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A POLITICAL PROFILE DR. LIM CHONG EU

BY CHEAH SEE KIAN

PREFACE

It is really not easy to remain an active political figure for 35 yars. Dr. Lim Chong Eu does exactly this, and may be because of this it should be easy to obtain information about him from past records. But, inexplicably, one cannot find even a book providing detail information about Lim Chong Eu. In English publications, we only managed to catch brief glimpses of him in Malaysian political annals. It is therefore safe to say that Dr. Lim Chong Eu the politician and Dr. Lim Chong Eu the man is rarely, if ever, fully credited with a biography.

Recently, Dr. Lim Chong Eu's expressed wish to retire into a more serene life prompted some friends to urge me to "figure about" Lim Chong Eu and to do a serialised biography about him in the United Post.

Writing about Lim Chong Eu is easier said than done because, besides the lack of proper records, the biography spans more than half a century!

When I raised this with Dr. Lim himself, I was given a comprehensive lesson on the writing of history and biography, but in the end, he gave a non-to-oa-ceptable response. "Lim Chong Eu is not an important man and merits no biography. If he is important to Penang it's only because he is Chief Minister. But there is not much to write about Lim Chong Eu," he said.

Perhaps he has turned down similar proposals by writers in English, for there is no "Biography of Lim Chong Eu" in English either.

I disagreed, "In the evolution of Malaysian Politics, you played an extremely vital role, especially in aspects concerning Penang and the Chinese Community. I do not intend writing just about Chief Minister Dr. Lim Chong Eu, but also about Lim Chong Eu the man himself:" I said. Then he switched the subject of conversation to the Inaugural Issue of the United Post which disclosed that he owns 12 horses, and that his intended retirement has something to do with horses. He pointed out to me that this sort of writing is just superficial and that it evades the main

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Registered Marriage upon Arrival in Hong Kong

The journey to Penang took Chong Eu and Swen Yen through Kwangchou and Hong Kong. Chong Eu, aware of impending changes, could not wait to be home but Swen Yen was feeling precarious. Nevertheless, the bond of lowe and mutual trust would keep the young couple, together for the journey, and for life.

When Chong Eu and Swen Yen arrived in Hong Kong in 1947, they left behind them a China engulfed in war. They heaved sighs of relief,

and found that a new life awaited them.

There were things to be done before returning to Penang. Although Chong Eu came from a relatively liberal family, the Baba Society in Penang, as well as the Chinese community, were still conservative. Thus, Chong Eu's first step in Hong Kong was to register his marriage with Swen Yen at the Civil Registry there.

Marriage was, and is, an affair involving only two individuals. Theirs was simple and solemn. No dinners, no unnecessary frills and fanfare. Their intention was to let Chong Eu present to his parents Swen Yen, the bride and not Swen Yen, a girl-friend.

Swen Yen easily adapted to the idea as she was more concerned with getting along well with Chong Eu's family than with rituals.

When they arrived at Penang after setting sail from Hong Kong, Chong Eu discovered that the familiar place had changed. Three years and eight months of atrocious Japanese Marial rule had left judy scars and removed some friends from sight. Swen Yen found everything refreshingly new. The quiet town, sparse population and most of all, the absence of war made Penang a totally different world from Chinese cities.

At the Lim family home, Swen Yen paid her traditional respects to her parents-in-law with not a little apprehension but was relieved to find that the elders were kind and considerate. She quickly discovered that it was easy to get along with all the family members and that they were all courteous and highly educated.

Immediately upon his return, Chong Eu realised that the Chinese community reflected the conditions in China, the Nationalists and the Communits remaining poles apart and pointedly opposed to each other. The only difference was that in Penang both factions attacked their opponents with the pen, through articles in the local press, whereas in Mainland China guns were the weapons.

With the Nationalists and the Communists locked in ferocious battles in China, their respective supporters in Penan drew clear lines of hostilities too. The Nationalist supporters mainly came from upper echelons of society while Communist faction sympathisers largely came from the working class.

Chong Eu was not drawn into committing his support for either side. He was careful not to take hasty actions while he had yet to arrive at his conclusions.

Even so, Chong Eu was basically a member of the Baba fraternity, having close links with the British Government. Politically, these Baba's also used the British norm as their yardstick. Without much doubt, some Baba community leaders held influential positions in the Chinese Chambers of Commerce and they were inclined towards the Nationalists. Tan Cheng Lock was one of these leaders.

In 1948, a State of Emergency was declared throughout Malaya and the Communist Party of Malaya was outlawed. A state of crisis erupted in the Chinese Community. In the crucial moments, Tan Cheng Lock started the fromation of Malayan Chinese Association (M.C.A.).

The MCA was formally established on 17th February 1949 with leaders of both the Baba Community and the Nationalist-related figures forming the core of leadership. Tan Cheng look represented the first group while Sir H.S. Lee and Leong Yee Kow represented the other. Sir H.S. Lee was a colonel in the Nationalist Chinese Army while Leong Yee Kow held the rank of a Brigadier General in that Army.

These two groups enjoyed a period of cooperation but later lapsed into rivals through infighting. Dr. Lim Chong Eu was clearly not inspired at that time, partly due to his recent return and was relatively a stranger to the local political scene. He needed time to come to grips with the various factors.

Lover's Treaty turned worthless

Almost immediately upon his return, Dr. Lim Chong Eu began to assist his father at So Beng Dispensary. This clinic was mercifully left intact through the war. The practice was successful with Dr. Lim Chove Leong at the helm while Dr. Lim Chong Eu assisted. The clder doctor was quite pleased that his cldeets son had finally taken after his footsteps.

But he was no less understanding when Chong Eu decided to join the Malayan Air Force as a doctor in the Auxillary Wing, Dr. Lim Chwee Leong granted freedom for his son to progress. From an Army doctor in the Chinese Armed Forces to a doctor in the Malayan Air Force, Chong Eu had ample occasion to prove his worth and to improve himself.

Since her marriage into the Lim family, Swen Yen never ceased to count the days. She kept looking out for news about the latest developments in China. But the conditions were getting more aggravated there. The Communist Forces pushed relentlessly on and gained key control of the Chinese soil on various fronts.

Seeing the approach of the six month deadline, at which Chong Eu had agreed earlier to accompany her home, Swen Yen was rather anxious but very worried as the situation in China had gone very turnultous.

One day, she said to Chong Eu, "It's almost six month now, we should be getting ready to go!" She was longing to see her parents and dear ones back in China.

"Can you go under these conditions? Why not wait a while before we decide?" Chong Eu was doubtful but nonetheless had to console her and to appeal for her patience.

China experienced a series of major political changes in 1948, and by the following year the decisive stage had been reached. The Reds had swung south for further control and Mao Tze Tung had got a new era to himself.

Those swift changes were out of Swen Yen's wildest expectations. Her "treaty" with Chong Eu, had it been written at all, would now be worth not much more than the paper on which it was written. She decided not to raise the matter again and made up her mind to stay permanently in Penang.

Whenever she recalled these vivid moments, Swen Yen could not refine from laughing at the ironies of life. Regional upheavals had changed her into what she is today — Mrs. Lim Chong Eu. "Had Chong Eu not agreed to the six month stay for me, I would not have consented to come. I had never expected to come and stay for forty years in Penang." she used to say.

Reminiscence brought back many and various feelings; but for Mrs. Lim Chong Eu, it brought no little measure of contentment too. If she had not followed Chong Eu, her life would have taken a different course; and if Chong Eu had been able to return to China with her for a six-month stay, the history of post-war Penang would be written differently too.

For Chong Eu and Swen Yen, it was their turn to forge part of Penang's destiny. Coincidence and fate help to decide many things, and Mr. and Mrs. Lim Chong Eu represented an apt example. Swen Yen readily accepted her fate and destiny. And she was ready to play her role as any good wife would. The following interlude would be ample proof that she had identify herself with her second home, Malaya.

In 1957, just before Malaya was granted Independence. Penang had Mr. Pinhorn, and Englishman, as Governor. Dr. Lim Chong Eu had by then achieved considerable social status and had many occasions to meet Mr. Pinhorn. With her home-sick heart, she approached Mr. Pinhorn on one occasion and disclosed her desire to visit China.

"No problem, you may go anytime and come back anytime!" replied the considerate Englishman.

Swen Yen was delighted and told Chong Eu. But Chong Eu was too heavily committed in his political affairs to accompany her on the trip. Swen Yen understood him because politicians sometimes had no control our their own time.

With Mr. Pinhorn's verbal assurance, Swen Yen was still apprehensive. She was afraid to venture away in case her return was met with complications. She could not risk been permanently seperated from her husband. So Swen Yen decided to ask for something more tangible.

She made a trip to Mr. Pinhorn's Office where the Governor gave her the necessary papers to leave. But she discovered something was amiss.

"Mr. Pinhorn, you granted me permission to leave; but no papers to guarantee that my return would be permissible! I can't risk been barred from Malaya!" she enquired.

Upon her insistance, the Governor gave her the additional document. Finally, Swen Yen voiced her one remaining worry, "Mr. Pinhorn, I intend to visit my relatives and then come back here. But will you call me for interrogations upon my return?"

Pinhorn assured her that she was free to go and to return,

Swen Yen got her permission and left for China that same year, back to the land she had left behind in 1947. She finally realised her wish after a ten-year wait. Considering her "six-month stay" decided on her first departure, she had waited twenty six-month terms.

She also had accepted that Dr. Lim Chong Eu could never return to practise in China, that her home is Penang, only her parental home was in China.

First step into Politics

Dr. Lim Chong Eu's involvement in politics is already widely known, but few knew when he started. In order to know this, one has to retrace the political developments of post-war Malaya.

When the Japanese surrendered in 1945, Malaya cheered the end of a dark era of repression and welcome the dawn of peace. Almost simultaneously, nationalism began to rear its head and spawned strong anti-colonial sentiments.

When the British returned to Malaya after the defeat of the Japanese, the British Government started to review the system, and concluded that the existing policies were outmoded. In October of the year, Sit Mac Michael was sent to Malaya for negotiations to draw up new agreements.

On his return to England in January 1946, Sir Mac Michael made his-ports to the ruling Labour Government which tabled the "Malayain Union" plan in Parliament. It entailed the combination of various Federated States, Malacca and Penang into a single administrative system. Singapore was not included as it was intended to remain a Crown Colony.

The Malayan Union proposal presented opportunities for anyone who accepted Malaya as homeland to acquire citizenship status. It was met with opposition from the Malays when it was published. The opponents held rallies and organised demonstrations throughout the country to vent their anger. They contended that the proposal would threaten the position of the Malays.

In spite of the protests, the Labour Government of England went ahead with plans to implement the proposal. It was debated and approved by both houses of the British Parliament on 18th March 1946.

The Malays became furious. Even the Sultans of various states boycotted the installation ceremony of the Malayan Union Governor-General, Sir Edward Dean,

Under the clarion call of their leaders, the Malays awoke with keen political awareness. Then, led by Datuk Onn Jaafar, Malay Organisations met in a convention on 24th January 1946 in Kuala Lumpur. The convention declared the formation of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO).

Riding on support derived from the Malay community, UMN'O rallied the Sultans and dealt with the British directly to protest against

the Malayan Union. After negotiations, the British agreed to some compromise and a draft of the Federation of Malaya Declaration was drawn up. It bacame effective on 1st February 1948 and replaced the Malayan Union.

The Federation of Malaya Declaration ensured the sovereign position of the Malay Rulers and accorded Malays special rights. It also formed the Rulers conference.

Under this Declaration, the British had established the centralisation of power except in religious affairs and customs of the Malays.

Meanwhile, the Chinese Community was indifferent. It had no positive stance towards the Malayan Union, neither had it much concern for the Declaration of the Federation of Malaya. Basically, the chinese in Malaya had three trends of thought, one of which was rightist; the second was leftist and they were rather engrossed in the conflict between the Nationalists and the Reds on Mainland China. The third group consisted of the locally born Chinese Baba's and they were inclined to opt for continued Britist Rule.

It was not until Declaration of Emergency that the local Chinese began to realise that their survival had been challenged and threatened. That prompted them to clamour for the formation of the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA).

The MCA was formally established on 17th February 1948 with the declared objective to alleviate the dilemma of the Chinese under the Emergency Rule. Its founding president, Mr. Tan Cheng Lock was a full-blooded Baba.

Dr. Lim Chong Eu is a Baba too. He had yet to join the MCA; and he was different from other Babas in the sense that he had a considerable understanding of the society in China after his long stop-over there. He was in many ways a Baba with much local flair, but he was at the same time ever much in common with the immigrant Chinese, and understood the aspirations of these people. He was a composite of the two cultures.

In fact, there existed a western oriented and left-leaning political party comprising mainly Chinese prior to the formation of McA. This Party, the Malayan Democratic Union, published its political objectives in December 1945, declaring among others, the aim to establish a self-ruling Malayan Government; election of all councillors; freedom of speech and association; abolishment of racial discrimination and equal employment opportunities.

The Malayan Democratic Union derived its membership mostly from professionals, and its Chairman was Philip Hoalim. Its spokeman was a Eurasian named John Ebert. They imitated the British Labour Party, advocating freedom, equality and democracy.

Although it was non-communist, its left-leaning stance was seen by the British Government as an easy target for infiltration by the Commu-

nist "United Front".

Besides, the British recognised only UMNO, the Malay Rulers and refused to grant the Malayan Democratic Union any representation. Deprived of recognition and unable to fit into the prevailing trend, the Malayan Democratic Union was dissolved on 25th June 1948.

The MCA filled the political vacuum in the Chinese Community as a political party duly recognised by the British authorities. The MCA membership comprised mainly of the English educated Chinese and Babas.

For Dr. Lim Chong Eu, his political logbook recorded nothing between 1947 and 1951. But his father was a community leader among the Babas and was appointed a Chinese Affairs councillor by the British until he retired from active social and political activities in the early 40's.

Even so, Dr. Lim Chwee Leong wielded considerable influence and it helped to guide Chong Eu into politics, As a son of Dr. Lim Chwee Leong, a British trained doctor and a medical officer in the Air Force, Dr. Lim Chong Eu was destined to be noticed and accorded political positions by the British Government.

Non-Partisan Councillor

On 30th April 1951, Dr. Lim Chong Eu crossed his first political threshold when he was appointed Settlement Councillor for Penang, a position equivalent to today's State Legislative Assemblyman.

On this day, dressed immaculately in lounge suite and feeling rather excited, Dr. Lim Chong Eu attended the Colonial State Assembly. He caught the envious eyes of many for his comparative youth, for he was only 32 while other councillors were mostly aged gentlemen. He was also unique as a man with no political affiliation. It could not be denied that his sound family background, outstanding educational achievement and social status served as his most valuable door-opener into the arena of politics.

For a young man who had witnessed both the World Wars, the opportunity to dabble in politics came as a singular honour. Chong Eu was excited and joyous and he wanted Swen Yen to share the honour

with him.

It was the chance for him to prove his worth, to utilise what he had learned. He did not join the MCA but wanted to forge a new political situation in Penang. Inspired and invogorated, Chong Eu's urge to form a new political party in Penang grew stronger.

Chong Eu knew he had to talk to Swen Yen ahout his intention to devote more time to public office and consequently less time for the

family.

"Would you agree to my involvement in politics?" he asked Swen Yen.

The question appeared unnecessary and unexpected and Swen Yen was perplexed.

"Are you not involved in politics now that you are made a councillor? Why ask this question?"

"No, no. They are two different issues altogether, I can be just a councillor but not involved with any party. What I mean by involving myself in politics was to form a political party and to put in my best," explained Chong Eu.

As a man with western-education, Chong Eu believed that he must seek his wife's views on a matter that will have far-reaching significance for their lives. If he went ahead against her wishes, it would cause arguments and upset peace in the house and that will distract him from his political work.

Mrs. Lim Chong Eu trusted her husband in making correct decisions and was ready to help him realise his ideals. She accepted the imminent change of life-style.

"You can go on with peace of mind. I shall take care of our home." Swen Yen encouraged cheerfully.

Dr. Lim Chong Eu insisted upon seeking the views of the wife when a major decision affecting the home was pending and he used to ask his younger colleagues to do the same. He believed that a man in politics could contribute his best if he did so with the blessing of his wife,

Political life in itself is a sacrifice. Chong Eu feels the sacrifice justified as it enables one to serve the masses. This strong conviction is born out of compassion. Chong Eu is always liberal in using this compassion as he is of the opinion that politics is merely an instrument in the quest for freedom, justice and humanism.

He went ahead to rally a group of contemporaries and formed the Penang Radical Party, which was similar to the Malayan Democratic Union in concept.

CHAPTER 4: MARCHING ALONG A LONG POLITICAL JOURNEY

The Radical Party was a product of Penang politics in the early 50's. And its chief founding member was the appointed Straits Settlement Councillor, Dr. Lim Chong Eu; helped in the effort by a group of English educated intellectuals.

Almost at the same time, the Labour Party was formed while Datuk Onn Jaafar, too, left UMNO to form the Malayan Independent Party.

Obviously, the Radical Party was another political organisation after the Malayan Democratic Union which transcended communal lines. But it, unlike the Malayan Democratic Union, did not display any left-leaning profile. It was different from UMNO and MCA which were communal based and vowed to champion the rights of their respective communities.

Spearheaded the Formation of Radical Party

During its inaugural convention at Westland School Hall on 19th June 1951, after a period of devoted campaign by Dr. Lim Chong Eu, almost a hundred persons were present. Amongst them were lawyers, doctors and serving councillors. Dr. Lim Chong Eu as Master of Ceremony, made the objectives of the proposed party clear.

"This inaugural convention is called to discuss the formation of a new political party to enable us to field candidates for the coming election of town councillors, which will be the first for Penang. Now, we must elect a speaker to chair this convention," declared Chong Eu.

Lawyer Lim Choo Wan was then proposed and elected as the speaker. After some deliberations, the party was named Penang Radical Party. Contrary to the name, it was not supposed to be radical nor was it extremist in any way. It was meant to be a moderate organisation.

After deciding upon the name for the party, the speaker adjourned the convention for five minutes in order to allow participants time for private discussions and negotiations over the election of office-bearers.

When the convention resumed, Mr. Lim Choo Wan was given sufficient support to head the party as its first Chairman, Dr. Lim Chong Eu regarded himself too young to hold that post and was elected as one of the three vice-chairmen; with Zainal Abidin, Penang Chairman of the Malay Citizens United Organisation, and Chu Swee Ee, a federal legislative councillor which was roughly an equivalent of today's member of parliament, taking the other two vice-chairmen's posts. The party secretary was a young Ceylonese lawyer, Mr. Sunny Pillay, He had later become secretary of the Georgetown Municipal Council. Lawyer Lee Thian Choo was elected commissioner and accountant Lee Hong Chiang was made treasurer.

There were five committee members and they were Dr. Menon, himself already a Settlement Councillor; Dr. Alias; Mr. Das who was then a teacher in Balik Pulau and a rural councillor; lawyers Mr. Philbert

and Miss Nancy Yeap Chin Poh.

Nancy Yeap was a granddaughter of the famous tycoon Yeap Chor Ee. Mr. Yeap had been a barber in his young days and later prospered enough to establish Ban Hin Lee Bank.

After its inauguration, the Radical Party apparently lacked a clear manifestation of it political ideals except to serve the people. It seemed to hint that wrestling for control of the Penang Municipal Council was its immediate, and primary objective.

The election by popular voting of a portion of the Municipal Councillors was a symbol of democratic reform on the part of the British Colonial Government, aimed at easing the tension caused by various parties demanding Self-Rule in Malaya. In fact, it was the first election by popular voting anywhere in Malaya. In the past, all councillors were appointed, albeit from lists of candidates proposed by various bodies. For instance, the British Government appoint councillors Dr. Ong Huck Chye of the Penang Chinese Town Hall, Dr. Lee Cheang Keat of the British Settlements Chinese Association, Mr. Gurmit of the Penang Straits Settlements Association, Mr. Martin of the Chambers of Commerce, Mr. Lim Yeow Choon of the Chinese Chambers of Commerce, The Government made direct appointments on its own of seven more councillors, including Mr. Khoo Siang Yew, and made the total of twelve councillors.

Under the new Council Enactment, the Municipal Council had fifteen councillors, six of which were to be appointed by the British

and the remaining nine were to be elected. There were only three electoral wards, or constituencies, namely Kelawai, Jelutong and Tanjing. Candidates from political organisations or by themselves were all allowed to contest the election, three candidates winning the most totes would be deemed elected to the council form each of the constituencies. The candidate with the most votes would serve for three years, the second would serve two years while the last winning candidate for the constituency would serve only a year.

With this arrangement, there would be elections every year and that gave the political scene some form of purposeful activity.

The nomination day for the first-ever election was on 1st November 1951. The Radical Party contested all the nine seats, the Labour Party contested eight while UMNO fielded only candidate. McA was not represented in that election. The curtain was already raised for the first act of Malayan oblitics.

In that election, Dr. Lim Chong Eu was not fielded as a candidate as he was then already a Settlements Councillor, (an equivalent of a State Assemblyman). Instead, he devoted himself to campaigning for his comrades.

A Granddaughter of Yeap Chor Ee elected Municipal Councillor

Of the nine candidates from the Radical Party, Nancy Yeap drew the most attention partly because female candidates were unheard-of those days and also due to the fact that she was hardworking. She was adored by the voters. Her added advantage was being the only rose among the thorns as far as candidates were concerned.

As one of the leaders of Radical Party, Dr. Lim Chong Eu had a month-long heetic campaign period. His main duties were to speak at rallies and to conduct door-to-door, meet-the-people sessions. Nancy Yeap was one of those who benefited from his efforts in Kelawai ward.

Yeap was one of those who benefited from his efforts in Kelawai ward.

1st December was polling day and the Straits Echo ran this report
on the polls.

"The Penang Municipal Council Elections was successful in many aspects.

Though the 72% turn-out of registered voters was not too satisfactory, one had to consider that it rained in the day and prevented many would-be voters from voting. No candidate was elected on communal support alone,

Unmistakably, the voting was based on the calibre of the candidate and Chinese, Malay and Indian candidates were duly elected in the same constituency."

The results; Radical won six seats, Labour one seat, UMNO one seat and the remaining went to an independent candicate, Mr. Cheah Cheng Poh. Of the party-backed counciliors, Radical Party had lawyer Lee Thian Chu, Mat Lah Husin in Tanjung Ward; Nancy Yeap, Lim Choo Wan and Rudins swept in Kelawai Ward and Dr. Menon in Jelutong, while the independent took the remaining seat in Jelutong.

The victory of Radical Party could be attributed to the party's intellectuals dominated membership. It appeared wibrant and well-organised and projected a favourable image of itself to the electorate. Meanwhile, the MCA was still engrossed in running the Welfare Lotteries to raise funds for New Village Chinese and overlooked the political significance of the election. It was not until the Kuala Lumpur Municipal elections in 1952 that it dawned on MCA that political representation was more vital than welfare work.

In comparison, Labour Party was new too and lacked capable pole. It was less systematic than the Radical Party in its organisation. Consequently, it could not match the effective electoral machinery of the Radical in the Penang Municipal elections. Even UMNO was relatively weak in Penang then, furthermore it had not been allied with the MCA to wield sufficient political-level.

Riding on the tide of victory and favourable political climate, Dr. Lim Chong Eu started a plan to gain eventual control of the Municipal Council. With the Radical Party controlling as seasts of the Council, and with the British appointing six of its own councillors, the party had no effective control then.

Dr. Lim Chong Eu had greater ambitions then. He, himself, would not take pride in remaining an appointed Settlements Councillor forever. He wanted to be elected a political leader of Penang.

As a systematic person, Dr. Lim Chong Eu decided to take one step at a time instead of going for the top post of the Radical Party. But he would invariably excel in his leadership so that his ability be widely accepted and admired.

In such conducive circumstances, he was already regarded as The Chief. With Radical Party extending its influence, Chong Eu was carried higher and higher towards the upper rungs of political ladder. He hoped

to consolidate power through politics, but the process was not plain sailing all the way.

Taking over the Helm of Radical Party

Dr. Lim Chong Eu was determined to strengthen the Radical Party. Though he was only a Vice Chairman in name, he was widely and highly regarded in his circles of associates.

Incidentally, the performance of Radical Party councillors were outstanding in the Municipal Council too. They gained both the confidence of the public as well as that of the British Authorities. This made the Radical Party one to be reckoned with.

In order to strengthen the party, Chong Eu went around recruiting capable personalities and hoped to make a better show of the next elections. Wong Pow Nee, Tan Cheng Bee and accountant, Wong Loo Tham were among those enlisted into the Radical Party.

Lawyer Lim Choo Wan decided not to seek re-election as the party chief in 1953. He felt it was time for Dr. Lim Chong Eu to take his rightful place at the helm of Radical Party. In the party elections that year, Dr. Lim Chong Eu took over the reigns from him while he assumed his new position as one of the Viee-Chairman.

But that time, Chong Eu had already made a name for himself both inside the Settlements Council as well as in the community.

In November the same year, the Radical Party nominated him to run for the Municipal Council. With the expiry of the two-year terms of Mat Lah Husin, Rudins and C.M. Ismail, another election must be held that year to fill the vacancies.

The Radical Party nominated Rudins the incumbent, Chong Eu and Wong Loo Tham to run in the three constituencies. It had high hopes to pocket the three seats.

Dr. Lim Chong Eu was originally fielded for the Tanjung seat, but in order to offer the safer seat to the new candidate, he chose Jelutong. It had a large Malay electorate, with Chinese voters making up a minority. It was not a safe seat to run against an UMNO candidate. But Chong Eu let Wong Loo Tham run at Tanjung and kept Jelutong for himself.

It was, and still is, difficult to say whether that decision was right or wrong. But that coming contest was the debut for Chong Eu and meant a lot to him then. Nomination day saw Dr. Lim Chong Eu fixed to run in a fourcorner fight against Mr. Hashim of UMNO, Pakunam of the Labour Party and Charan Singh, an independent.

From the line-up, Dr. Lim Chong Eu appeared the leading candidate as he was then a Settlements Councillor and had better exposure. But he fought for victory without complacence as he felt the contest could go either way.

First taste of Defeat in his maiden contest

In spite of his efforts, Dr. Lim Chong Eu met his waterloo when the results were announced after polling. He had lost to the UMNO candidate who polled 2,178 votes to Chong Eu's 1,186 votes. In fact, UMNO candidate also won the other two constituencies.

Few people knew Dr. Lim Chong Eu had any experience of defeat in elections, even most old-timer politician were ignorant of this "record". To them Dr. Lim Chong Eu is invincible. It is not surprising though, considering that the minor stumble is now buried deep in the history of local politics.

Defeat might be painful, but it could spur one into changing strategy. This minor stumble did not make a dent in Chong Eu's political image though it made him come up with a major decision which nobody had noticed before. It might have also change to course of history for the Radical Party.

After his unsucessful attempt to enter the Penang Muncipal Council, Chong Eu was never to try again. No one could read his mind and none knew why, but Dr. Lim Chong Eu had decided not to contest for any seat in the council till today. Obviously, he was concerned about his reputation but he ought not mind the realities of politics.

When Dr. Lim Chong Eu held sway over Penang politics, he had neglected to try the door of the Muncipal Council, even while he is the Chief Minister and had to serve as ex-officio chief of the council, he quickly delegated the running of the council to his deputy, Tan Sri Teh Ewe Lim, Finally, in 1984, he gladly accepted the conferment as "Free Citizen" by the Georgetown Municipal Council.

No more Municipal Councillorship for Chong Eu

Undeniably, had Lim Chong Eu contested for a Municipal Council

seat in the 1959 or 1963 elections, he would surely have won. But he had not tried.

If we had looked at the result of the 1953 Municipal Council elections, it would be obvious that the three UMNO candidate had won on the votes of the Malay, who had registered themselves and had turn out in considerable numbers on polling day. On the contrary, the Chinese were indifferent then. Thus, it had dawned on Dr. Lim Chong Eu to initiate the drive to register Chinese voters in later days. He wanted the Chinese to realise the importance of voting and exercising the basic rights of a citizen.

In the same elections in 1953, other notable losers were Ramanathan and N. Pakunan of the Labour Party. Another one, Khoo Soo Gin, was from the Malayan Independent Party.

Although the Malayan Independent Party was well-proclaimed, it could not gain enough foothold in Malayan politics to sustain its survival. It was initiated by Datuk Onn Jaafar who had left UMNO earlier and advocated non-ethnic membership. Though he had left UMNO, Datuk Onn continued to hold his post as Minister of Internal Affairs in the Colonial Government, The new UMNO president, Tunku Abdul Rahman was then only a legislative councilior. In comparison, Datuk Onn had more influence than the Tunku, and Datuk Onn had briefly succeeded in convincing Tan Cheng Lock and Dr. Lim Chong Eu to assist in his efforts for some time, Datuk Oon appeared to lawe an advantage in the tug of war with UMNO. But Tan Cheng Lock was later persuaded to side with UMNO.

The real cooperation of McA and UMNO began in 1952 during the Kuala Lumpur Municipal elections. In the twelve seats contested, MCA and UMNO won nine seats between them. The Malayan Independent Party suffered a stunning defeat and could do nothing but to allow the McA-UMNO alliance to lay their foundation of cooperation.

Even though MCA did not participate in the 1953 Georgetown Municipal Council Elections, its co-operation with UMNO helped, to a certain extent, to sway some Chinese votes to UMNO candidates. To make matters worse for Radical Party, it had to split votes with the Labour Party candidate, eventually conceding three municipal council seats to UMNO. This blow to the Radical Party could not be unrelated to these two factors.

One of the prominent leaders of Malayan Independent Party was Penang rubber magnate, Mr. Heah Joo Seang, he was national vicepresident of the party and its Chairman in Penang State. Heah Joo Seang occupied an important place in the Chinese leadership echelon at Penang by virtue of his wealth, but he had no common ground with Chong Eu,

After its defeat in the elections, the Malayan Independent Party was re-named Party Negara Malaya (Malayan National Party) by Dato' Onn Jaafar, and it had Chinese members too. Heah Joo Seang remained one of its leaders. But Dato' Onn was furious over MCA's pro-UMNO stance and had later taken the Party Negara along communal lines. However, Heah Joo Seang stayed on, making himself the target of various accusations. Party Negara could never command the support of the Chinese community and eventually became inconsequential.

When Dato' Onn switched his stand, Lim Chong Eu distanced himself even more from him. At the same time, Lim Chong Eu came

upon a new breakthrough in his political career.

This was due to the reality that Radical Party could no longer carry on its struggle alone, given the emergence of new political factors. One of which was the stagnation of its influence in the Georgetown Municipal Council, though it had won nine out of six seats contested in 1951, (Election Regulations then stipulated that the three candidates with the third most votes in their constituencies could serve only one year), Radical could only secure only one of the three seats in 1952; its Chairman Lim Choo Wan was the only one elected, in Kelawai ward). Therefore, Radical could manage only to maintain its six seat hold on the council.

In 1953, (with three more councillors vacating their places, two of whom are from Radical) the elections saw the defeat of Lim Chong Eu, and others from the party, which by then had its councillors reduced to only four in the Municipal Council.

Secondly, registered Chinese voters in elections in 1952 and 1953 was already neglegible and their turn-out was even more disappointing; that had adversely jeopardised the chances of Radical candidates, For instance, 90% of voters in 1952 were Malays and Indians, while the Chinese voters made up the remaining 10%. With the given indifference of Chinese constituents, vicotry was remote at best for Radical candidates constituents

Finally, the co-operation of MCA and UMNO in the 1952, Kuala Lumpur Municipal Elections had brought them a resounding vicotry, paving the way to the formation of Alliance.

But MCA had yet to have much clout in Penang and had stayed

clear of the municipal elections in 1951, 1952 and 1953. Aware of this, MCA founder and President Tan Cheong Lock initiated recruiting drives in Penang with the view to strengthen the party. While in Penang, he met influential Chinese in the State to convince them into joining MCA. He also sent feelers to Lim Chong Eu to persuade the latter to join Alliance and fight for independence and protect Chinese rights.

On one hand, he had hoped to see Lim Chong Eu taking Radical Party into Alliance as its component, on the other hand, he requested Lim Chong Eu's personal membership in MCA and assistance in beefing

up the party organisations.

MCA had realised the importance of extending political influence after its victory at the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Elections, 1952. In June the same year, it approved a proposal to re-organise, making it more apparent as a political party, and not just as welfare organisation earing for the Chinese. During this time, Leong Yee Kow from Perak was appointed Secretary-General by MCA Central Committee; replacing Leong Seok Ling who had resigned.

Almost simultaneously, MCA had mooted plans to publish a daily, to serve as a medium for propaganda. The Party's central committee had intended to purchase Nam Keow Daily of Singapore, using its exisiting machines and assests and converting its name to "Ma Hwa Daily". Due to the opposition from some state party organisations, the idea was shelved.

Incidentally, Tan Cheong Lock had to overcome some oppositions too, before the re-organisation of the party. He had even resigned in frustration. But his plans were adopted when party leaders persuaded him to stay on.

Nevertheless, his reforms were alow, mainly due to the grip of power by various state leaders and the central committee's lack of dominance over these state bodies. For example, Penang McA was then headed by Chinese community leader Ng Swee Khim. (also Chairman of the Penang Chinese Chambers of Commerce). By virtue of his leadership in the community, he was made a political helmsman. But as "Mr. Nice", he and no political drive and initiatives, leaving the party's affairs stagnant.

JOINING MCA IN 1954

It was not until 1954 that Tan Cheng Lock and Leong Yee Kow

were able to push the party forward in Penang. They coaxed Lim Chong Eu to join hands into strengthening MCA and consolidate Chinese political influence.

Lim Chong Eu had political ambitions, and not just an "averageman". He was far-sighted in his analysis of the current political environment. He was of the view that the Chinese needed more political awareness. They ought to register themselves as voters, lest the Chinese Community would lose its rightful representations in the coming elections in 1955.

1954 was an eventful year for Malayan politics. Various political bodies had exerted pressure on the colonial government, demanding early general elections, autonomy and eventually Independence.

On one side, MCA and UMNO (and later joined by MIC) formed the Alliance to ask for autonomy; on the other hand, Party Negara, led by Dato' Onn demanded for autonomy and Independence. (When Dato' Onn left UMNO in 1951, he formed Malayan Independent Party, but it was handed a stunning defeat in the elections. Dato' Onn then re-organised it to become Party Negara to vie for political power with UMNO).

After its inception, Party Negara had made a considerable impact when many Mentris Besar (Chief Ministers in the Malay States) and legislative councillors joined it. On top of it, Dato 'Onn was the Minister of Internal Affairs in the colonial government, wielding considerable influence. Later, it had tried to postpone the holding of general elections while UNNO persuaded the British for an early one. The British were initially inclined to agree with Dato 'Onn, without expressly so and without agreeing to consult the majority party on the appointment of additional assemblymen after the elections. Alliance, being more wocal, had called on its existing assemblymen to resign in protest. It proved effective and the British related.

Given the changes in the political climate, Lim Chong Eu, as Radical Chairman, had two choices: is join forces with Dato Onn and co-operate with Party Negara; or to ally with Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tan Cheng Lock and co-operate with the Alliance. After thorough considerations, Lim Chong Eu chose the latter.

In order to convince the Radical Party membership and to win over public opinion, Chong Eu told them, "The time has arrived for us to take a united stand with other political parties and to strengthen our line-up with the aim to form a government through democratic elections."

The primary objective of politics is to garner power to rule; and a political party is the vehicle to power. In Chong Eu's philosophy, politics is not unchanging; and that if you have no power, there shall be no means to realise your ideals, to serve the people.

Thus, he needed to change and rationalise Radical Party's strategies. Due to dissimilar circumstances, though, he merely expressed support and sympathised with the resignations of Alliance assemblymen to protest the colonial government's delay in returning power to the people; he insisted that Radical Party councillors in Penang had to continue serving the people. As for Radical Party assemblymen in the Federal Legislative Assembly, Chong Eu left the individuals to decide and did not impose the party's wills. The Radical's only Federal assemblyman, Chee Swee Ee took it upon himself (to stav on.

On 27th June 1954, Penang Radical Party held a General Meeting and unanimously passed an Amendment to its Constitution and changed its name from "Penang Radical Party" to Radical Party. This removed the regional constrain on itself.

Lim Chong Eu, as the Party Chairman, told the meeting, "Today, our important task is to co-operate closely with other political parties in order to gain self-rule at the earliest possible date. The Federal elections are imminent, and this is the golden opportunity to learn about democracy and to breath the air of a democratic environment. Radical Party's members should be bold enough to face the new challenges of the future."

"There is a need for us to make the next move now," he added.
What was "the next move"? Lim Chong Eu characteristically, did
not resort to the explicit and forced his subjective views on others but
rather tactfully and convincingly brought them to share his views.

He exhorted, "We must seek a break-through from the existing base and sail this ship into the open sea. The Radical Party had built a sound foundation in the past and we would not fail."

This clear but non-committing address to the Radical Party had definitely taken effect and made most members willing to accept the concept of cooperation with the Alliance Party.

But at that important moment, Lim Chong Eu announced his withdrawal as Chairman though he indicated the willingness to accept the lesser position as Vice-Chairman. Those present were shocked and began to make various guesses and speculations.

Lim Choo Wan (林注旺) was prompt to propose Lim Chong Eu as the incumbent Chairman. But Lim Chong Eu, his mind made up, persistently declined despite repeated appeals.

The reasons for that decision were known to none but Chong Eu alone

The broader scope in MCA

Lim Chong Eu had valid reasons for the decision to relinguish his Chairman's post. The MCA had extended feelers to him by then, inviting him to join the party while maintaining his membership in the Radical. The best way to achieve this manouvre was to opt for the co-pilot's chair. This would ensure that the Radical Party had its spokesman and Chairman if and when Chong Eu joined MCA. He did not want his enlistment in MCA to harm the Radical Party in anyway. But during those days, political organisations were lack and it was not uncommon for some individuals to have memberships in two parties.

Chong Eu envisaged further too, to make MCA stronger and prove

himself with it

Though no one knew then what was his next move, the Radical Party's members respected his wishes and accepted Dr. Menon's (美农 医生) nomination as Chairman. Dr. Menon (美农医生) was an appointed Straits Settlement

Councillor as well as an elected municipal councillor. After the Party elections, the Radical Party leadership line-up was

as follower-

Chairman Vice-Chairman

: Dr. Menon : Dr. Lim Chong Eu, Lim Thian Choo and

Miss Yap Chin Poh (this lone lady municipal councillor was

having a meteoric rise in the party)

Secretary : Ramanath Treasurer

: Wong Lu Tham Commissioner : Ismail Che Mat

Committee Members : Dr. Goay Ah Pen (倪亚班医生), Yee

Cheang Seng (徐长生), Tan Cheng Bee, Lee Thian Choo, Therahan, Philip and

Pereira

Soon after that, Lim Chong Eu became the Radical Party's pioneer in leading Chinese leaders from the party to join MCA and thereafter gained a foothold in it.

The switch from leading a multi-ethnic party to leading a communal party merely constituted a spolitical strategy of Lim Chong Eu. He frequently used different strategies under different circumstance and at different times. Past ventus and experience made him conclude that when there is a need to change, it is not advisable to doom oneself by remaining obstinate; when the era has changed, one should go with the trend. There should be no fear of changes but one must be afraid to remain unchanging. Position should be secondary to the primary concern for occupying the right one at the optimum moment so as to stay invincible. If one clings to the existing, it would be unlikely one could achieve any break-through and change the status quo.

With the support of most members, the Radical Party became a component of the Alliance before the 1954 elections. As it was basically a regional political organisation in Penang, the Radical Party possessed no national profile and was consequently not regarded highly by the Alliance.

On the contrary, the group of Radical Party's members led into the MCA by Lim Chong Eu proved themselves to be influential and eventually effected fundamental changes in MCA.

Lim Chong Eu joined MCA largely at the invitation of Tan Cheng Lock and Neoh Yu Kow (漢字事), but before he could do so, Tan Cheng Lock had resigned for the second time as its president. The reason behind the resignation was the failure of some officers in the party to consult him before agreeing to a electoral pact between MCA and the Colonial Government.

Tan Cheng Lock resigned on 29th July 1954; Tan Siew Sin, his son, was then under medical treatment in London. The whole cross-section of the MCA persuaded Tan Cheng Lock to remain.

Lim Chong Eu, too, voiced his opinion over the resignation. He described Tan Cheng Lock as the leader capable of bringing solidarity to the Party, respected by the Chinese as well as the Malay community and had close rapport with UMNO.

Responding to widespread appeal, Tan Cheng Lock changed his mind and stayed on. He arrived in Penang on 5th August 1954 and appealed to various political parties to join the Alliance. He met Chong Eu and a number of other leaders again to extend MCA's invitation to join the party.

During those days, dual membership in political parties was permidded and Radical Party members could retain their membership after joining the MGA. Lim Chong Eu became a MCA member under those circumstances and was elected as a member of the MGA working committee in Penang, responsible for negotiating with UMNO in the formation of Penang State Alliance.

The fifteen-man committee consisted of Ong Joo San (王か山) .
Ian Jit Seng (唐日升) . Yong Yun Chuan (杨允全) . Eu Chong
Seng (徐夫生) . Khoo Kuang Hooi (永夫年) . Ng Swee Khim (岳 成早) . Leong Kam Yew (梁鈴標) . Khoo Yew Aik (年有直) .
Cheah Cheng Poh (谢清波) . Wong Cu Thum (青鲁坛) . Lim
Chong Eu (林苍祐) . Ong Keng Seng (王景成) . Lam Poh Chye (直保財) . and Lee Huan Boon (季娘文) . Tai Hooi Su(載志思)

The Penang State MCA also decided to form its Youth Wing and Wanita (ladies) Movement.

Apparently, the Radical Party went into the Alliance via two ways, one of which was joining Alliance as one of its component parties, the permitting non-Chinese members to become alliance members, while the other was the application for MCA membership by Chinese members as individuals.

Among the many who became Alliance members, Lim Chong Eu was most outstanding and had many eyes on him because he had gradually acquired the reputation as a good orator and fine negotiator since becoming a Straits Settlement Councillor.

When Mrs. Pandi, the Chairman of the United Nations General Assembly (as well as the Chief of Indian delegation to the U.N.) visited Penang on 13th August 1954, Lim Chong Eu was made the leader of the welcoming delegation, consisting of Settlement Councillors.

Then again, when President Nehru of India visited the Island on 31st December the same year, it was Lim Chong Eu who was on hand to welcome the distinguished guest.

Reputation and performance always go in proportion. Chong Eu achieved fine reputation through his outstanding performance, and when he decided to join the MCA, he handed over the helm of Radical Party to Dr. Menon.

From that day on, the name of Lim Chong Eu was closely linked to MCA in many ways and through many years while, conversely, he became more and more remote and removed from Radical Party, even though it was also a component of the coalition.

In a show of unity in Penang Alliance, the Radical Party abstained from fielding candidates of its own for the Penang Municipality elections scheduled for November 1954. Instead, it supported Alliance candidates Goh Guan Hoe (Tanjung), Aris (Jelutong) and Abdullah Ali (Kelawai). All three of them emersed victorious.

The original councillors of the 3 wards, who had served their 3-year terms were all Radical men; Lee Thian Choo (Tanjung), Dr. Menon

(Jelutong) and Nancy Yeap (Kelawai).

But Radical Party retained their councillors in Province Wellesley as Wong Pow Nee and Tan Cheng Bee maintained their Radical Party member status. Another councillor there was non-partisan Ooh Chooi Cheng

Nancy Yeap was a vice-chairman of Radical Party and she had divergent views with Chong Eu's over Radical Party's affiliation with Alliance. She had never openly voiced support for Party's decision to join the coalition, neither did she enrol herself as an MCA member. Her sudden decision to quit proved quite a shock.

Bitter Contest against Yeap Chor Ee's daughter-in-law

But more surprises were in store

January 23, 1955 was nomination day for the Straits Settlements Council polls. On that sunny day, cheered on by a refreshing breeze, Lim Chong Eu headed for the nomination centre with his supporters. He was to contest in Kelawai constituency.

A short while later, a well-known lady appeared at the nomination centre too and went on to submit her nomination papers.

Lim Chong Eu was astonished as he recognised the contestant. She was someone he knew and she had considerable influence.

She entered her name as Ooi Siew Neoh in the nomination papers. But she was also Mrs. Yeap Kim Hoe, wife of millionaire Yeap Chor Ee's second son. She was not only Yeap Chor Ee's daughter-in-law but Nancy Yeap's mother too.

Normally, the younger generation would take over then the older ones retire. But Ooi Siew Neoh broke tradition by taking over from her daughter who was bored with politics.

She also parted company with tradition when she proved that women not only had their place in the home but had a role to play in politics too

In the conservative society of the 50's, few women acted against

tradition. Ooi Siew Neoh was one of those who dared.

But of course she had her origins and family backgrounds to her advantage. Though a daughter-in-law of tycoon Yeap Chor Ee was not expected to meddle in matters "reserved for men" and be unnecessarily

exposed in society, she was in a unique position to do so.

Yeap Cor Ee was a top-notch millionaire. Ban Hin Lee Bank was one of his achievements and it remains one of the primary business concerns of the Yeap family. If you are still young, you may not have heard of Yeap Chor Ee, but you have surely heard your elders talking about "Tee-Tow Ee" (Barber Ee); especially when passing through Northam Road (presently Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah) and came to an imposing bungalow, the elders would gesture towards it and say, "This is "Tee-Tow Ee's bungalow".

Yeap Chor Ee had his ancestral origins in the Nan An district of Fujian Province, China. Born into a poor family in 1868, he migrated southwards to Penang at 17 years of age. He was destitute and alone and accepted hard-labour as his means of survival. Later, he became a street-corner barber at Nordin Street, thus the nickname "Tee-Tow Ee".

