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Multi-Ethnic Politics: The Case of Malaysia

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INTRODUCTION

The Process of Integration

A political community is a man-made artifact fraught with destructive tendencies, which make its continued cohesion a major task of government. As one contemporary observer warns, "The basic assumptions and models of political science, economics, and sociology, nevertheless seem predicated on the existence, substantially, of a national community. This assumption greatly simplifies the study of social functions and corresponding structures...Broadly speaking, however, a complete national community seems to be a special case, not a typical one." ¹

The founding and preservation of a national community calls for the integration of its component parts. The integrative process may be unconscious, without plan, or it may be sought after with intense deliberateness and sophisticated manipulation. In either case, integration must occur at several different levels if the polity is to achieve minimal stability and autonomy. Interaction must exist among the governing institutions, among the various social sectors, and among the officials of government and the articulates of those groupings. ² In other words, the institutions of authority must be coordinated so that their direction reaches out

uniformly. In addition, the society's sub-groups should tolerate and, hopefully, cooperate with one another so that their resources can be pooled for the common welfare, which, after all, is the *raison d'être* of unification. Finally, policy-makers and administrators ought to be equipped with means of learning the needs and expectations of the various groups and of transmitting the government's own decisions and objectives back to its constituency. Creation of these sorts of communicative and cooperative networks entails reconciling the well-known differences which separate the city from the countryside, the elites from the mass, and one ethnic groups from another.

This study of Malaysian politics considers this latter obstacle to national integration: the division between ethnic communities. The character of ethnicity is such, however, that analysis necessarily touches upon the other types of division as well. Political integration in a multi-ethnic society is particularly difficult for the very reason that ethnic divisions so frequently overlap with and compound the more common lines of political and social separation.

Perspectives on Ethnic Pluralism

Political analysis, like all social studies, is subject to the vogues or, at least, the preoccupations of the day.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that perspectives on ethnic pluralism have changed over the past several decades. In the era between World Wars I and II writers devoted themselves to the study of the so-called "minorities problem," focussing on Europe - especially on the crumbling Hapsburg Empire - and on those weaker ethnic groups which spiritually were tied to nation-states just across their borders.

These analyses were motivated by the question of how to guarantee formally the rights of ethnic minorities and how to redraw national boundaries so as to reduce the likelihood of ethnic conflict provoking international conflict. The investigations of this period dealt with national as well as international politics, both of which were viewed through the experiences of the First World War and the shattering of Nineteenth Century European alliances. Solution to the minorities problem was linked to the generalized effort to stave off a second conflagration in Europe.

After World War II social science blossomed in the United States. Simultaneously, there was a growing sensitivity within the American public to the plight of one ethnic group, the Negro, and, more generally, to the gap between American values and the discriminatory practices pervading the society. This public concern prodded scholars to redirect their attention, to turn from European ethnic conditions to

the domestic context. Now ethnicity was viewed largely in terms of race, whereas the previous European focus encouraged a nationality or cultural axis for analysis. The factor of national loyalty, so crucial to understanding Europe's ethnic problems, became much less relevant. In its place, stress fell on the democratic "credo," to borrow Gunnar Myrdal's phrase. The question that preoccupied these post-war students of ethnic relations was how far and why did American political and social reality fall short of the American equalitarian and libertarian ideals. The field for investigation was Negro-white relations. Anti-semitism also received considerable attention at this time, but it too was studied in the context of race and American ideals.

Now, once again, the focus has shifted. Contemporary headlines, as well as academic research, devotes itself to problems arising from the establishment and maintenance of new, often artificially-contrived nation-states in Africa and Asia. Neither conflicting national loyalties and Great Power rivalries, nor the divergence of credo and practice are fully satisfactory for exploring this newly spot-lighted aspect of ethnic pluralism. National frontiers and civil liberties enter the discussion, but usually only peripherally. The analytical axis today is "nation-building," a complex mobilization and inter-weaving of policy, resources, and groups for the sake

of unity and modernization.

This current approach to inter-ethnic relations includes the earlier concerns, but it ranges over a broader analytical territory. In so doing, the "nation-building" or integrational perspectives reflects not only world conditions but the increasing utilization of inter-disciplinary tools in diagnosing social and political phenomena. The political ramifications of ethnic diversity, it is now believed, can be appreciated adequately only if one also understands the social, economic, and cultural contexts in which the political system operates. Furthermore, the description of each ethnic group individually is insufficient; a societal perspective on ethnicity is demanded. A politically integrated system is more than the sum of the ethnic distinctions between the various groups; it is the overall pattern which those distinctions weave and the interplay between that pluralist pattern and the style and institutions of politics.

As a vantage point from which to observe ethnic pluralism, then, integration also appears more fruitful than earlier approaches because it goes beyond the groups themselves and penetrates questions at the root of politics: the requisites for stability and for effective and lasting change.

Government Policy and Integrational Choices

There is no single blueprint for inter-ethnic integration. In modern nation-states integration rarely is left to happenstance; it is pursued with as much calculation as a favorable balance-of-payments of military security. This means that a regime committed to national reconciliation and unity faces a choice as to just what sort of integrative formula it desires - or it may find some way to put off making that choice without risking mere paralysis.

Three alternative integrative formulas are offered most commonly: full assimilation; cultural pluralism; and the "melting pot,"³. In a country moving from communal separatism to national unity all three may be going on simultaneously in different sectors of the society: e.g., inter-marriage may be on the rise between at least two of the country's three or more ethnic communities, a hopeful sign for those intent upon assimilation; whereas a live-and-let-live attitude is growing more popular on the formerly explosive topic of dietary customs, thus fostering cultural pluralism; while a wholly new eclectic mode of intercourse is emerging in business affairs, a witness to melting-pot forces at work.

But a regime which stakes its support and legitimacy on being the architect of a new "national identity"

rarely can tolerate, nor is afforded the luxury of such casual and mixed development. It feels compelled to set explicit goals, to present justifications, to offer reassuring interpretations and prophesies. Consequently, government officials have to make some choice among these basic blueprints: Are their regime's policies intended to produce assimilation of minor groups into the larger ethnic community, or a continuation of ethnic separateness under the umbrella of national allegiance, or perhaps a genuinely new community which absorbs all the present cultures but emulates no single one of them?

In some instances a government may not be at all sure which of these it prefers, desiring to tackle one disintegrative element at a time without projections into the uncertain future. Other governmental regimes - especially those overwhelmingly composed of members of one ethnic group - may prefer assimilation as an end but eschew explicit detailing of this goal for fear of igniting communal hostilities. In still other circumstances rulers may vacillate between one formula and another as it seeks by trial and error to determine the character and potential of their own society. The hard choice among integrative models, therefore, breeds a political ambiguity which may be particularly evident in multi-ethnic systems.

