 1951. Ex-members of *Hizbul Muslimin* such as Ustaz Osman Hamzah, Baharuddin Latiff and Khaidir Khatib, were invited to attend the UMNO *Ulama* Conference held at the Sultan Sulaiman Club in Kuala Lumpur on 23 August 1951. Dato' Onn gave his last opening speech as President of UMNO at this Conference. It might be said that when the *ulama* wing within UMNO was first set up in



1946 under the Chairmanship of Shaikh Abdullah Pahim, it probably bore Dato' Onn's political mark of wanting to use it as a nucleus for a larger and wider Islamic religious role in the country, such as the *Ulama* Union. His intention, although unexpressed, could well be to equate UMNO with MNP's religious wing, whose members were mainly derived from *El-Ehya Asshariff*. Such an *Ulama* Union would have the sure potential of enhancing Dato' Onn's political position in UMNO considerably. As events were to show, if at the time the *Ulama* Conference was held Dato' Onn was not leaving UMNO and Haji Ahmad Fuad, head of UMNO's Religious Affairs Department, did not contemplate following his mentor to join IMP, the subsequent course of political events could have been vastly different. Perhaps PAS would not have been formed in November 1951.

As noted earlier, Haji Ahmad Fuad bin Hassan, Chairman of UMNO Religious Affairs Department (and later the first PAS President), was an ex-student of El-Ehya, who was the key person in organising activities which helped to promote Malay nationalist consciousness and Islamic religious development at the school before the War.<sup>2</sup> Partly through his efforts and partly through the foresight of UMNO leaders, notably Dato' Onn, who seemed to be giving special attention to the problem of *Ulama* unity, the Conference was successfully convened. It passed two noteworthy resolutions. The first was the formation of a supreme Islamic religious body charged with the responsibility of administering Islamic affairs. The Committee formed comprised Haji Mohamad Fadlullah Suhaimi, Haji Ghazali and Haji Abdullah Pahim. The Committee's immediate task was to serve notice to the Sultans on the need to form such a body to administer religious affairs, reminiscent of MATA's strident objective in 1947, to take over the administration of religious affairs from the Sultans and the conservative *ulama*. The second resolution called for the formation of an *Ulama* Union which was to be independent of any political party or organization. A five-man Committee was set up to carry out the resolution and to draft a constitution for the Union. The Committee consisted of Haji Ahmad Fuad,

Chairman; Mohamad Shafie, Haji Ayub, Sa'don Jubir (later an UMNO stalwart) and Haji Mohamad Amin as Committee Members<sup>3</sup>.

On 26 August 1951, three days after the Conference, *Utusan Melayu* published a report which referred to the *Ulama* Union as an Islamic political organization dedicated to the objective of realising an independent Malayan government based on Islam. The newspaper urged political parties to concentrate on attaining independence<sup>4</sup>. As events at that time – i.e. after the formation of the Federation of Malaya – rapidly took a communal turn, Malay leaders like Dato' Onn and Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Dato' Onn's successor, suddenly found themselves diametrically opposed to each other on matters concerning the principles of Malay supremacy. While Dato' Onn fought for the defusion of communal tension among the different communities through the creation of a single political organization for all, the Tunku strove for the maintenance and preservation of a separate political party for the Malays, but at the same time, recognizing the inherent rights of the non-Malays.

The confrontation between the two Malay political giants and their followers led to the emergence of a third faction, the religious offshoot of UMNO, which gradually became identified with, and involved in, not unlike *Hizbul Muslimin*, promoting the growth of Islamic political consciousness. The enlisting of religious radicals in the UMNO-sponsored *ulama* movement had at least provided them the necessary cover as a means to evade suspicion concerning their leftist inclinations. Now, along with the UMNO religious conservatives, they could safely and loudly wage an independent political struggle whose Islamic objectives would, at least temporarily, run on a parallel course with other Malay nationalist movements. It was against this uncertain political background that the achievement of independence, rather than the promotion of political ideology, became a catch-word for most Malay political parties. Dato' Onn had named his new party as the Independence of Malaya Party (IMP)<sup>5</sup>. The Tunku, reacting to threats by IMP on the independence issue, had categorically stated that "independ-

dence must be given to the Malays"<sup>6</sup>.

The formation of IMP by Dato' Onn, after he resigned from UMNO, created uncertainties and an atmosphere of nervousness and tension among the Malays. Earlier, in February 1950, in a desperate move to quell disquiet in UMNO, Dato' Onn had made a revealing statement on the prevailing political condition of the party at that time. He said:

UMNO was not only supported by mischievous people but also by the faithful. In this group both satans and angels existed for which our paradise is well established<sup>7</sup>.

It was in the midst of this harrowing period that UMNO, having set up the Department of Religious Affairs within itself, began to embark on an intense campaign throughout the country to prevent the imminent split arising from differences of opinion over the administration of religious affairs which came under its jurisdiction. This soon developed into a controversy surrounding the question of whether or not a religious organization, if formed, ought to be political or a non-political body. The train of events which subsequently led to the famous exit of the ulama division from UMNO, and became an independent political organization dedicated to the up-holding of Islamic principles and precepts, began as a routine exercise when the party's Religious Affairs Committee decided to sponsor an *ulama* Conference. The Conference was held for two days – 21-22 February 1950. In his closing speech at the Conference, Dato' Onn emphatically remarked on the need to reduce the power of the Sultans on religious matters. He indicated to the delegates that "if you want religion to be organized as you have done with politics, certain of the religious powers of the state must be conceded, otherwise you will have conflicting decisions."<sup>8</sup> He went on to say that though the Sultans were needed and supported by the people, the Malays wanted to participate in the government and religious administration, and that if such objectives could not be attained by peaceful means, then stronger measures must be adopted<sup>9</sup>. It was this parting shot of the UMNO President that was to have

given the *ulama* the confidence they so urgently needed to spearhead their long-cherished aspirations.

The drift towards a certain political direction for the *ulama* may be said to begin here. Dato' Onn's speech at the Conference undoubtedly sent certain signals to susceptible Malay minds as to the limit and parameters of their struggles. Haji Ahmad Fuad Hassan, an *ulama* leader from Trengganu, who was later to become the first PAS President, could not have misinterpreted Dato' Onn's message at the first UMNO-sponsored *ulama* Conference. It came as no surprise when, on 1 June 1951, the party organ, *Suara UMNO* (the voice of UMNO), unsuspectingly cited Haji Ahmad Fuad as having said that "the strength of Islam cannot be realized without the union. Indeed the *Ulama* union will be a means for achieving good aspirations."<sup>10</sup> He, therefore, advised the *ulama* and religious experts to "unite in one front".

At the same time, UMNO's sense of Islamic religious solidarity continued to grow. At the party's Executive Committee meetings on 30 June 1951, it was decided to hold an *Ulama* Conference at Sultan Sulaiman Club, Kuala Lumpur, on 23 August 1951.<sup>11</sup> Haji Ahmad Fuad, who was Chairman of the Advisory Committee of UMNO's Religious Affairs, was put in charge of scrutinizing proposals which were intended to be moved at the Conference. It was at that time that UMNO was facing a leadership crisis involving Dato' Onn's proposal to incorporate non-Malays as members of UMNO which was rejected by many UMNO leaders at the lower level.<sup>12</sup> The crisis might have forced Haji Ahmad Fuad,<sup>13</sup> who was known to be Dato' Onn's ardent supporter and close adherent, to adapt his political stand and plan for the future. Haji Ahmad was initially one of the challengers for the party Presidency against Tunku Abdul Rahman and C.M. Yusof and also for the Vice-Presidency against Dato' Abdul Razak Hussin (later Tun) and C.M. Yusof.<sup>14</sup>

As far as Haji Ahmad Fuad's position was concerned, it should be stated clearly here that his efforts to forge an *ulama* union were not without criticisms and risks. For example, commenting on his efforts to unite the *ulama*, a writer, one Idrus,

wrote cynically in the *Qalam* of this unification attempt through UMNO. Idrus said that Haji Ahmad Fuad "should leave UMNO and form an Islamic organization based on brotherhood and politics ... so long as he is within UMNO not even one of those efforts will have the support from the Islamic *ummah*"<sup>15</sup> Another person, Haji Ahmad Maliki, who later rose to become one of UMNO's Supreme Council members, spoke out even more vehemently. He suggested that the proposed *ulama* organization be broadened into a political party based on the Indonesian *Mashumi*.<sup>16</sup> At about the same time, the Singapore Malay Union (SMU) submitted a resolution to the UMNO Sixth Annual General Assembly soon to be held in Kuala Lumpur categorically calling for the establishment of an independent Islamic government in Malaya.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile news spread from Johor that an Islamic party of Malaya would be formed.<sup>18</sup> The most concrete move was made by Engku Ismail bin Abdul Rahman, head of the Johor Religious Department, who wrote a letter to the Conference proposing the formation of *Parti Muslim Malaya* (Muslim Party of Malaya) "which was to be responsible for Muslim affairs, independent of any other party and it should be based on the *Quran* and *Hadith*".<sup>19</sup>

The impending fissure within the Malay-Muslim community over, at first, the administration of Islamic religious affairs, was now becoming increasingly evident. In his opening speech at the conference, Dato' Onn made a terse comment on the *ulama* and religious department authorities which reflected, if anything, the state of serious disunity among Malays. He said:<sup>20</sup>

As long as there are nine *muftis*, nine *kadis* and nine 'in all things' by which everyone of them has different attitudes and views and followed nine different ways, then the religious administration in Malaya is torn apart and more so the people of Malaya.

It was not very long after this that Dato' Onn, after resigning from UMNO, formed a new rival party, the Independence of Malaya Party (IMP). Haji Ahmad Fuad, too, as expected, left UMNO and joined Dato' Onn's IMP. Like those of Dato'

Onn's, his ideas seemed to hinge on obtaining speedy independence from the British. His political ideology was difficult to grasp now that he seemed to be torn between secular responsibility and religious commitments. His tone was clearly that of a secular nationalist rather than an avowed Islamic fundamentalist. He said: "The battle ground for an ideology is an independent state. Therefore the political parties, the IMP, UMNO and PEMAS<sup>21</sup> are urged to forget the question of *ism* and the pattern of the State, and to form an effective powerful force for the independence of Malaya."<sup>22</sup>

But IMP was formed in a hurry in quest of speedy independence in spite of the fact that it was ill-prepared for such a major task. As Dato' Onn himself testified, the Malays were too disorganized and disunited and the Islamic religious institutions in various states in too much of a disarray for "an effective powerful force for the independence of Malaya" to crystalize. Haji Ahmad Fuad's decision to join IMP and work from within the party to forge unity among the disparate Malay political parties for the sake of attaining independence was, from the beginning, looked upon with suspicion. One writer, Abdullah bin Hamid al-Idrus<sup>23</sup> of Singapore, was critical of Haji Ahmad Fuad's efforts, saying that Dato' Onn's approach to the independence issue and Haji Ahmad Fuad's support of the former's 'formula' would lead to the annihilation of the absolute rights of the Malays. Furthermore, he argued, Dato' Onn's battle-cry of nationalism was incongruent with Islam.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile the controversy with regard to the issue of independence and the position of the Malays vis-a-vis the non-Malays seemed to have hastened the convening of another UMNO Ulama Conference. This was held in November, 1951.

The few days before the Conference held on 24 November, 1951,<sup>25</sup> were very eventful. UMNO, which was caught in the leadership wrangle and faced with the prospect of being rejected by the British, like *Hizbul Muslimin* and MNP had been earlier, if it decided to veer towards extremism, did not seem to be particularly aware of the possibility that it might lose the Religious Affairs Department to the *ulama*, who were by then almost bent on separation. Many *ulama* within the

Islamic religious quarters were, by then, in favour of the formation of an Islamic political party as opposed to a non-political *Ulama* union. Even *Utusan Melayu*, as early as 26 August 1951, had referred to the proposed formation of the *Ulama* union not as an *Ulama* union as such, but as an Islamic political organization with the deep-seated objective of establishing an 'Islamic state' of sorts.<sup>26</sup> Slightly more than a week later, another newspaper, *Majlis*, stated: "The group which founded the pan-Malayan *Ulama* union must carry on its aim ... until a political party like *Mashumi* is established."<sup>27</sup>

So, besides individuals and religious bodies associated with UMNO, support for the formation of an Islamic political party also came from the mass media. The real test came on 24 November 1951 when the third *Ulama* Conference was held in Butterworth, Province Wellesley. In his opening speech to the delegates, Haji Ahmad Fuad referred to the proposed *Ulama* union as both a 'union' and an 'Islamic party of Malaya'.<sup>28</sup> The Conference also resolved to call the Islamic 'Union', the *Persatuan Islam Se Malaya* or Pan-Malayan Islamic Association (PMIA).<sup>29</sup> Both *Utusan Zaman* on 25 November 1951, and *Warta Negara*, on the following day, reported that PMIA or PAS was a political party based on religion and would not form an alliance with any other political organization in Malaya.<sup>30</sup> The *Sunday Times*<sup>31</sup> about two years after PAS was inaugurated, said that:

[PAS'] constitution had four objectives. Firstly, it was to realize a union of the Islamic brotherhood as a collective force in order to implement all the demands of the Islamic religion and political democracy. Secondly, [PAS] was to concentrate its efforts and powers for unifying the constitutions and religious administrations all over Malaya. Thirdly, [PAS] was to safeguard and defend the rights, interests and honour of the religion and Islamic *ummah*. Fourthly, [PAS was] to co-operate with other political organizations whose principles and objectives were not opposed to Islamic teaching. This was for attaining democracy, social justice and humanity. The party

membership was open to every Muslim reaching, according to Islamic law, the age of puberty, and who was a citizen of the Federation and Singapore.

There were only two nominations to the party presidency - Haji Ahmad Fuad and Haji Abdullah Pahim; the former was duly elected by majority votes.

Tunku Abdul Rahman, expecting that Haji Ahmad Fuad would bring the newly-formed Islamic political party closer to IMP, spoke out strongly in defence of Islam, saying that UMNO and Islam were inseparable and that the former depended on the latter for survival. The Tunku also gave his word that his party would not do anything to oppose the *ulama*.<sup>32</sup> In stressing that UMNO was indeed an Islamic political party, he said that he did not understand the real objective of PAS. To this, Haji Ahmad Fuad replied that his party's aim was to fulfil what UMNO could not accomplish.<sup>33</sup>

By this time, however, growing concern over the declared objective of the preceding *Ulama* Conferences to take over the administration of religious affairs from the Sultans and the UMNO-backed *ulama* must have sent clear warning signals to conservative Malays and apprehensive Sultans of the republican spectre reminiscent of *Hizbul Muslimin*. Perhaps in response to this development which would clearly put PAS in a bad light, in February 1952, Haji Ahmad Fuad clarified that the party's objective was to struggle for the protection of Islam and to bring honour to its followers.<sup>34</sup> He flatly denied that PAS was out to take over the administration of religious affairs from the Sultans. Instead, he stressed that his party would support the Sultans in the fight for justice and Malay rights.<sup>35</sup>

Towards the end of the year, apparently feeling better assured and more confident than before, Haji Ahmad Fuad began to steer his party towards a more well-defined objective. Its earlier strategy of avoiding confrontation with UMNO slowly and steadily came to be identified with the commitments to strengthen the party, and to divert it away from issues which would tend to obscure its principal aims of championing the cause of Islam. Although as a political organization PAS had



not fully geared its machinery towards mobilising the Malays, it did gradually build up its image through the many social, educational and religious activities common to an Islam-orientated political organization. For instance, sensitive to uneasiness felt by both the Sultans and the conservative *ulama*, PAS was attempting to adopt a new approach to the 'religious unification of Islam'. Its new campaign theme was Muslim unity through a unified religious administration, without the conspicuous mention of any attempt to take-over the administration of Islam. Its political aim of "freeing the Malays from foreign rule and slavery" was keenly pursued nevertheless, but not with the same gusto as shown by its predecessor, the *Hizbul Muslimin*.

Although PAS had been infiltrated by a handful of leftists, it appeared that without the experienced hands of ex-MNP and *Hizbul Muslimin* activists on the lever of the party leadership, it would have suffered serious commandeering ability. The full PAS Executive Committee, elected on 24 November 1951,<sup>36</sup> the day it was formed, consisted of religious leaders who were considered conservative and many of them owed allegiance to UMNO, being members of the party at the same time.<sup>37</sup> And, in fact, by the time it was formed it had also to turn its loyalty to IMP whose leader, Dato' Onn, commanded substantial following from among Malay leaders and members of the PAS Executive Committee. The Tunku was aware of some UMNO members being elected to the PAS Executive Committee. In fact, *Utusan Zaman* also admitted the difficulties faced by PAS as it had to contend with the status of its party office-holders who were at the same time members of other political parties.<sup>38</sup>

PAS' soft-peddalling of political issues (although it had not slackened its religious programme) was to be expected. Earlier, it was suggested by Baharuddin Latiff that the *Ulama* Conference at Butterworth should first be concerned with the establishment of an *Ulama* union rather than an Islamic political party. According to Baharuddin, an ex-*Hizbul Muslimin* leader, an *Ulama* union would be most fitting for the time being as otherwise, it would be ridden with organizational

problems for lack of manpower.<sup>39</sup>

True to Baharuddin's fear, at the time when it was formed, PAS was caught between dual loyalties. Being basically an arm of UMNO, it was faced with the painful prospect of having to break with the party that helped to nurse its existence since 1946. On the other hand, many of its leaders, including Haji Ahmad Fuad, were Dato' Onn's close associates. The latter's decision to depart from UMNO to form IMP on 16 September 1951<sup>40</sup> could not but influence the party, i.e. PAS, in the planning of its objective and course of political actions. Viewed from the vantage of the nationalist struggle of UMNO, the new Islamic party, under Haji Ahmad Fuad, failed to make an impact on Malayan politics. Forced into such a political corner during the crucial period of Malay nationalism, it had little choice but to wait not only for the tension between UMNO and IMP to ease off, but also until suspicion concerning its leftist inclination had been completely erased from the minds of the Sultans and other Malay leaders. Moreover, to take the lead in the political campaign during the period of the Emergency meant, particularly in the case of a new political party like PAS, that it had to engage in the unusually arduous task of confronting the authorities. Besides, it had to contend with the many political creeds which the Malays represented; and to win them over it must necessarily come face to face with the British, who still held the trump card and who were, more or less, quite clear about who should inherit the mantle of power. Also, between 1948 and 1952, the agitation for and against a United Malaya, took the centre stage in Malayan politics.

It has been said that the period 1949 to 1951 saw Dato Onn's attempt to move from his position as the father of the Malays to the status of a non-communal Malayan statesman and father of Malayan independence. Over-confident of his power and influence, he pressed for the complete opening of UMNO's membership to non-Malays and the conversion of UMNO into a 'United Malayan National Organization'. The UMNO Central Committee backed him on 5 January 1951 but Onn came under heavy Malay criticism.<sup>41</sup> Dato' Onn chose a difficult time to re-orientate Malay thinking. At the end of 1950

"Malay radicalism [had] abandoned its earlier leftist secular stance to combine Malay nationalist radicalism with militant Islamic revivalism".<sup>42</sup> This, of course, resulted in the arrest of several Malay leaders, including Dr. Burhanudin Al-Helmi, Taha Kalu and Abdul Karim Ghani in connection with the Nadrah riots in Singapore.<sup>43</sup> But it did not make Dato' Onn's task any easier, for the year 1951 saw the emergence of the Peninsular Malays Union (PMU) which, together with its Singapore counterpart, the Malay Union of Singapore, became another rallying point for Malays who were militantly communal. The PMU proceeded to mount an intensive campaign against Dato' Onn's "unconditional surrender" to the non-Malays and his attempt to recast UMNO into a multi-communal political party.<sup>44</sup>

IMP made known its eight-point manifesto, the principal provisions of which called for self-government within ten years, local elections by 1953, free compulsory education up to the age of 12, and Malayanization of the public services.<sup>45</sup> All in all, there was little that was left for PAS to capitalise on except, as Haji Ahmad Fuad explained, the party's fear that Malaya would lose any vestige of becoming an Islamic state and its concern for Malays who would have to share political power with other races. In taking stock of this development, he urged the party to prepare itself for an Islamic form of strategy in the face of changes and challenges which the country was undergoing. Haji Ahmad Fuad took note of his party's weakness under the circumstances.<sup>46</sup> This was the situation in which PAS painfully found itself when it set out to pursue an independent political course after the breaking-up with UMNO.

However, between 1952 and 1953, two important events took place. The first event was the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Elections and, the second, the controversy surrounding the sponsorship of the "National Convention" and the "National Conference". Dato' Onn's departure from UMNO to form IMP in 1951 began to show signs of major distress in race relations between the Malays and the Chinese when, as a result of the British support of a "more openly political role" for the Chinese,<sup>47</sup> he staged a competition with Tunku Abdul

Rahman, UMNO's new President, to win over the non-Malays. Although, to the chagrin of Dato' Onn, UMNO successfully formed an alliance with MCA (founded in February 1949) to win the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council Elections in 1952,<sup>48</sup> problems regarding Malay-Chinese relations continued to be the dominant issue during the year.

Within the UMNO-MCA Alliance there developed strains arising from the visit of a Chinese 'spokesman', Victor Purcell. The Tunku's objection to Purcell's visit caused the MCA to withdraw its offer of RM500,000 to set up a Malay Welfare Fund to be administered in cooperation with UMNO. This money, which was actually derived from the MCA welfare lottery,<sup>49</sup> drew such an uproar within PAS that for his statement in favour of the "MCA's gift", Haji Ahmad Fuad's rift with other PAS leaders and the latter's subsequent loss of confidence in him must have begun here. To compound the issue, in early 1953, a split occurred within PAS arising from differences in religious pronouncements.<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile, communal division also intensified in the Federal Legislative Council over the Immigration Control Bill, the Education Bill and the Registration and Licensing of Business Bill.

Being partners and victors in the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council Elections, both UMNO and MCA naturally "were torn between the objective of winning elections and the objective of vigorously championing their separate communal causes."<sup>51</sup> Dato' Onn, seeing the opportunity to seize on the dilemma faced by UMNO and MCA, declared that the communal cooperation between the two parties was a "sham". Dato' Onn's intention was clear and calculated, that is to drive a wedge between these two incompatible political parties. If his efforts failed to split UMNO and MCA, his motive did succeed in bringing to full public view the underlying differences between the Malays and non-Malays in post-war Malayan politics. It was a dog-eat-dog situation.

These developments did not escape the attention of PAS which waited in the wings for a possible rupture in the body politic. In fact, Dato' Onn's motive notwithstanding, his criticism of the Chinese in 1953 would invariably have the effect of

sending shock waves through the Malay community, particularly PAS, whose leadership was known to be close to him. In his criticism, Dato' Onn cited the determined Chinese opposition to the nationality laws, the Education Ordinance and their threats of hartals and boycotts, as well as their demands for the creation of a separate Chinese university to rival the University of Malaya.<sup>52</sup> So severe was this criticism that within UMNO it caused, to some extent, the party's Perak branch to rebel against Tunku Abdul Rahman for his "compromising" attitude towards the MCA. The "rebels", under the leadership of Dato' Panglima Bukit Gantang, soon set up the National Association of Perak to become politically allied with the IMP.<sup>53</sup> PAS' immediate reaction was not unexpected. True to its colours, Haji Ahmad Fuad, PAS President and Dato' Onn's supporter, quickly responded by echoing the claim that Chinese aspiration was to conquer Malaya through Chinese culture and that there was ample evidence of their insincerity towards Malaya and the Malays.<sup>54</sup> It was obvious the first salvo of communal conflagration fired by Dato' Onn and Haji Ahmad Fuad could not have happened at a worse time.

By mid-May 1953, therefore, amidst an increasing tendency to indulge in communal politics, three separate "national front" conferences were being planned. The IMP sponsored the 'National Conference', the UMNO the 'National Convention' and the Peninsular Malays Union (PMU), the 'All-Malay Round Table Conference'. Mesmerized by an increasing desire to win the hearts and minds of the people, these conferences competed with one another in their expression of nationalist demands. But they also reflected the political interests of the groups that sponsored them.<sup>55</sup>

By virtue of his close association, and also in collaboration, with Dato' Onn, Haji Ahmad Fuad announced that PAS would send delegates to the IMP-sponsored National Conference. However, in an effort to show impartiality, he also indicated PAS' readiness to attend the UMNO-MCA-sponsored National Convention, if invited. By then, PAS was becoming more conscious of the importance of its Islamic identity. Haji Ahmad Fuad seized upon the occasion by appealing to the

*ulama* and the *imam* (traditional heads of religious rituals and functions) to involve themselves actively in politics.<sup>56</sup> In emphasizing the *Quran* as the party's guiding force, he drew the attention of the *mufti* and the *ulama* to their constraints and shortcomings as officials of the Religious Councils. He said they would be better able to serve Islam if they allied themselves with PAS.<sup>57</sup> At this juncture, PAS' leaders' increasingly audible Islamic voice on matters of party policies was also publicly aired at its rally at Bayan Lepas, Penang, in early August 1953. Independence, they urged, should be achieved only through guarantees based on Islam.<sup>58</sup> In anticipation of independence, PAS at its Executive Committee Meeting in early June 1953 decided to prepare a draft constitutional proposal to be submitted to the second session of the National Conference. In conformity with its policies, the proposals emphatically called for the establishment of Islam as the official religion of the country with the setting up of a Ministry of Islamic Religion to provide the structural support. However, the party was surprisingly in agreement with the citizenship provision as contained in the Federation Agreement.<sup>59</sup>

PAS' leaders' growing concern for Islam continued to rank first in the order of priority at its subsequent conferences. At its Congress held on 25 August 1953, one day before the Second PAS Conference took place at Bagan Datoh, Perak, the party outlined a three-prong strategy with the intention of strengthening its base. The first objective of the strategy was to set up a Muslim youth body, later known as the PAS Youth Council, within the party in preparation for the implementation of its policies associated with political demands and Islamic programmes. The second objective was to promote and foster Muslim brotherhood as a step forward in avoiding and overcoming the many differences emanating from Islamic religious pronouncements and such other fundamental issues. The third objective of the Congress was to revive and cultivate Islamic spirit, practice and teachings.<sup>60</sup> The Congress' strategy was clear-cut; it aimed to create an atmosphere in which Islamic life would be predominantly realised among Malays. Whatever political intention there was to be gained from such

a strategy must be favourable to the party. In making doubly sure of his party's Islamic message, Haji Ahmad Fuad delivered a speech at the Second PAS Conference which expressed in no uncertain terms his party's firm intention to fight unflinchingly for Islamic propagation.

At the end of the Conference, the party resolved to urge the colonial government to introduce Islamic studies in the English schools' curriculum and in the School Certificate examination for Muslim students.<sup>61</sup>

In September 1953, what had all along been seen as Haji Ahmad Fuad's clever ploy to stick closely with Dato' Onn came to be demonstrated all too clearly by his admission at a Special PAS Conference in Bukit Mertajam on 26 September 1958. At the Conference to decide PAS' stand on whether to join the National Conference or the National Convention, Haji Ahmad Fuad openly defended PAS' support of the former. However, when the PAS Conference voted in favour of joining the UMNO-MCA sponsored National Convention, Haji Ahmad Fuad tendered his resignation as PAS President and left the party. Subsequently, when on 28 February 1954 Dato' Onn formed *Parti Negara*, Haji Ahmad Fuad became one of its Executive Committee members.<sup>62</sup> Thus was sealed the fate of a man who had been an important moving force in the founding of PAS. He tried subtly to provide Islamic support for the IMP cause, but it was precisely this which brought about that uneasiness which plagued PAS' leadership almost as soon as the party was launched in 1951.

Far from galvanising the loose ends of its ambiguous Islamic policies, the party, in fact, suffered a serious trauma which silently ate up the very sinews of its existence. At least three factions within and outside the party had taken part in the cast that saw its three-year existence end in confusion. First, Haji Ahmad Fuad himself, whose dependence upon Dato' Onn's personal leadership led the party into the alley of uneasiness and instability. Second, among PAS leaders, there were those who looked upon UMNO the party which indeed sponsored PAS' formation - as a necessary platform to achieve their own desired political ambitions. Besides considering

UMNO as a logical supporter in their demands for independence, they were also firm in the belief that, being outside the government (whereas IMP, since Dato' Onn<sup>63</sup> and the majority of the *Mentri Besar* were 'government people', was suspected of representing government interests), UMNO might well advance more aggressive political demands which suited PAS' palate well. Like its predecessors, PAS somehow or other, developed the tendency to conduct its struggle outside the establishment. And also, not unlike its predecessors, PAS leaders in time came to regard the Sultans and the *ulama* in power as the necessary obstacles in their objective to elevate Islam to its rightful place in Malaya. Third, both UMNO and IMP were 'spoilers' whose political behaviour, as events showed, developed the potential of making PAS a pawn that promised, by implication, nothing but its own destruction. The slow and almost leisurely pace at which PAS was progressing was largely caused by the 'divided loyalty' that existed among its leaders. Whilst Haji Ahmad Fuad<sup>64</sup> steadfastly supported Dato' Onn's political moves, his colleagues were sentimental about the Tunku-led UMNO. Very little could be expected of a political party which developed under such uncertainties.

### **The Leadership of Dr. Haji Abbas Alias**

While certain PAS leaders did take delight in the resignation of Haji Ahmad Fuad because they could now expect to see their party heading in a more definite ideological direction, others were unsure that the situation would not be the same as it had been under Haji Ahmad Fuad. As mentioned earlier, at the time of his resignation, PAS had not been able fully to tear itself away from UMNO, the party which gave it life and political apparatus to function as a legal organisation unhampered by the legal arms of the colonial administration. Nurtured and "cultured" under the wings of the pro British UMNO, PAS obviously enjoyed considerable support from the former's first President, Dato' Onn Jaafar, who was also an appointed Member of the Legislative Council and Member for Home Affairs. However, Haji Ahmad Fuad had to contend with the



new political situation created by Tunku Abdul Rahman, UMNO's second President, who was clearly regarded as Dato' Onn's legitimate successor and who had no intention of striking a deal with Dato' Onn on the vital question of the party's membership and non-Malays. Other than Haji Ahmad Fuad's personal loyalty to Dato' Onn, it is difficult to understand, given the former's religious background, how he could be persuaded to agree with Dato' Onn on the sensitive and extremely vital issue of non-Malay inclusion in UMNO as members. Considering that the epicentre of PAS' political ideology lay rooted in its inimical disposition towards the non-Malays and the attendant cultural, economic and political consequences, Haji Ahmad's tolerance of Dato' Onn's noncommunal political scheme must constitute a rude shock and an insult to the party.

But fate, as many PAS leaders had feared, was no kinder to the new party leadership. After Haji Ahmad Fuad's resignation, the party was again plagued by the same problem that it had wanted to solve. Dr. Haji Abbas Alias, Haji Ahmad Fuad's successor and a medical doctor in Government service, became PAS President in November 1953, two months after his predecessor left. In August 1954, PAS held its Third Annual Conference at *Madrasah Tahdhib ad-Diniyyah*, in Tiut Serong, Parit Buntar, Perak. However, as Dr. Haji Abbas was on duty as a medical officer in Mecca, the Conference proceeded under the supervision of three Acting Presidents, Ahmad Awang, Haji Ahmad Tuan Hussin and Haji Mansur, J.P.<sup>65</sup> It was perhaps the first time the party was without its President at its own annual conference.

As though PAS was fated to have a difficult beginning, at the time when it decided to cooperate with the leadership of Tunku Abdul Rahman and participate in the National Convention, little did its leaders realise that it would be placed under the same situation as it had been when Haji Ahmad Fuad brought PAS into the National Conference. In defending PAS' involvement in the National Conference, Haji Ahmad Fuad had said that his party had studied the report of the Working Committee of the National Conference and that for the attainment of independence, despite its opposition to non-

Malays, a multi-racial organisation was necessary.<sup>66</sup> Haji Ahmad Fuad's intention to stick to the National Conference could not be other than what was desired by the Conference's authors, namely the *Mentri Besar* and IMP leaders who, following their defeats in the municipal council elections of 1952 and 1953, had favoured a more gradual transition to self-government than what the UMNO-MCA Alliance had proposed.

The recommendation of the National Conference working committee reflected this view. It proposed that municipal and state elections should precede the federal elections, the last-mentioned to be held towards the end of 1956. A Legislative Council of 90 with less than half elected membership was proposed as a first stage in the transition to self-government.<sup>67</sup> Haji Ahmad Fuad's preference for the Conference's gradual approach to self-government must, in itself, be in conflict with other PAS leaders' attitude towards self-rule which UMNO, under the new leadership, incidentally, had struggled for. Moreover, it must be reiterated that, being an Unofficial Member of the Federal Legislative Council, Haji Ahmad Fuad's political attitude could not seriously be in conflict with that of the authorities. It may thus be inferred that the political propensity of PAS at the time Haji Ahmad Fuad decided to surrender his position of leadership in favour of the National Conference's "solution" to the hard-pressed question of self-government, was one which was genuinely in line with the party's visionary struggle to set up an Islamic state. UMNO's radical and uncompromisingly "Malay" posture was seen by other PAS leaders (to which faction, by virtue of their choosing him to succeed Haji Ahmad Fuad, Dr. Haji Abbas must belong) to be in tandem with their quest for an Islamic-centred Malay government.

It should be stressed that far from showing signs of distress at the loss of Haji Ahmad Fuad, PAS leaders became more determined to continue the struggle along the ideological line of Islam based on the *Quran* and *Hadith*.<sup>68</sup> When the second session of the National Convention convened on 11 October 1953 to discuss the report on constitutional reforms and the Alliance Working Committee's proposal for federal elections

in 1954, one of the two PAS delegates to the Convention, Mohamad bin Hanif (the other was Haji Mohamad Asri bin Haji Muda), objected to the liberalising of the qualification of electors.<sup>69</sup> Among the Alliance Working Committee's proposals which were treated with contempt by the PAS delegate was the demand for "extension of the franchise to all adults who are either citizens, subjects of the Rulers, British subjects or both in Malaya and who have lived in Malaya for five years".<sup>70</sup> Mohamad Hanif argued that the loyalty of non-federal citizens could not be guaranteed and thus voting rights should be restricted to those who were subjects of Malay rulers or federal citizens.<sup>71</sup>

Such liberalising of franchise must have taken PAS by surprise since, earlier on, UMNO had similarly objected to IMP's compromising attitude towards the non-Malays in the latter's approach to self-government. For its part, the Alliance was confident of victory and the need for a review of its proposals for an early election, that is in 1954, was deemed to be unnecessary and a waste of time. This confidence was quite clearly reflected in the defiant tone of their resolutions and the uncompromising manner in which they advanced their demands.<sup>72</sup>

At the time of the second session of the National Convention in October 1951, the situation was quite critical for the party as it was without a leader until November 1953. And at about the time that Dr. Haji Abbas Alias came to lead the party until mid-1954, the "crisis" arising from the proposals for the federal elections led PAS to withdraw from participating in the third session of the National Convention held on 14 January 1954. Undoubtedly PAS had suffered profound political frustration as it suddenly found itself at the crucial crossroads in facing the fundamental question of voting rights for non-Malay electors. It gave up support for Dato' Onn's IMP mainly because the latter was advocating compromise with the non-Malays. Consequently, the party faced the same problem at the National Convention.

By February 1954, a new political party, *Parti Negara*, which was in fact a replacement for IMP, had been established

whose political objectives came to be a complete *volte face* from that of its predecessor.<sup>73</sup> In May 1954, gauging from the mood and political attitudes of the Malays outside UMNO, PAS more or less had decided that it was no longer compatible with the Alliance policies of wanting to give electoral and citizenship rights to the non-Malays.<sup>74</sup> But UMNO for its part, realising that support from the Malays was indispensable, quickly capitalized on the political climate by pointing out that immediate independence was imperative as it provided the answer to Malay poverty.<sup>75</sup> Thus, while defusing the party's concessionary tendency towards the non-Malays, UMNO was able to emerge as the new champion of Malay economic plight, thereby avoiding a head-on clash with the militant Malay political groups with which it had not been too friendly.

But PAS remained true to its conviction; it stuck to its Islamic gun. By August 1954, it was getting clearer that PAS would not budge from its Islamic religious struggle. Independence, the party declared, should not be preceded by election. In demanding independence from the British, the party urged the Malay sultans to abrogate their previous treaty with the British and to cooperate with PAS in their independence struggle.<sup>76</sup> PAS' resolutions at its Third Annual Conference at Titi Serong on 12-14 August 1954 clearly demonstrated its unwavering Islamic approach to the political problems facing the country at that time. Its objectives were to strive for the realization of independence of Malaya and Islamic *ummah* (community) and to struggle for the aspirations of Islam in the administration of state governments. The party's ratified constitution also called for the setting up of an Islamic government to be based on the precepts of democracy. PAS' strident effort to determine its own political future in accordance with purer Islamic objectives became increasingly ominous when it decided that it would withdraw from the National Convention and support any political organization fighting for Malayan independence. The Conference also decided that PAS should contest in the forthcoming elections.<sup>77</sup> The new Executive Committee elected at the Conference consisted of Dr. Haji Abbas Alias (elected *in absentia*),

President; Ahmad Awang, Deputy President; Othman Abdullah, Vice-President, and eight Committee Members.

The Third PAS Conference clearly marked a crucial turning point in the formulation of the party's political objectives. PAS became more determined, more uncompromising and more relentless in its efforts to forge a cohesion around the political struggle based on Islam. PAS' disenchantment with UMNO, first during its last days under Dato' Onn's leadership, and subsequently after the presidency had been taken over by Tunku Abdul Rahman, which led to its compromising disposition towards the non-Malays, indeed developed into a profound sense of fear and insecurity. It had depended greatly on UMNO during its embryonic growth and had invariably regarded it as a protector of the Malays and Malay religion. However, after Haji Ahmad Fuad's resignation from the party which appeared to have arisen from his loyalty towards Dato' Onn's political stand, in the light of the Malay leadership crisis at that time, PAS became a new rallying point for radical Muslims whose earlier struggles were thwarted by the British measures to curb political militancy. But Haji Abbas, mild-mannered and English-educated, did not share the fervour of most of PAS' new leaders. His reluctant leadership was nevertheless seen as a concession to Malay radicals who had been waiting in the wings, so to speak, to ride on the first available political vehicle to achieve their avowed Islamic aims.