This barber was no ordinary man-in-the-street, though. He prayed often and devoutly at The Temple of Goddess of Mercy. There he met a Hakka business magnate Goh Teik Chee, who encouraged him to enter

business, for he had high regards for the young man.

Yeap Chor Ee had business brains though lacking in formal education. He started dealing in sugar, importing it from Indonesia. When he had some savings he invested in sugarcane plantations in Province Wellesley.

Through this sugar trade, he got to know Indonesian "Sugar King" Ooi Teong Ham. And with the latter's support, Yeap himself became the "Sugar King" of Malaya.

As their association and friendship progressed, the Indonesian millionaire had his daughter married to Yeap Chor Ee's son and the 2 friends became in-laws

In the meantime, Yeap Chor Ee's business experienced further expansion. In 1890, Ban Hin Lee was formed to deal in banking, oilmilling and real-estate. Yeap Chor Ee had made himself a banker.

The philantropist died on May 26, 1952 at the age of 81. In his life-time, he had made generous and numerous donations to educational and charitable organisations which included a grant of \$250,000,00 to University Malaya for the establishment of a Chinese-section of its library.

He had 6 sons; the eldest Lean Seng (達成), second and third sons Lean Ho (達河) and Lean Hong (達滅) died in their youth, then there were Kim Hoe (金和), Hock Hoe (稿和) and Hock Hin (稿号)

Daughter of "Sugar-king" Ooi Teong Ham

As the wife of Yeap Kim Hoe and daughter-in-law of Yeap Chor Ee, Ooi Siew Neoh had enough to reflect her exquisite position and status, but she had also the added advantage for being South-East Asian "Sugarking" Ooi Teong Ham's daughter.

About Ooi Teong Ham achievements, most of those who had inklings of the history of the Overseas Chinese would not be unfamiliar. In fact, his international standing far exceeded that of Yeap Chor Ee.

Born in a central Java provincial capital of Indonesia on November 19, 1866, Ooi Teong Ham was 2 years elder than Yeap Chor Ee. Ooi's father, Ooi Chee Sin, had sailed south from the Thong Aun district of Fujian Province in 1858 and set foot in central Java. After a period of dedicated struggle, he established Kian Guan Company to handle local-produce trade between China and Indonesia. Later, business was diversified to included pawnshops, mailing services, logging and opium. Riches went to him in great gushes.

When Ooi Chee Sin died in 1901, he left his second son Teong Ham US57 million and 10 million in Indonesia Rupiahs, Armed with the huge asset and his close ties to the local Dutch Colonial Officials, Teong Ham expanded Kian Guan Company to deal in sugar, which included sugarcane plantations and opening no less than 9 sugar-refinentations and opening no less than 9 sugar-refinence.

He produced not only 60% of Indonesian sugar output, but managed to sell it to virtually every available market in the world. On the Malayan market, Yeap Chor Ee was his associate and close friend.

Before long; Teong Ham ventured into shipping and banking; and gained the reputation as the richest man in Indonesia, 'Indonesian Sugar King' as well as "Southeast Asian Sugar-King'.

At the conclusion of World War I in 1918, in an attempt to avoidheavy taxes by the Dutch government, Teong Ham resided temporarily in Singapore and took up British citizenship.

While in Singapore, he donated \$150,000.00 to fund the establishment of Raffles College and \$100,000.00 for building Hua Keow

Secondary School Hall.

After his death, at 58, in Singapore in 1924, his remains was returned to Java and laid to rest in his birth-place. The epitaph on his tomb proclaims 'Here lies a man with unique mental powers, owner of banks, ocean-liners and real-estate. His great reputation rings in heaven. This site resembles the domain of the Dragon and the perch of the Tiger; it's valuably guarded by the hills, nutured by tides from the ocean. A great tomb that exists in this homeland.

There were many other Malayan and Singaporean Chinese leader who made great fortunes and had dealings with the late Ooi Teong Ham, among them were Lee Kong Chien ($\pm \hat{\kappa} \pm \hat{n}$) . Tan Lak Sai ($\hbar \div \hat{\kappa}$) $\hat{\kappa}$) and Lee Yian Lian ($\pm \hat{\kappa}\hat{\nu}$) . They all, to various extents, enjoyed the benevolence of Ooi Teong Ham before they made it to the top of their respective fields.

Ooi Teong Ham had 8 wives who together born him 26 siblings, with equal numbers of boys and girls. Most of them had their fine education in England. One of the daughters, Oo Siew Neoh (考练表), married Yeap Kim Hoe, as mentioned earlier, while a younger sister of

hers married the 3rd of the Yeap children, Hock Hoe.

Besides, another of the sisters, Ooi Hooi Lan (黄老生) married famous Nationalist Chinese diplomat, Koo Wee Kin (縣稅 稅) . Koo was appointed Chinese ambasador to the U.S. in 1915, when he was only 28. Then he was stationed in England in a similar position. In 1922, Koo was recalled to become Secretary-General of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. In 1931, he was promoted to the post of Deputy Foreign Minister. Before his retirement in 1950, he was, variously, China's ambassador to FRANCE, England and the U.S.

With his discourse, readers must have grasp the magnitude of Ooi Silven Nooh's prestige and power. More recently, her nephew, Yeap Leong Aun (Himmy Yeap) was shot dead in an attempted kidnap in October 1983. Jimmy was the Executive Director of Ban Hin Lee Bank.

With such formidable backfround and backings, Ooi Siew Neoh posed considerable threat as Lim Chong Eu's adversary in the polls. No doubt Chong Eu possessed useful political reputation and popular support, but Ooi Siew Neoh could not be dismissed easily as she had wealth and status. Though Chong Eu remained confident, he was surely not complacent because his challenger was an outstanding lady from distinguished families.

The distinquished lady Targeted Chong Eu

Armed with her daunting status and wealth, Siew Neoh's challenge against Chong Eu in 1955 was the focus of the polls. The press gave special emphasis on its coverage of the contest.

There were a total of 14 constituencies for the polls in Penang. The Alliance, which consisted of UMNO, MCA and Radical Party, contested all of them; the Labour Party of Province Wellseley went after 5 constituencies: Party Negara 3, Labour Party of Penang put all its hope in 1 and there were 3 non-partisan candidates.

At the close of nominations, 4 constituencies were won by Alliance candidates, uncontested. The remaining 10 constituencies were contested by total of 20 candidates.

The political ambience was favourable to Alliance in 1955. The British Governor, Mr. Pinhorn, had declared most of Penang State 'white area, i.e. free from communist insurgent threats; meanwhile the British Colonial Government had, in a compromise, agreed to the election of a majority of Legislative Assemblymen in the Federal Legislative polls that year.

As an Alliance candidate, Lim Chong Eu had reasons to feel confident; additionally, his political track-records would stand up to scrutiny when he met the test.

On the other front, Ooi Siew Neoh too, felt optimistic for victory. She belived that the voters would support her the way they did for her daughter 3 years earlier, (Nancy Yeap contested and won the municipal polls in 1951 on a Radical ticket).

Entering politics two and half years after Yeap Chor Ee's death, Ooi Siew Neoh still had her home at the Yeap bungalow at Kelawai Road. Prior to that, she was merely known as Mrs. Yeap Kim Hoe, though her daughter, Nancy enjoyed considerably more political limelight as a municipal councilior and the only female one.

Nancy had served her 3-year term without disappointing her constituents. She had devoted her best efforts to improving the town,

But she obviously did not agree with Chong Eu for taking Radical Party into the folds of Alliance, though she was not explicit.

Nonetheless, her sudden withdrawal and her implied consent for her mother's candidature Chong Eu manifested her stand, which was with her mother's.

Herself a lawyer, Nancy could not and would not openly contest against Lim Chong Eu, her comrade, as she was still a vice-chairman of Radical Party.

Ooi Siew Neoh had no party affiliation and was at liberty to contest.

And since her daughter won magnificently, polling the most votes at
1143 she herself had no reason whatsoever expect to defeat.

Naturally, Nancy did not object to her mother's nomination as she, too, thought the odds favourable. The, the pair went on to plan for the campaign. They released press statements, made campaign speeches, conducted door-to-door convasses. They had to put in their best efforts as their trial was no lame-duck. He was Lim Chong Eu.

Realising her opponent's strength, she attacked Chong Eu on 2 fronts. Firstly, she accused the British Government for favouring party-backed candidates; contending that barting non-pratisan candidates from making radio-transmitted campaigns was an unfair decision. This was intended to seek sympathy votes. Secondly, she turned her guns directly on Chong Eu, alleging that Chong Eu 'sold out' Radical Party. She demanded to know whether the party had convened a General Meeting to permit members and leaders to join Alliance.

She was believed to have obtained the information from Nancy. In sarcasm, she declared, 'A leader with perseverance would never

'change horses mid-stream', and would not jump onto the Alliance bandwagon.

She urged the voters vehemently, 'Dump the so-called leader who had betrayed the people!'

Sharp-tongue, Ooi Siew Neoh did not miss any opportunity to denounce and degrade Lim Chong Eu's image.

In her campaign leaflets, she wrote, 'When Lim Chong Eu contested the 1953 municipal polls in Jelutong, he vowed to quit politics if he lost. But does he keep his words?'

Though Chong Eu contested and lost the 1953 polls, no evidence could be found of his alleged promise to quit after defeat. It could be intelligence report given to Ooi Siew Neoh by persons who were dissatisfied with Chong Eu's actions in taking Radical party into Alliance.

Ooi Siew Neoh further censured Lim Chong Eu for discarding the principles of Radical Party. She demanded, 'Is this a way to secure a place in the government and to ensure his chances in reaching for the top?'

She explained that by her contesting as an independent, she would be free from dictates from Kuala Lumpur (the Federal authorities). Shie 'did not want the Federal government to impose its wishes on the Penang Assemblymen, much less the chances of one party controlling the state government.

Among the first to echo the sentiments of Ooi Siew Neoh was Radical Party Secretary Mr. Rama. He announced his resignation as party secretary, his objections against Radical Party's entry into Alliance and joined Ooi Siew Neoh in her scathing bombardment of Lim Chong Eu.

He declared, Radical Party is multi-ethnic while Alliance is nothing but an amalgation of communal parties.

In support of Ooi Siew Neoh's earlier accusation, he also asked Chong Eu and associates the reason for their failure to consult party members over the move to join Alliance.

But it was evidently clear that the majority of the Radical Committee members favoured joining Alliance and be associated with MCA. Only a minority remained adamant.

The obstinate few had hoped to overturn the decision to join Alliance through a General Meeting. But being insignificant in number, they failed to master the response expected.

Siew Neoh, throughout the month-long campaign, missed few opportunities to attack Chong Eu. Relentlessly and exhausting all her available resources, she worked and hoped to achieve sudden popularity.

Faced with this 'iron-lady', Lim Chong Eu chose to remain rational and avoided any direct confrontations and ignored her character-assasinations.

He knew the right approach for the peculiar problem at hand. For Ooi Siew Neoh, Chong Eu used a tactic advocated by Confucious: 'dont't argue with a woman'.

His political onslaught used major issues as its core; he criticised Parti Negara leaders for making irresponsible statements. He said, These people have been blinded by hatred; they are selfishly incapable of accommodating dissidence."

Parti Negara chief, Datuk Oon Jaafar left UMNO in 1951 to form his new organisation. At first, he managed to court the support of MCA leaders. Some of them even join the Independent Party. But after a while, MCA switched its support to UMNO and in the process entaged Datuk Onn. The Party Negara chief had pledged to champion the rights of the various ethnic groups, but now he accused MCA of opposing citizenship laws, the Education Act and unreasonably demanding the establishment of a Chinese University to rival University Malaya. He further alleged that MCA had ties with the Taiwanese Kuomintang, attempting to turn Malaya into the 20th Province of China.

Laying a solid political foundation

Lim Chong Eu explained and stressed the importance of unity among political parties to ensure the success for demanding autonomy and an early Independence. He denied having ever betrayed Radical Party. He merely wanted, he explained, to consolidate a greater political force to facilitate demands for Independence.

The prevailing polls for the Straits Settlements council was, in

Chong Eu's opinion, a significant step towards autonomy.

Lim Chong Eu's views were shared by Sunny Pillay, (When Socialist Front controlled the Georgetown Municipal council, he was council secretary). Sunny Pillay supported Chong Eu in his move to bring Radical Party into Alliance. He listed the Alliance objective of serving the people as a primary goal worthy of support. He, too, denied Radical Party ever devlated from its principles. 'The unity of political parties in the country shall bring an early realisation of our dream for Independence and be our own masters, he contended.

Policy speeches were more convincing than making personal snipes, but le latter undeniably brought home some expected results. Nevertheless, too much character assination and mud-slinging had resulted in repercussions. Oo! Siew Neoh did not anticipate this point when she chose to go after victory by concentrating on bringing down Chong Eu's image.

Emotional outbursts brought only temporary satisfaction but the public was not impressed. When the results were know, Lim Chong Eu had won by a convincing majority over Ooi Siew Nool. In the process, Chong Eu further strengthened his position in the political arena.

Ooi Siew Neoh, stung by her own defeat, hung up her political boots and was never heard of again in the circle. In 1956 her daughter migrated to Singapore where she married a foreigner. She left Penang later herself. The past seemed to be misty clouds that glide by our eyes, but it could be vivid in moments of gentle recall.

When Chong Eu was immersed in his campaign, he was thankful to have an able assistant. This man was later nicknamed 'grasshopper' but was actually Mr. Lim Ee Heong. He put up posters, went canvassing and did whatever was necessary for Chong Eu.

Sponsoring Wong Pow Nee to Political Eminence

One of the Radical Party councillors who joined Alliance with Chong Eu was Bukit Mertajam's Wong Pow Nee. He won his councillorship by a vast majority in his hometown.

Lim Chong Eu took Wong Pow Nee into MCA and consequently Alliance. He gave Wong incalculable help and was considered Pow Nee's mentor and leader.

Cheah Seng Kim, a relative of Chong Eu's maternal family was returned unopposed as assemblyman when nominations closed at Tanjung constituency.

Chong Eu and Cheah Seng Kim were destined to share a long bout of political animosity later. But we will be more elaborate in later chapters.

Other notable victories were that of Dr. Menon, Radical Party Chairman, who won the Jelutong seat on an Alliance ticket; and another Radical Partyman Aziz, who won uncontested at Bayan Lepas.

Aziz later joined UMNO, served as state executive councillor, and for some time as Acting Chief Minister. He was linked to an interesting episode which had him contesting unsuccessfully on a Radical ticket as Principal Councellor in Jelutong, while his wife contested, on an UMNO ticket in the polls, but at Kelawai. She was defeated too. Both husband and wife contested the same elections, under different party banners. but suffered the same fate. In 1955 though, Aziz had his chance to make good his earlier loss. He enjoyed a long and close association with Chong Eu.

The following are the results of the 1955 Straits Settlement Council elections, Penang:-

- Tanjung Bungah Cheah Seng Kim (uncontested) Alliance
- 2. Bayan Lepas - Aziz (uncontested) - Alliance
- 3. South Coast - Hussein (uncontested) - Alliance

4. West Coast	- Nyak Hashim (Alliance) 4328 votes (elected)
5. Tanjung East	 Boo Chong Huat (Independent) 1775 Wong Loo Than (Alliance) 4616 votes (elected)
6. Tanjung West	Abdul Wahab (Negara) 1641 votes Abu Bakar (Alliance) 2681 votes (elected) Zalenti Olivera (22)
7. Jelutong	 Zakaria (Negara) 734 votes Dr. Menom (Alliance) 5074 votes (elected)
8. Kealwai	Sharif (Negara) 764 votes Dr. Lim Chong Eu (Alliance) 1535 votes (elected)
9. Central P.W. 10. North P.W.	Ooi Siew Neoh (Independent) 635 votes Mohamad Ang (Alliance) (uncontested) Hashim Awang (Alliance) 3492 votes (elected)
11. Butterworth	 Ibrahim (Labour) 1812 votes Ooi Chong Kee (Alliance) 3492 votes (elected)
12. Batu Kawan	 Ooi Kuan Yong (Labour) 1812 votes Sinniah (Alliance) 2815 votes (elected)
13. South P.W.	Kandiah (Labour) 589 votes Hashim Sulaiman (Alliance) votes 2076 (elected)
14. Bukit Mertajam	- Lim Teok Hoe (Labour) 821 votes - Wong Pow Nee (Alliance) 4966 votes

(elected)

- Dr. Khoo Kay Gan (Independent) 858 votes - Ong Chye Gaik (Labour) 187 votes

The Alliance swept in all the 14 constituencies. The 14 councillors, together with another 10 appointed by the British government and the Governor as an ex-officio member, made up the 25 member State Assembly, the majority of which were elected by popular vote.

Thus, a new era of political evolution for Penang had been ushered in.

Acted as 'shadow' Chief Minister

1955 was a year of major changes in Malayan history. The strident call for political autonomy rang across the nation. Various state elections witnessed landslide victory for Alliannee, which emerged as the ruling party and the major political organisation. Parti Negara, which was the maintream political group had been relegated to the sid-lines.

This year brought numerous conditions favourable to Alliance. First, it had proven itself as the party capable of weidding considerable power through various races, especially in its attempt to force the British colonial government into granting concessions, allowing an early implementation of democratic rule. Secondly, Alliance had sole expressed disastifaction over the terms of the Education Act, announced by the British colonial government in 1952. Alliance had so entered into consultation with Chinese education bodies, specifically the Teachers' Unions and School Board Unions.

In this aspect, MCA played a pro-active role in its opposition to the 1952 Education Act.

The backgrounds to the issue were the Education Act was drafted hased on recommendation of the Benham Report. It rejected the Fener-Goh Report. The Benham Commission was formed in 1950 and consisted 5 British and 9 Malay members. It recommended, among others, the implementation of a single stream of National Type schools, using English and Malay as the media of instruction. The Fenner-Goh Report was drafted in 1951 by Dr. Fenner and Dr. Goh Telk Yew and it, in turn, considered the continued evistence of Chinese education in line with the development of Malayan national awareness.

Education Act 1952 considered Chinese and Tamil third languages and ruled that Chinese and Tamil Schools could not form part of the national education system. Under it, only requests by a minimum of 15 pupils were considered for providing Chinese or Tamil lessons in National Schools.

Besides, the British government imposed certain constraints on the dependent of Chinese schools. For instance, Chinese school teaching staff could only enjoy the benefits of a new salary scheme if their school seek prior approval of the Education Ministry on matters concerning teacher employment, curriculum and choice of text books. This effectively curtailed the powers of the board of governors of these schools.

The Teachers' Union and Board Union of these schools, in conjunction with the Chinese guilds and societies unanimously opposed the Education Act 1952. MCA followed soon in voicing its objections, In 1953, the Teachers' Union, Board Union and MCA formed a joint committee, konwn as 'The 3 major organisations' to champion their cause of preserving Chinese education.

Realising that National Schools presented too much a financial burden on the budget, and under pressure of opposition from the Chinese community, the British government appointed in 1954 Special Committee to study expenditure related to education. Thus the White Paper on Education 1954 came into being. This White Paper placed its emphasis on reforming Chinese and Tamil schools, implementation of tri-lingual education and the introduction of English medium classes in Chinese and Tamil schools.

Chinese school Teachers' Union and Board Union officials met MCA President Tan Cheng Lock in Malacca in January 1955. UMNO

chief Tunku Abdul Rahman was present too.

Their meeting discussed and agreed that if Alliance won the general elections, it would ammend the 1952 Education Act and recognise the rightful position of Chinese schools. The terms of this agreement was included in the election manifesto of the Alliance.

When Lim Chong Eu was appointed to the MCA Working Committee in 1954. He was entrusted with the duties of working with Alliance and

overseeing education issues.

It could not be denied that the victory at Kelawai during the Penang Straits Settlements council polls gave Lim Chong Eu considerable unlifting in prestige and status. In the assembly, he was the leading councillor of Alliance. In other words. He led the 14 elected Alliance councillors and was an influential figure, though executive powers was still in the hands of the Governor.

On April 16, 1955. Lim Chong Eu proposed a motion that 'This assembly in conjunction with other states of the Federation, adopt Malay and English as official langunages; and that this assembly appoint a special committee to study and make proposals concerning the necessary ammendments to the 1948 Federation of Malaya Agreement and the implementation of its policies.

This proposal by Chong Eu was opposed by British appointed councillors, but on the strength of support of elected councillors, which formed the majority and were all Alliance men, the motion was carried. This signifies that Lim Chong Eu had gained control of the Penang Straits Settlements Assembly.

The ascend of Lim Chong Eu in MCA

In MCA, Lim Chong Eu was rising to be one of its central leaders. On 12th March 1955, he was elected one of the MCA delegates to the Alliance National Council, and 15 others who were Tan Cheng Lock, Leong Yee Kow (梁宁皋) , H.S. Lee, Too Joon-hing (来证券), Wong Sai Nam

Wong Sai Nam

Lin, Leong Cheong Lin (梁夫龄) , Tan Siew Sin, Tan See Eng, Foo Jee Mee and representative from Pahang. UMNO too nominated 16 delegates of its own.

Soon Alliance started to make preparations for the first Federal Legislative Assembly (an equivalent of the parliament today) general elections. It had been decided that the Federal Legislative Assembly consisted of 99 members; 52 of whom to be elected while 32 others to be appointed. Ex-officio members made up 3 more while the 94 Mentris Besar and one member each from Penang and Malacca completed the figure.

This agreement meant the political party which won the most of the 52 elected sets shall have its leader appointed the Federal Chief Minister.

But it must be noted that of the 1,280,000 register voters, 84% were Malays, 11.2% were Chinese while Indians consittuted only 4.6% of the total.

Consequently, some UMNO members accused their leaders for conceding too much in their negotiations with MCA over the allocation of constituencies, and proposed 12 seats for MCA. But MCA deemed the share inadequate. Finally it was settled with UMNO taking 37 seats MCA.15 while MIC was not given any place to contest.

More seriously, the move to implement National Type Secondary Schools system precipitated severe student unrests in Chung Ling High School, Penang which crupted on November 23, 1956.

The Registrar of schools closed the school for 3 weeks and 68

students were sacked for their involvement.

This incident caught the attention of the nation, especially that of the Chinese community. Chung Ling High School headed by Wan Yong Nian (连永年), managed by a school board under the chairmanship

of Mr. Ong Keng Seng, was the first such school to accept government aid and undergo conversion. After appeals, 16 of the sacked students

were reinstated or allowed on transfer.

Inspite of being a member of the Razak Commission, Lim Chong Eu was obviously displeased with the implementation of The Report by the Federal Commissioner of Education Bens without prior approval by the Legislative Assembly. The Commissioner of Education also failed to write to Chinese Secondary School in the country to explain the necessity to meet 20 conditions for conversion. Thus, MCA convened a joint-meeting with Teacher Union Board Union delegates to discuss the issue. They deicded to make counter-proposals to the Education Minister, requesting abolishment of the 20 conditions and announcement of fresh regulations.

Commenting on the student protests in Chung Ling High School, on 5th Aptil 1957, Lim Chong Eu said, 'The student unrest in Chung Ling High School is like a boil on the body of Chinese Education. Careful dignosis is necessary before treatment, and superficial medication won't be effective."

If the root-cause of the ailment was not removed, the problem would persist, he added. Chong Eu was sympathetic with the fate of the sacked students. He

considered Board Chairman Ong Keng Seng and the executive board members largely responsible for the sacking of 68 students. Implicity, Chong Eu did not favour sacking as a way to solve

education problems. MCA, incidentally, set up a committee to study and investigate the student unrests and other education problems.

But the education problems were never solved to satisfaction, they persisted and was transformed into political issues which caused considerable damage to MCA's image in later years.

Lim Chong Eu had foreseen the grave pertinence of the controvercial issue but he felt that the 2 most pressing tasks for MCA were citizenship and votes.

Any politician who claims to have reasonable ambitions in his field would work to build his image and position within and out of the Party because he cannot made do without either one. Lim Chong Eu was no exception. As soon as he became an MCA member, he displayed his outstanding calibre and gained increasing support in the Party. Out of the organistion he was made a director of Penang Chinese Chambers of Commerce, and from 1955 he was the society's Ex-officio director too.

During the tenure as director of the Penang Chinese Chambers of Commerce, Chong Eu made a far-sighted proposal to the Board of Directors, urging it to put up a multi-storye building for rental. He expected considerable profits from the project. But his proposal was not fully accepted then. The Penang Chinese Chambers of Commerce merely put up a 3-storey building (housing a moderately-sized hotel). It still stands at Farquhar Street. But the Penang Chinese Chambers of Commerce had shifted its headquarters to a rented office-space at the multi-storey building of the Penang Chinese Chown Hall.

In addition. Lim Chong Eu was a founder of Penang Jaycess, which aimed to encourage young businessmen to master organisation skills

and discover leadership talents.

Even so, Lim Chong Eu devoted much of his time to political activities. He considered politics indispensible and the Chinese would be feeble in their struggle for their rightful place in the country without political leverage.

Earnest call to the Chinese to take up Citizenship

Thus, Lim Chong Eu made incessant calls to Chinese residents to register as voters. It was hoped that their voting right would be exercised to the desire effects in general elections. These calls were made because it was discovered that during the 1955 polls, Chinese voters were relatively small in number which made negotiations for more seat to Chinese candidates difficult.

At the same time, he was convinced that citizenship was a right the Chinese could not afford to forfeit. They should not be hesitant, Chong Eu contended, especially in those pre-independence days when the Chinese must single-mindedly involve themselves in the fight for Independence.

For MCA, Chong Eu had great enthusiasm and sincere love; for the

Chinese, he wanted them all as Malayan citizens.

In this aspect, he had similar views to that of the late Premiler of China Mr. Chou En Lai. The Chinese Premier had conveyed China's views regarding the object of loyalty for overseas Chinese to Singaporean Chief Minister David Marshall when he visited Singapore in 1955, He urged overseas Chinese to be loyal to the nation in which they resided. This viewpoint was widely welcome by political leaders of the overseas Chinese. Evidently, Lim Chong Eu wanted MCA and the Malayan Chinese to become a single entity because the two groups were inseparable. In view of the inadequate state of organisation in MCA, Chong Eu prefered rebranes Irist, before the Chinese could be consolidated under its banners. Therefore, during a meeting of senior committee members of MCA which he chaired, Chong Eu made a speech which advocated reforms. He proposed re-organising MCA, strengthening its grass-root machineries, assisting Chinese in their application for citizenship and the launching of membership drive by MCA.

The most potent adversary to Alliance was Datuk Onn's Party Populara. It named 29 Malay and 1 Chinese candidates to contest the polis. There were also lesser parties like Pan Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP), Labour Parth and the Peoples Progressive Party (PPP).

As he had indicated earlier, Lim Chong Eu did not contest the elections. With the benefit of hind-sight, it seemed that since he was then the leading councillor of the Penang Stairts Settlement Council which was entitled to nominate a member to the Federal Legislative Assembly, and he would in all likelihood be the nominee: he need not contest the polls.

The so-called 'leading councillor' was the leader of the majority party in the council who had the power to represent it. Due to the vesting of executive powers in the governor prior to independence in Malaya, the 'leading councillor' could not be consider 'Chief Minister'.

Regardless of the official title, Lim Chong Eu was already, to a considerable extent, considered the future Chief Minister of Penang or 'the shadow C.M.'

Polling day for the Federal Legislative Assembly election was on July 25. With most relevant conditions going for Alliance, it won a sweeping victory by taking 51 seats. The PMP took merely 1 seat. The 2 elected Federal Assemblymen from Penang were Tai Hooi Soo and Chee Swee Ex.

Other MCA candidates who made it in the polls were Tan Siew Sin of Malacca, Cheah Kay Kow of Taiping, Leong Yee Kow of Ipoh, Too Joon-hing of South Kinta, Ong Yoke Lin of Kuala Lumpur (West), Cheah Yew Kiat of Kuala Lumpur (East), Lee Eng Teik of Central Sclangor, Lim Kee Siong of Seremban, Tan Luan Hong of South Johore, Tooli See Chong of Central Johore, Tan Suan Kok of Muar (South), Lee Tian of Alor Star and Lim Theng Kwang of South Kedah.

Lim Chong Eu and Goh Ghee Yen were respectively nominated by Penang and Malacca as appointed members of the Federal Assembly. There were also appointees from the trades. For instance, The Malayan Chinese Joint Chambers bf Trade and Commerce named 2. The plantation and mining sector appointed 2 each from their members, and MCA was allowed 2 additional appointed members which made the total of its men in the Federal Lexistiev Assembly 23.

Tunku Abdul Rahman, as UMNO chief and Alliance leader, was sworn in as Federal Chief Minister. His cabinet comprised of notables like Abdul Razak bin Hussein (Minister of Education), Too Joon-hing (Deputy Minister of Education), Dr. Ismail (Minister of Natural Resources), H.S. Lee (Minister of Transport), Abdul Aziz (Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries), Leong Yee Kow (Minister of Health and Social Welfare), Abdul Rahman Talib (Deputy Minister of Health and Social Welfare), Sambanthan (Minister of Labour) Ong Yoke Lin (Minister of Post and Telecomunications) and Sardon Jubir (Minister of Public Words)

A MEMBER OF THE RAZAK COMMISSION

Lim Chong Eu was not named into the cabinet, but he had the consolation of being appointed Party Whip of Alliance. It could not be denied that his prestige and position enjoyed extra boost as Alliance whip and leading councillor in Penang.

The Alliance made 2 important moves after the elections: One of which was the opening of talks with representatives of the Communist Party of Malaya at Baling, on December 28, 1955. But the negotiations broke down. MCA was represented at the talks by Tan Cheng Lock and Choo Wan Hene. Lim Chone Ew was spared the task.

However, he was named to the body entrusted with reviewing the existing Education Act. The commission was formed on September 4, 1955 under its chairman, Education Minister Abdul Razak. Its members included Sambanthan, Sulaiman, Shansuddin, Abdul Aziz, Too Joonhing, Lim Chong Eu, Zainal Abidin, Abdul Rahman Talib, Ghazali, Leong Cheong Lin, Abdul Hamid Khan, Lee Tian Hin, Goh Chee Yen and Mohamand Idris.

The Commission's Report was published on May 6, 1956 and foccicially refered to as The Education Report 1956 (or Razak Report).

The essence of its content were:

 The ultimate objective of the Federation of Malaya is to place all school children of the various races under a single national education system, under which the National Language shall be its main medium of instruction. But the Commission admits that this objective must be achieved without undue haste. Instead, it must be done in stages.

2. To be acceptable to the people, the education system must be able to satisfy the people's needs for cultural, social, economic and political development. While making the Malay Language as the National Language, the languages and cultures of other ethnic groups should be preserved and giben due development.

There shall be 2 types of primary schools; National Primary and National Type Primary. The latter may use English, Chinese or Tamil as the medium of instruction.

4. As for National Type Secondary Schools, the Report wanted them to share a common syllabus and sit for a common examination. The media of instruction in these schools were not stressed upon and they are allowed to use more than 1 language as the medium.

HAD SOME WORDS CONCERNING THE STUDENT UNRESTS IN CHUNG LING

The Report meant to say that secondary schools may adapt themselves to the government education system, become National Type and receive government aids.

The Chinese School Teachers Union considered the Report giving too much stress on English and Malay Language while neglecting Chinese. It protested even more strongly when the government announced, later, that English would be used in the Lower Certificate of Education and Teacher Qualifying Examinations.

SPEAKING UP FOR REFORM

At the same time, he raised a controversial issue, by demanding that MCA stated its stand unambiguously concerning politics in China. He said: If the Kuomintang and the Communists in China succeeded in their

peace talks, MCA must give sufficient thought to the stand it would have to take.

His argument was that MCA must not continue to maintain covert ties with any faction in China. Instead it must view the Kuomintang-

Communist issue from a Malayan perspective.

This trend of thought invited much displeasure from the leaders in ower in MCA. These leaders, who were closely associated with the Kuomintang were not about to allow Chong Eu's 'New Thinking'. Chong Eu discovered to his dismay that his proposal to reform MCA had come up against a wall, mainly because MCA bosses were mostly Kuomintang men or Kuomintang sympathisers. They could not and would not tolerate Chong Eu's 'revolutionary actions'.

On his part, Lim Chong Eu had hoped to refute and repulse statements by some Malay leaders questioning the loyalty of the Malayan Chinese to the country, Datuk Onn Jaafar, of the Party Negara, himself had alleged that 'MCA has links to the Kuomintang and intend to make

Malaya the 20th province of China'.

Besides, Labour Party founder Mohamad Sopee (who had eventually joined UMNO, was elected Member of Parliament, and had served as the Director-General of Information and as Malayan Ambassador to Pakistan) also accused MCA as 'a tool of Taiwan'.

It was not easy for MCA to shed its Kuomintang-related image overnight. But the issue was revived and given more exposure after the Conference of Delegates of Chinese Guilds and Associations.

This was what happened.

After the victory at the polls in 1955, Alliance held direct negotiations with the British. Finally, an accord was reached on February 8, 1956 primitting Independence to Malaya on August 31, 1957.

After the signing of the accord, Britain appointed Sir Reid to head a Constitution Commission of Inquiry to compile the opinion of the

various sections of the people of Malaya.

The Chinese Guilds and Associations in Confrontation with MCA

Under the aegis of Mr. Lau Pak Khoon of Perak, a total of 1094 Chinese Guilds and Associations in the country sent delegates to a Delegates' Conference and decided upon a 4-point memorandum for the Reid Commission of Inquiry. The 4 points were:

1. All persons born in Malaya are acceptable as citizens;

Immigrants who have resided for a minimum of 5 years in Malaya are exempted from the language test while applying for citizenship;

All Malaya citizens are entitled to equal rights and obligations;

4. Malay, Chinese and Tamil are recognised as official languages.

The Conference formed a Working Committee consisting of:— Lau Pak Khoon, as chairman, Yap Mow Tat (Negerl Semblian), Ong Keng Seng (Penang), Tan Chin Soon (Trengagnu), Lim Kean Ko (Kedah), Yee Kim Kam (Johore), Leong Cheong Lin (Malayan Chinese Joint Chambers of Commerce and Industry), Leong Chee Siong (Chinese School Boards Union), Chow Chee Hooi (Selangor), Tan Kee Gark (Malacca), Lim Lian Gaik (Chinese School Teachers' Union), and Chuah Eng Heng (Selangor Chinese Associations Federation).

But the memorandum presented to the Reid Commission by Alliance did not list Chinese as one of the official language, which rpompted Lau Pak Koon (別伯年) and his group to protest. Lau and Tah Khee Ngak (熊 柳 金) led the Chinese Guilds in confrontation against MCA though both of them were leaders of the Party.

In other words, MCA was headed for a split over the controversy concerning the drafting of the constitution of Malaya. Lim Chong Eu did not belong to the Lau Pak Koon faction but he was not totally pro-

Tan Cheng Lock too.

When the working-committee of the Chinese Guilds sent Lau Pak Koon, Tan Khee Pgak, Lin Lan Gaik (& ½ £ 3.) and Yap Mow Tat (+ ½ ½) to London to make representations, Dr. Lim Chong Eu, in its position as the organising chief of MCA, commented, "The actions by the Chinese Guilds are neither in the interests of the nation nor the Chinese community." He also pointed out that some of those concerned owed allegiance to Nationalist Taiwan, thereby making the demand for Independence a controversial issue. He had in mind Lau Pak Koon and Tan Khee Ngak when he said that.

Due to foreign political involvement in the "Chinese Guilds Delegation", one of its members, Lim Lean Gaik withdrew from the trip to England. He alleged that there were certain persons who tried to use

their ties with Taiwan to solve local problems in 1956.

Lim Lean Gaik said, "Chinese Education in Malaya must be solved locally, without foreign intervention."

The replacement for Lim Lean Gaik later withdrew from the delegation too, resulting in the considerable weakening of stature for

the delegation.

On the other hand, Tunku Abdul Rahman minced no words in accusing Lau Pak Koon and his group as "Kuomintang activists and refused to meet them. Lim Chong Eu praised Lim Lean Gaik for distancing himself from the delegation and his insistance that local problems must be solved locally and without meddling by foreign powers.

lems must be solved locally and without meddling by foreign powers, Since the incident, the ties between the two "Lim's" grew consider-

ably better.

They had crossed paths during the sutdent-unrests in Chung Ling High School; Chong Eu addressed the problem as a politician while Lean Gaik took up the struggle for "Chinese Education" as a Chinese educationist. The medium for their links was the joint council of MCA. Chinese Education Bodies and Teacher Union delevates.

At that time, Chong Eu was a member of the MCA Education Committee, entrusted with the task of investigating the Chung Ling High School student-unrest. Others in the committee were Goh Chee Yan (ξ -急期), Lee Yoon Thiam (ξ -劉彦), Foo Jee Mee (符章 ξ), and Gan Yuan Chang (F-元章).

The Chung Ling incident developed into a political issue when the Labour Party started a signature campaign itself and demanded the

reinstatement of ousted students.

The failure of MCA to effectively tackle the education problems lent opportunities to the opposition parties who went on to widen their influence.

In another aspect, Lau Pak Koon and Tan Khee Ngak vehemently denied any ties with Kuomintang. They made no secret of their determination to plead their cause in London; failing which they say, they would appeal to the United Nations.

In an act of counter-attack, Tan Khee Ngak accused Tan Siew Sin a "Pro-Mainland China", with an obvious reference to Tan Siew Sin's proposal to form a delegation to visit China. But the delegates, Lee Yan Nian (孝 是 本) and Chang Lik (孝 東) went as traders and had no political terms of reference.

EXISTENCE OF 2 FICTIONS IN M.C.A.

In spite of the obvious, Tan Khee Ngak seemed bent on vengence when he urged the government to arrest Tan Siew Sin and his associates. He was rebuffed, as was expected. But it reflected the existence of

"Pro-Taiwan" and opposing factions in MCA.

The actions of Tan Khee Ngak and Lau Pak Koon drew considerable attention from within MCA itself. The faction in power proposed their removal from MCA. But this proposal was opposed by members of the "Keow Seng (将生) Association" – which included Lim Chong Eu, Goh Guan Hoe, Cheah Toon Lock, Lee Cheang Keng (孝朱孝), Koo Seng Hock (孝永祿), Chew Boon Ee (周文意), Lim Huck Aik and Yee Swee Ee (後姓意)

Opposed as he was to Lau Pak Koon's ways, Lim Chong Eu nonetheless recognised Lau's rights to voice his own views and that of his clique. After all, Lau Pak Koon had not deviated from the Chinese Guilds' resolutions. What was unacceptable to Chong Eu was the "alien Factor"

In Penang, meanwhile, Labour Party had gained a foothold when Ramanathan, Tan Phock Kin, Lim Kean Siew, Ooi Theam Siew and C.Y. Chov won the Municipal Council Elections.

Ipoh also witnessed the emergence of D.R. Seenivasagam and his People's Progressive Parry (P.P.P.) as "champions of the Chinese and the Indians". Other large towns and the city of Kuala Lumpur also supported to a large extent the Labour Party.

REFUSING "CHIEF MINISTERSHIP ON THE PLATTER"

1957 was a water-shed of Malayan history. When Alliance won the elections in 1955, the way from autonomy to Independence was opened.

Independence meant the un-shackling of Malayan citizens from colonial rule. In place of the colonialists, the people could elect their own government. As the Alliance national chairman, Tunku Abdul Rahman was destined to become Prime Minister of Malaya upon Independence, Penang and Malacca would elect their respective Chief Minister too.

As to "Who would be Chief Minister of Penang?" there was widespread speculations. According to the Penang State Constitution, which is appended to the Federal Constitution, the Chief Minister shall be the chief executive and the appointment is a political one whereas the Governor (Yang Dipertua Negeri) shall be the state's supreme ruler and non-political in appointment.

During that period, Lim Chong Eu could be said to be the obvious choice as Chief Minister of Penang. But, how could a "cooked duck fly away"? There were many intricate twists and turns to the episode which

merit recapitulation.

In late 1956, Lim Chong Eu was busy leading with the Chung Ling student-unrest and the subsequent appeal to readmit 68 students sacked during the boycott of classes. Soon after that, on 4th January 1957, Penang experienced a violent moment when the Municipal Centennary Celebrations procession turned into clashes. The situation then was tense and Chinese-Malay racial ties was hermed as the result of those clashes.

To sooth the uneasiness, Penang Chinese Guilds and Associations formed a goodwill committee which, among others, included Lim Chong Fig.

These two major events in Penang put considerable pressure on Lim Chong Eu, who was regarder the "leading legislative councillor." Simultaneously, he was the Alliance chief of the state though the state MCA chairman's post was delegated to Ng Swee Khim (佐珠岑) within the MCA itself, Chong Eu was regarded an extremely influential figure. From various indications, the Chief Ministership seemed to be safely in his nocket.

The press predicted that too; but the Perak MCA proposed Tan

Cheng Lock for the post.

As if to make the episode more interesting, the Penang Chinese Chambers of Commerce proposed the election of Governor by popular vote and not by appointment.

On 4th August 1957, newspapers made headline forecasts; Raja Uda, then Speaker of Federal Legislative Assembly shall be Penang Governor, Lim Chong Eu is tipped to be Chief Minister, Tan Cheng Lock shall be Malacca Governor while his Chief Minister shall be Othman (\sharp \sharp \sharp \sharp), the deputy Mentri Besar of Perak.

These forecasts were not without basis; as the Tunku had earlier persuaded Lim Chong Eu to be ready to form the Penang State Government

ment

Tunku told him, "When Malaya achieves Independence on 31st August 1957 Penang will need a Chief Minister and you are most suitable."

Chong Eu had not committed himself in his reply, for the Chief Ministership was not his political ambition. He had greater aspirations to serve the nation in the mainstream of national politics, leading the Chinese community.

THE MAKING OF WONG POW NEE AS CHIEF MINISTER To many, the lofty position of a Chief Minister should prove

irresustible. But Dr. Lim Chong Eu was confident that refusing its appointment would not reduce his political clout and he had more important missions to complete.

Subsequently he told Tunku, "Wong Pow Nee is the best choice as Chief Minister."

Tunku was taken aback and inquired, "Who is Wong Pow Nee?" In his own mind, Tunku had not included Wong Pow Nee in the list of nossibles.

Wong Pow Nee, as it turned out, was an English language teacher in Bukit Mertajam. He was Lim Chong Eu's Radical Party member and won the 1953 Municipal Elections in Bukit Mertajam on a Radical Party ticket. Following Chong Eu to MCA later, he contested and won the elections in Bukit Mertajam as Colonial legislative councilius.

The victory of Alliance in the Legislative Council elections put Lim Chong Eu, Wong Pow Nee and Cheah Seng Kim on a common platform of "in the same boat" as the saying goes. Lim Chong Eu was the leading councillor (the Chief Executive, Mr. Pinhorn was oppointed by the British, and the position as leading councillor was then an effective stepping-stone to Chief Ministership). Wong Pow Nee held the Commerce and Industry portfolio in the State Government while Cheah Seng Kim was entrusted with the Transport and Local Government Committee.

Among the Chinese legislative councillors, only Wong Pow Nee and Cheah Seng Kim were Chief Minister hopefuls if Lim Chong Eu declined the post,

In fact, Lim Chong Eu prior to his making his intentions known, was already functioning as the Chief Minister. For instance, he was the defacto leader of the Legislative Council on 12th July 1957, the last session of the council before Independence. Mr. Pinhorn, the British

governor had, on that ocassion indicated that after that last sitting, a new era would be ushered in.

On that day, Chong Eu, representing Alliance, proposed the ratification of the State Flag and State Constitution. His resolution: That this honourable council welcome the Federal Legislative Assembly's Report No. 41 which enshrines constitutional system and its appendices; and welcome the effort to make Malaya an independent and sovereign nation on 31st August 1957; That this honourable council also support the Penang State Draft Constitution which formed an Appendix of the Federal Constitution.

Lim Chong Eu's motion was accepted and passed by the Legislature.

Cheah Seng Kim was absent from the day's sitting.

History had been created: Lim Chong Eu was the person to lead Penang towards becoming a part of sovereign Malaya, he had turned a new page for the State's own annals and becoming very much a part of Penane itself.

After the ratification of the State Constitution, came the selection of Chief Minister. Tunku Abdul Rahman made repeated attempts to coax Chong Eu into taking up the post himself. Finally, Lim Chong Eu made his polite refusal, citing his term of mourning for the death of his father as reason. Dr. Lim Chwee Leong died on 27th May 1957 and was laid to rest on 2nd June 1957.

In a press statement, Lim Chong Eu listed many reasons for his refusal to become Penang's first Chief Minister, among them his recent loss; he also expressed his gratitude to his proposer, the Tunku.

Personally, Lim Chong Eu favoured Wong Pow Nee, who was 8 years his senior at the age of 46.

SHATTERING OF CHEAH SENG KIM'S DREAM

Lim Chong Eu's forfeiture of the Chief Ministership opened a flerce power struggle within Penang MCA. One faction was in support of Wong Pow Nee while another clamoured for Cheah Seng Kim's appointment. In wealth and connections, Cheah Seng Kim enjoyed considerable advantage over Wong Pow Nee; and Cheah Seng Kim was related to Chone Eu.

But Chong Eu is not a man to be influenced by nepotical ties in his decision. He did not help Cheah Seng Kim for his own reasons. Though

those reasons remained undisclosed. Cheah Seng Kim had passed away and he died without realising his dreams — to become Chief Minister. His dreams were shattered by Chong Eu.