How any given government resolves the dilemma of

choice and then goes about implementing that choice is one avenue for analyzing the political consequences of ethnic pluralism. A study of this sort is concerned with two principal aspects of political behavior. First, how the government perceives its integrative mission and, second, how it employs its policy-making resources to assure success in that mission. If, as in the case of Malaysia, the government includes spokesmen of all major ethnic groups, then the process involves reconciliation of disparate ethnic claims on at least two levels: between the policy-makers themselves and between the policy-makers and the several ethnic groups the government is intent upon transforming.

Taking government policy formulation as an analytical vantage point involves considering the governors' conceptualizations of the nature of their own society and its hoped-for new identity. It also involves the strategies and tactics which they adopt for acting upon those conceptualizations.

One of the principal themes of this paper is that very often the requirements of strategy turn around and begin to shape these basic notions about their society and its future. The day-to-day and year-to-year requirements for the passage of legislative programs, for the smooth operation of bureaucratic machinery entrusted with affecting

those programs, and for the continuing cohesiveness of the ruling inter-communal party all work to modify the concept of the integrative solution sought. The frequent primacy of style and strategy serves to reinforce the ambiguity of the politics of ethnic pluralism.

One advantage of cutting into ethnic pluralism through government policy-making is that it leads directly to the relative malleability of ethnic patterns. Politics often is slighted in discussions of ethnicity, or politics is seen primarily as simply a by-product of certain ethnic givens. In actuality, in the relationship between the political system and inter-ethnic pattern there is no passive partner; each has the potential for fundamentally shaping the character of the other. In a post-World War II nation it is more than probable that the government will use the political system to fully exploit that potential. What then becomes interesting are the ways in which the pre-existent ethnic pattern dictates the style and resources and agents in the political arena and, conversely, the extent to which political action rearranges ethnic conditions.

Malaysia: A Case Study

No multi-ethnic society is typical. The danger posed by Malaysia is that it may be "super-typical." Many

countries include ethnic heterogeneity among their several distinguishing features, but in few is it so pre-eminent. The sheer number of separate ethnic groups and the colorfulness of their distinctions make Malaysia almost over-rich as a subject for ethnic-political analysis.

Moreover, that richness is not simply racial. Race may or may not be one of the factors separating peoples into recognizable sub-communities. In Malaysia race is such a factor, but, as will be seen, it is not the distinction with the greatest explanatory power. In other words, to take race as the predominant factor dividing Malaysians and motivating various Malaysians will obscure such important distinguishing and motivating factors such as language and religion, factors which may coincide with race, but are not identical with it. Malaysian multi-ethnicity, consequently, serves to underscore the analytical separateness between race and ethnicity.

In addition to its unusual heterogeneity, Malaysia offers a good starting point for the comparative study of ethnic politics because the Malaysians themselves are so self-conscious about this feature of their national life. This acute awareness pushes ethnicity into the lime-light in most political contests and deliberations. But this happy analytical circumstance deserves a warning as well, for when

moving from Malaysia to other multi-ethnic states such visibility of ethnicity's repercussions should not be expected.

A fourth condition enhancing Malaysia's appropriateness as a subject for study is its recent achievement of independence. The flood of new nation-states issuing from the disintegration of the European empires brought with it a heightened interest in the ingredients of nationhood. Furthermore, the flood came at a time when technological and scientific advancements had made the distance between "developed" and "undeveloped" societies wider than ever before. The result has been that, besides concern with national unity as such, the new states are seeking a particular sort of unity, one which will guarantee the maximum mobilization of resources for the most rapid and concerted drive toward change.

Malaysia is one of these post-war creations and thus serves as a prime example of the ramifications of these pressures and anxieties for inter-ethnic politics. In Malaysia this comes out especially in the obsession with "pragmatism." Again, however, Malaysia is not a typical multi-ethnic state. There are many nations which embrace numerous ethnic groups but which gained independence a century or more ago, have had the opportunity to build a foundation of commonality without the simultaneous rush for change. Therefore, newly-gained

Independence and the fear of underdevelopment are variables which may or may not be relevant to a given ethnic situation.

What makes Malaysia such an inviting field for inquiry, then, is not that it is typical, but that its pluralism has uncommon visibility and intensity. Along with India, Malaysia draws the political implications of ethnic pluralism in extreme and thereby forces one to ask questions that might be neglected in more muted pluralist conditions.

To get at the nature of Malaysia's multi-ethnic politics this study has concentrated on government policy-making and on one policy area in particular: education. There were two important reasons for selecting education. First, and most important, over the past decade education has been the issue which has preoccupied Malaysians themselves perhaps more than any other. As a result, most of the assumptions, fears and aspirations of the different ethnic groups and their political representatives have found their way into education debates. The bargaining within the federal ministries and Cabinet and the dialogue in the general public have absorbed almost every sort of ethnic interest and political actor. Education also serves to illuminate the continuing significance of Malaysia's colonial experience. British standards and biases can be found in some degree in the programs of leaders in all the ethnic groups.

Another reason for making education policy a case study - within a case study is that it is an area relevant to almost every newly independent state. Education as a vantage point makes it possible to consider the relationship between integration and development. Of course, there are other areas of policy which allow for similar inquiry, for instance, economic planning and rural development. But in Malaysia there are none so central to both development and reconciliation of ethnic divisions as education. This is not a permanent situation, however. Other issue areas may be more productive for the understanding of ethnic politics in the future.

This touches upon another theme which runs through this paper: issue emphasis or preoccupation in any multi-ethnic society is subject to change as new forms of interaction and inter-dependency develop among the various groups and between them and the government. Thus although education seems to be the most rewarding entre to Malaysian politics today, religion or economics or the military may serve that purpose at some other period. It follows, too, that education may not be the most appropriate case study in another country which has quite different ethnic and political conditions.

The materials for this study are drawn from the period 1950 - 1967, a fact of special importance in light of the above hypothesis concerning issue prominence. The greatest source of information and impressions is personal interviews conducted during 1965-66 in Malaysia with persons in the Federal Ministry of Education, political parties, schools, and associations. Because of the continuing delicacy of educational decisions, interviewees were assured that their identities would not be disclosed in this paper.

A word should be said about the confusing semantics of Malaysia. The term "Malaysia" refers to the Federation of Malaysia, which was created as a new state in 1963 out of four previously separate entities: the already-sovereign Federation of Malaya, Singapore, and the two Borneo territories of Sarawak and North Borneo (renamed Sabah). All of these constituent parts were at one time under the rule of Great Britain. Singapore, the island at the tip of the Malayan peninsula, broke off from Malaysia in August, 1965, and today is an independent state.