Although it is only a matter of conjecture, the radicals would probably have been deprived of the desired platform if PAS, at that juncture, had been led by men who were willing, like Haji Ahmad Fuad, to subscribe to the policies of a government-supported political party of which it was a constituent part. It follows that because the amount of control which UMNO commanded over PAS began to wane during Haji Ahmad Fuad's leadership, it would appear natural for the party to veer from UMNO and seek an adventurous path. Its disagreement with UMNO on the liberalization of franchise made it much easier to seek 'refuge' in a political struggle whose cause could be seen to be avowedly Islamic. Thus, during 1954 and 1955, through an appeal to the religious sentiments

of the Malays, PAS rapidly grew in strength.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, the Third PAS Conference in August 1954 had been a major starting point of a prolonged clash between UMNO and PAS. It won only one lone parliamentary seat in Krian, Perak, in the 1955 'national' elections; its poor performance can only be attributed to the weakness of party leadership under Haji Abbas Alias. But its influence and popularity among the Malays, on account of its Islamic appeal and the attendant cultural issues, were ascending steadily to a height, which, by the 1959 elections, cost the Alliance the two state governments of Kelantan and Trengganu.

### **The Beginnings of PAS in Kelantan**

Although badly defeated in the General Elections of 1955, PAS was far from being discouraged. After Haji Ahmad Fuad's resignation, as mentioned earlier, there was a steady increase of membership as religion and race began to colour political issues. Not only did it become the sanctuary for many Malay radicals but it became the popular choice of Malays seeking a truly Malay political party which could champion their cause exclusively. UMNO by then was seen by many as a party which was no longer looking after the genuine interests of the Malays. It was no surprise therefore that PAS, within a decade of its foundation, became firmly entrenched in Kelantan. The Kelantanese society is widely known for its deep commitment to the Islamic faith.<sup>79</sup> To 'outsiders', the Malays of Kelantan are also distinctly identified by their strong sense of belonging to their community and the place of their birth. The state's physical isolation, until very recent times, is considered to be a major factor which characterized its society even today – it is steeped in cultural traditions and very vocally subscribe to Islamic teachings.

British policy in Kelantan before the war gradually aimed "at the preservation of continuity in local society rather than at any fundamental transformation of it. It looked to the emergence in the state of a British-sponsored model Malay monarchy."<sup>80</sup> Perhaps sensing the danger of indigenous

retaliation, and in conformity with its advisory role, the colonial government seemed to discourage any influx of Chinese who might engulf the Malay population and undermine, by their commercial activities, the Malay peasant economy.<sup>81</sup> In the 1930s, the Kelantan Malay aristocracy which had become a living witness to the disruptive changes elsewhere in the Peninsula, exerted their influence to ensure that the same mistake was not repeated in Kelantan. For instance, a rigorous and effective Malay Reservations Act, which controlled the acquisition of land by outsiders, was passed in 1930.<sup>82</sup>

The period immediately after the Second World War was the most trying for the Malay *rakyat* in general. Deprived of the political platform of the radical *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (KMM), which, as mentioned earlier, was, in 1942, dissolved by the Japanese, who feared that it would step up campaign to undermine their rule during the Occupation, the Malays quickly regrouped under the Japanese-sponsored Malayan Army, the *Pembela Tanah Ayer* or PETA and, towards the end of the Occupation, an organization known as 'Special Strength of the People' (*Kekuatan Rakyat Istimewa* or KRIS).<sup>83</sup>

Although Malay political parties and organisations had receded into temporary paralysis during the Occupation, the interregnum was nevertheless filled by developments in religious studies and Malay literary pursuit. Fortunately, Japanese intrusion into religion was of short duration. Later the Japanese Military Administration even organised two Pan-Malayan congresses of Islamic leaders which possibly played an important role in stimulating post-war Islamic efforts to organise on a national basis.<sup>84</sup> Religious schools had been allowed to continue between 1942 and 1945. All religious schools in Kelantan, in particular, were functioning as before the war. The *Majlis Agama dan Istiadat Melayu Kelantan* (Kelantan Islamic Religious Council and Malay Custom), the institution responsible for the welfare of Muslims and for the propagation of Islam, "extended its educational activities by supervising eight Malay and Arabic schools and in 1944 one more school was put under its supervision" with a total of 865 students.<sup>85</sup>

The serious lack or absence of political conduit in which

the Malays could express their dissatisfaction led them, initially, to turn to religious learning. Kelantan had all along been some sort of a pivot, drawing Islamic scholars and propagators from near and far. But the existing atmosphere had long-term advantage. "National sentiment," asserts the British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, "is a fact".<sup>86</sup> When it is ignored, it is intensified and becomes a source of strife. According to Russell, "national feeling could not exist in a nation which is wholly free from external pressure of a hostile kind."<sup>87</sup> Japanese cruelty, severity and atrocities in dealing with the local population during the Occupation, though generally less severe with the Malays, whom they pitted against the Chinese, are well documented. The Malays - they had hoped that by cooperating with the Japanese they would be given independence on a silver platter - were soon disillusioned when the Japanese impaired the economy and disrupted the administrative system. Hence the period during which the Malays were politically subdued, transformed them later into an aggressive force which caught the British by surprise after the Japanese surrender. Without the Islamic religious enthusiasm of the Occupation period, whose teachings covered both "mosque and state" and emphasized more than mere semantics, the road to Malay nationalism would have been considerably slower and less eventful.

Moreover, influential Islamic scholars had left behind a generation of *pondok* teachers or young *ulama* in Kelantan who had been waiting for the opportunity to spring onto the first available political vehicle to realise their objectives. After the war ended, these so-called "seeds of Islamic party" were reorganized as were their *Pondoks*, which were abandoned during the Occupation, and at the end of the 1950s quickly became PAS' important religious 'cells' which spearheaded Islamic campaign for the party just as Malay school teachers were to UMNO.

Kelantan had known political associations before the War. In response to a number of Malay associations established throughout Malaya, the Kelantan people were beginning to feel the pressure of being denied the rightful place in their



own country. Therefore, on 20 April 1939, Kelantan Malays formed the *Persatuan Melayu Kelantan* (PMK).<sup>88</sup> This association was essentially the brainchild of an English-educated Malay elite group which was dedicated to the forging of Kelantan Malay unity and the realisation of educational progress of the Malays in the state.<sup>89</sup> Although initially devoid of political ideology, the association's leaders included persons such as Nik Mohd. Salleh Omar, Nik Yahya Nik Daud, Dato' Abdullah Mahmud and Nik Ahmed Kamil (later Tan Sri)<sup>90</sup> who later were to join UMNO. However, the first overt Kelantan Malay political organization was formed on 31 October 1940. This organization, the *Persatuan Persetiaan Melayu Kelantan* (PPMK), would have been formed in 1935 had it not been for the colonial government's censorship against its heavy political orientation.<sup>91</sup> The prime mover behind PPMK's formation was Nik Mahmud bin Abdul Majid who, later, on 28 November 1955, emerged as the leader of the Kelantan Malay United Front (KMUF). He also became a very important figure in the Peninsular Malays Union (PMU) and later *Parti Negara*, all of which were avowedly anti-British and anti-Chinese.<sup>92</sup>

Unlike PMK, the membership of PPMK was drawn from the Malay-educated of Kota Bharu and other towns in Kelantan. It is pertinent to record at the outset that PPMK leaders had been involved with Ibrahim Yaacob's KMM. Among them were Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri bin Haji Muda, Dato' Ishak Lotfi bin Omar and Khaidir Khatib,<sup>93</sup> who subsequently joined PAS and became its leaders.<sup>94</sup> Mohamad Asri's half brother, Asaad (or Saad) Shukri bin Haji Muda and his brother-in-law, Muhammad Daud bin Haji Muhammad Salleh, were also well known activists in PPMK.<sup>95</sup> For their anti-British stance, a number of PPMK leaders were detained in 1948 along with leaders of the Malay Nationalist Party, API and *Hizbul Muslimin*. Mohamad Asri escaped detention and abandoned his political activities, seeking refuge instead in a literary movement.

The Emergency did curtail political activities for a while. Then PAS arrived. It first took root in Pasir Mas. The person

who played the main part in starting a branch of the party in Kelantan was Amaluddin Darus who was of Kedah origin. A branch of PAS was formed in Bukit Besar, Kedah, not long after PAS itself came into existence at Bukit Mertajam. Amaluddin Darus, who was a driver attached to the Fire Brigade in Kedah, was transferred to Pasir Mas sometime in 1952. He took the initiative to recruit members for PAS at Pasir Mas, operating from a tailor's shop at No. 28 Jalan Tengku Ahmad. The shop was owned by a certain Ahmad Yatim. He also endeavoured to recruit members in coffee shops, book shops and news stands, and succeeded in getting together about 60 members who registered with PAS. With that a meeting was held on 23 July 1953 at the Pasir Mas Mosque to form the Pasir Mas branch of the party. He would have been the popular choice to be its first Chairman but he declined. A certain Omar bin Yusuf was then elected the Chairman with Amaluddin Darus as the secretary.

Not long after that Haji Noor bin Haji Yussuf from Machang came to meet Amaluddin Darus. On the latter's advice the Machang branch of PAS came into existence on 21 September, 1953. The inaugural meeting was held at the Madrasah Wataniah. In 1954, a branch of PAS was also founded at Kota Bharu and Pasir Puteh. It was here that Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri bin Haji Muda and his nephew, Dato' Haji Ishak Lotfi bin Omar, made their contribution to the consolidation of PAS in Kelantan. In the ensuing year, through the efforts of a well-known Pasir Puteh personality, Ustaz Haji Adam Kamil, numerous members were enlisted, and branches set up, for example, at Tanah Merah (1955), Pachok (1956), Kuala Krai (1958) and Tumpat (1959).<sup>96</sup>

In view of the important role which Mohamad Asri and his nephew, Haji Ishak Lotfi, played as leaders of PAS in Kelantan, a few words about them may not be out of place. Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri's exposure to politics began when he was a student at the *Sekolah Majlis Ugama Islam* (Islamic Religious Council's School) in Kota Bharu where teachings of the Islamic reformist movement sweeping across the Middle East and Indonesia were planted early in his life. After the war,

he became a petition writer, correspondent and columnist for a Malay daily, *Majlis*. He was active in *Persekutuan Persetiaan Melayu Kelantan* (PPMK), being its assistant secretary from 1945 to 1946. After the Japanese Occupation, he was active in *Angkatan Pemuda Insaf* (API), the youth wing of the *Partai Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya* (PKMM) or MNP. After the war, Mohamad Asri then left Kelantan to join *Maahad Ehya el-Shariff* in Gunong Semanggol, Perak, where he was active in PKMM besides being the personal secretary to Abu Bakar Al-Bakir, the leader of the radical *Hizbul Muslimin*, from 1947 to 1948. In 1948 when *Hizbul Muslimin* and PKMM dissolved, Mohamad Asri went into hiding. In 1949, he emerged as a literateur in *Lembaga Pembangunan Sastera* (LEPAS) and became its Vice-Chairman until 1954. He joined PAS in 1953 and a year later he was elected deputy secretary of the party and editor of its official organ, *Suara Islam* or *Voice of Islam*. He was elected national President of PAS in 1969 replacing Dr. Burhanuddin who died that year.

Ishak Lotfi, Asri's nephew, had a career and political background not unlike that of his uncle. None was more surprised than Ishak Lotfi himself when PAS nominated him as *Mentri Besar* in 1959 for he had only been an ordinary member of the party since he joined it in 1954. He went to Mecca in 1937 when he was 12 and stayed there for a few years. During the British Military Administration (BMA), he was the Secretary-General of the *Persatuan Persetiaan Melayu Kelantan* (PPMK), where Dato' Asri similarly had his early political grounding, and took an active part in opposing the Malayan Union. He joined the *Majlis Agama dan Istiadat Melayu Kelantan* as a *zakat* (tithes) officer in 1949.

But neither Mohamad Asri nor Ishak Lotfi was an *ulama* although, clearly, PAS succeeded in establishing itself firmly in Kelantan because it anchored itself to the numerous *pondok* schools and capitalized on the parochial feelings of Kelantanese. In the years which ensued it was the peculiarity of Kelantan society - exclusiveness, ethnocentrism and a deep sense of belonging (Kelantanese society being comparatively more homogeneous than the other Peninsular Malay

societies) - which enabled PAS to emerge as a cohesive force and UMNO, which was prepared to share political power with non-Malays, found it difficult to gain widespread influence in that state.

However, despite its success in forming several branches in Kelantan by 1955, PAS' performance in the elections that year did not indicate that it was to have a major impact on Kelantan society. PAS contested three of the five federal seats. One of the candidates was Dato' Mohamad Asri who stood at Kelantan Timur. He was badly defeated, securing only 2,292 votes whereas the Alliance candidate, Nik Hassan bin Haji Nik Yahya (now Dato') (who, later, together with his team of state UMNO leaders, on account of political arrogance and abuse of power, accounted for the defeat of the Alliance to PAS in 1959), obtained 30,954 votes. *Parti Negara's* Dato' Nik Ahmed Kamil bin Haji Nik Mahmood, from a well-known family in Kelantan,<sup>97</sup> also defeated Mohamad Asri in the State seat by securing 4,014 votes. At the state level where there were 16 seats, PAS fielded candidates for only three constituencies - Ulu Kelantan, Machang and Pasir Mas Central. Again it achieved no success. In fact, its candidate at Ulu Kelantan was badly beaten losing his deposit with only 225 votes, compared to the winner's (Alliance's Mohamed Ali bin Abdullah's) 5,908 votes. Even the Independent candidate, Haji Mohamad Yusof Bangs (T.V. Bangs, an European convert), obtained more votes (973). Haji Mohamed Yusof contested in an area where he had worked for 30 years, first as a planter and then as State Development Officer.

The Alliance won all the 16 seats. On polling day, only eight seats were contested; the other eight of the Alliance's candidates had been returned unopposed on nomination day. Altogether only 60% of the electorate in the eight constituencies went to the polls. Two Independent and one *Parti Negara* candidates lost their deposits. One of the two Independent candidates was Nik Mustapha Fathil bin Haji Nik Mahmood, brother of Nik Ahmed Kamil who, as a *Parti Negara* candidate, had earlier contested and lost the Kelantan Timur federal seat.<sup>98</sup>

TABLE 1: RESULTS OF 1955 ELECTIONS IN KELANTAN - FEDERAL

Constituencies	Nomination Day: 15 June 1955				Polling Day: 27 July 1955		
	Total No. of Votes	No. Voted	Voting %	Spoilt Votes		Votes Obtained	Majority
1. KELANTAN	39,084	33,657	86.1	1,136	1. Ab. Khalid b Awang Osman (ALL.) 2. Dato Nik Ahmed Kamil b. Mahmood (NEG) 3. Hj Mohd Noor bin Hj Yusoff (PAS)	21,746 7,175 3,600	14,571
2. KELANTAN TIMOR	46,221	39,153	84.7	1,011	1. Nik Hassan b Hj Nik Yahya (ALL.) 2. Dato' Nik Ahmad b Hj Nik Mahmood (NEG) 3. Mohd. Asri b Hj Muda (PAS) 4. Mohamad b Ibrahim (IND)	30,954 4,014 3,292 883	26,940
3. PASIR MAS	34,779	29,449	84.7	979	1. Tungku Ahmad b Tungku Ab. Gaffar (ALL.) 2. Hj Mokhtar b Hj Ahmad (PAS)	20,963 7,507	13,456
4. KELANTAN UTARA	42,510	36,060	84.8	1,337	1. Tungku Indra Petra (ALL.) 2. Dato' Nik Hussein b Nik Zainal (NEG)	28,428 6,295	22,133
5. KELANTAN TENGAH	43,194	37,595	79.4	1,003	1. Abdul Hamid b Mahmud (ALL.) 2. Tungku Annuar Zainal b. Tg Zainal Abidin (NEG) 3. Dato' Nik Mohamed b Ab. Rahman (IND) 4. Idris b Hj Mohamed (IND)	28,422 2,970 1,154 721	22,127

TABLE 2: RESULTS OF 1955 ELECTIONS IN KELANTAN - STATE

Constituencies	Nomination Day: 15 June 1955				Polling Day: 27 July 1955		
	Total No. of Votes	No. Voted	Voting %	Spoilt Votes		Votes Obtained	Majority
1. ULU KELANTAN	10,210	7,181	70.33	75	1. Mohamad Ali b. Abdullah (ALL.) 2. Hj Mohd Yusof Bangs (IND) 3. Othman b Minal (PAS)	5,908 973 225	4,935
2. MACHANG	16,500	11,148	67.56	108	1. Hj Tuan Yaacob b Engku Yunus (ALL.) 2. Hj Mohd Noor b Hj Yusof (PAS) 3. Hj Ab. Majid b Hj Noh (NEG)	8,838 2,202 1,406	6,636
3. TANAH MERAH					1. Abdul Ghani b Mohamed (ALL.)	Unopposed	
4. BACHOK	13,046	8,231	63.09	158	1. Ismail b Ibrahim (ALL.) 2. Hj Osman b Hj Ismail (IND)	6,745 1,328	5,417
5. BACHOK SELATAN	10,190	6,735	66.09	106	1. Azhari b Abd. Rahman (ALL.) 2. Nik Mustapha Fathil b Hj Nik Mahmood (IND)	5,965 664	5,301
6. PASIR PUTEH UTARA					1. Mohamad b Idris (ALL.)	Unopposed	
7. PASIR PUTEH SELATAN					1. Hj Ab. Rahman b Hj Yusof (ALL.)	Unopposed	

Constituencies	Total No. of Votes	No. Voted	Voting %	Spoilt Votes		Votes Obtained	Majority
8. PASIR MAS UTARA	11,975	7,254	60.57	48	1. Hj Awang b Hj Ab. Saad (IND) 2. Omar b Hj. Ali (ALL)	1,595 5,611	4,016
9. PASIR MAS SELATAN					1. Yaacob b Awang	Unopposed	
10. PASIR MAS TENGAH	11,982	7,708	64.32	102	1. Abdullah b Ahmad (PAS) 2. Ab. Rahim b Hj Daud (ALL)	2,738 4,868	2,130
11. TUMPAT UTARA					1. Basir b Rashid	Unopposed	
12. TUMPAT SELATAN					1. Othman b Mohammad Udin	Unopposed	
13. BANDAR KOTA BHARU	9,061	4,485	50.59	41	1. Dr. Ab. Aziz b Omar (ALL) 2. Lee Kang Chuan (IND)	4,388 155	4,233
14. KOTA BHARU UTARA					1. Hassan b Hj Yaacob (ALL)	Unopposed	
15. KOTA BHARU TENGAH					1. Nik Mohd. Amin b Ali (ALL)	Unopposed	
16. KOTA BHARU SELATAN	16,737	10,076	60.60	30	1. Wong Yeow Wye (ALL) 2. Ab. Hamid b Hj Yaacob (IND)	8,028 1,918	6,110

## CHAPTER II - NOTES

1. See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, *Maahad Il-Ihya Assyariff*, p. 209.
2. Ibid., p.74.
3. See Safie bin Ibrahim, *The Islamic Party of Malavryia*, p.19.
4. Ibid.
5. See *ibid.*, p.20.
6. See *Utusan Melayu*, 28 August 1951.
7. Ibid.
8. See Safie bin Ibrahim, *op.cit.*, pp.11-13.
9. Ibid., p.13.
10. Ibid., p.14.
11. See J. Funston, *Malay Politics*, p.93.
12. See *ibid.*, pp.147-150. It should be stated here that when PAS was formed, its constitution also provided for the inclusion of "Melayu" citizenship which was the term proposed for all citizens of the country irrespective of whether they were Malays or non-Malays.
13. See Safie bin Ibrahim, *op.cit.*, p.151.
14. Ibid.
15. See *Qalam*, July 1951, p.16. See *ibid.*
16. See *Utusan Melayu*, 20 August 1951.
17. See *The Straits Times*, 22 August 1951.
18. See *Majlis*, 23 August 1951.



19. See *Utusan Melayu*, 23 August 1951.
20. See *ibid.*, 24 August 1951 and also *Majlis*, 24 August 1951.
21. Malay acronym for *Persatuan Melayu Semenanjung* or Peninsular Malay Union (PMU), led by a court interpreter of Melaka, Hashim Ghani.
22. See *Utusan Melayu*, 26 September 1951.
23. It is not known if this Idrus was the same person as the 'Idrus' who had earlier written in the *Qalam* calling for Haji Ahmad Fuad's resignation from UMNO to form an Islamic political organization. Considering that both writers were primarily concerned with Haji Ahmad Fuad, it is highly probable that it was the same person involved.
24. See Safie Ibrahim, *op.cit.*, p.22.
25. See J. Funston, *op.cit.*, p.93.
26. See Safie bin Ibrahim, *op.cit.*, p.19.
27. *Ibid.*, p.24.
28. *Ibid.*, p.26.
29. Safie bin Ibrahim erroneously translated *Persatuan* as 'union' and thus the English equivalent of "*Persatuan Islam SeMalaysia*" as 'Pan-Malayan Islamic Union. See *ibid.* To avoid unnecessary confusion the party will be referred to subsequently as PAS.
30. See *ibid.*
31. See *Sunday Times*, 26 August 1951. See also *Warta Negara*, 26 November 1951 and *Utusan Zaman*, 25 November 1951, quoted by Safie bin Ibrahim, *op.cit.*, p.27.
32. See *Utusan Melayu*, 31 December 1951.
33. See *Utusan Zaman*, 13 January 1952.

34. See *Utusan Melayu*, 2 February 1952.
35. See *ibid.*, 28 April 1952 and 9 July 1952.
36. The names of those who were elected to the PAS Executive Committee were as follows: Haji Ahmad Fuad bin Hassan, President; Mohamad Ghazali bin Abdullah, Deputy President; Haji Husin Che Dol, Faqir Mohamad Nur, and Abdul Rahman Jamallliddin al-Jampuli as Vice-Presidents for Northern, Central and Southern Zones respectively and Haji Ahmad Maliki, Secretary. Eight Executive Committee Members were also elected, namely, Ustaz Yahya al-Junid, Haji Othman Talib, Haji Mohamad Nur, Haji Zahidi, Haji Abdul Wahab, Haji Ishak, a *Kadhi* from Perak, Mohamad Mahzub and Haji Ahmad Badur. Haji Ahmad Mokhtar and Ismail Haji Said were elected as Auditors. See Safie bin Ibrahim, *op.cit.*, p.28.
37. See *Utusan Melayu*, 29 November 1951.
38. See *Utusan Zaman*, 2 December 1951.
39. *Ibid.*, p.25.
40. See R.K. Vasil, *Politics in a Plural Society: A Study of Non-Communal Political Parties in West Malaysia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).
41. See Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, *From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation*, p.99.
42. See G.P. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, p.119.
43. *Ibid.* See also R. Clutterbuck, *Conflict and Violence in Singapore and Malaysia, 1945-1983* (Singapore: Graham Brash [Pte] Ltd., 1985), pp.72-73.
44. See G.P. Means, *op.cit.*, p.119.
45. *Ibid.*, p.126.
46. See *Utusan Melayu*, 5 January 1953.

47. See G.P. Means, op.cit., p.135. Prior to the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council Elections the MCA was happy to regard itself as a social, cultural and welfare organization.
48. The UMNO-MCA alliance won nine of the 12 seats contested, the remaining three being captured by IMP (two seats) and an independent (one seat). Ibid., p.134.
49. Ibid., p.135.
50. See Safie bin Ibrahim, op.cit., p.34 and pp.42-43.
51. See G.P. Means, op.cit., pp.135-136.
52. Ibid., p.140.
53. Ibid., pp.140-141.
54. See *Utusan Melayu*, 20 February 1953.
55. See G.P. Means, op.cit., pp.142-143.
56. See *Utusan Melayu*, 18 April 1953.
57. See op.cit., 20 April 1953.
58. See *Warta Negara*, 3 August 1953.
59. See *Utusan Melayu*, 25 August 1953.
60. Safie bin Ibrahim, op.cit., pp.48-49.
61. Ibid., p.49.
62. See ibid., p.52.
63. At that time Dato' Onn was the Member for Home Affairs.
64. It must also be stated that Haji Ahmad Fuad was an Unofficial Member of the Federal Legislative Council.

65. See Safie bin Ibrahim, op.cit., p.56.
66. See *Utusan Melayu*, 27 September 1953.
67. See Gordon P. Means, op.cit., p.143
68. See Safie bin Ibrahim, op.cit., p.56.
69. Ibid., p.54.
70. See Gordon P. Means, op.cit., p.145.
71. See Safie bin Ibrahim, op.cit., p.54.
72. See ibid.
73. *Parti Negara* had denounced non-Malays as 'aliens' who would pose a serious threat to the Malays in Malaya to the extent that the Malays would be eliminated from power in their own country. See John Funston, op.cit., p.42.
74. See *Warta Negara*, 4 May 1954.
75. See J. Funston, op.cit., p.45.
76. See Safie bin Ibrahim, op.cit., p.58.
77. See ibid., p.59.
78. See Gordon P. Means, op.cit., p.155. See also *Utusan Melayu*, 14 August 1954.
79. See M. Joycelyn Armstrong, "Elements of Ethnic Ranking in Urban Malay Society," p.34; Muhammad Abu Bakar, "Pondok, Pilihanraya dan Pemerintahan di Kelantan" in *Kelantan Dalam Perspektif Sosio-Budaya Satu Kumpulan Esei*, ed. Nik Safiah Karim & Wan Abdul Kadir Yusuf (Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Pengajian Melayu, Universiti Malaya, 1985), pp.316-334 and Nik Abdul Aziz bin Nik Hassan, "Pendekatan Pengajian Islam di Negeri Kelantan Diantara Tahun 1860 Sehingga Tahun 1940", *Malaysia Dar Segi Sejarah*, 11 (1982), pp.50-62.

80. See Clive S. Kessler, "Muslim Identity and Political Behaviour in Kelantan", in *Kelantan: Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State*, ed. W.R. Roff, p.280
81. See Ibid.
82. See *ibid.*, pp.280-281.
83. See J. Funston, *op.cit.*, p.35.
84. See *ibid.*
85. Ibid.
86. See Bertrand Russell, *Political Ideas* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, reprint 1985), p.68.
87. Ibid.
88. See Asaad Shukri Haji Muda, *Detik-Detik Sejarah Kelantan* (Kota Bharu: Pustaka Aman Press, 1967), p.153.
89. See *Al-Hikmah*, 27 April 1939, p.10.
90. Interview with Yusoff Zaki Yaacob (now Dato') in 1971 in the course of my research on Kelantan Malay intelligentsia. Dato' Yusoff Zaki was considered the brain behind a group of young University of Malaya graduates who rallied behind UMNO when Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah took over the party's leadership in the late 1960s. He was in fact responsible for grooming a group of Malay school teachers and political aspirants in UMNO between 1966 and early 1980s. A staunch royalist, Dato' Yusoff was instrumental in putting an end to the Ma'ahad Muhammadi Religious School strike in 1971 which this author had occasion to participate in as a mediator. The mediators, consisting of 4-5 persons came into being as a result of the Kelantan Sultan's request, to assist *The Majlis Agama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan's* board of the school management to end the strike. Another member of the 'mediation committee' was Haji Wan Fauzi bin Haji Wan Mahmood, presently a Senior Officer in the Ministry of Education and an active con-

tributor to the History Association of Malaya. See Penulis Khas (Alias Mohamed), "Mogok Pelajar-pelajar Maahad bukan kerana yuran?", *Berita Harian*, 3 May 1971; Penulis Khas (Alias Mohamed), "Sistem baharu pelajaran untuk Sekolah Maahad Muhammadi", *Berita Harian*, 8 May 1971, and Penulis Khas (Alias Mohamed), "Mogok Maahad: Majlis harus kemaskan skru-skrunya yang longgar", *Berita Harian*, 10 May 1971.

In the late 1960s, Dato' Yusoff Zaki Yaacob set up the *Mingguan Kota Bharu*, a Jawi weekly tabloid, in support of his family-owned printing press, the Dian Press, which also produced the nation-wide popular monthly magazine *Majallah Dian*. More importantly, however, the tabloid made no secret about its antipathy towards PAS, and it was this newspaper which was largely responsible for undermining PAS influence in Kelantan as it entertained writings critical of the party as well as views of young UMNO members and sympathisers who were dissatisfied with certain UMNO policies insensitive to the Malay predicament. It was Yusoff Zaki who actually became the prime mover and provided the necessary impetus behind the formation of *Maktab Kadir Adabi*.

The original headquarters of the school in Jalan Sultannah Zainab was in fact a large house belonging to Yusoff Zaki's brother. When this school was officially opened in 1970 it attracted students from all over the country because of the wide publicity it received in the Press following the visits of VIPs, including Tun Abdul Razak and Cabinet Ministers, to this school. See Penulis Khas (Alias Mohamed), "Dua orang tamu agong lawat Maktab Kadir Adabi", *Berita Harian*, 8 April 1971 and Alias Mohamed, "Pelajarnya meningkat 3,000 orang", *Berita Harian*, 1 February 1972.

91. See Abdul Hamid Othman, "Inteligensia Melayu Dalam Beberapa Kegiatan Sosial di Kota Bharu Tahun-Tahun 1920an-1945" (B.A. Graduation Exercise, Department of History, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1972), p.67.
92. See Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, *From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation*, p.86. See also Clive S. Kessler, "Muslim Identity", p.282.

93. Khaidir Khatib was a former political secretary to Dato' Asri, during the latter's tenure as Kelantan's *Mentri Besar*. Khaidir had been Asri's close confidant since Gunong Semanggol days when he served as the information chief of *Hizbul Muslimin*. They joined PAS together on their return to Kelantan in 1953 after PKMM and *Hizbul Muslimin* had ceased to exist. In the 1930s, Khaidir was active in *Persatuan Muslimin Indonesia* (PERMI) which was very influential among Malays in West Sumatra. It had branches in Kuala Lumpur and Kelantan.
94. Interview with Dato' Yusoff Zaki Yaacob in 1971.
95. See Clive S. Kessler, *Islam and Politics in a Malay State*, p.106.
96. See Amaluddin Darus, *Kenapa Saya Tinggalkan PAS*, Kuala Lumpur, 1977, pp.17-19, and Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Hamid, "Perkembangan Politik Kelantan 1959-61" (B.A. Hons. Graduation Exercise, Department of Malay Studies, University of Malaya, 1979/80), pp.63-68.
97. Dato' Nik Ahmed Kamil was the son of Dato' Perdana Mentri Haji Nik Mahmood who successfully installed his son as the *Mentri Besar* of Kelantan after him. A dynastic crisis evolved in Kelantan in the late 19th century over, first, the succession to the royal throne. Subsequently, as the Siamese and, later, the British interventions took roots, thus defusing the power of the Sultan (or Raja as it was originally known in Kelantan), the post of *Maha Mentri*, later known as *Perdana Mentri* and subsequently *Mentri Besar*, became a bone of contention among the aristocrats. This continued after the British regained Malaya in 1945.
98. See *Straits Times*, 21 September 1955. For full results of the Kelantan elections, see Tables 1 and 2.

## Chapter III

### *The Dr. Burhanuddin Era 1956 – 1969*

#### **Dr. Burhanuddin in PAS**

Although PAS was not about to crumble after its dismal showing in the 1955 elections, its destiny was undeniably vague. On the other hand, UMNO, under Tunku Abdul Rahman, was in a state of euphoria owing to the landslide victory achieved by the Alliance. IMP had been dissolved even before the 1955 elections but a new party – *Parti Negara* – had been founded as its successor and Dato' Onn was again the leader. His struggle had taken a new turn. In 1951 he was the most vocal advocate of non-communalism. Beginning from 1954, he became once more the champion of Malay hegemony. Compared to both these parties, *Parti Islam* or PAS had no leader to boast of who could be regarded as a celebrity. At this juncture, Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi joined the party and PAS was gradually transformed. It was not merely a party committed to the cause of Islam and dedicated to the upliftment of Malay society; Dr. Burhanuddin introduced to the party an ideology albeit, initially, a vague one.

The perception of Dr. Burhanuddin even today is not much clearer than it was during the days when he was one of



the leading personalities in Malaysian politics. He had become some kind of a public figure when, in 1937, in reply to questions put by the Raja of Kelantan (Tengku Ibrahim ibni Sultan Muhammad IV), Haji Wan Musa bin Haji Abdul Samad, a well-known *ulama*, replied that dogs were ritually clean and could be kept as pets by Muslims and that contact with their saliva did not require subsequent ceremonial purification.<sup>1</sup> This opinion was contradicted by many *ulama*. A full-scale Council of Debate was arranged with the *Mufti* and Chief *Kadhi* on one side and Haji Wan Musa as well as the *Kadhi* of Singapore, Haji Abbas bin Muhammad Tahir, on the other. The young Dr. Burhanuddin also appeared as assistant to Haji Wan Musa and Haji Abbas, thereby indicating that he was a *Kaum Muda* as Haji Wan Musa was.

But Dr. Burhanuddin did not emerge into the limelight again until the end of the Japanese Occupation though he was involved in the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (KMM) founded by Ibrahim bin Haji Yaacob. During the Japanese regime he was appointed Adviser on Malay customs and culture attached to the Japanese Military Headquarters in Taiping. He was at the airport in Taiping when Ibrahim Yaacob met Sukarno in 1945 and, when Ibrahim left for Indonesia after Japan had surrendered, following the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Dr. Burhanuddin was practically the most widely accepted leader of the radical Malays. Indeed, he became Vice-President of the *Partai Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya* (PKMM or MNP) when it was formed by Mokhtaruddin Lasso, a communist from Sumatra, on 17 October 1945. Mokhtaruddin Lasso almost immediately left for home after the formation of the party and never returned to Malaya.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Burhanuddin, who held the party's presidency for about a year, led the party until early December 1947, when he was assigned the role of party adviser with Ishak Haji Muhammad as President. But he continued to be active and was very much the influence between the various Islamic organizations such as MATA, LEPIR as well as *Hizbul Muslimin* which were founded at Gunong Semanggol.<sup>3</sup>

In December 1950, Malay radicalism seized upon the Maria Hertogh controversy<sup>4</sup> as an opportune platform to

demonstrate its furore against the British in Singapore. The Peninsular Malays Union (PMU), which was formed only three months previously and led by Hashim Ghani, a court interpreter from Malacca, in particular, capitalized on the issue. Through *Melayu Raya*, a Malay daily owned by ex-MNP leaders, PMU "planted the thought in the minds of the Muslim public that UMNO was not fighting for the Muslim cause. From time to time, they published news here and there expressing dissatisfactions from the Muslim sector regarding UMNO's silence - interpreted as its indifference."<sup>5</sup> PMU was indeed a party which was opposed to Dato' Onn and UMNO because of the move to bring non-Malays within the fold of UMNO.

It is believed that, although Dr. Burhanuddin did not become a member of PMU, he was a major influence which brought about the birth of PMU. When the Maria Hertogh debate erupted in Singapore, Dr. Burhanuddin was again involved and this, in fact, lent credence to his alleged role in providing the ideas and impetus behind PMU's crusade against UMNO. Both Khatijah Sidek, leader of PMU's, and subsequently of PAS' Women's Section, and Osman Rashid, PMU's Youth leader, attributed their positions and involvement in PMU to Dr. Burhanuddin's influence and encouragement.<sup>6</sup> On the Maria Hertogh (or 'Natrah' as Muslims fondly called her) case itself, Dr. Burhanuddin himself of course never denied his overt role in mobilising Malay support in Singapore where PMU was distinctly identified as one of its prime agitators and for which he was detained by the Singapore authorities for a year in December 1950.<sup>7</sup> According to Haja Maideen:<sup>8</sup>

Dr. Burhanuddin, however, had his own reason for not involving himself as the leader of the issue. He believed the British Colonial regime in Singapore would not tolerate him generating any agitation, as the Special Branch always had him under surveillance. They would clam down any activity which the British regime perceived as undermining their authority. He further explained that if Karim Ghani led the protest, there would be less suspi-

cion as he was not leader of any political party but only the leader of a religious association. He continued, "I am always classified as a leftist. If I lead the issue, the British, as well as my political opponents will view me as a national threat and I fear that it could lead to a split among the Muslims. But I will be second in command under you.

Dr. Burhanuddin was alleged to have told Karim Ghani that "If you lead, any repressive measures imposed would be less stringent than those imposed on me."<sup>9</sup> Karim Ghani was an Indian Muslim; he was President of the Singapore Muslim League and was detained by the British for his role in the riots.

The *Melayu Raya* itself began publication on 29 August 1950. Its editorial board consisted of Dr. Burhanuddin, Taha Kalu, Darus Sheriff, Harun Aminurashid and Abdullah Sangora. The newspaper, which was aimed at competing with *Utusan Melayu*, "portrayed the growing frustration and impatience against conservative nationalists" and "dealt with the problems of the Malays in economics and education respectively."<sup>10</sup> *Melayu Raya* also published prominently news from or about Indonesia,<sup>11</sup> indicating that up to this time Dr. Burhanuddin, whose party, MNP, had just been dissolved, was still preoccupied with the Indonesian struggle as a means to achieve independence for Malaya.