This is a re-enactment of the episode:-

Penang Alliance covened a meeting on 16th July 1957 to discuss the candidature of Chief Minister. The meeting was held in the UMNO building at Macalister Road, Penang. Among those present were Chong Eu, who chaired the meeting; Dr. Menon, Cheah Seng Kim, Hashim bin Awang, Wong Pow Nee, Ng Swee Khim (毛珠ま), Abdidi (UMNO Chairman for Penang), Abu Bakar, Ooi Chong Khee (黄金荻) and Sam Ah Chow (茶金錠).

At the start, Lim Chong Eu told the participants that the primary task of the day was to select a suitable candidate for the Chief Minister's post. As it had great significance on the future of the state, Chong Eu urged them to choose wisely. Eventually, two names were proposed: Wong Pow Nee and Cheah Sense Kim.

When the votes were counted, the score was 6 against 6 despite much lobbying before voting. Perplexed, Chong Eu announced a brief adjournment.

Then the phone rang. It was the Tunku himself; calling to find out the result of the voting. When told of the impasse by Chong Eu, the Tunku said, "To save all the troubles, you might as well take the post yourself!"

"That is not possible, in the process of a democratic election, one of them must be selected," Chong Eu replied.

"In that case, as the Chairman of this meeting, use your casting vote," the Tunku relented, knowing he could not convince Chong Eu to accept the post anymore.

Chong Eu reiterated his preference for Wong Pow Nee and Tunku Abdul Rahman agreed.

When the meeting was resumed, Lim Chong Eu was prepared, logic and reasons had to prevail over relations. He cast his deciding vote for Wong Pow Nee.

His one casting vote made Wong Pow Nee, turning him from a humble school teacher into the Chief Minister of Penang.

His one casting vote too, decided the political fortune for Cheah Seng Kim as he could go no further. Cheah Seng Kim had to live with that much regrets because of his relative — Lim Chong Eu. Wong Pow Nee was moved close to tears by his gratitude. Though younger than himself, Chong Eu was his political mentor. He knew he owed Chong Eu something not easily repaid.

With the situation decided, Wong Pow Nee got on the task of forming the State Government. He made Lim Chong Eu the state executive council's commissioner. Others appointed into the exco were Cheah Seng Kim, Ooi Chong Khee (東京湖), Abdul Aziz Hashim bin Awang and Dr. Menon.

Fate seemed to have decided that his refusal of Tunku's proposal courted the latter's displeasure, and it finally became Chong Eu's political encumberance as their relationship soured.



◀林苍祐在中国一家商店參 現购物。

Lim Chong Eu at a Chinese shopping centre.



林苍祐参观中国制造的拖| 拉机。 Lim Chong Eu looking over a Chinese-made tractor.



◆廖承志设宴款待林苍祐。
两人举杯共饮。

Mr. LEOW CHEN CHEE gave a banquet to honour Dr. Lim Chong Eu, and proposed a toast to his distinguished guest.



头甚健,跃居为首席议员。图为林医生在槟城机场迎接到访的联 合国主席班迪夫人(印度)。

With his appointment as Penana Legislative Councillor, Dr. Lim Chong Eu quickly amassed great popularity and was recognised as The Leading Councillor. Seen here at the airport to welcome visiting United Nation's Chairman of the General Assembly, Mrs. PANDI of India.

K久之后, 林花枯着手组 D 只核城岛进党、参加乔治 市议会选举。结果有六名 **学员中选,包括富豪叶祖** 悲的孙女叶宝真律师。围 为她宣誓就取时摄。

the Radical Party and contested the Georgetown Municipal Council elections. 6 of his candidates were elected, notably millionaire Yean Chor Ee's granddaughter, Miss Yeap Chin Poh who is seen here taking





银行家大富豪叶租意。 Banking magnate Yeap Chor Ee.



东南亚糖王黄仲涵(印尼)。 Southeast Asla's Sugar King, OOI CHONG HAM of Indonesia.



意的通知。地在一九五三年和林苍 枯时全参加州议会选举。 OI SIEW NEOH, OOI CHONG HAM'S doughter and Yeap Chor Ee's doughter-inlaw, who contested against Lim Chong Eu In the 1953 State Legislattive Council elections.



1953年面对默維勞大的黃精雄計手 林苍祐終于过关当选州议员。 In spite of his opponent's pressige and wealth, Lim Chong Eu won the elections to become a State Leaislative Councillor.

CHAPTER 5: BECOMING PRESIDENT OF MCA

The low flying sparrow shall never know the lofty aims of a soaring

eagle.

Lim Chong Eu had many personal reasons for refusing his appointas the first Chief Minister of Penang, but the greatest was his fear of being constrained to a state as its chief executive. He wanted to spread his able wings in the greater arena of national politics while leaving the task of running the State to Wong Pow Nec.

Pow Nee was greatly indebted to him as the former had never dreamed that he would ever be given so much trust by the 'godfather'. During the earlier years of his tenure, Pow Nee frequently sought advice from his mentor, making him a virtual 'ruler behind-the-scenes'.

An obvious advantage of the arrangement was the freeing of more time and energy for Chong Eu to mind the affairs of MCA.

After mustering the support of the young turks and those not in the sphere of power in the Party, Lim Chong Eu made his first move in early 1958. It was his first volley in the struggle for reform.

As the Organising Chief of MCA, he declared, "Since 1957, MCA had endured a lot of decay within its echelons, this is perpetrated by elements out to create disunity, and it has resulted in the loss of confidence in the Party by some sections of the Chinese Community."

"MCA has to be ravamped, we need infusion of new blood and streamlining of our party machinery in order to stem the rot!" he urged vehemently.

He described 1957 as the Organisation Year for MCA and 1958 its Year of Renewal.

Lim Chong Eu had much in mind when he made the call for "neway". In the previous two years, MCA had failed to make itself felt in its fight for Chinese education; never was it very successful in its struggle for Chinese political rights. Voters in various municipal and local council elections made their disenchantment known when their gave increasingly bigger number of votes for the oppositionists. Of special note was the success of the Socialist Front in wrestling for the control of Georgetown Municipal Council.

In Perak, Dr. Seenivasagam made an excellent breakthrough for his P.P.P. when he won handsomely the seat vacated by Leong Yu Kow(集章 為), who had been appointed Malacca Governor.

If the MCA did not improve itself, its political fortunes were bound to be graded soon

Wrestling for Power in the Party

At that time, no other person had the courage to reveal and criticise the Party's weaknesses from the position as one of its own leaders; Lim Chong Eu was the only one to publicly address MCA's problems.

Chong Eu was the only one to publicly address McA's problems.

As it developed, the "reform movement" gathered an increasingly larger following, ranging from the covert sipporters to those more vocal. Lim Chong Eu had obviously become the rallying point for a new force in the MCA.

The incumbent leaders and the old-guard in the Party were shocked and furious. Lim Chong Eu's open criticisms had dealt them a stunning blow.

Battle lines were drawn. On one side were Tan Siew Sin and Ong Yoke Lin factions led by Tan Cheng Lock, they were supported Perak, Selangor, Malacca, Palang, Singapore and some Johore branches; on the other were Lim Chong Eu and his reformists from Penang, Kedah, Perlis and some other Johore branches. A splinter faction led by HS. Let and his son also existed.

Sir H.S. Lee was then the Finance Minister, but was denied an important party post. He was indignant to be just the Chairman of the Political, Youth and Women bureau.

(In its earlier years, MCA had no Women's Wing, but a man was put in charge of its establishment! It was baffling and queer to the point of becoming a record in political annals).

H.S. Lee had also experienced defeat in 1956, during the Party's elections in Selangor. Ong Yoke Lin had betrayed him, supported by Tan Siew Sin and had wrestled the State Chairman's post from H.S. Lee.

The loss of the state-level party post and the elusiveness of the Party's Central positions had convinced H.S. Lee to provide secret

Chong Eu wanted to reform MCA, but he hesitated to spearhead the power-struggle. He was in a dilema and he told his supporters that he wanted only to help revitalise the Party and not the President's post.

At first, some members suggested Too Joon-hing, (朱这兴) the Secretary-General as a Presidential challenger. But more voiced their choice of Lim Chong Eu as the candidate to challenge Tan Cheng Lock.

For days, Chong Eu mulled over his options, spent sleepless nights

in contemplation.

On 23rd March, 1958, MCA would hold its 9th Annual Delegates Conference and a new Central Committee would be elected. Whether MCA would taste reform would depend on this day.

On the night of the 22nd, Chong Eu paced the floor, undecided and restless. To challenge Tan Cheng Lock would offend the incumbent but to back down would mean a precarious future for MCA.

Finally, it dawned on Chong Eu that the Party must come before individuals. He had to take up the struggle even if it meant fighting a rock with an egg. Decision made, Chong Eu became more cheerful and courage had come to him.

Defeating Old Guard Tan Cheng Lock

The historic day arrived with 112 delegates at MCA's Annual Delegates 'Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Lim Chong Eu led his reformists into the hall. Tan Cheng Lock sensed the imminent battle and the atmosphere tensed. Vote-canvassing was widespread within the hall itself.

Tan Cheng Lock was a founder of the party and its old guard. Up till the day, no one had dreamt of challenging him for the President's post. Unless the incumbent abdicates, no challenge to his tenure can be

imagined, at least that was the general opinion.

In the morning session, Tan Cheng Lock delivered his Presidential Address. It was followed by the Secretary-General's Report. Voting was reserved for the afternoon. When the meeting was resumed after lunch, the reformists made their move; Tan See Eng (景世美) of Negeri Semblian proposed permitting reporters into the hall as observers. Lim Chong Eu immediately supported the move. He cited precedence as previous party elections were covered by the press.

The proposal was passed; Chong Eu and the reformists had won the

first round.

When the second round was called, Wong Tham Soon (黄埠順) of Selangor, a Tan Cheng Lock supporters, proposed ammendments to the agenda so as to elect office-bearers before debating ammendments to the Party Constitution. The reason was that some delegates had come from far away states like Perlis and had to leave earlier.

Lim Chong Eu was on his feet to oppose the motion, he insisted adherance to the original agenda. He retorted that no delegate was anxious to go home.

As a test of the reformists' actual strength, Tan Siew Sin proposed the motion be put to vote. The motion to ammend the agenda obtained 37 votes and was defeated.

Chong Eu had won the second round too.

Pertaining to the constitution ammendment items, one was to create the post of a deputy President (until then, MCA had only a President and no Deputy President). 85 delegates were for, with 70 others against it. As the majority was less than the 3/5 stipulated, the motion was defeated

The result meant the reformists had a simple majority.

The move to collect a 2 dollar subscription per year as against \$2.00 every two years from members was unanimously passed without debate

As heated debates prolonged the constitution amendment item, voting for office-bearers was delayed till 6.45 of the evening.

The rules of MCA then did not require prior nomination formalities. Candidate could be proposed impromtu and surprise challengers could

emerge during the election.

At that moment, the hall was tense, filled with expectations. The first post to be up for election was that of the Presidency.

Yong Cheong Kang (杨章港) of Perak, who was with the incumbents quickly proposed Tan Cheng Lock for re-election and was seconded by One Yoke Lin.

Reformists Teh Wan Boon (郑皖文) (Johore) and Wong Pow Nee (Penang) named Lim Chong Eu. Obviously, Wong Pow Nee have his chance to show his gratitude. The battle had Lim Chong Eu pitched against Tan Cheng Lock.

One, a founder of the party and the other, a 'revolutionary'. The delegates had to make their choice.

After nomination, Chong Eu requested and was granted permission to speak.

"I have decided to contest the post of President after careful deliberation; in fact, I did not decide until last night. At this last minute, I opted to accept nomination.

The reason for my decision is a simple one: MCA is a democratic

body. Thus, any post can be contested.

In the past few weeks, press reports may have led to some misunderstandings. Actually, we do not become rebels when we contest this election. We are also not challenging Sir Tan Cheng Lock. On the contrary, we aim to merely make the Party better according to democratic procedure, without which MCA many face worse problems in the future.

I have to make it clear that if I were elected President, I do not for a moment consider purging Sir Tan Cheng Lock from MCA. Conversely, I am convinced that he had done a lot and made numerous sacrifices for MCA. Let's ensure that the party is not destroyed, regardless of the results of this election."

Chong Eu's brief but forceful speech won him resounding applause from the delegates, and many votes. The incumbents watched helplessly as the tide swayed. But they maintained their stature.

When the delegates had trooped in to cast their votes and the results were announced, the defenders were stunned in disbelief.

Lim Chong Eu had won with 89 votes against Tan Cheng Lock's 67.

Amid amother round of thunderous applause, Lim Chong Eu because the new President of MCA.

Cheered on by his supporters, Lim Chong Eu accepted Tan Cheng Lock's blessings and immediately announced the appointment of the loser as MCA's Honorary President for Life. Tan Cheng Lock graciously accepted the gesture too.

The remaining posts were swept by the reformists. There were 3 contenders for the Secretary-General's post; Yong Cheong Kang of Perak obtained 2 votes, Ong Yoke Lin of Selangor got 65 while the winner, Too Joon-hing (東達秀) of Perak, a Chong Eu aide obtained 89 votes.

Yong Pang How (杨邦孝) (Lim Chong Eu faction) beat Tan Siew Sin to become Publicity Chairman.

Youth Chairman : Tan Suan Kok (除室區) Labour Bureau : Tan See Eng (除世茶)

Political Bureau : H.S. Lee (李孝式)

Wanita Chairman: Mrs. Tan Luan Fong (陈銮峰夫人)

Besides these elected posts, all state MCA chairman were ex-officio Central Committee Members; they consisted of Wong Foo Nam (Singapore) Khor Teik Beng (Trenganu) Tan Siew Sin (Malacca) Ong Yoke Lin (Selangor) Ng Kim Kee (Pahang) Pek Seng Kin (Perak) Fong Yew Huang (Negeri Sembilian) Ong Yew Wee (Kelantan) Ng Swee Kim (Perang) Chuah Song Lim (Johore) and Dr. Cheah Toon Lock (Kedah).

Lim Chong Eu and his faction won a full victory and succeeded in controlling the party's central leadership. They started a new chapter for MCA while the vanquished left the hall in silence, rejected and dejected.

Noetheless, the victory did not mean an end to struggle. The losers were determined to watch at the wings, waiting for the chance to make their comeback.

According to MCA's constitution, the State leadership enjoyed a degree of autonomy, which the central leadership could not interfere. Chong Eu, albeit supported by some states and in full control of the central machinery of the party, had to contend with opposing factions in other states. They constituted a time-bomb capable of blowing up the party in future power struggles.

Though aware of daunting difficulties, the reformists went ahead with their plan to give MCA a full-width revamp.

SENT T.H. TAN PACKING

The 9th Annual Delegates' Conference ended amid cheers for Chong Eu's victory. But the triumph did not bring as end to the power-struggle. At the relatively youthful age of 38, Lim Chong Eu became the

President of MCA and enjoyed the consequent upsurge of prestige and power. He had good reasons to feel bouyant.

Back in Penang, he was immediately asked by journalists to comment. In response, he said, "18 months ago, MCA was drifting aimlessly without political purpose."

"In the past, important office-bearers of the Party were at liberty to conduct their own power-grabbing games, these had led to conflicts and subsequently thwarted the growth of the Party. That MCA could survice today is due more to the assistance of friends and weakness of our political adversaries than to the organisation's strong points." he continued.

Chong Eu had made these observations for a long time. Prior to the Party elections, he repeatedly advocated reform. But the friends and foes he referred to were not specified.

In those days, MCA's archival was the Socialist Front, which had gained a foothold in the urban areas. They posed a considerable threat to MCA and was therefore not suffering from the weakness Chong Eu referred to. Even if he had hinted at the Tan Siew Sin faction, they too were not allosether weak.

The only explanation for Lim Chong Eu's win was the complacence of Tan Siew Sin's faction. They underestimated Chong Eu and misjudged the desire of the delegates for change. The delegates wanted a new line-up to lead the Party. All factors then merged to forge a new era for Lim Chong Eu.

In a way, the sweetness of victory came too early for Chong Eu and his "revolution" had yet to succeed. The State leadership had yet to be reigned in and made to toe the line. Chong Eu could do little as their positions were protected by the Party Constitution.

Fully aware of the sensitive situation, Chong Eu nonetheless went ahead with his plans. The first to come under scrutiny was the Executive Secretary at the headquarters, T.H. Tan (族赤海).

T.H. Tan was once a journalist and made his political debut under the patronage of the Tunku. He was made the Executive Secretary, a salaried post, after joining MCA as an ordinary member.

The Tunku gave him quite a lot of help and had him close at hand most of the time. He even accompanied the Tunku to London for the Independence talks. His unique position was more like a extra-terestrial being to MCA. More perplexing was his later appointment as the Secretary-general of Alliance. As an ordinary MCA member, his political previlege was most unusual.

That T.H. Tan depended on the Tunku for political survival was widely known. It was also the reason for his failure to convey MCA and Chinese Community view-points to the Tunku. Lau Pak Koon was naive enough to request him to convey the Chinese Society's memorandum to the Tunku, but T.H. Tan paid no attention to the matter.

Lim Chong Eu and his aides wanted to remove T.H. Tan, they needed no one like him in MCA. T.H. Tan himself had hoped for Tan Cheng Lock's re-election as President and his own likely continuation as the Party's Executive Secretary. But the incumbent's defeat had decided for him his own resignation.

When the Senior Committee members met in Penang on 13th April 1958, it accepted T.H. Tan's quit notice and the Central Committee meeting concurred when it was convened a week later.

The ouster of T.H. Tan forced him to move closer to Tan Siew Sin and together they plotted for the future, against Chong Eu.

STOPPED PUBLICATION OF PARTY NEWSPAPER

The next tast that needed Chong Eu's attention was the financial position of the Party, which had gone repeated into the red. The new President appointed Wong Shu Fen, Too Joon-hing, H.S. Lee and Foo Jee Mee to improve upon the matter.

The Central Committee, too, was concerned. It discovered that the Party publication, "The Mirror", needed \$50,000.00 a year as running costs while its revenue was only \$4,000.00. An order was issued to close down the 4-year old publication.

"The Mirror" was started by T.H. Tan in 1955. Earlier, in 1952, MCA had talked of publishing "MCA Daily" using the existing machinery of the "Nam Keow Daily" of Singapore, which had shut down. But the proposal was shelved when some State leaders voiced opposition. Their reason: Party funds should not be used to run newspapers.

"MCA Daily"'s failure to go to press might be for better or for worse, but no historian can conclude for certain. Bu judging from "The

Mirror"s demise, Party organs were not easy to manage.

T.H. Tan later came out in defence of "The Mirror". He disclosed that 5,000 copies of it were published in Chinese while another 3,000 English copies were also made for every issue. All of them were distributed free-of-charge.

Tan Siew Sin, on the other hand explained "The Mirror" sexpenditure for the year, "The Mirror" spent \$47,621.66 while taking in \$37,938.66 in advertising fees. The short-fall was \$9,683,60.

Anyway, the issue soon subsided and was forgotten.

The third thing to which Lim Chong Eu directed his attention was the Constitution of MCA, which by then had been considered archaic and feudalistic as the various States bodies tried to corner their share of power. The central leadership was left almost powerless to deal with crucial issues. Meanwhile, too much power was vested in the hand of the President, which left the Central Committee Members more like chorus-lads. Thus, Lim Chong Eu made up his mind to overhaul the Constitution with the help of his committee, which he controlled.

He described the un-ammended Constitution this way: The Central Committee was only consultative, voicing its opinion to the president; it had no executive power. This kind of Central Committee was as good as non-existent and made the MCA appear more like a welfare organisation than a political organisation.

He proposed trimming the President's powers, and allocating more to Central Committee members, in line with his desire to democratise the Party.

In another aspect, Lim Chong Eu's faction wanted to make MCA more like a political party, with the authority vested with the headquarters and not splintered amont the State Committees.

Conflicts during Constitution Ammendments

The main points porposed by the new Central Committee in ammendment of the Constitution were:-

- Branches to be established according to municipal electoral wards and these branches shall elect their delegates to the Division Delegates Assembly. (Divisions established based on Parliamentary Constituencies) The respective Divisions shall elect their own National Delegates without the control of the State Committee.
- State Committee are not allowed to appoint their own trustees as only the Central Delegates' Conference shall be empowered to do so. This shall facilitate the centralisation of control of Party assets.
- 3. Only Chinese Malayan citizens shill be admitted as MCA members 30th November 1958 witnessed the first ever Extrodinary Delegates Conference in the history of MCA. Lim Chong Eu convened the meeting to consider the proposed ammendments to the Party constitution. There were 126 delegates at the conference.

The new ruling faction, headed by Chong Eu himself, wanted the ammendments, but the fresh-out-of power faction of Tan Siew Sin put up a strong opposition to the proposals.

Throughout the conference, from morning to the evening, the chasm of division was all too clear.

Tan Siew Sin suggested the establishment of a special committee to study the proposed new-look constitution, which would be tabled at the next Delegates' conference. He had the support of Ong Yoke Lin, who also wanted the members of the porposed special committee be drawn from various States, either one or two members shall represent each state.

Their intentions were clear, they intended to use the State leaders to block the proposed ammendments. They were also aware that their remnant influence at the State-level would be further curbed if the proposed ammendments were passed.

Lim Chong Eu, who chaired the conference, put Tan Siew Sin's proposal to vote. It was defeated 67 to 57 (with 3 abstensions).

Then the proposed ammendments too were put to vote.

But first Lim Chong Eu told the delegates, "The only way to strengthen the party and to lead the community more effectively was to ammend the constitution. As a partner of Alliance, we must work for the merger of Singapore with Malaya. It is an ideal we have to strive to achieve."

He also pointed out that it was the first major ammendment of the constitution and urged the delegates to vote wisely and rationally.

When the votes were counted, 75 were in favour of the ammendments while 50 other were against. There was only 1 abstension. The opposers were quick to point out that the 75 votes did not account for 3/5 of the votes cast to warrant passing the ammendments. But the faction in power countered that the total of valid votes was 125 as the blank vote did not constitute an option and that made 75 votes the required 3/5.

The two sides were at an impasse for sometime before Chong Eu, as the chairman of the conference, declared the ammendments passed. He also indicated that he would be responsible for any eventualities. The matter was decided but the animosity grew deeper, feelings turned all the more bitter for the two factions.

Unable to gain the confidence of Tunku Abdul Rahman

Lim Chong Eu wanted to consolidate the MCA in order to lead the Chinese community in the fight for their rights. Tan Siew Sin, on the other hand, wanted to maintain the prevailing state of party affairs which would facilitate his planned come-back.

Chong Eu's triumph and his push for reform in the Party left his opponents rather uncomfortable. Tan Siew Sin, Ong Yoke Lin and T.H. Tan gradually moulded themselves into a virtual opposition faction within MCA. They were also more aligned with the Tunku. This, in addition to the confidence T.H. Tan enjoyed from the Tunku, made the Prime Minister very cautious of Chong Eu.

Of Lim Chong Eu's faction, only Lee Siok Yew was in the Federal Cabinet, as Finance Minister, but he was not totally loyal to Chong Eu. Too Joon-hing (朱达兴) was just a deputy minister. Neither Lim Chong Eu nor any of his trusted aides were in the cabinet then, which gave the Party Leadership much disadvantage.

In fact, almost immediately after Lim Chong Eu's victory at the Party polls, Malay newspapers began to make adverse comments.

Utusan Melayu, in one of its editorials said, "More pro-Kuomintang elements have infiltrated MCA." It went on to voice concern over the likely deepening of racial tones in MCA.

Though the editorial did not identify the "pro-Kuomintang elements", it was believed that other than the known pro-Kuomintang H.S. Lee, Lim Chong Eu must be the target.

Nevertheless Chong Eu did not become a member of the Kuomintang though he worked for some time as a military doctor under that regime in China. He was also careful not to bring any mainland political views into Malava on his return from China. For instance, he opposed Lau Pak Koon's attempt to use ties with Taiwan to influence solutions to the local political problems. In his speeches, he constantly implored local Chinese to register as citizens and regard themselves as Malayans.

The allegation by the Utusan Melayu editorial was unfair and Lim Chong Eu rebuffed the snipe, decribing it as unfounded.

But his political adversaries were quick to seize the opportunity to brand him with that "unproven charge" later.

MCA troubled by Chinese Education Problems

With the change-over of leadership, and with Lim Chong Eu in control over the situation, at least temporarily, MCA began to devote a great deal of time and effort dealing with Chinese Education issues.

Lim Chong Eu realised that Chinese Education was a sensitive subject and it was an important factor affecting the very survival of MCA. It would incur the wrath of the Chinese community if MCA were to ignore Chinese Education. With this awareness, Chong Eu set about improving MCA's image in the Chinese community.

Soon after assuming office, the new President of MCA went to the Official Opening ceremony of Nanyang University in Singapore. It was

29th March 1958.

When he returned, he described the experience "unforgettable".

Simultaneously, Chinese schools were brewing a boycott movement

simultaneously, Chinese schools were brewing a boycott movement against the "Selection Examinations for Chinese Upper Secondary Schools".

MCA, under Chong Eu's leadership, took up the challenging task. After discussing at its meeting, MCA declared that it supported Alliance's education policy though it was against the way the policy was being implemented. Anyway, MCA was opposed to the boycott move.

Chinese educationists were unanimous in opposing the "Selection Exhibition and its failure to be considered on par with the Lower Certificate of Education (L.C.E.) examinations. The medium of examinations was also an added concern. The Board and Teachers Unions of the Chinese Schools wanted the examinations in Chinese Language and felt it should also be recognised by the Government.

Under these circumstances, the Chinese Educationists criticised the

MCA and Lim Chong Eu for their stand.

Due to the seriousness of the situation, Lim Chong Eu had to send Lee Chee Siong (李 我 祥), H.S. Lee and Yong Pang How (桥 非 孝) to meet Tun Abdul Razak, the chief architect of the Razak report.

and to discuss with him the resultant problems of the Report. Chong Eu himself flew to Kuala Lumpur to meet the Chinese Educationists. The proposals from the 3 major bodies were handed over to Minister of Education, Khir Johari by Chong Eu.

After protracted talks, the Minister issued a statement recognising the Selection Examinations as on par with the Fully Aided Schools examinations.

Though the conclusion left some disappointments, suitable am-

mendments were made and some ground were gained. Lim Chong Eu urged the students to take the examinations.

On the 20th day of May, 1958, a group of students barged into

Lim Chong Eu's clinic. They were Junior Midde 3 (Form 3) students of

Chung Hwa Secondary School. They had signed a letter in which they wanted the MCA president to answer 8 queries.

- 1. Why did MCA meet the Minister of Education alone and in the absence of representatives of the 3 major Chinese Education bodies?
- 2. Does Dr. Lim Chong Eu think that MCA can represent all Chinese in Malaya in making decisions pertaining to their education?
- 3. Before the 3 major Chinese Education bodies could make any decision MCA had hastily convened a meeting of its Culture and Education Bureau and it poblicy declare support for the examinations system; it also, through the mass media, urged students to accept the examinations. What does Dr. Lim Chong Eu think of all these?
- 4. Before the "3 major bodies" had even agreed to the examinations system, it had convene a meeting to consider "ways to advise students to sit for the examinations." Is this proper?
 5. Does the MCA consider the "3 major bodies" an executive
- organisation of its Education Bureau?

 6. We want the MCA to clarify its stand regarding the new exami-
- nation system.

 7. We want confirmation that over-aged students can be allowed
- complete upper-secondary education.

 8. We want confirmation that the new examination certificate is
- on par with L.C.E.
 This series of scathing questions were obviously the work of

students bent on boycott. They were clearly unhappy with Lim Chong Eu's actions.

The questions were all concerning the Razak Report; there were no

longer over-aged students in fully aided schools, government aided school students sit for government examinations which were either in Malay or English.

Pressure from the problems represented a challenge for Chong Eu. He neither wanted to let the students down nor to disappoint the Chinese Educationsts. He wanted to try his best through MCA.

To the waiting students, he had a brief reply. He said, "The 3 major bodies comprising of Board Unions, Teacher Unions and MCA had actually studied the problem of Selection Examinations deeply." He also wanted the students to have confidence in the "3 major bodies", which was formed with 33 members, f1 each from MCA, Board Unions and Reacher Unions. According to its rules, the chairman shall be MCA's president, ex-officio.

Carrying the cross for Chinese Education

In an effort to gain the students' confidence in MCA, Lim Chong Eu directed the MCA Education Bureau to seek more concrete and clear-cut concessions. Towards the end, the Alliance Government agreed to issue certificates for the Selection Examinations, which not only enabled its holder to enter upper secondary school, but allowed him to apply for teacher training at Day Training Gentres (DTC) and for admission into Trade Schools.

Scopes for the examinations were defined at lower secondary level. Student un-rest, education problems and controversy over examinations system made Lim Chong Eu carry a cross, the Cross for Chinese Education. He had no other choice as the helmsman of MCA.

At a conference hosted by Chinese Guilds on 27th May 1958 in Johore, Chong Eu declared gravely, "Knowing very well the complexity and difficulties faced by Chinese Education, and waare of it as my first severe test, I resolve to remain true to Chinese Education and loyal to the nation!"

The pressure on the new MCA president came from various sectors, both within and out of the Party. Since his avowed sincerity and initiative towards Chinese Education, much hope was placed on him by Lim Lian Gaik (林连玉), a veteran educationist.

Lim Lian Gaik was Chairman of the Teachers' Union Confederation, his struggle for Chinese Education spanned decades from the 1950's to the 1960'.

When the "3 major bodies" met on 1st June 1958 in Kuala Lumpur after a re-organisation, Lim Lian Gaik expressed new hopes and expectation in the new MCA president.

His optimism towards the capabilities of Lim Chong Eu was mainly derived from the MCA president's considerable success seeking parily of the Selection Examination with L.C.E. Lim Lian Gaik also expressed hope that MCA would work closer with the Chinese education bodies under Chong Ew's leadership.

The two Lim's consequently forged a close companionship over Chinese Education issues.

Following is the list of important leaders in the "3 major bodies" Chinese Education Organisation:—

Chairman : Lim Chong Eu (MCA)

Secretary : Lee Chee Siong (李致祥) (MCA)

Asst. Secretary : Lim Lian Gaik (Teachers' Union)
Treasurer : Tan Choo Mow (\$1 \times it) (Reards

Treasurer : Tan Choo Mow (陈济谋) (Boards Union) Asst. Treasurer : Teh Wan Bon (新統文) (MCA)

Committee Members: Foo Yew Fong, Lee Thian Hin, Choo Wan Heng, Lee Chee Siong (all of MCA), Lim Lian Gaik, Gan Yen Chang, Ong Chor, Chuah Yam Peng, Chow Man Sa (all of Teachers' Union)

Gaik, Gan Yen Chang, Ong Chor, Chuah Yam Peng, Chow Man Sa (all of Teachers' Union) and Voon Tian Kuang, Ong Keng Seng, Choong Sam, Tan See Eng, Tan Chee Mow (all of Boards Union).

There was also a Special Committee comprising of Lim Chong Eu, Tan Chee Mow, Lim Lian Gaik, Lee Chee Siong and Voon Tian Kuang

Tair circe show, Lin Lain Gain, Lee Chee Slong and Voon Han Kuang (温泉夫).

Chairing its meeting after the re-organising, Lim Chong Eu called upon the members to be vigilant against future challenges. He was also confident. he said, that given solidairty and co-operation between the

Education body and the Chinese Community, difficulties could be overcome. Under the precept of the Federal Constitution, Chinese Education could thus be fully developed.

He pledged that MCA would sink or swim with Chinese Education. After the 10-hour marathon session of consultations. Lim Chone Eu

said it was most encouraging.

Inspite of the improved unity and co-operation within the organisation, the Boards and Teachers Unions section were still adamant that
the government make clear assurances before they state their stand
concerning the Selection Examination.

At about the same time, another student-protest forced Lim Chong Eu to intervene.

On 3rd June 1958, students of Han Chiang High School held a sudden, but peaceful demonstration to make 3 demands:-

 Re-instatement of students sacked for protesting the implementation of Selection Examinations;

- That the school act according to the decisions of the 3 major Chinese education bodies and to refrain from invididually forcing students to take the examinations until the problems were reasonably resolved.
- 3. The assurance by school authorities that no students would be sacked for protesting the unreasonable implementation of examinations system by the government; and that the students were merely supporting the 3 major Chinese Education bodies in fighting for a reasonable settlement.

After the gathering, representatives of the students met Dr. Lim Chong Eu at his clinic to request his intervention. They also wanted him to convince the school authorities to reinstate 2 students who were sacked earlier.

Lim Chong Eu advised the students to concentrate on their studies and told them there was nothing wrong in taking examinations.

He also reminded them of the noble intentions of Mr. Lim Lean Teng, the founder of Han Chiang High School, in managing the school the way he did.

In another aspect, Lim Chong Eu, in his efforts to cool the matter, sent Yong Pang How to meet Education Minister Khir Johari. The new request was to make the Selection Examination only evaluational in nature and had nothing to do with student promotion and government aids to schools.

The Minister gave his verbal consent.

After these negotiations, even the Boards and Teachers' Unions indicated satisfaction.

They in turn publicly urged students to take the examinations.

Mr. Lim Lean Teng also accepted Lim Chong Eu's mediation by compromising to cease sacking students, the 16 students in reciprocation, apologised to Mr. Lim Lean Teng.

Simultaneously, student unrest in Kuan Cheng ($\not\Rightarrow \not B_k$) Girls' High School, Kuala Lumpur also came to a peaceful conclusion with the settlement of controvercies.

When the students in Chinese Schools accross the nation registered themselves for the examinations, Lim Chong Eu himself had passed a severe test, by the Chinese Community.

Tan Siew Sin launched his counter-offensive

Just to recapitulate; MCA, led by Lim Chong Eu, enjoyed a period of internal stability after its attempt to ammend its constitution on 30th November 1958. But it was not after considerable efforts as Tan Siew Sin's faction was in the way.

The fact that Siew Sin and Ong Yoke Lin were cabinet ministers made them rather influential. They and their underlings refused to lend recognition to the legality of the Ammendaments. They even led State MCA's of Selangor, Malacca and Pahang in boycotting the new Constitution.

The new constitution had overtones of the power struggle between Chong Eu and Siew Sin and their respective factions. The Lim faction wanted to consolidate power by keeping it to the central leadership, which they now controlled. They wanted party discipline, and a curb on the autonomous powers of the State leaderships and with it the eradication of "feudal-lord style" situation.

Besides, the new constitution had provisions for the affiliation of Chinese Guilds and Societies in the MCA. This, it was hoped, would gained the support of the guilds and societies and prevent a comeback by the Tan group.

It was due to this consideration that Lim Chong Eu's group did not take disciplinary action against leaders under Tan Cheng Lock who had their showdown with the Chong Eu faction but were active in Chinese guilds and societies,

Though their intentions were good, they suffered a blow when the Registrar of Societies declared the Ammendments to MCA's constitution unlawful due to the lack of requisite number of votes, the decision to allow the affiliation of MCA Singapore was also rejected by the Registrar.

With the new constitution still-born, Lim Chong Eus faction struck a compromise with the opposing faction of Tan Siew Sin. They agreed to draft a fresh constitution, to accept the affiliation of Chinese Guilds and societies which had "common goals" with MCA. But the original proposal to put all State MCA's assets under party central leadership control was deleted. Furthermore, State MCA bodies were given the power to recommend candidates for electroal offices and if their choice was overruled by the central leadership, they reserved the right to present fresh recommendations.

These compromises were meant to avoid further split of the Party as general elections were imminent. The proposed compromise constitution was scheduled to take effect only after the general elections.

Courting Chinese Guilds and Societies to best the Tan Siew Sin clique

Superficially, MCA's factional struggle seemed subsided: but strong under-currents of in-flighting remained turbulent. This was the result of the great importance both opposing factions placed on the selection of candidates for the coming general elections and the Tan Siew Sin faction's concerted efforts to pressure the ruling Lim Chong Eu group.

Though he felt the threats, Lim Chong Eu remained stocial in his efforts to improve ties with the Chinese Guilds and Societies and hoped

to awaken the Chinese inhabitants to enrol as citizens.

Under the rallying efforts tof Chong Eu, MCA sponsored a Delegates Conference for Chinese Guilds and Societies across the nation. It was held in Kuala Lumpur on 11th May 1958. Lim Chong Eu delivered his address to the delegates in Mandarin, the first-ever MCA leader to do so since its inception.

Dr. Lim'said, "The 1948 Federal Treaty was not totally fair in its term. I was due to this that MCA fought hard for our rights during the drafting of the Federal Constitution before Merdeka. Our main objective was to safeguard the citizenship rights of Chinese inhabitants and their entitlement to you fen electrics.

He made strident calls for the lasting unity of Chinese and the spirit of caring for one another. He also urged the Chinese organisations to constantly convey their views to MCA so as to enable it to serve the

community effectively.

The special attention MCA paid to voter-registration was due to its awareness that only 700,000 of the 1,200,000 eligible Chinese voters had registered themselves.

The conference elected conference convening chairman for various States, namely:—

rs, namery:— Selangor : Lee Chian Keow (李剑桥) (a son of H.S. Lee) Negeri Sembilan: Lee Chee Siong (李鼓祥) Penang : Wong Pow Nee (王塚尼) Malacca : Goh Chee Yan (天志渊)

Pahang Perak		(何炽强) (刘伯群)
Johore	: Wong Su Fen	(黄树花)
Trengganu Kuala Lumpur	: Khor Teik Meng : Lim Teng Kuang	(许徳明)

Kelantan

: Foo Jee Mee (井世本) These leaders were entrusted with the responsibility to launch citizenship-registration campaigns. As requested by Chong Eu, Wong Pow Nee also conducted a similar assembly in Penang.

With their influence and prestige improved in the Chinese community, Lim Chong Eu's group began to enjoy a corresponding increase in political leverage in Alliance.

Meanwhile, UMNO was also undergoing a period of change. It began to feel its entitlement to a greater say over matters in Alliance. It sought to have control over the coalition. Then, the Alliance Constitution was ammended, in its Executive Committee UMNO now had 6 members. MCA had 5 (originally 6) and MIC had 3. But the member ratio for its Main Committee remained unchanged at 16 each for UMNO and MCA and 6 for MIC.

The 5 Executive Committeemen of Alliance from MCA were Lim Chong Eu, Too Joon-hing, H.S. Lee, Yong Pang How and Wong Yik Teong.

The Bargain for 1/3 of parliamentary seats for MCA

After a period of reform, MCA leaders finally started to prepare for negotiations with UMNO over allocation of constituencies in the scheduled general elections in 1959. The MCA leaders decided on 2 major objectives:-

1. MCA must be allocated 1/3 of all parliamentary constituencies;

2. Assurances pertaining to Chinese Education must be included in the Alliance manifesto.

The reasons MCA wanted to put across were that for 1959, Chinese voters had attained 35.6% compared to the lowly 11.2% in 1955. In addition, MCA felt that by controlling 1/3 of the parliamentary seats, it can ensure that no ammendment of the Federal Constitution could be made without MCA's consent.

Chinese Education had always remained a touching issue. MCA had watch with chagrin while some municipal constituencies in major towns fell to opposition parties. Notably, the Georgetown Municipal Council was already in the control of the Socialist Front. If it did not pay greater attention to the Chinese Education issue, MCA would eventually lose more Chinese votes.

Lim Chong Eu had sought the opinion of Tan Cheng Lock regarding the matter. In his letter of reply, Tan Cheng Lock indicated support for Chong Eu's move.

UMNO had its own, and different views concerning the distribution of constituencies of the 104 parliamentary constituencies, it wanted 74 while McA was asked to take 28 and the remaining 2 were for MIC. The reasons were said to be UMNO's status as the back-bone of Alliance and that UMNO had lost two state governments, Kelantan and Trenganu to PAS and it was not prepared to lose, in distribution talks, more parliament seats to MCA.

When he met the press on 8th July 1959, Lim Chong Eu pointed out that 2 major issues faced the Federation, one concerned the Constitution and the other pertaining to Education. The Federal Constitution should not be ammended at will and education was of great importance too. He vowed to carry on the obligation but requested support of the Chinese for MCA to enable it to fight for their rights.

A political storm appeared gathering over the scene. On one side stood the Tunku with his UMNO while on the other was Lim Chong Eu and MCA.

Sadly, Lim Chong Eu did not get Tan Siew Sin's support in the matter. Tan Siew Sin had always enjoyed the confidence of the Tunku and this changed the fight for rights by MCA into a fracas within the Party itself.

Nevertheless, Lim Chong Eu sent a confidential letter to Tunku Abdul Rahman in June 1959 explaining to him the stand of MCA. It touched on the 2 major issues, allocation of constituencies and Education. These are all history, but some recapitulation might not be of no value.

A Letter to the Tunku, stating MCA's Stand

The letter began by stating, "I must first express my gratitude for your kind concern about my illness, and I am glad to inform you of my gradual recuperation after treatment at the hospital. But I am still unable to leave home. Now, I intend to discuss with you matters of great

significance to the development of our nation and Alliance."

"As I pen this letter, nomination day for the Federal general elections is only 3 weeks away. Surprisingly, the election manifesto of Alliance has yet to be discuss by the Executive Committee. Needless to say, Alliance members are totally ignorant of it.

Considering all factors, I feel this is a very dangerous phenomenon, as it can lead to needless arguments prior to the polls. Even so, I still wish to take this opportunity to stress the importance of 2 issues.

I am of the view that the Manifestor must have a clear-out indication of our stand regarding them. Before I go into details, I must reiterate our utmost concern for the evolvement of all races in the Federation into a sovereign people. I am sure of Alliance's resolve to develop Malayan awareness and concerpt in a peaceful and stable manner. I am convinced that only Alliance can solve the first problem, that of communation

Putting into perspective the welfare of the nation, we fear that a spark caused by undue communalism may lead to mass panic or even bloodshed. I think since the inception of Alliance, one of its greatest moral achievements is maintaining national harmony and containing the aforesaid danger. But if we view the situation from the perspective of The Federal Constitution and parliament, and if we take into account the general position of citizens and votes, especially the distribution of constituencies, it is not hard for us to realise that even in parliament, communalism has rearred its ugly head. Though there is no blood-shed for the moment, it may eventually lead to that tragic stage. Malayan people of other races – Chinese, Indians and Eurasians – are all fearful of only communalism. They are afraid that uncontrolled attitudes not only may destory plans for development by Alliance; even the Federal Constitution may be used to oppress the minority races.

It is due to this that MCA has consistently maintained its policy to support justice, and to uphold a Constitution which ensure the basic rights and equality of citizens. We have done this ever since the commencement of negotiations for the draft of the Federal Constitution.

Today, this policy of ours has been enshrined among the aims and objectives of the new MCA Constitution. But the aforesaid worries still remain because the Federal Constitution can be ammended by the consent of 2/3 of the members of parliament. Only the Malays can muster the required 2/3 of the members of parliament. We have already noticed the attitude of some M.P.'s from the east-coast after the state

general elections in Trengganu. We are confident you would agree that if the trend is allowed to continue, it would lead to very dangerous grounds. This would be against the principles of Alliance.

Under these circumstances, I feel I must appeal to you to ensure the existence of a concrete assurance to uphold the present Federal Constitution in the Alliance manifesto. It is of paramount importance. Until now, my conviction is that the Chinese, especially those who support MCA, vote for Alliance mainly because they fear the racialist-stance of other political parties.

I staunchly believe too, that Alliance must obviously maintain its present moderate policies, and to reflect it in its manifesto. This act will convert the mutual suspicion among various races into that of trust in our foundamental stand.

Your would surely agree, I believe, that unless MCA secures an allocation of at least 40 seats, it would be impossible to ensure moderation.

In view of this, Alliance must adopt concrete policies to reflect its commitment to uphold the Federal Constitution and ensure the conviction that all Malayan citizens enjoy equal status. The Federal Constitution must not be ammended unless non-Malay political parties in the Alliance give their consent. Thus, the demand for an allocation of 40 seats in parliament polits to MCA is a fair and justified one.

Furthermore, the Alliance manifesto must make a clear review of its education policies for the past 2 years. Recommendations from related bodies should be considered; but more importantly, Alliance must make clear its stand regarding the implementation Article 152 of the Federal Constitution

In view of the above objectives, Datuk Abdul Razak and I have drafted the following clauses:-

The Malay Language has experienced sufficient development, but before all schools could provide facilities for the teaching of the language, they should be allowed to use their present media of instruction in providence and the same time, under conditions that Malay is included as one of the computory subjects, these examinations should be accorded government recognition as on par with the national Education Certificate examinations. They should also be regarded as one of the factors in complying to the Education Ministry's policies.

I merely request for a minor alteration, which is as follows:-

The aims of schools having examinations are to decide on student promotion and to grant graduation. For instance, students passing the L.C.E. can be promoted, but those not capable of continuing of further studies must leave school. Therefore, I request that the words "promotion-related" in our statements be altered by adding after those words" and as evaluation of student achievement at school-leaving stage,"

Danger Signals from Penang Polls

In this letter, Lim Chong Eu had mentioned his indisposition. It was an inflammation of spinal nerves. After a year-long political flurry in 1958, he was forced to reduce his activities during the first half of 1959. This made him unable to assist in the state assembly polls in Penang which was held around June that year.

MCA suffered some disappointments in the elections as only 6 of its 11 candidates contesting on Alliance tickets were elected. The Socialist Front, on the other hand, managed to corner 7 seats for Lim Kean Siew, Tan Phock Kin, Lee Kok Leong, Ooi Teong Hoe, Tan Chong Bee, C.Y. Choy and Ramanathan,

Though Alliance still controlled the State Assembly by holding on to 17 of the 24 seats, MCA's prestige had evaporated. For the MCA President, it could not be an outcome to be pround of,

Dr. Lim Chong Eu himself did not contest the polls, as he had his sights on a parliament seat. But he was close to the taste of defeat as his close sides, and trusted friends had lost their elections. Among them were lawyers Fong Yan Sin, Foo Yew Fong, Lee Thian Choo, Sam Ah Chow and Lim Eng Hooi.