"Malaya" refers to the Federation of Malaya, composed of the nine traditional sultanate states and two former Straits Settlements (Malacca and Penang) on the Malayan peninsula. Malaya gained independence from Britain in 1957, six years prior to the formation of the larger Malaysian

federation. Nowadays the adjective "Malayan" usually refers to anything associated with the peninsula, regardless of its ethnic affiliation. For example, the Chinese party in the federal government is the Malayan Chinese Association; it does not include the Chinese of either Sabah or Sarawak. Likewise, the Malays on the peninsula are referred to as Malayan Malays, distinct from Malays living outside the peninsula.

The study which follows concentrates on Malayan politics. This emphasis is dictated by practical manageability. But it is justified by the existence of the Malayan political system as an autonomous political system within the larger federation and by the longer experience which Malaya has had in trying to cope with the problems and the possibilities of ethnic pluralism. However, Malaysia by itself is full of opportunities for comparative analysis and thus a separate chapter is devoted to the other parts of Malaysia - Singapore, Sarawak, and Sabah.

CHAPTER I

Ethnicity in Malaysia

The extent to which public policy even attempts to reorder ethnic group relationships will depend on several directly political circumstances. One is the amount of open or latent hostility that exists among the several communal groups. If such animosity is close to the surface posing a threat to minimal peace and order, the government will be forced to devote its energies merely to preventing the outbreak of violence and have little time to consider such long-range objectives as national identity. Another important condition affecting a government's involvement in altering fundamental social relationships will be the degree to which this real or potential inter-communal hostility is politicized. If ethnic tensions are mobilized and channelled into organized political groups with specific platforms there is much more likelihood that the government can react to the threats of civil disorder through means other than force and perhaps introduce continued bargaining and dialogue on questions beyond mere peace and order.

A third factor is the strength and ethnic attachments among the policy-makers themselves. If most of the leading government officials see themselves also as representatives of one or another ethnic group then it is probable that any major governmental decision will have to be reconciled with various ethnically-defined interests. Finally, there is the

practical and ideological aspirations of the policy-makers. If they are committed to a notion of class solidarity as the foundation for national unity or if they are particularly anxious that their nation better its standard of living within their own life-time, then they are less apt to tolerate ethnic divisions within the nation and are more than likely to urge the use of governmental resources to eliminate these obstacles to unity and progress.

These immediately political factors will be more or less salient for policy formulation according to the type of ethnic diversity and given country possesses. The sorts of generalizations made, therefore, about the political ramifications of multi-ethnicity will be qualified by the particular set of ethnic groups in mind. Malaysian multi-ethnicity - composed of Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian, Dyak, Dusun, and still other groups - is different in quality from ethnic pluralism found in Canada, Ceylon, or Guyana. To grasp the relationship between ethnicity and politics, then, it is vitally important to spell out just what those differences are which are deemed most politically consequential in a given state. The ultimate aim is to be able to discriminate between various forms of multi-ethnicity and to make comparisons of politics among those forms.

This paper is attempting only one half the task. It concentrates on only one country, Malaysia - and within Malaysia, chiefly on the states of Malaya. But the long-range analytical objective still serves to suggest some broad categories for comparative study, some of which are more relevant to Malaysia than are others, but none of which can be dismissed a priori regarding any ethnic condition.

Variables Distinguishing Multi-Ethnic States

Below is a list of factors which play a significant part in separating ethnic pluralism in one country from that in another. It is according to the varying relevance and import of any one of these factors that the political choices and alignments in a given state will be molded by the existence of ethnic heterogeneity.

Categories of Variables:

I. Demography:

- A. The numerical and relative size of each resident ethnic community.
- B. The geographic distribution of each ethnic group within the national boundaries.
- C. The place of origin of each community.

II. Race:

- A. Physical distinctions between the

groups, if any.

III. Culture:

- A. Distinctions and/or coincidences of religion, language, customs, values among the various communities.
- B. The availability of a culture not intimately associated with any of the resident ethnic groups.

IV. Social structure:

- A. Patterns of inter-marriage.
- B. The relative tendencies to form communal organizations.
- C. Urban-rural concentrations.
- D. The availability of authoritative institutions within any community (e.g. hierarchical church, native rulers).

V. Political experience:

- A. Differential colonial experience.
- B. Identification with a foreign government; the proximity of that government; the degree of mutual trust between it and the home government.

These categories and their sub-categories are useful in two respects. They enable one to define the nature of

"ethnicity" of any single group and they also provide a way of drawing an overall diagram of ethnic pluralism for an entire society. Ethnicity is a vague term. It can explain political behavior only if it is given the explicitness of a particular context. An ethnic group, for example, may be termed such due to its distinctive language or due to its distinctive physical appearance or due to its separate religion. But although in each case ethnicity applies, these three sorts of ethnicity are likely to have quite different political consequences.

In any one country some of these variables, or lines of distinction, will divulge more about the political system and the chances for integration than will others. Moreover, the weight ascribed to any one of these factors is likely to change as the country moves from one stage of political development to another. The chances of public policy altering inter-ethnic relationships will also increase or decline as certain of these factors displace others in their political weight.

The effective policy-making might itself shift the pivot of communal relationships from one line of distinction to another. For example, at the time of independence or of the initial drive for political integration (the two are not synonymous), a given society might be most markedly divided by language and religion. But since the church hierarchies of the

groups act as the chief spokesmen for communal interests, religion looms as the largest obstacle to national unity. Should, however, the government of this hypothetical country succeed in secularizing the political process, barring clerical personnel from political participation, then religion might recede and the linguistic differences, until then overshadowed, become the ethnic distinction most forcefully shaping the country's political dialogue.

Granted, this is an over-simplified example, but it at least suggests the fluidity of inter-ethnic relations and, more important, the alterability of the political context in which integrative policy is formulated. As will be seen time and again in Malaysia's own experience, the relationship between ethnicity and politics is neither deterministic nor fixed.

Each of the variables listed have some bearing on Malaysia, but six in particular shed light on the sort of impact ethnic diversity has had on the course of its political integration: 1) relative numerical strength; 2) the groups' places of origin; 3) geographic distribution of each of the ethnic groups within Malaya; 4) economic-occupational stratification; 5) linguistic and religious differentiations; 6) social organization. There is also a seventh factor - the availability of a non-resident cultural alternative - which will be discussed at some length in the chapters which follow on education and language.

Demographic Distribution in Malaya

Numbers by themselves cannot make an ethnic group "politically significant." Given two ethnic groups, each clearly distinguishable from the greater part of the society and each conscious of peculiarly communal interests, the group comprising 35 per cent of the total population is less likely to be ignored than the one claiming only 5 per cent of the population.