In contrast, he was nowhere mentioned when the UMNO religious elite consisting of "establishment *ulama*" were busy preparing to break away from the party in 1950. It is to be noted that by then a schism had developed within the *ulama* rank arising from both political and religious differences. As a nationalist with the thought of Islam firmly planted in his mind as reflected in *Melayu Raya*,<sup>12</sup> the Malay daily which he led, Dr. Burhanuddin could not have refrained from participating in issues that were at the centre of the *ulama*'s discussion if he had been a member of the contending *ulama* forces himself. This seems to explain the reason for his "disappearance" from public debate concerning the formation of an Islamic political party, especially after one such party, *Hizbul Muslimin*, had been crippled by the authorities for harbouring leftist tendencies in 1948.<sup>13</sup>

His imprisonment in December 1950 by the Singapore authorities seemed to have given him all the more reason to shy away from politics after his release. It is indeed strange he could afford a lingering existence for about four years after the Nadra riots, in spite of the fact that politics became increasingly polarised and compounded by the citizenship issue. Dr. Burhanuddin was released one year after his arrest. For the next three years he returned to private practice of homeopathy.<sup>14</sup> In fact, Dr. Burhanuddin's involvement in PAS came to light only in 1956 after his efforts, in the All-Malaya Malay Youth Congress (AMMYC) and Malay National Front to steal support away from UMNO the previous year came proved futile. It may be recalled that in 1955, PMU sponsored the AMMYC which had been preceded by an All-Malaya National Congress (AMNC), also sponsored by PMU, in 1954. The more radical Malays, however, decided to form *Parti Rakyat* in November, 1955.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, from 1951 to 1954 – the period considered crucial in PAS' political course insofar as the events leading to its entry in the 1955 general elections were concerned – Dr. Burhanuddin had no direct influence on the party or any party whatsoever.

Perhaps it was no coincidence that Dr. Burhanuddin joined PAS at a time when the party had begun to draw followers from MNP and *Hizbul Muslimin* who, in spite of the lack of a suitable leader, came to regard the party as their new political sanctuary. He joined PAS on 14 December 1956, and was elected party President at the PAS Annual Conference held at Kuala Lumpur on 23-25 December, 1956.<sup>16</sup> PAS soon grew in influence. In time, as the after effect of its participation in the Malayan election the previous year, and also as a result of its collaboration with *Parti Negara* in the elections,<sup>17</sup> PAS was able to register itself in the minds of the Malay electorate as an Islamic party which fought for Malay rights and Malay exclusivism.

But even after Dr. Burhanuddin took over the leadership from Dr. Haji Abbas Alias, political disquiet in the party was seen to characterize its growth and development. By about 1957, however, the party, no doubt owing to Dr. Burhanuddin's

leadership, was heavily infiltrated by ex-members of radical Malay political parties; among those who had become active members of PAS were Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri and his nephew, Dato' Haji Ishak Lotfi, Baharuddin Latif, Othman Hamzah and Ahmad Azam. Two other radical Muslims, Muhamad Taha Kalu and Abdullah Zawawi, who were standard bearers of MNP and close associates of Dr. Burhanuddin, had also joined PAS.<sup>18</sup>

Nonetheless, leadership of PAS was not surrendered to Dr. Burhanuddin without contest. All along he was regarded as less of an Islamist than a Malay nationalist. There is insufficient data available with regard to the circumstances which led him to join PAS in 1956. The party Presidency that year was contested between Dr. Burhanuddin and Zulkifli Mohamad, with the latter entering the contest at the last minute.<sup>19</sup> Although Zulkifli was defeated by 84 votes to 12, he was to challenge Dr. Burhanuddin for the Presidency again in 1959. The usual explanation given for this confrontation has been simply that Zulkifli was more religiously oriented than Dr. Burhanuddin.<sup>20</sup> John Funston argues that "it seems more accurate to describe their differences as those between an adherent to Islamic reformism on the one side, and on the other to a more quietistic Sufism."<sup>21</sup>

Dr. Burhanuddin's image as a nationalist was never contradicted. In his Presidential Address at the PAS General Assembly in 1956, he stated that "As a nationalist, I do not consider it incompatible with my principles to carry on my struggle in any party, as long as the party is genuinely and positively opposed to colonialism, and is truly struggling for a genuine independence."<sup>22</sup>

But, according to Funston,<sup>23</sup> although Dr. Burhanuddin "was personally deeply religious, Islam was perhaps less important than Malay nationalism and anti-colonialism in prompting his involvement in politics". Irrefutably, he had been some sort of a proponent of class struggle during the heyday of anti-British movement in Malaya. Although not exactly the kind of class struggle that is propounded in historical materialism or the socialist interpretation of society,<sup>24</sup> Dr. Burhanuddin's political conviction seemed, at least, to have been moulded early by

Malay poverty and their economic and educational deprivation under colonial rule. Perhaps as a result of the grounding of his politics during stints in India and the Middle East,<sup>25</sup> his hatred for the British was deep-rooted. On his return some years later to the country, Dr. Burhanuddin became the editor of a magazine, *Taman Bahagia*, which was swiftly banned by the British as soon as it made its appearance because of its anti-British stance.<sup>26</sup> In 1950, as mentioned earlier, at the peak of the Nadra controversy, he became editor of the Malay daily, *Melayu Raya*,<sup>27</sup> which cooperated with other newspapers such as *Malaya Nanban*, *Dawn*, and *Sinaran*,<sup>28</sup> in protest against the British colonial government's attitude towards the Nadra issue. Karim Ghani, his close associate, was editor of *Malaya Nanban*, as well as owner of an English weekly, *Dawn*, and its Malay version, *Sinaran*. Karim Ghani was one of the chief organizers, besides Dr. Burhanuddin, of the Nadra Action Committee. Through these newspapers both Karim Ghani and Dr. Burhanuddin became known as pioneers of the Islamic reform movement in Singapore as well as the Federation of Malaya.

Indonesia's independence movement before and during the war must be of immense significance to Dr. Burhanuddin's political struggle.<sup>29</sup> But his knowledge and experience of the Malay nationalist struggle during and after the war developed distrust among PAS leaders. After having been involved in the KMM, KRIS, PKMM, MATA, *Hizbul Muslimin*, PUTERA-AMCJA, MNF and the Socialist Party over a period of 15 years, Dr. Burhanuddin must seem to be some sort of a "high priest" of both Malay nationalism and socialism to many Muslims of his time. They feared that he would be insincere to the Islamic objectives of the party.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, as soon as he was declared the winner in the contest with Zulkifli Mohamad for the PAS Presidency in 1956, three PAS leaders – Haji Ahmad Haji Hussain (PAS representative in the Federal Legislation Council), Haji Ahmad Haji Ali (a representative of the party's Hilir Perak branch), and Othman Abdullah (former PAS Youth leader) – voiced stern warning against deviation from PAS' Islamic precepts.<sup>31</sup> Although during the first three years of his leadership, PAS grew from strength to strength, the

group that was influenced by Islamic fundamentalism never ceased to attempt a take-over of the party's leadership. This group tried again in 1959, but failed. Dr. Burhanuddin's triumph over Zulkifli Mohamad in the 1956 and 1959 PAS Presidential contests was attributed less to his Islamic image than to his leadership skills and the roles he had played in the nationalist movement, though Islam, let there be no doubt, was no less an influential factor behind his election to the Presidency. Under his astute leadership PAS began to make such an impact that when elections were once more held in 1959, its performance sent shock waves through the entire nation.

### **The 1959 Elections and the Trengganu Debacle**

When discussing the 1959 Malayan elections, Professor Ratnam remarked, "As compared to the electorate in 1955, the most outstanding feature of the 1959 electorate was its vastly increased proportion of non-Malay voters; while in 1955 the preponderance of Malays had been quite overwhelming, communal distribution of voters was now much more in proportion to the general distribution of population."<sup>32</sup>

But, in fact, no less noteworthy was PAS' performance compared to its single-seat victory in 1955. PAS contested 58 out of the total Parliamentary seats of 104. It won 13 seats (nine in Kelantan and four in Trengganu). Although proportionately this was very modest compared to the figures for the Alliance (74 out of 104), it should be mentioned that the Alliance contested all the 104 seats including those where the non-Malay voters had an important bearing on the results.<sup>33</sup>

PAS' success at the state level was even more impressive. It captured both the states of Kelantan and Trengganu. The Alliance had already won nine of the state elections when the Trengganu state election was held on 19 September, 1959. On polling day (20 June 1959), Ibrahim Fikri bin Mohamed, leader of the state Alliance, was brimming with confidence. It was Dato' Onn's *Parti Negara* that was expected to give the Alliance stiff opposition especially in the constituencies of Ladang, Batu Burok and Trengganu Central. Altogether 91

candidates contested the 24 seats. The Alliance and PAS contested all the seats but PAS was expected to give the Alliance a good fight only in one constituency – Kuala Nerus where Ibrahim Fikri had to take on a well-respected religious leader, Haji Abbas bin Haji Mohamed.<sup>34</sup>

When the results of the Trengganu state election were known, Tunku Abdul Rahman, leader of the national Alliance, sportingly admitted that they had themselves to blame. The party did not, he said, "go down to the kampongs to explain things properly to the people as was done by other parties. It depended too much on political speeches by UMNO leaders, from outside the state.<sup>35</sup> Altogether, PAS won 13 seats, the Alliance 7 and *Parti Negara* 4. Hence, PAS became the first non-Alliance party to form a state government in the Federation of Malaya. The President of PAS in Trengganu, Ahmad Azam, 36 years old and previously a religious teacher in Perak, was expected to be elected the *Mentri Besar*. But, as it will be seen subsequently, he was not chosen.

Needless to say, PAS' victory in Trengganu was a shock to most people in the country. Impartial observers attributed the Alliance defeat to several factors, the main ones being: (a) the religious fanaticism of the people in the "ulus" who were mostly illiterate - the Alliance lost nearly all the seats in the riverine and remote constituencies in the Dungun, Ulu Trengganu and Besut areas; (b) the Alliance's poor election machinery; (c) PAS' ability to make full use of local religious leaders to woo voters in their respective kampungs; (d) PAS' strategy of carrying out house-to-house campaign for about seven months before the elections instead of relying on rallies, and (e) the Alliance's failure to publicize economic achievements made in Trengganu.<sup>36</sup>

PAS' ascendancy in Trengganu made the Kelantan state election even more interesting. It was held on 24 June 1959. But, Tunku Abdul Rahman, on the eve of the Kelantan election, was confident that the Trengganu state election results would not have a psychological effect on the voters in Kelantan. "The mentality of the people in Kelantan and Pahang," he said, "are different. They are still for the Alliance."<sup>37</sup>



But political observers did not quite share Tunku Abdul Rahman's views. PAS had been industriously building up their strength after their success in Trengganu. The Alliance was nonetheless confident of winning 25 of the 30 seats to be contested. As in the case of Trengganu, *Parti Negara* and the Socialist Front were the other two major parties contesting. PAS was said to have a strong influence among the rural people especially in Pasir Mas which had six constituencies – Tok Uban, Tendong, Rantau Panjang, Meranti, Lemal and Bandar Pasir Mas. It was said to be not particularly strong in the Kota Bharu area.<sup>38</sup>

As it turned out, PAS success in Kelantan was overwhelming. Even before all the results had been known, PAS' superiority was astounding. When it had captured 17 seats, the Alliance had won only one – Wee Khoo Hock captured the constituency of Bandar Hilir. In Meranti, the Alliance candidate lost his deposit. PAS indeed also won with big majorities in Kota Bharu Pantai and Tumpat Barat.<sup>39</sup> (See Table 3).

PAS, in Kelantan, proved that it was not a party which depended solely on rural votes. In the Parliamentary elections, it captured the Kota Bharu Hilir seat comfortably with a majority of 3,161 votes. Its victory at Kota Bharu Hulu was even more impressive; Haji Hussein Rahimi beat his Alliance opponent by 11,026 votes. In every one of the state seats in the area of Kota Bharu, PAS candidates won with a majority of no less than 3,000 votes, except Kota Bharu North where Abdullah bin Ahmad beat the Alliance candidate, a lady, by 2,164 votes.<sup>40</sup> The Parliamentary elections were, in fact, held after the state elections. As such, the interest generated by the success achieved by PAS earlier was even more noticeable. During the campaigns, PAS was said to have indulged in personal attacks on their opponents in Trengganu. In general, the Alliance was criticized for having "given in" to the other races. In Kelantan, religion was made the main issue by PAS which made it very clear that it wanted the rule of Islam to apply. At the same time, it assured the non-Muslims that the party stood for freedom of worship.<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, PAS had a five-point platform. If returned, it would:<sup>42</sup>

**ADOPT** Islamic principles;  
**RESTORE** Malay sovereignty;  
**IMPROVE** the standard of living;  
**PRACTISE** true democracy; and  
**PROMOTE** social justice.

In its Manifesto, PAS promised that it would abolish all treaties which permitted the presence of foreign troops in the country. The party also planned to change the Constitution so that all those who became nationals of the country would be known as "Melayu". This had been Dr. Burhanuddin's stand since the time he was in the MNP. PAS wanted that all the jobs of *Mentri Besar*, Assistant Ministers, Governors and heads of the armed forces be given only to Malays. It proposed to establish friendly relations with all Muslim countries. It would ban Western dances like the rock'n roll as well as strip tease shows. In the field of economics, PAS proposed to regulate the import of foreign goods so that they would not weaken the industries of the country and it would combat the monopoly and the illegitimate stand of capital over human labour.<sup>43</sup> Its condemnation of capitalism and support of labour again bore the stamp of Dr. Burhanuddin.

In terms of its attitude towards non-Malays, there was, in fact, little to choose between PAS and Dato' Onn's *Parti Negara* which also advocated that more should be done to preserve and safeguard Malay rights and privileges. *Parti Negara* contended that the Malays had been badly let down by the existing Constitution. The party felt that the section of the Constitution which dealt with the special position of the Malays was "an eye-wash". It was emphatic that "special position" was not the same as "special rights".<sup>44</sup> It is important to note that both Dato' Onn and Dr. Burhanuddin won in Trengganu. Dato' Onn won at Kuala Trengganu South and Dr. Burhanuddin at Besut. (See Table 4).

Tunku Abdul Rahman was deeply disappointed at the consecutive defeat of the Alliance in the two east coast states. He complained bitterly of the "astounding ignorance" and "simplicity" of certain people he had come across in his

TABLE 3: RESULTS OF 1959 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS - KELANTAN

Constituencies	Total Electorate	Total No. Voted	% Voted	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
1. ULU KELANTAN	22,819	17,430	76.3	1. Tungku Indra Petra (ALL) 2. Hj Yatim b Hj Shamsuddin (NEG) 3. Amaluddin Darus (PAS)	8,770 292 8,306	404
2. TANAH MERAH	25,793	19,653	76.2	1. Othman b Abdullah (PAS) 2. Ustaz Azham (ALL)	12,752 6,774	5,978
3. PASIR PUTEH	26,326	19,031	72.3	1. Mohammad Asri (PAS) 2. Mat Idris (ALL)	12,284 6,630	5,654
4. BACHOK	25,382	17,872	70.4	1. Nik Min Ali (ALL) 2. Zulkifli b Muhammad (PAS)	3,761 11,880	10,119
5. PASIR MAS HILIR	21,891	15,626	71.4	1. Nik Man b Nik Muhammad (PAS) 2. Che Omar b Hj Ali (ALL)	12,422 3,130	9,292
6. PASIR MAS HULU	18,364	13,227	72.0	1. Dato' Raja Hanifah (PAS) 2. Yaacob b Awang (ALL)	9,518 3,559	5,959
7. TUMPAT	24,383	16,744	68.7	1. Mohamed Johan (ALL) 2. Hj Che Hassan (PAS)	6,380 10,249	3,869
8. KELANTAN HILIR	23,975	16,880	70.4	1. Hassan Hj Yaacob (ALL) 2. Wan Mustapha (PAS)	4,327 12,418	8,111
9. KOTA BHARU HILIR	24,178	15,862	65.6	1. Nik Ismail b Nik Hussin (ALL) 2. Haji Ahmad (PAS)	6,302 9,463	3,161
10. KOTA BHARU HULU	27,421	18,882	68.8	1. Hj Hussein Rahimi (PAS) 2. Che Ismail b Ibrahim (ALL)	14,775 3,749	11,026

TABLE 4: RESULTS OF 1955 ELECTIONS - TRENGGANU

Constituencies	Total Electorate	% Voted	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
1. KUALA TRENGGANU SELATAN	19,247	70.0	1. Dato Onn' b Jaafar (NEG) 2. Engku Mohsein b Abdul Kadir (ALL)	7,986 5,374	2,612
2. BESUT	21,399	67.0	1. Dr. Burhanuddin b Mohd. Noor (PAS) 2. Husin b Hj Abdullah (ALL)	9,988 4,216	5,772
3. TRENGGANU TENGAH	20,765	71.0	1. Harun b Pilus (PAS) 2. Engku Sayed Mohsin b Zabdin (IND) 3. Setia b Abu Bakar (IND)	8,625 199 757	3,671
4. KUALA TRENGGANU UTARA	19,994	73.0	1. Hassan Adli b Hj Arshad (PAS) 2. Wan Abdul Kadir Ismail (ALL) 3. Ibrahim b Abdul Kadir (IND)	7,262 6,535 540	727
5. DUNGUN	15,759	70.0	1. Khadijah Sidik (PAS) 2. Dan Salleh b Abdul Kadir (SF) 3. Mohamed Adib b Omar (ALL)	6,249 595 4,158	2,091
6. KEMAMAN	-	-	1. Wan Yahya b Hj Wan Mohamed (ALL)	Unopposed	

campaigning.<sup>45</sup> Dr. Burhanuddin, on the other hand, was brimming with confidence for the future. He said that PAS had decided to spread its activities to the west coast, forgetting that PAS, in effect, began on the west coast and won its first seat in Krian, Perak. But Dr. Burhanuddin probably had in mind those states - such as Kedah, Perlis, Negeri Sembilan and Malacca - where the Malay population was clearly substantial. He was optimistic that, within the next five years, PAS would be able to win the confidence of the people in those states.<sup>46</sup> He added that PAS was satisfied with the 13 seats it had won. "By 1963," he said, "we hope to get the west coast states into our fold." The first phase of the PAS west coast expansion programme involved the reorganizing and streamlining of the party's administration. The party headquarters would continue to be in Kuala Lumpur,<sup>47</sup> despite the fact that PAS' strength was concentrated on Kelantan and Trengganu.

However, despite its excellent performance in the 1959 elections, internal fissures had indeed developed within PAS even before that. The most intense struggle took place in the state of Trengganu as a result of factional politics which led to a clear split between local-born PAS leaders and those who came to settle down in the state and, in time, through their association with PAS, became entrenched in the state's political party. Apart from that, the roots of the factional struggle also had their origins in the advent of Islamic resurgence at the beginning of the twentieth century following the spread of divergent religious orientations in particular the cleavage between *Kaum Tua* and *Kaum Muda*. The emergence of these reformist groups in Trengganu, as in other parts of the Malay Peninsula, was compounded by the prevalence of a variety of Islamic teachings which preyed on the illiterate masses.

In the history of Islam, the conflict which arose as a result of sectarian religious interests and interpretations had been known to deal a heavy blow to Muslim unity. In the first half of the twentieth century in Malaya, it gave rise not only to disparate and uncontrolled, and therefore misleading interpretations of the *shari'a* (Islamic law), but also to the religious factions which were represented by the restorationists, and the

reconstructionists (those who sought to blend tradition with modernity).<sup>48</sup>

The existence of this at times serious religious conflict had been the main obstacle to *ulama* unity as has already been observed earlier. Indeed, it contributed to PAS' instability during the embryonic years of its life. However, the conflict notwithstanding, Muslims flocked to their religion in the event of a threat, real or imaginary, faced by their community as exemplified by the Trengganu rebellion of 1928 in which the force of Islam was involved in a confrontation with the British colonial government.<sup>49</sup>

Whatever the motive of the rebellion, it does appear that Islam undoubtedly played a significant role in the mobilisation of support behind Haji Abdul Rahman Limbong, the leader of the rebellion, against the British. The participation of several religious leaders in the revolt also indicated the significance of the religious factor in the ostensible peasant protest against land rules and taxation.<sup>50</sup> The important inference to be drawn from this observation is that as Trengganu moved from the period of colonial administration to the independence period,<sup>51</sup> it saw a new dimension in the state's political development in which religion and the issue of state parochialism took a firm hold of the populace. Up to that time, the *rakyat* of Trengganu, owing to their anti-British sentiment and the twin background of being deeply religious and economically backward, developed a hostile perception of the transition from traditionalism to modernity. By 1956, the embittered *rakyat*, now generally more inclined towards Islam-oriented PAS than the British-sponsored UMNO, had vigorously clamoured for more local-born Malay participation in the government of the state. Having won handsomely the first round of their demand for local-born Malay participation in the affairs of the state by rejecting Dato' Onn's (an outsider's) *Parti Negara* for UMNO (led by Ibrahim Fakri) in the 1955 Malayan elections,<sup>52</sup> they were set to switch allegiance to a party which they considered to be of particular relevance to the Islamic cause, whereas UMNO was now seen to be compromising with the enemies of Islam.

Under the leadership of Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi, the new PAS national President, the party as a whole had made impressive membership gains from the "Malay belt" of the states of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Trengganu. Ex-members of the defunct KMM, API, *Hizbul Muslimin* and PKMM or MNP, now inside PAS, began to emerge from their cells, more confident that there could not be a better political party than PAS with which to realise their dreams. Many of these ex-members of the defunct political parties had eluded colonial government action by migrating to other states which they considered safe, at least temporarily, from the arms of the law. By virtue of their being active in the previous political movement, there was little difficulty in getting themselves accepted for political leadership positions in the new political party. One such leader who found himself to be increasingly popular among the religious circles in Trengganu was Ustaz Ahmad Azam bin Napiah (sometimes referred to as Mohd. Azam bin Hanafiah), a native of Perak, who played an important role in the move to form PAS at the time of the UMNO-sponsored *Ulama* Conference in Kuala Lumpur on 23 August 1951.

But PAS had in fact taken part in the 1959 elections amidst clamour and simmering discontent among local-born Malays, arising from their inferior status compared to the government positions held by "outsiders", that is, Malays who came from other states. As before, the dominant influence at the middle and top levels of the party leadership was supplied by the non-Trengganu Malays and this gave the still small band of *tokoh-tokoh tempatan* (leading local personalities) the further stimulus to attempt to wrest control of state politics and administration from non-local Malays.<sup>53</sup>

PAS' astounding success in the Trengganu elections did little to heal internal dissension revolving around the state's party leadership. Preoccupied with the perennial question of the lack of local-born Malays in the administration and politics of the state, in its election campaign, PAS had capitalised extensively on the issue, pledging commitment to uplift their subdued positions in the state. But fate, as it turned out, had a far greater influence to determine events than the party could

have foreseen. The first elected *Mentri Besar*, Daud Samad, it was soon realized, had been a member of *Partai Rakyat*, though he was elected on a PAS ticket. Ustaz Ahmad Azam, the state's party leader who had all along been regarded as a serious contender for the position of the state's *Mentri Besar*, was a non-local and, therefore, his nomination was overruled by the Sultan.<sup>54</sup> This situation thus left Daud Samad in a precarious position of power in which he was not absolutely supported by his own Council.

The split between the faction loyal to him and those who supported Ahmad Azam worsened as others in the State Assembly privately entertained ambition of becoming *Mentri Besar* themselves. Meanwhile, Ahmad Azam's faction was weakened by the failure of the party to appoint one of his candidates as the new Speaker of the State Assembly.<sup>55</sup> The smouldering sentiment within the party leadership loomed large as Ahmad Azam's demand for sufficient authority to deal with his opponents was rejected by Dr. Burhanuddin.<sup>56</sup> Deprived of his party's national leadership support and pushed aside in the State Assembly, Ahmad Azam thereupon resigned his position as head of PAS in Trengganu. His resignation, which immediately resulted in the Party's loss of a clear majority in the State Assembly, prompted the *Mentri Besar*, Daud Samad, to seek a coalition with *Parti Negara*, which had four seats in the Assembly.

When *Parti Negara* refused cooperation, political manoeuvres to unseat the Speaker, Taib Sabree, were launched because of his alleged support for *Parti Negara* in the local elections in 1961.<sup>57</sup> In early October 1961, two PAS assemblymen were taken to Kuala Lumpur to meet the Sultan and Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Razak, as a result of which they announced defection to UMNO. Subsequently, the PAS state government requested for a new election but the Sultan refused. Four *Parti Negara* assemblymen had also crossed the floor to join the Alliance.<sup>58</sup> By late October 1961, PAS rule crumbled.<sup>59</sup>

PAS' loss of Trengganu to the Alliance as a result of the leadership squabbles came as a rude shock to the party. More



than the loss of legislative power and the chance to implement the Islamic principles of government, it suffered severe setbacks in the way of party credibility and leadership image. Worse, it happened at a time when the party had just begun to enjoy the height of its barely ten years of political existence. The "Trengganu debacle" could not have been more tragic to the top brass of the party, considering the fact that it had the best set of leaders at the time. Both Dr. Burhanuddin and Zulkifli Mohamad were widely acknowledged to be learned and capable who, if they had been more amenable to UMNO's tendency to blend secularism with religion and to prefer capitalism to socialism, would have been of value to UMNO. It cannot be denied that the Alliance take-over of Trengganu in 1961, after barely two years of PAS' rule in the state, was a bitter blow to the latter and it could not recover lost ground when the state election was again held in 1964. PAS' brief rule in Trengganu has been said to be characterized by administrative incompetence and leadership dissension<sup>60</sup> so much so that it is still readily cited as an example of the inability of PAS to run a government.

### **Burhanuddin and Zulkifli**

Although the collapse of the PAS government in Trengganu was basically an internal problem and did not reflect any major cleavage within the party as a whole, it is nonetheless possible to discern at least two factions in PAS. Means described the situation in the following manner:

The basic contest was between the traditional, conservative, orthodox *ulamas*, and the modernist-reformist element in Islam and inspired in part by the movement centered at Al-'Azhar University in Cairo. The latter attempted to re-interpret Islam in light of modern science, technology and historical research. The orthodox *ulamas* tried to follow a literal interpretation of the *Koran*. Consequently, they generally opposed policies which would allow Muslims to obtain any interest on invest-

ments, they opposed the use of proceeds from state-run lotteries for Muslim welfare, schools and mosques, and they opposed the consumption of alcoholic beverages, especially at government and official functions. The orthodox element was also much more likely to favor strict enforcement of the *khalwat* law including its provision against non-Muslims. On these issues the modernist-reformist elements were more lenient and sometimes tried to avoid the literal application of the *Koran* or the *hadith* through re-interpretation or through some subterfuge which upheld the strict letter of Muslim law, but avoided some of its harsher consequences. Among the latter were found the most active proponent of the pan-Islamic ideal, taking as their example the pan-Arab and pan-Muslim views of colonial Nasser and the United Arab Republic.<sup>61</sup>

Means' suggestion of a kind of *Kaum Tua-Kaum Muda* cleavage is, perhaps, not the best way to look at PAS in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Some elements of the long-standing feud must have been there. But Dr. Burhanuddin's admission into PAS was in fact quite symbolic. It should not be forgotten that his struggle in the past had been, as it appeared, primarily, to promote Malay nationalism although his *perjuangan* (cause) never became manifestly secular in character. This, in part, was because, in Malay society, traditionally, Islam was seen as an important ingredient in the making of a Malay nationalist: indeed, Malay was Islam and Islam was Malay. To become a Muslim was to *masuk Melayu*.

Means further remarked: "Where Dr. Burhanuddin stood on these issues is difficult to determine, but his previous association with the Malay Nationalist Party would suggest that he tended to entertain more secular reformist views."<sup>62</sup> But, between *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua* which of the two subscribed to 'more secular reformist view'? Bearing in mind his involvement in the theological debate in Kelantan in 1937, he would stand out quite clearly as a *Kaum Muda*. However, the obsession throughout his active days as a politician was 'Melayu

*Raya*' (Greater Malay Land). To bring about a merger between Malaya and Indonesia as well as other territories in the Malay Archipelago had been one of the major objectives of PKMM or MNP. When he joined PAS, he pursued the same cause. Under his leadership, PAS did not fail to take up the cause of the Patani Malays. It was critical of the Thai government's education and language policies which discriminated against Malays and of Thai officials who were unsympathetic and uncooperative in cases that should have been governed by Muslim jurisprudence and practice. PAS continually urged that Patani should become a part of Malaya.<sup>63</sup>

In the 1958 PAS conference, Dr. Burhanuddin once more spoke passionately on the subject of *Melayu Raya*. He likened it to the pan-Arab nationalism in the Middle East, reminding his listeners that the three million Malays in Malaya were only part of a larger group. All the Malays in the region should be united to form one country.<sup>64</sup> In early 1960, he again spoke on the subject at the Borneo People's Party (BPP) Congress whose theme indeed was a "single Borneo family". The BPP's President was none other than A.M. Azahari (leader of the Brunei Revolt in 1962) who, together with Dr. Burhanuddin, was one of the founders of *Parti Rakyat* in Malaya. At the Congress, Dr. Burhanuddin expressed his wish to see Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei independent and strong for "so long as there were subjected people, prosperity and peace in the world would be threatened."<sup>65</sup> He further envisaged a greater unity of all the territories within the Malay Archipelago.<sup>66</sup>

Throughout his term in Parliament, although he was elected on a PAS ticket, he was most vocal on issues which related to Malay nationalism (*Kebangsaan Melayu*), Malay hegemony (*Ketuanan Melayu*) and *Melayu Raya*. He had vowed even at the time MNP was dissolved that he would never join any party except that which served the cause of Malay nationalism.<sup>67</sup> He made a number of long and passionate speeches in Parliament on the subject. The first was when he supported Dato Onn's motion that the nationality of the Federation of Malaya should known as *Melayu*.<sup>68</sup>

On 18 October, 1961, the Government made its first official move to form Malaysia. A resolution was moved in Parliament to the effect that the House, agreeing in principle, with the concept of Malaysia which was to comprise the 11 states of the Federation, the states of Singapore and Brunei as well as the territories of Sarawak and North Borneo, endorsed the Government's initiative in taking action for its realization. Dr. Burhanuddin seconded the resolution but only on the understanding that the new political entity ought to be called "*Melayu Raya*". He therefore moved an amendment to the resolution which read that the House, in principle, agreed with the suggestion to form *Melayu Raya* which, apart from the territories that it was envisaged should comprise the proposed Malaysia, ought eventually to include Indonesia, the Philippines and the rest of the Malay Archipelago. It seemed never to have dawned on him that such a resolution would have alarmed Malaya's neighbours. Not surprisingly his amendment was rejected by the House. Dr. Burhanuddin, however, quite sincerely believed that such a move by the Malayan Government would lead to greater unity among the states in the region. A meeting of the leaders and statesmen of the region would help to iron out problems.<sup>69</sup>

On 15 August, 1963, the Malaysia Bill came back to Parliament for its second reading. This time Dr. Burhanuddin spoke out passionately against it. He accused the Alliance Government of betraying the national aspiration of the people of the Malay Archipelago. He reminded the Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, that as late as June 1963, the Prime Minister had publicly declared his support for President Macapagal's proposal which sought to unite the 140 million indigenous people of the region.<sup>70</sup> The proposal, of course, did lead to Maphilindo which fizzled out when Malaysia was formed in September 1963.

Dr. Burhanuddin could not agree with the special conditions accorded to Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah especially with regard to religion and language. It was manifest, he said, that the Malay language would never be fully implemented as the National Language by 1967 as planned. Furthermore, he

claimed that within the Constitution there were clauses inserted which would be disastrous to the Malays. Article 23 regarding citizenship, to him, would destroy the national aspirations of the Malays.<sup>71</sup>

For all his preoccupation with Malay hegemony and *Melayu Raya*, Dr. Burhanuddin, in fact, never failed to discourse on the place of Islam in his own concept of Malay nationalism. In fact, he anticipated the polemic which surfaced in more recent years when the younger intellectuals within PAS raised the question of *asabiyaah* which many tend to translate as 'nationalism' and this, they claim, is contrary to the teachings of Islam. Dr. Burhanuddin, in his book, *Falsafah Kebangsaan Melayu* (Bukit Mertajam, 1954), ventured the opinion that *asabiyaah* did not mean 'nationalism' but 'fanaticism' or, if it was seen within the context of nationalism, 'extremism' or 'chauvinism'.<sup>72</sup> In a sense then, Islam was always subsumed in the political ideals which he talked about even if he seemed to be unduly preoccupied with the existence of the Malays as a political entity.

He was certainly an Islamic scholar of some standing for he wrote a number of books on Islam such as:

1. *Agama dan Politik* (Singapore, 1954)
2. *Ideologi Politik Islam* (Taiping, 1963)
3. *Simposium Tasauf dan Tariqah* (Penang, 1966)
4. *Tafsir Al-Burhan* (unpublished)

Dr. Burhanuddin's political career, however, came to an abrupt end in late 1963. A Sessions Court in Kuala Lumpur found him, together with seven other Directors of the Malayan-German Shipping Company, guilty of company mismanagement and he was fined RM2,200.<sup>73</sup> As a result, he was unable to contest the elections in 1964. He passed away on 25 October, 1969.

As mentioned earlier, Dr. Burhanuddin was twice chal-

lenged by Zulkifli Muhamad for the party's top post (in 1956 and 1959). But, there is no evidence to show that there were irreconcilable differences between them although they did, generally, belong to different schools of thought. Zulkifli belonged to an English-educated family; his father was a government servant. In later years, when he was away in Egypt he wrote letters to his father in English.<sup>74</sup> Like Dr. Burhanuddin, he had taken part in anti-Malayan Union activities. But, even then, his stance was more to the right as he was an UMNO member when he was young and it was through the help of Haji Abdul Wahab bin Tok Muda Abdul Aziz (Panglima Bukit Gantang), the leader of UMNO in Perak in the late 1940s, that he managed to obtain his passport to go to Cairo to further his education, in August 1947.

Zulkifli Mohamad was born in 1927 at Kota Lama Kiri, Kuala Kangsar. He first studied at a Malay school at Parit, followed by five years of religious education at the Sekolah Aziziah, Parit (1940-1941) and the Madrasah Idrisiah, Bukit Chandan, Kuala Kangsar (1943-1945). He joined the Perak Malay Youth Movement in 1946 and in 1947 left to further his education first, at the Al-Azhar University, and subsequently the American University at Cairo.

His departure for Cairo was indeed an important turning point in his life. There he improved his knowledge of Arabic and he was exposed to Islamic knowledge which helped him to perceive things more expertly in religious terms. But he was a keen science student. In fact, it was at the University of al-Azhar where he first studied, that his interest in Mathematics, Physiology, Biology and Astronomy grew. In 1950, he gained admission to the Faculty of Education, American University, also at Cairo. The subjects he chose apart from General Psychology, Modern History, General Sociology, Economics, English, Philosophy of Education and General Philosophy, were – Science, Biology and Child Psychology.

That he was quite unlike many of the students of religious schools was demonstrated by his criticism of the educational system in Al-Azhar. In his letter to his father he remarked that "Azhar's way of teaching is dull and a dead one." A couple of

years later he again commented, in his letter to his father, that at Al-Azhar, "much depends on collecting and memorizing the facts, instead of my own that depends on logic, intelligence and investigation."<sup>75</sup> Despite taking his studies very seriously, Zulkifli never lost interest in politics. He participated in forums held to support Indonesia's struggle for independence. He criticised Israel's aggression towards Palestine. He was deeply influenced by the ideas of Hassan al-Banna and the activities of *Ikhwanul Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood). Between 1949 and 1950, he was President of the Federation of Peninsular Malay Students in Egypt, in addition to being a committee member of the Indonesia-Malaya Students' Union.<sup>76</sup> He worked closely with Muslim students from Thailand and the Philippines as well.

Zulkifli was born a healthy child but was struck down by polio at the age of two. Since then his health presented a major problem and slowed him down considerably. But it also turned him into a determined young man. In one of his more depressed moods, he wrote to his father, in 1952:

I ... wonder whether I can go through till the end of this academic year. Indeed, the work ahead will be tough and for the present time I cannot concentrate for more than two hours once. My task now is to balance between health and studies, in such a way that neither is badly affected.<sup>77</sup>

Despite his determination, he had, eventually, to return home without completing his course at the American University. He was very ill in 1953 after his return from Cairo. But it did not prevent him from publishing his first book *Masyarakat dan Syariat (Society and Muslim Law)* the same year.

In 1954, he had recovered sufficiently to be able to channel his energy towards helping to establish the Islamic College which was first opened in Johor Bharu and subsequently, in the following year, shifted to the Sultan of Selangor's old istana at Klang. In 1954, Zulkifli was appointed Secretary of the College. But Zulkifli might not have joined PAS if he had been allowed to contest the 1955 elections as an UMNO candidate.

His name had been submitted by the Kuala Kangsar UMNO Division to contest the Kuala Kangsar constituency but, despite the fact that his mother too had been a stalwart of *Kaum Ibu* in Kuala Kangsar, since the very beginning of the party, Zulkifli was not selected as an UMNO candidate. He then joined PAS and contested the Selangor Central seat but was badly beaten by the Alliance's candidate, Lee Eng Teh, who polled 5,652 votes to Zulkifli's 1,311 votes. However, he beat the *Parti Negara's* candidate (Hassan Chek Lenggeng) who obtained only 839 votes.

In 1959 he stood again, this time at Bachok, Kelantan, and he won the Parliamentary seat against the Alliance candidate (Nik Min Ali) with more than 10,000 votes to spare and this was despite the fact that Zulkifli was of Perak origin. It was the Islamic ideal that he upheld and the fact that he was a Malay which won him his seat in as much as the same reasons enabled Dr. Burhanuddin and Dato' Onn, both outsiders, to win at Trengganu.