There were some consolation as Wong Pow Nee, Cheah Seng Kim, Tan Khim Hoe, Chor Sin Kheng, Kee Yong Chin and Peh Joo Teik

gained their entry to the State Assembly.

The defeat of MCA candidates at the polls could be blamed on problems pertaining to Chinese Education. The Socialist Front, on the contrary, managed to make political capital by declaring it championed the cause for Chinese Education.

Smarting from the pain of the defeat, Lim Chong Eu decided to stake pointed demands from UMNO as an indication of MCA's resolve.

But, lacking the support of State MCA leaders elsewhere, the demands listed in his confidential letter went unheeded. This caused great dissatisfaction in the Lim Chong Eu camp. The controvercy started in MCA as an internal squabble but escalated to open conflict. A storm appeared inevitable in MCA.

As usually, a lull precedes the storm. When the Tunku made no move upon receiving Chong Eu's letter, which was dated 24th June 1959, the sender too, waited patiently.

Both sides were expecting some hard bargaining on 10th July 1959, the day Alliance was to hold its meeting.

But MCA was not as united as Dr. Lim Chong Eu imagined, Feeling indignant of his diminished position after the party polls, Tan Siew Sin teamed up with the Tunku's confidante, T.H. Tan to manipulate the situation skillfully to their advantage. Tan Siew Sin and Lim Chong Eu had become political arch-tribute.

T.H. Tan, too, had a score to settle with the Party leadership since losing his salaried post as MCA's Executive Secretary.

Tan Siew Sin and Ong Yoke Lin used T.H. Tan as their conduit to the Tunku's confidence. They formed a front which was bent on overthrowing Lim Chong Eu. Naturally, there were a great number of cronies behind Siew Sin. They represented a force to threaten Lim Chong Eu's hold on the party reigns.

Through T.H. Tan and his informations, Tunku Abdul Rahman also managed to get an up-to-date and clear view of the inner scenes of MCA.

Yong Pang How raised the curtain for battle scenes

There is a Chinese military strategist saying that to know yourself and your enemy makes every battle a victory.

While the Tunku knew all too well plans of the ruling faction in MCA, Lim Chong Eu was not so knowledgeable of UMNO affairs.

Although Chong Eu had patience, and as he waited patiently for a response from the Tunku, his aides were not endowed with this virtue. They were convinced that the very spirit of defending the community's rights warranted vocal expressions, regardless of consequences.

It was Yong Pang How (結集本), MCA Publicity Chief, who made Lim Chong Eu's letter to the Tunku public. (Yong later became the Chairman of Overseas Chinese Banking Corporation).

Yong was a close associate of Dr. Lim Chong Eu, and, as MCA Publicity Chief, felt that it was his duty to make known MCA's collective demands. At the same time, he disclosed to the Press decisions taken at a meeting of the Central Working Committee of the MCA. That meeting was held during August and it passed two resolutions. (1) MCA demands an allocation of 35 to 40 seats in the general elections. (2) The Alliance manifesto must state its stand in accepting the policy allowing examinations in schools to use the same language as their media of ineviraction.

Yong Pang How said, "Dr. Lim Chong Eu shall make the demiands on behalf of MCA. It the Alliance decides not to acede to the demands, the President shall report to the Central Committee. Then the Central Committee will decide whether MCA should pull out of the Alliance and contest the polls on its own,"

Yong further pointed out that the purpose of MCA in making demands was to ensure that the Federal Constitution would not be ammended at will, and that the very survival of MCA was closely linked to Chinese Education issues.

He also indicated that Abdul Razak had agreed with the MCA approach in handling issues concerning education.

On selection of candidates, the MCA Publicity Chief said, "It should be emphasized that the choice of Chinese candidates from Alliance must be made by MCA, devoid of outside interference."

Those who attended the Central Working Committee meeting were Lim Chong Eu, Too Joon-hing (未运兵), H.S. Lee, Tan See Eng, Tan Suan Kok, Wong Yew Wee, Khor Teik Meng, Chuah Song Lim, Wong Foo Nam and Pak Seng Kin.

None from Tan Siew Sin's group was there.

Without any doubt, Yong Pang How had delivered a time bomb. It could blow up any time at all.

In the afternoon of July the 10th, Tunku Abdul Rahman called Lim Chong Eu for a talk over constituency allocations and education issues. The talk ended after an hour, without reaching any accords.

A crisis had been precipitated and a political storm seemed imminent.

The Storm came as Expected

The Tunku was raging in anger as he summoned some key cabinet members to the Prime Minister's Secretariat. Those who were called included Dato' Abdul Razak, Tan Cheng Lock, Minister of Education Khir Johari, Minister of Trade and Industries Tan Siew Sin, Forcia Affairs Minister Dr. Ismail, Agriculture Minister Abdul Aziz, Health am obliged to ensure the survival of democratic spirit in MCA. It must be pointed out that there exists a bunch of saboteurs in MCA and I am duty-bound to call a National Delegates Assembly."

3. It was clear that in order to break the impasse, MCA delegates from various states must be asked to make their decisions. But, to clarify the matter from the beginning to the end, Lim Chong Eu decided to disclose Tan Cheng Lock's letter to the MCA Central Committee.

The letter was written to all Central Committee Members of MCA and stated:-

"Dr. Chong Eu had seen me to consult me about the two demands contained in his letter to the Tunku; that is to ask for an allocation of 1/3 of the parliamentary seats and to insist on the inclusion of assurances on Chinese Education in the Alliance Manifesto."

"I agree with his actions, and sincerely urge all of you, as representatives of the Chinese and others in Malaya, to unite and be determined in your support for the two demands."

Signed: Tan Cheng Lock
Date: 8th July 1959.
This letter caused a series of furious exchanges between Lim Chong

Eu and Tan Siew Sin.

It was the first direct confrontation between the two key charac-

It was the first direct confrontation between the two key characters.

On his side, Chong Eu had the backing of his Central Committee; Tan Siew Sin, on the other hand, had the support of cabinet ministers and the Tunku. As father and son, Tan Cheng Lock, too, went to the aid of Siew Sin and engaged Chong Eu in heated debates.

The father and son pair and Chong Eu used sharply worded statements for each other.

Verbal battle with the father and son pair

Tan Cheng Lock accused, "Lim Chong Eu appeared to be using me as his tool in his arguments with Alliance and UMNO, hoping to strengthen his position."

"Dr. Lim gave my letter, which was meant for the Central Committee to the press. And this, unfortunately had created an impression that I encourage the uncompromising stand of MCA in its argument with Alliance over seat allocation and Chinese Education issues."

"It must be pointed out that when he met me, he did not present the total picture of the situation. Throughtout my life, I devoted myself for the unity and goodwill among the various races, especially those between Malays and Chinese. At this stage, I would absolutely not destroy this unity and friendship."

"Dr. Lim knew all too well that since vacating my post as MCA President two years ago, I have distanced myself from the political arena, thus it is not proper to drag me into the present political whirlpool."

"Without making known to me the contents of the letter, Dr. Lim made me signed it. This is tantamount to trickery."

But Tan Siew Sin was more abrasive. From the onset, he had made agitated accusations of Chong Eu until the Tunku had to advise him to check his temper in the presence of reporters.

The younger Tan said, "My father's eye-sight is very poor, his memory no better; thus when he signed that letter he did not realise the significance attached to it."

"I have never seen such lowly and despicable tactics. When Lim Chong Eu and his wife came to Malacca to meet my father, he used a typewriter and typed a letter for my father to sign on. When my mother came near to inquire, Dr. Lim repeatedly assured her it was nothing important. He was wary of rousing her suspicion, and asked his wife to seek the company of my mother to visit other portions of our house. This action was an obvious effort to lead her away to prevent her from exposing his tricks."

Tan Siew Sin continued by sarcastically calling Chong Eu a general without troops, meaning that albeit his lofty position he had no supporters.

He added that Chong Eu was inordinately pround of his reform, but his home state, Penang, saw the ignominious defeat of his reformed MCA in the state polls, while Malacca MCA, though un-reformed, scored a total success in a similar election.

Lim Chong Eu replied and made counter-attacks to the barrage. He answered, "My only reply is I showed Central Committee members the letter Tan Cheng Lock wrote me. When a serious crisis appeared in MCA, I made a special trip to Malacca to meet Sir Tan Cheng Lock. Before that, I had phoned ahead to inform him of my request. Upon arrival, I was given a courteous reception. Then I briefed him on the

MCA situtation and sought his advice. After I have finished, he voluntarily picked up his pen and wrote the letter to the Central Committee, urging for a determined stand while negotiating in the Alliance. He signed the letter in the presence of my wife and Mrs. Tan."

With two conflicting versions of the matter, the truth is not known

even till to-day. But history must eventually identify the truth.

Actually, the war of words between Siew Sin and Chong Eu was tragic for the Chinese community. Just when MCA should be fighting for the due rights, their efforts, instead of being directed outwards, were expended neutralising each other. Looking at the matter from to-day, it is no more crucial how that letter was written and signed. The important consideration should be were MCA's demands at that time fair and legitimate?

At that time, Tan Siew Sin thought Chong Eu's moves wrong and since he had considerable influence as a cabinet minister while Chong Eu had none in the federal government, quite a number of people went to Siew Sin's camp.

What started off as MCA's quest for Constitutional power degenerated into an internal strife. MCA, accused by Chinnea associations of lacking concerted efforts prior to Merdeka, was once again under fire by the Chinese Community. Its repeatedly eroded position in the community was totally due to its failure to achieve unity.

What's worth mentioning is that prior to the deterioration of his relationship with Lim Chong Eu, Tan Siew Sin himself had, on 27th September 1956 written a private letter to Chong Eu. Tan was then MCA Publicity Chief and Lim the Party's Political, Election and Citizenship Bureau Chief.

In his letter, Tan touched on the existence of strong racialism and disclosed worries of continuous loss of rightful position by non-Malays as citizens.

Tan also said in the letter, "As I see it, MCA must develop the rightful position of the Chinese and always do it."

Less than 2 years later, with Lim Chong Eu elected MCA President, their personal relationship chilled. They even had such animosity for each other that they failed to fight for a Party-cause on the same side.

Sandwiched by pressure from the Tunku and denial of support from Tan Siew Sin, Lim Chong Eu found himself in a perilous position.

Compromise failed to materialise

The Party's Extraordinary General Meeting was convened on 12th July 1959 at its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. 162 delegates of MCA gathered to decided the Party's fate.

It was a crucial for for them — to remain with Alliance or to quit? Lim Chong Eu had his mind full considering his supporters behest that he remained firm and his obligation as McA President to head-off a split which might cause the Party to crumble. He hoped for a compromise to ease the crisis.

He told the Assembly, "This crisis came under perplexing circumstances, It started with the publication of my confidential letter to Tunku Abdul Rahman, which was an unwise move. Then it was the publication of Tan Cheng Lock's letter to the Central Committee."

"But the situation really took a turn," Chong Eu delcared, "when I talked to the Tunku about contents of my letter in the meeting of Alliance on 2nd July, the Tunku had delayed the discussion because of the lack of time."

Chong Eu continued, "Though I was not present when the two letters were made public, I am willing to take the moral responsibility for it."

"I regret the publication of the 2 letters without my prior consent and I am sorry. And I feel that more misunderstandings were caused by their publication. When I met Dato' Abdul Razak on 9th July, we discussed seat-allocation and education issues. The talk was rather satisfactory. But the situation changed with the woletters made public."

"The morning of the next day, when I phoned the Tunku for an appointment I was told to wait for his letter before meeting him. When I met him immediately after receiving his letter, the condition of the day has turned to the so-called — 'confirmation of rumours' that MCA would quit Alliance and except for those members loyal to Alliance, MCA should no longer be a partner of Alliance.

"I feel that if we reiterate MCA's confidence in the Alliance and Tunku's leadership today, the misunderstanding can be cleared. Then, we may be able to renew the ties between MCA and Alliance."

"But, I must stress, I cannot tell you how many seats we can get from talks with UMNO. It is only a matter of mutual trust now and Tunku has had Alliance under his control." "I don't know how decisions would be made about seat-allocation and the draft of the Alliance manifesto, but I have reasons to believe that with trust restored in Alliance, what we have achieved in talks prior to the crisis can be maintained."

"However, I am sorry to say with today's situation the Central of the Committee cannot provide a clear directive on principles. Now, national delegates must make a decision for MCA and be responsible for the Party's ties with Alliance. While you think over your decisions, be reminded that unity in the Party must be preserved at all costs.

Apparently, Lim Chong Eu, in his speech, hinted that he wanted a compromise with Tunku, preservation of unity in MCA and its remain

in Alliance.

After deliberating for 3 hours, the assembly voted 89 to 60 expressornfidence in Tunku's leadership in Alliance. It also empowered Lim Chong Eu as President to negotiate with Alliance leaders and report to the Delegates Assembly. Though the crisis was defused — MCA remained in Alliance, Lim

Chong Eu was less successful avoiding another blow. This sudden shock, as it turned out, would leave Chong Eu spiritually and physically exhausted.

Superficially, Chong Eu's diplomacy had secured a victory, but it was making him a loser, a general with "no troops to command".

The real victor was Tan Siew Sin as he gained the increased trust of the Tunku, who thought of him as someone who could co-operate with UMNO. The reason: no demand was made about MCA's allocation of 40 seats and listing of Chinese Education issues in the manifesto.

MCA had put its fate at the disposal of the Tunku.

Together with the Tunku, T.H. Tan, Tan Siew Sin and Ong Yoke Lin had succeeded in excluding Lim Chong Eu further from the forums of decision making. His position as MCA President had more name than substance.

Though the Delegates Assembly of MCA had, for the time being, defused a ticking bomb, Lim Chong Eu's troubles were far from over.

Lim Chong Eu was known for his reformist style. Unexpectedly in the Extraordinary Delegates Assembly he did not side totally with his reformist faction. Instead, he projected himself as a mediator, hoping to cool the feelings of Tan Siew Sin's group.

His attitude could not please the opposing faction, instead, the rivals took it as an opportunity to step up the pressure. They tried to

push Chong Eu out of the mainstream; similarly, he could not satisfy his own faction too, because of his failure to display his unwavering resolve and his desire to sink or swim with them.

Chong Eu still clung to the hope that with tensions removed, he could pick up the pieces with the Tunku and regain the dignity and self-

respect of the community.

Either they did not understand Chong Eu's long term objective or they were unwilling to retreat, thinking that to regain any grounds conceded first would be senseless, two important figures from amongst his own line-up spoke vehemently of their objections over the compromise.

Yong Pang How opposed any compromise

As a lawyer and the Party's Publicity Chief, Yong Pang How led the way to voice the objection. In words meant to embarrass Chong Eu, he said, "According to our President, it appeared that we have to hand over a blank cheque to Tunku. Whatever he says would be our order!"

"Personally," Yong continued, "I would not so easily issue this cheque unless I am sure who would be given it and how much is given." I can tell all of you. I stand by every word I said to the press.

Until today, I still maintain the stand of mine."

The Publicity Official went on, "I feel the issues discussed today had nothing to do with the publication of those 2 letters, When I joined the Selangor MCA, I had said that MCA should understand the two Selangor meaningful. Now, the first issue has been tackled; the latter remains undecided. Guarantee for Chinese Education can only be made if we secure sufficient seats in the Parliament, for ensuring that any ammendments to the Federal Constitution be made only with our consent."

"Now, people want us to have trust in Alliance. I feel that they must also have trust in us. We should not hand over our blank cheque

so easily."

"On Chinese education, the most pressing problems is the language used for examinations. Regardless of whether we are lawyers, politicians or laymen, we cannot defend the policy of the government making a Chinese-educated candidate taking his examinations in English. What is wrong is wrong no amtter how right politicians try to make it. As for me, I would not accept what is wrong now because I might be called a hypocrite in the future."

With his speech, Yong made it clear that MCA should not retreat in its struggle for their rights; there should be no compromise too. He wanted MCA to remain unwavering in its stand.

Too Joon-hing remained stoic

MCA Secretary-General Too Joon-hing echoed Yong's views, except that Too spoke more bluntly.

"This is the most important moment in MCA's 10-year history. It can even affect the Party's survival. MCA is a party safe-guarding the rights of the Chinese, and if we cannot accommodate the reasonable demands of the Chinese, who are we representing?" he inquired.

"We are demanding for more seat-allocation and Chinese Education. Pertaining to the first issue, parliament figures show that Chinese voters form the majority in 39 constituencies. Isn't our demand for 1/3 of the 104 parliament seats a fair one?"

"We have said before of our resolution to uphold the constitution, and we do not want to see our rights threatened by others in ammending the Constitution. Since Independence, MCA had made widespread publicity to encourage the Chinese to register as citizens. After all the efforts and sacrifice to achieve the results today, is our demand unreasmable?"

"I am very sad today. Though we have to co-operate with our allies, we must not be controlled by them. We have received not even a word of reply from the Tunku to our letter dated 24th June, is this a democrative attitude? Is this fair?"

"Today we are seeing a havoc caused merely by a letter. May I ask: is making legitimate demands an act of back-stabbing?"

"Press reports had disclosed a demand by UMNO to acquire 74 seats, no one thought it was a problem. But when we ask for 1/3 of the 104 seats, we are said to have made a great blunder. Is this fair? MCA represents the Chinese. So we must not bow to others all the time."

"I am of the opinion that if our two demands were not met, MCA must contest the general elections alone," concluded Too.

Lee Thian Moh, a trusted aide of Chong Eu from Penang asked, "The demand by MCA for 40 seats is a fair and reasonable one. What is wrong with it?"

"Although it is not too proper to make public the 2 letters, but I wish to know whether MCA has been too unreasonable in its demands. From my point of view, they have no reasons to get so enraged by the publication of the letters."

"Besides, the Tunku has already gained total control of the Alliance National Council and would this in itself harm the very rights of MCA

and MIC?" asked Lee Thian Moh.

Yong, Too and Lee were self-righteous. But, alas, their appeals were not too warmly greeted. Pro-Tan Siew Sin delegates took turns at calling for retraction of the demands.

Adroit manouvres by Tan Siew Sin's faction

The first of the salvo was fired by Selangor delegate Loo Joo Kooi ($\not \to \neg \not \uparrow \uparrow \uparrow$), who demanded to know whether disciplinary actions would be taken against the person responsible for the publication of the letters, and whether the announcement of MCA's intention to quit Alliance was made by Yong Pang How.

Another delegate from Selangor, Wong Than Soon, accused Yong for causing the crisis by publicating the letters and demanded Yong's clarification.

A Trengganu delegate, Tan Eng Aun, wanted delegates to curb fiery speeches. He said "west-coast meat might be east-coastman's poison."

Finally, Tan Siew Sin took his position at the rostrum. In his speech, he avoided direct reference to Lim Chong Eu, but he aimed at the very heart of Chong Eu's faction in his attacks.

He said, "Yong Pang How said earlier that the publication of the letters have nothing to do with our discussion today, but he spoke the undersirability of handing over blank cheques to Alliance and UMNO. As you have known, seat allocation and choice of candidates has always caused difficulties before a general election. These difference of opinion can be overcome through negotiation, not open debate."

"If talks fail, we can of course call an Extraordinary General Meters and there would then be a need to publicate things. But our talks have not failed. So the problems have roots in the publication of those letters. Which is to say that by making public the contents of letters before talks can be concluded, especially in these times of high tensions, is an act of azitation." concluded Siew Sin.

With an adroit twist, he turned his attention on Too Joon-hing and Yong Pang How, and implicitly criticised Lim Chong Eu too.

"Sometime in June, I was informed by Party headquarters about problems in candidate-selection and that State leadership should not conduct individual negotiations with the State Alliance authorities. In truth, with the exception of a few States, MCA had already reached agreement with Alliance over this matter."

"When the Central Working Committee met for the first time, I suggested empowering the 5 delegates to the Alliance Council to conduct negotiations. At this point, I must be frank that there existed two factions in our Party. And the 5 delegates were not from my faction. (They were Lim Chong Eu, Too Joon-hing, Yong Pang How. H.S. Lee and Ooi Eik Teong).

"My suggestion was made in the interests of the nation and the Party. But Ong Yoke Lin proposed giving the President full powers to negotiate. Eventually, I agreed too. Unfortunately, the proposal was turned down by the C. W. C."

"Frankly, this problem is not caused by seat-allocation because Alliance has already proposed that the chief criterion in candidateselection should be the winning-prospect and not based on racial origin. The main consideration is to ascertain victory for Alliance so as to be able to form government."

"As far as I know, when this principle was discussed in the Alliance National Council, MCA delegates told UMNO leaders that it would not matter even if we lose, because we can then form a strong and viable

opposition."

"Secondly, Alliance had suggested that the selection of candidates be decided by various State leaderships because local leaders know better the sentiments of their voters. But our Central Working Committee disagreed, may be they feel that candidates picked this way may not be to their liking. I have said so much with the intention to expose the truth behind this crisis and to identify the persons responsible for this dilemma "

Obviously, Tan Siew Sin was defending Alliance and accusing the ruling-faction of Lim Chong Eu. Firstly, he agreed with the winningprospect criterion in picking candidates and not based the selection on racial proportion. Then he support the policy of allowing the State authorities to pick candidates, leaving the Central leadership powerless. Thirdly, he harboured the objective of bringing down Yong Pang How and with it, the collapse of Lim Chong Eu's line-up.

Tan Siew Sin had more "outrageous" views when he touched on Chinese Education, He declared, "Yong Pang How mentioned Chinese Education problem. Though I don't understand Chinese, but I know that students from Chinese Schools are now permitted to answer their papers in Chinese when they sit for promotion examinations. Mr. Yong had accused the government of making Chinese educated students sit for English examinations, but I am sure the government is not that stupid to commit this madness."

"The country's prominent Chinese Educationist Lim Lean Gaik met me last night. From our discussions, I came to know that the Chinese Educationists want lasting permission for Chinese school pupils to sit for examinations in Chinese. Now, this is different, because we can't create a "Mini-China" in a nation like Malaya. As for the objectives of examinations in Chinese Schools, Mr. Lim had told me the view that Chinese educated student need not necessarily seek government employment. This I disagree because unemployment in the country may increase and the future of Chinese education students would be restricted."

"When we talk about racial ties between Malays and Chinese, I am survey we can agree that in many aspects Chinese are superior to the Malays. This is the reason the Malays are in fear. They hope to have some protection in the government to compensate for their inferiority in economic aspects. This reasoning may be wrong, but it is very common among Malays. I must say that in order to alleviate this fear, we must resort to patient engotiations and desist from making inflammatory speeches."

"Yong Pang How said unless MCA gets the number of seats it wanted, it would be impossible to protect Chineser gights. In truth, only a simple majority is needed for ammending the Constitution. On Chinese Education again, if the government had intended to exterminate it, the government need only cut down on the aids it gives to these schools. Of course, this move may cause an up-roar in these schools, it may be lead to riots."

Tan Siew Sin spoke as if he represented the Alliance and the government. Though he was not a key figure in MCA, he, nonetheless held a cabinet post. Besides, he enjoyed the Tunku's confidence. This was what Chong Eu lacked as non-minister.

Lim Chong Eu's supporters were furious after listening to Tan Siew Sin. Their distaste for him aggravated.

But the delegates were worried of the consequences should MCA quit Alliance. This, added to Chong Eu's statement calling for compromise, made them vote to remain in Alliance and forget the 2 demands — Chinese education and 1/3 seat-allocation.

Undeniably, Lim Chong Eu had suffered a major set-back. Tan Siew Sin gained a lot of ground. As things began to take a fast turn, it was destined that Lim Chong Eu, not Tan Siew Sin, would leave MCA in disgust.

Lim Lean Gaik rebutted Tan Siew Sin

Tan Siew Sin's speech to the MCA delegates angered Lim Lean Gaik and the Teachers' Union. The following day, Mr. Lim released a press statement countering Tan Siew Sin.

He stated, "I have two points to clarify; firstly, prior to Dr. Lim Chong Eu's letter on 24th June to the Tunku, I have only co-signitured with Dr. Lim Chong Eu and Tan Chee Moh as representative of the 3 major bodies, a letter to the Tunku, the Prime Minister (during 3 mejoral election, with parliament dissolved, Tunku Abdul Rahman temporarily step-down and Abdul Razak stood in as Prime Minister) and the Minister for Education. Other than that, I have never in my personal capacity or as Chairman of the Teachers' Union written any letter to the Tunku.

"Secondly, I met Mr. Tan Siew Sin at 6:30 p.m. on 11th July, It was arranged by Mr. Goh Chee Yan (夫 多) # 30 and Sim Moh Yuh (龙 惠 3) . I also invited the vice-chairman of Teachers' Union, Mr. Ong Chor and Mr. Lau Hwai Kuh. I insisted that our main demand is the use of the medium of instruction for the Lower and Higher Certificate Examinations and its parity with government examinations, assuring similar prospects. I only said these sentences. Then Mr. Goh. Mr. Ong and Mr. Lau spoke to Mr. Tan Siew Sin in English, which I do not understand."

"It is therefore not true that I made those statements to Tan Siew Sin, as he attributed to me."

"My opinion of Tan Siew Sin is that he is completely different from his father, Sir Tan Cheng Lock. Finally, I must point out that the 3 major organisations have sufficient representation beyond denial. The

closed-door policy adopted by the Alliance government toward this 3 major organisations (comprising of MCA, Board Union and Teachers' Union) to prevent us from carrying out our obligations to the Chinese, What is the ulterior motive of the government?"

Vice-Chairman of the Teachers' Union, Lau Hwai Kuh also recounted the informal meeting with Tan Siew Sin that night. "At the time, we pointed out to Tan Siew Sin that in both enforced policies and recommendations of the Education Report, all races are allowed to use their mother-tongue as media of instruction. Since it is so, the examina-

tions should be similarly permitted to use the language."

"About prospects for Chinese educated pupils, Tan Siew Sin told us that the government wants to conduct examinations in the official language because it intends to employ only those who passed the examinations. We countered that it is not necessary that Chinese school students seek government posts. But we feel the government should recognise Senior and Junior Secondary Chinese School graduation qualifications."

"Mr. Tan Siew Sin disagreed on this. He said that if we insist on government recognition of Chinese language examinations, it would be tantamount to demanding Chinese as an official language. Malays would object to this. He further pointed out that if Chinese Schools teach only Chinese and set the test papers in Chinese instead on English, students would not possess Malayan awareness."

"We pointed out to him that we recognise Malay as the National Language and we agree that it be taught from standard one in primary schools. We contended that to inculcate Malayan awareness, the content of the lesson is more important than the medium of instruction,"

The Teachers' Union obviously held conflicting views with Tan Siew Sin's. Yong Pang How was the Union's sympathiser and insisted the struggle be taken up by MCA for the educationists' demands.

Sadly, the Delegates' Assembly was not interested in discussing the demands anymore. Instead, the target was Lim Chong Eu and his group, It approved, by a majority, to let Tunku Abdul Rahman decide the fate of MCA. This gave Yong Pang How much disappointment. He felt that MCA had deviated from its original objectives and lacked the courage to stand firm on Chinese Education and seat-allocation issues.

A spate of resignations

Yong Pang How was a son of MCA veteran, Yong Hook Lin; a Yong Pang How was known for his outspoken style and willingness to lead the way. Outraged by the delegates support for compromise, he announced his resignation as MCA Publicity Chief. In his letter of notice to quit, he told the President that he had publicated the 2 letters on behalf of MCA and, since the act was met with disapproval by the Delegates' Assembly, he had no quit. He also left the party after some time.

The resignation sent shock waves through MCA and was a prelude to a spate of other resignations.

Following closely, MCA Secretary-General Too Joon-hing too resigned his post and party membership. Then came the quit decisions of Tan See Eng, Tan Suan Kok, Koay Kai Tong, Ho Keng Chuan, Yap Kim Chooi, Chooi Kok Kuen and others.

After a while, Lee Khian Keow (another son of H.S. Lee and elder brother of Alex Lee) resigned too with an accusation that the Tunku resorted to undemocratic tactics in the selection of candidates.

Yong See Moh (later elevated to be a judge) also joined the ranks of party quitters. In Penang, MCA strongmen Lee Thian Moh, Oon Chin Siong, Foo Yaw Tong and Lim Eng Hooi also variously submitted their resignations.

The tide of party resignation seemed to take Lim Chong Eu aides one after the other from MCA. Though disappointed, he could not stop them as the situation had turned highly unfavourable to them. They had decided to stop seeking mere political survival and hoped to start aftesh—elsewhere.

Yong Pang How had a great plan to form a new political party when he first left MCA. News was then rife that the proposed party would be named "Malayan Action Party". But due to the uncertainly that prevailed and Lim Chong Eu's absence the plan was dropped.

But some better-known ex-MCA leaders contested against MCA candidates in the problem-plaqued elections. They included Too Joonhing, Tan See Eng and Koay Kai Tong. But more of which later.

With the exit of so many of his backers from MCA, Lim Chong Eu found himself more isolated, and more often at odds with Tan Siew Sin. But the President was by then a toothless tiger. Had Lim Chong Eu persisted with the 2 major demands, and had his faction established a new party in time, the course of events might be changed. But he failed to do either. He close to remain in MCA and placed himself in an unsayoury position.

It quickly became apparent that to remain MCA president was meaningless. He asked himself the purpose of continuing. He found no answer, even today. But certainly he had not expected events to move that quickly and to reach that state of deterioration. It went so far that the President of MCA was oblivious of identities of his party's candidates.

Coverly, Tan Siew Sin had grabbed the control of MCA. With the Tunku's tacit support, Tan Siew Sin, T.H. Tan and Ong Yoke Lin began to disregard the President, Lim Chong Eu.

With a heartful of enthusuasm, Lim Chong Eu started by reforming MCA, but so soon he had to witness the shattering of his own hope.

With his supporters gone, after accusing MCA of inconsistency and

with his supporters gone, after accusing MCA of inconsistency and lacking in resolve, Chong Eu now stood alone.

"Nothing is more tragic than the demise of hope!"

When Lim Chong Eu returned, after meeting Tunku Abdul Rahman on 13th July, he brought news that McA may be allocated 32 sents, and that all candidates would be picked by the Tunku himself, with the MCA President permitted to go through his party's list and to make recommendations. The Chinese Education issues would not be listed in the manifesto, but would be implemented administratively as soon as possible. The talks did not achieve expected results. That was when the wave of resignations, started by Yong Pang How, really went rolling.

The MCA President rendered powerless

The President's faction were furious in the Delegates' Assembly convened to receive reports about the result of talks. Tan See Eng. Choo Wan Heng and Lee Thian Moh took turns to oppose conceding more grounds. They voiced dissatisfaction over the 32 seat allocation when Chinese voters constituted the majority in 39 constituencies. Two of them insisted on a minimum allocation of 35 seats.

But their greatest grouse was the power of selection of candidates rested with the Tunku and not the Party's Central leadership. Of course they were also unhappy about the neglect of Chinese education issues.

But more delegates were in favour of compromise and the decision to compromise was taken with 89 votes in favour and 60 votes against.

Nomination Day came on 15th July. Despite his position as MCA President, Lim Chong Eu was ignorant of the Party's candidate-list just days from Nomination Day. He was not even aware whether he would be a candidate himself. That was most unimaginable.

In the process, his greatest spoiler was T.H. Tan. T.H. Tan had used the backing of the Tunku for Lim to openly flout Lim Chong Eu.

As a matter of course, MCA candidates were selected by the Tunku in consultation with T.H. Tan, Tan Siew Sin and Ong Yoke Lin. Lim Chong Eu was left out of the scene altogether.

It was not until Nomination Day that Chong Eu was told of the list of candidates. They were all Tan Siew Sin's men. None of Chong Eu's men, not even himself, was picked for nomination.

MCA was given 31 seats to contest, one less than what was agreed.
MCA's willingness to settle for 31 seats from the 40 it had originally
demanded for was an indicator of its set mould of submissiveness.

Nomination day saw Lim Chong Eu in great displeasure. He accused Alliance of breaking its own promises to consult the President of MCA on the candidate list.

As Alliance Executive Secretary, T.H. Tan had a full list of Alliance

candidates. But he did not avail it to the MCA President, purportedly because Alliance ministers were placed in safe constituencies and it would be disastrous if "anti-Alliance elements" were to lay hands on it.

In his anger, Chong Eu refused to be responsible for any MCA candidate and he told the press as much.

He also demanded to know what Tan Siew Sin and Ong Yoke Lin meant by "safe constituencies". Dr. Lim said, "We should let the people make the choice and not run away from the people."

Dr. Lim was referring to MCA ministers who discarded constituencies with a Chinese majority and, instead, got themselves nominated in Malay majority constituencies. This, he contended, degraded their own self-respect in the eyes of the community.

Emotionally, Dr. Lim Chong Eu said, "I still remember vividly that Tan Siew Sin and Ong Yoke Lin had stood by principles when we debated Constitution Ammendment in MCA. They insisted that nomination must be made by the grassroot and in accordance with democratic principles. They also said that those who worked before the polls should be allowed to select their candidates." "What I can see now is that they are not abiding by their principles. I cannot imagine how they could explain for their transformation but I hope their seats would be safe."

"From what I know, T.H. Tan is a provocateur, perpetrating the act of souring MCA's ties with UMNO for the benefits of a small bunch of people (meaning ministers) who want safe seats."

Deep hatred for T.H. Tan

Lim Chong Eu could not hide his disgust for T.H. Tan, even from the press. He said, "When I met Tunku before nomination day, he had directed that the list of candidates be shown to me. But it was never done"

Then Chong Eu showed a note from Tunku to T.H. Tan containing the directive.

He concluded, "This is not an election for MCA, it is merely an election for a few persons in MCA."

Lim Chong Eu's rage was at its peak.

The next day, however, T.H. Tan had his version for the press. He denied ever seeing the note and assured that he would do as directed had Chong Eu shown him Tunku's note. But T.H. Tan may be the only one who knew the truthfulness of his words.

Then, he volunteered some reasons. He said, "Under these circumstances, with 2/5 of MCA delegates voting for withdrawing from Alliance, we have to take precautions against leakage of the candidate list to the outsiders."

"Dr. Lim did not attend the Alliance meeting. The candidate list was discussed in that meeting." T.H. Tan pointed out.

Then he added, "Alliance had originally selected Lim Chong Eu, Too Joon-hing and Yong Pang How as candidates, but had to reconsider their position as things changed unexpectedly.

T.H. Tan's clarification naturally failed to convince Lim Chong Eu and his aides.

A President of MCA, not allowed to pick his party's candidates and had to contend with various excuses. This must either be outrageous or laughable, or both.

In fact, when considered in depth, this indicated that T.H. Tan acted not for MCA but for Alliance. And he did so under Tunku's directives. After this, MCA's reigns found themselves in strange hands and the Party began to go in directions away from where Lim Chong Eu intended.

Lim Chong Eu could never forget the humiliation of being left ignorant of his own candidates' identities. He hated T.H. Tan, but he also realised the Tunku had turned his back on him and was then moving closer to Tan Siew Sin.

Inspite of the impossibles facing him, Lim Chong Eu remained in MCA and as its helmsman. But he had very little to feel optimistic now. The splintered condition of his own team was not a view to forget easily.

With his own name dropped from nomination, he saw his own decline and the emergence of his aides in opposition line-up. They were

contesting the polls as independents.

This was a President in siege. But then, some warm rays of consolation began to penetrate the cold, grey clouds. Grassroot organisations of MCA began to pass resolutions expressing confidence in his continued leadership. They urged his stay too. Of course some were merely projecting a desirable image for the elections though there were genuine gestures of loyally.

Lim Chong Eu, in a commendable gesture of statesmanship, went to Kuala Lumpur to help Alliance candidates in their campaign. But as he sat on the platform with Tunku Abdul Rahman during a rally, the

two leaders were far from trusting each other.

After nomination, it was polling day on 19th August. With his depressed heart, Chong Eu attended the rally. At that time, he was already considering to relinquish his Presidency.

Spring faded with the Flowers

On 28th July, Lim Chong Eu made a painful decision and announced his plans to leave for medical treatment overseas. His departure was scheduled for 4th August. The feeling of having to concede an MCA he had planned to reform and settle for nothing was not too pleasant.

Left with no better choice, Lim Chong Eu decided to leave a Party for which he had great expectations. He could not remain the leader of a party over which he had no more control, neither did he want to stay as a puppet.

Then came the expected but equally shocking announcement to quit as President of MCA. He retained his membership in the Party until much later. No reasons were cited for the resignation except that he was following his doctor's orders. His stay overseas would be 6 months.

Though it was widely known that he had health problems, few would believe that he resigned solely for that reason. Some were inclined to blame the decision to quit on "political ailments" because it was not characteristic of Lim Chong Eu to quit politics for some illnesses. He had few trusted people in the Party and he refused to do what was against his will.

The Chinese community reverberated with shock, the Central Committee of MCA also called an emergency meeting when the resignation was made known. They advised Dr. Lim to stay on, and even suggested Dr. Cheah Toon Lock, MCA's deputy President to take over the work in Dr. Lim's temporary absence. The meeting also ratified Ooi Eik Teong's appointment as party Acting Secretary-General, to replace Too Joon-hing who had resigned.

Lim Chong Eu tumed down the appeals for his stay. The contents of his first letter of resignation was never made known. But The Straits Echo quoted it as having said the condition for Chong Eu's continued tenure as MCA President would be an assurance of MCA's on par status with UMNO in the Alliance.

This was not substantiated and the Acting Secretary-General, Ooi Eik Teong refused to deny nor confirm the report,

It did not matter as, MCA already lacked the leverage it needed to be on par with UMNO in Alliance.

On 4th of August, two weeks before polling day, Dr. Lim Chong Eu, accompanied by his wife, Swen Yen, left the country. The Bayan Lepas Airport in Penang was swarmed by a large crowd of nearly 600. Prominent among them were Chief Minister, Wong Pow Nee, MCA Deputy President, Dr. Cheah Toon Lock, State UMNO Chairman, C.M. Hashim, State MIC Chairman Arumugam Pillay and state UMNO Secretary Aziz Unbahim, an Exco member.

It was a touching scene. MCA Youth Leader Chan Siew Guan led a chorus of "Unity our resolve, concentrate our strength, fight for equality in Eudcation! Long live Dr. Lim, long live Chinese unity, long live racial unity!"

The slogans rang loud and clear in the hearts of the crowd.

Lim Lean Gaik expressed much regrets

Though Dr. Lim Chong Eu had much to say, he chose to be brief. He expressed confidence in his deputy's capability to continue leading MCA, called on members to give support and co-operation to Dr. Cheah Toon Lock. But he made no mention of the Central Committee's efforts persuading him to stay.

With a wave of farewell, Lim Chong Eu stepped into the waiting plane, on a journey set to change his political destiny.

Despite the lingering memory, it is hard to judge the move as either correct or misconstrued. It remained arguable today.

Some insisted that Lim Chong Eu should not have left MCA, and had he persisted the political scene might be different today. But others felt that even had he stayed on, he would be nothing more than a puppet leader. In the encirclement by T.H. Tan and Tan Siew Sin. Chong Eu could reach nowhere except a certain political cul-de-sac.

The Teachers' Union Chairman, Lim Lean Gaik had deep regrets over Chong Eu's resignation. In his conversations, he could not hide his appreciation for the disappointed hero.

In Sitiawan, the educationist released a significant statement:-"We had mistaken ideas before. We thought MCA had been our

ally - and had some achievements in their share of government. We had 4 reasonable requests and made them through MCA. Unfortunately, with the exposure of internal strife in Alliance, we can see clearly that MCA has been deserted by its partners."

"Even the MCA President cannot have a word of say in the preparation of the Alliance manifesto and cannot even lay eyes on the list of candidates who are supposed to represent the Chinese. If MCA is the supreme organisation of the Chinese, then its President is naturally the Supreme leader of the Chinese. In fact, with the general support of the Chinese he enjoys, he can proudly be the supreme leader."

"But with our supreme leader placed in such a sorry position, who else can talk friendship with Alliance? Who can negotiate with it? We really do not blame Lim Chong Eu for telling reporters that "it's finished!"

"We must realise that the MCA President can say it's finished, but Chinese rights should never be finished. We must unite the masses. struggle for our objectives. We must also vote our ideal representative into Parliament."

This statement was meant by Lim Lean Gaik to be words of caution and struck hard at Tan Siew Sin's group.

The same words and Lim Chong Eu's resignation contributed to the loss of many votes by MCA candidates. In the end, candidates in urban constituencies, where Chinese votes constitute the majority, suffered heavy losses.

The political fortune of MCA had been squandered.

The Parliamentary polls in 1959 was the first since Malaya achieved Independence and was a gauge for Alliance achievements. If MCA had not split into factions and internal strife, the Party might perform better in the polls. This was because under Lim Chong Eu's leadership, efforts were initiated to rid it of unhealthy traits.

Pitifully, MCA members lacked the concerted action it needed; some wanted to stand tall, some were lame ducks and wished to slouch in their ready armchairs.

"A hero's tears are shed for deeds unaccomplished" Though Lim Chong Eu shed no tears in public, the inner pain and frustration was his, and his alone, to endure.

Of the 31 parliamentary candidate from MCA fielded, 19 were elected while 12 other met their respective waterloos.

According to R.V. Vasil's analysis in his book "Radical Politics of Malaya", in constituencies where Malay votes formed more than 20% of the constituencies MCA won its 19 seats. But in areas where there were less than 20% Malay votes, MCA candidates achieved no success at all. The results suited UMNO well because it made MCA dependent on UMNO for electoral victory. Unavoidably, this resulted in further weakening of MCA.

R.K. Vasil also concluded that the only objective of UMNO in keeping MCA with Alliance were:—

1. To project an image of a multi-racial Alliance

2. To deliver sufficient seats in Parliament to form a 2/3 majority

To provide a controlled channel through which Chinese dissatisfaction can be routed.

R.K. Vasil's analysis and conclusion were rejected by Tan Siew Sin's faction. But since then, MCA had compromised in many issues.

Beginning 1959, most MCA "heavyweights" prefered to contest elections in relatively safe constituencies until, in 1982, the "tradition" was broken by Lee San Choon. In urban areas, where there were concentrations of Chinese, MCA candidates fell like bowling pins; for example, in Penang, Goh Guan Hoe (former Mayor) of MCA lost to Tan Phock Kin of Socialist Front at Tanjung; Lee Thian Choo of MCA lost to Lim Kean Siew of Socialist Front at Datuk Keramat; and both were defeated with majorities in excess of 5,000 votes. In Province Wellesley's southern constituency, Tail Hoof Soo of MCA lost to Veerappan, also from Socialist Front.

In Penang State, the only two victorious MCA candidates were Gey Chong Keat at North District Penang and Tan Cheng Bee at Bagan, with only just over a thousand-vote majority. In Malacca, MCA's Wong Koon

Wan was also defeated, by Tan Khee Ngak of Malayan Party.

Perak State delivered defeats to MCA's Teng Hai Giap (程海坐), Wong Kok Eng (景图楽), Yeoh Kean Telk (楊建俊) and Tan Kok Siang, who were respectively beaten by D.R. Seenivasagam, S.P. Seenivasagam, Khong Kok Yat and Chan Swee Hoe of the People's Progressive Party (P.P.P.)

Selangor State witnessed the defeats of MCA men Lim Shee Hong, Khor Pei Kee and Lee Eng Teik, all to Socialist Front candidates.

Lim Chong Eu aides, Tan Sai Eng and Koay Kai Tong who left MCA and contested as independents, defeated their MCA adeversaries in Negeri Sembilan.

Another close associate of Chong Eu, Too Joon-hing who tried his luck at Sitiawan, Perak was unfortunately beaten with a vestigial margin of 300 votes. Too contested in the neighbouring constituency of Teluk Intan in a by-election in 1961 and was second-time lucky.

Looking at the above results, we conclude that the failure by MCA to stand firm on its 2 major demands had lost it the confidence of the Chinese community. Though MCA remained above water, it had nonetheless become an easier target in the political battle fields.

Formal Resignation after the General Elections

When Malayans went to the polls on 19th August, Lim Chong Eu was already in England and far from the sweet victory and bitter defeat of MCA. On 15th September of that year, he formally wrote to the Acting Secretary-General of MCA Ooi Eik Teong, tendering his resignation as Presiden In the letter he stated, "I refer to my first letter and wish to inform you that my decision to resign as President must be deemed a final one. Thus, I would appreciate if you could convey my views to all the members of the Central Working Committee."

"I feel that under the Constitution in effect, the Party cannot appoint someone to carry out the orders of the Central Committee unless I resign. The Special Committee for re-organisation has important

tasks and it would be unfair if I am absent when it meets."

"In view of the special circumstances in the Party, it must have a leader who makes himself available. Therefore, the Presidency must be held by a person who is available. Under these circumstances, I must stick by my decision to resign."

Yours faithfully,

Lim Chong Eu

His refusal to reconsider his decision must be his only choice. It was no longer the actual leader of McA. Tan Sew Sin, supported by his group and backed by Alliance, had become the de-facto leader of the Party. Dr. Cheah Toon Lock only temporarily acted as President until 1961. As a cabinet minister, Tan Siew Sin had the influence and resources to wrestle the control of McA into his hands.

Lim Chong Eu's faction, with his resignation, faded from MCA.

The conclusion of one era is the beginning of another. When Lim Chong Eu's reign ended, MCA entered a period of fundamental changes under the new, Tan Siew Sin, era.