Numbers are significant in inter-ethnic politics mainly as they make it possible or impossible for the political system to turn a blind eye to distinctly ethnic, sub-national interests and demands. Overseas Chinese have established communities in numerous countries around the globe, but in a few have their relative numbers been so large as in Malaysia, in the federation as a whole as well as in its constituent parts. Many countries can count more than two culturally or racially separate ethnic groups, but few have, as does Malaysia, more than two that claim in excess of ten per cent of the society.

Table 1 Percentage of the total population represented by the major ethnic groups in
Malaysia

A. Malaysia in Toto - 1960 (including
Singapore)

Malays and other Indigenous*	46.8%
Chinese	41.4
Others (Indians, Eurasians, etc.)	11.8

* 80 percent of all Indigenous are Malays

Source: T.G. McGee, "Population: A Preliminary Analysis," in Wang Gung-wu, ed., Malaysia, New York, Praeger, 1964, pp. 67-81.

B. Malaya - 1957

Malays*	49.8%
Chinese	37.1
Indians	11.1

* Includes nomadic indigenous peoples.

Source: Federation of Malaya, Department of Statistics, 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, p. 3.

C. Sarawak - 1960

Sea Dyak (Iban)	31.9%
Chinese	30.8
Malay	17.4
Lang Dyak	7.7
Melanau	6.0
Other Indigenous	5.1
Others	1.1

(Table 1: continued)

Source: Joan Rawlins, Sarawak: 1839-1963, London, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1965, p. 189.

D. Sabah - 1960

Kadazan (Dunsun)	32.0%
Murut	4.9
Bajau	13.1
Other indigenous (Brunei Malays, Kadayans, etc.)	17.5
Chinese	23.0
European	0.4
Others	9.1

Source: Sabah, Annual Report, 1963, Jesselton, Government Printing Office, 1964, p. 7.

E. Singapore - 1957

Chinese	75.4%
Malays	13.6
Indians and Pakistanis	8.6
Others	2.4

Source: State of Singapore, Annual Report, 1963, Singapore Government Printing Office, 1965, p. 80.

These population figures underscore certain realities in the Malaysian situation that are bound to have a political impact. In Malaysia, first of all, no single ethnic group even if one counts the mixed "Indigenous peoples" as a unified group - can command an absolute majority of the total population in any of the federation's constituent parts (excluding the now independent Singapore with its Chinese majority). And in the nation as a whole the Indigenous group has been given the barest of popular majorities by the departure of Singapore, but this majority overlooks serious divisions among those Indigenous peoples. Sheer numbers grant no ethnic group an unquestioned political superiority. Although the Malays possess a popular plurality - about 49 per cent after 1965 - there is a second ethnic group which is a close numerical rival. The numerically superior Malays, then, are not confronted simply by a plethora of small communities; the Chinese are nearly as great in number.

In addition, whereas this numerical equilibrium between two large ethnic groups might itself produce a radical two-side confrontation, in Malaysia the probability of this is lessened by 1) the existence of non-Malay, non-Chinese groups in considerable number and 2) the uneven geographic distribution of the Malays, leaving them relatively weak outside Malaya proper.

Numbers set the stage for any multi-ethnic situation, but they do so in only the barest fashion. To give the scene meaning and depth, to set the communal actors in motion, and to suggest the probable directions of that motion, it is necessary to look beyond numbers other differentiating factors.

Ethnic Politics and the Place of Origin

Taken all together, the non-Malays in both Malaysia and Malaya outnumber the Malays. But the real political strength derived from this fact is undercut by a second crucial fact: most non-Malays are "aliens."

Anyone familiar with Malaysia will wonder at the exclusion of differential colonial policy among the list of seven primary conditions shaping the nation's politics. Britain's attitude toward the various ethnic groups, however, was the by-product of a more fundamental deliniation between its colony's peoples: the division between natives and immigrants. The place of origin of any Malaysian ethnic community was the factor which then shaped British policy toward it.

Admittedly, in other British colonies - Burma and Nigeria, for example - colonial administrators drew policy distinctions between even those several communities all of which claimed indigeneity. But in Malaya the entire rationale

stemmed from the British understanding that the Malays, as the one group indigenous to the peninsula, had certain prior claims on the colonial government.* Conversely, those ethnic groups originating outside the Malay archipelago had a lesser status and a lesser claim on governmental attention and protection.

Political institutions affirmed and perpetuated this indigenous-alien distinction. British sensitivity to Malay interests was intensified by the existence of traditional Malay sultanates on the peninsula, which the British Crown treated as protectorates, not as subject colonies. The necessity of maintaining this theoretical legal relationship induced British administrators to stress their deference to and protection of the source of Malay communal authority, the sultans.

British economic needs gave the indigenous-alien division its major spur by encouraging the influx of Chinese and Indian labor in the early decades of this century to fill the demands of the new rubber and tin industries. Nevertheless, it is probably safe to assume that even without colonial institutionalization of the immigrant-native distinction,

* Strangely enough, the nomadic aborigine tribes, which trace their inhabitation of the peninsula even further back than do the Malays, are beyond the political pale. Except during the Emergency, they have never figured in Malaya's inter-ethnic political system.

it still today would be a salient ingredient in the inter-ethnic relationship and in the direction of integrative politics. Virtually all countries which have had to incorporate a large influx of immigrants from cultures quite dissimilar from that of the resident peoples has had to tackle the problem of reconciling immigrant and native claims. In Malaya, however, this not uncommon problem has been intensified by the size of the alien influx, the British colonial priorities, and the uncrystallized character of the resident culture, which was ill-prepared to impose a dominant mode of life upon the newcomers.

At the root of the immigrant-indigenous split is the matter of legitimacy: does the historic fact of prior residence carry with it certain rights and privileges not open to later-arriving residents? This, in turn, arouses questions of loyalty, stability, priorities, all of which come to the surface continually in the debates over the ultimate quality of the new Malaysian community and in deliberations over the most suitable steps to be taken to achieve such a community.

The difficulties which stem from tying legitimacy to indigeneity are compounded in the Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak. On the peninsula the Malays comprise virtually the entire indigenous population. In Sabah and Sarawak, by contrast, the Malays are but a small portion of the

indigenous peoples and thus cannot claim special status without also sharing it with the Dyaks, Kadazans, and others. The resulting political alliances and anxieties in the Borneo states will be looked at more closely in a later chapter, but it is worth noting at this point because it demonstrates another aspect of the problem of establishing the rationale for legitimacy in a ethnically diverse society. American and South African whites have struggled with similar problems of legitimacy in their attempts to rationalize the peculiar treatment of the American Indian and the African Negro respectively. If the right to shape the nation's identity is not founded in length of habitation, then what alternative grounds are there: relative contribution to the country's economic development? numerical superiority? coercive power?