But, for Zulkifli himself, the PAS struggle was not one which should be based on Malay nationalism but on Islam. Unlike many PAS members he acknowledged that the position of Islam itself could not be consolidated in the country without the support of non-Muslims. More than that, non-Muslims had rights in an Islamic country. Because of this belief, he did suggest that PAS itself ought to open its doors to non-Muslims as associate members. But his suggestion found no favour in PAS.<sup>78</sup>

Not only was he inclined to be more liberal on racial issues than Dr. Burhanuddin, he was, in some ways, more pragmatic. He thought a great deal about social and economic problems. He even discoursed the pros and cons of movies, for example he said, "We ought not to look at movies as necessarily a source of evil." People themselves decided whether movies produced good or bad effects because they determined the type of movies produced. Therefore, Malay movies should have their own identity.<sup>79</sup>

In Parliament, he often raised questions about the economic position of the Malays. On a number of occasions, he



touched on the role of the Rural and Industrial Development Authority (RIDA) giving suggestions as to how it could operate more effectively. He felt that it was imperative that a Malay Economic Secretariat should be formed to help improve the lot of the Malays. He was a member of the *protem* committee which, in 1956, attempted to form a Malay bank. Dato' Haji Yahya bin Dato Abdul Razak (the same person who together with Col. H.S. Lee first initiated the UMNO-MCA co-operation during the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Elections in 1952) headed the committee.<sup>80</sup>

Zulkifli had little difficulty retaining his Parliamentary seat in Bachok in 1964 although he beat the Alliance's candidate by a much smaller margin (slightly over 4,000 votes). He was not destined to serve the party long. Hardly two weeks after he was returned as a Member of Parliament, on 6 May, 1964, on his way home to Kuala Kangsar from Bachok, he was killed together with his wife in a motor accident.<sup>81</sup> This was the second blow to PAS which had partially lost the leadership of Dr. Burhanuddin in late 1963.

Those who have long associated with PAS would tend still to look upon the era 1956-1963 as the best years of the party. The Burhanuddin-Zulkifli leadership gave the party dignity and respectability. Both earned the respect of their opponents in Parliament not merely because of their ability at oratory; both spoke with conviction and knowledge. Many, in fact, marvelled that an *ustaz* like Zulkifli Muhamad could comment so intelligently on the budget. With Dr. Burhanuddin's forced retirement and Zulkifli's demise, the party leadership shifted to Mohamad Asri and his supporters, more particularly, Kelantan members of PAS.

### **The 1964 and 1969 Elections**

The absence of Dr. Burhanuddin as a candidate did not immediately affect PAS when campaigns for the 1964 elections began. Although he could not contest, Dr. Burhanuddin could still campaign for his party. Opposition parties were allowed to broadcast in four languages as part of their campaigns. PAS

chose to do it in Malay and English. Dr. Burhanuddin, Zulkifli Muhamad and Mohamad Asri were the three representatives chosen by PAS to broadcast in Malay while Dr. Burhanuddin alone broadcast in English.<sup>82</sup>

Dr. Burhanuddin was said to have devoted the greater part of his broadcast to the principles of Islam. He did not mention any party but his own although his attack on the Alliance was obvious. Mohamad Asri complained bitterly that the Alliance did not respect the freedom of election because there had been arrests of members of the opposition parties from time to time. In general, PAS' broadcasts were said to be entirely 'communal' in the sense that they were addressed to one particular community and the emphasis, as was the case in previous years, was on Malay rights, particularly with regard to language and education, as well as on Islam. In its Manifesto too, PAS concentrated on promises to establish an Islamic state in which Islamic teachings would be a "guide for state administration"; extend Malay special rights by requiring that certain state offices must be held by Muslims; provide more scholarships and build more religious schools; and expand government services to fishermen and padi planters in rural areas.<sup>83</sup>

On the issue of Islam which PAS continually raised, the main argument was that the establishment of Islam as the state religion in the Constitution was nothing but a sham since it had not led to the adoption of specifically "Islamic principles of administration". PAS promised that it would faithfully follow these principles if returned to power but it did not really elaborate. Neither did it refer to its administration in Kelantan in order to illustrate the point. In the house-to-house campaigns that it carried out it was more inclined to warn Malay voters that they would be going against the dictates of Islam if they voted for a non-Islamic party or for that matter UMNO which was working in close cooperation with non-Muslims. PAS was also said to have incited the Muslims to wage a holy war (*Perang Sabil* or *jihad*) against non-Muslims in the country. It was further alleged by the Alliance that PAS was forcing the people to swear on the *Quran* that they would not fail to vote for its candidates. Support was urged on the ground that PAS'

candidates were not mere party representatives but "messengers of the Prophet" who were opposing infidels and those who collaborated with the latter.<sup>84</sup> An Alliance candidate remarked that "It is not Dr. Burhanuddin or Zulkifli who are the leaders of the party now, but the Prophet, the messenger of God."<sup>85</sup>

But the Alliance was able to discredit PAS on a few occasions. For example, it was pointed out that Harun Pilus, a PAS member of Parliament (Ulu Trengganu) was found guilty of *khalwat* (close proximity) with a waitress, and earlier, another PAS leader had been found guilty of outraging the modesty of a woman. Other PAS leaders too were said to indulge in vices such as drinking alcohol and entertaining "wild women."<sup>86</sup> It was also pointed out that in five years of administration, PAS had, in fact, accomplished nothing. Kelantan had stagnated economically. In contrast, those states under Alliance control had enjoyed development. Since Kelantan's population was primarily Malay, PAS rule had indeed brought misery to the Malays whose interests and welfare PAS purported to champion. PAS was even accused of having mortgaged Ulu Kelantan in order to obtain funds for its election expenditure.<sup>87</sup>

Despite an all-out effort by the Alliance to dislodge PAS in Kelantan, the voters in that state faithfully supported the Islamic party though PAS clearly lost ground compared to the elections in 1959. Then it had won 28 state seats. In 1964, it won 21 seats. At the federal level, PAS lost ground only slightly. It won one seat less than the nine which it won in 1959. Not only did PAS win less seats, the amount of votes it received was also reduced by 7 percent.<sup>88</sup> PAS showed once again that it was basically a Kelantan party. (See Table 5 and 6).

The year 1964 also saw the emergence of Mohamad Asri as the new leader of PAS. Although a seasoned politician by the late 1950s, Mohamad Asri had kept a comparatively low profile. It was believed that he played a major part in the electoral success achieved by PAS in 1959 but it was his nephew, Haji Ishak Lotfi, who was made *Mentri Besar* of Kelantan. Mohamad Asri had been a member of the Executive Committee of PAS from 1955. He was Vice-President in 1961 and, after Zulkifli

Mohamad's demise, Deputy President in 1964. He became Acting President by 1965 when Dr. Burhanuddin was arrested for alleged subversive activities during the period of the Indonesian Confrontation. After the PAS victory in Kelantan in 1964, Mohamad Asri was elected the *Mentri Besar* of Kelantan.<sup>89</sup>

Less fortunate than Dato' Asri, however, was Dato' Haji Mohamad bin Nasir who, in the late 1970s, was to be involved in a major controversy in PAS politics. Born in 1916 at Kampong Kota, Kota Bharu, the son of a migrant from West Sumatra, Mohamad Nasir had his early education at a private English School in Kota Bharu. In the evenings, he was given religious instruction by a certain Tuan Guru Haji Mohamed. Subsequently, he studied at the school run by the *Majlis Agama*. Upon graduation in 1933, he became a teacher serving the *Majlis*. He then continued his English education at yet another private English school known as the Royal English School at Kuala Krai. He passed the Junior Cambridge Examination in 1935 and was selected by the government to further his education at the Agriculture School, Serdang. He graduated in 1937 and returned to serve the state government.

During the Japanese Occupation, he resumed his study of Islam under two persons: Maulana Haji Abdullah as well as Maulana Mohamed Shah, both of whom originated from India. He first became involved in politics in 1958 as a result of which he resigned from government service. Because of the exposure he had in religion he chose to join PAS and was fielded as a candidate in the elections in 1959. He won at Machang and was then appointed Deputy *Mentri Besar* (from 1959-1964 when Dato' Haji Ishak Lotfi was the *Mentri Besar*). His political career received a setback when he lost in 1964 in the constituency of Machang North. He made a comeback in 1969.<sup>90</sup>

The battle in 1969 between the Alliance and the opposition parties was even more bitter. In 1964, the opposition parties were more restrained because of the Indonesian Confrontation. The Socialist Front and PAS were two parties openly accused of being Indonesian sympathisers because of the large number of MNP personalities found in these two parties and the Alliance did not hesitate to detain those believed

to have been involved in subversive activities. The situation in 1969 changed greatly. The political campaign which was sharp and sometimes disturbing was described as "certainly the liveliest in Malaysia's short history of representative government."<sup>91</sup> But there was, in fact, no dominant issue. Racial tension, however, mounted.

The Alliance had one message for the voters where PAS was concerned, especially in Kelantan because the state was under the control of PAS. As Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister, put it, "... during the 10 years of misrule by the PMIP the state had lost about \$900 million worth of development projects."<sup>92</sup> He quickly explained that it was not that the Central Government had opposed PAS' efforts at development but there was nothing to substantiate their promises. Though PAS had promised to open up land schemes, there was, in fact, no money for the project. PAS did not even have money to pay their staff.

Abdul Samad Ismail (now Tan Sri), another veteran MNP member and, later, one of the founder-members of Singapore's People's Action Party, was attached to the *Straits Times* in 1969. His analysis of the Kelantan situation provides a useful insight into the complexity of Kelantan politics. "Strictly on its record as the state Government for the last ten years," he remarked, "the PMIP would seem certain of defeat on polling day.... Yet no one here can confidently claim that he has his fingers on the pulse of the *ra'ayat*."<sup>93</sup> Dato' Asri was so confident of a victory in Kelantan that during the last couple of weeks before polling day, he spent much of his time campaigning in Kedah, Trengganu, Perlis, Selangor, Penang and Johor.

Again in their campaigns, PAS had little that was concrete to present to the public. In reply to the accusation that they had done little for the state and that the Alliance could do so much more, they replied: "For ten years Alliance leaders spat in our faces, describing us as the most backward and most ignorant Malays in Malaysia. Now they come to us offering RM548 million [a promise made by Tun Abdul Razak should the Alliance be returned to power in Kelantan]. We have our dignity, our pride, our tradition of self-reliance - be patient

and vote us again into power and you will get double that amount in 1974."

To the simple peasant steeped in his religion, the PAS call for a complete rejection of the Alliance offer was based on the argument that the offer was no more than a materialistic and worldly temptation to subvert his spiritual value. PAS had been able consistently to feed on the fierce pride the Kelantan peasant took in what he believed to be his unique identity and personality which set him apart from the other Malays on the mainland. Samad Ismail concluded: "There have been changes in the last decade. The days of the *ulamas* which dawned in Kelantan in the 1959 elections seem to be drawing to a close. Candidates described by observers as 'radicals' have been brought into the PMIP line-up. But PMIP remains an obscurantist party, lacking an explicit socio-economic programme that identifies and revolves around the day to day problems of the peasantry. Against this stands the specific promises of development in the special Alliance manifesto." But PAS again retained Kelantan.

Vasil's comments on the results of the 1969 elections aptly sum up the dangerous situation which prevailed almost as soon as the results were known. He said: "The results of the elections had an immediate electrifying impact, not so much in terms of the actual number of seats wrested by the opposition parties from the Alliance as in the psychological dimension of the opposition's victory. The results were seen by the Malays as the beginning of the end of the *quid pro quo* arrangement which had ensured their supremacy in the politics, administration and government of the country since independence in 1957."<sup>94</sup> The shock suffered by the Malays led, as is now well known, to the riots of 13 May, 1969.

The year 1969, however, was a triumph for PAS though a close look at the election results will show that the success achieved was, to some extent, balanced by some amount of reverses, even in Kelantan, PAS' fortress. In Kelantan, the number of seats (both state and federal) obtained by PAS further deteriorated compared to 1959 and 1964. But in Trengganu, PAS almost recaptured the state government. Of the 24 state seats,

13 went to the Alliance and 11 to PAS. The Alliance won 4 Parliamentary seats and PAS 2. But there was a shock for PAS too. Daud Samad, the *Mentri Besar* between 1959-1961 when PAS was in power, lost the state seat of Kampong Raja. In Kedah, two UMNO stalwarts (Senu Abdul Rahman, then the Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Dr. Mahathir Mohamad) were defeated in the Kubang Pasu and Kota Star South Parliamentary constituencies respectively. PAS, in addition, captured 8 state seats compared to none in 1964. Although PAS won only one seat (state) in Perlis, its performance was no less remarkable because it managed to narrow the Alliance's majorities in almost all constituencies. Abu Bakar Hamzah, whom Dato' Asri had earlier proclaimed would be the new *Mentri Besar* of Perlis, lost by only five votes in the Sanglang state constituency. Another PAS candidate lost the Utan Aji constituency by 16 votes and in the Mata Ayer state constituency, PAS was defeated by 54 votes.<sup>95</sup>

Abdul Samad Ismail who had earlier hinted at a possible PAS defeat at the hands of UMNO acknowledged, after the results, that UMNO's power base in the rural areas had been seriously undermined. He added: "The inescapable fact is disturbing – the battle against rural poverty is far from being won. There are other plausible reasons but basically the sweep in the countryside by the PMIP suggests a failure to contain the increasing frustrations of the peasantry."<sup>96</sup>

In fact, the *Straits Times*, on polling day published an article on the scheduled opening of the Muda River Scheme on 12 May 1969 which was described as "Malaysia's biggest single development project"; it was expected to bring "sweeping change" to a "depressed region". The paper did not mince words when it remarked that the area stretching from Kedah across Perlis "is one of the most depressed regions in the country, crowded, marked by malnutrition and disease, bound by tradition and climate to primitive rice farming." A survey had shown that 42 percent of the adult population was illiterate. Also, the growth of population, the lack of economic alternatives and inheritance laws had cut land holdings down to "pathetic sizes". The average Kedah or Perlis padi farm covered

less than five acres, and about half the 60,000 families in the scheme area must make do with less than four.<sup>97</sup>

But Samad Ismail, who followed closely the elections held in the PAS strongholds, was of the opinion that neither religion nor poverty was the crucial factor which enabled PAS to succeed in particular areas. It was PAS' very pragmatic approach which was its real strength. He said: "It is the difference in style and approach that seems to give the PMIP the ideological strength to maintain its link with the *ra'ayat* in Kelantan. It is true that religion plays a part in the party's hold over the *ra'ayat*. But the average Kelantanese is neither a fanatic in his religious outlook nor is he a learned scholar in the teachings of Islam. He is devout but while he may pray five times a day, religion rarely comes into his daily life."

Samad Ismail then gave an illustration of the peculiar mental make-up of the average Kelantanese. According to him,

If the Kelantanese rejects the offer of the Central Government to build a mosque in his village, it is because the PMIP tells him that it is against his way of life. His way is the *gotong royong*. Building mosques and prayer houses is an occasion in which the whole community participates and the best craftsmanship in the village is to put to use to make it a monument to native ingenuity.

The PMIP identifies itself with the uniqueness of the Kelantanese character and adapts its style to the peculiarities of the Kelantanese situation.

Much of the PMIP's tactics outside of Kelantan do not make sense but they show a grasp of the political moods and feelings of the peasantry.

"PAS supporters," one keen observer said, "elected welfare officers and not State assemblymen or Parliamentarians into office".<sup>98</sup>

To put it another way, PAS had succeeded hitherto not because of its platform which was still vague. It never attempted, until the early 1980s, to explain its philosophy and objectives in more concrete terms. It was its *modus operandi* which



proved most effective, not unlike Dale Carnegie's *How To win Friends and Influence People*. The Alliance, more aloof, and talking about money and development, failed to make any significant headway. In about five years, since he took over as the *Mentri Besar* and Acting President of PAS, Dato' Asri emerged as the father figure in Kelantan.

In 1971, Dato' Asri was finally officially elected President of PAS. He was at the peak of his political career and confidently predicted that PAS would soon succeed in capturing Kedah and Trengganu.<sup>99</sup> Malay intellectuals, at that time, disenchanted with UMNO's inclination to compromise with its political partners, gave strong moral support to PAS. To them it was PAS rather than UMNO which had shown itself the party most expressive of Malay ethos and most symbolic of Malay hegemony. But, it was precisely at this juncture that Dato Asri made the crucial decision to collaborate with UMNO and even non-Muslim parties in a grand coalition called *Barisan Nasional*.

TABLE 5  
STATE SEATS WON BY PAS IN 1959, 1964 & 1969  
(BY STATES)

STATES	1959	1964	1969
Kedah	1	—	8
Kelantan	28	21	19
Perak	1	—	1
Perlis	—	1	1
Trengganu	13	3	11
TOTAL	43	25	40

PATLIAMENTARY SEATS WON BY PAS IN 1959, 1964 & 1969  
(BY STATES)

STATES	1959	1964	1969
Kedah	-	-	3
Kelantan	9	8	6
Perak	-	-	1
Trengganu	4	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>

Total Number of Parliamentary and State Seats Won by PAS: (Parliamentary seats in parenthesis)

1959 = 43 (13)    1964 = 25 (9)    1969 = 40 (12)

### CHAPTER III – NOTES

1. See Muhammad Salleh bin Wan Musa (with S. Othman Kelantan), "Theological Debates: Wan Musa b. Haji Samad and His Family" in W.R. Roff (ed.), *Kelantan: Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State*, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, P.160. When this author met Haji Muhammad Salleh Haji Wan Musa at his house in Jalan Merbau, Kota Bharu, during 1968-1971, he spoke glowingly of his father's crusade against the conservative *ulama* who keenly competed with him for influence. At that time, Haji Muhammad Salleh too, on account of his being a 'liberal' Muslim, seemed to have been alienated.
2. Mokhtaruddin Lasso was said to have 'disappeared' a few days after the convening of the PKMM First Congress from 30 November to 30 December 1945 and he was succeeded by Dr. Burhanuddin. See Kamaruddin Jaffar, *Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmy - Politik Melayu dan Islam*, Yayasan Anda, Kuala Lumpur, 1980, p.6; Ahmad Boestamam, *Dr. Burhanuddin: Putra Setia*

*Melayu Raya*, Kuala Lumpur, 1972, and *Merintis Jalan Ke Puncak*, Kuala Lumpur, 1972.

3. See Nabir Abdullah, *op.cit.*
4. Maria Hertogh was the daughter of Dutch parents who had left her in the adoption of a Malay business woman in Indonesia when Maria's father was about to be interned by the Japanese at the beginning of the war. After the Japanese surrender, through information given by some British colonial officials in Kemaman, Trengganu, where Cik Aminah, the business woman permanently lived, Maria's parents found that she had become a Muslim and adopted a Muslim name, Nadra. Persuaded by the colonial officials, Maria's parents secured a court order to obtain custody over Maria, then 13 years old, because she refused to return to her parents. In an apparent move to thwart the court action, Cik Aminah immediately married her off to a Malay, Mansor Adabi. Under Muslim law, this marriage made her legally the responsibility of her husband. The legal wrangle, seen as a serious conflict between Islam and Christianity, quickly turned into a religious confrontation which ended in riots that left 18 people dead. Eventually the civil court allowed Maria to be taken back to Holland with her parents where she was reported to have undergone a turbulent life. She later moved to Nevada, USA. See Haja Maideen, *Nadra Tragedy* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1989), p.140 and serial articles in *Dewan Masyarakat* which provide a vivid account of Hertogh's miseries and sufferings. See *Dewan Masyarakat*, February, March, April, May and July 1989.
5. *Ibid.*, pp.210-211.
6. See Firdaus Hj. Abdullah, *Radical Malay Politics: Its Origins and Early Development*, pp.148-149.
7. See Kamaruddin Jaafar, *op.cit.*, p.7.
8. See Haja Maideen, *op.cit.*, p.140.

9. See *ibid.*
10. See *ibid.*, p.108.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, pp.210-211.
13. See Nabir bin Hj. Abdullah, *Maahad Il-Ihya Assyariff Gunong Semanggol 1934-1959*, pp.198-201.
14. See J. Funston, *Malay Politics*, p.119.
15. *Ibid.*, pp.43 and 119.
16. See Safie bin Ibrahim, *The Islamic Party*, pp.62 and 80.
17. See G.P. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, pp. 160 and 229.
18. See J. Funston, *op.cit.*, pp.95-96.
19. See *ibid.*, pp.120 and 122.
20. *Ibid.*, p.122.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*, p.120.
23. See J. Funston, *op.cit.*, p.120.
24. For an insight into a discourse on socialism, see Alexander Gray, *The Socialist Tradition* (London: Longmans, 1946).
25. See Haja Maideen, *op.cit.*, p.141.
26. See J. Funston, *op.cit.*, p.119.

27. See Haja Maideen, *op.cit.*, p.141.
28. *Ibid.*, pp.109-110.
29. See J. Funston, *op.cit.*, pp.118-120.
30. See Amaluddin Darus, p.98.
31. See *ibid.*, p.94.
32. See K.J. Ratnam, *Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1967), p.200.
33. *Ibid.*, pp.202-204. For full results of the Parliamentary elections in Kelantan and Trengganu, see Tables.
34. *The Straits Times*, 20 June 1959.
35. *Ibid.*, 22 June 1959.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.* 24 June 1959.
39. *Ibid.*, 25 June 1959.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*, 18 August 1959, p.9.
42. *Ibid.*, 19 August 1959, p.8.
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*, p.8.

45. See the *Straits times*, 22 August 1959, p.8.
46. Ibid., 24 August 1959, p.16.
47. Ibid.
48. See Eqbal Ahmed, "Islam and Politics" in *Islam, Politics and the State*, Asghar Khan, ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Ikraq, 1987), p.13. For the Egyptian version of the religious differences and the events that led to the assassination of Anwar Sadat, see Mohamed Heikal, *Autumn of Fury: The Assassination of Sadat* (London: Gorki Books, 1984), particularly pp.127-135.
49. See Abdullah Zakaria bin Ghazali, "Kebangkitan Trengganu 1928", in Mohamad Abu Bakar, Amarjit Kaur & Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali (eds.), *Historia* (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Historical Society, 1984), pp.277-306.
50. See Shaharil Talib, *After Its Own Image - The Trengganu Experience, 1881-1941* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp.146-163).
51. See, for instance, Alwee Jantan, "Trengganu 1945-1957: A Study in Political Development" (Unpublished Graduation Exercise, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1958).
52. In this election Trengganu was divided into three Parliamentary constituencies of Trengganu Utara, Trengganu Tengah and Trengganu Selatan. The results of the elections were as follows:

#### **Trengganu Utara**

Ibrahim Fikri (UMNO-Alliance)	22,041
Mohd. Salleh Ahmad (Parti Negara)	2,866

#### **Trengganu Tengah**

Engku Mohsin A. Kadir (UMNO-Alliance)	19,038
Sulaiman Ali (Parti Negara)	4,746

**Trengganu Selatan**

Wan Yahya b. Wan Mohd. (UMNO-Alliance)	16,345
Ibrahim Matroh (Parti Negara)	2,628

See K.J. Ratnam and R. S. Milne, *The Malayan Parliamentary Elections of 1964*, pp.13-14.

53. See M. Kamlin, "History, Politics and Electioneering: The Case of Trengganu", Research Paper, Department of History, University of Malaya, 1977.
54. Ibid., p.25.
55. See G.P. Means, op.cit., p.256.
56. Ibid., 231.
57. Ibid., p.256.
58. Ibid., p.233.
59. See J. Funston, op.cit., p.58.
60. See M. Kamlin, op.cit., pp.25-26.
61. See Gordon P. Means, op.cit., p.230.
62. Ibid., p.231.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
65. See Saliha Haji Hassan, "Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi: A Political Biography" (Academic Exercise, Department of History, University of Malaya, 1972), p.43.

66. See Abdul Rahman Rahim, "Dr. Burhanuddin dalam Kenangan", *Utusan Zaman*, 2 November 1969.
67. See Saliha Haji Hassan, *op.cit.*, p.43.
68. See *Parliamentary Debates* (Official Report), Vol.II, No.50, Col.5300.
69. See Saliha Haji Hassan, *op.cit.*, p.44.
70. *Ibid.*, p.46.
71. *Ibid.*, p.47.
72. See Kamarudin Jaafar, p.15.
73. See the *Straits Times*, 4 March, 1964.
74. This biographical sketch of Zulkifli Mohammad is based on Mohammad Redzuan Othman's very useful study entitled "Profesor Zulkifli Muhammad: Satu Kajian Tentang Riwayat Hidup Dan Sejarah Perjuangan" (Academic Exercise. Department of History, University of Malaya, 1981).
75. *Ibid.*, p.13.
76. See Mokhtar Petah, *Zulkifli Mohammad dalam Kenangan* (Kota Bharu, 1966), p.36.
77. See Mohammad Redzuan Othman, *op.cit.*, p.20.
78. See Amaluddin Darus, *op.cit.*, p.179.
79. See Mohammad Redzuan Othman, *op.cit.*, pp.62-63.
80. *Ibid.*, App. E2.
81. *Ibid.*, p.73.



82. See K.J. Ratnam & R.S. Milne (eds.), *The Malayan Parliamentary Elections of 1964* (Singapore, 1967), pp.217-222.
83. See Gordon P. Means, *op.cit.*, p.336.
84. See K.J. Ratnam & R.s. Milne (ed.), *op.cit.*, pp.120-121.
85. *Ibid.*, p.122.
86. *Ibid.*, p.123.
87. *Ibid.*, pp.152-153. I will return to this subject in Chapter IV.
88. See Gordon P. Means, *op.cit.*, p.338.
89. N.J. Funston, *op.cit.*, p.124.
90. For a useful study of Haji Mohamad Nasir, see Rosli Abu Bakar, "Datuk Mohamed Nasir: Tokoh Politik di Kelantan" (Academic Exercise, Department of History, University of Malaya, 1988).
91. *The Straits Times*, 5 May 1969, p.10.
92. *Ibid.*, 8 May 1969, p.8.
93. See A. Samad Ismail, "In Kelantan the *ra'ayat* Keeps His Secret", *ibid.*, p.10.
94. See R.K. Vasil, *The Malaysian General Elections of 1969* (Kuala Lumpur, 1972), p.36.
95. See the *Straits Times*, 13 May 1969, p.10. For statistics of PAS' performance in the elections, see Table 5.
96. See A. Samad Ismail, "Learning the Secret of the Ra'ayat", in *ibid.*
97. See A. Samad Ismail, "Sweeping Change Soon For A Depressed Region", *ibid.*, 10 May 1969, p.10.
98. See the *Straits Times*, 13 May 1969, p.10.
99. *Ibid.*

## Chapter 1V

# *Coalition Government*

### **Strengthening the Malay Power Base**

The 1969 post-election race riots, provided the necessary backdrop for rethinking about the strategies for national unity in Malaysia's precarious multiracial society. Although the immediate cause of the Kuala Lumpur riots that broke out suddenly on 13 May 1969 was the non-Malay challenge to Malay political pre-eminence, the underlying reasons for their outbreak were generally said to be Malay pent-up anger at and dissatisfaction with the slow pace of their economic improvement under the premiership of Tunku Abdul Rahman, hence their disapproval of and disenchantment with the non-Malay control of the economy and increasing non-Malay demands for political equality.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the actual causes may be, the riots served the purpose of bringing out into the open what so many people had pretended for a long time did not exist. Manifestly, there was chronic suspicion, outright distrust and widespread antipathy among the country's main racial groups. This, the Alliance leaders under Tun Razak, the Tunku's successor, subsequently recognized, was a more dangerous sickness in the body of the nation than the 12-year bloody communist insurgency, and one that only 'major surgery' could hope to remove. It would

unavoidably involve nothing less than a complete reconstruction of the country's economy, the change of political order and, above all, a more equitable distribution of both its wealth and its opportunities for advancement.<sup>2</sup> The Alliance government's New Economic Policy (NEP), launched in 1971, was, therefore, predicated on the belief that, once the racial imbalance was evened out, the basis for peaceful progress towards a united multiracial society would be securely established.<sup>3</sup>

It was also argued that, if a lasting peace between the main communities was to be preserved, the standard of living of the Malays would have to be raised to a level where they no longer felt threatened or displaced in their own country. This could be achieved only by ensuring that they became "full partners in all aspects of the economic life of the nation",<sup>4</sup> rather than just the tillers and armed defenders of its soil. This objective indeed formed the crux of the Second Malaysia Five-Year Plan that was put into effective operation in January 1971, about four months after Tun Razak took over the reins of government from the Tunku. This re-ordered and re-formulated economic policy was designed to operate in two parts, but with each main division, in many ways, complementary to the other.

The first was decidedly aimed at reducing poverty levels generally by raising the income of, and increasing the employment opportunities for, all Malaysians, irrespective of their racial origins.<sup>5</sup> The second was aimed at restructuring Malaysian society so as to correct "these imbalances which tended to perpetuate the identification of race with economic function",<sup>6</sup> that is, Malay inveterate dependence on agriculture and Chinese perennial domination of commerce and industry. But this was not to bring about the complete dissociation of Malays from agriculture; it was merely to reduce Malay dependence on it.

One of the Plan's first priorities was to transform the placid life in the predominantly Malay rural areas by providing economic aid and an injection of educational and job opportunities so that the people there would be as modern and advanced as the urban communities. Its avowed intention was

to create a completely new Malay commercial and industrial nucleus on par with other races, especially the Chinese, in the country.<sup>7</sup> That meant that there would have to be an unwavering commitment on the part of the government to an almost total reorganization of the traditional structure of the nation's manpower needs. Legislations in favour of Malay absorption into the mainstream of the Malaysian economy would have to be enacted and enforced in order to bring about equality of opportunities. Privileged concessions to Malays in respect of employment in commerce and industry, though unpopular, would have to be emphasized. A further vital target of the Plan was to introduce measures that would eventually prevent key components of the country's economy from coming under foreign domination. Such measures would ensure that Malays took an increasingly larger share in the control of the country's primary produce, in particular, rubber, palm oil and tin. This was to be achieved through the purchase of a substantial interest in key companies, that is, by buying up their shares on the stock-market, or through direct offers to their foreign stock-holders.

The new opportunities which were opened to the Malays regardless of creed and ideological orientation under the NEP set-up could not be entirely ignored by PAS. The party undoubtedly realized that cooperation between the Alliance-controlled federal government and the PAS-controlled state government of Kelantan in particular was difficult. Both the Kelantan and Trengganu<sup>8</sup> state governments under PAS control, for example, had been unwilling to cooperate with the federal government to effect rural development which was given a very high priority at the national level. Both were reluctant to put aside land for Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) schemes. Each accused the Alliance-controlled federal government of exploiting the land shortage for political purposes.

On the other hand, the federal administration also blamed the two state governments for resisting federal assistance prompted by selfish political considerations.<sup>9</sup> As land matters were vested in the hands of the respective state

governments, it was difficult for the federal government to carry out economic development in these states (particularly in Kelantan), unless the state governments were willing to abide by the conditions laid down by the federal government. Furthermore, on several occasions the state government of Kelantan failed to live up to its promises of opening up lands for development because the federal government refused to extend to it financial aid. This resulted in the disaffection of PAS voters towards the Kelantan government.

As mentioned earlier, the rationale behind this new government policy was the belief that Malay discontent shown in May 1969 was derived largely from a feeling that their existing special rights, enshrined in the Constitution, had done little to provide them with benefits from modernization and economic growth. Hence the Second Malaysia Plan, 1971-75, established targets which provided that, within a period of twenty years, 30 percent of all commercial and industrial activities would be managed and owned by Malays and other indigenous people.<sup>10</sup> When Tun Razak took over the premiership from the Tunku, expectations were high that his administration would be a radical departure from that of his predecessor's.

Basically there were three notable aspects of government which typified the leadership of Tun Abdul Razak who took over as Malaysia's Prime Minister from Tunku Abdul Rahman in 1970. These were: the style of government, the attention given to problems of national unity and the formulation of the New Economic Policy (NEP).<sup>11</sup>

Tun Razak had assumed the premiership on the resignation of the Tunku, whose deputy he had been since 1957, after playing a key role as Director of Operations with extraordinary powers in restoring order after the outbreak of serious racial conflict in Kuala Lumpur in May 1969. Following the "depoliticization" of racially sensitive issues through the Anti-Sedition Ordinance of 1970 and the Constitution Amendment Act of 1971, Tun Razak formulated a New Economic Policy designed to focus attention on the economic factors underlying Malaysia's racial problems, the principal

aim of which was to increase the hitherto insignificant Malay participation in commerce and industry.

Before the advent of the NEP, the Malays, according to official sources, formed 74% of all the poor in Peninsular Malaysia. Within the major racial group, 65% of all the Malays were poor. In comparison, the incidence of poverty among the Chinese was 26% and Indians 39%.<sup>12</sup> Between 1957 and 1970, income inequality in Malaysia increased for the population as a whole, and especially among the Malays.<sup>13</sup> Between 1958 and 1973, the average urban income changed from 1.5 times the average rural income to 2.1 times. Similarly Chinese average incomes were 1.9 times that of the average Malay incomes in 1958, but nearly 2.2 times in 1973.<sup>14</sup> The income structure became considerably worse in the first decade after 1958, although it then improved.<sup>15</sup> In the late 1960s, hardly any rubber estates of 100 acres and above in Peninsular Malaysia were owned by Malays, although Malays and non-Malays shared ownership of rubber smallholdings. The ownership of the rubber, oil palm and coconut industries had long been firmly in the hands of non-Malays (including Europeans) "even taking into account about 308,000 acres of FLDA (now FELDA) land cultivated with rubber and oil palm which had been settled predominantly by Malays".<sup>16</sup> In 1969, the Malays owned only 1.0% of the share capital of resident limited companies in Peninsular Malaysia as compared to the Chinese ownership of 22.8%.

Apart from the ability of the Malays to attain and preserve political power, the success of any policy to promote a sustained *bumiputra* participation in commerce and industry must be dependent on the fulfilment of two conditions: the creation of adequate opportunities and the existence of sufficient numbers of *bumiputra* able and willing to participate in the opportunities offered. This essentially entails the entrenchment of credible conduits or state agencies with sufficient muscles and political will to formulate policies and implement them without reservation.

*Majlis Amanah Rakyat* or MARA was one agency entrusted with the task of training bumiputras for manpower needs

under the new economic transformation. MARA's programmes which were designed to deal with both aspects of the problem formed part of the general strategy of economic development envisaged in the First Malaysia Plan. Of the problems facing the Malaysian economy three in particular had a direct bearing on the programme of Malay participation in commerce and industry, that is, the need for diversification of the economy, the shortage of trained manpower, and the continuing poverty of the rural areas. In its general development programme, MARA was given the task of contributing to a solution of the overall needs of the economy and, through its responsibility, for ensuring an adequate level of *bumiputera* participation, thereby helping to resolve what was politically the most sensitive issue in Malaysian society.<sup>17</sup>

Tun Abdul Razak, himself a former civil servant, did not fail to pay special attention to the improvement of the bureaucratic machinery.<sup>18</sup> But there were also numerous political problems which plagued the nation's well-being. When the country returned to normalcy after the May riots, Tun Razak, as Director of the Operations Council, proclaimed in July 1970, an order which prohibited public discussion of sensitive issues, namely citizenship, national language, the special position of the Malays, legitimate rights of the other races, and supremacy of the Sultan. On 31 August 1970, the King proclaimed the *Rukunegara*.

For the Malays, the *Rukunegara* was easily accepted as a national ideology but the non-Malays, unaccustomed to the new political order, at first viewed it with reservation.<sup>19</sup> Whilst the Tunku's leadership of the Alliance was based on compromise among three political organizations – UMNO, MCA and MIC – which attempted to maintain racial harmony as much as possible, Tun Razak's stewardship of the government was characterized by Malay dominance in politics and he tried to uphold and expand Malay identity as the national identity. In other words, while the leadership of the Tunku was based on racial harmony within the framework of Malay-based politics, that of Tun Razak was based on the "Malay first policy to make Malay identity the national identity".<sup>20</sup>

Under Tun Razak's leadership, the central government attempted to establish a network for the economic development of the *kampung* (village) in conjunction with the development of the country. The prevailing features of the network were: (1) mobilization of traditional administration; and (2) utilization of the modern elite of the Malaysian Civil Service. This involved the setting up of a Development Administration Unit in the Prime Minister's Department in 1966 to train government officers and also to evaluate administrative systems. The objects of the Development Administrative Unit were: decolonization, development, modernization and efficiency.<sup>21</sup>

Within the first three years of his premiership, Tun Razak had three Cabinet reshuffles, all of which were expressive of the needs of the time. Young and able men with the desirable political aptitude were recruited to serve in both governmental and political machineries. This contrasted with the Tunku's distaste for young radicals. Musa Hitam (now Tan Sri), the UMNO Youth leader and an up and coming personality in the party, who held the record for speaking out against the Tunku's compromising attitude towards non-Malays in the 1960s, was brought into the position of Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry. Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah (from Kelantan), a young Queen's University graduate specialising in economics, was entrusted with the country's prestigious Petronas (National Petroleum Industry), which was set up quite similar to Indonesia's Pertamina.

The grand aim of these measures was to create a powerful "Malay interest" in public sector organizations with full government backing and to promote Malay private sector by helping it with finance and other aids. There was also sufficient mechanism for the Government to step in if Malay private enterprise did not show the requisite initiative.<sup>22</sup>

When, in 1973, Tun Dr. Ismail, Tun Razak's deputy, passed away, the Minister of Finance, Tun Tan Siew Sin, claimed succession to the post of Deputy Prime Minister. Tun Razak chose instead his brother-in-law, Hussein Onn,<sup>23</sup> a relatively new-comer in Malaysian politics. Apparently hurt by



what observers regarded as "an ill-deserved slight" and what he knew would be construed by the MCA as "a sign that he was not indispensable to the government after all", Tun Tan Siew Sin withdrew from politics.<sup>24</sup> Some have tended to interpret that Tun Tan Siew Sin's retirement was the result of a clever manoeuvre to facilitate the appointment of a Malay Minister of Finance (Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah), so that smooth implementation of the New Economic Policy (with a Malay bias) could be assured.

As Tun Razak was also concerned with order and stability, he felt that there was an obvious need to re-establish links with the Chinese community and to win its confidence. But there were grave doubts whether the MCA could help to achieve this. There was a need, therefore, to come to terms with opposition parties. In several cases they either controlled a state or were essential to political stability – for example, SUPP (Sarawak United People's Party), *Gerakan* in Penang, and PPP (People's Progressive Party) in Perak; also, DAP (Democratic Action Party) in Selangor and PAS in Kelantan. Moreover, each of these States had either a security problem, or had been the scene of communal disturbances. The devaluation of the Malaysian currency, for example, had led to communal riots in Penang in 1967, while the May 13 racial violence occurred mainly in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor.