▲林苍祜从急进党转入 公会后, 地位更形重. 1957年东姑诚邀林茶; 任槟州首席部长,但 以丁父忧为理由而婉若 From Radical Party, Dr. L. Chong Eu had his political influence extended when h joined MCA, in 1957, he v persuaded to lead the Pena State Government as Chief Minister by the then Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, But Dr. Lim Chor Eu declined the offer, citin his fathers' recent death and his resultant grief as reason.



《林苍祐向东姑推荐王保尼出任槟州首 都长,并在联盟会议上投下决定性的 支持王保尼。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu proposed Wong Pow Nee :

the Tunku as the choice for Chief Minister and cast a deciding vote at the State Alliance Meeting to support his choice.



Another State Legislative Councillor, CHEAH SENG KIM lobbied for support to become. Chief Minister too; he did not receive Chong Eu's nod though they were related to each other.





房他的领导,后来却交惠。 As his stature grew in MCA, Dr. Lim Chong Eu received much appreciation from

As his stature grew in MCA, Dr. Lim Chong Eu received much appreciation from the Tunku for his leadership; even Tan Siew Sin had to admit to his abilities, But they went seperate ways later.



李孝式暗中帮了林苍祐一把,使后者当上

Colonel H.S. Lee, who lent subtle support to Lim Chong Eu, thereby enabling the latter to become President of MCA.



Founder of MCA and its President, Tan Cheng Lock was deteated by Lim Chong Eu at the party's elections in 1958.





当选马华总会长后,林苍祐比王保尼更容易靠近东始。 After ascending to the position as President of MCA, Lim Chang Eu had easier access to the Tunku than Wong Pow Nee had.



身为马华总会长、林苍祐是记者群包围采访的对象。 As MCA President, Llm Chong Eu became the target for interviews and photographs to flock after flock of journalists.



创造了条件。 As a run-up to contesting the President's Post, Lim Chong Eu Initioted a series of "reform" statements; seen here is one of those newspaper cuttings from 1957.



"革命"舆论。这是1957年的剪报。 The Challenge to Tan Cheng Lock's

leadership of the MCA by Chinese guilds and associations created conducive climates for Chong Eu's bold move to vie for the Presidency.



全马华团组成的代表团准备到伦敦争取更多的权利, 图中人 物包括划伯群、陈期岳和林连玉。

A delegation of Chinese guilds and associations leader from across the nation ready to fly to London on a mission to negotiate for better rights. Those in the picture included LAU PAK KHUAN, TAN KEE

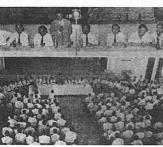


Lim Chong Eu and his faction within MCA had regular meetings with Chinese community leaders to discuss and evaluate Chinese Education issues.



• 种民学生发动学潮,抗议改制,林苍菇从中斡旋,又使到马华和董赦总的关系接近。

Students of Chung Ling High School, Penang, boycotting class to protest against the implementation of fully-aided schools system. Lim Chong Eu's mediation in the issue helped to foster closer ties between MCA and "Tung-Chiao Chung" (the Amalgated School Boards Unions and Teachers' Unions.



◆林苍祐在1958年以马 总会长的身分, 召开 团代表大会。首次以 语公开演讲, 吁请华, 登记成为公民, 以便

资格参加投票。

In 1958, Lim Chong Eu ca a Conference of Chinese Association Leaders in his capacity as President of M. At the conference, he mad maiden speech In Mandarii urging Malayan Chinese to register themselves as citizand ensure of their rights t vote.



在槟城方面、林苍祐也交由王保尼展开登记公民权运动。 The Job of urging local Chinese to register as citizens in Penang was delegated to Wong Pow Nee by Chong Eu.

林苍祐夺权成功 后,主持第一次 马华中委会设。 Chairing his first MCA Centrol Committee Meeting as the purty President.





◆林苍祐和其亲密战 友陈世英及来运兴 合照。 Lim Chong Eu with his close aldes TAN

Lim Chong Eu with his close aides TAN SEE ENG and CHOO JOON HING.



林苍祐的先锋队杨邦孝微起一场 风暴。

Lim Chong Eu's ranguard, YONG PUNG HOW raised a political storm.



林 答 結 在 槟城 的 代 言 人 拳 典 谟。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu's spokesman In Penang, LEE TIAN MOK.



4 争加剔。在一项特别代表 次会上,林苍结涂和陈修信 该相持不下。 After taking over the reigns, Lim Chang Eu had to face escalated factional conflicts in MCA. At a Delegates Extra-ordinary Assembly, his faction had an impasse with Tan Siew Sin Saroup.

东站通过陈东海、拉拢陈修) 信、组成反标茶祛派系。

信、組成反林 卷 結束系。 Tunku Abdul Rahman used T. H. Tan as a go-between to procure Tan Siew Sin, convincing them into forming an anti-Lim Chong Eu faction.









應修信和林苍結正面对抗。 Direct confrontation between Tan Siew Sin and Lim Chong Eu.



翁毓麟倒向陈修信反林苍祐 Ong Yoke Lin leaned towards Tan Siew Sin, thus himself an adversary of Chang Eu.



◆陈祯禄政龄林苍祐及全体中委的信,表明支持马华中委的两个坚持。但陈修信指为此信系林苍祐在其父不知情下签署的。 终于引起杆然阅波。

Tan Cheng Lock's Jetter to Lim
Chang Eu and all the Central
Committee Members of MCA;
supporting the Committees' two
demands. But Tan Siew Sin claimed
that the letter was signed by his
father, without knowing its contents
and at Chang Eu's persuasion. This
claim precipitated nasty storm.



◆马华向联盟要求更多席位不果,引致陈修信反攻, 林苍祜失告,贴然神伤。

MCA unsuccessfully negotiated within Alliance for the allocation of more seats in the parliamentary elections, and exposed a disappointed Chong Eu to Tan Siew Sin's scathing criticisms.

林苍祐斗争失败。由隆道栋、王保尼在机场危勉 Defeated in his struggle, Lim Chong Eu left Kuala Lumpur for Penang. Wang Pow Nee was at the airport to console Lim pon his return.





◀林苍祐大权旁落,伤心离圆赴英国养 马华代总会长谢敦禄医生机场相送。

Deprived of his powers, a dejected Lim Chong Eu left for England to seek medical treatment; acting MCA president Dr. CHEAH TOON LON seen here at the airport to bid farewell.



林苍祐向机场的送行者说: 再见了! |

Lim Chong Eu saying "We shall meet again!" to friends and supporter who come to see him of.

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■不久之后,林苍祐信器 马华公会,正式辞卸忠 会长职。

A while after his departure, Lim Chong Eu wrote to the party, tendering his resinnation as President.

CHAPTER 6 THE POLITICAL RECOUPMENT BY LIM CHONG EU

History has repeatedly proven one thing: Heroes and great men are most vulnerable to loneliness.

They need to be surrounded, they need people to support their

They need to be surrounded, they need people to support their cause and be willing to sacrifice for them.

Heroes and great men are so used to cheers that they feel no greatness without them, instead they brood in loneliness and feel gradually forgotten.

In a way, they are not unlike famous beauties; great and famous beauties need the praise and envious stare of a thousand eyes to feel really lovely, they too doubt their own looks when left in solitude.

Chong Eu, in the caring company of his wife, left the scene of his sad political fall in 1959. They lived a period of unintruded peace in England. But it was not the life he savoured. He missed his comrades. These people who had roamed the political grounds with him, left MCA one after another. They were lost too and wondering about their next political dawn, when their hero returned.

Similarly, Lim Chong Eu had a thousand indignances deep in his heart. He could not admit defeat, he would not endure loneliness. He vowed to regain the lost honour and pride.

Politics flows with his blood. It is his life.

An alien homeground to great the returning Chong Eu

One day in England, Chong Eu told the wife, 'I am returning!'

These words carried more significance and resolve than what they seemed. It gave notice of Chong Eu's desire to make political recoupment.

In the inner world of his heart, there was no such word as 'defeat'. In it he could only find the flames of enthusiasm to deliver love and to banish those he despised.

He promised himself: I shall stand up again!

Return he did, in 1960. But greeting him at the airport was no longer the cheering crowd. He was no longer the boss of a political party. He was a leader alone.

A span of barely one year separated the bold, brave and defiant

send-off for the departing leader and the cold and forlorn welcome that greeted that same returning figure. Even in the tropical warmth, Chong Eu could not suppress a spasm of cold.

"You are no longer the ebullient and genial figure but a man

"You are no longer the ebullient and a progressively forgotten!" he reminded himself.

Illness and treatment were mere political excuses which he used. As a doctor, Chong Eu knew the chronic-nature of his disorder, and the improbability of cure within a short period.

But the discomfort and pains of illness was easier endured than the excruciating torment of political wilderness. The sense of being pushed against the ropes by T.H. Tan, Tan Siew Sin and Ong Yoke Lin also left him in prolonged claustrophobia.

The lingering shadow of those 3 adversaries brought frowns of disgust to his face. But, as the Chinese saying goes: A gentleman's avenge would not be late even in 10 years.

'Chong Eu, you must not fail so easily or else T.H. Tan shall sneer at your incapacity to redeem your humiliation,' he had assured himself in the belief that he was no born-loser.

But the alien scene in an otherwise familiar Penang that met him upon his arrival reminded him of hard realities. Penang was no longer where he called the shots. There was not much political turf for his feet too.

'What am I?' Chong Eu began to ponder the future.

He came up with a blinding blank. Wong Pow Nee had firmly established himself as Penang Chief Minister. Tan Siew Sin had not only secured himself ministerial promotion, he was in even firmer grip of MCA.

Lim Chong Eu would never plead for favours in an MCA under Tan

Siew Sin, neither would be return to the party.

Consequently, he decided that the first step was to establish a foothold using Soo Beng Dispensary.

Practising medicine by day, he used available time to call up old pals. There were ex-MCA comrades who had shed political coats but as many were still awaiting his beckoning.

One of the latter was a man who had followed Chong Eu in all the hustlings in MCA, Lim Ee Heong.

Though both belonged to the Lim clan, they were no closer relatives. With Lim Ee Heong typically a guy-in-the-streets, while Lim Chong Eu the personification of aristocracy; they could not be more incongruous in character. But, despite the contrasting worlds of their backgrounds and life-styles, they shared common medium in politics.

And they needed each other. Chong Eu needed a man to do the running, to be the vanguard and to conduct liaison work; Ee Heong, meanwhile, needed a mentor to make his life more purposeful.

Towards Chong Eu, Lim Ee Heong had only admiration and adulation. It was said that if Lim Chong Eu were to ask for the moon, Ee Heong would bring one for his Dr. Lim.

Undoubtedly, Lim Chong Eu had other able assistants too. Oon Chin Seong was one of Chong Eu's backstage supporters. As a teacher, Oon could not be too visible in his political activities, but it did not prevent him from convincing numerous persons to attend Dr. Lim's 'sermone'.

Among others who played Lim Ee Heong's roles, albeit in later days, were Lai Min Goh (黎敏語), Loh Seong Beng (罗象明), and Teh Boon Huan (郭文操)

They roamed wide and far to recruit supporters, whom Dr. Lim Chong Eu received with undifferentiated welcome. Anyone who came to his clinic, and who had an ear for politics would be treated to a lengthy discourse, with some non-too-flattering words for T.H. Tan thrown in for good measure.

Political Lectures in Medical Clinic

When Lim Chong Eu began to talk about politics, he would almost forget that he was a doctor.

Every day, as he gave consultations to patients in his clinic, he could not tear himself clear of politics. Then, as political confidants increased, patients got impatient and thinned.

'He 'drove patients away' by his fervent love for politics. He sacrificed his medical practice for it.' Oon Chin Scong recalled.

As mentioned earlier, Lim Chong Eu had read books by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, As a doctor, Sun Yat-Sen held that politics cures more significantly than medicine. While doctor saves lives, politics can save a nation.

Dr. Lim Chong Eu subscribed to this philosophy. Thus he sacrificed the medical practice to whip up political ardency.

During that period, Lim Chong Eu turned his clinic and his home into political auditoriums. Day after day, subjects like Chinese education and democracy reverberated between the walls of those venues.

Some days, he called gatherings at vacation bungalows for friends and believers.

He had to establish a political platform before a party could be formed

Besides Penang, Chong Eu recalled old comrades like Too Joon-hing, Tan See Eng and Koay Khai Tong to activate the plan.

After more than a year of canvassing and recruiting, Lim Chong Eu finally satisfied himself of the timeliness for inaugurating the Party, He withdrew from MCA, which by then had become Tan Siew Sin's domain.

Although Penang was Lim Chong Eu's base-camp, Seremban presented another launching pad.

It turned out that two trusted lieutenants of Chong Eu had, in 1959, contested and won the year's parliamentary elections as independents. They were Tan See Eng and Koay Khai Tong. That was not all. in the Seremban municipal polls, in 1961, an Independent Front led by Tan See Eng had won 9 seats and controlling rights of the Seremban Municipal Council.

Inauguration of The United Democratic Party

For these reasons, Lim Chong Eu agreed and supported the idea to launch the new Party - United Democratic Party - in Seremban.

That was the second political organisation formed by Lim Chong Eu. The first was the Penang Radical Party which became defunct after Merdeka, when Dr. Lim joined MCA.

United Democratic Party was born 21st August 1961 in Seremban. To endow it with multiracial tones, former Party Negara leader Abdul Hamid was elected Chairman. (Party Negara was established by Datuk Onn Jaafar and originally rivalled UMNO, but after severe and repeated setbacks it suffered in the 1959 and 1964 polls it headed into oblivion).

Lim Chong Eu was elected Vice-chairman while birth-place leaders Tan See Eng and Koay Khai Tong were respectively made Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General.

Other noteworthy leaders were Too Joon-hing, Ooi Eik Teong, Tan Suan Kok and Wong Soo Fen.

Too Joon-hing contested the 1959 general election in the Perak constituency of Sitiawan but lost. Later, when the Teluk Intan constituency in the same State fell vacant due to Foo Sek Kong's death, he made another attempt and, with the help of Lim Chong Eu, won the contest.

During the by-election, Mrs. Lim Chong Eu departed from her own traditional role of a backstage supporter to speak at a rally. It indicated the full support the husband-and-wife pair had for Too Joon-hing.

From the on-set, the United Democratic Party had the Seremban Municipal Council under its control, and 3 members of parliament among its ranks, which was quite a booster for its prestige.

Lim Chong Eu had by then acquired a different political philosophy. Believing no more the effectiveness of solving social problems through a single race, he advocated a heterogeneous approach to counter the inherent weaknesses of communal politics.

He said, 'When Tunku Abdul Rahman decided to form the Federation of Malaysia, I thought it was timely to approach our unsolved communal problems based on broader footings.'

At the inaugration of United Democratic Party, he declared, 'We are in the process of building a truly patriotic party, so that everyone may enjoy equal rights. We transcend communalism to work for a united country.

'Equality is the most crucial factor. Our experience in Alliance indicated that it was bristling with crises. When important issues were raised in Alliance, splits that surfaced were caused by racial sentiments; but in a truly Mahaysian structure splits can only be caused by economic and social problems.

'The policy of Alliance gave more priority to maintaining balance than to forging a new society. But, to us, moulding a new society is far more important. Only with spirits of equality can this ambition be achieved.'

'It is a pressing task to form a loyal opposition party which would eventually accede itself to power of governing. Parliamentary democracy is gradually losing lustre because of the rigidity in the Alliance structure. To give democracy the activeness it needs, United Democratic Party must be formed. It is as timely as the formation of the Federation of Malaysia.' 'The move towards a non-communal Malaysia would establish the unique national character and security. Undoubtedly, colonialsm had brought numerous benefits to this country, but it also dismantled the cultural mould of the various races in the region. Malay are lost today for they could not decide to opt for the West or for the East. The people's feelings need to be accepted. To them, a new born Malaysia will be a symbol of realisation of their aspiration for basic human rights. But racial politics deny us the human rights appriations.'

Tan See Eng, the obstinate objector

Lim Chong Eu's emphasis on non-communal politics did not, however, prevent the United Democratic Party from assuming, to a considerable extent, Chinese political accents. He wanted the Party to be explicitly multi-racial and its membership open to all races.

How did Lim Chong Eu arrive at this decision to change his political approach?'

He considered himself unlikely to escape the same old confines if he toed the MCA political line. Similarly, he would not obtain the support of other races. More important, though, was his realisation that efforts to create a fair and just society could be more successful by non-communal means.

In theory, he certainly aimed to build a moderate and democratic society; neither resorting to socialism nor the Alliance format.

With Alliance in power and the Socialist Front the strongest opposition front, Lim Chong Eu endeavoured to create a third dimension. Initially, Lim Chong Eu had more faith than confidence in his own changes of success.

In another aspect, Tan See Eng was opposed to Chong Eu's views. Tan wanted United Democratic Party to champion Chinese rights, expecially those concerning education. He claimed that anyone would be a hypocrite to declare oneself non-racialist and non-chauvinist.

The differences in political convictions and approach put increasing distance between Lim Chong Eu and Tan See Eng.

Chong Eu was reluctant to put too much public emphasis on communal politics but pribately he noted that Chinese rights could be fought for through concerted efforts.

In order to achieve his ideals, Chong Eu even suggested forming an opposition front with other opposition parties in the country to rival

the Alliance

Due to this. Chong Eu wanted Tan See Eng to accept the political strategy. But as the latter was obstinate, their relationship deteriorated.

Their differences had to be settled at the United Democratic Party Delegates' Assembly.

It was called on 14th April 1963, Kuala Lumpur. After his bitter lesson in the MCA power-struggle. Lim Chong Eu had become wiser and more cautious. Before this Assembly, he had already successfully lobbied for the acceptance of his strategy by the moderates in the party.

The move was effective as during the election of party officials Chong Eu successfully got another notable Malay politician. Datuk

Zainal Abidin elected as the Part Chairman

Datuk Zainal Abidin was one of the founders of UMNO, and left with Datuk Onn Jaafar to form Malayan Independent Party. After a spell of inactivity, Datuk Zainal Abidin was then invited to join United Democratic Party.

Chong Eu took pains to demonstrate his multi-racial inclinations.

He no longer wanted to retain the communal line of struggle.

With the election of Lim Chong Eu as United Democratic Party Secretary-General; Tan See Eng and Koay Kai Tong, the former Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General respectively, were left out of the Executive Committee line-up Disenchanted, Tan See Eng and his supporters left United Demo-

cratic Party.

That was when Lim Chong Eu decided to move camp to Penang. which he made United Democratic Party's power base.

The Georgetown Municipal Council election was set for 1963. The

Municipal government was then under Socialist Front control. The election promised to be the first test for Chong Eu and his United Democratic Party.

Socialist Front gained control of the council in 1959 and consolidated its grip 2 years later when it won 14 out of the council's 15 seats. It was the Socialist Front's heyday but Alliance's hour of gloom as it took the remaining seat.

For 1963, Socialist Front had good reasons to expect another sweeping victory as it had the leadership of the strategist. Lim Kean Siew. They chose not to take United Democratic Party seriously at all.

As mentioned earlier, Lim Chong Eu decided not to contest another municipal election again after his defeat in the 1953 municipal polls. So, he made no attempt to personally contest the 1963 polls too. Nevertheless, he wanted his cadres to be standard-bearers as the results would be a clear indicator of the constituents' moods.

Recruiting Teh Ewe Lim to dismantle Lim Kean Siew's Aura

Lim Chong Eu had the cross-hair of his electioneering weapon centred on Socialist Front's star, Lim Kean Siew.

Both Lim's were political contemporaries but Chong Eu joined the fray earlier. When Lim Chong Eu made it to the top-notch position in MCA, Lim Kean Siew started his rise from the horizons and later shone brightly as an oppositionist in the local political arena.

Their dispositions were utterly incompatible. Chong Eu was a master in exercising purposeful patience while Kean Siew was noted for his eagerness, hoping to build his political empire in Perang. Though Kean Siew was not the Mayor of Georgetown, he appeared to hold sway over it since 1961.

As their rivalry developed, they had enough animosities between them to fill volumes of books.

Who could stop Lim Kean Siew, the political meteor of Socialist Front? This was the oft-repeated question of Lim Chong Eu. Despite much searching, he failed to find an equal contender for Kean Siew in United Democratic Party. Lim Chong Eu himself was not inclined to test the water himself as he was aiming to prove himself in the parliamentary polis.

Then, when all the talent-hunt appeared in vain, one man was recommended by an official of The Judo Club. The man was Judo Club secretary and was considered to possess yet unpolished potentials. Albeit a total political unknown, the man was reputed to have tenacious fighting spirits.

One day, Lim Chong Eu asked to see the man in Soo Beng Dispensary, where he intended to interview and gauge his possible giant-killer.

The man turned out to be later-day Speaker of Penang State Assembly (1982 – 1986), Teh Ewe Lim. He was born in 1925 and died at the age of 63 on 20th November 1986.

Back in 1963, Teh Ewe Lim was a small-time businessman, simple in attire and virtually unknown in political circles. He possessed secondary school education. At Chong Eu's invitation, Teh Ewe Lim came nervously to Soo Beng Dispensary.

'So you are Teh Ewe Lim! Please sit down. The chairman of your Judo Club recommended you and I am very glad to meet you.' Lim Chong Eu started off with cordalities.

Teh was pleasanntly surprised at the warmth of his host. 'Doctor, you are very kind. In fact, I have long admired your leadership talents; you are the leader of our Chinese community' he returned the courtesy carefully.

Lim Chong Eu quickly put across his question, 'I want you to give me a frank answer, what do you personally think of Lim Chong Eu?'

'Dr. Lim is a nice man, works for the Chinese, has courage to confront the Tunku. I respect you deeply," was Teh Ewe Lim's unhesitating conclusion.

'Do you think you should support Lim Chong Eu?'

'Definitely, and unconditionally,'

'You have not joined any political party. So I sincerely invite you to join United Democratic Party. Let's proceed with our struggle together.'

'I have to give it some thought as I have not join any political organisation before.'

"There is no need to hesitate! I have membership application forms here. Fill it up! I have an important mission to entrust upon you." "Teh Ewe Lim accepted the forms. But he suddenly felt puzzled.

What mission? I do not know much about anything and I can't shoulder too heavy a duty, 'cautioned Teh.

'You can surely do it, but you must work, work hard,' Chong Eu assured him.

But Teh Ewe Lim was still wondering about the nature of his 'mission'.

Dr. Lim knew he had the young man interested, so he proceeded to tell him about the forth-coming municipal polls and his intention to pick him as a candidate.

Teh was not too unduely worried at that. After all, there had been nawkers and workers who were elected councillors before. But that did not make him feel less excited. He considered that a task not too overwhelming to try. Winning or losing would not hurt him as he was a very ordinary man for the start.

'We got information that Lim Kean Siew would be contesting the Kampong Manggis constituency. I intend to nominate you against him,' Chong Eu declared solemnly.

Teh Ewe Lim shook his head and hands simultaneously in distress. 'Doctor, please stop joking. Lim Kean Siew is so well-known, he is M.P. as well as councillor! Who am I to challenge him?'

But I can see you have what it takes to challenge Kean Siew. You are hardworking and you can serve the constituency. You will win! Though educational achievement is important, the voters do not need snobbish councillors; they want someone who's with them and near them!. Chong Eu consoled and encouraged at the same instant. He wanted Teh Ewe Lim to capture the leading star of Socialist Front.

Later, Chong Eu asked Teh Ewe Lim in mock challenge, 'Are you brave enough to face Lim Kean Siew?'

Teh Ewe Lim, unconcerned about the outcome of his proposed challenge, replied bravely, 'What is there to be afraid of anyway'.

Very well, go back and get yourself prepared. We would see to the formalities on nomination day, 'concluded Lim Chong Eu while a smile of satisfaction brightened his face. He had finally found someone brave enough to challenge Kean Siew's reputed supremacy.

But Teh Ewe Lim was still unassured when he stepped out of Soo Beng Dispensary. He felt perplexed, scratched his head and asked himself. 'To flight Lim Kean Siew? Am I asking for rocks as my burden? But I have agreed! So let it be. Even if I were to lose by a narrower margin I would consider it a wind.

A Giant must fall some day

Chong Eu and Kean Siew come from the same clan, but they cannot be more discordant.

Lim Chong Eu, in a move intended to thwart Kean Siew's arrogance, picked Teh Ewe Lim to vie for his seat. Chong Eu knew too well, the unrelenting grip Socialist Front had on the municipal council; but he did not believe in the invincibility of Lim Kean Siew.

On nomination day, Lim Chong Eu patted Teh Ewe Lim on the shoulder and said assuringly, 'Don't be afraid, even a giant must fall some day.'

Although many wondered why. Chong Eu avoided contesting the municipal polls as a candidate, the only conclusion they could arrive at was that the municipal election was for the boys and it need no particiption from Chong Eu who had too much political mileage. But if given deeper contemplation we realise that Lim Chong Eu has an aversion for second-time defeat. After his disastrous attempt in the 1953 municipal polls, he wanted no more direct connection with it. May be the bitter

memory still haunted him?

As a political party, United Democratic Party fielded sufficient candidates to vie for all 15 seats. Socialist Front accused Lim Chong Eu of plotting to split opposition votes for the benefit of Alliance, which intended to make its comeback. But Chong Eu categorically refuted the charge. He wanted to cut a path between Alliance and Socialist Front for himself.

Though he regarded the municipal polls as an important opportunity for the debut of his United Democratic Party in Penang, and he hoped it would light an ever-burning torch for future of that party, Chong Eu dared not hope for securing control of the council. He regarded the contest between Teh Ewe Lim and Lim Kean Siew as equally important. Lim Chong Eu wanted to dispel the myth that Lim Kean Siew cannot be beaten.

To that end, Chong Eu offered some valuable advice to Teh Ewe Lim.

'Pick the weaknesses of your opponent. This is especially so if you are up against a formidable one. Don't go for direct confrontation!' exhorted Teh Ewe Lim's mentor. 'Hit hard at the weak points of his defence.'

Lim Kean Siew had advantage over Teh Ewe Lim for he had a high political profile. Teh Ewe Lim, on the other hand, was merely an unknown and untested challenger. Lim Kean Siew had his weakness too; he was complacent and he could not meet the voters door-to-door.

With the nominations done, Teh Ewe Lim began his door-to-door canvassing. He did it from dawn to dusk and into the nights. The young challenger approached virtually every voter, addressing them courteously as if they were all his brothers, sisters, elders and relatives.

Some kind-hearted women-folk offered him advice. They said, 'Mr. Teh, why don't you save your breath? How can you beat Lim Kean

But Teh Ewe Lim had a well-thought-of answer. He told everybody, 'I know I can't win against Lim Kean Siew, but I ask for some support from you merely to retain my deposit.'

This won him numerous sympathy votes. In addition, Lim Kean Siew could hardly be seen in the constituency, which caused many housewives to switch their support to Teh Ewe Lim.

Without a doubt, Teh Ewe Lim had first-class 'walking ability' as he toured virtually every yard of his constituency. Besides, he had an amiable disposition as his asset too. In days, the name of Teh Ewe Lim had etched itself in the minds of voters too.

For oratory, Teh was no match for Kean Siew; in academic achievements, Kean Siew won hands down; in status, Teh had nothing to compare with Kean Siew. Lim Kean Siew was simultaneously opposition leader, a political star, lawyer, Member of Parliament, Municipal Councillor. As for Teh Ewe Lim, he was none of these; just a common and average man. People hardly even noticed him when he walked on the streets before nomination day.

Teh Ewe Lim took care to avoid Lim Kean Siew's glamour. He chose to work unobstrusively, walking from house to house in his campaign.

On the night the ballots were counted, Teh appeared at the counting centre, prepared for defeat. There were much more Socialist Front supporters than United Democratic Party supporters though Kean Siew himself had yet to appear.

As the ballot counters sorted out the votes, the two main candidates' votes appeared almost equal. It was not possible to predict the outcome even at that point. But one thing was clear, the candidate from MCA contesting on an Alliance ticket had certainly lost as the amount of votes in his tray was apparently less.

On the first official count, Lim Kean Siew won by a few votes. But at the second count, Teh Ewe Lim was found to have own narrowly instead. Finally, officials conducted the third and final count, Teh Ewe Lim had a majority of 34 votes.

As the Returning Officer announced the official results for the Kampung Manggi's constituency contest, Teh Ewe Lim wept in shock and for happines. He could hardly believe it as true.

When aides conveyed the devastating news to Lim Kean Siew, he was shocked too, but also deeply dejected. He could not face the truth that he had just been beaten by a 'freshie'.

Overnight, Teh Ewe Lim had changed from an ordinary man to an extraordinary one. Flushed in victory, he rushed to Lim Chong Eu's residence in Kampung Baru to convey the good news.

Chong Eu congratulated him, then said to him, in English, 'You are entering a new chapter of your life.' Teh Ewe Lim remembered these words till his last days.

Unfortuntely for United Democratic Party, all its other candidates were defeated, leaving Teh Ewe Lim a lone ranger in the council. The Socialist Front retained control of the council with 9 seats while Alliance candidates won the 5 remaining ones.

For Socialists Front, the days when they controlled 14 of the 15 council seats were over, for good. The humiliating defeat of Lim Kean Siew also brought to mind the Chinese saving that 'Water can float a

boat, it can sweep it over too.'

Teh Ewe Lim won mainly on the strength of women support. His constituency was a part of the State Assembly ward of Datuk Kramat. This was where he gained his foothold, using it as a springboard to his magnificent future in public office.

Since then. Teh Ewe Lim was no longer a nobody, his name had become a household word

He attributed his success to his mentor, Dr. Lim Chong Eu, without whose encouragement and help he would not achieve what he did.

With the gratitude deeply etched in his heart, Teh Ewe Lim's respect for Chong Eu transformed itself into reverence and total loyalty. He would abide by whatever decisions Lim Chong Eu made.

In Province Wellesley, United Democratic Party managed to win one Central District Municipal council in the name of Ooh Chooi Cheng, who was an old comrade of Lim Chong Eu during the days of Radical Party. At the Rural Council level in Penang, Tok Boon Kooi (卓文書) of United Democratic Party too, managed to secure a seat. Considered as a whole, the United Democratic Party's power and scope of influence in Penang was still far from ample.

The Unexpected Debut of Loy Hean Heong

Unlike in Penang, the United Democratic Party managed to win control of a District Council in Perak. It was the Ayer Tawar District Council and Lim Chong Eu appointed one of the council-men to be its chairman. The man, destined to become a business magnate today, was Lov Hean Heong.

Loy was then a mechanic in the rural town. When Lim Ee Heong, under Chong Eu's orders, went there to recruit candidates for the council polls, Loy was among the selected ones. But Loy pleaded that he could not afford to contest. Later, given financial backing by some local supporters, Loy found himself elected councillor and subsequently appointed council chairman.

appointed counter chairman.

Since then, Loy Hean Heong never looked back. He proceeded into commerce and made himself a millionaire; one of those who enjoyed Lim Chong Eu's helpful lift. The first banker who underwent grooming under Chone Eu was Yong Pane How.

The 1964 general election was held under the shadows of confrontation from Indonesia.

Malaysia was formed on 16th September 1963, combining the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak.

The Government of Indonesia, led by President Sukarno opposed the Orimation of Malaysia. It accused the British of forcibly alienating Sabah and Sarawak into the Federation of Malaysia against the wishes of the people there. But a Commission of Inquiry sent by the United Nations found, at the completion of its tour of Sabah and Sarawak, that the people there agreed to join Malaysia.

Then Sukarno wreaked tides of confrontation, branding Malaysia as a product of Neo-colonialism and severed diplomatic ties with Malaysia.

Leftist political groups in Malaya and Singapore, too, protested against the mode of Malaysia's formation. They, too, accused it as Neo-colonialism and labelled it a British stunt. The most vehement opposers were the Socialist Fronts of Singapore and Malaya.

United Democratic Party and Lim Chong Eu, on the contrary, supported the formation of Malaysia while opposing Alliance policies.

At its delegates conference at Segamat, Johore on January 12, 1964, United Democratic Party adopted a wide spectrum of political objectives, including promoting national progress and the reduction of speeches with communal accents.

Among the resolutions were the pledge to help build a just society based on principles of equality, and condemnation of the deployment of foreign troops on Malaysian soil.

The United Democratice Party also pledged to work for the improve-

the United Democratice Party also piedged to work for the improvement of economic and cultural standing of all races, especially those who were economically backward.

When it came to education, the United Democratic Party was comparatively moderate when it declared to give special attention to the shortcomings of Alliance regarding education – failure to formulate a desirable system for National Language Education and depriving other languages the equal opportunity for development." Its ambiguous stand towards education courted the discontent of the Chinese Community, and demands were made for a more defined stand in its 1964 election manifesto.

'Schools of various language media accept Malay language as a compulsory subject, but the Government must grant equal treatment to all these schools; in addition, the respective medium of instruction must be used in examinations.

Certificates of graduation examinations, regardless of the medium used, must be accorded parity for employment purposes.'

It must be manifestly clear to Lim Chong Eu that education constituted a perennial worry of the Chinese, unless its performance in this aspect proved desirable and its stand unambiguous, his United Democratic Party would be unlikely to find itself a place in the Chinese community. Though he single-mindedly wanted to adopt a multi-racial approach, he could not isnore the pertinence of reality.

A personal victory in the 1964 polls

The general election came in April. With parliament and state assembly polls run simultaneously, candidates could contest both parliament and state seat in one attempt.

Alliance contested all the 104 parliament seats; the Socialist Front fielded 63 contestants; PMIP (Pan Malaysian Islamic Party, now PAS) contested 54 seats while Lim Chong Eu's United Democratic Party, ambitiously put up 27 candidates. In addition, the people's Action Party (PAP) of Singapore decided to contest in 11 constituencies while PPP contested in 9.

The failure by opposition parties to cooperate and formulate a common strategy resulted in multi-cornered battles in many constituencies. This proved to be their fatal mistake.

At the same time, the nation was still under the spectre of the Indonesian Confrontation and the people cared more for supporting the government in the defence of national sovereignty than for the victory of the opposition.

The circumstances were anything but favourable to the opposition parties. But they apparently failed to foresee the impact of these factors. These opposition parties anticipated the Alliance, especially MCA, to lose more seat than it did in 1959 when the ruling coalition failed to secure an expected landside victory.

Lim Chong Eu nominated for the Tanjung parliamentary constituens as well as the Pengkalan Kots State constituency. He amassed a large troop of activists to help him vie with Alliance and Socialist Front contenders in a 3-corner tussle. In some areas, candidates from PAP also joined in the fray.

At about this time, Lim Chong Eu had another bout of spinal column pains. He was forced to use crutches at rallies. The subject of his speeches was mainly on education. His helpful aide, Lim Ee Heong used to speak at several rallies a niight, taking swipes at Alliance one

moment and the Socialist Front the next.

When the Chinese School Teachers' Union was raising funds for its building, Lim Ee Heong toured the State and even further to stage-manage charity shows. Many donors made their contributions under 'Mr. Anonymous'; Lim Ee Heong had to repeat the words numerous times a night as he announced the list of donors. Gradually, he himself was nicknamed 'Mr. Anonymous'.

This Mr. Anonymous was gifted in speech. Words came in non-stop torrents when he began and had audiences captivated. Before long, he had made a name for himself as The Speaker of United Democratic Party.

Unlike others, Lim Chong Eu did not call Lim Ee Heong Mr. Anonymous' but prefered to call him 'Grasshopper'. The reason was supposed to be Lim Ee Heong's ability to hop from one place to another. Sometimes, even Chong Eu found it hard to locate him. Ocassionally other aides had to be despatched to hunt for him when Chong Eu had urgent tasks for 'grasshopper'.

Grasshopper was noted for his oratory skills, virtually every candidate of the party requested his services at their rallies. This made Lim Ee Heong very busy, but he seldom missed Chong Eu's campaign

gatherings.

With Lim Ee Heong's charismatic presence, Chong Eu always had big crowds at his rallies. But they were no match for the fiery speeches at Socialist Front rallies, which pulled mammoth audiences wherever they were held.

The most fantastic audience amassed during the campaign period was the one that formed itself to listen to Lee Kuan Yew at The Esplanade grounds. Most of the crowd came with curious expectations.

The voters went to the polls on April 25th. Lim Chong Eu was nothing less than confident, although his opponent Tan Phock Kin, the incumbent Socialist Front M.P. was no easy prey. Lim Chong Eu was certain there would be a place, somehow, for United Democratic Party. In the end, Lim Chong Eu really defeated the incumbent handsomely.

The constituents in Tanjung did not forget easily Chong Eu's sacrifices in the MCA. They also sympathised with his cause and believed him to be a bulwark of the Chinese. He was someone who must be allowed to stand up again. Even though the Socialist Front had its share of basic support, it was no match for Chong Eu.

Thus, Lim Chong Eu could walk into parliament again. (His first term was from 1955 - 1959 when he was a Federal Legislative As-

semblyman)

Chong Eu's victory in the parliament polls was the only one United Democratic Party could claim. All its other parliamentary candidates were routed. Being Chong Eu, he found himself unbeatable as he had immaculate reputation.

Opposition Party in Disarray in the wake of Defeat

The crowds at election rallies certainly made a poor yardstick for forecasting the results. Though the opposition managed to put up a great show in their campaign, they were nevertheless in discord. Votes were split. In addition, the Indonesian Confrontation instilled fear of foreign invasion in the populace. This in turn caused the people to rely on the continued rule of Alliance.

Psychological factors and a discordant opposition handed victory

to the Alliance on a platter.

Full results of the polls were known a day after April 25th. Of the 104 parliamentary seats in West Malaysia, all of which Alliance contested, 89 went to Alliance. Considering the additional 16 seats won by the Sabah Alliance and a further 18 by the Sarawak Alliance, the ruling coalition bagged 123 of the total 154 seats in Parliament. This exceeded the magical 2/3 majority in its favour.

MCA put up its own magnificient performance by winning in 27 of the 33 constituencies it contested, it was the most glorious day for Tan

Siew Sin since he became MCA President in 1961.

Basked in victory; MCA, under Tan Siew Sin, decided to treat Chinese community opinion lightly, taking an increasingly divergent path from the community and finally even engaged in conflict with it. But more of which shall be put forth later.

In some ways, Lim Chong Eu's prestige was also at its peak. In his first foray, he claimed two prizes; a seat each in Parliament and the Penang State Assembly. Besides, he also managed to influence the voting trend in 3 State constituencies neighbouring his parliamentary area, which voted United Democratic Party men Khoo Kay Por, Teh Ewe Lim and Teh Gaik Kooi (非正常) into the State Assembly. All other United Democratic Party candidates were less blucky.

The Socialist Front was the biggest opposition party and it fielded 63 parliamentary candidates, however only Tan Chec Khoon and Lim Kean Siew managed to win at Batu constituency of Selangor and Datuk Keramat constituency of Penang respectively. In Penang, the Socialist Front could do no better than winning 2 State assembly seats. They were Jelutone for Tan Hock Hin and Tanjung South for Khor Pene Seah.

Peoples' Action Party, (PAP) did no better too when only Devan Nair (later Singapore President, presently residing in the United State) won his contest.

The Peoples' Progressive Party (PPP) had 9 parliamentary candidates on its tickets, but only the brother-pair of D.R. and S.P. Seenivasagam were victorious.

Lastly, PMIP, the Islamic Party, won 9 seats from the 54 it contested. As an added consolation, it retained the control of the Kelantan State Government.

Seen from the general situation, Alliance had consolidated its position further while the opposition had apparently seen better days.

In spite of his personal performance, Lim Chong Eu felt disappointed with the results of the general elections. For one thing, some policies of the Alliance government were retrogressive and against the benefit of the general public to him. The considerable support MCA managed to gather from the Chinese community surprised Chong Eu, too.

For another, Chong Eu had observed to his dismay communial politics getting deeply rooted, while the centrist party-line which transcends racial barriers he single-mindedly advocated went unheeded.

Thirdly, he simply could not bear the sight of Tan Siew Sin, T.H.

Tan and Ong Yoke Lin holding sway over MCA virtually invincible

Nonetheless, he had his consolations in that he found himself personally enjoying the support of the Chinese community, as his absolute majority over Tan Phock Kin in Tanjung parliamentary area and his win with more than a thousand votes over his rivals, Socialist Front young-turk Tan Phan Khim and Leong Yun Chow of Alliance, showed.

His protege Teh Ewe Lim was defeated in the parliamentary polls tim Kean Siew in Datuk Keramat, but managed to overcome Georgetown Mayor and Socialist Frontman, C.Y. Choy in the State Assembly constituency of Tanjung West.

Teh Ewe Lim expressed his regrets for contesting against and defeating C.Y. Choy because he had high regards for the Mayor, whom he decribed as a 'Mr. Nice'. But he had to 'abide by the party's orders, and had no choice but to fight the Socialist Front.'

He attributed his own victory to the United Democratic Party, saying that he could never defeat C.Y. Chov by himself.

Another of Lim Chong Eu's trusted aides, Khoo Kay Por won by a marginal majority in Tanjung North.

Khoo was a basketball enthusiast, formerly uninvolved in politics. He was introduced to Dr. Lim by Teh Boon Huan and other associates.

Teh Ewe Lim and Khoo Kay Por were deeply indebted to Dr. Lim and always obeyed his wishes.

It must be noted that the Socialist Front changed its strategy in the year. The younger generation activists had gained important positions in the party. Consequently, the veterans were made to contest in less favourable constituencies. Lim Kean Siew, as party stalwart, had to accept the arrangement too. But he insisted that others like Tan Phock Kin, Ooi Theam Siew and C.Y. Choy did likewise in a full scale revamp of strategy, leaving no old-timers to cling on to safe constituencies.

This change gave way for the rise of Tan Hock Hin and Khor Peng Seah of the 'young-turks'. The veterans were, however, swept away in a wave of defeats.

Listing below, or recapitulation, is the list of parliamentary and State Assembly polls results for Penang, 1964.

Parliament:

- Choong Yew Leong (Alliance) 6,221 votes
 Tan Phock Kin (S. Front) 8,516 votes
- Tan Chong Bee (PAP) 778 votes
 Lim Chong Eu (UDP) 12,928 votes (elected)

2. Datuk Keramat - Lin

- Lim Cheng Pot (Alliance) 7,707 votes

 Lim Kean Siew (S. Front) 10,102 votes (elected)

- Teh Ewe Lim (UDP) 8,238 votes

3. North District	- Geh Chong Kear (Alliance) 16,688 votes
	(elected)
	- Law Teik Hai (S. Front) 10,148 votes
	- Tok Boon Kooi (UDP) 5,149 votes
4. South District	- Idris (Alliance) 16,089 votes (elected)
	- Abu Bakar (S. Front) 12,571 votes
	 Lim Meng Lee (UDP) 4,752 votes
5. Bagan	- Tan Cheng Bee (Alliance) 8,925 votes
LICA SCHOOL IS	(elected)
	- Mohd. Salleh (S. Front) 6,564 votes
	- Mahdi (UDP) 871 votes
	- Sharif (PMIP) 983 votes
6. Province North	 Hj. Ahmad Badawi (Alliance) 15,440 votes (elected)
	- Omar Yusoff (S. Front) 3,277 votes
	- Siti Fatimah (PMIP) 4,087 votes
7. Province South	- Ang Teng (Alliance) 10,427 votes (elected)
7. Trovince boutin	- Veerappan (S. Front) 6,322 votes
	- Mohamed Dan (UDP) 457 votes
9 Province Central	- Ibrahim (Alliance) 15,660 votes (elected)
o. Hovince central	- Kam Yew Wah (S. Front) 7,486 votes
Penang State Assem	bly Elections:-
1. Butterworth	- William David (Alliance) 4,258 votes
1. Duttermortin	(elected)
	- Vasu (S. Front) 3,178 votes
	- Mahdi (UDP) 575 votes
2. Bagan Ajam	- Peh Joo Teik (Alliance) 4,741 votes
2. Dagan rijam	(elected)
	- Ooi Theam Siew (S. Front) 3,031 votes
	- Wong Kooi Lim (UDP) 203 votes
3. Muda	- C.C. Ismail (Alliance) 5,768 (elected)
5. Muua	- Yaakob (S. Front) 587 votes
	- Siti Fatimah (PMIP) 1,496 votes
4. Kepala Batas	- Hj. Ahmad Badawi (Alliance) 4,531 votes
4. Repaia batas	(elected)
	- Omar (S. Front) 457 votes
	- Khaw Boon Pin (UDP) 524 votes
	- Hi, Yusof (PMIP) 1,562 votes
	- fig. 1 usor (Finite) 1,362 votes

5.	Tasek Glugor	-	Jamil (Alliance) 6,724 votes (elected) Yunus (S. Front) 1,573 votes
		_	Ooi Hoe Huat (UDP) 934 votes
6.	Permatang Paul	1-	Ariffin (Alliance) 6,724 votes (elected)
			Baharuddin (S. Front) 2,282 votes
			Syed Abdullah (UDP) 993 votes
7.	Bukit Mertajam	-	Wong Pow Nee (Alliance) 3,967 votes
			(elected)
		_	Tan Tong Boo (S. Front) 2,917 votes
			Ooh Chooi Cheng (UDP) 2,458 votes
8.	Alma		Sulaiman (Alliance) 5,224 votes (elected)
		-	Lee Chong Soon (S. Front) 2,451 votes
		_	Harun Sirat (UDP) 1,273 votes
9.	Jawi	-	Kee Yong Chin (Alliance) 6,303 votes
			(elected)
		_	Shahadar (S. Front) 3,583 votes
10.	Nibong Tebal	_	Hj. Said (Alliance) 4,322 votes (elected)
		-	Seow Hun Boo (S. Front) 3,044 votes
11.	Kota	_	Leong Jun Chow (Alliance) 1,962 votes
		-	Tan Phun Khim (S. Front) 2,937 votes
		-	Lim Yew Hock (PA) 165 votes
		-	Lim Chong Eu (UDP) 4,065 votes (elected)
12.	Tanjung Central	-	Lee Huan Boon (Alliance) 2,401 votes
		-	Ooi Teong Hoe (S. Front) 2,401 votes
		-	Kang Eng Hwa (PAP) 3,576 votes
		-	Teh Gaik Kooi (UDP) 4,055 votes (elected)
13.	Tanjung West	-	Cheah Hock Seng (Alliance) 2,052 votes
		-	C.Y. Choy (S. Front) 2,470 votes
			Teh Ewe Lim (UDP) 3,610 votes (elected)
14.	Sungai Pinang	-	Ramanathan (Alliance) 4,236 votes
			(elected)
		_	Omar (S. Front) 3,120 votes
			Lee Kay Boon (UDP) 1,385 votes
15.			Teh Poh Wah (Alliance) 1,376 votes
		-	Khor Peng Seh (S. Front) 4,789 votes
			(elected)
		-	Loh Lean Kee (UDP) 2,066 votes

16	Taniung North	- Choong Yew Leong (Alliance) 2,571 votes
	ranjung room	Loh Guan Kheng (S. Front) 2,656 votes
		- Tan Chong Bee (PAP) 535 votes
		- Khoo Kay Por (UDP) 2,877 votes (elected)
17.		- Tan Khim Hoe (Alliance) 2,658 votes
		(elected)
		- Tritipal Singh (S. Front) 1,324 votes
		Lim Kean Chye (UDP) 1,497 votes
18.	Tanjung Bungah	- Cheah Seng Kim (Alliance) 5,669 votes
	, ,	(elected)
		- Osman Salieh (S. Front) 3,197 votes
		 Syed Salleh (UDP) 844 votes
19.	Dhoby Ghaut	- Zakaria (Alliance) 4,179 votes (elected)
		- Arshad (S. Front) 2,113 votes
		 Cheah Cheng Kiat (UDP) 1,773 votes
		 Khoo Yet See (Independent) 370 votes
20.	Ayer Itam	 Chow Sin Kheng (Alliance) 3,485 votes
		(elected)
		 Lim Kean Siew (S. Front) 3,358 votes
		 Tok Boon Kooi (UDP) 1,202 votes
21.	Jelutong	 Khaw Kok Chwee (Alliance) 3,169 votes
		 Tan Hock Hin (S. Front) 4,999 votes
		(elected)
		 Chen Lee Sim (UDP) 2,552 votes
22.	Glugor	 Aziz (Alliance) 4,487 votes (elected)
	_	 Tan Phock Kin (S. Front) 3,345 votes
		- Tan Chee Aun (UDP) 658 votes
23.	Balik Pulau	 Hj. Ahmad (Alliance) 3,149 votes (elected)
		 Abu Bakar (S. Front) 2,353 votes
		- Mohamad Tala (UDP) 416 votes
24.	Bayan Lepas	 Ismail Hashim (Alliance) 5,064 votes
		(elected)
		 Chew Tai Seng (S. Front) 1,861 votes
		- Ismail (UDP) 961 votes
		 Hussein Delani 491 votes

Based on the above results, a conclusion can be drawn that the opposition could have won in many areas had they succeeded in making a electoral pact. But they chose to neutralise each other and let the Alliance walk through.