Geographic Distribution of Ethnic Groups

Geographic distribution is the third factor bearing most heavily on the Malaysian inter-ethnic political system, in terms of both regional concentrations and rural-urban concentrations. In Malaya it is rural-urban distinctions between Malays and non-Malays which carry most explanatory power; but in Malaysia as a whole it is both sorts of geographic distinctions.

Territoriality and politics are closely intertwined. Authority is exercised over persons in defined territories. In turn, votes on which an elected government depends are mobilized in geographical units. Hence, in a multi-ethnic nation the distribution of the various ethnic groups throughout the country will affect both the exercise of governmental authority and the design of public policy. Moreover, it will affect the character of support on which that authority finally rests.

In Malaya certain political stability derives from the relatively scattered distribution of all three major ethnic groups; Malays, Chinese, and Indians are to be found in all of the main populated regions. By contrast, in some Southeast Asian nations one or more ethnic groups may be confined to remote hill regions such as the Kachins in Burma and the Montagnards in Vietnam. In the pre-twentieth century United States, likewise, the Negro community was confined overwhelmingly to the southern region.

Many nations with significant ethnic divisions such as these adopt a federal structure to coincide with the territorial ethnic concentrations in an effort to appease the autonomy-minded communities clustered in these areas. Federalism for numerous modern states thus has become the price of national integration. In these cases - Canada, Burma,

Nigeria come to mind - a study of inter-ethnic politics neatly parallels the study of operative federalism. This is not so in Malaya (nor in contemporary United States, for that matter). The federal system does have consequences for Malayan inter-ethnic politics, but the latter is not its raison d'être. Instead, Malayan federalism was adopted out of a desire by colonial administrators and later Malayan political leaders to preserve the multiple seats of traditional Malay authority, the sultanates.

In the larger Malaysian federal system the link between ethnic concentrations and federalism's rationale is much more evident, however. The recognition of the peculiar ethnic compositions of Singapore and the two Borneo states made it necessary to provide considerable autonomy. In addition, the very geographic distance between these new appendages and the peninsula increased the sense of ethnic differences and so further counselled a federal structure.

On the Malayan peninsula the federal pattern follows the lines of authority of the traditional sultanates, while separate states were formed out of the colonial Straits Settlements of Malacca and Penang, neither of which has a traditional Malay ruler. But these federal boundaries do not mirror the ethnic distribution patterns in the country. As a result, federalism tends to be a factor in Malayan politics

for reasons other than the make up of the states. Especially they figure in inter-ethnic contests because they are the seats of the sultans and thus an object of traditional identification and loyalty for the Malays, who then tend to use state officials to speak on the behalf of Malay interests. The state may have a large Chinese and Indian population, but since those communities have relatively little attachment to the states in which they live, they will work through other levels of government - particularly the municipal governments - to press their demands. *

This negative role of federalism in Malaya perhaps is best appreciated by trying to imagine the different sort of ethnic politics that would prevail on the peninsula were its states drawn on communal, rather than sultanate lines. The inability to contain the Chinese-dominated Singapore within the larger federal structure suggests the disintegrative tendencies inherent in this sort of ethnically-defined federalism.

It would be a mistake, however, to overstate this relative non-coincidence of ethnic and federal divisions. For, while it is true that no state on the peninsula is composed of

* There is no conclusive data on the actual feelings of Malays for their sultans, although this generalization is probably fairly valid. The contemporary role of the sultans is a field of inquiry that undeservedly has been neglected.

a single ethnic group, there are marked differences in the states' ethnic homogeneity. The states on the East Coast - Kelantan, Trengganu, and Pahang are, along with the western states of Kedah and Perlis, heaviest in Malay composition. The states on the southwest coast are most marked by ethnic heterogeneity and large clusters of Chinese and Indians... Malays live in all the states, but the non-Malays dwell mainly along the West Coast, which is the region of greatest urbanization and commercialization. This means that although the study of relations between the states and the central government will not yield optimum insight into the process of national integration, there are, nonetheless, differences worth noting between the ethnic politics of the several states - the political system of Penang is not the same as that of Trengganu.

It is the degree of urbanization, rather than regional ties, that has given Malayan federalism its ethnic coloration. Put most starkly, the Malays are rural, the Chinese urban, and the Indians split between rural and urban. As with so many communal stereotypes - accepted by foreigners and Malaysians as well - this one is true, but grossly oversimplified.

The over-simplification itself, however, is a political reality. Its acceptance directs political dialogue, policy

community at his peril.

According to the 1957 Census, the total urban population ("urban" here refers to population in towns of 1,000 or more) was 42 per cent of the entire Malayan population. Of this urban sector the Malays comprised 21 per cent, versus their being 49.8 per cent of the total population; the Chinese comprised 63 per cent of the urban sector, versus their 37.1 per cent of the total population; and the Indians comprised 12 per cent, versus their 11.1 per cent of the total population. Of the eighty-four towns of over 5,000 population, only ten had a Malay majority, and six of these ten were in the state of Kelantan, three in neighboring Trengganu, and one in Kedah. With the exception of Kota Bharu (Kelantan's capital) and Kuala Trengganu (Trengganu's capital), all of these Malay-dominated towns had populations of less than 20,000 each. All the remaining urban centers - i.e., 74 of the 84 towns of 5,000 or more - have immigrant, largely Chinese majorities. Eighty per cent of the urban population in Malaya is concentrated in towns of 20,000 or more, and none of these towns possess a Malay majority. ¹.

Therefore, it may well be that the rural-urban split is far from absolute, but it is also true that it is the non-Malay sections of the national community which are the ones currently most responsible for the new life-style

emerging in Malaysia as urbanization spreads.

The rapid change stemming from the movement of people from villages to towns is even more poignant for inter-ethnic relations because the major cities which are setting the pace for the others in molding this new hybrid culture are cities which are relatively divorced from Malay tradition. Georgetown, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur - none of these most rapidly expanding centers are traditional seats of Malay royalty. Instead, they owe their importance and influence to commercial and colonial administrative stimulus, not to ties with pre-colonial cultural and governmental prestige, as, say, Bangkok does. This fact makes it simply all the harder to blend and reconcile Malay culture with either the immigrant or the western-modernizing cultures. In other words, the style of life in closest harmony with the rapid development of economics and communications is being forged in population centers in which Malays are least at home. If Kota Bharu, instead of Kuala Lumpur or Ipoh, were the center of this transformation, then perhaps the Malays would not have to make the double leap, over both the foreign culture hurdle as well as the urban hurdle.