In the PAS-controlled state of Kelantan, there were efforts made by the communists to win over the Muslims. It was imperative that the government ruling each state should be broadly representative and willing to collaborate with the central government.<sup>25</sup> With the exception of the DAP, virtually all major opposition parties were persuaded to join the UMNO-led tripartite Alliance party to form a coalition government.<sup>26</sup> In the 1974 general elections, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC), the Pan Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), the People's Progressive Party (PPP) and *Gerakan*, joined the UMNO to contest against the remaining opposition parties, such as the *Pekemas* or Social Justice Party, the People's Socialist Party of Malaya or PSRM and *Kita* (Perak-based). The coalition first

took place in Sarawak where the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) formed an alliance with the government party, the *Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu* (PBB). In the state of Sabah, the Sabah Chinese Association (SCA) coalesced with the Malay-based United Sabah National Organisation (USNO) to contest against the opposition represented by *Pekemas*.<sup>27</sup>

In 1974, the *Barisan Nasional* in Kelantan made greater use of "personality" and material appeals than of ideology as opposed to the elections in 1955, 1959, 1964 and 1969. The emergence of Independents opposing the *Barisan* candidates in the August 1974 general elections in the state resulted from differences ranging from personal and material benefits to ideological factors. After PAS entered the coalition, it was quite widely accepted in Kelantan that the leaders of the party had done very well in terms of acquiring positions of power. Indeed, after Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri became a Federal Minister and Dato' Ishak Lofti took his place as Kelantan *Mentri Besar*, both these gentlemen became visibly more affluent.

This provided ground for UMNO members to oppose the coalition later on, but it was also a matter of major consideration for PAS dissidents who saw in the new political alignment an increasing tendency on the part of their leaders to deviate from party principles.<sup>28</sup>

At any rate, the coalition of PAS with the Alliance and its subsequent entry into the *Barisan* were to witness "a decline of ideological conflict among the Malays ... at elite level and below - [enabling] UMNO's acceptance of a much more vigorous tactical programme to deal with Malay backwardness".<sup>29</sup> Still, communal tension was one problem in Malaysian politics which needed a more durable solution. The coalition of January 1973 was seen as the key to the ultimately multi-communal configuration of the *Barisan*. The ruling coalition, in its new form, proved very acceptable to the Malays. When Parliament reopened in 1971 after a 21-month rule by fiat, it was on the understanding that the entrenchment of Malay rights in the Constitution would be reinforced at once. The use of legislation to alleviate Malay anxieties was therefore necessary in accordance with the established UMNO and

Alliance view of the roots of communal tension. This made it possible for the rapprochement between UMNO, a major component of the Alliance, and PAS. The Alliance policy of appeasement, which was marked by the formation of a series of coalitions between the Alliance and opposition parties, became complete when PAS finally decided to join the fold. This "contributed to political quiescence and inter-ethnic peace, although there was the possibility of revival of inter-party rivalry between the Alliance and PAS in the form of dissensions within the party caused by ground level rejection of the coalition with UMNO".<sup>30</sup>

The May 13 race riots clearly marked a shift in constitutional departure as a result of communal tensions which were built up over the years. But it was Tun Razak's ascendancy to power which generated radical policy changes, especially those pertaining to governmental and the ruling Alliance Party's aspirations. For example, it was during his tenure of office that diplomatic relations were established with the People's Republic of China, thus making Malaysia the first ASEAN member to recognize the communist regime. The need for this recognition arose from the fact that, facing communist threat from within which was allegedly backed by Beijing and the Chinese populace who could not have been happy with the Malay-dominated government, some form of commitment on the part of the People's Republic of China was necessary to ensure that the latter did not interfere in Malaysia's internal affairs. The Razak-Mao Tze-Tung communique formalised in 1974, emphasized the People's Republic of China's abandonment of dual citizenship as regards the Malaysian Chinese. At the same time, in order that Malays (who are Muslims) were assured of religious security, Tun Razak set out on a series of blazing tours of the Middle-East countries, leading eventually to the International Islamic Conference held in Kuala Lumpur in 1974.

### **PAS' Decision to Join the Coalition**

"Political alliances between parties", says Professor M. Duverger, "vary greatly in form and degree. Some are

ephemeral and unorganized, that is, simply temporary coalitions which take place in order to benefit parties concerned in the election in order to support one from time to time. Others are lasting, strong and organized".<sup>31</sup> To begin with, the May 13 incident and its immediate aftermath had generated serious discussions within the Malay-controlled bureaucracy and in the political circles on the urgency and the dire need to consolidate Malay political hegemony. The crucial task of organizing these discussions in the all-important soul-searching effort of UMNO for solutions to Malaysia's aggravating racial predicament, fell on Tun Abdul Razak. The Tunku, crest-fallen and blamed for the incident, had little access, or was himself inaccessible, to the intellectuals, particularly Dr. Mahathir Mohamad and Dato' Musa, who had by now re-grouped to share their views with Tun Razak and Tun Dr. Ismail in private.<sup>32</sup> Tun Ismail rejoined the Cabinet after about two years of retirement and was appointed the Minister of Home Affairs and Justice.<sup>33</sup>

By September 1969, when the dust of the May 13 racial convulsion had safely settled, "Dato' Asri, the head of the PMIP, quickly visited the capital, conferred with Tun Razak, and then passed the word to his colleagues to cut out the rhetoric."<sup>34</sup> Speculations as to why PAS decided to join the coalition led by the Alliance have been numerous. Among Malay political circles, the explanation seemed to be that it was the result of PAS leaders' very real fear that the Alliance would resort to extensive gerrymandering in future elections, especially in Malay-dominated constituencies where the opposition was dominant, thereby making it difficult for PAS to win these constituencies.

Another belief was influenced by the relatively short time in which Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri, PAS President, took to agree to the formation of the coalition with the Alliance, considering that PAS, in 1964, had echoed the voice of the PKI or *Partai Komunis Indonesia*, in denouncing Malaysia and supporting Indonesian guerilla in Malaysia during the period of Confrontation.<sup>35</sup> But in the late 1960s there were ominous signs that many Malays, in response to increased polarization

in communal politics, were visualizing the amalgamation of UMNO and PAS. However, after the Tunku stepped down in September 1970, and as old ways had changed in favour of an 'action-oriented' government, new solutions were contemplated so much so that, in the Malay political circles, there were even talks of banning the PAS' brand of politics to alleviate polarization.

Be it as it may, Dato' Asri's fears were known privately to be many. Towards the end of the 1960s and early 1970s, especially after Tun Razak became Malaysia's premier, there were obvious indications that the Malays had tremendous confidence in his (Tun Razak's) leadership. Dato' Asri, many felt, became increasingly unsure of the long-term benefits for PAS if it continued to dissociate itself from the mainstream of Malaysian politics. The emergence of a new social group of Malay intellectuals who did not wish to be excluded from and deprived of the Alliance's economic programmes, worried him considerably. Under the new Alliance leadership there was a noticeable tendency among Malay intellectuals to rally to the support of the government. UMNO too had some reasons to hope (and PAS to fear) that Kelantan might finally be brought under the Alliance control in an open contest in 1974.

The trend towards the establishment of *Barisan Nasional* or National Front indeed, as mentioned earlier, had its beginnings in July 1970 when the first coalition was formed in Sarawak state following the holding of general and state elections there. The Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), a basically Chinese party, joined with the Bumiputra Bersatu which then drew in some dissident Pesaka members to ensure a simple minority in the state legislature. This was followed by the formation of the Penang coalition state government in February 1971 between the majority *Gerakan* party which had 13 seats, and the Alliance which had four seats in the state legislature.<sup>36</sup> In 1971 the People's Progressive Party (PPP) joined the Alliance in a coalition government at state and municipal levels in Perak. The Alliance had 22 seats in the Perak State Legislative Assembly to the PPP's 10, while the PPP controlled the Ipoh (Perak's state capital) Municipality.<sup>37</sup>

In September the following year, discussions began between the Alliance and PAS leaders. Responding to the Alliance-PPP coalition in Perak, PAS national Deputy President, Haji Hassan Adli (from Perak) said his party hoped the coalition government in the state would enable the economically backward Malays to surge forward in tandem with the resolutions of the Islamic Economic Congress.<sup>38</sup>

Many individuals were responsible for the formation of UMNO-PAS coalition government at the State and Federal levels. During the initial stages, several UMNO leaders were involved in approaching different levels of PAS leadership to hold talks on the proposed coalition government. Among those UMNO leaders who played key roles in the negotiations to end the long-standing impasse between the two main rivals were Dato' Harun Idris, the then *Mentri Besar* of Selangor; Abdul Samad Idris, who was Assistant Minister of Home Affairs; Abdul Ghafar Baba,<sup>39</sup> who held the portfolio of Minister of National and Rural Development, and Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, who was entrusted with the Chairmanship of two government giant corporations – *Pernas* and *Petronas* – as well as the government-owned *Bank Bumiputera Malaysia Berhad*.<sup>40</sup>

During its formative period the government set up a Coordination Committee chaired by the late Tun Dr. Ismail bin Dato' Abdul Rahman,<sup>40</sup> then Deputy Prime Minister. Tengku Razaleigh, a member of the Committee, was to represent UMNO and his duties were to oversee the development within the coalition and report to the Committee.<sup>41</sup>

According to Abdullah Ahmad (now Dato'), Tun Razak's Political Secretary then who was himself from Kelantan, he was directed by the then deputy premier to meet Dato' Asri soon after the May 13 race riots in order to explore avenues to end the UMNO-PAS inter-party struggle for control of the government.<sup>42</sup>

His popularity notwithstanding, Tun Razak had many rivals within UMNO who did not support his elevation to Tunku's position. Names which were bandied about as a possible threat to his otherwise smooth succession were Encik Mohd.

Khair Johari (now Tan Sri), Dato' Harun Idris, Tan Sri Syed Jaafar Albar, Dato Senu Abdul Rahman (now Tan Sri) and Tan Sri Syed Nasir Ismail. During the crucial period of UMNO leadership transition (from May 1969 to 21 September 1970, that is, the day the Tunku resigned as Prime Minister) up to the time of his untimely death on 14 January 1976, Tun Razak enjoyed an especially close rapport with the local press, thanks to Dato' Abdullah Ahmad's skilful manoeuvres; he recognized early the power of the print media, such as *Utusan Melayu* and *Utusan Malaysia*, *Berita Harian* and *Straits Times* (later *New Straits Times*), in helping to realise Tun Razak's objective.

One area of Tun Razak's preoccupation at that time was to ensure that if there was any challenge to the more-or-less established line of succession which he represented, it would be defused and diluted by leaders whom he, with Dato' Abdullah's assistance, would groom at the lower level. One UMNO leader who assumed such a role and became an important element in Tun Razak's efforts to discourage threats to his ascent in UMNO and the government was Dato' Abdul Samad Idris (now Tan Sri). Dato' Abdul Samad was chosen because, like Dato' Harun Idris, Tan Sri Syed Nasir and Tan Sri Syed Jaafar Albar, he was familiar with Malay ethos and capable of being combative if challenged.<sup>43</sup> This was the time when Dato' Abdul Samad Idris was seen, through the local press, to be actively involved in coalition overtures.

For instance, on 16 December 1970, Dato' Abdul Samad Idris, who later became Assistant Minister of National and Rural Development, advanced two reasons in his proposal for the formation of an Alliance-PAS coalition government in Kelantan and Trengganu. According to Dato' Abdul Samad, Kelantan Malays had been deprived of development projects on account of ideological differences and divergent party loyalties. As such, he saw the urgent need to end the split in the Malay community.<sup>45</sup> Delving into the political differences between UMNO and PAS, he said Kelantan Malays had become victims since they were unable to take part in the federal land schemes, namely the *Lembaga Kemajuan Tanah Persekutuan* (LKTP) or Federal Land Development Authority.

Calling on the Malays to consider seriously the importance of their unity, Dato' Abdul Samad pointed out that the fundamental strength of the politics of the nation lay in the hands of the Malays. "Malay solidarity", he stressed, "will buttress the unity of all races in Malaysia".<sup>46</sup>

On the following day, Dato' Asri, who was then Kelantan *Mentri Besar*, responded to Dato' Abdul Samad's overture by saying that the latter's opinion on the coalition proposal merited a serious study since it had important political implications.<sup>47</sup> In his opinion, the question of uplifting the economic conditions of the Malays in Kelantan was a separate issue, as he believed that it could be overcome even without the formation of a coalition government in the state. However, since it was a serious issue his party was prepared to examine the matter closely with other party leaders if the proposal came from "someone of authority".<sup>48</sup> The next few days, after Dato' Abdul Samad's press statement, saw various levels of UMNO making statements in favour of the proposed UMNO-PAS coalition.<sup>49</sup>

On 20 December 1972, ten days before the inauguration of the Alliance-PAS coalition, PAS' Secretary-General, Abu Bakar Hamzah, presented a policy paper to the party's Central Committee which sought to explain to party members the reasons for the party's need to join the coalition.<sup>50</sup> PAS leaders argued that the proposed coalition was in accordance with the fundamental tenets of the Holy Quran. It was in agreement with Islamic teachings and would contribute to the furtherance of the Islamic struggle. They further stressed that an Alliance PAS coalition would help the UMNO-led federal government to promote national unity in the true spirit of Islamic brotherhood, in addition to enabling PAS, together with UMNO, to implement its party objectives, namely the upliftment of the economic position of the Malays, propagation of Islam and implementation of a Malay-oriented education policy.

On 21 September 1973, Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri, PAS national President, delivered a presidential address at the party's nineteenth *muktamar* (assembly), the gist of which is as follows:<sup>51</sup>



The PMIP joined the Alliance in the coalition on the understanding that it hopes to work with the Government in implementing programmes which are aimed at eradicating poverty and restructuring society. The aim is to bridge the economic gap separating the races and to ensure the successful materialization of a new economic monopoly. Besides this, the party will also fight for moral and spiritual development through all possible means in line with the national education policy. The coalition ... will help give more impetus in the promotion of spiritual values.

Similar reasons were advanced by the Alliance's national President, Tun Abdul Razak, who was also UMNO's national President and Prime Minister. At any rate, a research conducted in Kelantan on the PAS-controlled land schemes during the period of the Alliance-PAS coalition, showed that a majority of the land settlers were of the opinion that the cooperation and amicable relations between PAS and UMNO had been economically beneficial to them as well as to the Malays in general.<sup>52</sup> They also indicated that PAS was a party of their choice because it was a Muslim party and did not compromise with non-Malays. In other words, they accepted the coalition because it was between "UMNO Islam" and "PAS Islam".<sup>53</sup>

It must be stated that economic decisions under PAS rule were to a large extent prompted by political motivation and priorities. The tendency for the structure of the state's economic development organization to be dominated and shaped by political interests was evident. With very few qualified personnel to man the state's development machinery, PAS' projects were thus left in the hands of basically unqualified staff. The situation was made difficult by the deliberate efforts of the state government to discourage the appointment of professionals and experienced officers to positions created by PAS' state leaders to take charge of their "pet projects". But it was not simply a question of PAS' inherent fear and distrust of highly qualified economists who, they felt, might have the opportunity to stab the PAS government in the back by feeding the federal leaders with the vital data that PAS leaders might

TABLE 6  
Land Settlers' Views on Alliance - PAS Coalition

Land Schemes	Good	Bad	'Do not know'
ChenuLang	96	2	3
Mengkebang	93	1	6
Peria	97	1	2
Temalir	91	5	4
Sungai Pas	62	2	2

Source: Rokiah Abdul Talib, "Rancangan Tanah Sebagai Satu Strategi Pembangunan: Satu Kes Kajian Ke Atas Rancangan-rancangan Tanah Negeri Kelantan" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1978).

want closely to guard;<sup>54</sup> it was also a question of the state government's inability to raise sufficient funds to finance its development projects. Until PAS joined the Coalition, the state-federal relations during the eighteen years of PAS rule in Kelantan had never been cordial.

After PAS had joined the Coalition, economic measures<sup>55</sup> began to gain a new prominence on the drawing-board of the Kelantan government. It was also a chance for the PAS leaders to take advantage of the opportunity to carry on their activities, notably economic, with the least interference from the federal government. At the same time, "they hoped to enjoy the financial and bureaucratic support of the federal leaders"<sup>56</sup> who began to think of PAS as a necessary ally in a new power alignment.

TABLE 7  
Benefits of Coalition Government to Land Settlers  
in PAS Land Schemes

Land Schemes	A	B	C	D	Other reasons
Chenulang	1	96	-	3	-
Mengkebang	4	85	-	9	2
Peria	13	52	-	7	28
Temalir	-	93	-	5	2
Sungai Pas	2	48	1	5	10

Note: A: 'Do not know'  
 B: Socio-economic  
 C: Education  
 D: 'No benefit'

Source: Rokiah Abdul Talib, "Rancangan Tanah Sebagai Satu Strategi Pembangunan: Satu Kes Kajian Ke Atas Rancangan-rancangan Tanah Negeri Kelantan".

Although it must be admitted that leaders from both UMNO and PAS had discreetly engaged in private discussions for more than a year before the formation of the coalition, PAS' decision to form the coalition was nevertheless rather bewildering to many Malaysians. But, in fact, PAS had high hopes that so long as the prevailing political arrangement lasted, the party would ultimately be able to replace UMNO. PAS leaders indeed had various considerations in mind for wanting to co-operate with UMNO. The transfer of national leadership from Perak - in effect, PAS' stronghold in the early years and where it won a seat in 1955 - to Kelantan seemed to have dis-

enchanted several northern-based party leaders. Among these were Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri's peers who knew well his ambition, passion and political propensity. There was a visible decline in the will of the rank and file to continue the struggle. To them PAS' uncompromising stand on communal issues "virtually rules out all chances of the party's coming to power at the national level".<sup>57</sup> Not only would non-Malay support never be forthcoming, even Malays in the more advanced Peninsular states would find many of the party's existing attitudes repugnant. At best, they felt PAS could only create an undesirable dichotomy which would not only be at the expense of the Malays in states where Malays did not form a majority, and would also defeat the party's objective of making the country a theocratic state.

Thus, what seemed to be central in the consideration of the party's supporters at that time was the futility of struggling based on its narrow objectives. This feeling of uncertainty within the rank and file of the party was further enhanced after 1969, by the action taken by the Alliance government to curb the discussion of sensitive issues which, in the past, had been an important rallying point for the opposition. Moreover, without religious pundits in PAS it would be difficult for the party to draw support from Malays in the more advanced west coast states of Peninsular Malaysia. Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri himself was not a scholar of Islam, though he was often assumed to be proficient in Arabic and highly knowledgeable in religious matters.

PAS' success in the past may be said to rest upon the existence of a substantial Malay population living in an isolated area which had experienced little development throughout the period of British administration. As a result, obscurantist religious teachers and *ulama* were able, to a significant extent, to exert influence on a relatively ill-informed peasantry. Beyond that there is no evidence that the party's mixture of religious obscurantism, and extreme communalism was likely to find favour further afield. But, by the late 1960s, there were signs that the appeal of the party was wearing off even in its "home" state. Gross administrative incompetence had cost the

party control of the Trengganu State Assembly through defection in its own ranks and, later, saddled it with a record of economic stagnation in Kelantan. The party had almost confessed to demoralisation with the untimely death of its deputy, Zulkifli Mohamad in 1964 and, a year later, in the incapacitation of its President, Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi, detained on the grounds of collaboration with the enemy during Confrontation.

Observers, however, speculated that PAS' decision to join the coalition with the Alliance could have been prompted by events which were believed to have deeply affected the leading figures among the party's top brass and which, they maintained, still remains a secret. Clive Kessler, for instance, wrote: "Whether the Party Islam leaders give away their trump card prematurely depends largely on what still remains unknown; on the pressure placed upon them to join the National Front and the future they knew to be in store for them had they refused".<sup>58</sup> Contrary to this "pressure" theory, some scholars, however, venture to stress that PAS' decision to cooperate with the Alliance in 1973 was a clever tactical move designed to undermine UMNO. By joining the coalition, they argued, it would be consistent with what had long been PAS' leaders' strategy, namely, to weaken UMNO and thus make PAS indispensable to it as a long-term partner.

There have been other views too. For example, it has been interpreted as a move by UMNO to align all Malays behind the Government and so impose Malay dominance on the other communities. "Otherwise", it is said, "there was no real need for the move ... It [UMNO] had certainly won the reputation of being genuinely concerned about Malay interests, and, with the proposals in the Second Malaysia Plan, seemed to have seized the initiative and put the P.I. [*Parti Islam*] on the defensive. It probably is the case that the P.I.'s position in Kelantan has been considerably weakened".<sup>59</sup>

In Kedah and Perlis, there was considerable resistance to the coalition proposals among PAS' members. They had done particularly well in 1969 and looked forward to winning control of the two States in the next election.<sup>60</sup>

After almost a quarter of a century's existence and having played the leading role of a formidable opposition in the Federal Legislature for 14 years, without doubt, PAS' decision to co-operate with the Alliance was of paramount significance to the country. That PAS' decision directly affected the personal interests of its leaders it would be difficult to deny and certain developments since then have begun to shed light on the behaviour of the party's leaders. A case in point is the election campaign of the opposition parties in Kelantan in 1974 which accused certain top PAS leaders of corruption and misappropriation of state government funds.

As a relatively young nation whose independence was attained only in 1957, the speed of Malaysia's economic and political development undoubtedly gave rise to many problems. When Parliament was suspended after the May 13 race riots in 1969, indications seemed to favour perpetual rule by fiat. But democracy was restored after 21 months. Few would have thought it possible for PAS to participate in an Alliance-sponsored coalition scheme, yet rapprochement was successfully achieved. For the first time after independence, elected representatives of UMNO and PAS were able to sit together in the Federal Parliament and they commanded about half of the total number of the Members of Parliament. When the first parliamentary session, after the 1974 general elections (which was also the first since the 1969 racial violence), was held between 5-20 December 1974, more than half of the Members of Parliament sworn in were new-comers. The government had 135 members in the *Dewan Rakyat* (House of Representatives) out of 153 – 32 more than the two-thirds majority required to change the Constitution. Dr. Nordin Sopiee had fittingly recorded the radical transformation in the configuration of parliamentary representation in the *New Straits Times* at that time. He said, the biggest group in the *Barisan* camp was drawn from UMNO, which had 62 MPs – 10 more than previously. The MCA had 19, four more over the previous score and PAS 13, adding an increase of three. The *Gerakan*'s five was also an increase of three, and the MIC's four, an increase of one. Sarawak's *Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu* and

SUPP had two fewer MPs than before the elections. The PPP had been whittled down from four to one. The Sabah Alliance retained its previous score at 16.<sup>61</sup> (See Table 8).

While the first (1959) Parliament had 30 opposition MPs, the second (1964) had 23. When Parliament was restored in 1971, the government had to contend with the biggest number of opposition members. In the 1974 Parliament only 19 represented the opposition - SNAP was represented by nine, the DAP also by nine, and Pekemas by Dr. Tan Chee Khoo's lone voice.<sup>62</sup>

TABLE 8  
Members of Parliament by Parties in November 1974

Political Party	MP	New faces
<b>Barisan Nasional:</b>		
UMNO	62	35
MCA	19	12
Sabah Alliance	16	5
Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu and SUPP	15	8
PAS	13	4
Gerakan	5	4
MIC	4	3
PPP	1	0
BARISAN TOTAL	135	71
<b>Opposition</b>		
DAP	9	5
SNAP	9	5
PEKEMAS	19	10
OPPOSITION TOTAL	19	10

Source: *New Straits Times*, 5 November 1974

The 1974 *Dewan Rakyat* was the first in the country's history in which there was no Malay opposition party. There was in fact not a single Malay in opposition benches. In the first Parliament, there were 12 PAS opposition members, in the second nine and, for most of the third, 12. All of the 10 Peninsular Malaysia opposition MPs elected in August 1974 were Chinese. The August 1974 elections were also significant in that Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who had been 'rehabilitated' by then, returned after a five-year break. Haji Hassan Adli of PAS was a member of the First Parliament. A total of 81 MPs were first-timers and the number of MPs increased from 109 to 144 with the formation of the new Parliament.<sup>63</sup>

### **The Issue of Corruption**

As events later were to show, the "strategy" theory proved to be inconsistent with what soon transpired and led to PAS' expulsion from the *Barisan Nasional* and its subsequent defeat in the 1978 general elections. With the advantage of hindsight then, the "pressure" theory (that the party was forced to abandon its oppositionist character) certainly appears more credible. In fact, speculations were rife at that time that Tun Razak's government was finalising plans to bring to justice certain PAS leaders who were found to be abusing their positions and power to enrich themselves.<sup>64</sup> Allegations of corruption in high places had been made before. The most spectacular of the allegations referred to the Lands and Mines Departments in the various states and involved senior civil servants and top politicians. But subsequently, the public service was made the target. However, in February 1982, about six months after Dr. Mahathir Mohamad became Prime Minister, Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries were required to declare their assets.

There was widespread belief that during PAS' rule, more than one million acres of timber and forest land were alienated to several companies – both foreign and local – as well as individuals who had contributed in one way or another to PAS' control of Kelantan. Most of these concessions were revoked after the general elections in 1974. Tengku Razaleigh advised



the *Mentri Besar* then, Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir, and later, after 1978, Dato' Haji Mohamad Yaacob, to issue summons to the leasees and inform them of the state government's intention without discussing with Dato' Asri first.<sup>65</sup> At least two companies – the Timber and Mine Corporation of Singapore and Ric Seng – a Perak-based timber company – had obtained more than half a million acres of timber concessions from PAS state leaders.

One source named Tengku Zaid bin Tengku Ahmad, a former PAS Member of Parliament for Pasir Mas and a Federal Minister, as among the beneficiaries of the PAS-controlled state government concessions.<sup>66</sup> According to this source, many legal documents in the concession deals were in fact drafted by a former UMNO senior minister.<sup>67</sup> He was PAS' State Legal Adviser before he joined UMNO in 1969 and subsequently appointed as an Assistant Minister in the Federal Government cabinet line-up after the general elections. The State Civil Servants from the Kelantan Civil Service (KNCS) also worked hand-in-glove with PAS. Since approval of land intended for alienation would have to go through a bureaucratic process, it is not surprising that PAS leaders, who largely benefitted from the alienation procedure, adopted a liberal attitude towards land applications by civil servants, if they did not actually encourage the civil servants to do so but in a manner that would minimise the chances of such alienation being made public.

As early as the 1960s the PAS state government was believed to have engaged in a land deal with a Chinese private company involving the leasing of about one-fifth of the state to the said company. Despite the party's ideological struggle and its claims to protect Islam and Malay rights, PAS leaders benefitted immensely from the deal. Speaking at an Alliance rally in Batu Kurau in April 1969, an UMNO Senator, Nik Hassan Yahya, said even though PAS had been in power for 10 years only 2,000 acres of land had been opened for land schemes in spite of the fact that there were 85,000 applicants during the period. By the end of that year, however, close to one million acres of forest and timber concessions had been

given to foreign and local companies, with the latter largely made up of PAS State Assemblymen and supporters.<sup>68</sup>

According to PAS sources, the state government, through Dato' Asri's initiative, alienated 900,000 acres of timber land to various Chinese companies with a very low premium. A Chinese businessman, Ong Kian Seng, was given three areas under his personal name. In a pamphlet entitled "Usaha UMNO dan Kerajaan Pusat" ("Efforts of UMNO and the Central Government"), UMNO charged that the PAS government in Kelantan had alienated forest land and timber concessions to the tune of three-quarters of Kelantan to Chinese businessmen from Singapore, Johor, Kuala Lumpur and Perak. PAS leaders, including religious teachers, had formed joint-venture companies with them, the same people that the party had accused of being infidels.<sup>69</sup>

On the other hand, it was not uncommon then, in the Alliance, for party members found guilty of corruption to be either stripped of their positions and forced to retire or given posts that would not involve them in the distribution of largesse. One exception was the controversial prosecution of the former Alliance *Mentri Besar* of Selangor, Dato' Harun Idris. But in this case, as he later testified in court, the charges were brought against him because of his resistance to the Prime Minister's advice to relinquish his post as Selangor's *Mentri Besar* and accept a United Nations' ambassadorial appointment.<sup>70</sup>

The question has been asked, as indicated earlier, by researchers whether there was pressure placed upon PAS leaders to form the coalition with the Alliance or whether they, in fact, gave away their trump card prematurely on account of certain miscalculations fearing for their own future (rather than the party's future), should they refuse to go along with the thinking of UMNO leaders.<sup>71</sup> However, evidence seems to point to the fact that the PAS leaders' decision to form the coalition with the Alliance was made after they had given thoughtful consideration to the risks if they had refused.<sup>72</sup> It is clear that the setting up of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in place of the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) not long after

Tun Abdul Razak had come to power was aimed at leaders who were involved in corrupt practices. It follows that since the previous Alliance's leadership had in fact removed persons of high position in the party including the Perak *Mentri Besar* for such purported involvement, the ACA would have been thought to be an effective instrument in removing opposition leaders who were found to be corrupt. There is evidence to support this argument.

Around the mid-1960s there was a case involving a land deal between the PAS-controlled Kelantan state government and the Timber and Mine Industrial Corporation of Singapore. Obviously well-informed about land situation in the state, Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister at that time, charged that "one fifth of Kelantan has been mortgaged free of charge by the PAS state government. The Executive Council of the state had just approved a grant of 375,000 acres of fringe jungle land in Ulu Kelantan District to the Timber and Mine Industrial Corporation without paying one cent."<sup>73</sup> The period of the mortgage was said to be for thirty-five years. The central issue in the federal government's outburst over the Kelantan state government's land deal was particularly the former's complaint regarding Article 111 (2) of the Federal Constitution. This Article stipulates that "a State shall not borrow except under authority of State law, and the State law shall not authorise a State to borrow except from the Federal Government or from a bank approved for this purpose by the Federal Government."<sup>74</sup> According to Clause 2(a) and (b) of the agreement between the Kelantan government and the Timber and Mine Industrial Corporation, "the company shall pay to the State Government, a prepayment of royalties of RM1 million for each of the two mining leases – such payments to be made by two instalments of RM500,000 each."<sup>75</sup>

It was also stated in Clause 8(a) and (b) of the Agreement that "the company shall pay a prepayment of RM2 million by two instalments and the prepayment should be set off against the timber royalties becoming due and payable to the State from time to time at the rate of 50 percent until such prepayments had been fully refunded."<sup>76</sup> However, when the Federal

Government brought the case to court suing the Kelantan government, it lost in the litigation.<sup>77</sup> Although the Federal Court held that the Kelantan state government "had not violated the Federal Constitution by entering into a multimillion dollar agreement with a Singapore-incorporated company to extract timber and minerals in Kelantan",<sup>78</sup> the uproar over the Kelantan PAS leaders' involvement in the alleged corruption did not die down.

Earlier, in 1964, another issue had come into public prominence. A federal government source was quoted as saying that "the PMIP-controlled State Government of Kelantan is broke. Four thousand dollars is all the cash it has in the State Treasury."<sup>79</sup> A newspaper report which carried the story on 29 November 1964, said: "Besides owing the civil servants, the State Government is also alleged to have failed to hand out RM60,000 – a payment from the Central Government – due to the Kota Bharu Town Council which wants to build a market, and failed to make six months' payment for work done by a contractor of the RM5 million Kelantan River bridge project."<sup>80</sup> The newspaper also quoted the source as saying that "the State Government was tottering on the verge of bankruptcy because of gross financial mismanagement." The State Government had asked the Federal Government for approval, "to borrow more than RM3 million from a commercial bank to tide over its financial crisis."<sup>81</sup> Replying to this charge, Dato' Mohamad Asri, who was then the *Mentri Besar* of Kelantan, nonchalantly said that "the deficit in the State budget was a 'normal' one".<sup>82</sup>

On 10 December 1964, D.G. Bompas, the Federal Auditor General, exposed further the state government's financial affairs which he said "reflected the lack of control of revenue collection in the State".<sup>83</sup> Pointing to the "serious irregularities" which had been discovered in audit, the Auditor-General also disclosed that the State had "... borrowed Federal funds without the authority of State Law – contrary to the Federal Constitution – and lent RM42,000 to town councils as interest-free advances to their staff without the written agreement or the authority of the Ruler-in-

Council, and failed to take legal proceedings or disciplinary action against an officer responsible for misappropriating RM28 at the Bachok Land Office".<sup>84</sup> The Auditor-General went on to remark that "the PMIP Government not only spent Federal cash for State purposes, but also used it to earn RM106,240 interest at a bank on a fixed deposit of RM2.7 million".<sup>85</sup>

Dealing with the controversial Kelantan River Bridge project, the Auditor-General recalled that the manner in which this project had been undertaken was not such as was likely to safeguard public funds to the best advantage or to ensure value for money. He also raised the following points which reflected if nothing else the state government's gross financial mismanagement:<sup>86</sup>

- (a) State Treasury: Thirteen vouchers for RM5,160.86 had not been produced for audit and 'as far as I am aware approval has not been obtained to allow these charges to stand in the accounts';
- (b) Town Councils: Failed to remit RM10,880 State revenue due as liabilities prior to January 1, 1958, which they collected on a 50 percent commission basis;
- (c) Revenue: The decrease in revenue from duties, taxes and licenses and the increase in Federal funds was due to a change in the method of accounting for export duty on iron ore assigned to the State. The amount received by the State in 1963 was RM1.15 million;
- (d) Deposits: eleven offices, including six district and land offices, had not submitted the required lists for the year 1963. Lists had also not been submitted in respect of five old land office accounts with balances totalling RM280,572 in the Treasury. [The Auditor-General wrote: 'To this extent I am unable to satisfy myself that the liabilities are properly recorded']; and
- (e) Thefts, Frauds and Losses: Since the last report, one case of the criminal breach of trust of RM17.50 by an office boy had been brought to his notice.

In 1965, another controversy was heard in the Federal Parliament when Dr. Lim Swee Aun, then Minister of Commerce and Industry, accused the PAS state government of Kelantan of practising corruption. He said that by allowing 1,300 illegal rice mills to function in the state, PAS had shirked its responsibility. In an obvious outburst against PAS leaders who had earlier accused the Alliance government of not helping the Malays, Dr. Lim said: "Why have they not arrested these people? Is it because they are PMIP members? This is an indication of political corruption in the PMIP".<sup>87</sup>

In 1967 two other issues relating to the PAS-controlled Kelantan state government's financial difficulties surfaced. The first was in May when Dato' Mohamad Asri admitted that the state government had borrowed RM5 million from commercial banks in order "to meet its financial requirements."<sup>88</sup> The second issue was in December of that year when, in desperation and failing to obtain loans from commercial banks,<sup>89</sup> Dato' Asri approached the Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, for a federal loan of RM1.5 million "to pay its employees their December wages".<sup>90</sup> A reporter had asked the Prime Minister to explain why the state government of Kelantan should be in the red. He replied somewhat poignantly, "It has a lot of money and God only knows where the money goes to".<sup>91</sup>

In 1968, amidst growing financial crises and faced with a deficit of RM10 million in the state government's budget,<sup>92</sup> there arose a wave of rumours over the imminent defection to UMNO of ten PAS Assemblymen in the state which, should it materialise, would invariably have toppled the state government.<sup>93</sup> On 13 September 1968, Tun Abdul Razak publicly named six of the ten PAS Assemblymen who planned to defect to UMNO. They were Dato' Nik Abdul Rahman bin Nik Mat, Deputy *Mentri Besar*; Abdul Rahman bin Salleh, a member of the State Executive Council; Yusoff bin Abdul Latiff, also an Executive Councillor; Omar bin Mohamed, Haji Wan Yusoff bin Wan Yaacob, and Haji Othman bin Ismail.<sup>94</sup> One Assemblyman, Abdul Kadir bin Mat Saad, and three other PAS members were also reported to have shown their interest in the defection plan.<sup>95</sup>

In the following year, Khaw Kai Boh, the Minister of Local Government and Housing, accused PAS of bringing the Alliance-controlled Town Council in Kota Bharu, the state capital, to the verge of bankruptcy. During the Parliamentary debate on the RM44.3 million development estimates for the Ministry, a PAS Member of Parliament for Bachok, Abu Bakar Hamzah, accused the Ministry of practising irregularities. But Khaw Kai Boh attributed the cause of the financial problems faced by the Town Council to the unreasonable attitude of PAS leaders, particularly their action of withholding funds from the Town Council.<sup>96</sup> The Finance Minister (Tan Siew Sin), too, in reference to the financial situation in the state, said that the state government was going bankrupt.<sup>97</sup> In addition, he remarked that the situation had been brought about "entirely by its [PAS'] own doing." In July that year, the Kelantan government was ordered by the High Court to repay the RMI million it had borrowed from a commercial bank in 1966. Under Clause 3 of the agreement signed between the bank and the Kelantan government, the latter agreed to repay the loan plus interest on or before 27 May 1967. However, it had failed to do so.<sup>98</sup>

It may be pertinent at this juncture to take a closer look at the government's<sup>100</sup> attitude towards corruption with the promulgation of the New Economic Policy (NEP). Tun Razak himself realized that the canker of corruption had taken a hold of public men due to the opportunities that had become available as a result of the rapid development of the Malaysian economy. It was mainly at the state government level that the main evidence of corruption existed and usually there was enough evidence to convince the person concerned that early 'retirement' was the easiest solution.<sup>101</sup> Tun Razak, therefore, decided to give more powers to the Anti-Corruption Agency.

Though anti-corruption laws had been enacted even before independence, no special department or agency had been established to investigate corrupt practices until after 1957. Until then, such problems were dealt with by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in the Police Force. However, in 1958, the government invited a Pakistani consultant

to review the anti-graft machinery. His proposals resulted in the setting up of a "Special Crime Branch" (SCB) in the CID, and an Anti-Corruption Unit in the Prime Minister's Department. However, the SCB's work was hindered by loopholes in the laws and lack of trained staff. In October 1967, all aspects of the anti-graft effort were integrated into a single body – the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) – with Harun Hashim (now Tan Sri Justice Harun) as its first Director-General.