On the opposite side of the political fence from Wong Pow Nee

The results of the 1964 General Elections brought home a point which Lim Chong Eu could not deny: Penang was the place where United Democratic Party had its influence and its existence depended largely on Chong Eu. Without him, United Democratic Party may just disintegrate anytime.

In reality, Lim Chong Eu sensed, the United Democratic Party depended on the Chinese as the base from which it drew its support; though he did not discard his belief in multi-ethnic political approach.

By winning one parliamentary and 4 State Assembly seats, Chong Eu could consider it a minor achievement for United Democratic Party, Thus, he planned a procession to express the party's appreciation of the voters' support. He knew from that moment on it would be the beginning of another long and hard struggle for him. Real victory was still far away, not yet within reach. He pondered with shudders of cold: is victory so distant?

But he did not give up hope, he vowed to make United Democratic

Party a strong opposition force in Penang.

He was the lone United Democratic Party member in parliament, fighting alone for his party. Before, he used to cross words with D.R. Seenivasagam in the lower house, but now they were seated together on the sparsely occupied opposition bench. He could not suppress chuckles when he thought over ironies changing time wrought on people. He, the former ruling party-whip had become a oppositionist today. Who could word sighing with mixed feelings of remote sadness and effacement?

His political arch-rival Tan Siew Sin was, in the meantime, on a meteoric rise, having being promoted from Minister of Trade and Industries to the senior position as Minister of Finance. Dr. Lim Chong Eu watched all these with not a little annoyance and distaste and

privately pledged to settle some old scores.

Another thing that made him feel more accutely of the irony was that, Wong Pow Nee, his one-time protege, was still firmly positioned as Chief Minister while he himself had been relegated to a position opposite to the Chief Minister, and as oppositionist.

Wong Pow Nee had maintained his respect and reverance for his political mentor. He did not hesitate to give Lim Kean Siew some dressing-down, but he was not ready to offend Chong Eu.

In fact, the mere appearance of Chong Eu made Wong Pow Nee feel rather modest. Even as the chief executive of a state, he could hardly move out from Lim Chong Eu's long shadow.

From his experience, Lim Chong Eu had concluded that politics is not unchanging, when the time comes, one has to keep with the tide.

The tide of change finally came after the 1964 elections. The PAP of Singapore sought to form a coalition government with Alliance, notably the UMNO part of the ruling front. But the proposal was rebuffed. As an alternative strategy, Lee Kuan Yew courted the opposition for co-operation.

To achieve this end, Lee Kuan Yew mooted the idea of 'Malaysian', hoping that the slogan would rally opposition parties under an umbrella organisation, but to the exclusion of the Malayan Socialist Front. In the eyes of Lee Kuan Yew, the Malayan Socialist Front had the same form as Singaporean Socialist Front, and they were not objects to be sought after nor wanted at all.

Under the auspices of the Peoples' Action Party, a 'Malaysian Solidarity Organisation' was formed, 9th May 1965, in Kuala Lumpur. Party to the umbrella group were PAP of Singapore, the Sarawak Mawada Party, the Sarawak SUPP, United Democratic Party and PPP.

As a representative of United Democratic Party, Lim Chong Eu became an important member of the Malaysian Solidarity Organisation. Due to this, Lim Chong Eu developed a close rapport with Lee Kuan Yew.

An invitation to ministership by Lee Kuan Yew

We should recall that Lim Chong Eu's had was a Singaporean, similarly his brothers enjoyed considerable prestige in Singapore. Thus, Singapore was not alien to Lim Chong Eu. When he was elected MCA President in 1958. Lee Kuan Yew was an opposition leader in Singapore. It was not until 1959, after the victory of PAP in Singapore, that Lee Kuan Yew took over the Premiership.

Lee Kuan Yew is a lawyer while Chong Eu is a doctor. Though they both had their higher education in England, one hailed from the south while the other had his base in the north.

But while Lee Kuan Yew had his political heyday, Lim Chong Eu was facing multiple tribulations in MCA and was finally forced to leave the party. Lee Kuan Yew, meanwhile, went on to consolidate his rule over Singapore.

When Singapore joined Malaysia, Lee Kuan Yew was the island's Premier, but in the Malaysian Parliament, he instead became an opposition member. As for Chong Eu, due to the limited influence of his United Democratic Party, he, too could only be merely one of the opposition members.

Notwithstanding all these, Lee Kuan Yew had a high opinion of Lim Chong Eu. Once, during his visit to Penang, Lee Kuan Yew had an amiable talk with Chong Eu, in the presence of Teh Ewe Lim and several others.

Lee Kuan Yew felt that Lim Chong Eu needed wider and better political turf for all his talents. He told Dr. Lim, 'I intend to draft you into politics in Singapore.'

Lim Chong Eu was puzzled. He could not fathom Lee Kuan Yew's intentions.

Lee, feeling his opening words too sudden, went on to explain, 'I mean to invite you to join my cabinet as a minister. There, you will have the opportunities to realise your political ideals.

Chong Eu was a little flattered, but he maintained his rational self as he replied, 'Premier Lee, I appreciate your kind intentions, but I prefer to indulge in politics here, in Penang.'

You won't have much to perform here as there are too many constraints. Why not come to Singapore, let's pool our efforts to make the island a better place. I have confidence in you.' Lee Kaun Yew was obviously sincere. He could not have foreseen the political changes that were to come. He merely felt that brains MCA and Alliance chose not to appreciate must be an asset to Singapore.

Lee Kuan Yew, like Lim Chong Eu, had much distaste for Tan Siew Sin. They were almost congruent in opposing MCA's Tan Siew Sin. Lee Kuan Yew wanted to show Tan Siew Sin that Chong Eu was no ordinary down-and-outer.

They had a long but amicable discussion, but Lee just could not persuade Lim Chong Eu to switch pastures.

Lim Chong Eu had a strong conviction: Penang of the future shall be in his hands, Pow Nee would not stay too long.

At that time, he had not foreseen the partition of Singapore from Malaysia. He also believed in the viability of remaining in Penang, especially with the inception of the Malaysian Solidarity Organisation which would strengthen the opposition force. With the expected

expansion of influence, the wrestle for control of Penang would not a daunting task.

May be Lee Kuan Yew did not realise Chong Eu's primary ideal.

As a man born and bred in Penang, Chong Eu possesses much lo
for the island state. In the days when Penang was still Straits Settlemen
he had already involved himself in Independence movements. When t
British government finally agreed to Malayan Independence, Lim Cho
Eu was the man who led the State Assembly to approve the Pena
State Constitution, State Flag and Emblem. In addition, he could ha
become first Chief Minister of Penang had he accepted the Tunki

Now, he vowed to wrestle control of the State from Tunku's han-But he needed the people, not the Tunku's offering. The move to jo the Malaysian Solidarity Organisation was to pave the way towar gaining control of Penang.

advice. Wong Pow Nee would not have had his turn.

But good times do not last. As the Malaysian Solidarity Organisati brought too much pressure on Alliance when Lee Kuan Yew initiate move heading for a show-down with Alliance, more specifically MC Singapore was asked to leave Malaysia on August 9, 1965. Consequent the Malaysian Solidarity Organisation was nothing more than a flashthe-pan, a mere historical term.



■1961年林苍祐由英国返 岛后,创组民主联合党。 连发型也疑然一新,剪 成榴梿头,难得一见。 这起在他教士会上所 拍的一帧珍贵图片。

After his return from England, Chang Eu began to plan for the formation of United Democratic Party (U.D.P.). Even his hairstyle was "revamped" into a crew-cut. This rare picture of Lim was taken in a public raily.



民联党升城区会成立。这是林苍括卷土重采的发源地, 致词者是 其老战友罗象明。

Inauguration of U.D.P. Tanjung Division, the power-base for Lim Chong Eu's political resurrection. The speaker is his old-time comrade, LOH SIANG MENG.



市域区会域主义会立事党員合形。 Party members of U.D.P. at their Tanjung Division Inaugural Meeting.



タ 早別 領 子 打 紙 Li 全党 泉 同 杯 を 祐 室 莹 改 恋。 LOH SIANG MENG (kading U.D.P. nembers of Tanjung Division in pledging loyalty to their new-born organisation in the presence of Dr. Lim Chong Eu.



林苍祐主特民联党代表大会。口号是"万众一心"。 Lim Chang Eu chaired the Delegates Assembly of this United Democratic Party (U.D.P.). Their Solgan: "TOGETHER WE STAND"



民主联合党第三届全国代表大会在槟城举行。图为出席者合影。 A scene at the 3rd, Annual National Delegates Assembly of U.D.P. In Penang,



林苍祐单领他的同志在1963年的市设会选举群众大会上登台光相。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu presenting his line-up for the 1963 Georgetown Municipal Council elections at a public rally.



1964年, 林苍祐在丹城胜利后, 单领彩耀林及邱继圆游街答谢 选民。他从这一点逐步登上高峰。

A victory procession to thank voters after his victory at Tanjung Constituency in 1964, Dr. Lim Chong Eu seen here with Khoo Kay Por, and Teh Ewe Lim. This proved to be a foothold upon which Dr. Lim Chong Eu ascended to the peak of his political cureer.



林苍枯以民主联合党党起的身分政迎民主行动党的善凡那和吴福厚。 As U.D.P. helmsman, Dr. Lim Chong Eu extended his welcome to Democratic Action Party's Devan Nair and Goh Hock Guan.



林苍柏招待示母与时及可定领和用金。 Lim Chong Eu playing host to opposition leaders from East and West Malaysia.

CHAPTER 7. GAINING CONTROL OF PENANG STATE GOVERNMENT

The defeat of Malaysian Solidarity Movement (因意) was certainly a blow to the opposition parties which did not choose the leftist way of fighting the Alliance as well as the Socialist Front. The most significant example was the 1966 Air Itam state seat by-election.

Lim Chong Eu wanted to choose a candidate for this by-election. Tan Gim Hwa, an accountant, and lawver Yeap Ghim Guan were proposed to Chong Eu, finally Gim Hwa was chosen to stand for the by-election on the Gerakan ticket. It was his debut in politics. Socialist Front fielded the veteran Lim Kean Siew. It was a three-corner fight against the Alliance and Lim Kean Siew won the battle

In spite of his defeat. Tan Gim Hwa was then absorbed to become one of the key cadres together with Teh Ewe Lim and Khoo Kay Por.

After the set-back in the by-election, Chong Eu realised that the formation of a strong opposition party was necessary to fight the powerful ruling party, especially so in Penang State.

UDP evolved into Gerakan

During the 1967 general meeting of U.D.P., Chong Eu proclaimed to form a truely strong and united opposition front. He hoped all opposition parties would consider his proposal.

His primary intention was to replace the vanished Solidairty Movement. However, the response was discouraging. After resoncideration, Chong Eu eventually thought of a new strategy. He invited many unsuccessful Labour Party leaders and some professionals to form the 'Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia' on 24th March, 1968. The six founder members were professor Syed Hussien Alatas (Singapore University Malay language professor), Prof. Wong Gan Wu (王孝武), Dr. Tan Chee Koon (Labour Party member of Parliament). Dr. Lim Chong Eu. Dr. Peter (Chairman of Medical Association of Malaya) and Veerappan (ex-Labour Party member of parliament).

They promised to fight for democracy, insisted on the principle of economic and social justice, and strived to promote the living standard of the working class in order to establish multi-racial and moderate socialist party.

Among the founders, there were Chinese, Malay and Indians. It clearly showed that it was a multi-racial political party.

Many more members from Labour Party as well as the trade union were absorbed into Gerakan, they were V. David and Tan Phock Kin but Lim Kean Siew was excluded because both Lim Chong Eu and Tan Chee Khoon dieliked him.

The formation of Gerakan had brought Lim Chong Eu into a new era in politics. He voluntarily acted as a deputy chairman of Gerakan, letting Syed Hussien Atlatas be chairman while Tan Chee Khoon was elected as Secretary-General.

It was really a hard and trying time for Chong Eu because he had to convince his comrades in U.D.P. to join the Gerakan collectively. He faced many obstacles as three were some members who did not agree to the dissolution of U.D.P. and to join the Gerakan. There were members who accused Gerakan of not emphasising the Chinese education issue, which was against the oblective of U.D.P.

Chong Eu spent much time and patience to explain the political situation to his comrades, and to persuade them to sacrifice for a stronger organisation. He stressed that to unite to fight against the Alliance is of great importance. U.D.P. must not stick to its old pattern.

With the persuasion of Chong Eu, the Penang Gerakan divisions and branches were established one after another. At the same time, many more intellectuals were absorbed into the party because the general election was just around the corner.

The registration of Gerakan was officially approved on 28th June. 1968. However, Chong Eu did not de-register U.D.P. with the intention that he and U.D.P. members would not be political orphans if there was a split within Gerakan. Of course, Chong Eu never wanted this incident to happen. His only concern was to expand Gerakan to become a strong opposition party which was the combination of strength from all walks of life.

Putting up an imposing line-up

During the 1969 general elections, Gerakan had reached an agree-

ment with other opposition parties. On the other hand, Chong Eu was busy looking for siutable candidates, but the response was unsatisfactory. Many people only gave their verbal support but were reluctant to join, due to the poor performance of U.D.P. in the 1964 general elections.

In fact, the list of candidates of Gerakan for the 1969 general elections was a mixture of a few notables and many unknowns. Chelliah, Stewart, Gopala, Ooi Ah Bee were certainly strangers to many. Their

appearance as candidates came as a surprise to observers.

The election slogan of Gerakan was 'Capture the State Government'. Although Chong Eu was ambitious, he did not have full confidence to overcome the Alliance Government. His only hope was that Gerakan would surely win more seats which would bring greater challenge to the Alliance Government.

As such, Chong Eu fielded his three beloved comrades, i.e. Tan Gim Hwa, Teh Ewe Lim and Khoo Kay Por in safe constituencies.

Many problems and issues such as unemployment, Chinese education, particularly the Merdeka University issue really perturbed the Alliance. The opposition parties reached a compromise to a certain extend that some constituencies were straight fights between the opposition and the Alliance.

In Penang State, the Gerakan had emerged as a mighty force of opposition. The Socialist Front boycotted the election and the front-line of DAP was not in Penang. The only party which was strong enough to wrestle with the Alliance was Gerakan.

Under the leadership of Lim Chong Eu, and with the support of the people, Grarkan made a breakthrough during the 1969 general election. In won 16 seats out of the 24 seats in the Penang State Assembly. Eventually Gerakan captured the Penang State Government and Chong Eu was swom in as the new chief minister of Penang. He assured the supporters that he would form an efficient state government.

The victory of Gerakan was truely a record for Chong Eu because he had gained the support from the people to topple Wong Pow Nee and made Penang the third opposition-ruled state after Kelantan and Trengganu.

Wong Pow Nee - a sporting loser

In fact, it was Wong Pow Nee who gratefully helped Chong Eu to become the new Chief Minister of Penang. Chong Eu was always the boss in the eves of Pow Nee because it was Chong Eu who had rendered his help and support in order to make Pow Nee head of the Penang State Government back in 1961.

Originally Chong Eu wanted to become the national Chinese leader, but he was disillusioned with MCA. The only way for him to show his ability and leadership was to form another political party and at last he

successfully built up his stronghold in Penang.

Many changes had taken place since the May 13 incident. Chong Eu was invited to form a coalition government with the Alliance under the leadership of Tun Razak who eventually formed National Front (a Broader Version of the Alliance). The conflict between Tan Siew Sin and Lim Chong Eu did not get in the way for the latter to join the National Front. In other words, Gerakan had turned itself from an opposition party into a partner of a ruling coalition. But Tan Siew Sin was never happy to see Chong Eu sitting beside him in the National Front.

Gerakan's Court Rebellion

By Syed Hussein's reckoning, Tan Phock Kin, Veerappan, Mustafa Hussein and Ong Joo How were all unwavering anti-Lim elements; and if Teoh Kooi Sneah, Khoo Teng Chye, Chelliah, Stewart, may be Harun Sirat, could be persuade to join the conspiration, in addition to the participation of opposition members, Lim Chong Eu's political future would be as good as finished. He would have his Chief Ministership taken from him in no time at all.

But from among those contacted, Teoh Kooi Sneah, Chelliah. Khoo Teng Chye and Stewart were the first to eye Ong Joo How's actions with suspicion. They refused to give immediate decision on Ong Joo How's proposal.

Ong Joo How was so confident of the success of the cospiration, they merely waited for Syed Hussein's orders to-start the coup. After which they expected to witness the fall of Lim Chong Eu. No precautions were taken to guard against leakage of their covert plan.

However, their secrets were leaked soon after Ong Joo How met

those potential coup-makers.

The tip-off came from Chelliah. He informed Lim Chong Eu of the impending coup. The Chief Minister realised the seriousness of the situation, and that if no counter measures were taken, his state government might be toppled.

That very night, Lim Chong En summoned Lim Ee Heong and told him to urgently inform the loyalists who were Ooh Chooi Cheng, Teh Ewe Lim, Khoo Kay Por, Tan Ghim Hwa and Ooi Ah Bee, to meet at 9.00 the next morning, June 6. The place of the meeting was to be the Chief Minister Official residence. Teoh Kooi Sneah, Stewart and Chelliah were also asked to be present. Three of those potential rebels, Tan Phock Kin, Mustafa Hussein and Veerappan were left out.

As Gerakan's Penang Chairman, Chong Eu conferred with the party's assemblymen and state committee members on the morning of June 6. The meeting decided to request the postponement of the party's

Annual Delegates' Conference from July 3 to October 2.

It was also decided to ask Ong Joo How to show cause why he should not be expelled from Gerakan. The party headquarters was asked to implement this resolution.

Lim Chong Eu was also briefed on the involvement of Teoh Kooi Sneah, Chelliah, Stewart and Khoo Teng Chye in the plot, against their will. The four took turns to sign a pledge of loyalty to Lim Chong Eu and divulged the whole process of being dragged into the plot.

With the meeting, Lim Chong Eu managed to turn the situation to his advantage as he had the loyalty of 12 assemblymen (including

himself).

The pledge of loyalty by the four assemblymen were similar except for details. As seen from their confessions, Feoh Kooi Sneah was the first to be approached by Ong Joo How, but he was not told the plan until he went to Ong's office. There, he discovered to his dismay that he had been made a part of a treacherous scheme

Khoo Teng Chye was informed sometime later, but he did not

agree to go along.

With the situation under his control, Lim Chong Eu managed to feel more secure. The resolution to take disciplinary action against Ong Joo How was meant to be a move to test the water at Gerakan Headquarters.

As expected, the leaders at H. Q. immediately huddled for a meeting to discuss the Lim Chong Eu issue in Kuala Lumpur. Syed Hussein was quite persistent to see Lim Chong Eu; was not as extreme. He Khoon, though dissatisfied with Chong Eu; was not as extreme. He proposed asking Lim Chong Eu to Kuala Lumpur for consultations.

On his part, Chong Eu did not intend to head for a show-down with the top leaders. Thus, he flew into the Federal capital on June S and met Syed Hussein and several other party leaders.

Prof. Syed Hussein was obstinate and unduely asserted himself when he started to inform Chong Eu the intention to suspend him temporarily, and to demand for HIS show-cause letter. All these were not decided upon by the central Committee before hand.

Lim Chong Eu refused to provide any explanation, but he was not about to beat a hasty retreat. Since Syed Hussein wanted a show-down, he decided to head back to Penang to prepare for the worst.

Chong Eu received Syed Hussein's letter on June 9, informing him of his sacking from Gerakan. This move reflected that the coup by Ong Joo How had been aborted, and left Syed Hussein himself to handle the job of sacking Chong Eu and taking away his Chief Ministership.

4 'Major Charges' over Chong Eu's head

Upon his return from Kuala Lumpur, after meeting the Gerakan leaders, Chong Eu immediately made plans for his counter-offensive. He decided to be on the offensive then because he refused to wait for defeat in a siege.

On June 9, he convened a meeting of Penang Gerakan Liaison Committee, which was also attended by 13 state assemblymen of the party. They included Tan Phock Kin. Veerappan, Mustafa Hussein and Ong Joo How were prominent absentees. The 13 state assemblymen present reiterated their support for Lim Chong Eu as Chief Minister. This gave Chong Eu a simple majority in the State Assembly of 24 members.

The baffling aspect of the meeting was the presence of Tan Phock Kin. Tan was a clear-cut Syed Hussein supporter and the faction's Chief Ministen-designate. But he saw if fit to attend the meeting which was unanimous in its support for Chong Eu. It appeared that Tan Phock Kin could not decide which side of the fence he was to be as the situation had not really clarified itself.

The liaison Committee also re-affirmed its earlier decision to write to Ong Joo How, demanding for his show-cause letter. Equally important was its re-iteration in the request for portponement of Gerakan's Annual Delegates' Conference, from July 3 to October 2.

Lim Chong Eu wanted the latter so as to prevent the leaders at Headquarters from taking 'punitive actions' in view of the official letter to terminate his membership. In the letter, Syed Hussein listed 4 major 'charges' against Lim Chong Eu:-

 Lim Chong Eu disregarded the Party Constitution and the Party's pledge;

A series of actions perpetrated by Lim Chong Eu had adversely
 affected party harmony.

Despite repeated requests, Lim Chong Eu failed to report to the Party President the development in Penang.

4. Numerous complaints have been received alleging the failure by

Lim Chong Eu to publicly discuss the Party's unity and interests.

Lim Chong Eu was amused by the abstract nature of those 'charges', and his realisation that Syed Hussein had failed to comply with rules when he took the action of writing the letter without allowing the central committee to make its decision on disciplinary action. (Gerakan Constitution stipulates that disciplinary action can only be decided upon and taken by the Central Working Committee).

In order to stop Syed Hussein's plot from succeeding, Lim Chong Eu first acted to consolidate his grip on the reigns of the Penang Government, then he drew strength from the State Liaison Committee for his defences.

At that point, the United Democratic Party was still registered. It prompted some angry party members to urge Lim Chong Eu for a move to retreat back into United Democratic Party and form the State Government under United Democratic Party banners.

However, Lim Chong Eu considered the move premature as his struggle with the central leaders had not failed. He was confident and he continued to strengthen his ties with national delegates to win over their support.

After the bitter lessons in MCA, Lim Chong Eu understood the fact that to give up the fight means to surrender to the offenders. He would not retreat this time and he prevented his supporters from giving up too. He wanted to see the struggle to the end instead of retreating to another corner of the arena.

We could understand too, Lim Chong Eu's strong determination. When he had decided on an action that he thought right, he would go ahead. Leading the State Government as its Chief Executive is an administrative duty, detached from party matters. He did not see it fit to brief the Party on all matters and seek its views over everything. He went ahead to run the show as its master. It was this decision of his to

seperate Party affairs from governmental affairs that courted adverse comments from some quarters. It was also because of this contention that Chong Eu planted seeds of disaster.

And with Syed Hussein breathing down his neck, he had to counter

the move.

Although some moderate leaders tried to mediate in the confrontation, Syed Hussein turned down the proposal, citing the letter which had been posted as an act which was irreversible. Syed Hussein had made up his mind to remove Chong Eu.

To this end, he called a meeting of the Central Committee on June 13 to decide the political fate of Lim Chong Eu. Lim Chong Eu's supporters consisted 7 of the 15-member Central Committee, and he still lacked the simple majority he required. The group tried desperately to get hold of another Central Committee member 'Chone Eu-breaker'.

The man Chong Eu and his backers had in mind was Lim Eng Chuan of Taiping. Lim Eng Chuan, a reputed lone-ranger, was not easy to locate. Lim Chong Eu sent his cronies looking for him. Eng Chuan

was not in Taiping, but somewhere in Kuala Lumpur.

It was Lim Ee Heong who found Eng Chuan in a Kuala Lumpur coffee shop and asked him for support.

After listening to Lim Ee Heong, Eng Chuan replied simply: I will help just this once, to let Lim Chong Eu remain as Chief Minister. I won't care about any future problems.

Lim Ee Heong was relieved and told the backer: Please help in this present crisis and let's talk about the later things as they come.

Adroitly Controlled the Central Committee

To Lim Chong Eu, the Central Committee meeting on June 13 was of great importance. He must not lose. With the trump card in his hand, he was not prepared to give way. As Gerakan Secretary-General, Dr. Tan Chee Khoon persuaded Chong Eu not to attend the meeting because he expected Syed Hussein to be absent too. He wanted the Central Committee to tackle the problem in the absence of the two main rivals.

Lim Chong Eu refused and attended the Central Committee meeting punctually. Veerappan, one of the few who were obstinately opposed to Chong Eu, left the meeting in protest when Chong Eu arrived. Lim Chong Eu had to chair the meeting in the absence of Syed Hussein. In Tan Chee Khoon's presence, he received two letter of resignation; one from Syed Hussein and the other from Party Treasurer, Vecrappan.

As the meeting progressed, the proposal to postpone the Annual Delegates' Conference to October 2 and 3 was approved, and it was decided to hold it in Penang. Then, half way through the meeting, a recess was made and Tan Chee Khoon met Chong Eu and unsuccessfully

persuaded him to meet Syed Hussein for talks.

When the meeting resumed in the afternoon Lim Chong Eu received more letters of resignation; from Dr. Tan Chee Khoon, Tan Phock Kin, Tan Giap Seng and Dr. Tan Luan Fong. It appeared as though they intended to cripple the Central Committee by quitting. Undeterred, Chong Eu went on with the meeting as he had 9 members present, a clear majority, at the moment.

The continued meeting accepted the resignation of Syed Hussein, and appointed Lim Chong Eu as acting President. The resignation of Treasurer Vecrappan was also accepted while Ng Swee Kooi was appointed as replacement. Others who tendered their quit notices were requested to reconsider. As those present specifically requested, Dr. Tan Chee Khoon's position was left unfilled, pending persuasions for his change of mind. Ong Boon Seong was elected Assistant Secretary-General to fill the vacancy left earlier by V. David, who was not allowed to hold important party posts as he was then a Trade Union official.

Out of the Central Committee and unable to accept his defeat, Syed Hussein had his supporters working towards negotiations for a compromise. But it was too late by then. Nonetheless, the defeated Gerakan President did not cease attacking and challenging the validity of the pruned Central Committee. He claimed that the Annual Delegate' Conference had to be convened as originally scheduled and be asked to decide who actually controlled the Central Committee. Chong Eu, convinced that the Delegates Conference had been duely postponed, refused to accede to the claim and to face a showdown which outcome he had no certain confidence.

This he had also learned from his days in MCA. In politics, to take a step in retreat is one dangerous step. Therefore, he decided against any compromise. He did not want to suffer defeat again.

Professor Syed Hussein Alatas, who resigned in haste, had begun to long for returning to lead Gerakan again. But time and tide wait for no man, Chong Eu demurred and slammed the door shut on any possibility of a negotiated conciliation.

On June 18, Lim Chong Eu issued an open letter to all Gerakan members, pertaining to the party crisis. In it, Chong Eu accused Syed Hussein of starting a revolution in the party, created confusion with the aim of breaking it up.

He also welcome the proposal by Syed Hussein to form his new party, and disclosed in strongly worded statements his unwillingness to work with Syed Hussein.

Syed Hussein and his backers, in the meantimes, planned to hold an Annual Delegates' Conference of Gerakan on July 3.

This prompted Lim Chong Eu to apply for a restraining order from the courts to stop Syed Hussein. The application was granted. Thus, Syed Hussein's men, in his forced absence, had to change the Annual Delegates' Conference into an Extraordinary Conference. Chaired by Tan Chee Khoon, it elected a new Central Committee with Syed Hussein as its Chairman, Veerappan as Secretary-General, Tan Chee Khoon history of the Conference of the Committee with Syed Hussein as its Chairman, Veerappan as Secretary-General, Tan Chee Khoon history of the Conference of the Conference

With that, Gerakan had TWO Central Committees, one headed by Chong Eu and the other by Sved Hussein.

When the Registrar was asked to step in, the new Central Committee was not accorded recognition while the Conference on July 3 was declared in contravention of the the Gerakan Constitution

In a desperate move, Syed Hussein applied unsuccessfully to cancel the restraining order which barred him from exercising his functions as Gerakan President. The High Gourt Justice, in his judgement stated that Syed Hussein had resigned and then wanted to exercise his Presidential powers. It was a move that perplexed everyone. The restraining order was therefore allowed to stay.

Syed Hussein's ultimate fate was, however, not decided until November 8, 1971 when Chief Justice Raja Azlan Shah declared Syed Hussein not a member and as such ceased to be the President of Gerakan since June 13. Thus, he problinted Syed Hussein from claiming himself Gerakan President, calling any meeting of the Party or issuing any statement for and on behalf of Gerakan.

Consequently, Syed Hussein, not recognised as Gerakan leader by the Registrar of Societies, was unsuccessful too in his attempt through the courts of law. His hope to return to Gerakan was then as good as dead. Under those circumstances he gathered some supporters, including Dr. Tan Chee Khoon, to form another party.

Surprisingly, the temperamental professor then clashed with Dr. Tan Chee Khoon and refused to participate in the pro-tem committee of the proposed party. Dr. Tan Chee Khoon went ahead to inaugurate it on October 31. The new party, christened 'Perkemas' was set to rival the Gerskan.

Veerappan, Tan Phock Kin and Mustafa Hussein also joined Perkemas and hoped to vie for political supremacy with Chong Eu in Penang.

But Lim Chong Eu was no easy prey. Before Perkemas could be formed, he had extended the olive branch to Ong Joo How and coaxed him back into the folds of Gerakan. That gave Chong Eu 13 assemblymen, one more than half, of the 24 member state assembly.

Armed with the magical 13, Chong Eu's state government was safe against coup-makers. Yeap Ghim Guan of DAP was eventually beaten in his bid to move a vote of no-confidence against the government.

Although there were many obstacles his beatened.

Although there were many obstacles hindering Gerakan, Chong Eu was able to overcome them one by one. In 1974 general election, Gerakan was allocated 13 state seats, UMNO 10 seats, MCA 3 seats and MIC got only 1 seat.

Of course, MCA was not happy with the 3 seats. But considering the outcome during the 1969 general election, it had not won even a single seat. Besides showing its protest, what else could it do? And it had to accept the 3 seats reluctantly.

Retaining Control in Penang

It was a downfall for the opposition during the 1974 general election. DAP could only manage to win two state saxls. Its leader Year Ghim Guan was edged both in parliamentary and state assembly election by Lim Chong Eu and Khoo Kay Por respectively. Candidates from Gerakan won the battle handsomely and proudly, It was really a set-back for Lim Kean Siew and his 'gang of seven' who deliberately asbotaged and degraded the image of Lim Chong Eu and caused him many sleepless nights.

Gerakan contested eight parliamentary seats (i.e. Penang 3 seats, Perak 2 seats, Selangor 1 seat and Federal Territory 2 seats). It won 5 seats of which 3 seats were captured in Penang, the results as follow:—

Tanjung	Lim Chong Eu (BN)	15,408 votes (elected)
	Yeap Ghim Guan (DAP)	13.969 votes
	Tan Phock Kin (Perkemas)	2,508 votes
	Lee kok Liang (PSRM)	1,622 votes
Jelutong	Rajasingam (BN)	15,112 votes (elected)
rtiatong	Gooi Hock Seng (DAP)	10,152 votes
	V. David (Perkemas)	6,955 votes
	Teh Eng Siang (PSRM)	1,467 votes
Nibong Tebal	Goh Cheng Teik (BN)	11,271 votes (elected)
B	Veerappan (DAP)	3,155 votes
Two seats won i	n Perak:-	
Taiping	Paul Leong (BN)	14,253 votes (elected)
	Loh Poh Seng (DP)	11,066 votes
	Chow Cheong Lin (Perkemas)	999 votes
	Ooi Hoe Hun (Sedar)	479 votes
Teluk Intan	Ow How Cheong (BN)	9,685 votes (elected)
	Chuah Khai Wee (Perkemas)	901 votes
	(DAP)	8,436 votes
In Selango	r and Federal Territory, all	three candidates from
Gerakan were de	efeated, their results were as follo	ows:-
Kepong	Tan Chee Khoon (Perkemas)	9,858 votes (elected)
	Tan Tiong Hong (BN)	9,192 votes
	Tan Kok Keat (DAP)	4,206 votes
	Lim Fong Cheng (Independent	618 votes
Kuala Lumpur	Lee Lam Thye (DAP)	15,112 votes (elected)
erection models.	Alex Lee (BN)	6,490 votes
	Yeoh Teik Chye (Perkemas)	1,540 votes
Petaling Jaya	Oh Keng Seng (DAP)	14,106 votes (elected)
	Goh Hock Guan (BN)	12,868 votes
	Pang Meng (Perkemas)	1,970 votes
	Lim Kwai Seng (Independent)	1,970 votes

Besides Gerakan, MCA men also won all the three parliamentary seats, they were Ling Liong Sik, Albert Mah and Tan Cheng Bee.

Penang state assembly elections was always regarded as the strongsuit of Gerakan. It won 11 seats out of the 13 seats contested, and thus retained the ruling power in Penang.

Bukit Tengah	of the Penang State assembly ele Harun Sirat (BN)	2,961 votes (elected)
	Ng Chay Tet (DAP)	1,299 votes (elected)
	Ong Chin Seong (Perkemas)	1,058 votes
	Sim Ban Lee (PSRM)	400 votes
	om ban bee (15ten)	340 votes
Macang Bubuk	Lim Heng Tee (BN)	
macang bacak	Shaik Adam (DAP)	3,198 votes (elected)
	Mohd. Noor (Perkemas)	2,005 votes 322 votes
	Osman Talib (PSRM)	435 votes
	Syed Abdullah (Sedar)	
Jawi	Chelliah (BN)	440 votes
Jawi		3,350 votes (elected)
	Khor Teik Hock (DAP)	2,457 votes
	Mohd. Noor (Perkemas)	695 votes
Dadona Vata	Tan Chin Theng (PSRM)	846 votes
Padang Kota	Lim Chong Eu (BN)	5,543 votes (elected)
	Khoo Soo Giap (DAP)	3,003 votes
	Tan Phock Kin (Perkemas)	936 votes
	Lee Kok Liang (PSRM)	306 votes
Kampung Kolam	Khoo Kay Por (BN)	5,458 votes (elected)
	Yeap Ghim Guan (DAP)	4,279 votes
	Wong Hoong Keat (Perkemas)	1,664 votes
	Ho Yew Seng (PSRM)	418 votes
Dato Kramat	Teh Ewe Lim (BN)	5,826 votes (elected)
	Gooi Hock Seng (DAP)	2,628 votes
	Tan Seng Kiat (Perkemas)	1,431 votes
	Ng Boon Leong (Independent)	260 votes
	Wong Chong Chin (PSRM)	144 votes
Sungai Pinang	Ooi Teong Hoe (BN)	5,648 votes (elected)
	Loh Kim Hin (DAP)	3,197 votes
	Nurashikin (Perkemas)	1,715 votes
	Tan Eng Siang (PSRM)	511 votes
	Mohd. Hamid (Independent)	1,371 votes
Bukit Glugor	Tah Ghim Hwa (BN)	5,010 votes (elected)
	Lam Chee Wai (DAP)	3,994 votes
	Chow Tat Seng (PSRM)	572 votes
	Ong Kean Thong (Independent)	195 votes
	Ooi Ean Kwong (Perkemas)	1,754 votes

Paya Terubong	Khoo Teng Chye (BN)	4,143 votes (elected)
	Lim Chen Teik (DAP)	3,047 votes
	Tan Kok Ping (Perkemas)	906 votes
	Tan Joo Hwa (PSRM)	1,947 votes
Tanjung Bunga	Khor Gark Kim (BN)	6,226 votes (elected)
	Khoo Soo Lye (DAP)	3.557 votes
	James Robless (Perkemas)	624 votes
	Lau Kor Koon (PSRM)	418 votes
Sungai Nibong	Choong Sim Poey (BN)	4,848 votes (elected)
	Goh Hock Guan (DAP)	1,072 votes
	Sutan Buns (Perkemas)	515 votes
	Osman Din (PSRM)	1,106 votes
	Tan Jit Seng (Independent)	474 votes

The two defeated candidates from Gerakan were deputy chief minister Ooh Chooi Cheng who was edged out by Oh Teik Aun of DAP in Bukit Mertajam and Teoh Kooi Sneah was beaten by Ng Swee Khim of DAP in Bukit Tambun.

Lim Chong Eu had proved that he was supported by the people to join Barisan Nasional, unlike the PPP who was completely beaten in Perak. This situation also gave Gerakan a certain political capital to struggle with MCA, particularly after it had absorbed many new blood.

Annoyed old-guards when recruiting new blood

Lim Chong Eu really needed a strong Gerakan in order to wrestle with MCA. That was the reason why he absorbed Lim Keng Yaik, Paul Leong, Alex Lee and Tan Tiong Hong on one hand and took in many interlectuals on the other hand. It was clearly indicated from the list of candidates for the 1974 general election.

With the 11 seats won in the state assembly, Lim Chong Eu continued to be the chief minister for the second time, UMNO won 9 seats both MCA and MIC won 1 seat and the opposition won 4 seats.

Besides Teh Ewe Lim, Khoo Kay Por and Chelliah who were appointed exco members, Lim Chong Eu also picked Khor Gaik Kim as his political secretary.

Then, political secretary only enjoyed a monthly allowance of \$500.00 and the allowance for a state assemblyman was only \$1,000.00. Today, a political secretary is a full-time job with a salary of \$3,000.00 plus a car and a driver.

Lim Chong Eu's first political secretary was ex-state-assemblyman, Ooi Ah Bee. He was considered as not fit for the job and no other chance was given to him in the future general election. Khor Gark Kim was his second political secretary.

The Debut of Goh Cheng Teik and Khor Gark Kim

The primary motive of Lim Chong Eu in picking Khor Gark Kim as his political secretary was to train new blood for the party and to

strengthen the party by adding to it a new breed of members.

The gossip that Lai Ming Wu (禁载悟) used Khor Gark Kim as head of the 'guardian group' during the general elections gradually lost credibility. (the guardian group was purported to protect Chong Eu against moves to topple him). Later, it was discovered that no one wanted to topple Chong Eu. Even if there were such moves, Chong Eu was not an easy target. In fact, he was a powerful compromise and balancing factor between Gerakan old guards and young turks.

On his first day at work, Khor Gark Kim was informed by Chong Eu that, 'As political secretary to the Chief Minister, you enjoy no prerogative, but if you use your position effectively, you may have

plenty of influence '

After the brief, Chong Eu told his political secretary to start working. But no specific work was mentioned. No clear instructions. He was confident Gark Kim knew his duties as political secretary.

Khor Gaik Kim divided his time between his own constituency and his job. He tried his best to exercise the influence that came with his job. Undoubtedly, he was the leader of the younger breed of Gerakan

men and a very luck one. Many of his contemporaries who were also elected state assemblymen, like Lim Heng Tee and Dr. Choong Sim Poey

could not enjoy such easy access to the Chief Minister.

Chong Eu attended most functions, both political and social, accompanied by Khor Gark Kim. They travelled in the Chief Minister's official car, and talked on their journey to these functions. But it was Chong Eu who did most of the talking. He had a wide range of topics to talk, for the benefit of his lone listener, Khor Gark Kim.

It is no easy task to work for Chong Eu. He would not hesitate to give you a dressing-down if he did not like your performance.

After the 1969 general elections, Chong Eu's close aide who seemed to catch plenty of lime-light was Tan Ghim Hwa. But Khor Gark Kim had replaced him after the 1974 polls. Though 'the old man' did not forget his old pals easily, Khor Gark Kim was fast becoming a political celebrity among the ranks of Teh Ewe Lim and Khoo Kay Por.

At that time, it was not easy to foretell the effects of his meteories on his own political future. But in time it turned out that Khor Gark Kim's political star shone too brightly for the liking of some partymen. It was met with resistance. In fact, his inordinately quick climb up the rungs of political ladder was a source of intra-party squabbles.

In another scene, Goh Cheng Teik was also busy cultivating his own sphere of influence. But he devoted a larger part of his effort in his role as an M.P. and consequently caught less local attention.

But as days went by, he managed to win over Teh Ewe Lim, Khoo Gark Por and even Tan Gim Hwa in his power struggle against Khor Gark Kim. Later, Gark Kim's Gerakan contemporaties Lim Heng Tee, Choong Sim Poey also leaned towards Goh Cheng Teik. Instead, it was Gark Kim who mowed closer to some old guards, including his former rival Lim Ee Heong and Yong Chip Tong.

Besides these, Dr. Lim Keng Yaik had also established his own power-base in Perak, and extended slowly to other peninsular states.

Gradually, there emerged a three-way split in Gerakan.

Lim Chong Eu, though aware of the internal struggle, was unperturbed because no single faction could threaten his firmly entrenched position. Unless 'the old man' himself abdicated the throne, no one needed to lust for it.

Lim Chong Eu was more concerned over MCA's moves. He had to maintain his high level of alertness.

Meeting of Arch-rivals

The first move taken by Lee San Choon after taking over the helm of MCA was to exert indirect pressure on Chong Eu. During the days when Chong Eu was MCA President, San Choon was merely one of his underlines, hardly noticed and meritted no mention.

But Lee San Choon never ceased to work doggedly. From the grassroots he worked his way up to the summit of MCA hierarchy, as its chief.

Considering academic attainment and qualification, San Choon had to bow to Chong Eu. But in political ingenuity and craftiness, he was easily equal, if not better than Chong Eu.

At one stage, Lee San Choon had to assume personal control of the Penang Liaison Committee of MCA as a strategy to neutralise the influence of Gerakan under the leadership of Chong Eu. The original MCA State Chairman, Sam Ah Chow was such a 'Mr. Nice' that he could not match Chong Eu. Lee San Choon took temporary control of the MCA in Penang and looked around for someone reliable from amongst the business big-guns. He found no one suitable. At the end, he settled for Lim Kean Siew.

As widely known, Kean Siew was once leader of the leftist Socialist Front and had enjoyed a period of political prominence. He could be considered a match for Chong Eu in qualifications and academic achievement. In addition, Lim Kean Siew was still bitter about his humiliating defeat in the 1963 municipal polls of Georgetown, at the hands of Teh Ewe Lim but planned for by Chong Eu. Chong Eu had no better feelings towards Kean Siew from the very start and the pair could be considered arch-enemies in politics.