Those states with the highest percentages of urbanized population are also the states with the greatest concentrations of non-Malays: Selangor, Penang, Pahang, Johore.

The tables which follow also note the increase of urban population, however, not just in the traditionally urban states, but in every part of Malaysia since the end of the war. Because during that time immigration of Chinese and Indians has dwindled markedly, this means that the rural-Malay stereotype is progressively being undermined by inter-continental migrations.

Table 2 Racial Composition of Urban Population
(in thousands) *

<u>Territory</u>	<u>Census</u>	<u>Indigenous</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Total</u>
Malaya	1947	275	812	215	1,301
	1957	604	1,704	360	2,680
	% increase	119.6	109.8	67.4	104.3
Singapore (city only)	1947	73	537	70	680
	1957	101	710	102	912
	% increase	38.3	32.2	45.7	34.1
Sabah (Sandakan and Jesselton only)	1951	4.4	18.8	3	26.2
	1960	9.1	35.8	5.6	50.5
	% increase	7.3	93.6	22.7	61.0
Sarawak	1947	22.99	34.8	2.2	58.9
	1957	23.5	67.4	2.7	93.6
	% increase	7.3	93.6	22.7	61.0

(Table 2: Continued)

<u>Territory</u>	<u>Census</u>	<u>Indigenous</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Total</u>
MALAYSIA	1947	374	1,403	290	2,066
	1957	946	2,517	471	3,737
	% increase	152.9	79.4	62.4	80.8

* "urban" includes towns over 1,000.

Source: Hamzah-Sendut, "urbanization," in Wang Gung-wu, ed., Malaysia, New York, Praeger, 1964, p. 89.

Table 3 Urban Population (Gazetted areas
10,000 population and over) by
States

<u>State</u>	<u>Percentage of Urban in Total Population</u>	
	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>
Federation of Malaya	15.9	26.5
Johore	15.4	21.8
Kedah	8.2	13.3
Kelantan	5.1	9.8
Malacca	22.8	24.0
Negeri Sembilan	13.2	17.8
Pahang	-	22.2
Penang	52.9	56.7
Perak	17.1	25.0

(Table 3: Continued)

<u>State</u>	<u>Percentage of Urban in Total Population</u>	
	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>
Perlis	-	-
Selangor	32.7	43.0
Trengganu	11.9	19.0

Source: Federation of Malaya, Department of Statistics, 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, p. 6.

The communal division roughly along rural-urban lines has important effects on the policy-making process of the federal government. It pushes to the fore certain types of policy demands and produces particular kinds of conflicts which have as a common denominator the issue of development priorities - i.e., commercial-industrial versus agricultural priorities. These conflicts, shared by diverse countries, are prevalent especially in those just launching programs of modernization. The tension between industrial and agricultural projects is, moreover, exacerbated in Malaysia because of the congruence between economic stratification and the communal differences in urbanization. Put another way, if Malaysia were beyond the Rostowian take-off stage and were economically and

technologically modernized - as much as rapid change allows any country to be - then the rural-urban split would not be so central to multi-ethnic politics as it now in fact is. On the other hand, of course, even though industrial-agricultural policy competition for resources and attention is lessened after take-off, this does not mean automatically a sudden flowering of communal harmony. But economic development probably will be accompanied at least by a new sort of communal conflict.

But while both agriculture and industry are lagging in the international market and while the government's resources for training, investment, and research are limited, the Alliance Party government in Kuala Lumpur is bound to find the economic, technological, and education policy decisions often will be inseparable from decisions on ethnic groups commitments.

Economic Stratification and Ethnicity

The geographic divisions are overlaid with occupational distinctions between the Malays, Chinese, and Indians. Although these occupational distinctions are not merely mirror images of the urban-rural split, they do demonstrate the diversity problem within both of those broad categories. For example, a commercial inclination is apparent even among

those Malaysian Chinese living outside the large towns, and the non-commercial tendencies of the Malays is marked not only in the rural areas but in the cities as well, where they lean toward the civil service rather than to business. The Indian community, once more, is the hardest to categorize. Indians' occupations usually depend on the particular sub-community affiliation - e.g., Indian Tamils are likely to work as rubber tappers, Ceylonese Tamils as professional men, northern Indians as shopkeepers, etc. There is a tendency for ethnic communities, furthermore, to sustain their roles in the society. The task for a government committed to social and political integration and to breaking down barriers to inter-ethnic communication and cooperation is thus to interrupt these role-sustaining patterns. The charts suggest graphically the role preferences that policy is intended to modify.

Table 4 Occupation by Race in Malaya - 1957

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Malaysians*</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indians</u>	<u>Others</u>
1. Total economically active	2,164,861	1,023,729	771,963	312,956	56,213
2. Agric., forestry, hunting, fishing	572,789	459,842	100,929	4,491	7,527
3. Agric. products requiring substantial processing (rubber, palm oil, etc.)	672,005	289,477	209,493	170,026	3,009
4. Mining & quarrying	58,499	10,312	39,955	6,809	1,423
5. Manufacturing (including both handicraft and automated mfg.)	135,382	26,588	97,502	10,086	1,206
6. Building & construction	68,134	21,830	32,589	12,302	1,413
7. Electricity, gas & water	11,569	3,850	2,985	4,176	558
8. Commerce	195,192	32,020	127,096	32,781	3,295
9. Transport, storage, communications	74,755	26,870	29,162	16,064	2,659

(Table 4 - continued)

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Malaystians*</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indians</u>	<u>Others</u>
10. <u>Services</u>	<u>319,745</u>	<u>127,641</u>	<u>109,948</u>	<u>48,113</u>	<u>34,043</u>
Selected services:					
a. Government services	34,189	17,906	5,268	8,967	2,048
b. Central, state, local gov't.	34,017	17,854	5,244	8,939	1,980
c. Foreign consulates & missions	171	52	23	28	68
d. Community serv.(ed- ucation, medicine, welfare trade & religious assoc.)	76,432	31,665	27,686	12,441	4,640
*Education alone	42,003	19,897	15,127	4,442	2,537
e. Police and home guard and prisons	52,647	43,791	4,994	2,317	1,545
f. Armed forces (Malayan)	11,930	9,151	1,059	1,004	716

* "Malaystians" here includes Malays and other indigenous peoples.

Source: Federation of Malaya, Department of Statistics, 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, pp. 102-110.