Despite its successes, the ACA was said to have a number of problems. The Government, sensitive to these problems, set up a sub-committee under the chairmanship of Tun Dr. Ismail, then Home Affairs Minister, to review the ACA set-up. A working paper on the proposed reorganization was approved by the Cabinet in May 1973, and two months later Parliament approved the setting up of a new body, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). A frequent criticism of the NBI (and also the ACA) was that it went after mostly the "small fish" and left the "big fish" free to carry on their illegal operations. Government leaders and former NBI chiefs, Tan Sri Ibrahim Salleh and Dato' Abdullah Ngah, had countered these allegations by arguing that the "big fish" often got away not because they were let off, but because their use of sophisticated methods made them difficult to book.<sup>102</sup> Former Prime Minister, Tun Hussein Onn, once said in reference to the "big fish": "My God, the big fish are like Jaws 2, very difficult to catch. You need strong cables to kill them".<sup>103</sup>

Hence, as soon as *Barisan Nasional* took over the state government from PAS in 1978,<sup>104</sup> Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, who was Kelantan UMNO chairman and a Federal Finance Minister, drew up a policy that excluded party supporters from getting land and timber concessions individually from the state government. Instead, they were encouraged to form a company and put in a tender. This was a drastic departure from the practice which prevailed during PAS' rule in the state. Under PAS leadership it was common for a *Wakil Rakyat* (State Assemblyman) to obtain 25,000 to 30,000 acres each. It was given 'legally', that is, approved by the Executive Council, at



lower rates. Timber concessions were seen as providing the economic base for the *Wakil Rakyat's* political activities. But when all this was revealed after 18 years of PAS rule, anger among the people took PAS by surprise in the 1978 general elections.

### **The Leadership Crisis**

The formation of the *Barisan Nasional* government consisting of political parties of various shades and ideological leanings, was beyond doubt a very major development in Malaysian politics. The style of leadership practised by Tun Abdul Razak left a significant imprint on Malaysian politics. Tun Razak sought to govern not through general appeals to idealism or sentiment but rather through his detailed grasp of politics. He had been the organization man entrusted by his predecessor, Tunku Abdul Rahman, with maintaining close contacts with the party's grass-roots; he developed very sensitive antennae as a result. His political subtlety and response to pressures and changes of mood had been demonstrated on a number of occasions and at various levels of political activity. His Cabinet which assumed duty in 1971 was, as mentioned earlier, reshuffled three times before the Alliance-PAS coalition in 1973, with very few dramatic happenings and no blood-letting; it nevertheless presented a very different image from that of the Tunku's administration.

In less than two-and-a-half years after he took office as Prime Minister, Tun Razak not only sought to bridge the gap between the old guards and the young hopefuls within the Alliance but also between the Malays and Malaysians of the other communities. At the same time he actively promoted and absorbed men of approved administrative ability into the government and party.

On 1 January 1973, the day the Alliance-PAS coalition came into existence, a minor re-organization brought Dato' Musa Hitam into the position of Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry and led to the new leader of *Wanita UMNO* (women's section), Aishah Ghani, taking over as Minister of Social

Welfare. This is an illustration, on a small scale, of the way Tun Razak took care to interlock UMNO and the government and of his quick response to changes within UMNO.

Dato' Musa Hitam represented the UMNO Youth, and also the new radical Malay intellectuals demanding social change in favour of the under-privileged Malays. Considered a radical Malay intellectual (and predicted by *The Times* magazine as one of the up-and-coming world leaders along with Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah), Dato' Musa Hitam was a Political Secretary to the then Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak, when he was ousted by Tunku Abdul Rahman for his part in the campaign, with Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, to unseat the former Prime Minister following the race riots in 1969. Aishah Ghani, a former member of the radical Malay Nationalist Party, took over the Ministry from Fatimah Hashim, whom she had defeated at the 1972 *Wanita* UMNO's Assembly for the office of President. This symbolized a new awakening in the women's section. In fact, as one Tun Razak's aide testified, radical change in the government and party was contemplated by the Tun long before he became Prime Minister in order to solve the many political and racial problems bedeviling the government under the Tunku's leadership.<sup>105</sup> There is little doubt that Tun Razak established the *Barisan Nasional* in order to rebuild national unity after the May 13 race riots and, by the same token, as many of his aides later came to testify, he strengthened the Malay power base that was often shaken by non-Malay demands under the Tunku's leadership.<sup>106</sup>

PAS' agreement in principal to form a coalition government with the Alliance was put to vote at its special meeting of 20 December 1972.<sup>107</sup> The result was 190 delegates voted in favour of coalition and 94 against. There were 19 abstentions and 30 absentees when the vote was taken.<sup>107</sup> There was therefore a split on the part of PAS members and this was untypical of the show of support which Dato' Asri used to enjoy when it came to making decisions on vital party questions. The indecisiveness in the vote was proof that he was no longer enjoying the confidence of the party rank and file. But PAS members'

display of defiance against and disillusionment with Dato' Asri's leadership was only the beginning of more problems to come. The events which ensued eventually brought about his downfall.

In Kelantan, the most serious protest came in the form of a reaction by disenchanted PAS members who contested the 1974 general elections in all the state constituencies.<sup>109</sup> In the state of Perak, among PAS members who stood as independent candidates in the party's traditional strongholds were its state deputy leader, Sukarnain bin Haji Ahmad, state party treasurer, Abdul Kadir Haji Idris, and a former PAS State Assemblyman, Mahmud bin Zainal Abidin.<sup>110</sup> Fifteen PAS rebels were also expelled in the state of Perlis, Kelantan, Johor and Perak for either contesting or campaigning against the party's candidates in the elections.<sup>111</sup> Even student leaders from the Institute of Technology (ITM), the National University of Malaysia (UKM), and the University of Malaya, who lent their support to the independent candidates in the national elections, spoke vehemently against Dato' Asri's alleged corrupt leadership.<sup>112</sup>

These events which were unprecedented in the history of the party came to the surface partly as a result of the expulsion of PAS' Secretary-General, Abu Bakar Hamzah,<sup>113</sup> from the party and the withdrawal from membership of party veterans, notably Amaluddin bin Darus (who, as noted earlier, had actually initiated PAS in Kelantan), Mohamad Fakaruddin bin Abdullah and several others. Like Amaluddin, Abu Bakar Hamzah had been in the party since it was formed. In fact, Abu Bakar was considered the 'brain' who had been greatly instrumental in PAS' decision to join the coalition in 1974.<sup>114</sup> But Abu Bakar, being a party senior, was also considered a threat to Dato' Asri's leadership. Unlike Dato' Asri, he is proficient in both English and Arabic. He received his tertiary education in the Middle East and is better known internationally than his colleague by virtue of his association with leaders of the Middle-Eastern countries and Indonesia since the 1950s. And, not unlike Dato' Asri, he had a strong flair for oratory. In fact, he was among very few PAS leaders who had

the ability to inject a sense of humour derived from Islamic history and idioms into his political speeches.

Abu Bakar's inimical disposition towards Dato' Asri stemmed from a variety of factors. One obvious reason that led to his criticism of Dato' Asri's leadership was the latter's increasing tendency to veer from the Islamic principles. He also saw a new dimension taking place in the PAS leadership, which probably constituted the biggest single factor in the rank-and-file's loss of confidence in Dato' Asri, beginning from the middle of the 1970s. At the 19th PAS Congress held on 23 September 1973 at Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, the post of PAS President was contested in a straight fight between the incumbent, Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri, and the party Secretary-General, Abu Bakar Hamzah. In this contest, Dato' Asri, who was also the Minister of Land and Mines in the coalition cabinet, survived the challenge. Although defeated in the contest that seemed to set a bad precedence for an Islamic party which was all too familiar with and often took delight in UMNO's intra-party rivalries and bickerings, Abu Bakar could at least find solace in the position of party Vice President which he won quite easily.

The emergence of young political aspirants from Kelantan who were educated in the secular system and close to Dato' Asri had become an "eye-sore" to the party's religious elders, most of whom were, unlike the materialistic political aspirants, unexposed to the political values that placed economic achievements as an essential means in the attainment of political power. Dato' Asri's close confidants – Wan Ismail Ibrahim, Nik Mustapha Shafie,<sup>115</sup> Zahari Awang and Abdul Manan Mohamad – were ambitious young men who could be considered as "misfits" in a political party that generally espoused Islamic fundamentalism and placed great emphasis on puritanical values. Because of his association with them, Dato' Asri lost credibility and that soon culminated in the eruption of the "March 14 Revolution" in 1977.

Abu Bakar Hamzah's disenchantment with Dato' Asri also resulted from the latter's elimination of PAS leaders who were thought to be holding opposing views.<sup>116</sup> Abu Bakar's expulsion

from PAS originated from his letter to the PAS President which the latter took as a slight on his reputation.<sup>117</sup> When the issue of whether PAS should join the coalition government was heatedly debated by party leaders, Abu Bakar Hamzah, widely acknowledged as the party's leading tactician, was among the top PAS leaders who had wanted the party to end the long-standing feud with UMNO. However, when the PAS' line-up for ministerial positions came up, his name was mentioned only as a Parliamentary Secretary, and not Deputy Minister for Education, when he had indeed made known his wish to the party President. He thought that he was not sufficiently rewarded.<sup>118</sup> Dato' Asri, according to one source, somehow believed that Abu Bakar would be more than contented with the portfolio of Parliamentary Secretary.<sup>119</sup>

Many second echelon leaders within PAS, at that time, were said to be strongly behind the move to persuade Dato' Asri to join the coalition with *Barisan*. Among the supporters of the PAS President who were believed to be instrumental in shaping his opinion in favour of coalition were men who were considered to be his "political advisers". Most prominent among them, by virtue of their rather high profiles in Kelantan, as mentioned earlier, although not necessarily at the national level, were Wan Ismail bin Wan Ibrahim, Nik Mustapha Shafie and Zahari Awang. According to one source,<sup>120</sup> Wan Ismail's support of the coalition move was drawn from the lessons of the failure of *Al-Ikhwan ul-Muslimin* in Egypt. The Egyptian President, Gamal Nasser, the source added, had banned *Al-Ikhwan* when the latter showed indications of being too powerful and dangerous for the revolutionary government under his leadership. Using the Nasser-*Al-Ikhwan* experience as a parallel in the Alliance-PAS situation, Wan Ismail was almost certain that PAS' fate would be tragically sealed (including the possibility of being banned) if it became too militant, and if it did not join the coalition. Whether there is any truth in this claim is open to speculation but it is quite credible when one considers that Wan Ismail's wife, Dr. Fatimah, an Egyptian, is the sister of Dr. Said Ramadhan who was the Chief Editor of *Al-Ikhwan*'s official organ, *Ad-Dakwah*,

whose views were often critical of Nasser. Wan Ismail was privately known to his close friends as an ardent admirer of Dr. Ramadhan.

Abu Bakar Hamzah was expelled from the party on 26 April 1974. In a press statement, PAS Secretary-General, Haji Hassan Shukri,<sup>121</sup> explained that the decision to expel Abu Bakar Hamzah was taken because the latter "had been absent from the country for a long period and this was considered bad for the party."<sup>122</sup> In a reply to the charge, Abu Bakar Hamzah said his expulsion stemmed from his disagreement with Dato' Asri "on certain activities of the party which he regarded as 'unconstitutional'." Among the issues which Abu Bakar found to be running counter to PAS party principles were Dato' Asri's appointment of Baharuddin bin Latiff<sup>123</sup> as the PAS national Information Chief and Dato' Asri's instructions to all PAS Members of Parliament to approve the 1974 budget without consulting the party first. Two other reasons cited by Abu Bakar for accusing Dato' Asri of having acted dictatorially were Dato' Mohamad Asri's decision to sit in the *Barisan Nasional* pre-council without the party's approval, and his decision to hand over Nilam Puri,<sup>124</sup> a PAS-sponsored Islamic educational institution in Kelantan, to the National University of Malaysia (UKM).<sup>125</sup>

Another personal friend of Dato' Mohamad Asri's and who, in the heyday of the Alliance-PAS hostility, had been a staunch critic of the former's policies, was Amaluddin Darus. According to Amaluddin Darus, the founder-member of the Pasir Mas PAS branch in 1952 who became the branch's Secretary in 1955, Dato' Asri joined PAS only after he returned from Seberang Prai; he was appointed PAS Commissioner for Kelantan. The post of the state's PAS Secretary was held by Amaluddin.<sup>126</sup> Dato' Asri's "compromising attitude" towards the Alliance's leaders was, therefore, unacceptable to PAS stalwarts like Amaluddin Darus and Abu Bakar Hamzah. When he resigned from the party on 15 June 1974 (apparently following Abu Bakar Hamzah's expulsion), Amaluddin Darus clearly had deep-seated grouses against Dato' Asri. Indeed, he told a press conference on 16 June 1974 that the party "has lately

deviated from its original principles based on the teachings of Islam. I have been inactive since 1971 especially after the PAS Tumpat Branch crisis."<sup>127</sup>

Referring further to his resignation, Amaluddin Darus said that "the present dissatisfaction within PAS was caused by the suspension of the Tumpat Branch of the party in 1971, and Dato' Mohamad Asri's approval of Singapore's expulsion from Malaysia in 1965 without getting a mandate from the party congress."<sup>128</sup> Amaluddin argued that Dato' Asri "should have called for an extraordinary general meeting of the party before he could extend the support to expel Singapore. A serious matter such as this one which involves national politics should not come from the decision of one man, unless he gets the approval from the party Congress."<sup>129</sup> Amaluddin also alleged that Dato' Asri had given his tacit approval to join the *Barisan Nasional* without referring to the party first.<sup>130</sup> "I do not oppose the National Front concept, but I am not happy with the leadership."<sup>131</sup>

The leadership problem within PAS did not end there. In June 1975, two events in Kelantan almost brought down the state government. The first event was the appointment of Dato' Haji Mohamad bin Nasir as the new *Menteri Besar* of the state by the National Front leader and Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak, replacing Dato' Haji Ishak Lotfi bin Omar, Dato' Asri's nephew. This decision caused much discontent among Dato' Asri's faction because they had hoped for another candidate, Wan Ismail bin Wan Ibrahim, to be the state's *Menteri Besar*. Wan Ismail had been Dato' Mohamad Asri's Political Secretary in the Coalition Cabinet. However, federal leaders seemed to think that the appointment of Dato' Haji Mohamad bin Nasir, who was more acceptable to UMNO, would help solve the many serious land and administrative problems in the state.<sup>132</sup> For one thing, Wan Ismail bin Wan Ibrahim, if chosen, would most likely prefer to salvage the interests of his immediate mentor, Dato' Mohamad Asri, and his faction. More than that, it was no secret that Wan Ismail's relation with the Sultan was strained. Therefore, his candidacy, if advanced, could not possibly have been approved by the Sultan.<sup>133</sup>

The second event was the announcement by Dato' Haji Mohamad bin Nasir that he would contest the PAS national Presidency in the party elections.<sup>134</sup> As the tradition of the party had been that the post of President should not be contested, although in 1971 Abu Bakar Hamzah did challenge Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri,<sup>135</sup> the decision made by Dato' Haji Mohamad bin Nasir to bid for the party Presidency in 1975<sup>136</sup> set in motion a chain of events which were to lead to the party's fateful expulsion from the *Barisan Nasional* in 1977. Earlier on, referring to pressures from some quarters in PAS demanding his resignation as Kelantan's *Mentri Besar*, Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir said he had "never asked to be *Mentri Besar* and did not join PAS with the intention of becoming a 'big man' some day".<sup>137</sup> As events soon were to prove, these pressures came from the faction close to Dato' Asri who felt that Haji Mohamad Nasir's clampdown on timber concessions in Kelantan had deprived them of their livelihood.<sup>138</sup> In this action, 200,000 acres of timber land which had been given to Dato' Asri's loyal supporters and PAS' State Assemblymen were frozen "for security reasons".<sup>139</sup>

Indeed, disenchantment with the leadership of Dato' Ishak Lofti bin Omar and later, Dato' Asri, grew within PAS in Kelantan by the early 1970s. Both were criticized for perpetuating nepotism in the state administration.<sup>140</sup> The issues on corruption and nepotism were so disturbing in Kelantan that they were persistently raised by the *Parti Sosialist Rakyat Malaya* (PSRM or Malayan People's Socialist Party) and the *Bebas Bersatu* (United Independents) during election campaigns in 1974. *Bebas Bersatu*, who were more vociferous and threatening than their socialist counterpart, were challenging the *Barisan Nasional* for control of the state of Kelantan. The party was led by a Pas dissident youth leader, Mohamad Fakaruddin bin Abdullah,<sup>141</sup> who was the former PAS Member of Parliament for Pasir Mas. The nucleus of the *Bebas Bersatu* was the "Golongan Revolusi" (Revolutionary Group), later popularly known as the "Revolusi 14" or the "Revolution of the Group of 14", which mainly consisted of PAS dissident members. They were supported by radical students of the MARA Institute of



Technology and local universities. In March 1974, the leaders of PAS' dissidents demanded the resignation of the then *Mentri Besar*, Dato' Ishak Lotfi bin Omar, for his alleged corrupt state government and leadership. It published a manifesto and was campaigning for a "clean, honest and efficient government".<sup>142</sup> Their leader, Mohamad Fakaruddin Abdullah, had pledged to "cleanse the government of corruption and nepotism of Dato' Asri in Kelantan".<sup>143</sup> Pamphlets attacking the *Mentri Besar* and the SEDC preceded the election campaign. One of the pamphlets alleged that the state government had sold a total of 1,175,202 acres of timber land to various companies since 1959 at prices far below the market value. Photostated copies of a cheque for RM140,000 which was purported to have been part of the timber concession payment were distributed widely several days prior to the election.<sup>144</sup>

### **The Fall of PAS in Kelantan**

Although the *Bebas Bersatu* did not succeed in capturing power in Kelantan in 1974, PAS leadership nevertheless faced serious opposition within the party, as mentioned earlier. Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir was, in effect, UMNO's choice. Dato' Asri and his supporters endeavoured to plan the fall of the new *Mentri Besar*. The group opposed to Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir was known as the 'Group of 20' (*Kumpulan 20*). However, it was not until 1977 that the group made their move. After a period of verbal exchanges, Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir was given an ultimatum to step down or face a vote of no confidence. The decision was taken after a meeting of the PAS State Liaison Committee on 10 September and Dato' Mohamad Nasir was given until 20 September to step down voluntarily.

Among the reasons given for their action was that the *Mentri Besar* did not follow party policy, often criticized party leadership, betrayed the trust placed upon him, damaged the image of the party, supported a certain group which worked against the interests of the party and, last but not least, he had weakened the state government.<sup>145</sup> The *Mentri Besar*, apparently, often when giving speeches, referred to himself as "neither

PAS nor UMNO".<sup>146</sup> But Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir replied that he was not going to step down. At any rate, elections were expected to be held in 1978. He further added that he would refer the problem to the central government because, he argued, the crisis involved a component of the *Barisan Nasional* rather than just the PAS administration in Kelantan. It would be unconstitutional for PAS to overthrow him as he was appointed *Mentri Besar* by the *Barisan Nasional*. Clearly, he said, he was responsible to the *Barisan Nasional*.<sup>147</sup>

When Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir did not step down on 20 September 1977, the PAS State Liaison Committee took action to pass a vote of no confidence against him. When this was made public, large numbers of people in Kota Bharu came out to the streets in support of the *Mentri Besar*. It was reported that between 60 to 80 thousand took part in the demonstration. Still, PAS went ahead and expelled Dato' Mohamad Nasir on 29 September 1977. Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir's popularity proved to be a difficult obstacle to surmount. After the expulsion had been announced, Dato' Asri immediately apologized and said that there had been a technical error. But when the Supreme Council of PAS met again on 10 October 1977, once more a decision was taken to expel Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir.

Altogether 13 persons supported the expulsion, seven opposed and two chose to remain neutral. Dato' Asri, as the chairman, did not vote as he did on 29 September. At that time he voted for expulsion. But when the matter was taken to the Kota Bharu High Court on 13 October 1977, the Judge issued an injunction preventing PAS from expelling the *Mentri Besar*. That, however, did not prevent the State Assembly, on 15 October 1977, from passing a vote of no confidence against Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir. When the motion was passed, 13 of the UMNO State Assemblymen and one from MCA walked out. So did Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir. Outside the Assembly Hall, he was received by thousands of people. He was also not without strong support within PAS itself. Indeed, the strongest support came from the Deputy President of PAS, Haji Hassan Adli.<sup>148</sup>

The vote of no confidence unavoidably led to a crisis in the relationship between PAS and UMNO. Understandably, UMNO wanted Dato' Mohamad Nasir to be reinstated. But when the stalemate could not be broken, the Prime Minister (Tun Hussein Onn) directed his deputy (Dr. Mahathir Mohamad) to resolve the problem but whatever the formula adopted, the person chosen by PAS as the new *Mentri Besar* must have UMNO's consent. But PAS refused to submit to UMNO's demands.<sup>149</sup>

Meanwhile, anti-PAS demonstrations in Kota Bharu, in particular, threatened to become violent. On 8 November 1977, a state of emergency was declared in Kelantan. The state was placed directly under federal control. Tan Sri Hashim Aman, a civil servant, was appointed Chief Administrator. Dato' Asri and his supporters were enraged. Those in the Cabinet resigned their positions and all members of the party serving in the Kelantan State Executive Committee were directed to do likewise. Hassan Adli, however, refused to follow the directive. He remained in the Cabinet and was therefore expelled by PAS. But PAS itself was expelled from the *Barisan Nasional* for opposing the emergency laws passed by parliament. On 12 February 1978, the emergency laws were repealed and Kelantan went to the polls on 11 March 1978.<sup>150</sup>

#### CHAPTER IV – NOTES

1. See Stephen Chee, "The Political Economy of Multiracial Development" in Stephen Chee and Khoo Siew Mun (ed.), *MalaYsian Economic Development and Politics* (Kuala Lumpur: Yayasan Anda, 1975), p.1.
2. See William Shaw, *Tun Razak: His Life and Times*, p.232.
3. See Stephen Chee, "The Political Economy of Multiracial Development", p.1.
4. See William Shaw, op.cit., p.233.
5. Ibid.

6. See Government of Malaysia, *Second Malaysia Plan, 1971-1975* (Kuala Lumpur: Government Printers, 1971).
7. See William Shaw, *Tun Razak: His Life and Times*, p.233.
8. In the case of Trengganu, PAS' controlled the state only briefly in 1959.
9. See Robert O. Tilman, *The Centralization Theme in Malaysian-Federal Relations, 1957-75*, Occasional Paper No.39 (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, May 1976), p.36.
10. See R.S. Milne and Diane K. Mauzy, "Malaysia Today", *Current History*, Vol.65, No.388 (December 1973).
11. See Stuart Drummond, "Towards a New Order in Malaysia", *The World Today*, Vol.29 (October 1973), p.440.
12. See Government of Malaysia, *Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980* (Kuala Lumpur: Government Printers, 1976), p.74.
13. See Jomo K. Sundaram, *A Question of Class: Capital, the State and Uneven Development in Malaya* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1986), p.249.
14. See M. Zainudin Salleh and Zulkifli Osman, "The Economic Structure" in Fisk, E.K. and H. Osman-Rani, ed., *The Political Economy of Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.144.
15. Ibid. See also Treasury of Malaysia, *Economic Report, 1974-1975* (Kuala Lumpur: Government Printers, 1974), p.84.
16. See Leon Comber, *13 May 1969: A Historical Survey of Sino-Malay Relations* (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann Asia, 1983), p.57.
17. See J.H. Beaglehole, "Malay Participation in Commerce and Industry: The Role of Risda and MARA", in W.H. Morris-Jones and Colin Leys, ed., *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies* (Leicester University Press, 1969), pp.230-231.

18. See Geoffrey B. Hainsworth, "Economic Growth and Poverty in Southeast Asia: Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippine", *Pacific Affairs*, Vol.52, No.1 (Spring 1979), pp.5-41.
19. See Yoshiyuki Hagiwara, "Political Leadership of the Malayan Party: Rahman to Razak", *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol.VIII, No.4 (December 1974), pp.374-375.
20. Ibid., p.384.
21. See Richard Stubbs, "The United Malays National Organization, the Malayan Chinese Association and the Early Years of the Malayan Emergency 1948-1955", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol.10 (1979), pp.82-83.
22. See Pran Chopra, "The Malaysian Miracles and Dilemma", *The World Today*, Vol.30 (May 1974), p.202. Vested with vast political and institutional powers to create a nucleus of Malay entrepreneurs, Tengku Razaleigh was invariably next in importance to the Prime Minister. When he became the Minister of Finance during Tun Hussein Onn's premiership (1976-1981) his power and influence increased considerably but many Malays were inclined to believe that he had not done enough for them.
23. Hussein Onn (later Tun) was the son of the founder-President of UMNO, Dato' Onn bin Jaafar. When Tun Razak died on January 14, 1976, he took over the post of Prime Minister. His tenure lasted until 1981 whereupon he withdrew due to health reasons.
24. See Karl Von Vorys, *Democracy Without Consensus: Communalism and Political Stability in Malaysia*, Princeton University Press, London, 1975, p.427.
25. See S. Drummond, "Towards a New Order in Malaysia", *The World Today*, Vol.29 (October 1973), pp.443-444.
26. This subject will be discussed in greater details subsequently.
27. See Sevinc Carlson, *Malaysia: Search for National Unity and Economic Growth*, The Centre for Strategic and International Studies (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975), p.2.

28. See Roger Kershaw, "National and Local Perspectives of a Non-Ideological Election: West Malaysia, August 1974 (with special reference to Kelantan), *Politics, Society and Economy in the ASEAN States* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1975), p.205.
29. Ibid., p.293.
30. See Stephen Chee, "Malaysia and Singapore: The Political Economy of Multiracial Development", *Asian Survey*, Vol.14, No.2 (February 1974), p.186.
31. See Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties* (London: Methuen, reprint, 1967), p.324.
32. See Carl von Vorys, op.cit., pp.371-385.
33. Tun Dr. Ismail was appointed Deputy Prime Minister by Tun Razak in September 1970. In 1973 he died in office of a heart attack at the age of 58, followed by Tun Razak of leukemia in January 1976 at the age of 54.
34. See Carl von Vorys, op.cit., p.386.
35. See William Shaw, *Tun Razak: His Life and Times*, p.168.
36. See Sevinc Carlson, op.cit., pp.12-13.
37. Ibid.
38. See *Berita Harian*, 18 April 1972.
39. Abdul Ghafar Baba became Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister in 1986 after Dato' Musa Hitam resigned from the government following a clash with the Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, over, at first, development policy issues which subsequently snowballed into what came to be understood as power struggle within UMNO for the premiership. In 1987 Abdul Ghafar contested against Dato' Musa for the post of UMNO Deputy President, while Tengku Razaleigh, in a pact with Dato' Musa, took on Dr. Mahathir for the Presidency. While Ghafar (and so did Dr. Mahathir) won the contest, he

never did feel secure in his position as rumours were in abundance that he was a 'stop-gap' UMNO Deputy President as well as Deputy Prime Minister. However, when UMNO once again held its three-year party election in 1990, Ghafar had reason to celebrate because Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, the then Education Minister and UMNO Vice President, decided not to contest against him. But three years later, in November 1993, this changed dramatically. In what was seen as a clearly unprecedented exit for an UMNO Deputy President, Ghafar, in the face of a formidable challenge from Anwar Ibrahim and faced with the prospect of being deserted by his loyal supporters, abandoned his decision to defend his position and subsequently resigned as Deputy Prime Minister.

Many explanations were given for his downfall. One unofficial interpretation had it that he had allowed his son, Mohd. Tamrin Ghafar (Member of Parliament for Batu Berendam), to 'run' his office for him and also had allegedly colluded with him to sell the controversial Rahman Putra Golf Club memberships for a hefty RM28 million to MARA, a government agency, while Tamrin Ghafar was its Chairman and Ghafar Baba the Club's President and Deputy Prime Minister. There were stories linking father and son to a life-style objectionable to the Prime Minister. Rumours were brewing too that moves to incapacitate Dr. Mahathir (involving leaders of the opposition parties and certain *Barisan Nasional* component parties by constitutional means) because of his purported support of Anwar Ibrahim in the contest against Ghafar were being seriously considered. Private meetings were held between Ghafar's 'inner circle' and certain leaders of the opposition parties to explore the possibilities.

40. Interview with Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, 17 December 1985.
41. He died in 1973. The leadership crisis in UMNO in 1987 led to the formation of 'UMNO Baru' (subsequently the name 'Baru' was dropped so as not to differentiate it from the original UMNO) under Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's leadership and the subsequent formation of 'Semangat 46' led by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah. The crisis was said to have begun from the time of Tun Dr. Ismail's death when Tun Hussein Onn succeeded him

as Deputy Prime Minister in 1973. From that time on the line of succession in UMNO was seen to be blurred by the inclusion of Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah and two UMNO radicals, that is, Dato' Musa Hitam and Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. At the General Assembly in 1975, UMNO delegates voted in Ghafar Baba, who represented the 'old guard', Tengku Razaleigh (the new blood) and Dr. Mahathir "who could speak on behalf of Malay radicals", as Vice Presidents. Bad blood between Tengku Razaleigh and Dr. Mahathir seemed to have had its beginnings in that year's UMNO election since it was strongly rumoured that the former had preferred Dato' Harun Idris to Dr. Mahathir as Vice President.

In spite of this, Dr. Mahathir, on assuming his position as Deputy Prime Minister in 1976, and subsequently in 1981, as Prime Minister, showed little sign of vindictiveness against Tengku Razaleigh whom he retained as Finance Minister until 1984. Dr. Mahathir could, and many expected he would, remove Tengku Razaleigh as Finance Minister in 1981 when he became Prime Minister, but this he chose not to do. In fact, he allowed Tengku Razaleigh to keep his Finance portfolio to the chagrin of Dato' Musa, who had earlier on written to Dr. Mahathir to register his disapproval of the move.

42. Interview with Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, 17 December 1985.
43. Interview with Dato' Abdullah Ahmad, 24 July 1987.
44. Another UMNO leader whom Tun Razak had intended to use to keep Dato' Harun in check was Dato' Mansor Othman, MARA's Director of Training. See Karl von Vorys, *op.cit.*, p.255.
45. See *Berita Harian*, 17 December 1970.
46. *Ibid.*
47. See *Berita Harian*, 18 December 1970.
48. *Ibid.*
49. The Setapak UMNO Youth division chairman, Kaharudin Mo'min, expressed his support for the proposed coalition. See *Berita Harian*, 20 December 1970. On 29 December, the chair-



man of Permatang Janggus UMNO Branch, Harun Taib, announced his branch's decision to support the proposal. See *Berita Harian*, 29 December 1970.

50. See Abu Bakar Hamzah, "Explanations on Enquiries in Connection with Coalition Governments" (Kuala Lumpur: PAS Headquarters, 1972). Abu Bakar explained to me sometime in 1976 that it was necessary that this policy paper be tabled at the PAS Central Committee meeting which decided on whether the party should form a coalition with the Alliance, although the key figures in the coalition negotiation like Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri, Abu Bakar Omar, Haji Wan Ismail Ibrahim and others had agreed in advance to the coalition proposal. It was a matter of endorsement, as he put it.
51. See *New Straits Times Malaysia*, 22 September 1973.
51. See Rokiah Ahdul Talib, "Rancangan Tanah Sebagai Satu Strategi Pembangunan: Satu Kes Kajian Ke Atas Rancangan-rancangan Tanah Negeri Kelantan" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1978), p.358. See Tables 6 and 7 of this Chapter.
53. *Ibid.*, pp.360-361.
54. During the difficult period of the Alliance-PAS relations, it was customary for the federal leaders to look for "spots" and opportunities to exploit as part of the Alliance strategy to demoralise the PAS government.
55. I mentioned in my book in 1975 that certain PAS leaders were taking advantage of the *Mageran* rule by initiating measures that would enable the State Economic Development Corporation, known as the *Perbadanan Kemajuan Iktisad Negeri Kelantan* (PKINK)' to take part in the state's economic activities, notably timber concessions and land alienation with the intention of enriching themselves or their close associates. They set up numerous logging companies, split vast tracts of timber land into several concessions and leased them to non-Malay companies for extraction. This book became controversial overnight as Dato' Asri, who was PAS president and the Federal Minister of

Land and Mines, lodged his objection with Premier Tun Razak who in turn made a press statement on the matter. The Tun's statement became headline news in all major newspapers. In his qualified statement, the Prime Minister said that he viewed any effort to split the *Barisan Nasional* with concern. He however added that he could not stop writers from writing what they liked. To another question from the press, Tun Razak denied having met the author for approval to publish the book.

The whole episode surrounding its publication was blown out of proportion because two well-known politicians and writers, Dato' Abdullah Ahmad and A. Samad Ismail (now Tan Sri), mentioned in the book were interpreted by certain UMNO 'old guards' as being responsible for the publication. One UMNO 'old guard', Dato' Senu bin Abdul Rahman, UMNO's Secretary-General (this author was informed later), instructed reporters from the *New Straits Times* and the *Utusan Melayu* group to ask the Tun what he felt about the book after chairing the UMNO Supreme Council's weekly meeting at the UMNO headquarters in Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman. To put the record straight, in 1975, Dato' Senu was one of the 'old guards' in UMNO who saw Dato' Abdullah Ahmad's rise in UMNO with the help of the former Singapore's Peoples' Action Party's (PAP's) tactician and mastermind, A. Samad Ismail, as a threat to their political survival. Dato' Abdullah was remembered as one of Tun Razak's political advisers who successfully engineered the resignation of Malaysia's first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, after the 13 May 1969 incident. Dato' Abdullah was also believed to be responsible for Dr Mahathir's rise in UMNO during the time of Tun Razak and Tun Hussein.

The rise of the 'Young Turks' after Tun Razak came to power in 1971, it was feared, would lead to certain UMNO veterans being displaced. As a result, after Tun Razak died in January 1976, the 'old guards' almost immediately orchestrated the removal of the 'Young Turks' from power by instituting charges against leaders of the 'Young Turks' on the grounds that they had served the cause of communism. By then, Home Affairs Minister Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, had become the most powerful man in the country. He had A. Samad Ismail arrested under the Internal Security Act (ISA), and towards the end of 1976, Dato'

Abdullah Ahmad was also arrested without trial; thus ended a low-key power struggle in UMNO which helped to preserve the position of the 'old guards'. Dato' Abdullah and Samad Ismail were released in 1981 by the Mahathir-Musa administration.

The book, referred to here, is *Kelantan: Politik dan Dilema Pembangunan* (Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Melayu Publications, 1975). On power struggle in UMNO, see also Jerome Bass, "Malaysian Politics 1968-1970: Crisis and Response" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1973) and Robert Shaplen, *A Turning Wheel - Thirty Years of the Asian Revolution*, Andre Deutsch, London, 1979, pp.147-171.

56. Interview with Dato' Abdullah Ahmad, 24 July 1987.
57. See K.J. Ratnam, "Religion and Politics in Malaya" in Robert O. Tilman, ed., *Man, State and Society in Contemporary Southeast Asia* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), p.356.
58. See Clive S. Kessler, "Islam, Society and Political Behaviour: Some Comparative Implications of the Malay Case", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol.23 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972).
59. See Stuart Drummond, "Towards a New Order in Malaysia", p.445.
60. Ibid.
61. See Nordin Sopiee, "The Action Parliament", *New Straits Times*, 5 November 1974.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. See K. Das, "Hussein Waits for a Golden Egg", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 13 February 1978, and also Maria Samad, "Clampdown on Graft in the Public Services", *New Straits Times*, 13 December 1987.
65. Interview with Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, 17 December 1987.
66. This informant asked that his identity should not be revealed.
67. Ibid.

68. See *Berita Harian*, 12 April 1964.
69. See UMNO, "Usaha UMNO dan Kerajaan Pusat", UMNO Headquarters, Kuala Lumpur, 1969.
70. See *New Straits Times*, 12, 15, 17 and 20 August 1975 and also *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Hong Kong, 5 and 12 December 1975.
71. See, for instance, Clive S. Kessler, "Islamic and Political Opposition in Southeast Asia", p.13.
72. I wrote to the Malaysian Inspector-General Police, Tan Sri Haniff Omar (now Tun), in June 1976, requesting access to the tape recordings which contained election speeches by opposition party leaders who accused Dato' Mohamad Asri and other PAS leaders in Kelantan of involvement in corrupt activities. He replied that the Special Branch Police recordings had been destroyed.
73. See *Straits Times*, 21 April 1964.
74. *Ibid.*, 2 December 1967.
75. *Ibid.*
76. *Ibid.*
77. *Ibid.*, 18 and 22 August 1967.
78. See also B. Simandjuntak, *Malayan Federalism, 1945-1963*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1969.
79. See *Sunday Times*, 29 November 1965.
80. *Ibid.*
81. *Ibid.*
82. See *Straits Times*, 30 November 1964.
83. *Ibid.*, 11 December 1964.

84. Ibid.
85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid., 21. December 1965.
88. See *ibid.*, 31 January 1967 and 8 May 1967.
89. Article 111(2) of the Federal Constitution, as stated earlier, prohibits state governments from securing loans from commercial banks without the approval of the federal government.
90. See *Straits Times*, 21 December 1967.
91. Ibid.
92. See *ibid.*, 15 February 1969.
93. See *ibid.*, 3 August 1968 and 28 August 1968. At that time, PAS had 21 members and the Alliance party had 9 in the State Assembly. The Alliance would require at least 6 or 7 PAS State Assemblymen to cross over in a 30-seat state legislature to enable it to dislodge PAS rule in the state.
94. See *ibid.*, 15 September 1968.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., 7 February 1969.
97. Ibid., 12 February 1969.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid.
100. In the early 1970s Parliamentary government was suspended. The country was governed by the National Operations Council (NOC) whose members consisted of leaders of various politi-

cal parties. Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister, acted as Chairman of the NOC.