Lee San Choon decided to make Lim Kean Siew Chairman of MCA Penang State Liaison Committee after careful analysis. The MCA boss meant the appointment to be a veiled show-of-power to Chong Eu, At the same time, San Choon trusted Kean Siew to rebuild Penang MCA to its former glory. Nevertheless, some grumbles emitted from certain quarters within MCA as they protested the Helmsman's decision to use a 'leftie' to lead Penang MCA.

Upon his appointment, Kean Siew made his first pivotal move: forming a Workers-and-peasants Division.

This was actually a grafted concept from the Socialist Front, which had championed the cause of workers and peasants. Lim Kean Siew, hoping to break the mould of MCA as a tow-kay party, (richman's party) went on to establish workers and peasants movement all over the country.

Without making judgement on the success/failure of the movement, we have to give Kean Siew due credit for his organisational skills and leadership capabilities. But whatever he did in Penang was aimed against Lim Chong Eu.

His political rivalry with Chong Eu, impossible to settle and immune to mediation, had been moved from opposing parties to within National Front.

No matter how deeply Chong Eu detested Kean Siew, he did not show it. But he was careful to guard against stealthy moves against him. Chong Eu constantly, but privately, reminded Gerakan members to be wary against Kean Siew's moves, covert of otherwise.

The worries were not unfounded. Kean Siew's re-emergence in the tough and tumble circle of politics was also not merely to gain prominence. The old pro had plans to lay claims to a position of leadership. As expected, the simmering rivalry of the two Lim's eventually turned red-hot in 1978.

Lim Kean Siew officially became Penang MCA State Liaison Committee Chairman in 1977, after a period of struggle and under the sponsorship of Lee San Choon. The MCA President wanted to use Kean Siew to neutralise some of Chong Eu's sparkle.

Prior to that, sometime in 1976, in his process of reestablishing MCA's image, Lee San Choon succeeded in courting 3 opposition assemblymen in Penang to join the party. They were DAP's Oh Teck Aun, Ng Swee Kim and Ong Joo How of Perkemas. With that, MCA amanged to have 4 assemblymen in the Penang State Assembly because it had then had already one lone member. Choong Yew Leong. Though it was still a long way from the 11-member Gerakan bloc, MCA had reasons to feel better with the improved situation.

With the cross-over of 3 oppositionists to the ruling side, the opposition bench was pitifully left with C.Y. Choy, the only opposition man, an independent.

The lop-sidedness of the state assembly was not a good thing for Chong Eu. Conversely, it signifies the beginning of confrontations between McA and Gerakan to closer quarters. Lee San Choon had lit the flames of a long term onslaught against Chong Eu. The ultimate objective: to regain control of the Penang State Government, to trim Gerakan's leverage in the National Front.

Unfortunately, Gerakan itself was beginning to suffer from the malaise of an internal struggle between the 'old guards' and the 'new breed'.

It was Tan Gim Hwa who made the first direct public reference to the party's internal conflict. On August 15, 1976, in one of the party dinners, as Vice-Chairman of Gerakan, Bukit Glugor branch, Tan Gim Hwa told the gathering, 'I heard rumours that allege that Ooh Choleng and 1 plot to replace Chong Eu in the party. I must stress that this is all foundless and irresponsible. The surprising thing is these rumours started after a group of new faces joined Gerakan in 1973. No

such accusations were heard of during the days of United Democratic Party.'

He went on to deny categorically that the party's new image was better than its old one, and accused that those with ulterior motives were out to push older members to the side-lines.

He even implicitly criticised the state government under Chong Eu for implementing plans that are divergent from the party's objectives.

Obviously, Tan Gim Hwa did not feel pleased with Chong Eu for allegedly using the 'young turks' to edge out the 'old guards'. Khor Gark Kim's emergence also made him very uneasy.

Tan and Khor did not arrive at this stage of mutual dislike by coincidence. There was a background of prolonged personality-clash

and conflict of interests which spanned over 10 years.

While having to deal with the party's internal problems, Lim Chong Eu had to face San Choon's tactical moves under the smiles of superficial amicability. He went about his tasks as Chief Minister, but with a much heightened degree of alertness.

At this time, he started to make plans for the coming leadership hierarchy of Gerakan with the view of countering MCA's offensive. He

also got ready to weed out his detractors within Gerakan.

During the party's Annual Conference in October 1976, Chong Eu deployed important former MCA reformists in vital positions of Gerakan to cast off the image of Gerakan as a reprint of United Democratic Party. He also made suitable arrangement to place new and old leaders of the party in the leadership line-up. However, Tan Gim Hwa was given the axe.

Chong Eu had the following line-up for the Gerakan leadership:-

President Lim Chong Eu

Deputy President Lim Keng Yaik and Ong Boon Seong

Secretary-General Paul Leong Treasurer Alex Lee

The 24 Central Committee members were:-

Ooh Chooi Cheng, Teh Ewe Lim, Ng Swee Kooi, Goay Fhey Kheng, Putih bin Mat, Ang Chin Wah, Khoo Kay Por, Goh Cheng Teik, Oh Siew Aun, Khor Gark Kim, Ooi Oon Seng, Rajasingam, Ow How Cheong, Slow Kok Khoon, Kuen Liew Mun, Chew Jit Swee, Choo Weng Huat, Tan Tiong Hong, Chong Pin Yee, Tan Chong Teik, Kang Chye Huat, Looi Yen Chan, Pyesan Singh and Saw Yin Wu.

A Series of Tactical Moves by Lim Kean Siew

To project Gerakan as a national party, the leadership line-up included representatives from the various states, and Chong Eu was careful to include those former McA men that made Lee San Choon fumed as Gerakan's new leaders. This move took Cerakan on a path to contend with McA for power within the National Front.

Lee San Choon could not miss the signifacance of these moves, but he used Kean Siew as HIS important piece to bring Chong Eu to a checkmate.

In his attempt to claim more seats for contest in the coming general elections, Kean Siew made regular comments in the press through MCA, including the claim that MCA would wrestle for control of the state government.

Though Kean Siew did not specifically mention the number of seats MCA wanted, it could be safely concluded from his statements that it would be more than the three it obtained in 1974. Kean Siew would not be pleased with even 5.

He had hinted at the time that he hoped for an equal allocation with Gerakan.

Not to be outdone, Gerakan made comments of its own and engaged MCA in a series of arguments in the press, sometimes resorting to disparaging remarks for each other.

Lim Kean Siew even suggested that MCA should contest the elections under its own banners if the allocation was not satisfactory.

This proposal was a little far-fetched as it was improbable for MCA men to contest the elections under its own banners in Penang while remaining on National Front tickets in other states. Further more, MCA had not even registered its own election symbols with the Election Commission and was thus not able to contest on its own.

After some time, National Front leaders mediated to settle the quarrel and it was agreed to let the National Front Council settle the matter. For the meantime at least, MCA and Gerakan had nothing else to say.

Lim Kean Siew had foreseen the situation as unfavourable to MCA, he accused Gerakan of edging out MCA under National Front's tacit consent. He had to resort to a different contingency.

First he ventured to 'test the water'. He made disclosures that some MCA men might contest as independents, and waited for response. Then, he recruited a group to put his plans into action in the elections.

On June 21, the curtain was raised for the 1978 general elections, with scenes of bitter struggle and treacherous plots set in Penang.

'Gang of 7' lays siege to Chong Eu's throne

For the '78 polls, the National Front decided to divide the Penang State seats as follows: Gerakan - 11, MCA - 5, UMNO - 10 and MIC - 1.

For 1974 Gerakan had 13 seats to its candidates and won 11 of them. And now it got only 11 to contest. Though it protested initially but eventually relented. On the other hand, MCA had gained 2 more seats to make its allocation for 1978 a total of 5 seats, which was not had. But Lim Kean Siew raised strong objections, citing the reason that the allocation could not reflect the real strength of his party.

Almost simultaneously, a group of MCA men took the opportunity to make propaganda. They threatened to pull out of MCA to contest as

independents.

The first salvo came from Mah Cheok Tat, MCA Tanjung Division Chairman. In his letter of resignation from MCA, he told Kean Siew, "After many years of misrule by the stubborn government under Lim Chong Eu, the problems of the region had gradually deteriorated, especially the threat to the livelihood of countless small-time traders posed by the porposed new city development centre; the resultant loss of rightful ownership by minor land owners; and the equally serious problems of numerous hawkers and sub-tenants losing their income ... the only way to settle our argument and conflicts with Gerakan is to let the constituents decide. I am confident you would agree to my resignation and withdrawal from MCA, and let me contest the elections as an independent."

To the press, Mah Cheok Tat disclosed that the People's Independent Front' formed by the MCA members who quit the party consisted of 12 persons; besides himself it included Ho Kay Pin, Wong Kam Hoong, Khoo Huat Hin, Lim Kah Pin, Lam Wu Cheong and Gan Kah Peng.

However, Wong Kam Hoong, Lam Wu Cheong and Choong Teik Seng failed to materialise at their nomination centres, making the original 12-member 'Front' only a 'gang of 7' and they had to recruit a last-minute ally, Tan Chong Hooi to make up the number. Who were the 'gang of 7'? Where did they contest? Firstly, Mah Cheok Tat contested in the state constituency of Kampung Kolam. He was originally set to face Khoo Kay Por of the National Front. But Khoo was disqualified on nomination day as his papers were not in order. This unfortunate slip left Gerakan with only 10 seasts to hope for. Lim Chong Eu was shocked and deeply disappointed as Khoo was his very close ally; the stumble also caused a degree of damage to the morale in Gerakan camp.

Mah Cheok Tat had previously represented MCA in the polls in 1969 and 1974. He lost both contests. In the absence of a National Front candidate for 1978, he looked hopeful for a win, but Ooi Ean Kwong for DAP was determined to put up a strong opposition.

The second man of the 'gang of 7' was Ho Kay Pin a graduate of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). Ho was nominated in the parliamentary constituency of Tanjung against Gerakan's Dr. Ooi Oon Seng who contested under the BN banners. Wong Hoong Keat of DAP was also nominated there, making it a 3-corner fight. This constituency was formerly represented by Lim Chong Eu, but Dr. Lim declined the chances of making it to parliament, declaring that he merely aimed for the Chief Ministership.

The third member was Dr. Khoo Soo Kheng of Nibong Tebal, who was slated to run against Dr. Goh Cheng Teik in the parliament constituency of Nibong Tebal. On another front, he was also nominated to contest the state seat of Jawi against Teoh Kooi Sneah of Gerakan.

The fourth man, Lim Kah Pin, was a fervent supporter of Lim Kean Siew. He contested against Gerakan stalwart Teh Ewe Lim at Datuk Kramat, a state constituency.

The next was a local leader of MCA and the labour union, Khoo Huat Hin. His was a 3-corner tussle with Lau Kok Chiew of Gerakan and Chin Nyok Soo of DAP.

Then came textile-merchant, Gan Kah Peng, who played dwarf against the giant himself, Dr. Lim Chong Eu in Dr. Lim's homeground of Padang Kota. Others to give the Gerakan chief a run for his votes were Gerakan founder member, Dr. Peter and Wong Hoong Keat of DAP.

The last of the 7 member 'People's Independent Front' was Tan Chong Hooi. He got himself nominated in Sungei Pinang, vying for the state seat against Dr. Ong Hean Tee of Gerakan and Chuah Bee Khan of DAP.

The main objective of the 'People's Independent Front' was to topple the Gerakan state government of Penang. They had hoped, inspite of the harsh realities, to join MCA assemblymen in victory and in forming the next state government.

Even though Lim Kean Siew did not publicly express his support for the 'People's Independent Front', Lim Chong Eu immediately and pointedly accused him of plotting and directing the 'MCA' Independent Front'. He blamed Kean Siew for 'misleading', the 'gang of 7' and that

they were out to create confusion and split votes.

In fact, other threats also existed against Gerakan's attempt to seek a fresh mandate. Beside the 'gang of 7' there were DAP'S fierce onslaught, ex-DAP men who, led by Yeap Ghim Guan, contested as Perkemas candidates; former leftists, like C.Y. Choy (former Mayor), Pakunam (former deputy Mayor) and A.R. Karim. A total of no less than 50 independents joined the partisans in what was seen as a record-breaking election for Penang in terms of confusing engagements.

But putting in strict terms, the viable parties were only the National Front, DAP and PAS. Others and the independents were the supporting cast. Nonetheless, Lim Chong Eu had to put up his best efforts against the 'People's Independent Front', which plotted solely against Gerakan.

A Year of Anxiety and Aggravation

1978 could be considered a year of great political anxiety for Chong Eu, and his most aggravating one since he entered politics.

He broke his traditional style by using some very demeaning words on the MCA off-shoots, the 'People's Independent Front' candidates. He snapped, 'This group of people are undisciplined political garbage; a pack of lemmings (note: Lemmings are small arctic rodents reputed in migration to rush in large numbers headlong into the sea and DROWN!). They merely work for their own selfish gains, they only knew how to split MCA and they are poised to divide the Barisan (meaning the National Front). The people of Penang knows that these are worthless elements, political clowns."

The 'gang of 7', unable to swallow the humiliations, made jokes of the 'new political terms' created by Lim Chong Eu and labelled him a 'tempestuous woman delivering her tirades in the streets'. They also claimed that he had degraded his position as head of a political party by using shocking words.

The 'gang of 7' declared their stand against Gerakan but in support of National Front candidates from MCA.

Meanwhile, the MCA leadership remained non-committal towards these ex-members. It neither announced their expulsion from the party nor lauded their actions. In a way, MCA appeared to give an implicit nod to the 'People's Front' for the treacherous onslaught on Lim Chong Eu.

Lee San Choon and Lim Kean Siew were glad to watch nonchalantly as Chong Eu fought against challengers from all fronts.

Actually, the 'People's Independent Front' was a malignant phenomenon of the 1978 polls. The seven men were MCA supporters, comrades in National Front. Due to their extreme 'hatted', they chose to hit Gerakan at its very heart. The National Front did not normally conduct acts of 'comrade verse comrade', but it finally happended. Little wonder why the Gerakan's 'old man' felt greatly aggravated.

According to National Front leader Ghafar Baba, any member of the component parties of the coalition who contested as an independent would be expelled. But MCA did not take any such disciplinary actions, which was taken as virtually encouraging the move to give Gerakan the rough-and-tumble.

In fact, the threat posed by the gang of 7 was easily more serious that of DAP. The DAP had just emerged from an internal power struggle, which left it much weaker. If fielded comparatively few candidates and of lower calibre. Conversely, the People's Front candidates were better-known and were backed by better election machinery, made innumerable press releases and put up mile after mile of posters.

An inordinate volume of posters was put up in the Kampung Kolam constituency, which was the central site for the City Development project. Lim Chong Eu sambitious plan to develop the Complex (later named KOMTAR) caused many existing huildings to be demolished, to make way for the new structures. The opposition and Chong Eu opposers were quick to seize the issue as munitions against him.

Some posters demanded: 'Lim Chong Eu, bring back my home!' some described Gerakan as The Demolition Party. All these caught the wide attention of the press and were hot topics of discussion on the streets.

Once, at a political seminar at Kampung Kolam, Lim Chong Eu had to put up with torrential tirades from an old woman, accusing him of

destroying her home, leaving her without shelter. It made Chong Eu rather upset.

Equally upsetting incidents also befell Mrs. Lim Chong Eu. When she went to the market, some hawkers intentionally embarrased her,

some even used very crude words.

These made Mrs. Lim sleepless and uneasy. She would never dreamed that Dr. Lim's sincere and dogged efforts to develop Penang could be rewarded with such unfounded accusations. It was hard to find a day when newspapers did not carry such criticisms and accusations,

Unable to endure such unjustified accusations, Mrs. Lim told her husband one morning during the campaign period, 'I think you'd better give up politics. Despite all the contributions you have made, they feel so convenient to disregard them and instead fall for the sweet lies of the opposition. You may be able to tolerate it, but I can't!"

Dr. Lim appeared unperturbed, and repeatedly consoled his spouse, 'For the time being, you stop reading newspaper, avoid going out. Won't that solve the problem? In the games of politics, you must be able to endure harsh cristicisms and stand up to the test.' But deep in his heart, Dr. Lim was raging with annoyance. He grimaced with disgust at the thought of Lim Kean Siew and Mah Cheok Tat's 'gang'.

I must make them pay for all these. When I have put my government in order, I shall settle the score with these people.' In the mean-

time, Dr. Lim had to hold his indignance.

The gang of 7 created quite a tide to rock Chong Eu's political boat. In addition, they spared no efforts to depict Chong Eu in the worst possible light, to degrade him.

The gang of 7, DAP, Perkemas and the independents were unified in their attempt to lay siege and would be too glad to put an end to

Chong Eu's political life.

The proposed KOMTAR (Tun Abdul Razak Complex) was beginning to take shape and the island-mainland link was merely on paper. Lim Chong Eu's blue-print for the Penang of tomorrow had yet reach the people's heart. His lofty ambitions was beginning to be hobbled with the necessary bug-bears of development - demolition of old structures and relocation of families. Gerakan seemed to be destined to join the battle with rock-bottom morales. What more with the disqualification of Khoo Kay Por, Chong Eu was really feeling anxious and troubled

His own position was the most precarious with threats from various queries. His Padang Kota was part of the parliamentary constituency of Tanjung, which had Gerakan candidate Dr. Ooi Yun Seng as his running-mate. But the parliamentary candidate was not a strong contender, and that ruled out any chances of any booster effects in the voting pattern. In the neighbouring Kampung Kolam state seat, Khoo Kay Por's disqualification further weakened National Front's position. To make matters worse, the venerable C.Y. Choy was having a field-day in Pengkalan Kota, which was also a part of the same parliamentary constituency.

Consequently, Lim Chong Eu was the only National Front candidate with an even chance in the Tanjung area which saw 2 state candidates and 1 parliamentary candidate of National Front in contest. Even then, he was going against the tides.

Winning just by a nose

The forecasts were progressively pessimistic by polling day on July 1978. In the afternoon, informations pointed to an uncertain situation, where no victory could be predicted for Chong Eu. However, the evening brought even worse news to the Chief Minister's residence: Dr. Lim, it appears that you must be prepared to face defeat. The voting trend had not been turned to your favour.

Lim Chong Eu's expression turned downcast at the unexpected year of the situation. In the records of his public life, he had never faced such trying challenge. He sat in the house, waiting through the minutes. He did not believe that majority of the voters wanted him to be nulled down.

be putted down.

After the last counting at the St. Xavier Institution, he heard that besides his narrow victory, the rest of the Barisan candidates were beaten. He just won by 914 votes majority over his opponent Wong Hong Keat of DAP and he barely managed to smile.

Below were the results of the Penang State assembly election for

Bagan Jermal Sak Cheng Lun (MCA) 5,640 votes (elected)
Chuah Ban Hock (SDP) 4,304 votes
Peh Joo Teck (Independent) 3,875 votes

Bagan Dalam T. Subbiah (MIC) 5,474 votes (elected)
Shamugam (DAP) 5,684 votes

	Loh Kim Heng (SDP)	857 votes	
	Hamid Abdullah (PAS)	845 votes	
Bukit Tengah	Liang Thau Sang (Gerakan)	3,728 votes (elected)	
	Ong Chin Seong (DAP)	3,164 votes	
	Musa Yatim (PAS)	2,319 votes	
Bukit Mertajam	Seow Hun Khim (DAP)	8,512 votes (elected)	
•	Oh Teck Aun (MCA)	5,451 votes	
	Apparoo	181 votes	
Macang Bubuk	Lim Heng Tee (Gerakan)	3,301 votes (elected)	
	Ng Chiew Pong (DAP)	2,782 votes	
	Hussein Ismail (PAS)	2,318 votes	
	Ismail Kamal (Independent)	100 votes	
Bukit Tambun	Ng Swee Khim (MCA)	3,815 votes (elected)	
	Koay Boon Seng (DAP)	2,749 votes	
Sungei Bakap	Teoh Kooi Sneah (Gerakan)	2,583 votes (elected)	
	Teoh San Seng (DAP)	102 votes	
	Khor Huat Tian (SDP)	99 votes	
	Khoo Soo Kheng (Ind. Front)	2,264 votes	
	Saidon (PAS)	513 votes	
	Yusoff (Independent)	1,632 votes	
Padang Kota	Lim Chong Eu (Gerakan)	6,137 votes (elected)	
	Wong Hoong Kiat (DAP)	5,223 votes	
	Dr. Peter (SDP)	108 votes	
	Gan Kah Peng (Ind. Front)	322 votes	
Pengkalan Kota	C.Y. Choy (Independent)	8,562 votes (elected)	
	Tan Chin Bee (MCA)	2,552 votes	
	Ooi Sit Thor (DAP)	3,460 votes	
Kampung Kolam	Ooi Ean Kwong (DAP)	10,239 votes (elected)	
	Mah Cheok Tat (Ind. Front)	2,225 votes	
	Lee Teck Hooi (Independent)	581 votes	
Dato Kramat	Teh Ewe Lim (Gerakan)	9,002 votes (elected)	
	Khoo Teng Kok (SDP)	786 votes	
	Lim Kar Pin (Ind. Front)	3,150 votes	
Sungei Pinang	Ong Hean Tee (Gerakan)	7,594 votes (elected)	
	Chuah Bee Khan (DAP)	5,149 votes	
	Pakunam (Independent)	2,343 votes	
	Tan Chong Hooi (Ind. Front)	777 votes	
Bukit Glugor	Karpal Singh (DAP)	7,776 votes (elected)	
	Tan Ghim Hwa (Gerakan)	7,202 votes	

	Yeap Ghim Guan (SDI)	
	Rahim Karim (Independent)	848 votes
Ayer Itam	Pater Dason (DAP)	7,643 votes (elected)
	David Choong Yew Leong (MC	A)6,421 votes
Paya Terubong	Oh Keng Seng (SDP)	517 votes
	Chin Nyok Soo (DAP)	5,525 votes (elected)
	Lau Kok Chew (Gerakan)	5,255 votes
	Lim Cheng Teik (SDP)	2,320 votes
Tanjung Bungah	Khoo Huat Hin (Ind. Front)	660 votes
		9,637 votes (elected)
	Khoo Soo Hoe (DAP)	4,464 votes
	Gopalnana (SDP)	322 votes
	Tan Chong Teik (Gerakan)	6,636 votes (elected)
Sungei Nibong	Tan Chong Telk (Gerakan)	4.074

QA6 votes

4.074 votes

Among the Grakan's candidates, only Teh Ewe Lim, Khor Gark Kim, Ong Hean Tee and Tan Chong Teik won handsomely. Those who won narrowly were Lim Chong Eu, Lim Heng Tee (519 votes) Liang

Thau Sang (564 votes) and Teoh Kooi Sneah (319 votes).

If the Gerakan could not retain the risky constituencies, their

domain which was built up in 1969 would be given to others. Lim Chong Eu would not be able to maintain the past glory even though he was still appointed as the Chief Minister.

Muhiddin (PSRM)

was still appointed as the Charle analysts.

The lucky escape during the 1978 general election was really a serious lesson for Gerakan. This miserable experience had caused Lim Chong Eu to hate the MCA deeper. It also reminded Chong Eu to be more cautious in order to avoid the pitfalls of complacence.

In view of MCA as the No. 2 partner in the National Front, Lim Chong Eu could do little to its refusal to take displinary actions against candidates of the People's Independent Front'. But he used his prerogative in Penang to bar those rebels from appointment as municipal councillors.

Naturally, Chong Eu kept a higher degree of vigilance against MCA from then on, especially during the haydays of Lim Kean Siew as MCA strongman. He was on guard against the latter's possible moves. He was also always mindful of MCA's oppressive stand since Gerakan's birth to its present state of growth. But very superficially, the two organisations appeared like members of a family. A pair of brothers habouring

different ambitions, having different schemes in their dreams and ever poised to pounce at each other.

When Lim Chong Eu made it to the Chief Ministership of Penang, Tan Siew Sin had quit active politics, Tan retired as MCA Chief in 1974. making wav for Lee San Choon. Upon retirement, the former MCA leader was made Advisor to the Ministry of Finance and later appointed Chairman of Sime Darby.

There was a group lobbying for his appointment as Yang Dipertua Negeri (Governor) of Penang on Tan Siew Sin's retirement. Though

rumours were rife, nothing concrete came of it.

According to the State Constitution of Penang, the Yang Dipertua Negeri is to be appointed by the King, acting on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister. In another words, when the Yang Dipertua Negeri had served his 5-year term, his successor had first to receive the nod from the Chief Minister.

As Lim Chong Eu and Siew Sin were political adversaries, it could be imagined that he would not relish the idea of Siew Sin sitting over him. Though the Yang Dipertua Negeri does not exercise executive powers of the state, he is still superior to the Chief Minister in protocol and post.

As such, the talk about Siew Sin's possible tenure as Penang Governor was put to rest.

As we would recall, Ong Yoke Lin, who had plotted with Tan Siew Sin to oust Lim Chong Eu from MCA in the late 50's to the early 60's,

was another of Chong Eu's arch-rivals.

In Lim Chong Eu's life, he would not easily forget 3 persons in MCA; they were Tan Siew Sin, Ong Yoke Lin and T.H. Tan. Dua to the unridgeable differences, Chong Eu flatly refused in 1972 to merge Gerakan with MCA and be the No. 2 man of the porposed group.

As for Ong Yoke Lin, there was also hints that he might become Penang Yang Dipertua Negeri when he retired as Speaker of Dewan Negara, the upper house of Parliament. But he could not possibly get the support of Chong Eu for that position.

Besides the 3 MCA men, Lim Chong Eu also failed to reconcile with Lim Kean Siew, who had joined MCA at a later stage but seemed

solely against Gerakan in his moves and manoeuvres.

The failure of the 'gang of 7' in the polls dealt a stunning blow to Kean Siew's political fame, because they could only sap the strength of Gerakan but failed to shake it. It also failed to topple Lim Chong Eu. Instead, it led to Penang MCA's own internal strife.

The first to take a blast at Lim Kean Siew was election loser and Penang MCA Youth Chairman Choong Ewe Leong. He was a former Exco member of the State Government, but lost his position at the 1978 polls at the hands of Peter Dason of DAP. He blamed the election defeat on failure by MCA and Gerakan to cooperate and communicate. He alleged that the stumbling-block to MCA — Gerakan ties was Lim Kean Siew and that had Kean Siew insisted on imposing his personal views and failed to place National Front interests above the narrower interests of individuals and MCA. The National Front would have faced the polls in better shape had Kean Siew not done the damage.

In the wake of Choong Ewe Leong's attack, Penang MCA Youth released a press statement in support, and proposed Choong Ewe Leong as replacement for Lim Kean Siew as the liaison Committee Chairman

of Penang MCA.

The press statement said, 'Lim Kean Siew, who has virtually total control of Penang MCA, risked everything just to exert the Party's influence. His move in forming the 'People's Independent Front' for the 'gang of 7' failed to receive the public's support. Eventually, the gang of 7 was wiped out. As commanding general, Lim Kean Siew should have remained to accept the consequences and resign, instead of flying off to Europe for a holiday on some excuses.

It went on to say: MCA's position in Penang is in a worrying state.

The pressing task now is to re-organise it.

When the statement was made, its target have gone on holiday overseas. When he returned, Kean Siew remained nonchalant to all the past protests.

With Lee San Choon as his backer, he would not think of stepping down, Lee San Choon, did not think the MCA-Gerakan struggle was over just then. He still needed Kean Siew to tie down Lim Chong Eu.

That was San Choon's long term strategy.

Thus, it was not Kean Siew whom Lee San Choon wanted to put on trial after the polls. It turned out that Choong Ewe Leong and his supporters were the ones to get the axe. Lee San Choon, exercising his Presidential powers, sacked Choong Ewe Leong and left Lim Kean Siew in firmer control of MCA in Prenang.

The shouts of protest from MCA Youth of Penang were in vain as Lim Kean Siew, being appointed, necessarily enjoyed the backing of San Choon. He had nothing to fear about Choong Ewe Leong.

Lim Chong Eu kept his hands off MCA's demestic affairs, Lim Kean Siew continued as MCA boss for Penang. But their next round promised to be more exciting then the previous one.

Goh Cheng Teik in Bitter Disappointment

Nevertheless, Gerakan managed to gain some grounds at the Federal Chemical Level thanks to Lim Chong Eu's influence. Paul Leong, a Chong Eu blue-eyed boy, was appointed Natural Resources Minister by Premier Hussein Onn. This Ministry is a superior one to any under the MCA Ministers.

With Paul Leong's promotion, Goh Cheng Teik's hopes for getting a full ministership evaporated before his eyes. Goh was bitterly disappointed and fissures began to form in his ties with Chong Eu.

Goh Chong Teik was single-handedly groomed by Chong Eu for politics. But Chong Eu's apparent favouring of Paul Leong spurred Goh to step up his efforts in cultivating his own influence in Penang. This aggravated the factional development that went on in the Party.

Though Chong Eu moved swiftly to stablise the general situation upon assuming his position, one worry persisted and left him rather disappointed: Khoo Kay Por refused to accept the decision to disqualify him on nomination day and appealled to the High Court. The judge declared the election at the constituency of Kampung Kolam null and void and ordered a by-election.

Prior to this, DAP's candidates at Datuk Kramat and Bagan Jermal, respectively Lam Chee Wah and Goh Lim Eam also appealled against their disqualification but failed.

The court made judgements based on its reasons and is above question. But the public regarded Khoo Kay Por's legal actions and ultimate victory in the court as deserving no honours and haboured a rebellious tendency against him in the by-election.

If Khoo Kay Por had qualified to contest against Ool Ean Kwong at the first try, he would have very good chances of a victory. But the by-election which was made possible by resorting to legal action had removed all the favourable factors from his side.

Under the queer conditions, Gerakan avoided publicly urging the voters to support Khoo Kay Por; instead, it urged the voters to let Gerakan have 9 seats and be a match for UMNO, which already held 9 seats. But the voters were cool to the pitch.

DAP, like Gerakan, decided to field the original candidate for the duel and let Ooi Ean Kwong face Kay Por for the by-election, DAP used National Education Policy as a prime issue, especially the problems concerning Merdeka University and Chung San Primary School rebuilding proposal which was obstructed.

When the ballots were counted on December 10, 1978, Khoo Kay Por was floored by Ooi Ean Kwong, Khoo managed 4,398 votes to Ooi Ean Kwong's 8,063. The margin of victory was 3,655 votes.

Chong Eu was very disappointed with the outcome as he could not prove Gerakan sufficiently strong and Gerakan failed to match UMNO in the number of State Assembly seats held.

Official visit to China and A Reunion with Xiao Oian

Two months after the 1978 polls, Lim Chong Eu visited Beijing on the invitation of the Chinese People's Foreign Friendship Association. Besides his wife and daughter, he was also accompanied by an entourage of State Government officials of Penang.

To a certain extent. Chong Eu's visit to China had great significance. He went as an ethnic Chinese Minister, revisiting a country which had played host to him, albeit much earlier. These must have evoked very special feelings.

The visit was made not long after the fall of China's 'gang of four'. and while wounds left by the infamous Cultural Revolution's rampages had yet to heal. Hua Kuofeng was then in power but Deng Xiaoping had yet to be fully resurrected, though he was already gaining influence.

While in Beijing, Chong Eu and his delegation was received by Leow Chen-Chi (since deceased), chairman of the Committee for Overseas Chinese Affairs. He also made a trip to Chen-dou, Szechuan Province and paid a visit to the hospital in which he had worked during the war

In addition to meeting the government officials, Chong Eu made a special request to the Chinese authorities for permission to meet Xiao-Qian, his old pal whom he had met in London during his student days.

Xiao Oian, a romanticist author and journalist, had shared a memorable period of time with Chong Eu and they remained intimate friends. Their last stay together was in 1944, when Chong Eu was a doctor in China.

In 1957, at the height of anti-rightist fervour, Xiao Qian was branded 'rightist' and lost his writing career. When the Cultural Revolution swept China in 1966, Xiao Qian's fate was worse. He was banished and confined in a cow-shed. He seemed condemned to waste his life in misery.

Xiao Qian was one of the many thousands who were victimised during the Cultural Revolution, He was still not truely 'rectified' when Chong Eu visited China in October 1978. Although the Cultural Revolution had come to an end, Xiao Qian was yet to be assigned in an appropriate working position.

As such, when Chong Eu put up this request, the unit concerned was quite undecided. Finally it was approved by a superior: Xiao Qian was allowed to meet Chong Eu.

At the People's Hall where the dinner was held, Chong Eu waited eagerly to meet his old friend.

It was really an exciting moment for Chong Eu and his wife to see their long waited friend. Mrs. Lim even shouted uncontrollably 'Wow! What had happened to you, you are just like a big barrel.'

Xiao Qian could only flash a bitter smile. There were too much hurt reflected from his face. He could not relate them one by one and

perhaps the bitter smile was the only way to describe them.

At that moment, Xiao Qian was led to sit with Chong Eu. It was his first time meeting a foreign guest and the opportunity to enjoy the delicious feast really surprised him. He had never dreamed of a day like this, his old friend has become a minister while he himself was still a victim waiting for "defreezing".

Thirty years of seperation had made a great change. Chong Eu was very sad to see a romanticist author friend tortured into a down-trodden old man.

After that meeting with Chong Eu, Xiao Qian was able to return to his work of writing. Perhaps Xiao Qian would be rectified sooner or later, but just because of Chong Eu's visit to China, he was unfreezed earlier and

allowed to rebuild his reputation as a writer.

Not too long afterwards, Chong Eu was informed that Xiao Qian was allowed to visit the United States. And later he also attended an international Chinese writers conference in Singapore. Chong Eu and his wife grabbed this opportunity and rushed to Singapore with the desire to entertain this old friend.

The most unforgetable moment for Mr. and Mrs. Xiao Qian in their life was the invitation by Chong Eu to visit Penang in 1985. They were the guest of honour of the Chief Minister.

Whenever Chong Eu talks about Xiao Qian, he is indeed excited and cheerful and also shows his warmth and respect. The lasting friendship between these two men has proved the greatness of sincere feelings.

ship between these two lines has proved the greathess of sincere rectings.

Friends who are close to Chong Eu said that he had saved Xiao
Qian because the latter was able to revitalise his life from despair due to
the visit of Chong Eu to Peking.

During the visit to China, Chong Eu took the opportunity to meet many old friend and his wife's relatives.

When we talk about Chong Eu's visit to China, it remains us of a historic occurance just before Malaysia and China established diplomatic ties.

After the conflict within the party in 1971, Chong Eu had gained the Gerakan. In order to assure the smooth running of the Penang State Government, he bagan to conduct talks with Tun Razak who was the UMNO President and had then established good relationship. They had a close co-operation again after the May 13, incident.

Tun Razak intructed the UMNO state assemblymen to give full support to Chong Eu.

Besides, Chong Eu was given a very confidential assignment by Tun Razak. He wanted Chong Eu to open up a way for Malaysia to establish diplomatic ties with China.

Although Chong Eu had always denied it, many indications had proved it was true that he negotiated with the Chinese officials during his visit to China in 1971.

Chong Eu was described as the 'Kissinger of Malaysia' who visited China secretly to make necessary arrangement for the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Chong Eu stayed in Hong Kong for quite some time, the main purpose was to negotiate with Chinese officials on the matter of establishing diplomatic relation between the two countries. He was entrusted to carry out this task secretly. Because he was not in the federal cabinet, it was not appropriate for him to announce it.

It is very simple inference that Chong Eu truely had carried out this important mission just because Tun Razak trusted him.

When Tan Siew Sin retired in 1974, Tun Tazak had invited Chong

Eu to join the federal cabinet for a key post, but Chong Eu declined the invitation merely on the ground that he intended to concentrate his energy on the development of Penang State.

From this presumption we can imagine how much Chong Eu was appreciated by Tun Razak. It was logical for Tun Razak to entrust Chong Eu with the mission to undertake negotiation regarding the

establishment of diplomatic ties between Malaysia and China.



◀1969年民联纳人民政党、党徽保留 三角形、中间多了禾穗。林苍祐也 因此接身一变成为槟州首席部长。

U.D.P. was inducted into Gerakan; the triangular form of the party emblem was retained but with the addition of a rice-stalks configuration. Dr. Lim Chong Eu himseif eventually assumes his position as Penang's Chief Minister.

扶政了的民政党、宴会场面也显得热 闹、堪谓赞群毕至、韩上添花。 As ruling party, Gerakan's functions were

never short of dignitaries. Prestige always accompanied power.





1974年,林苍祐领导民政党加入国鲜,再度执政。图为他和邱耀圆 被同志抬起欢呼时援。

In 1974, under Dr. Lim Chong Eu's leadership, Gerakan bocame a component party of National Front (Barisan Nasional) and won the second mandate in the year's elections. Lim Chong Eu seen pictured with Khoo Kay Por after their victory and chaired by supporters.



1982年,林苍姑在同一个这区模捷,图为他和诗子模双双被技业的影响镜头 Contesting In his original constituency and was again in 1982, Lim Chang Eu getting the "spoils of victory" with Dr. Khor Tur Koon.



过。在他身后的人物有邱建圆、 许岳金、林维雄及曾永森等。 ubilant Lim Chong Eu, basking in victory, r

A Jubilant Lim Chong Eu, basking in victory, received by party members; behind him are Khoo Kay Por, Khor Gark Kim, Lim Ee Heong and Michael Chen.



1974年叶锦源企图夺取栋州政权不遂。 Yeap Kim Guan of DAP failure to capture the power of the state of Penang.





林苍祐吸納了林敬益(上)、梁棋科 (中)及曾永森(下)先后加入民政 党,但皇帝下三虎相斗的局面。

Dr. Lim Keng Yalu (top) Paul Leong (centr and Michael Chen (botton) were respectively recruited into Gerakan by Chong Eu. But they eventually brought a triangular tussle for power within the party



足清德本来是林苍祐的好徒弟。 后期却变成关系冷却。 Dr. Goh Cheng Teik started as Chong Eu's protege; but their relationship became chilly later



◆一度是林苍祐身边的两位紅人、 郑耀林已告作古,许岳金则告失 势。
They were once Chong Eu's prominent

aides, but Tan Sri Teh Ewe Lim had died and Dato' Khor Gark Kim had faded from political limelight.



波德中大会即使退出领导民政党, 林苍祐还是扮演着垂帘听政的角色。 图为他和受领导人振臂高呼太阳效。

Though he had relinquished his reigns on the party at Port Dickson General Assembly Dr. Im Chong Eu remains a leader behind the scenes; he is seen here chanting a Unity slogan with other leaders.



1982年林荃站車领其他後达人及支持者前往提名站。 Lim Chong Eu leading candidates and supporters of Gerakan to the nomination centre in 1982.



提名过后,林苍祐文民生仆仆展开党选注册。 After nomination, Dr. Lim Chang Eu starts on his campaign scalls, while wind style.

1972 年民政党内哄倒林苍祐的主要人物

During Gerakan's 1972 intra-party conflict, Dr. Tan Chee Khoon was the leading character in rallying anti-Lim Chong Eu forces.



陈志勤 Dr. Tan Chee Khoon



賽胡中阿拉达斯 Syed Hussein Alatas



陈朴根 Tan Phock Kin



威拉邦 Veerappan



王裕好 Ong Joo How



V 大卫 V. David



特选才 Yeoh Teck Chye



基斯打化 Mustafa Hussein



PETER DASON

脱离马华的七人帮矛头直指林苍祐,企图推翻民政党执政 权, 但宣告失败。

A splinter group from MCA, The Gang of 7, had their gun-sights on Dr. Lim Chong Eu. They planned in vain to topple Lim Chong Eu and crush the Gerakan at the elections.



MAH CHEOK TAT



HO KHEE PIN



年思庆 KHOO SOO KHENG



LIM KAHPIN



郑岩兴 KHOO HUAT HIN



颜嘉妈 GUN KAH PENG



▲林苍祐指林建寿暗中支 持七人帮。这是一张貌 合种离的照片, 图中人 物是林苍祐、林肆寿及 李三春。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu accused

Lim Kean Slew of providing covet support to The Gang of 7. This picture depicts a scene of superficial cordiality among Lim Chong Eu. Lim Kean Siew

民联党的铁三角



外班林 Mr. Teh Ewe Lim



环 建 图 Mr. Khoo Kay Por



陈锑平 Mr. Tan Kim Wah



林苍祐于1964年主持民联党代表大会。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu chaired the annual general meeting of UPD in the year of 1964.



林苍祐于1978年访问中国时,政府官员及地方领袖前往进行。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu seat off by Govt. Officers & Local Community Leads in 1978 doing his trip to Ching.



林苍祐1984年会見樂館泮,麦汉锦及奉永枢。 Dr. Leo Yee Pan, Mak Hon Kam & Lee Yong Kee paid a courtesy call to Dr. Lim Chong Eu In 1984.



CHAPTER 8: ABDICATING THE LEADERSHIP OF GERAKAN

Originally Dr. Lim Chong Eu had decided to quit leading the Gerakan after the 1978 general election. However, he did not intend to quit as Chief Minister of Penang.

The decision to remain as Chief Minister but to quit as party leader is to demonstrate his point that party and government should be separated. At the same time, he wanted to prove that 'Lim Chong Eu is not Gerakan', and Gerakan is not Lim Chong Eu' either. As many have argued that once Lim Chong Eu stops leading Gerakan, the party is

Dr. Lim Chong Eu had made it clear in August 1980 when he announced that he would not seek re-election in the Gerakan Delegates

Sources from the grassroot revealed that the Deputy President, Dr. Lim Keng Yaik would be successor. True enough, Lim Keng Yaik was targetting to become the party President, he was not contented to be

However, Lim Chong Eu was preparing to promote Paul Leong for Paul Leong was the more suitable person to lead the party since he was the Minister of Primary Industries which was an important post. Besides, his relationship with key UMNO leaders was good.

Paul Leong was the secretary-general when Chong Eu led the party. But if he could not overcome Keng Yaik, he could never be able to take

Chong Eu's formula was:-

Chairman : Paul Leong Deputy Chairman: Lim Keng Yaik

Secretary-general : Teh Ewe Lim

The strategy of getting Ewe Lim to become Secretary-general was to prevent Goh Cheng Teik from getting a promotion. Moreover, if the first two posts were offered to the members from Perak, then the third post should be retained for a Penangite since the party-base was Penang. In fact, Chong Eu's formula was not totally accepted by the party members. They rejected this pre-arranged election. Perhaps, this was a mistake Chong Eu had made.

Chong Eu understood that Paul Leong's chances of winning was not high. So he instructed Khor Gark Kim and Lim Ee Heong, who were from Penang to get support from various places. But the response was not favourable. In fact, Gark Kim had offended the supporters from both Keng Yak's camp and Cheng Teik's camp.

When Chong Eu noticed that the situation was not in Paul Leong's favour, he specially met Keng Yaik and persuaded him to remain in the second spot. But the latter insisted that the grassroot wanted him to fight for the top post, otherwise they would quit the party.

Keng Yaik also made it clear that he would not contest if Chong Eu agreed to lead the party, otherwise, he had no choice but to contest for the Presidency.

The Gerakan Delegates' Conference was held on 17th August, 1980 in Port Dickson. Representatives from various states made their efforts to get supports. The two camps turned out in full force for this election.

Pulling the carpet from under Cheng Teik

The main purpose of Chong Eu's formula was clear, he wanted Cheng Teik to be precluded as secretary-general simply because he realised that Cheng Teik had the ambition to take his place as Chief Minister of Penang. As such, Chong Eu regarded Cheng Teik as a rebel in the party. The character of Chong Eu was no bowing to compulsion and there should be no 'anti-Chong Eu' campaign within the party, be it Cheng Teik or even Gark Kim, he would make use of every possible ways to stop such opponents.

During the election on 17th August, 1980, it was the straight fight between Keng Yaik and Paul Leong. About 600 representatives cast their votes and Kheng Aik obtained 325 votes against 268 votes of Paul Leong (7 spoilt votes). In other words, Keng Yaik was elected President by a 57-vote majority.

Keng Yaik's victory certainly disappointed Chong Eu to a great extent, but it was as widely forecasted beforehand.

Paul Leong was nominated by Keng Yaik to contest the deputy President's post and he was elected unopposed. The other deputy President was veteran Ong Boon Seong. His victory prevented Cheng Teik from getting the post.

During the election of secretary-general, Cheng Teik had earlier known that he had been axed from the list, so he withdrew from the election, followed by Tiong Hong and Chow Siong, and Ewe Lim was elected unopposed.

Chong Eu was not completely disappointed in this election as he had Cheng Teik prevented from moving up.

After the election, Cheng Teik was told that Keng Yaik had betrayed him, but Cheng Teik denied such allegation, saying that he was still young and he was willing to sacrifice for the unity of the party.

Although Cheng Teik had clarified that he was on good terms with Keng Yaik, the situation later showed that they were two different powers which affected greatly the struggle of both the camps.

After the election of the important posts, the 24 central committee members were elected from 41 nominess. Except for 5 from the life members, the other 19 were elected. Cheng Teik who was compelled to withdraw from contesting the top posts attained the most ovtes, 300.

Lim Heng Tee	committee members - Penang	354 votes
Ong Hean Tee	- Penang	345 votes
Song Chow Siong	- Selangor	337 votes
Tan Siong Teik	- Negri Sembilan	330 votes
Ow How Cheong	- Perak	328 votes
Goon Sui Fook	- Selangor	298 votes
Choong Sim Poey	- Penang	284 votes
Kee Lek San	- Perak	275 votes
Ong Kee Bok	- Perak	273 votes
Tan Tiong Hong	- Federal Territory	
Yeap Chee Kean	- Negri Sembilan	250 votes
Leow Teik Kai	- Kedah	244 votes
Koay Tiong Tong	- Johore	243 votes
Balasundram	- Penang	238 votes
Goay Swee Chok	- Malacca	235 votes
Loh Bok Chuan	- Malacca	228 votes
Oh Heap Kee	 Negri Sembilan 	211 votes

The 5 life-members were:—
Ang Chin Wah — Perak
Goay Teng Kheng — Kedah
Khoo Kay Por — Penang
Putih bin Dan — Penang
Harun Sirat — Penang

Gark Kim made a sacrifice

Party members from Penang state occupied 8 seats as committee members and one as secretary-general. The Pro-Cheng Teik Cilquemadeup the majority. Committee members from other states were mostly pro-Keng Yaik. As such, the whole central committee was actually controlled by both Keng Yaik and Cheng Teik camps.