Malays' urban migrations have not been translated automatically into increased Malay commercialization and industrialization. For the Malayan government to reduce the gap between the Malays and non-Malays it will require more than official encouragement of urban migration among the traditionally rural Malays. In addition, the government will have to supply commercial-technical training programs and the expansion of the market activities, together with restriction of non-Malay enterprises. The Alliance government prides itself on and founds its own legitimacy on its pragmatic, hard-headed approach to economic affairs. As a result, this need to supplement the urban influx with economic manipulation poses a dilemma. Somehow the government must sustain economic growth, while at the same time providing for the gradual but steady entry of the largest ethnic group into the country's commercial life.

So far the safety-valve has been the expandability of the military and the civil service. Both have been the principal employers absorbing the new Malay urbanites. This has allowed for the happy avoidance of the issue of commercial exclusiveness or domination becoming the center of emotional political controversy.

Nevertheless, while the absorption of Malays into

military and government services has solved temporarily the problem of urban migration, at the same time it has aggravated the problem of national-ethnic loyalties. It has meant that the government in its military and civilian branches is manned disproportionately by members of one community, the Malay, thus encouraging the identification of the government with the Malays and the non-government sector with the non-Malays. The occupational stratification thereby, has reinforced the alien-indigenous split traced to differences in place of origin. This tendency is given constitutional sanction. Article 153 guarantees that there will be a 1:4 ratio of Malays in the Civil Service. It is true, however, that there is more opportunity for Chinese and Indians to enter and rise in government service now than in the colonial past.

In the next decade the tension that currently swirls around language and education well may be transferred to the area of economic planning. So long as Malays are chiefly rural and the number of urban Malays is small enough to match positions in the bureaucracy, the government will be able to satisfy communal demands by assigning priority to rural development. But when the economic situation is no longer so felicitously definable in rural-urban terms and when the government posts are full, the government's agricultural investment will not be sufficient to stave off inter-communal

conflicts. It will be then that Malaysian economic pragmatism surely will suffer severe strains.

The Alliance is faced with the conflict of rural-commercial priorities; but these are easier to reconcile than would be, say, Chinese-Malay confrontation within the commercial area itself. Consequently, as communal barriers break down and the ethnic groups mix in the residential and occupational spheres it is more than likely that government's problems will intensify. Here again is the paradox of increasing integration: integration brings with it the greater probability of conflict. The case studies of language and education demonstrate this paradox repeatedly.

Culture and Ethnicity

The most common point of departure in analyses of multi-ethnic politics at any stage of development is the detailing of features which give each group its cultural identity or physical distinctiveness. The physical or cultural characteristics separating groups differ from context to context, affecting the opportunities for effective political decision-making and ultimate reconciliation.

There are some ethnic characteristics that are more pliable than others, religion more than race, for instance. Furthermore, in societies embracing three or more

significant ethnic groups it is important to note whether the distinctive features between A and B are the same as those dividing B and C: how many lines of separateness does an integrative policy have to bridge? are the communal divisions reinforced or diluted by their repetition among the various groups? does the dissimilarity of lines distinguishing groups encourage certain inter-communal alliances? if so, on what sorts of issues? For example, A and C may ally on religious policy matters against the claims of B. But A and C may part political ways when it comes to language or foreign policy. The point is that a multi-ethnic situation is a sum of all the groups, plus all the interconnections between those groups.

In Malaysia the two crucial bases of cultural differential, and thus of potential disintegration, are language and religion. They are important, however, in dissimilar ways and have different kinds of political repercussions.

Language is a definitive characteristic for all three major communities. In this sense, language may be termed a "positive" cultural characteristic; it affords each ethnic group a trait with which it can identify and which it can and has used as a basis for political mobilization. Religion, on the other hand, while objectively distinctive for the majority of each community, is not so "positive" in its political function.

While language serves as a basis of political mobilization in all three groups, religion serves this function primarily in only one Malayan community, the Malay.

This is not to say that religion is therefore politically irrelevant for Malayan Chinese and Indians. But for these two groups religion has chiefly a negative function. Non-Muslims formulate their political goals and expectations not on the basis of their own majority religions, but on the basis of their anxieties regarding the possible political aspirations of the Muslims, especially the Malay Muslims. In Borneo as well Christianity does not serve to design political organizations or platforms so much as it stimulates doubts and hostility toward the two states' Muslim peoples.

Whereas the non-Muslims interject religion into their politics as a negative value, the Muslim Malays have organized a political party and designed political platforms on Islam. They have used religion to define and legitimize the state and to judge the propriety of their leaders' behavior and the suitability of their representatives' policies. Rarely is a Chinese or Indian party or politician measured by his conformity to formal values; it is enough for them to advocate Malaysian religious freedom and perhaps support the establishment of a national holiday on the birthday of Buddha or some Hindu festival.

The negative role of religion for the Chinese and Indians is due both to the uprooting of their religions from their native socio-political settings and to the religious heterogeneity of these two ethnic groups. Virtually all Malays are Muslim, but not all Muslims are Malay. A sizeable number of Malayan Muslim belong to the Indian community; these are mostly non-Tamil Indians originating from northern India. Still, in the context of Malayan communal politics Islam is associated with Malay interests rather than with cross-community interests. Likewise, the sole religious party in Malaya is not simply a Muslim party but implicitly a Malay-Muslim party, the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP).

Religious heterogeneity among the non-Malays also has been fostered by the energetic work of the Christian missions in Malaya. Christianity, in actuality, has made relatively few converts in Malaysia, and more proportionately in Borneo than in Malaya. On the peninsula Christians number some 300,000, only 4.2 per cent of the peninsular population;² whereas in Sabah and Sarawak Christians amount to 16.6 per cent and 15.8 per cent respectively.³ But what is interesting for our discussion is not so much the size of the Christian convert group as its ethnic make-up. In Malaya and Borneo the Christians have been drawn virtually solely from the non-Malay communities. So it is the

Chinese and the Indians in Malaya who contain within their ethnic groups these religious minorities, while the Malays have remained religiously homogeneous. And although small in number, the Malayan Christians are among the best educated and most prominent persons in each of the non-Malay communities, that is, they are in many of those positions called upon to mobilize and represent their communities' interests.

Added to this heterogeneity is the non-militant, non-institutional character of the Malaysian forms of Hinduism and Confucian-Taoist-Buddhism. Whereas the Malay Islamic teacher plays a central role in his ethnic community's social and political life, the clergy in the non-Malay communities do not. The experience immigration undermined and diluted the centrality of religion and religious authorities in the Chinese and Indian communities. By contrast, Islam has a strong tradition of political militancy. Hinduism and the Chinese eclectic religion are not a-political, but they lack Islam's fundamental political orientation. Thus it is not simply that the Malays are using Islam to mobilize their community in politics; Islam by its very nature contains the seeds of political activism.