101. See William Shaw, *op.cit.*, p.248.
102. See *New Straits Times*, 14 September 1981.
103. See "On the Take – Who's at fault?", *New Straits Times*, 14 September 1981.
104. The fall of PAS in Kelantan will be discussed later.
105. Interview with Dato' Abdullah Ahmad, 20 April 1987.
106. *Ibid.*
107. *Berita Harian*, 10 December 1972.
108. See *Straits Times*, editorial, 23 December 1972.
109. See Roger Kershaw, "National and Local Perspectives of a Non-Ideological Election", pp.204-206.
110. See *New Straits Times*, 15 August 1974.
111. *Ibid.*, 20 September 1974.
112. Among the student leaders was the President of the MARA Institute of Technology Students' Union, Ibrahim bin Ali. See *New Straits Times*, 24 August 1974. Ibrahim joined Berjasa under the leadership of Dato' Haji Mohamad bin Nasir, then UMNO, Semangat 46, and back to UMNO. He finally approached me to help him defect to UMNO. I arranged for him to see UMNO leaders in 1990. He asked then for the post of Deputy Minister as a condition for his defection. Although this was not forthcoming he still joined UMNO.
113. At 33, Abu Bakar Hamzah, who became PAS' national youth leader was sacked by the Malayan Muslim College at Klang because he went to Cairo to attend an Afro-Asian youth conference without permission from the College authorities. He

was a Senior Assistant librarian in the College. He was elected PAS' national youth leader in December 1958 and left for Cairo to represent the youth section of the organisation at the Afro-Asian Youth Conference in February 1959. See *Straits Times*, 24 February 1959. Abu Bakar died in Kelantan in 1993.

114. One of PAS' national Vice-Presidents, Ali bin Taib, conceded that Abu Bakar Hamzah was one of the party's principal tacticians. Interview with Ali bin Taib on 26 April 1978. Abu Bakar Hamzah, in the late 1940s, served in the Malayan Security Service, a government intelligence organisation.
115. He is an honours graduate from the University of Malaya who was one of the university's student leaders in the mid-1960s. His presence in PAS caused considerable furore as he had difficulties with the grass-roots. Nevertheless, due to his closeness to Dato' Asri, he was chosen by his mentor, Dato' Asri, to contest the State Assembly seat of Jeli as a *Barisan Nasional* candidate in the 1974 elections and won. Wan Ismail too is a University of Malaya graduate who majored in History.
116. Interview with Abu Bakar Hamzah on 3 November 1987.
117. Interview with Haji Mohamad Zain Abdullah, Member of Parliament for Bachok, on 11 November 1987. Haji Mohamad Zain remained a loyal supporter of Dato' Asri. He joined UMNO together with Dato' Asri.
118. Interview with a PAS Member of Parliament on 11 November 1987 who asked to remain anonymous.
119. Ibid.
120. Interview with Dr. Mohamad Nor Nawawi on 6 November 1987. He was a close associate of Wan Ismail and a leader of *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* (ABIM), which in the 1970s had become an important rallying point for University of Malaya Muslim youths. He was a lecturer at the University of Malaya before moving to the International Islamic University.
121. Haji Hassan Shukri became the party's new Secretary-General

when Abu Bakar Hamzah was chosen to be the Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries following the Alliance-PAS coalition on 1 January 1973.

122. See *New Straits Times*, 27 April 1974.
123. He was a member of the PAS Central Committee and had been one of the party's second echelon leaders tipped to be a contender for the top leadership position.
124. This educational institution was initially set up by the PAS state government of Kelantan in the 1960s to prepare students for university education in the Middle East as well as a sort of a "training ground" for PAS party cadres who, upon completing their courses, would be returning to their respective states to take up positions in the party.
125. See *New Straits Times*, 29 April 1974.
126. See *Berita Harian*, 17 June 1974.
127. *Ibid.*, 17 June 1979.
128. *Ibid.* It must be noted that PAS' stand on the entry of Singapore into the Federation of Malaysia and the country's subsequent exit had not been consistent. While it fought against Singapore's entry in the 1964 elections, in 1969, PAS campaigned against the country's expulsion.
129. See *Berita Harian*, 17 June 1979. Amaluddin's stand on this issue is understandable. He was the Kelantan PAS delegate to the 6th PAS Congress held in Kuala Lumpur in August 1957 – a few days before independence – who had moved a resolution demanding the inclusion of Singapore, British North Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak in the independent Federation of Malaya. Amaluddin had said that the territories should be accepted as parts of Malaya because of many factors which brought them and Malaya close to one another. The PAS Central Committee, however, moved an amendment, which was adopted, that the section about making them part of Malaya be omitted. The Congress would ask the government to approach Britain for independence for the territories. See *Straits Times*, 26 August 1957.



130. The prevailing opinion among Malays was that Dato' Asri could ill afford to bring the coalition issue into the open for fear that whatever decision he might have made at that time would be shot down by party zealots who had gathered steam to confront him on some vital issues concerning the direction of the party. PAS, however, officially gave its mandate to its leaders on 16 June 1974 – more than six months after the coalition was formed.
131. See *Berita Harian*, 17 June 1974.
132. See R.S. Milne, "Malaysia and Singapore", *Asian Survey*, Vol.16, No.2 (February 1976), p.188.
133. Interview with Dato' Abdullah Ahmad, 25 December 1987. But PAS was inclined to believe that the Sultan's objection to Wan Ismail was engineered by Dato' Abdullah Ahmad and Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah who were unofficial advisers of the Sultan on political matters in the state.
134. Attempts were made to topple Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir at the Pasir Mas-Rantau Panjang divisional meeting on 12 June 1975 which was officiated by Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri. At this meeting, Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir was allowed to speak only for 15 minutes. This information is based on an unpublished article written for *Berita Harian* by Ab. Rahman bin Abu Bakar. This article, entitled "Siapakah Dalang Dalam Krisis PAS Kelantan Hari Ini?" (Who Engineered the Kelantan PAS Crisis Today?), was addressed to this author when he was a journalist with the newspaper in 1975. It was not published due to editorial advice.
135. Abu Bakar Hamzah was defeated in this Presidential election. Nevertheless, this contest set a precedence in that it was the first time since the death of Dr. Burhanuddin that a PAS president was challenged.
136. See *New Straits Times*, 26 June 1975. PAS' Presidential election is held once every two years. At a press interview Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir said that he had also received several letters supporting his candidacy from various parts of Kelantan.

Selangor and Trengganu. He said, "The confidence and faith of the people in my leadership in the state are gaining momentum. Whoever tries to topple me will have to topple the coalition government first." Ibid. However, his decision to contest was later revoked "in the interest of party unity".

137. Ibid., 13 June 1975.
138. PAS leadership in Kelantan adopted the practice of distributing timber concessions to party leaders and functionaries since it came to power in 1959.
139. See *New Straits Times*, 14 May and 14 June 1975.
140. Since 1959 the post of *Mentri Besar* of the state had been in the control of Dato' Ishak Lotfi Omar (1959-1964), and his uncle, Dato' Asri (1964-1972), and several important posts in the State Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) were reserved for Dato' Asri's close associates and trusted friends.
141. Mohamad Fakaruddin was a member of Pasir Mas Hilir PAS division. On 30 May 1974, just a few months before the 1974 general elections, this division was suspended by the PAS Central Committee. Fakaruddin was considered the "brain" behind the formation of the "Revolutionary Group" and emerged as the leader of the United Independents. His deep-seated grouses against the leadership stemmed from his opposition to the inclusion in PAS of "secular advisers" and young lieutenants associated with Dato' Asri. The United Independents was formed soon after the formation of the Alliance-PAS coalition in preparation for the general elections on 24 August 1974. The Independents' objective was to topple the state government under Dato' Asri's leadership. Its leader, Mohamad Fakaruddin Abdullah, made use of corruption issues extensively in an effort to bring down the state government. The party's targets were Dato' Asri himself, his nephew, Dato' Ishak Lotfi bin Omar (the then Kelantan *Mentri Besar*), Nik Mustapha Shafie (a close confidant of Dato' Asri), Haji Wan Ismail Ibrahim and members of the State Executive Council who were dubbed as Dato' Asri's "inner circle". Several members of the "Revolutionary Group" along with party veterans

such as Haji Khaidir Khatib and Haji Mohamad Nor, tried to see Dato' Asri on this matter but failed.

142. See A. Samad Ismail, "Rebels Without a Cause", *New Straits Times*, 20 August 1974.
143. Ibid.
144. Ibid.
145. *Berita Harian*, 16 September 1977.
146. See Muzawar bin Md. Jalei, "Krisis Politik Kelantan 1977" (Academic Exercise, Department of History, University of Malaya, 1979/80), p.8. Muzawar had interviewed Nik Aziz bin Nik Mat, Head of the *Dewan Ulama*, PAS.
147. *Berita Harian*, 17 September 1977.
148. For a blow by blow account of the Nasir-Asri confrontation, see Lotfi Ismail, *Detik Mula Konfrontasi Nasir-Asri*, Petaling Jaya, 1978. See also the sequel *Berakhirnya Zaman Keagungan PAS*, Kuala Lumpur, 1978.
149. For an interesting account of this UMNO-PAS confrontation, see Subky Latif, *Siapa Ganti Asri?*, Kuala Lumpur, 1978. See also Mohd. Asri bin Haji Muda, *Cubaan dan Cabaran*, Kuala Lumpur, 1978.
150. On Kelantan under emergency rule, see Ariff Budiman Tahir, *Politik Darurat*, Kuala Lumpur, 1978. See also Alias Mohamed, *Sejarah Perjuangan Parti PAS: Satu Dilema*, Utusan Publications, Kuala Lumpur, 1978.

## Chapter V

### *The Haji Hadi Factor*

#### **The Fall of Dato Haji Mohamad Asri**

The crisis of 1977 was more than just a clash between Dato' Mohamad Asri and Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir and their respective supporters.<sup>1</sup> UMNO Kelantan, then under the powerful leadership of Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, was carefully working towards undermining PAS' position there. Tengku Razaleigh had the support of many young Kelantanese pursuing tertiary education in the universities and the Mara Institute of Technology. These were not products of *pondok* schools but, in a large number of cases, graduates of private secular schools that had mushroomed in Kelantan ever since the local universities began taking in Malay-medium students on a large scale in the early 1970s.

Kelantan was the second Malaysian state, after Sabah, to hold its state elections. Those who had followed events in Kelantan closely since 1977 were quite certain that PAS' position in that state had been severely shaken. The fight was not just between UMNO and PAS. A party to be reckoned with was Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir's *Berjasa*, formed in December 1977. It was no secret that UMNO and *Berjasa* collaborated in the 1978 elections although, in a few constituencies, candidates of both these parties contested against one another.

There were 36 constituencies. PAS contested all the con-

stituencies, the *Barisan Nasional* 24 and *Berjasa* 25. There were also 10 independent candidates. On 12 March 1978, the *New Straits Times* reported:

A severe trouncing for PAS and a State Government firmly in the hands of the National Front and *Berjasa* – that is the decisive verdict of the people of Kelantan.

By 1.10 am the National Front had won 19 seats, sufficient to form the State Government on its own. *Berjasa* had nine seats and PAS two.

Dato Haji Mohamad Nasir successfully defended his Tendong constituency defeating his PAS rival by 4,429 votes. He had won with a majority of 5,702 in 1974. PAS casualties included the Deputy *Menteri Besar*, Haji Wan Ismail bin Wan Ibrahim, as well as its legal adviser, Dato' Wan Mustapha bin Haji Ali. The party received a great setback in all three seats in the Nilam Puri area which comprised the Parliamentary constituency of Dato' Mohamad Asri. The final results were: the *Barisan Nasional* won 23 seats, *Berjasa* 11 and PAS only 2. PAS beat *Barisan Nasional* in Manek Urai by 98 votes out of a total of 3,902 votes cast. It also beat *Berjasa* in Sering by only 84 votes out of a total of 7,308 votes polled.<sup>2</sup>

The Parliamentary elections were held on 8 July 1978. With Kelantan firmly in its grasp, the *Barisan Nasional* was confident of making a clean sweep of the 12 Parliamentary seats in the state. But it was far less optimistic in Trengganu. Tengku Razaleigh himself admitted that the *Barisan Nasional* would face a tough battle with PAS in several constituencies and the *Barisan's* chances of winning these seats stood at 50-50.<sup>3</sup>

Dato' Mohamad Asri himself, shocked by the state election results, decided that discretion was the better part of valour and abandoned his Nilam Puri constituency to contest at Padang Terap (Parliamentary seat) in Kedah where he faced Kedah's *Menteri Besar* (UMNO's Dato' Seri Sued Ahmad Shahabuddin). Altogether PAS fielded 88 candidates for Parliament; the party won only 3 – 2 in Kelantan, 2 in Kedah and 1 in Pahang. In Kedah, PAS' Deputy President, Dato' Abu

Bakar Umar, won the Kota Star Parliamentary and Jerlun state seats. Dato' Mohamad Asri was beaten at Padang Terap by 2,747 votes (Syed Ahmad polled 14,747 votes) whereas the PAS candidate at Nilam Puri (Ustaz Mustapha bin Ibrahim) lost to his *Barisan* rival by 2,157 votes.<sup>4</sup>

But the crushing defeat (both state and federal) suffered by PAS in Kelantan was no indication that the party was about to meet its demise. Its performance in Kedah continued to be impressive. Indeed, it was because PAS had succeeded in making considerable headway in Kedah that Dato' Asri thought that Padang Terap might be a safer seat than Nilam Puri. In Kedah, apart from winning two Parliamentary seats, PAS was able to retain 7 state seats (won in 1974 when it was part of the *Barisan*). These were: Jerlun, Anak Bukit, Langgar Limbong, Bukit Raya, Sik, Kupang and Sala. The final results of the 1978 elections in Peninsular Malaysia are shown in Table 11.

Its unexpected trouncing in Kelantan apart, one noteworthy feature of PAS which emerged in the course of the 1978 elections was the tendency, at least during the election campaigns, to deemphasize nationalist issues and to promote *Islam* accompanied by attempts to link up with the growing *Islamic* resurgence movement which was beginning to spread all over the country. PAS had called for the promotion of *Islamic* law in Kedah and ABIM (Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement) leaders contested in Kedah as PAS candidates. Members of ABIM indeed openly campaigned for PAS.<sup>5</sup> The appearance of ABIM as PAS sympathizers at this juncture deserves special attention for some of their leaders were soon to move into PAS and overhaul the whole outlook and programme of action of the party.

Over the years, since the formation of PAS in 1951, there was increasing enthusiasm with the party among those who would like to see *Islam* given its proper place in Malaysian society. This was because a fast moving, an adolescent group in the late 1960s. In 1971, they founded the *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* or ABIM, mainly to strengthen the cause of *Islam* - to *hambatkan*. The initiative to form ABIM was taken by the leaders of the *Pergerakan Kebangsaan Pelajar-Pelajar Islam Malaysia* (National

TABLE 9: RESULTS OF 1978 STATE ELECTIONS - KELANTAN

Nomination Day: 23 February 1978

Polling Day: 11 March 1978

Constituencies	Total No. Votes	Voting %	Spoilt Votes	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
1. SIMPANGAN	10,155	72.55	176	1. Tahirb Abdul Aziz (BERJASA) 2. Nik Ab. Ramhan bin Nik Mohamed (PAS)	5,087 2,104	2,983
2. SUNGAI PINANG	11,405	70.38	172	1. Che Hassan b Che Ishak (PAS) 2. Che Lat b Kassim (BN)	2,832 5,023	2,191
3. WAKAF BHARU	11,958	74.47	169	1. Ismail b Awang (PAS) 2. Omar b Awang Kechik (BN)	2,925 5,811	2,886
4. SEMUT API	9,585	73.62	185	1. Sapeia b Nik Yusof (IND) 2. Nik Mat b Nik Din (BERJASA) 3. Mohamed b Hussin (BN) 4. Wan Mamat b Wan Yusof (PAS)	339 983 2,813 2,737	
5. KEMUMIN	8,837	71.79	148	1. Haji Daud b Ibrahim (PAS) 2. Omar @ Omar b Ibrahim (BERJASA)	2,198 3,997	1,799

Constituencies	Total No. Votes	Voting %	Spoilt Votes	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
6. SERING	9,472	77.15	136	1. Che Ismail b Che Abdullah (BERJASA) 2. Abdullah b Haji Arshad (PAS)	3,544 3,628	84
7. TENDONG	10,632	75.99	148	1. Saharum b Ibrahim (PAS) 2. Hj. Mohamed b Nasir (BERJASA)	1,751 6,180	4,429
8. MERANTI	9,247	73.10	105	1. Zaid b Fadzil (PAS) 2. Hanifa b Ahmad (BERJASA)	2,853 3,802	949
9. BANDAR PASIR MAS	10,356	70.81	101	1. Abdullah b Che Hin (BN) 2. Hashim b Hj Omar (PAS) 3. Tengku Iskandar b Tengku Ahmad (BERJASA)	3,252 1,647 2,333	919
10. SUNGAI KELADI	14,001	63.08	136	1. Nik Mohd Kamil N. Abdullah (PAS) 2. Foo Chow Yong (BN)	2,261 6,435	4,174
11. TELIPOT	11,006	66.70	98	1. Hassan b Yaacob (BERJASA) 2. Ahmad Rastom (BN)	1,918 3,949	2,031



Constituencies	Total No. Votes	Voting %	Spoilt Votes	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
12.KUBANG KERIAN	11,277	73.94	186	1. Nik Bahari Shah b Jusoh (BERJASA) 2. Salahuddin b Abdullah (PAS) 3. Datuk Wan Mustapha Hj Ali (PAS)	5,252 1,376 1,376	2,352
13.TAWANG	10,781	78.86	200	1. Mohd. Daud b Mohd. Ali (BERJASA) 2. Mohd. Zain b Abdullah (PAS)	4,733 3,569	1,164
14.PERUPOK	8,922	76.91	168	1. Omar b Mohammed (PAS) 2. Hj. Mah Mohamed b Wan Ahmad (BERJASA)	2,847 3,847	1,000
15.JELAWAT	10,112	77.93	148	1. Mohamad b Hj Hassan (BN) 2. Mohd. B Hj Yacob (PAS)	4,261 3,471	790
16.GUAL PERIOK	6,411	75.26	78	1. Hamzah b Awang Hamat (PAS) 2. Husein b Ahmad (BN)	1,978 2,769	791
17. LEMAL	7,519	71.25	161	1. Noor Mohamed b Mohamed Din (BERJASA) 2. Mohd. Yusof b Hj Abdullah (PAS)	3,409 1,787	1,622

Constituencies	Total No. Votes	Voting %	Spoilt Votes	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
18. TOK UBAN	8,343	75.00	123	1. Abdullah b Che Man (IND) 2. Musa b Muhammad (PAS) 3. Daud @ Daud Yatimee b Ahmad (BERJASA)	1,631 1,487 3,016	1,385
19. SALOR	10,595	78.52	123	1. Mohamad Sarian (BERJASA) 2. Hassan b Hj Mohamed (PAS)	5,150 3,046	2,104
20. KETEREH	9,728	80.66	104	1. Ariffin b Mahmood (BN) 2. Hj Abdullah b Hj Hassan (PAS)	5,123 2,620	2,503
21. PERINGAT	9,222	76.47	106	1. Mohd. Amin @ Abd. Hamid b Salleh (PAS) 2. Wan Hashim b Hj Wan Ahmad (BERJASA)	2,390 4,556	2,166
22. BUKIT PANAU	8,912	77.39	29	1. Ab. Halim b Ab. Rahman (PAS) 2. Ab. Latif b Hj Ab. Rahman (BN) 3. Shahidan b Hj Ab. Rahman (BERJASA)	2,375 3,936 557	1,561
23. LANAS	5,626	81.78	24	1. Abdullah b Che Hassan (PAS) 2. Mohamed b Yacob (BN) 3. Mohamed b Hussin (IND) 4. Ahmad b Hj Awang Besar (BERJASA)	2,059 2,247 105 166	188

Constituencies	Total No. Votes	Voting %	Spoilt Votes	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
24. GUAL IPOH	7,245	81.34	56	1. Mohd. Jai b Mat Piah (PAS) 2. Mustafa b Yaakob (BN) 3. Shafii b Hj Abd. Ramhan (BERJASA)	881 3,859 1,097	2,761
25. PULAI CHONDONG	8,032	82.31	36	1. Hj Hamzah b Hj Salleh (IND) 2. Yahya b Othman (PAS) 3. Abdullah b Hj Mohamed (BN)	642 1,665 4,268	2,603
26. BANDAR MACHANG	10,688	78.38	54	1. Hj Wan Ismail b Wan Ahmad (IND) 2. Wan Mahyudin b Hj Wan Abu Bakar (PAS) 3. Tuan Ismail b Tuan Mat (BERJASA)	499 1,632 3,833	1,474
27. SUNGAI RASAU	5,979	80.60	33	1. Mohamad b Jusoh (IND) 2. Raja Husain b Haja Saleh (PAS) 3. Abdullah b Ahmad (BERJASA) 4. Yahya b Hj Yusoff (BN)	486 1,499 224 2,577	1,078
28. SELISING	10,519	78.02	103	1. Mahmud b Hussin (IND) 2. Setapa b Abd. Rahman (BERJASA) 3. Mohamad Nor b Ab. Majid (PAS) 4. Wan Muhammad b Wan Abu Bakar (BN)	353 474 2,343 4,929	2,586

Constituencies	Total No. Votes	Voting %	Spoilt Votes	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
29. BANDAR PASIR PUTIH	8,782	75.24	124	1. Raja Mahmud b Raja Mamat (BN) 2. Cikgu Musa b Salleh (IND) 3. Hj Wan Ismail b Ibrahim 4. Abd. Razak b Ag. Kechik (BERJASA)	3,751 545 1,960 228	1,791
30. CHERANG BUKU	8,673	78.34	126	1. Wan Omar b Wan Majid (BN) 2. Mat Nor b Mamat (PAS) 3. Mohamed Nawi b Awang (IND)	3,484 3,121 64	363
31. TEMANGAN	6,147	81.60	79	1. Ab. Ghani b Abd. Rahman (PAS) 2. Abd. Kadir b Awang (IND) 3. Salleh b Che Harun (BN) 4. Ahmad Tabarani b Harun (BERJASA)	1,527 45 2,701 664	1,174
32. GUCHIL	6,324	76.98	86	1. Mat Hussin b Hassn Gul (BERJASA) 2. Mohammad b Awang (PAS) 3. Mohamed b Isa (BN)	713 1,475 2,594	1,119
33. PAHI	6,115	71.27	105	1. Tengku Zaid b Tengku Ahmad (PAS) 2. Ab. Aziz b Talib (BN)	1,246 3,007	1,761
34. JELI	5,868	82.86	33	1. Ab. Samat b Hj Drahman (BN) 2. Che Mahmood b Mohd. Ali (BERJASA) 3. Khaider b Khatib (PAS)	2,659 391 1,889	660
35. GUA MUSANG	8,015	65.64	80	1. Hj Che Yusof b Che Noh (PAS) 2. Abdul Ghani b Abu Bakar (BN)	1,509 3,672	2,163
36. MANIK URAI	5,179			1) Wan Abdullah b W. Su (PAS) 2) Hssein Sulaiman (BN)	1,926 1,828	98

TABLE 10: RESULTS OF 1978 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS - KELANTAN

Nomination Day: 21 June 1978

Polling Day: 8 July 1978

Constituencies	Total No. Votes	Voting %	Spoilt Votes	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
1. TUMPAT	34,667	72.47	354	1. Tengku Noor Aishah bt. Tg. Ahmad (BN) 2. Wan Mat (PAS)	14,460 10,206	4,254
2. PENGKALAN CHEPA	29,156	75.83	291	1. Ustaz Nik Aziz (PAS) 2. Chegu Mohd. Nor Hj Ali (BN)	11,897 9,919	1,978
3. PASIR MAS	10,972	73.86	228	1. Chegu Man (BN) 2. Haji Zakaria b Ismail (PAS)	12,521 10,126	2,395
4. KOTA BHARU	41,162	67.77	308	1. Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen (BN) 2. Pak su Hj Lah (BN)	18,136 9,454	8,682
5. BACHOK	31,256	79.48	262	1. Chegu Hj Mohd. Zain (PAS) 2. Hassan b Harun (BN)	12,469 12,111	156
6. RANTAU PANJANG	23,207	74.05	186	1. Ibrahim b Muhamed (BN) 2. Haji Zain (PAS)	9,433 7,568	1,865

Constituencies	Total No. Votes	Voting %	Spoilt Votes	Candidates	Votes Obtained	Majority
7. NILAM PURI	30,765	78.26	171	1. Chegu Mat Hj Ali (BIN) 2. Ustaz Mustapha b Ibrahim (PAS)	13,011 10,874	2,157
8. TANAH MERAH	23,500	79.35	101	1. Hussein b Mahmood (BN) 2. Hj Hanafi b Hj Daud (PAS)	10,448 8,099	2,349
9. MACHANG	25,709	78.92	118	1. Kassim Ahmad (BN) 2. Hj Wan Ismail b Wan Ahmad (PAS)	11,707 8,465	3,242
10. PASIR PUTEH	29,002	75.45	285	1. Wan Najib b Wan Mohamed (BN) 2. Ustaz Yahya b Hj Othman (PAS)	12,018 9,580	2,438
11. KUALA KRAI	19,697	78.47	172	1. Dr. Nik Hussein (BN) 2. Zahari Awang (PAS)	9,108 6,177	2,931
12. ULU KELANTAN	21,048	76.45	120	1. Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah (BN) 2. Ustaz Khaidir (PAS)	10,267 5,705	4,562
Barisan Nasional PAS	143,161 110,620					

TABLE 11:  
FINAL RESULTS OF 1978 ELECTIONS - PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

State	BN	DAP	PAS	IND.	BERJASA
<i>DEWAN NEGERI</i>					
Perlis	12	-	-	-	-
Trengganu	28	-	-	-	-
Penang	20	5	1	1	-
Kedah	19	-	7	-	-
Perak	32	9	1	-	-
Melaka	16	4	-	-	-
Selangor	28	3	-	1	-
Pahang	32	-	-	-	-
Negeri Sembilan	21	3	-	-	-
Johor	31	1	-	-	-
Kelantan	23	-	2	1	11
<i>DEWAN RAKYAT</i>	98	15	5	-	-

Association of Islamic Students of Malaysia) or PKPIM which, at that time, was led by Anwar Ibrahim (now the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance).<sup>6</sup>

Born on 10 August, 1947, at Bukit Mertajam, Anwar Ibrahim, ABIM's President, comes from a family of politicians. His father, Haji Ibrahim Abdul Rahman, was an UMNO Member of Parliament, representing Seberang Perai Central, between 1959-1969. He was, from 1964-1969, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Health. Che Yan Hussain, Anwar's mother, was known to be active in UMNO in her younger days. After his early education in Bukit Mertajam, Anwar Ibrahim was admitted to the Malay College at Kuala Kangsar. He gained admission to the University of Malaya in 1969. His leadership qualities were amply demonstrated when he was in the university where he led, first, the Malay Language Society and then the Islamic Students' Society with aggression and dynamism.<sup>7</sup>

PKPIM, in fact, had been in existence since 1961 but it was under Anwar Ibrahim's leadership that it gained national attention criticising the government and commenting frequently on international issues. But, since PKPIM was a society of students, the leaders felt that it would spread its wings to include Muslim youths, hence ABIM was born. It was founded with the expressed purpose of pursuing *dakwah* and opposing secularism which they felt was beginning to consume the Malaysian society. It was also intended to compete with the activities of Christian missionary groups which, apparently, had succeeded in converting Muslim youths although on a negligible scale.

In the course of its formation and early existence, apart from Anwar Ibrahim, others actively involved in ABIM, in a leadership capacity included Dato' Seri Sanusi Junid (now the Minister of Agriculture), Dato' Suhaimi Haji Kamaruddin (now with *Semangat 46*, the group led by Tengku Razaleigh in opposition to UMNO led by Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad) and Nakhaie Haji Ahmad (who joined UMNO recently but before that was one of PAS' stalwarts).

Leadership struggles within PAS indeed had begun



almost as soon as it celebrated its electoral success in 1959 in the state of Trengganu. It became more critical during the period when Dato' Mohamad Asri took over leadership of the party from Dr. Burhanuddin. The *Dewan Pemuda* (Youth Wing) of the party was unhappy with him and those who could be regarded as his staunch supporters. This was particularly true after Dato' Mohamad Asri decided to lead PAS to join the *Barisan Nasional* in 1973. The *Pemuda* were also dissatisfied with the *ulama* who sat in the party's Supreme Council for having been exploited by Dato' Asri.

Simultaneously they were dissatisfied with the religious elders for failing to realize the objectives for which PAS was originally founded. But, Dato' Asri was a seasoned politician. His hold over PAS could not be easily loosened. However, when PAS suffered serious reverses in the 1978 state and federal elections, Dato' Asri, for the first time during his leadership of PAS, found the situation slipping from his grip. Islamic fundamentalism which was spreading like forest fire throughout the Islamic nations soon consumed Malaysia too. Apart from ABIM which indeed represented an aggressive young Muslim movement, one began to hear, with increasing frequency, references to, apart from *dakwah*, *Tabaligh* (a movement which originated from among Indian Muslims), *Mubaligh* (meaning, in fact, 'missionaries' but which was a term seldom used among Muslims in the country for, in the past, missionary activity was not Islam's strong point) and *Arqam* (an Islamic group, whose members use green robes, which was deliberately creating an exclusive and self-dependent Muslim community with its 'commune' at Sungai Penchala, situated just inside the boundary of Kuala Lumpur along the road leading to Sungai Buluh and Kuala Selangor).

Most of the PAS leaders of the first generation were, by then, in their fifties. They found it progressively more difficult to control the younger and more impetuous budding leaders. Dato' Mohamad Asri's leadership came under heavy attack by the rank and file not only because of his decision to join the Coalition Government but also because of his failure to force the *Barisan Nasional* Government to incorporate Islamic laws

into its administration. His tendency to pick close friends and relatives to fill certain party positions also earned him the distrust and contempt of the Trengganu and Kedah factions, led in the former state by Mustapha Ali and Wan Mutalib Embong and, in the latter state, by Nakhaie Ahmad and Fadzil Noor. It may be pertinent to mention that Fadzil Noor, like Nakhaie Ahmad, was also a product of ABIM.

Dato' Mohamad Asri indeed saw the danger which lurked ahead. To prevent the party leadership passing to groups other than those whom he had groomed in Kelantan, he too picked his future successors and worked closely with them. Haji Wan Ismail bin Wan Ibrahim and Nik Mustapha Shafie, both of whom have been mentioned, were the most important among those who belonged to Dato' Asri's 'inner circle'. But, these men failed to fit into the 'fundamentalist' mould that the new PAS members desired. They were too secular for an Iranian model of leadership which was becoming a fad within PAS. They were said to be too materialistic, too compromising and sympathetic towards the UMNO brand of Malay nationalism. At the same time, Haji Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, a Central Committee member and leader of the party's *Dewan Ulama*, was too closely identified with Dato' Asri's faction. Although well-known in Kelantan for his religious knowledge and highly respected by the party rank and file, Haji Nik Abdul Aziz seemed a little too old for the new revivalist frenzy that the younger group within the party was actively perpetuating. Furthermore, there seemed to be some sort of unsettling differences among the contenders for power. For instance, the faction led by Haji Mustapha and Wan Mutalib Embong was deemed to be in favour of a shift in leadership from Kelantan to Trengganu, while the faction led by Haji Nakhaie and Fadzil Noor endeavoured to bring about control of leadership by Kedah.

It was at this juncture that PAS once more had to face the national elections. Diane Mauzy very succinctly summed up this critical situation faced by PAS in 1982. She wrote:

A leadership struggle inside PAS also hurt its electoral performance. PAS was split nationally between the 'Old

Guard' leadership struggling to retain power against the competition of the party's largely Arabic-educated and Islamic fundamentalist 'Young Turks'. In Trengganu, the Young Turks captured control of the party's state organization and completely dissociated themselves from the national leadership. This split was so complete and so bitter that the Young Turks did not want Datuk Asri, a gifted orator, even to campaign on behalf of PAS candidates in Terengganu. In Kelantan, the Old Guard or 'Group of Twenty' prevailed after a Young Turk's attempt to dominate the candidate slate was stopped by Datuk Asri. However, divisions prevented completely unified and enthusiastic campaign efforts there. In Kedah and Perlis the situation was worse since neither faction dominated and the struggle was carried over into the elections.<sup>8</sup>

Despite serious internal dissension, PAS did not fare too badly in the 1982 elections. Indeed, its position improved compared to that of 1978. The following Table provides an overall picture of PAS' performance in Peninsular Malaysia (where it won seats).

TABLE 12  
RESULTS OF 1982 STATE & PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS  
PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

	BN	PAS	DAP	IND.	TOTAL
<i>PARLIAMENT</i>	103	5*	6	—	
<i>STATE</i>					
Perlis	11	1	—	—	12
Kedah	24	2	—	—	26
Trengganu	23	5	—	—	28
Kelantan	26	10	—	—	36

Note: \* Four in Kelantan and one in Kedah

But, whatever success it gained was again confined to the same four states. However, where its performance in 1978 was encouraging (for example, Kedah at the state level)<sup>9</sup> its performance in 1982 was dismal. It crumbled in Kelantan and Trengganu in 1978 but, in 1982, it regained some measure of dignity in these two states. The *Barisan Nasional*, interestingly, offered to accept PAS back into its fold but Dato' Asri replied that PAS was too busy to think of rejoining the *Barisan Nasional*. It must concentrate on regaining lost ground. Dato' Asri himself won the Kubang Krian State seat but lost the Parliamentary seat of Nilam Puri (to which he had returned, after losing at Padang Terap, Kedah, in 1978) to the *Barisan Nasional* candidate Dato' Haji Mohamed bin Haji Ali by 1,139 votes. The *Barisan Nasional* candidate polled 15,029 votes.<sup>10</sup>

But Dato' Asri was, in fact, indulging in wishful thinking or perhaps he was fully aware that there was no way he could lead PAS back to the *Barisan Nasional*. There was already widespread discussion as to who should lead the party after Dato' Asri. Two of the favourites named were Haji Yusoff Rawa of Kedah and Haji Abdul Hadi Awang of Trengganu. The latter whom many PAS followers eventually came to regard as "a new Messiah" was to have a profound influence on PAS.

Meanwhile in the 1982 PAS' *Muktamar Agung* (General Assembly), held on 23 October at the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur, in the face of an impending overthrow of this leadership, Dato' Asri voluntarily resigned his position as party President and when, in 1983, there were rumours afloat that he would be expelled from the party which he had once helped to consolidate, he resigned from the party along with his loyal supporters.<sup>11</sup>

On 23 March, 1983, in front of about 1,000 loyal supporters in Kota Bharu, Dato' Mohamad Asri announced the formation, or perhaps revival of *Hizbul Muslimin* or HAMIM.<sup>12</sup> The choice of name is understandable for a veteran politician who after so many years at the helm and, once admired and respected by friends and foe, came tumbling down. His intention is clear. He had dreams of making a comeback. But he was living in the past. He must have realized that "all the King's

horses and all the King's men cannot put Humpty Dumpty together again."

### **The Rise of Haji Abdul Hadi**

With the exit of Dato' Mohamad Asri and his lieutenants, the leadership of PAS passed to a younger and more radical group of persons, in particular Haji Hadi Awang, Haji Fadzil Noor and Haji Nakhaie Ahmad. They belonged to the disgruntled youth section of the party who accused leaders like Dato' Mohamad Asri of having strayed from the "true path of Islam". They had been full-fledged members of ABIM who were dedicated to the cause of Islam and therefore greatly displeased with the manner Islam had been subordinated to Malay culture and nationalism. Many of the ABIM members also left the organization when Anwar Ibrahim joined UMNO in 1982, not long after Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad took over as President from Tun Hussein. They joined PAS where the cause of Islam, they believed, could be better pursued.

But the Muslim 'purists' knew too well that as long as the party was led by nationalists like Dato' Mohamad Asri and Dato' Haji Abu Bakar Umar (the Deputy President), the party's objective of setting up an Islamic state would not materialize. They therefore worked out a strategy whereby they would cooperate with and exploit Haji Yusoff Rawa, a PAS Old Guard, who was known to have privately nursed a smouldering grudge against Dato' Mohamad Asri. As a result, when Dato' Mohamad Asri left the party, Haji Yusoff Rawa was elected President of PAS. But he was no more than a figure head. This left the younger group with ample opportunity to inject radical Islamic values into the party.

First, they re-organized the party by setting up a Council of *Ulama* which was empowered to issue rulings on religious matters and was complementary to the party's Central Committee.<sup>13</sup> Then the new leadership quickly introduced a more fundamentalist element by declaring the political goal of PAS to be the creation of an Islamic state and by organizing regular *ceramah*, or political-cum-religious talks, throughout

the country.<sup>14</sup> In the first few salvos thrown at its traditional rival, UMNO, and the non-Malays who also became its target, PAS leaders thus, once again, branded UMNO and the non-Malays as enemies of the first order. The new, PAS leadership's attack on UMNO was so abusive that a division immediately surfaced between "*UMNO Islam*" and "*PAS Islam*".