The most miserable person in this particular election was none other than Khor Gark Kim. He had worked very hard for Paul Leong and . us offended the Keng Yaik camp and he was incompatible with Cheng Teit's camp. Eventually Paul Leong was not excluded but the poor Gark Kim was left out of the central committee.

Gark Kim's defeat had prevented him from being appointed assistant secretary-general and not even a committee member. He could only resist the pressure as a state councillor. But he was unable to raise his head since then. The adverse situation had also caused him a lot of trouble during the 1986 general elections.

Lim Kean Siew made another threatening move

After the Gerakan elections another matter caused Lim Chong Eu a great deal of headache when the star assemblyman for Pengkalan Kota C.Y. Chop yassed away on 26th September 1980. The vacancy left behind by C.Y. Chop had given Lim Kean Siew a hope to be included in the state assembly. He was once strongman in the Labour Party and he believed that the constituents would support him.

The Pengkalan Kota constituency was regarded as a 'Black Area' by the ruling party, they would never put a strongman in this fight because no one would be spared. MCA would normally send an unknown candidate when allocated this seat.

However, the situation had drastically changed after the demise of C.Y. Choy. Lim Kean Siew was anxious to contest for the seat in the hope to make a comeback.

As the Chairman of Penang BN, Lim Chong Eu could not publicly oppose Lim Kean Siew because this seat was traditionally allocated to MCA who could field their own choice. However, Lim Chong Eu was not willing to see Kean Siew's victory in the contest as his chief ministership would be challenged in the next general election.

The only way to wreck Kean Siew's dream was to secretly support an independent candidate.

Independent candidates could be found anywhere, but the person should be influential enough to get a sizeable support of the voters.

A man who had been working for the late C.Y. Choy was eventually picked as the independent candidate. He was none other than Lim Yew Chin.

The experienced political veteran Lim Kean Siew used two strategies to counter the pressure from Gerakan. He persuaded the MCA president Lee San Choon to seek co-operate from Lim Keng Yaik who was the new Gerakan President.

Following this, Kean Siew also invited San Choon and Neo Yee Pan to pay a courtesy call to Lim Chong Eu with the motive that Chong Eu would help Kean Siew in the election.

As the Penang BN Chairman, Chong Eu ought to support the Barisan National candidate, but the 'gang of seven' who brought disgrace to him had restrained him from supporting Kean Siew with sincerity and earnestness.

Nevertheless, since Kean Siew had extended the olive branch, all Chong Eu could do was to keep the hatred deep inside his own heart.

Secondly, Kean Siew had also received the support from the then Minister of Finance, Tengku Razaleigh who allocated a total sum of 600 thousand ringgit to three Chinese primary schools in the Pengkalan Kota constituency.

The contest turned out to be a four-corner fight among Lim Kean Siew from Barisan National, Teoh Teik Huat from DAP, two independents – Lim Ewe Chin and Tan Kee Chye.

Lim Chong Eu was compelled by courtesy to witness' the nomination and the voting. He did not attend any of the MCA ceramahs. On the contrary, Lim Keng Yaik was invited to make exchange of fire with DAP.

Lim Chong Eu was quite unhappy with the attitude of Keng Yaik yet he could not oppose it publicly. On some occasions, he had to say something good, reluctantly, about the Barisan National candidate. The result came eventually, Kean Siew won the battle with 6,839 votes gainst Teik Huat's 6,285 votes, the majority was 554. The independent candidate Lim Ewe Chin secured only 1,503 votes, which made his deposit confiscated. Another independent Tan Kee Chye managed to get only 56 votes.

Using San Choon's own Foes to Mount a Counter Attack

The emergence of Lim Kean Siew was a big blow to two persons. Chief Minister Lim Chong Eu realised that the Penang BN would be facing many problems in time to come. Lim Kit Siang of DAP also faced the same problem within his party, because he was accused of wrongly fielding Teoh Teik Huat in the by-election. The so-called 'gang of four'. — Chan Teck Chan, Seow Hun Khim, Chin Nyok Soo and Goh Lim Eam were expelled from the party in the wake of the controvers.

Before the 'gang of four' incident, a state assemblyman from DAP had crossed over to Gerakan, he was none other than Ooi Eam Kwong who defeated Khoo Kay Por in the Kampong Kolam constituency in 1978.

The only undertaking to Eam Kwong was that he would be fielded in the next general elections.

The cross-over of Eam Kwong had stimulated Chong Eu to get three other ex-DAP State assemblymen and MP into Gerakan, but the negotiation was not successful.

Instead, Lee San Choon and Lim Kean Siew successfully convinced them to join MCA, increasing the MCA seats to 5 in the state assembly.

On the other hand, Lee San Choon received a big blow when the MCA strongman Michael Chen, and his followers crossed-over to Gerakan on 2nd June 1981. Chen made a statement on that day, saying that it was the most painful decision he had ever made during his 18 years in politics.

Surprisingly, a Gerakan MP Tan Tiong Hong joined the MCA too. In other words, both MCA and Gerakan experienced gains and losses. The two parties were not having a sincere co-operation, they were actually jockeying for power and position within the BN. The ultimate aim of MCA was ruling Penang state, it wanted to smash the legend that Lim Chong Eu was not replaceable.

Lee San Choon Retaliated

Lee San Choon was convinced by Lim Kean Siew to tackle Lim Chong Eu with a strategy. In 1982 general elections, Lee San Choon had made a very painful decision to contest in Seremban constituency where the majority of voters is Chinese.

Because of his sacrificial attitude, San Choon could speak out boldly to the BN leaders with conditions that MCA wanted equal allocation of seats with Gerkann in Penang Sate. In other words, MCA must be given an opportunity to prove itself that it enjoyed more support than Gerakan from the people.

In fact, Lim Chong Eu did not know anything about it until the very last minute

On the other hand, Gerakan had made negotiations with Thong Chiao Chung before the 1982 general election in order to absorb some chinese educationists into Gerakan. They were Kerk Choo Ting, Koh Tze Koon, Ong Thin Kin, Kang Chen Cheng, Yang Chuan and many others.

Lim Chong Eu was satisfied with such arrangements because he understood that Gerakan really needed a mightly force to gain more support. Eventually the Chinese educationists joined the Gerakan with the blessing of Barisan National President, Dr. Mahathir.

Kean Siew's Efforts for a Comeback in Vain

The 1982 general elections was in fact a battle between MCA and Gerakan. Since the Barisan National, especially UMNO, had given MCA an opportunity to prove its ability to regain the control of Penang, MCA would spare no efforts to overcome Gerakan's defences.

After realising the situation which was not in Gerakan's favour, Lim Chong Eu immediately flew to Kuala Lumpur to meet Dr. Mahathir, but his efforts were in vain. Certainly, Chong Eu was very angry over the arrangement that was accepted by Keng Yaik.

At the same time, Kean Siew strongly hinted that as long as MCA could secure more seats than Gerakan, he would definitely be the next Chief Minister of Penang.

As such, Kean Siew and his candidates went all out, and quite confident to win the election.

During the campaign, many funny posters were created. The conflict between MCA and Gerakan was obviously depicted.

Lim Chong Eu told the Gerakan members that Kean Siew should be eliminated. Gerakan could only retain the chief ministership in the absence of Lim Kean Siew.

As expected, Gerakan won all the eight seats allocated, whereas MCA won only six seats. The most dispointed person was of course Lim Kean Siew who was defeated in Pengkalan Kota. As a result, the chief ministership went to Chong Eu again.

Chong Eu was very satisfied with the result for he had successfully stopped his opponent from roaring. At the same time, Chong Eu had once again proved that no other person was able to snatch his post as Chief Minister while he was still in position.

Killing Two 'Birds' with One Stone - Removing Former Faithfule

The status quo was maintained when Lim Chong Eu was sworn in as the 4th Chief Minister of Penang state. Paul Leong and Goh Cheng Teik remained in the cabinet. Khor Gark Kim was elevated as a senior state executive councillor, who had a chance to take his turn to be the acting chief minister with Abdul Rahman Abbas of UMNO.

In 1984, Lim Chong Eu decided to go for a medical check-up in

the U.S.A. and if necessary, to undergo an operation.

Before his departure, Chong Eu met both the prime minister and deputy prime minister, stressing the possible consequence of the trip. He was then assured that the post of Chief Minister would be retained for Gerakan until the next general election.

Fortunately, Chong Eu returned home after less than a month's treatment.

However, not too long afterwards, Chong Eu hinted that he feeled tired and would restrained from frequent functions. He would normally instruct Gark Kim and other Exco members and even his political secretary, Boey Weng Kiat to represent him at various functions and activities.

Knowing that Chong Eu might retire from politics very soon, cliques within the party were waiting for the opportunity to seize the leadership of Penang Gerakan.

At this moment, Tan Ghim Hwa who had been very quiet for some time once again became active and with the support from Goh Cheng Teik, he defeated Gark Kim and was elected chairman of the Penang Gerakan. Nearing the 1986 general election, Lim Chong Eu reiterated his desire to retire from politics and such decision would not be changed. His decision accelerated the power struggle within the party. With the co-operation of the national leadership, the Penang leadership immediately worked out a list without Chong Eu for the general election. Under this arrangement, Cheng Teik would stand in the state seat while his parliament seat would be allocated to Kerk Choo Ting who was the secretary-general of Gerakan.

Gark Kim was given the Bukit Bendera parliamentary constituency which was regarded as a 'black area' for him. He would be out of business in the coming Penang state government whether he wins or

loses in the fight.

Upon persuasions by Dr. Mahathir and leaders of the Penang Chinese community, Lim Chong Eu changed his mind and agreed to stand for election with the condition that the list of candidates should be altered. The compromise was that Cheng Teik should be 'kicked back' to Nibong Tebal parliamentary constituency. At the same time, Chong Eu also agreed to 'edge out' Gark Kim from the state assembly, At first Chong Eu had wanted to make way for his son Kean Aun to become an assemblyman, but he eventually change his mind under the complicated situation for fear that he might be accused of nepotism.

The non-retirement of Chong Eu had smashed the dreams of both

Cheng Teik and Gark Kim of gaining the Chief Ministership.

After experiencing the tempestuous storm and turbulent waves, Chong Eu once again secured the chief ministership and had become

the longest serving chief minister of Penang.

In the 1986 general elections, Chong Eu's opponent was DAP's Wong Hon Yoke who was regarded as a lightweight. But to the astonishment of the voters, Chong Eu could only retain his seat by a mere majority of 1,500 votes. It was actually a set back for Chong Eu. With the influence of Lim Kit Siang, DAP won 10 seats in the Chinese predominant constituencies. They also captured 6 parliamentary seats out of the 7 contested. MCA and Gerakan proved definitely inferior. Koh Tze Koon and Khor Gark Kim were defeated. Tan Ghim Hwa was

not spared either, while Cheng Teik was re-elected in his parliamentary constituency but lost his post as a deputy minister.

The real winner among the Barisan National Chinese candidates was Chong Eu alone. Chong Eu remained unhurt while his fellow comrades experienced the defeats. He went on to become the 5th-term chief minister of Penane.

From this point, Chong Eu has proved that after his defeat in MCA power struggle in 1959, he has decided to change his political strategy in order to protect himself amidst a big storm. Syed Hussien Alatas, Tan Chee Khoon, Lee San Choon, Lim Kean Siew and even Lim Kit Siang could never overthrow him. His only regret is that neither of his two sons, Kean Aun and Kean Seng, had become an assemblyman when he is still in power.

The story of Chong Eu has not come to an end. During his 30 years in politics, people close to him realise that he is not an easy person to work with. He is really the god-father of Gerakan, he will make you listen to his teachings even until mid-night.

He likes to gather information in order to understand the intention of a party leader. He is very observant of people around him too.

Chong Eu does not make promises easily. He will not reveal his stance and attitude until the very last moment. For instance, he distrusts Cheng Teik, but he does not criticise him in public. When the time comes, he will just hit out and you will have no chance to defend yourself.

Chong Eu's original ambition was to become a national leader of the Chinese, but after his plan was spoiled by Tan Siew Sin, T.H. Tan and Ong Yoke Lin, he was contented to become the leader of Penangites. He even declined the invitation of the late Tup Brazie to join the exhibit

and Ong Yoke Lin, he was contented to become the leader of Penangites.

He even declined the invitation of the late Tun Razak to join the cabinet.

He is proud to have successfully implemented two gigantic projects

The Penang Bridge and KOMTAR, during his tenure of office.

Perhaps Chong Eu is most happy to prove that he is the invincible chief minister until his decides on his own retirement.

Chong Eu is the chief minister who does not stay in the official residence. He moved out from the Macalister Road residence after the 1978 general elections and is presently staying at his own house in Tanjung Bungah.

Chong Eu is now a horse owner, besides, he also rears dogs. They are his pets.

As a doctor, he should know when to retire, but as a politician, he does not know where is the finishing line. Normally, politics and power are the highest ideals a person will pursue. Once you have reached the summit, nothing will influence you into retreating from such a wonderful and fabulous world unless and until you really need to seek refuge in a more serene life.

Now is not the time for Chong Eu to rest, he has still a long way to

We are not in the position to speculate his future, thus, the story of Lim Chong Eu ends at this point.



1986年林苍祐在官邸与教育部长会华依布拉致寒暄、左为许子根博士。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu chatting with Minister of Education Anwar Ibrahim at the Chief Minister Residence; looking on is Dr. Khor Tzu Koon.



1986年林签祐括闽首相拿替士里马哈迪医生出席一项廉价屋开幕仪式。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu with Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir at the official opening of a Low Cost Housing Scheme.



林苍祐在元首府内庆视州元首敦阿旺医生(右一)华说。 Chong Eu Greeting the Yang Dipertua Negeri (governor) Tun Dr. Awang bin Hassan at the Residency (Sri Muttara) on the governor's birthday.



林苍祐与育首相教胡申翁,中为国防部长东始阿李道胡丁。 Chong Eu with former Prime Minister, Tun Husseln Onn, between them is Defence Minister Tengku Ahmad Rithoudeen.



■1984年林苍祐荣膺乔治市荣誉市民,由市议会主席拿督莫哈末育投予。

President of the Georgetown Municipal Council, Dato Mohamad Yeop conferring the Free Citizen's Honours on Dr. Lim Chong Eu.



1982年林苍姑在签署文件豪任第四任模州省席部长。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu signing the Oath-of of fice as Ohief Minister of Penang for the 4th term in 1982.

1972年林苍祐和 敦陈修信。 Dr. Lim with Tun Tan in 1972.





◀1980年林苍祐和 敦翁毓麟。 Dr. Lim with Tun Omat Ong Yoke Lin in 1980.







林签结和华柱领袖卫士里黄文彬、拿管许平等及拿管住汉良。 Dr. Lim Chang Eu with Chinese community leaders Tan Sri WEE BOON PIN, Dato KHOR PENG TING, and Dato CHOONG HAN LEONG.



A friendly gesture before the punches were pulled — Dr. Lim Chong Eu with opposition leader Lim Kit Siang.



1979年林荃站招待泰国省相克良萨。右为外交华长卫德里敦沙里。 Playing host to foreign dignitaries – Dr. Lim Chang Eu with Thal Prime Minister Kriangsak and Malaysian Foreign Minister Tan Sri Ghazali Shafte.



1980年林苍祐迎接到访的南韩总统崔圭夏。 Welcoming President CHOI KAI HA - The Chief Minister with bit distan



林苍祜挥手致意抖抖。 Dr. Lim Chong Eu waving goodbye, or is it?

A CHRONOLOGY OF DR. LIM CHONG EU'S POLITICAL CAREER

- 1919 Born at Arraton Road, Penang on May 28.
 - Enrolled at a girls' school then to Penang Hutching School for primary education. Received secondary school education at Penang Free School.
- 1938 Offered a Queen Victoria II Scholarship for higher studies in England.
- 1939 Joined Mandarin Tuition class conducted by Xiau Qian in England and a close flourished folurished between the tutor and the student.
- 1940 Graduated from Gray's Inn with a law degree.
- 1944 Graduated from University of Edinbrough with a degree in Medicine.
 - In the mids of World War II headed for Chungqing, the makeshift capital of China, with some returning Chines students, took up a job as Medical Officer of the Field Services Planning Committee of the Chinese forces, During this period met his wife-to-be, Madame Goh Swen Yen (Shin Yoong).
- 1946 Served China's Nationalist Chief of Staff, Chen Cheng, as his personal physician.
 - With Xiau Qian's recommendations succeeded in his application to be a lecturer in English Literature at Futan University, Shanghai, China.
- 1947 Left Shanghai for Hongkong and registered marriage with Mrs. Lim at the Civil Registry of Hongkong. Upon arrival

- back in Penang assisted his father, Dr. Lim Chwee Leong in medical practice at Soo Beng Dispensary.
- 1950 Served as Medical Officer with The Malayan Airforce Auxiliary Wing with the rank of Air Force Captain.
- 1951 At the age of only 32, appointed Penang Straits Settlements Councillor by the British Colonial Government on April 30.
 - Initiated the formation of Penang Radical Party which had its Inaugural meeting at Westland School Hall and elected a vice-chairman on June 19.
- 1953 Through majority support contested and won the post of Chairman of the Penang Radical Party.
 - On November 20, nominated as a candidate of the Penang Radical Party for the Georgetown municipal elections at Jelutong. Met his waterloo at the polls a month later.
- 1954 After earnest inviations by MCA President Tan Cheng Lock, joined the party and nominated to sit as a member of a working committee by the Penang and Province Wellesley MCA Committee on September 15, to negotiate with UMNO in the formation of Penang Alliance.
 - Called on all Malayan ethnic Chinese for political awareness and to register as voters.
 - Convened a General Meeting of Penang Radical Party on June 27 to ammend its constitution and change its name to "Radical Party" to dismantle the regional restriction. But refused nomination as its Chairman, obviously manifesting his desire to dilute ties with the party and concentrate himself in MCA.
 - Represented Penang Straits Settlements Council in welcoming the visiting Chairman of the United Nations General Assembly, Mrs. Panthi (Chief Indian Delegate to the U.N.) on August 13.
 - Received visiting Indian Premier Nehru on December 31, in a similar capacity.

- 1955 Contested Penang Straits Settlements Council elections at Kelawai constituency (an election similar to the State Assembly Polls today) against Mdm. Ool Siew Neoh, daughter-in-law of millionaire Yeap Chor Ee and mother of lawyer Yeap Chin Poh, a municipal councillor and Radical Party Vice-chairman. Won the election with 1535 votes against the 635 of Ool Siew Neoh, on 23rd January.
 - Based on his outstanding performance in the Penang Straits Settlements Council, appointed a member of the Alliance National Council by MCA effective from March 12.
 - After the first Federal Legislative Assembly General Elections on July 25, and by virtue as the leading councillor of Penang Straits Settlements Council, appointed Member of the Federal Legislative Assembly (an equivalent of the lower house of Parliament today) and as Alliance whip.
 - took up his position, on September 4, as a member of the Razak Commission for Education.
 - served as an ex-offcio director of Penang Chinese Chambers of Commerce from 1955 to 1959, urged the erection of a multi-storey complex for rental to accumulate profits; but his proposal was not fully accepted.
- 1956 In MCA, actively pushed for the rendering of assistance to Chinese in their application for citizenship and registration as voters.
 - The Razak Report, published on May 6, precipitated student unrests in Chung Ling High School on November 23. Due to failure by the authorities to table the Report in the legislative assembly and to write officially to Chinese Schools citing the conditions for acceptance as aided schools, Dr. Lim joined the Chinese education bodies to make counter-proposals to the Minister of Education and demanded the repeal of the 20 original conditions.
 - received a letter from MCA Publicity Chief Tan Siew Sin, stating his view pertaining to the political direction of MCA, "As I see it, MCA defend Chinese rights, and always must."

- 1957 As chairman of MCA Senior Committee Members Meeting on March 8, voiced the imperativeness for MCA to strengthen it grassroot organisation, assist Chinese in their application for citizenship and recruit Chinese into MCA. Also urged the party leadership' to consider and decide upon the appropriate stand should peace-making talks between Chinese Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists succeed.
 - On April 5 commented on the student protests in Chung Ling High School by saying "the student unrests in Chung Ling is like a boil on the body of Chinese education, careful diagnosis for the root-cause must be done before treatment; don't frust the effectiveness of superficial medication." Also placed the responsibility for the student sackings on the Board of Management of the School.
 - On April 14 expressed his opinion regarding the trip by a delegation of the Chinese guilds and associations to England when he said, "The Delegation's actions are detrimental to the country and the Chinese community. Malayan problems should be solved in Malaya, don't resort to foreign influence." Also expressed appreciation for the decision by Mr. Lim Lian Gaik to withdraw from the Delegation.
 - in the last sitting of The Straits Settlements Council on July 12 proposed a resolution tha "this council welcome the constitution-system proposal as contained in Report 41 of the Federal Legislative Assembly and its Appenda, and welcome the efforts to establish The Federation of Malaya as a sovereign and independent nation; particularly the Appendax concerning the draft of the Fenang State Constitution." This resolution was passed and it initiated Penang to be an integral part of the independent Malaya, opening a new page in the history of the state. During the same session of the Council, the state seblem, which carried the symbols of the old-fort and the sea; the state flag which was of blue, white and yellow and had a pinnag (areca) tree, were approved. (With the completion of the Penang Bridge, the state emblem was ammended to depict the Bridge and the sea)
 - various local newspapers printed headlines predicting his

imminent appointment as Penang Chief Minister, but he recommended Wong Pow Nee to the Tunku.

- 1958 As Political Bureau Chief of MCA, declared publicy that "since 1957, MCA organisation has been rotten because some obstinate elements in the party want to create ideaunity and influence a portion of the Chinese to loss confidence in MCA." "MCA needs te-organisation, it must be infused with newblood, its administration must be revamped to reverse the slide towards chaos." Described 1957 as Year of Organisation for MCA while 1958 its Year of Renewal.
 - During the 9th Annual Delegates' Assembly of MCA on March 23, supported by his reformist-faction, successfully challenged incumbent Tan Cheng Lock for the Presidency, winning by a margin of 89 votes to 67, at only 38 years of age.
 - attended the Official Opening of Nanyang University, Singapore, on March 29, accompanied by Ong Keng Seng and Yeap Thye Heng.
 - On May 11, at the National Delegates' Conference of Chinese Guilds and Associations, of which he was the sponsor, spoke in Mandarin, the first-ever MCA leader to do so. He said, "The 1948 Federation Agreement is not totally fair. Thus MCA fought for our rights in the drafting of the Contitution prior to Independence, mainly to ensure that Chinese could be granted citizenship and be registered as voters." He also called on Malayan Chinese to remain united, of mutual assistance and to provide constant feedback to MCA to enable it to serve the community effectively. Soon after, started a drive, in conjunction with the guids and associations, to register for citizenship and as voters, but a considerable number of Chinese then chose to isnore the drive.
 - On May 20, a group of Form 3 students from Chung Hwa High School rushed into Soo Beng Dispensary, met Dr. Lim Chong Eu and wanted the new MCA president to answer their 8 questions.
 - Declared on May 21, at a gathering of Chinese Association delegates in Johore "I fully understand the complexity and

daunting difficulties faced by Chinese education and realise that I will be the first to face the test, but I stand firm on my sincere commitments to the country and Chinese education!"

- As Chairman of the newly re-organised '3 major organisations' for Chinese Education, said on its first meeting, "Our organisation must remain alert to face the challenges ahead. But given the solidarity that exists between this organisation and the Chinese we can surely overcome the difficulties, let Chinese education enjoy sufficient development under constitutional guarantee." Also made a pledge that MCA shall kink or swim with Chinese education.
- On Jume 3 students of Han Chiang High School held a lightning but peaceful demonstration protesting the examination system, they demanded to see Dr. Lim Chong Eu to present their 3-point memorandum. After that, Dr. Lim despatched Yong Pang How to confer with Education Minister Khir Johan; requesting the change in the nature of the examinations to evaluational, making it unrelated to government aids and student promotion. The Minister gave his verbal consent and defused the highly charged situation.
- MCA convened its first-ever Extraordinary Delegates' Assembly on November 30, to consider Ammendments its constitution. Of the 126 delegated present, 75 voted for the proposal against 50 opposing votes and 1 abstention. A controversy ensued over the attainment of the stipulated 3/5 support. As Party President, he declared the votes sufficient and his willingness to bear responsibilities for any eventualities. But The Registrar of Societies later declared the number insufficient and the ammendment null and void.
- 1959 With 11 other representatives of MCA, prepared to negotiate with UMNO for: 1) allocation of 1/3 of the parliamentary seats to MCA candidates. 2) The inclusion of assurances concerning Chinese Education in the Alliance manifesto.
 - Wrote to the Tunku on June 24, stating the demands for 1/3 seat allocation to MCA and inclusion of assurances about Chinese Education in the election manifesto. The letter was

later made public by MCA Publicity Chief, Yong Pang How and taken by some as an attempt to put the Tunku under dures; meanwhile, the Tunku had won over the support of Tan Siew Sin, through the efforts of Alliance Secretary. General, T.H. Tan. It eventually led to a major crisis in MCA on the eve of the first general elections after Independence.

- On July 8 made a public statement that "The Federation is facing 2 major problems; one is about the Constitution and the other is about education. It is also of paramount importance."
- Met the Tunku on July 10 for a hour-long discussion concerning the allocation of parliamentary seats and education-related problems. The meeting ended in strained disagreement. Soon after, the Tunku made his written reply to Dr. Lim's letter.
- On July 13 MCA called another Extraordinary Delegates' Assembly to decide whether to remain in Alliance or to go it alone in the general elections. Made hints in his speech about seeking a compromise with Tunku Abdul Rahman in the hope that MCA would not head for a split. Also hinted the desire for MCA to remain in Alliance. After a 3-hour debate, it was decided, 89 votes to 60, to remain in Alliance and to declare confidence in the leadership of the Tunku. Dr. Lim Chong Eu was empowered to conduct negotiations with Alliance leaders and brief the next Delegates' Assembly.
- On the eve of the general elections, Dr. Lim remained oblivious to the idemtity of candidates as T.H. Tan retained total control of the list. When the list of MCA candidates was published all names belong to the Tan Siew Sin faction. Enraged, declared to the press on July 15 that he would not be responsible for the MCA candidates.
- made his painful decision and announced it on July 28 that he would go abroad for medical treatments on August 4.
- Officially announced his resignation on July 30. It was not accepted and efforts were made to persuade for his reconsideration.

- August 4, day of departure. Accompanied by Mrs. Lim Chong Eu, headed for a rest overseas. A large crowd, including Penang Chief Minister Wong Pow Nee, Penang UMNO Chief C.M. Yusoff, Penang MIC leader Arumugam Fillay, MCA Deputy President Dr. Cheah Toon Lock, Penang Excomember Aziz and many others, was at the Bayan Lepsa Airport to bid farewell. MCA Youth Chairman Chan See Guan led his members in chanting 'Strengthen our Resolve, Consolidate our Power; Fight for Power; Fight for equality in Education. Long Live Dr. Lim! Long Live Chinese Unity and Long Live Unity for All Races!"
- Wrote to MCA Acting Secretary-General Ooi Eik Teong from England on September 15, reiterating his decision to resign as MCA President.

1960 — Returned to Penang from England.

— The Teluk Anson parliamentary constituency fell wacant with the death of M.P. Foo Saik Kong. Too Joon-hing contested the by-election as an independent and was assisted by Dr. Lim Chong Eu and Mrs. Lim. It was also the first time she did public speaking.

1961 - Left MCA.

- Formed The United Democratic Party (UDP) on April 21 and was elected its vice-president.
- 1963 Due to divergent political views, headed for a showdown with Tan Sie Eng. Drawing on experience gained while involved with the power-struggle in MCA, and convinced that UDP must pursue multi-ethnic roads, successfully lobbied for the election on April 14 of former UMN founder, Datuk Zainol Abidin as Party President while himself got the post of Party Secretary-General. Tan Sie Eng and his supporters were spurned.
 - To test the response of the Penang public to UDP, a full-scale participation was made in the Georgetown Municipal polls; hitherto unknown, Teh Ewe Lim challenged Socialist Front

- strongman Lim Kean Siew and defeated the incumbent at Kampong Manggis ward by a slim majority of 34 votes.
- On the formation of Malaysia on September 16, led UDP to declare support for the concept but remained opposed to Alliance policies.
- 1964 In the General Elections on April 25, defeated Socialist Front stalwart Tan Phock Kin at the Tanjung Parliamentary constituency; and simultaneously defeating Socialist Front youngturk Tan Phan Khim at the state constituency of Kota, making his a double victory. UDP won 4 state seats and 1 parliament seat during that election.
- 1965 Under the aegis of The Peoples' Action Party (PAP) of Singapore, "The Malaysian Solidairty Organisation' was fromed in Kuala Lumpur, May 9, Participating parties included PAP, SUPP, SCCP, UDP and PPP. As UDP leader, became an important official of the new organisation, (after the formation of Malaysia in 1963 and the first Malaysian general elections in 1964, the PAP of Singapore requested the formation of a coalition government with Alliance, but was turned down. The Malaysian Solidarity Organisation was an alternative to consolidate political power by PAP. It finally led to the partition of Singapore from Malaysia to became a Republic)
 - during the days of organising the Solidarity movement, Lee Kuan Yew visited Penang to confer with Dr. Lim Chong Eu.
 An invitation was made for his move to Singapore to be made a minister and given greater scope for his political ambitions. The offer was courteously refused.
- 1966 Both Tan Gim Hwa and Yeap Ghim Guan were proposed as possible candidates for the by-election at the state constituency of Ayer Itam. Picked Tan Gim Hwa as the UDP candidate. Yeap Gim Guan left to join Democratic Action Party (DAP) and became a major political foe in the 1978 general elections.

- 1967 Taking stock of past losses at the UDP Annual Delegates' Conference, felt that opposition parties must form a united front to be politically viable. But the call did not receive the expected response from other oppositionists, and was forgotien. Later, efforts were made to recruit opposition leaders like Labour Party's Tan Chee Khoon, Veerappan (some Labour Party leaders could not adapt themselves to the party's newly emerging political leanings) and professionals like Prof. Wong Gan Wu and Prof. Syed Hussein Alatas to establish a new party, which made the idea of re-organising UDP tempting.
- 1968 On March 24, together with Prof. Syed Hussein Alatas, Prof. Wong Gan Wu, Tan Chee Khoon, Dr. Peter and Veerappan launched the "Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia" or "Gerakan" in Kuala Lumpur. The Party was granted registration on May 28 and it went into high gear to make preparations for the general elections. expected the next year, 1969.
- 1969 In the general elections, the line-up of candidates headed by him were, with the exception of his trusted aides and some Labour Party cross-overs, mainly unknowns. With the Socialist Front boycotting the polls and the political fortune of Alliance at its lowest ebb, he put up campaign slogans asking for support to form the Penang government. When the results were known on May 9, he was returned with a landslide majority in his original constituencies of Tanjung (Parliament) and Kota (state). Other candidates from his line-up, too, reported victory after victory. Even the then-ruling Chief Minister Wong Pow Nee lost his seat in Bukit Mertajam to Ooh Chooi Cheng. The Gerakan won 16 of the 24 state assembly seats, a ruline majority.
 - May 11, just before 'May 13', the Alliance Chief Minister Wong Pow Nee resigned as a formality to let the winning party form the next state government. The governor issued his letter of appointment to Dr. Lim Chong Eu at the same ceremony. (If Wong Pow Nee had taken 2 more days to resign, the Chief Minister would not be Dr. Lim Chong Eu because riots broke out in Kuala Lumpur on May 13 and spreaded to parts of the

country. A state of emergency was declared, with Tun Abdul Razak heading the central government through the National Operations Council (NOC). Parliament was suspended and parliamentary democracy temporarily terminated.)

- 1971 On June 5, Gerakan President Syed Hussein Alatas and Tan Chee Khoon masterminded a scheme to topple the state government of Penang under Dr. Lim Chong Eu, A shadow cabinet was formed using the names of Tan Phock Kin, Vecrappan, Khoo Teng Chye, Chellain, Teoh Kooi Sneah, Stewart, Mustaffa Hussein and Harun Sirat and some members of UDP and Pekemas, (Since taking over the state government of Penang Dr. Lim Chong Eu had embarked on a series of development projects and policy reforms, notably in solving the unemployment problem. These were not approved by the central leadership of Gerakan. The Party president and Party Secretary-General and other leaders felt that the Penang State Government was controlled by Dr. Lim Chong Eu and not Gerakan. Thus they planned the move to overthrow Dr. Lim and started the first crisis in the Party.)
 - On June 6, convened a meeting of all Gerakan state assembly-men and the party's state leaders at 9 in the morning, as Chairman of Penang Gerakan. The meeting decided to request the central leadership to postpone the Annual Delegates' Conference from the original date of July 3 to October 2. It also decided to ask Ong Joo How to show cause as to why the should not be sacked from the Party, the party head-quarters was asked to follow up on the matter.
 - Gerakan President Prof. Syed Hussein wrote to Dr. Lim on June 9, stating his '4 major crimes' and asking for his reason not to be sacked from the Party. Immediately convened a meeting of the State Gerakan Committee and 13 state assemblymen were present too. (including Tan Phock Kin) The meeting, to a considerable extent, stablished the position of his government.
 - On June 13, he chaired the Central Committee meeting of Gerakan as its vice-president. The meeting accepted the resignation of Prof. Syed Hussein Alatas as President and the

resignation of Verrappan. Later, the conflict developed into a court battle, in which the High Court, on November 8, 1971 ruled that Syed Hussein ceased to be Party president and member on June 13, and that he had since no power to speak on behalf of Gerakan. Consequently, Syed Hussein's insistence that the party hold its Annual Delegates' conference on July' 3 was null.

- In the state assembly of Penang on September 27, DAP assemblyman Yeap Gim Guan moved a vote of no-confidence in the government but it was defeated 11 votes to 7 with the 4 UMNO members abstaining. The 11 supporters of the government were Ooh Chool Cheng, Teh Ewe Lim, Khoo Kay Por, Tan Gim Hua, Ooi Teong Hoe, Chelliah, Ooi Ah Bee, Stewart, Teoh Kool Sneah, Khoo Teng Chye and Ong Joo How. Ong had been convince by Dr. Lim to vote for him for the sake of the stability of the Gerakan Government. But when the Pekemas was formed, Ong joined the new party later. Efforts were made to forge closer co-operation with Tun Abdul Razak and UMNO with a view to form a coalition state government comprising of Gerakan and UMNO assemblymen.
- In November, a table-tennis team, led by Datuk Michael Chen, took part in the Afro-Asian Table-Tennis Friendly Matches. There, China's deputy foreign minister, Ji Feng-éi told Michael Chen, "Its time our 2 countries develop closer ties. Discussions should be started concerning establishment of diplomatic relationships. "When the message was conveyed to Tun Abdul Razak, he was prompt to send Dr. Lim Chong Eu on a trip to Hongkong, with the aim of getting a better perspective of the move by China.
- 1972 Due to the formation of a coalition state government in Penang, in the month of May, MCA was left without a representative in the government. Thus, Dr. Lim Chong Eu and Tan Gim Hwa made a courtesy call on MCA President, Tan Siew Sin. They dicussed the formation of a Penang State Coalition Government Consultative Committee and a Penang State Government Liaison Committee to include MCA men.

- 1974 Won the general elections, on August 25, at Tanjung (parliament) and Padang Kota (state) for the third term, but for the first time on a Barisan Nasional (National Front) ticket. Absorbed many former MCA leaders, who had tried to reform the party but had eventually fallen out of favour with MCA leadership, to contest the polis; they included Dr. Lim Keng Yaik, Alex Lee, Paul Leong and Dr. Tan Tiong Hong. There were also many new faces in the Gerakan line-up of candidates, such as Dr. Goh Cheng Teik, Khor Gark Kim, Lim Heng Tee and Dr. Choong Sim Poey. Under his leadership, the Gerakan candidates won a total of 11 state assembly seats.
- 1976 Pianned a strategic line-up of party leadership for the Gerakan Annual Delegates' Conference in October, thereby balancing the 'old guards' and the 'new breed' at the upper chelon of the Party. It also lent great contrast to MCA and directly brought down MCA's standing in the National Front.
- 1978 Nomination day for the general elections was on June 21. The polls brought multi-lateral threats to his party as, 1) The MCA, dissatisfied with the allocation of 5 state assembly seats, and with the implicit consent of its state liaison committee chairman, Lim Kean Siew, fielded 7 of its men (known as the gang-of-seven) to contest as independents but calling themselves the "peoples" independent front." 2) One of his candidates and close aide, Khoo Kay Por was disqualified on nomination day due to a technical fault in his nomination paper, reducing the 11 seats allocated to Gerakan to 10, complication his expected formation of the state government.
 3) Yeap Gim Guan, who had got out of DAP, formed his Social Democratic Party (SDP) to contest the polis; 3i independents who had remnant support of former members of the defunct Labour Party further complicate matters.
 - when the results of the elections were made known late into the night on polling day, July 8, the Gerakan won 8 of the 10 seats in contested in spite of extremely uniavourable conditions. He successfully defended his seat at Padang Kota, but barely beating his challenger, Wong Hoong Klat of DAP, by a natrow margin of 914 ballots.

- In September, led a State Government Delegation to visit China upon the invitation by China's External Friendship Association. On special arrangement, he managed to meet his old pal, Xiau Qian.
- 1980 2 weeks before the Gerakan Annual Delegates' Conference was due to take place in Port Dickson, on August 17, made the announcement to forgo contesting the President's post. Lim Keng Yaik and Goh Cheng Teik wasted little time to join hands in contesting for the President's post and Secretary-General's post respectively. But the outgoing President had in mind Paul Leong for Presidency, Lim Keng Yaik for Deputy Presidency and Teh Ewe Lim for the post of Secretary-General. Lim Keng Yaik retixed to accept the arrangement. Finally, on the eve of the Conference, a compromise was reached whereby Lim Keng Yaik got his Presidency, Paul Leong to be his deputy and Teh Ewe Lim was tapped to be Secretary-General. This compromise was later dubbed the 2:11.3 formula'.
- 1982 Upon winning the general elections, appointed Penang Chief Minister for the 4th term.
 - During the year widely expected to face general elections. MCA specifically arranged for its state chairman. Lim Kean Siew to make demands for state seats in Penang. And in order to refute allegations by UMNO that MCA minister had no courage to contest in Chinese-predominant constituencies. MCA President Datuk Lee San Choon had himself nominated to face DAP National Chairman Dr. Chen Man Hin in the parliamentary constituency of Seremban. The MCA chief wanted this as an act to roll back the humiliation that had been heaped upon MCA. With the stoical stand of MCA, it managed to get an allocation of 8 state seats in Penang to an equal number for Gerakan. Lim Kean Siew went into top gear to ensure a total victory in Penang. Apparently, winning all 8 seats by MCA would realise Lim Kean Siew's dream of becoming Chief Minister. Dr. Lim Chong Eu, was forced to match the effort. In order to ensure the continued rule of Gerakan in Penang in the face of fierce challenge, he requested

the central leadership of Gerakan to let him field a line-up of all incumbents. In the ferocious campaign, both MCA and Gerakan spared no efforts to out-shipe and out-do each other. But when the ballot boxes were opened, Gerakan edged out MCA by winning 8 seats to MCA's 6. Lim Kean Siew himself feil in a stunning defeat in Pengkalan Kota. Face with grave odds, Gerakan once again overcome the opposition to retain its firm hold in Penang politics, while Dr. Lim went gloriously on to head the state government.

- 1984 Conferred the honours of 'Free Citizen of Georgetown' by the Georgetown Municipal Council on December 1.
 - due to the re-occurence of his old illness, forced to seek treatment in the United States. Rumours were rife concerning his intentions to retire from politics. Then, at a dinner at Gerakan Bukit Gluger Branch, Dr. Lim himself indicated his intention not to defend his seat in the coming general elections. This announcement sent shock-waves through the community.
- 1985 Upon his invitation, Xiau Qian and his wife visited Penang. The pair were then in Singapore for a Conference of International Chinese Writers. Upon hearing the news of their presence in Singapore, Dr. Lim Chong Eu and his wife rushed there to meet them and invited them for a stay in Penang.

1986 - General elections.

— Under persistent persuasion of top Gerakan stalwarts and Chinese community leaders, underwent a change of mind and agreed to seek re-election in the polls. But insisted upon the re-arrangement of the line-up of Gerakan candidates in Penang, which included reverting Goh Cheng Telk from a state constituency to his former parliamentary constituency, Khof Gark Kim was moved to the parliamentary constituency of Bukit Bendera. Successfully defended his now-familiar state constituency of Padang Kota and was made Chief Minister for the 5th. term.

EPILOQUE

'A Political Profile of Lim Chong Eu' was written, sporadically in 1986. It was serialised in the 'United Post' in 64 instalments. Now, these articles are edited and published as a book with the hope that keen observes of political developments may take a closer look at the tribulation and triumph of a statesman; and come to grasp with the fleeting transformation of situations in time which is filled with complex intrigues and cruel irony of politics.

Due to constraints of time and energy, data collected for this book cannot be said to be comprehensive. Some portrayals may appear exaggerations; some dramatised; but these were created to suit the easy, informal style of the 'United Post', for which I resorted to a congenial way of narration. Consequently, this is not a formal biography; much less annals, at best it is merely a chronological narration of Lim Chong Eus political career and sketchy framements of his life.

This book is titled 'A Political Profile of Lim Chong Eu' because its pages carried some subjective comments and perceptions of the author. And in order to project the character and disposition of some individuals, certain dialogues were fabricated.

I wish to devote this page for expressing my appreciation and gratitude to the following persons for their kind assistance in contributing valuable informations: Y.A.B. Dr. Lim Chong Eu, Mrs. Lim Chong Eu, Mrs. Lim Chong Soo, Datuk Lowe Hool Seah, the late Tan Sri Teb Ewe Lim, Datuk Oon Ching Seong, Datuk Tan Gim Hwa, Y.B. Datuk Khoo Kay Por, Datuk Khor Gark Kim, Datuk Lim E Heong, Datuk Lay Bin Wu, Mr. Loh Seong Meng D.J.N., State Assemblyman Y.B. Chin Nyok Soo, State Assemblyman Y.B. Boey Weng Keat, Mr. Khor Peng Seah, Mr. Choo Peng Khim J.P. and Mr. Lee Tian Moh and others.

Although most of the informations were gathered based on recollections of associates and friends of Dr. Lim Chong Eu, they lose not much of their vividness. The author has devoted considerable time verifying records with news-reports of 'Sin Pin Jih Pao'. Undoubtedly, the content of this book has historical basis and not figments of imagination.

It must be mentioned that when the author disclosed his intentions to Dr. Lim Chong Eu, he considered it an ambitions endeavour to write a biography (not necessarily of himself); here must be a thorough understanding of the philosophy, the political thoughts and the outlook of the subject before it could be proceeded upon. In addition a committee must be formed to undertake the task of conducting interviews. Then the information collected must be analised, 'dissected and digested' and systemtically compiled, otherwise it would end up as writing a feature of somebody and some tales.

The author is unable to satisfy these strict conditions because readers of 'United Post' prefer narrative portraits and they have special

interests in related but memorable episodes.

In the meantime, due to the lack of time as the 'United Post' intends to introduce this series as soon as possible, the author has no choice but to process the pages of information and let the work meet the readers.

From the beginning to its conclusion, this series has not been honoured with the perusal of Dr. Lim Chong Eu himself, thus the author accepts full responsibilities for any inadvertent errors.

Some individuals mentioned in this books are living while some others have departed, if there existed any statement disrespectful to

anyone, I extend my deepest regrets.

Anyway, whether readers have affections for Dr. Lim Chong Eu or otherwise, this book would have served its intended purpose if it could let you gain further insight to the political evolution and nostalgic eras prior to and after Independence.

The author devotes this book for the loyal Malaysian citizens who love this nation dearly, with sincere hopes that we shall extricate ourselves from complex and perplexing situations and head for the

bright horizons of justice and rationality.

At last, but not the least, I would like to extend my sincere thanks. to Mr. Ng Ah Laik who spend flis svaluable time to translate this book into English, but only assisted by Mr. Chew Ean Hean who translated the minor portion and proof-read by Mr. Lim Kim Chewa.

A brief introduction of Mr. Ng Ah Laik is as follows:

Born 41 years ago in Penang, Ng Ah Laik was educated first at Jit Sin High School, Bukit Mertajam, then at Technical Institute, Penang. Trained as a teacher at The Technical Teachers' Training College, Kuala Lumpur, he now teaches at Sekolah Menengah Perai, Province Wellesley.

The varied educational background, first in Chinese, then English and finally in Bahasa Malaysia enables him to converse fluently and write in all 3 languages.

In the years 1984, 1986 and 1987 he served as a Municipal Councillor of the Municipal Council of Province Wellesley (Majlis Perbandaran Seberang Perai).

Translating 'Political Profile of Lim Chong Eu' from its original text in Chinese is his first attempt in that direction though he has been an avid reader, mainly in Chinese and English language.