As a result many *kampung* in heavily Malay-populated areas saw the setting up of two *surau*, or prayer houses – one for UMNO members and another for PAS. For the first time too, rural Malays found themselves wedged in not only by ideological beliefs of the type which they were confronted with in the 1960s and 1970s, but also by the degree of *Islamic-ness*. This overt politicization of Islam brought PAS into fiercer confrontation with UMNO, particularly in the *kampung* where there was increasing tension and conflict.<sup>15</sup> For instance, during the Padang Terap by-election of 1985, one person was reported killed after clashes between UMNO and PAS supporters.<sup>16</sup> In November 1984, at the height of the PAS-UMNO controversy, Prime Minister Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad challenged PAS to a debate but it was cancelled by the King to prevent the possible occurrence of civil disorder.<sup>17</sup>

PAS aggression and the danger that it might disturb the peace of mind of the populace led the Government to ban all public gatherings. Subsequently, the Government tabled a White Paper in Parliament on "The Threat to Muslim Unity and National Security", naming six extremist groups who were planning to plot against the Government in favour of the establishment of an Islamic state. The White Paper also implied that PAS leaders were connected with the plotters. In November 1985, an open battle with security police broke out in Kampung Memali, near Baling, Kedah. The incident which began as a police effort to detain Ibrahim "Libya" Mahmood under the Internal Security Act (ISA) claimed the lives of eighteen people including four policemen. Twenty-nine others were injured.<sup>18</sup>

However, in spite of this bloody incident, tension between PAS and the UMNO-sponsored Government did not subside. Following Ibrahim "Libya's" death, Haji Hadi proclaimed that

Ibrahim's death was an act of martyrdom. Thus Ibrahim and thirteen other supporters were given a hero's burial at Parit Panjang, a PAS stronghold. The Memali incident was later exploited by PAS extensively in the 1986 general elections.<sup>19</sup>

In fact, as far back as 1982, even before the general elections took place, there were reports that the practice of *kafir-mengkafir* (each party calling the other *kafir* or unbelievers) had become so bitter that in the PAS stronghold of Kampung Apal in Besut, Trengganu, PAS and UMNO supporters resorted to the use of separate burial grounds. A story was also told of a husband who prevented his wife from visiting her parents when he found out that the wife's father was an UMNO strongman. It was not uncommon to hear of marriages that had to be solemnized twice, first, by the Government or UMNO *imam* (priest) and then by the PAS *imam*. There were also instances when the PAS supporters refused to touch meat because the animal was slaughtered by an UMNO man.<sup>20</sup>

At the root of this problem was the belief among PAS supporters (because of their leaders' pronouncements) that UMNO members were infidels. Malays who had embraced UMNO's brand of public policy were branded as betrayers of Islam because they did not believe that Islamic laws could be implemented in Malaysia. Since Haji Abdul Hadi Awang's appearance in the political arena, religious issues which once had more or less lurked in the background now loomed large, threatening to destroy the Malay social fabric.

Although during the heyday of Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri's leadership, PAS had similarly threatened to supplant the value system that had been accepted by the Malays for generations, with an orthodox Islamic system, never was the party leader able to command so much respect and so much confidence, as an Islamic-sage, compared to Haji Hadi. In a series of his talks and Friday sermons which were recorded in cassette tapes and sold to the public, he said UMNO *imam* who led the daily prayers as well as the Friday prayers did not have the right to lead the congregation.<sup>21</sup> Such pronouncement expectedly sent shock-waves through Malays who, all of a sudden, were conscience-stricken and found it necessary to re-examine

their commitment to Islam. It must be stressed that, to most PAS members and followers, Haji Hadi was more than a politician. He was a "*Tok Guru*", a religious supremo who, in the early 1980s, was much revered by the party's militant groups. Admittedly, a great number of UMNO members too admired Haji Hadi privately. His oratorical skill, his strong and persistent voice, his knowledge of Islam and the sense of confidence he was able to exude in his lectures and sermons seemed to point to the fact that he was a new 'Messiah' in the lexicon of PAS politics. Seen in this light, Dato' Asri, in 1982, was reduced to the image of a dwarf whom PAS must have regretted having, for not only was Dato' Asri not an Islamicist (and PAS should rightly be led by one because it propounded and desired an Islamic state) but he had also become an anachronistic nationalist.

Haji Hadi is the son of the former *imam* of the Kampung Rusila mosque in Trengganu. He was educated in Saudi Arabia and Al-Azhar University in Cairo, holding a Masters degree in Islamic jurisprudence and politics.<sup>22</sup> He is avowedly dedicated to the establishment of an Islamic state in Malaysia. In his political speeches and Friday sermons, he frequently lambasted the US raid on Libya and the Malaysian Government's "unIslamic practices". He praised Iran's Islamic Republic and condemned the decadence of Western lifestyles. He advocated justice and equality for all, regardless of race or social status, but emphasized the supremacy of Islam. While he said he had never visited Iran or met its theocratic ruler, his concept of Islam and its role in society did bear a strong resemblance to the philosophy of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Fired by an impatient and impetuous desire to introduce the Islamic value system in order to weed out immorality and the sumptuousness of vain men, Haji Hadi talked incessantly about justice at home, in society and Government, about Western education which had led to promiscuity and ill-gotten children who did not respect elders and about Islam that provided guidance and answer for the ills of society. He talked about disunity and discord in the world because of a dual policy, Islamic and non-Islamic, that caused societal disruption and a chaotic environment in the task of governance. The dual



policy, he contended, had given rise to the birth of urban Malays who were contemptuous of God's instructions. "If all Muslims realise the richness and capacity of Islam to rule the country, then this would give us a way to reach the non-Muslims," he said.<sup>23</sup>

Over the years, particularly prior to Haji Hadi's emergence on the political scene, the debate concerning the place and role of non-Malays in multi-racial Malaysia had never featured well in the party's programme for the establishment of an Islamic nation. Under Dr. Burhanuddin's leadership, the non-Malays were to have been schematically avoided, socially and politically. Dato' Asri, Dr. Burhanuddin's successor, on the other hand, felt that since the Chinese formed the single biggest non-Malay group in the composition of the country's population, they should be categorically dichotomized into Muslim Chinese and non-Muslim Chinese. But, apparently it did occur to him that in such a situation, while the former would gradually be assimilated and therefore not cause discomfort to the party's Islamisation programme, the latter would be left to languish under an Islamic administration, thereby giving rise to constant uncertainty, friction, distrust and confrontation in the society.

Haji Hadi's political solution, by and large, seemed to offer some hope *albeit* still bordering on vagueness, especially with regard to non-Malay participation and representation in the Government via a democratic polity. PAS' problem, he readily admitted, "is that non-Muslims are given the wrong impression of Islam and Muslims themselves don't understand Islam."<sup>24</sup> To him, the challenge faced by Malaysia was in finding ways to solve society's ills – poverty, injustice, communalism, corruption, promiscuity and illiteracy. "We feel society's problems cannot be solved by overcoming economic differences between races and by creating cultural unity", he said. "It can be solved", he added, "by giving due right to all without any discrimination."<sup>25</sup> In his opinion, communal politics that emphasized only Malay nationalism and Chinese nationalism, would increase tension among the different races in the country. He was convinced that racial tension could be overcome by

giving due right to all citizens. In an effort to win the hearts and minds of the politically-orientated non-Malays, Haji Hadi proposed to implement Islamic laws as that would be fair to all, believing fervently that "the justice and equality presented by Islam will humble non-Muslims, leading them to either convert to Islam or to respect and obey the religion because it defends their rights."

Haji Hadi, who was also a member of ABIM prior to his meteoric rise in PAS, envisioned a free society in which freedom of religion and culture would be guaranteed to the non-Malays. "They can eat pork, drink alcohol, have lion dances, but only among themselves and within their own community," he said, adding, "For they should respect the sovereignty of Islam, and their activities should not threaten Islam and its followers."<sup>26</sup> He further said that, "Even a Chinese Muslim or an Indian Muslim or any other Muslim can become Prime Minister provided he is pious and righteous."<sup>27</sup>

Haji Hadi's immediate task on assuming power was to revive the role of the mosque which he said had been badly affected by secularism as a result of British intervention and colonial humiliation. The mosque played a significant role in the life of any Islamic community. In the time of Prophet Mohammad, the mosque was the centre of the Islamic state. The mosque was not only a place to pray, it was also the heart of the nation. In an attempt to wrest power from the federal government in the 1960s, PAS had made extensive use of the mosque by holding religious talks and discussions. As most of the *imam* were staunch and loyal PAS backers, their efforts in subverting the government mosques with politically inclined religious sermons, detrimental to the well-being of the government, was executed without fear and inhibition. In the 1970s, however, the state governments, through the Departments of Religious Affairs which govern and finance mosque administration, introduced a - ruling prohibiting - the use of the mosque for activities by men other than religious functionaries authorised by the Department. In the early 1980s, it was this crippling of mosque conduit for PAS activists which gave rise to the "two mosques" phenomenon.

The Malaysian Constitution acknowledges Islam as the country's official religion, but Haji Hadi argued that the foundations of the existing government were secular in nature. "Islam," he observed, "is based on the concept of *syura*, or consultation which welcomes all views provided they are not against Islam."<sup>28</sup> He stressed that in Islam "there is no such problem as majority or minority". He strongly objected to the assumption that non-Muslims could not accept the implementation of Islam. The first Islamic state was founded by the Prophet Mohammad in Medina where there was a majority of non-Muslims. "Persia is another example. The Persians, a non-Muslim people, adopted Islam when the religion conquered their Empire. This is because Islam guarantees the rights of all people, Muslims and non-Muslims. It would be the same with our non-Muslim communities in Malaysia," he said.<sup>29</sup> Haji Hadi distanced himself from some of the harsh measures imposed by the Iranian regime on its people, saying people would be free, enjoying the same rights in the framework of Islam. He believed that stoning adulterers, amputating the fingers or hands of thieves and other harsh measures "are meant more as a deterrent than punishment." Non-Muslims in an Islamic society and under Islamic law, however, would have to make concessions, he forewarned. Islam guaranteed their rights and provided freedom and justice, but they would have to obey the law, including provisions forbidding women to appear in public without a veil; the banning of music, dance, alcohol and the mixing of the sexes in public places, and reserving the major responsibility of running national affairs for Muslims. Since decision-making in other countries such as the United States and the Soviet Union was controlled by dominant or majority groups, "it's natural that policy-makers here be Muslims."<sup>30</sup>

Because of his charismatic leadership, PAS now had a fiery orator of religion and politics who could draw crowds by the thousands to every sermon. In one of his sermons in 1984, Haji Hadi pronounced that anyone who questioned the viability of the Islamic state was an infidel. He therefore loudly approved of the *syariah's* ruling on stoning of adulterers to

death and such other measures that were "not in conflict with the *Quran*." Since 'Young Turks' like him, Haji Fadzil Noor and Haji Nakhaie Haji Ahmad, took over the party leadership in 1982, the Iranian revolution and the *ulama* leadership have been a major source of strength to the party. Because of these new leaders' determination to emulate the formidable influence of the Iranian leadership, posters and pamphlets of Ayatollah Khomeini as well as numerous books on Iranian Islamic revolution were conspicuously displayed at PAS' general assemblies and other functions. Several PAS leaders and supporters also attended seminars and discussions with Iranian leaders in Teheran.

The new PAS leaders believed that the *ulama* were the heirs of Prophet Mohammad. "They are the repositories of Islamic knowledge. Thus, in calling for *ulama* leadership, we are saying that the leadership of the Islamic state lies with the *ulama*. This will ensure that the PAS struggle would never run from the path of Islam as those who are best able to interpret Islam are the *ulamas*."<sup>31</sup> Following the example of Iran, PAS leaders like Yusoff Rawa (its President), Haji Fadzil Noor, Haji Nakhaie Ahmad and Haji Hadi himself were determined that religious elites, the *ulama*, should take the lead and provide a strong and viable Islamic leadership in the administration and politics of the nation. To them, the Iranian revolution had come to mean that Islam could establish a state in modern times. It further showed that an Islamic movement could come to power in trying circumstances and was capable of solving the ills of society and arresting the economic decay of a troubled nation.

Besides this, the Iranian revolution had given a great deal of emphasis to the implementation of laws derived from the *Quran* and *Hadith*. Needless to say, it struck a responsive chord among PAS leaders since they regarded faithful adherence to laws, rules and prescriptions as indicative of one's commitment to the preservation of the Islamic character and identity of society. Manifestly, the success of the Iranian revolution, in establishing an Islamic state and preserving an Islamic identity, became a great inspiration to PAS.

Just as UMNO was beset by controversies arising from radical changes introduced by Dr. Mahathir's leadership, so was PAS confronted by controversies arising from Haji Hadi's statements and *fatwa*, or religious rulings. One significant development was the decision, in late 1985, by the PAS leadership to gain the support of non-Malays in the election. By 1985, PAS had formed a Chinese Consultative Committee (CCC), which was intended as a bridge between PAS and the Chinese community. Although, in the past, a few Chinese Muslims were given positions in the party, it was the first time that PAS openly and formally sponsored the formation of such a committee. The party apparently came to realise that without Chinese support it would be difficult for the party to win any meaningful vote in the election and thereby make a significant impact in Parliament by way of pressuring the government for the establishment of an Islamic state.

In a carefully laid down strategy to woo Chinese voters, Haji Hadi made a statement that Malays would be stripped of their special rights under the law in an Islamic state.<sup>32</sup> His public pronouncement on the issue of Malay special rights and the role of non-Muslims in a PAS-controlled federal government in actual fact became counter productive and, in 1986, cost the party dearly during the general elections. PAS' alignment with the CCC was also scorned by its own supporters. It claimed to be the "true" Islamic party dedicated to the establishment of an Islamic state, yet it strove to provide a "comfortable" place for the non-Malays in the PAS government. PAS' participation in an opposition front consisting of left-wing non-Malay parties made it no different from UMNO, which it had constantly attacked for cooperating with non-Muslims.<sup>33</sup> The statement by Haji Hadi that pop music and culture were unIslamic and would be banned under PAS rule was taken as an affront to Malay and non-Malay entertainers as well as the cultural community.

As far as the PAS leadership was concerned, it was committed to an untainted, flawless Islam, an Islam that was free from worldly pollution. As Chandra Muzaffar remarked, "It shares the same rhetoric about the evil character of secularism

and all other Western ideologies. It follows that it is opposed to both capitalism and communism, liberalism and socialism. Nationalism, the PAS leadership regards as a particularly dangerous force since it is the ideology of the group in power.<sup>34</sup>

According to PAS leaders, narrow nationalism, which they described as *asabiyyah*, was a product of colonial thinking, preserved and perpetuated by Western secularists. Secularism, therefore, had been instrumental in rationalizing and legitimizing *asabiyyah*. PAS' opposition and rejection of *asabiyyah* stemmed from the fact that it had caused untold misery the world over. PAS leaders pointed to Arabism as an example in which Islam was relegated to a secondary role in uniting the Arabs. Their thoughts were in harmony with that of an Islamic scholar who claimed that:

It has been shown that nationalism violates Quaranic teachings and, therefore, has no place in Islam. The practice of nationalism, however, has also proved to be a failure both on the domestic level of nation-States and at the international level. On the domestic front, nationalism conceals glaring contradictions within the nation-States themselves because the nation is everywhere a conglomeration of diverse groups striving for diverse ends, often conflicting with each other. Common race, language, territory have not prevented these various groups from fighting, and killing each other.<sup>35</sup>

Arab nationalism, according to PAS leaders, had excluded Islam in its attempt to revive Arab values and culture in spite of the fact that it was Islam that created the Arab homeland and which impelled the Arabs to conquer that area and spread the teachings of Islam. UMNO nationalism, they said, was no different from Arab nationalism which was based on *asabiyyah*. The UMNO nationalists had played the trick of separating a section of the Muslims and placed them as an independent entity against the rest of the Muslim community whereas Islam, they stressed, should rightly be the pivot in

determining the social and political life of Malaysia. Indeed, Islam had been the basic principles which helped to nurture early Malay nationalism and it had been since at least the beginning of the present century, the major force behind the social and intellectual life of Malaysia.<sup>36</sup>

### The 1986 Elections

PAS moved forward to meet the 1986 elections seemingly with confidence and optimism. It was, as mentioned earlier, interested in both Malay and non-Malay votes. As a result, it issued a pamphlet in English entitled "The struggle for Islam: The Islamic Party of Malaysia's Perspective"<sup>37</sup> which, *inter alia*, said:

1. PAS' struggle is to establish Islam as a complete and perfect way of life encompassing '*aqidah*' (faith), politics, economy, '*akhlaq*' (etiquette and morals), the family and society among others.
2. Islam as a complete, perfect and universal system based on the '*Qur'an*', the '*Sunnah*', '*Ijma*' and '*Qiyas*' (of the ulama) is PAS' ideology and provides it with its methodology as a movement.
3. The rulings of the '*ulama*' (scholars) and the '*mu'tabar*' (recognized *imams*) are respected and held in part as the appreciation given to knowledge which gives us strength and is an important part of life itself. Knowledge is an endowment from Allah through which dignity and respect is achieved.
4. Social reality is given due consideration in the process of understanding phenomena and initiating action. But it is not sacrosanct; it is exposed to change and change can be effected upon it.

Therefore, reality is not binding which can force us to use it as a measure of right and wrong in our actions. Instead if reality is found to contradict the basis of the struggle – Islam – then it must be changed and removed.

5. Maturity and scholarly excellence founded on the correct methods of '*ijtihad*' is the power that can expose the truth

and is useful in understanding Islam, the laws of nature as well as man's social environment.

6. Knowledge of the sciences of the Universe gleaned through scientific research does not contradict Islam. It can be utilised for the purpose of living in accordance with Islam on the condition that its use for and how it is used does not go against Islamic teachings as embodied in the 'Qu'ran' and 'Sunnah'.

As nomination day approached, PAS became more emphatic in its proclamation of its platform. At the end of May 1986, in an interview with the *New Straits Times*, party President, Haji Yusoff Rawa, when told that no political party was willing to come to an arrangement with PAS because of its uncompromising stand that membership in a united front must be preceded by recognition of the other parties in the front of its objective of setting up an Islamic state (*Darul Islam*), replied, "No acceptance, no talk."<sup>38</sup> Even for an electoral pact to materialize, "... recognition of our objectives must precede talks." Although PAS was a political party, it would remain steadfast and loyal to its declared objective, he added. He was optimistic that "People will come round to our way of thinking eventually. They will soon realise that the Islamic State has a place for everyone. It may take a long time, so be it. After all, ours is a long term struggle."

A few days later, he again reiterated PAS' stand that the two prerequisites for an Opposition Front were:

1. That PAS steadfastly maintains its aims of establishing an Islamic State, and
2. That PAS heads the front on the basis that an Islamic administration offers the greatest political stability and long term understanding among parties.

The front should not be a marriage of convenience, he added.<sup>39</sup>

Meanwhile, PAS had, as noted earlier, helped to sponsor the establishment of a Chinese Consultative Council (CCC)



which was particularly active in Perak and Selangor. Many members of this body were said to have been unhappy Chinese school teachers who felt that the *Barisan Nasional* Government had been completely oblivious of the interests of the Chinese community. But, even among those who joined the CCC, there was possibly no clear idea of what the organization stood for. There were some who believed that the original intention of the CCC was for the Chinese leaders to persuade PAS to fight for their interests. But, there were others, like the leader of the CCC in Selangor (Tan Ah Chai), who readily pledged the full support of the Chinese community to PAS for the setting up of an Islamic state.<sup>40</sup>

The greatest blow to some of the members of the CCC came shortly before nomination day when the PAS legal adviser said that the party's constitution did not allow non-Muslims to be members of PAS, what more to stand under its banner.<sup>41</sup> This was later confirmed by one of the *ulama* who declared:

Non-Muslims will not have the right to vote in the PAS Islamic State. They will also be made to pay the *ijizyah* (poll tax) the way it was in the medieval Islamic kingdoms.<sup>42</sup>

The *ulama* concerned, Abdul Samad bin Ibrahim, had served the Perak PAS *ulama* Council for ten years and he said that the Council had never changed its mind about establishing the *Darul Islam* in which non-Muslims could become citizens but would be deprived of their right to vote. More than that, according to him, those who chose to believe in anything other than Islam must also lose their right to hold any office of power and authority. Even in the case of Muslims, those who were not recognized as *ulama* would have no right to become elected representatives to the Consultative Council (Parliament) of the Islamic State and they would not be allowed too to criticize or question the decision made by the *ulama*. To do so would be apostasy. This was a terrible blow to some members of the CCC who indeed had hopes of contesting the elections on the PAS ticket.<sup>43</sup>

The more perceptive of the PAS leaders realized very

early the problem faced by the party and acknowledged that its chances of doing well in the elections were slim. One of them was Haji Fadzil Noor, Deputy President of PAS. Always sober in his views, he was also the State Party Commissioner and, since 1982, he had been the lone opposition member in the Kedah State Assembly having won his seat at Bukit Raya by a thin majority (400 votes). Referring to the 1986 elections, due to be held soon, he said that he expected PAS to win fewer seats "than it can count fingers on one hand." He did not share the optimism of the party's east coast leadership, meaning no doubt Haji Hadi Awang, though he did not specifically mention any name.

Some of the reasons which worked against PAS were, firstly, the fact that Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir, the Prime Minister, had brought massive development to Kedah. Secondly, it was unrealistic for PAS to be sure of victory in Kedah when most of the constituencies had more than 10 percent non-Malay voters. Thirdly, even in Kelantan, the situation was not in PAS' favour because Dato' Asri and his team in *Hamim* had effectively split the party workers.<sup>44</sup> It may be mentioned in passing here that after he formed *Hamim*, Dato' Asri was able, in 1985, to lead the party to become a member of the *Barisan Nasional*. *Berjasa* was deeply disappointed with the development and decided to withdraw from the 1986 elections.

PAS indeed also faced opposition from the rank and file because of its attempts to collaborate with the CCC. Many party workers were ready to walk out if they should discover eventually that PAS had obtained help from *orang kafir* to win a few seats. On top of that, PAS' attempts to come to terms with other parties also encountered insurmountable obstacles because, as Haji Ali Munawar (Deputy President of *Nasma*)<sup>45</sup> explained:

There was no formula, no guidelines as to how seats should be divided particularly in areas where more than one party in the front had already established a certain amount of strength. PAS as the so-called 'leading partner' could have contributed ideas. But no; instead each party

came to the negotiating table aimed with what it wanted – and determined to get it.<sup>46</sup>

At the same time, none other than Ustaz Nakhaie Ahmad, PAS' information chief, told the press that an electoral pact was not practical because "it is short-term and not based on solid grounds". "PAS," he added, "was not interested in an electoral pact – only in the coming general election." The arrangement must be long-term.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the numerous problems it faced, PAS was able to field the largest number of candidates, next to the *Barisan Nasional*. At the federal level, PAS fielded 99 candidates to *Barisan Nasional*'s 177; at the state, PAS had 265 candidates to *Barisan Nasional*'s 351. PAS contested all the federal and state seats in the following states: Kelantan (federal 13, state 39), Trengganu (federal 8, state 32), Kedah (federal 14, state 28), and Perlis (federal 2, state 14). Voting took place on 2 August, 1986. The results, in fact, surprised few people except that PAS' extremely poor performance at the federal level, where it won only one seat, was quite unexpected. PAS won only at Pengkalan Chepa where its candidate, Haji Abdullah Arshad, polled 17,501 votes beating his rival (it was a straight fight) by 4,175 votes.<sup>48</sup>

Haji Abdul Hadi Awang, of whom much was expected, lost the Marang (Trengganu) Parliamentary seat to Abdul Rahman Bakar by 638 votes. He obtained 13,015 votes. But he managed to retain his state seat at Ru Rendang where he beat the *Barisan Nasional* candidate by 531 votes. He polled 3,470 votes. Jaafar Mohamed, writing in the *New Straits Times*, after the results had been known said:

An explosion of Islamic fundamentalist fervour primed by poverty and fused by discontent was to have swept PAS to victory in Terengganu. But the weapon forged by fiery party leader Haji Hadi Awang to encompass the destruction of his political enemies blew up in his face, leaving him scarred. And now PAS is picking up the pieces....<sup>49</sup>

## CHAPTER V – NOTES

1. See also Alias Mohamed, *Sejarah Perjuangan Parti PAS: Satu Dilema*.
2. *The New Straits Times*, 11 & 12 March 1978.
3. *Ibid.*, 6 July 1978.
4. For full results of the state and federal elections in Kelantan in 1978, see Tables 9 and 10.
5. See Diane K. Mauzy, *Barisan Nasional Coalition Government in Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur, 1983), p.120.
6. For a useful study of ABIM, see Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Jalil, "Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM) 1971-1978" (Academic Exercise, Department of History, University of Malaya, 1979). See also Hussin Mutalib, *Islam and Ethnicity in Malay Politics*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1990; J. Victor Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim – Resolute in Leadership*, Arenabuku, Kuala Lumpur, 1983, and Yahaya Ismail, *Anwar Ibrahim*, Dinamika Kreatif, Kuala Lumpur, 1993.
7. Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Jalil, *op.cit.*, p.185.
8. See D.K. Mauzy, *Coalition Government in Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur: Marican & Sons, 1983), pp.130-131.
9. In 1987, PAS captured seven state seats in Kedah.
10. See the *New Straits Times*, 24 April 1982, p.2.
11. See Samso Anuar Muhamad, "Hizbul Muslimin Malaysia (HAMIM): Sejarah Penubuhan dan Perkembangannya 1983-1988" (Academic Exercise, Department of History, University of Malaya, 1989), pp.17-32.
12. *Ibid.*, p.39.
13. See Sankaran Ramanathan & Mohd. Hamdan Adnan, *Malaysia's 1986 General Election – The Urban-Rural Dichotomy*, Occasional Paper No.83 (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1988), p.32.

14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. See Chung Kek Yoong, *Mahathir Administration* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1987), p.92.
17. See Sankaran R. & Mohd. Hamdan Adnan, *op.cit.*, p.32.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. See *New Straits Times*, 10 February 1982.
21. Ibid.
22. See Safa Haeri, "Malaysia's Voice of Islam", *Compass New Agency*, September 3, 1986, and also "Man Who Draws The Crowds To His Sermon", *New Straits Times*, 9 February 1982.
23. *New Straits Times*, 9 February 1982.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Quoted by Chandra Muzaffar, *Islamic Resurgence in Malaysia* (Petaling Jaya: Penerbit Fajar Bakti, 1987), p.92.
28. Ibid.
29. See Safa Haeri, *op.cit.*
30. Ibid.
31. See Zainah Anwar, *Islamic Revivalism in Malaysia: Dakwah Among the Students* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1987), p.42.
32. See Sankaran R. & Mohd. Hamdan Adnan, *op.cit.*, p.33.
33. Ibid.

34. See Chandra Muzaffar, *op.cit.*, p.56.
35. See Murtaza Garia, "Nationalism in the Light of the Quran and the Sunnah" in M. Ghayasuddin (ed.), *The Impact of Nationalism on the Muslim World* (Shah Alam, Selangor, 1986), p.33.
36. See A.K. Hidayat, *PAS 1951 - 1991 [Tercabar-Mencabar]* (Kuala Lumpur, 1986), p.8. Many of the PAS ideas were disseminated through *ceramah* all over the country.
37. Published by the Department of Information, Bureau of Information and Dakwah, PAS Headquarters, Jalan Pahang Barat, Kuala Lumpur, n.d.
38. See Zainon Ahmad, "Opposition Front at Best a Weak One", *New Straits Times*, 1 July 1986.
39. *The New Straits Times*, 2 July 1986, p.5.
40. *Ibid.*, 22 July 1986, p.9.
41. *Ibid.*, p.8.
42. *Ibid.*, 25 July 1986, p.8.
43. *Ibid.*, 22 July 1986, p.8.
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Nasma* stood for *Parti Nasionalis Malaysia*, a party formed by an ex-UMNO member, Raja Dato' Nasron.
46. *The New Straits Times*, 24 July 1986, p.10.
47. *Ibid.*, p.11.
48. *Ibid.*, 4 & 5 August 1986.
49. See Jaafar Mohamed, "An Exit for PAS in Terengganu", *Times Two*, 5 August 1986, p.1.

## Chapter VI

### *Conclusion*

The question which has been repeatedly asked ever since PAS captured the states of Kelantan and Trengganu in 1959 is: "What does *Parti Islam* stand for?" Most non-Malays do not have a clue. Malays are perplexed too if they try to look for PAS' objectives in more concrete terms. To non-Malays again, *Parti Islam* sounds a fanatical organization. They understand Islam in terms of the many prohibitions which are often made public. To Malays, on the other hand, during the early years of PAS history at any rate, PAS was the pure Malay political party. UMNO was considered tainted when it formed a coalition with MCA in 1952.

But, in general, both Malays and non-Malays have no clear idea how PAS was first formed and why. Only the older generation of UMNO members perhaps remember that PAS, as a 'foetus' was first conceived by UMNO. When it started to grow as an independent child its loyalty was torn between UMNO and the direction to which its first President, Haji Ahmad Fuad, was drawing it. Haji Ahmad Fuad had his own personal reason for attempting to influence PAS into supporting Dato' Onn who, in 1951, left UMNO to found IMP. But he was unsuccessful and PAS was left neither here nor there for a couple of years.

It was at this point that the UMNO-MCA coalition was formed and many UMNO members left the party and joined PAS which they felt could better serve the interests of the Malays. The formation of PAS also gave Malay radicals, who had adopted a low profile after the emergency had been declared and numerous leftists detained, the opportunity to re-surface. Many naturally joined PAS; after all, some of them had been members of the first Islamic political party to be formed in the country, namely, *Hizbul Muslimin*, which was founded at Gunung Semanggol, Krian, Perak, in 1948.

Probably by design, after *Parti Rakyat* (a replacement for the Malay Nationalist Party which had voluntarily liquidated after 1948) had been founded, in 1955, largely through the initiative of Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi, former leader of the MNP, Dr. Burhanuddin himself joined PAS and almost immediately was elected President (in late 1956). That there was collaboration between *Parti Rakyat* and PAS thereafter there is no doubt, though it was never publicly displayed.

Manifestly, throughout the period that Dr. Burhanuddin was leader of PAS, the main objective of the party was the pursuit of the goal of *Melayu Raya*. It had been Dr. Burhanuddin's obsession since he became involved in politics, initially as a close supporter of Ibrahim Haji Yaacob. But, Dr. Burhanuddin, unlike Ahmad Boestamam, the first President of *Parti Rakyat*, was not a nationalist pure and simple; he was also well-educated in Islam apart from being a doctor in the field of Homeopathy. Dr. Burhanuddin never forgot the fact that he was leader of a party which had declared itself to be based on the teachings and doctrines of Islam. To his credit, he attempted to reconcile, in his writings, his political cause and Islam. "Nationalism", he said, "was not *asabiyyah*". It was therefore not forbidden in Islam. At any rate, his *Melayu Raya* was primarily a land of Muslims.

Zulkifli bin Mohamad, Deputy President of PAS, throughout the period that Dr. Burhanuddin was President, was also not an *ulama per se*. He too had been a nationalist, indeed he was once a member of UMNO and if fate had not played a hand, he might never have joined PAS. Between 1959 and



1964, PAS was perceived to be a party which zealously fought for Malay dominance in Malaya/Malaysia. The *Islamic-ness* of the party was not conspicuous.

From about 1965, the party came under the control of Dato' Mohamad Asri who was, by then a veteran politician, having been an activist since the late 1940s. Basically, he shared the political ideology of Dr. Burhanuddin but he soon introduced an element of parochialism which was not there during Dr. Burhanuddin's presidency although PAS was already in control of Kelantan since 1959. But Dr. Burhanuddin was of Perak origin. Kuala Lumpur was the PAS headquarters. Dato' Asri was a Kelantanese and he soon surrounded himself with young Kelantanese; these formed the core of *Parti Islam*. Not that PAS neglected the other Malay states. In fact, it was consolidating itself in the west coast states of Perlis and Kedah.

But Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri's every move was influenced by those young Kelantanese whom he trusted implicitly. Their administration of Kelantan between 1964 and 1969, when Dato' Asri himself was the *Mentri Besar*, was, to say the least, eventful. A cleavage developed within PAS itself as more and more members became disenchanted with Dato' Asri, his nephew, Dato' Ishak Lotfi, and the young intellectuals. At the same time, news spread like wild fire that 'fishy' land deals were taking place in Kelantan.

Not long after he was officially elected president of PAS and at a time when Tun Abdul Razak, the Prime Minister of Malaysia and successor to Tunku Abdul Rahman, was planning to strengthen the position of the Malays in the country, both politically and economically, Dato' Haji Mohamad Asri led PAS to join the *Barisan Nasional*, a much larger coalition than its predecessor, the Alliance. There was considerable opposition from members of PAS but Dato' Asri did not heed their protest. PAS was for five years a component party of *Barisan Nasional*. It therefore adopted the *Barisan Nasional's* platform which had always emphasized racial unity and a sharing of the economic cake; but, basically, Malay hegemony and cultural tradition as well as Islam should be maintained. Under the Alliance, and this was continued during the period of the

*Barisan Nasional*, Islam was made the official religion of the country but Malaya/Malaysia was never declared an Islamic country.

During those five years, Dato' Asri left his base in Kelantan and became a federal minister residing in Kuala Lumpur. Dato' Haji Mohamad Nasir became the *Mentri Besar* and he soon took steps to correct what he believed to be the maladministration which had occurred before he took office. This was the spark that resulted in a conflagration. The people of Kelantan were split asunder and, indeed, PAS itself, because, popular as Dato' Mohamad Asri was so was Dato' Mohamad Nasir, a mild-mannered and simple man. UMNO backed Dato' Mohamad Nasir. When PAS passed a vote of no confidence on Dato' Mohamad Nasir, the *Barisan Nasional* found it convenient to expel PAS. The state had been placed under emergency rule and when this was lifted, state election was held. PAS was literally driven out of Kelantan for it suffered a crushing defeat.

Despite dissension within the party, Dato' Asri held on to his President's post. Meanwhile, young intellectuals with religious rather than secular education began to join PAS. Many of these belonged to the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM), initially led by Anwar Ibrahim. When Anwar Ibrahim joined UMNO after Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir took over as UMNO President from Tun Hussein Onn, many more ABIM members became disillusioned and they too joined PAS. It was at this juncture too (1982) that *Parti Islam* again failed to capture any single state at the general election and this stirred up the young religious elements in PAS to a state of frenzy. They threw out Dato' Mohamad Asri.

Between 1982 and 1986 (when general election was once more held in the country), PAS, for the first time, came out strongly in declaring its stand as an Islamic party. Its main objective was the creation of an Islamic State – *Darul Islam*. The die was cast. In an Islamic country, non-Muslims had no voting rights. All major positions in the country must also be held by Muslims and only the *ulama* were eligible to sit in the Islamic Parliament. This firm stand was conveyed to Muslims, in particular, through the oratory of a new 'star' in PAS - Haji Abdul

Hadi Awang of Trengganu. He was admired, nay, adored even by university lecturers and students. But the voters rejected PAS completely – only one PAS member won at the federal level.

The year 1990, however, saw PAS successfully steering itself clear of a possible internal rift as a result of ideological differences between the 'fundamentalists' and the sympathizers of the UMNO break-away party, *Semangat 46* (led by Tengku Razaleigh). It was also feared that after Dato' Asri left the party in 1983 to form *Hamim* which later in 1988, enjoyed UMNO's support, PAS may face an uphill battle for, again, within PAS itself there were the moderates who subscribed to a gradual approach to Islamisation, and the radicals who favoured uncompromising changes to the political order. But both these factors, in the end, did not prevent the party from achieving a major success at the polls on 20 October 1990.

In 1990, PAS won seven parliamentary constituencies and 33 state seats. With the support of *Semangat 46* which harped on issues such as the alleged dictatorship of Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the position of the monarchy and corruption, PAS once more made major in-roads in Kelantan and Trengganu. It wrested control of the former state after a lapse of twelve years and in Trengganu won no less than eight seats in the state legislature compared to the two they held before the dissolution of Parliament. It almost captured six other constituencies in the state where it lost by less than a thousand votes.

PAS' performance in this election showed that its deep commitment to traditonalism and its rather narrow brand of Islam need not be a disadvantage even in modern times. It has since continued, with increasing vigour, to fortify measures such as the *hudud* laws, which, to a significant extent, has helped the party to look more Islamic in the eyes of many Muslims.

Judged from its 43-year history, the party, though unable to hold the reins of government at the federal level, has the tenacity, the physical endurance and the stamina to continue to oppose UMNO. At the same time, the niche that *Semangat 46* has carved out for itself in the present political scenario cannot be dismissed as a passing phase. It cannot be surmised

that its struggle merely rests on superficial issues which UMNO or its *Barisan Nasional* components need not pay heed to. In fact, to an important extent, it was the *Barisan's* nonchalance that caused Kelantan to slip into the opposition's hands in 1990. *Barisan* would have suffered much worse politically if it had fought PAS in an adverse economic milieu and under a less astute leadership than that of Dr Mahathir's.

It is anticipated that in another few months the government will seek a fresh mandate from the people. As this juncture (June 1994), UMNO, *Barisan's* major partner, has just held its Special General Assembly. One major issue which has come to dominate Malaysian society during the present run-up to the election is PAS' passage of *hudud* laws in the Kelantan State Legislature and Dr Mahathir's categorical refusal to recognize them. Referring to them as PAS-inspired, and hence politically motivated laws, Dr Mahathir made it clear that he was not against *hudud* laws as laid down in the *Quran* but was against PAS' leaders' interpretation of the *Quran* with regard to the laws. He stressed that it was necessary that a team of truly able and qualified scholars, free from political rubric, should take charge of the responsibility of interpreting the laws.

Be that as it may, the Malay psyche is not easily predictable. PAS has, at this juncture, firmly entrenched itself in Kelantan. And even in other predominantly Malay areas because of Malay sensitivity towards their religion, UMNO candidates are likely to face possibly sterner opposition than in 1990.

Even as the *Barisan* prepares for the next election, there has emerged a new Islamic force – the *Al-Arqam*. Though not a new movement it has shown signs of becoming more militant. In June 1994, various federal authorities under the influence of the Prime Minister's Department have issued statements giving notice of the Government's impending crackdown on the movement. *Al-Arqam* has had a substantial following among the Malay populace. Their likely support for PAS, whose platform of Islamic centricism they share, will undoubtedly further strengthen PAS' position in the forthcoming elections. But PAS will nevertheless need to contend with the reality of having to convince non-Muslims who form a substantial pro-

portion of the electorate, that their policy of bringing about a harsh Islamic state, is ultimately for the benefit of all Malaysians.

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