Constitutionally, Malaysia strikes a nice balance. It proclaims Islam the "religion of the Federation," and makes the sultans the heads of religion (i.e., Islam) in their own

states; at the same time it asserts the freedom of all other religions to practice, so long as no effort is made to convert Malays. ⁴. The problem is how to maintain that delicate balance in a country where religion is a principal means of defining ethnic loyalty and where politics is overwhelmingly concerned with shaping a national identity. *

In comparison with religion, there has been a more noticeable tendencies for Malaya, Chinese, and Indians each to describe themselves by their linguistic identity and for each to utilize their respective language claims as justification for more general demands for communal advancement or protection.

The imbalance of political relevance of religion among the three Malayan groups has meant that communal conflict has focussed with special sharpness on a single issue - language. With so many inter-ethnic fears and desires being channelled through a single issue, language policy has been the most difficult to formulate and implement. But it is also true that this incongruity of interest in religion has reduced the politically disintegrative potential of the objective cultural divisions

* The Malay sultans are not purely Islamic figures. Much of their historic and symbolic authority has been derived from Hinduism. In fact, it may be that British colonial policy and Malay nationalism are increasing the Islamic character of the sultans.

between the three ethnic groups. The dilemmas of language are in this sense the price paid for avoiding wider-spread cultural-political conflict.

In language as in religion, the Malays enjoy greater internal homogeneity than do the Chinese and Indians. Of Malaya's three ethnic groups only the Malays can be fully defined by a single language. The Indians are not all Tamil-speaking; Chinese may speak one of a multitude of different dialects.

The Malayan Indian community is composed of several language groups: Tamil, Telegu, and Malayalam from southern India; Punjabi, Maharatti, Bengali, Marawari, Pushtu, and Sindhi from northern India. The southern dialects are by far the most important, comprising about 90 per cent of the Malayan Indian population; among this group the Tamil-speakers represent about 80 per cent.⁵ In practice, Tamil and English serve as the common language among the Indians, but neither embraces the entire Malayan community. These linguistic divisions among the Indians has made the political demands for the preservation of Tamil less potent than other communal demands and has thereby reduced the possibilities of the language policy debate in Malaya becoming a simple three-way ethnic conflict.

Among the Chinese linguistic differences are of a somewhat different nature, but still do not serve the cause of communal solidarity. The Malaysian Chinese community is made up of a number of dialect groups. The most important are 1) Foochow, spoken by the Hokciu and Hokchia peoples from around the mainland Chinese city of Foochow and in the hinterlands; 2) Hokkien, spoken north, south, and inland from Amoy and including a variation of the Henghua dialect; 3) Teochew, spoken around Swatow; 4) Hakka, spoken over a wide area inland from Swatow and Canton; 5) Cantonese, spoken along the coastal areas north and south of Canton; 6) Hailam, used by the people of Hainan Island; 7) Southern Mandarin, spoken in Kwangsi province inland from Canton and mutually intelligible with the Mandarin dialects of the north.⁶

For both the Indians and Chinese a linguistic map parallels the homeland origins of the immigrants. While the Tamil's predominance reflects the numerical strength of the southern Indians in Malaya, the large numbers of Hakka, Hokkien, and Cantonese indicate the regional predominance of southern China's province among Malaya's Chinese. Unlike the Indians, however, the Chinese have a communal lingua franca which is not immediately associated with any of the major linguistic groups in Malaya. This is Kuo-yu, or Mandarin. After the 1911 Revolution in China Kuo-yu

became the medium of instruction in Chinese schools and the operative community-wide language. Today claims on behalf of "Chinese" in Malaya usually refer to Kuo-yu. In addition, the Chinese communal cohesiveness is assisted by the fact that all of the various dialects are written in the same characters and thus written Chinese is intelligible by members of all the dialect groups.

In both India and China themselves language has been a source of political dispute. When a Malaysian regime, then, intervenes in the realm of language in order to change social patterns it is taking hold of an historically hot coal. In this respect, language is in a different political situation among the non-Malay indigenous peoples of Borneo. While language has been an extremely sensitive issue there, the mother tongue of, say, the Kadazans or Ibans are not as integral to their speakers' historical identity.

For the Malays language is almost synonymous with ethnic identity. There are pronunciation variations in Malay from state to state, with perhaps jokes made by Selangor Malays about the funny way a Kedah Malay speaks. But Malay is mutually intelligible throughout the peninsula and Borneo among all Malays. The intimate link between language and ethnicity for the Malays is suggested by the legal definition of a Malay which includes in part having Malay as his

native tongue. No comparable definition could hold for the other ethnic groups.

For the Malays religion and language have been the foundation of communal identity, more so than ethnicity in general. Therefore, one immigrant group, the Indonesians, who have come over to Borneo and the peninsula as laborers, have been relatively easily assimilated and have been accorded equal rights with the indigenous group because this particular immigrant group possesses the definitive cultural characteristics of the Malay language and the Islamic faith. *

Official policy has done its part to conserve this ethnic homogeneity among the Malays. Both the promotion of the Malay language and the prohibition against Christian proselytizing among Malays together with the provision for Islamic instruction in state-supported schools has insured that the Malays would remain a recognizable ethnic community even though other communities were being increasingly threatened by internal and cross-cutting divisions. No ethnic group in Malaysia is totally immune to those powerful forces of modernization and westernization which dilute communal solidarity, but it has been the non-Malays who have been

* "In 1947 Malaysians living in Malaya but born elsewhere comprised about 13 per cent (309,000) of the Malay population. The largest group of these were from Java." Between July and December of 1953, for instance, there was an inward migrational surplus of Indonesians amounting to +9,748. 7.

particularly susceptible to pluralism. This may change, however, if government policies succeed in bringing more Malays into professional and commercial occupations and into urban life.

Race and Ethnicity

Race is often confused with ethnicity. In fact, it is one of many lines of distinction which may or may not differentiate sub-groups in a society. In Malaysian politics the racial factor does relatively little to explain behavior. Race per se certainly explains less about the Malaysian political system than about the political systems of countries like South Africa or the United States.

Inter-marriage, for example, which is a social assimilative prod toward political integration, is inhibited in Malaysia far less by race qua race than by religion. In fact, the newspapers give considerable publicity, usually favorable, to inter-marriage across ethnic lines, so long as it does not involve a Muslim marrying an unconverted non-Muslim. Another indication that race itself is not the main stumbling block to greater intermingling between ethnic groups is the common practice of Malay parents to adopt Chinese girls. These children are raised as Muslims and live according to Malay custom; and there seems to be little difficulty in their

mixing with and eventually marrying a Malay. The Prime Minister and his wife, Malays, in fact have adopted Chinese daughter.

This is not to say, naturally, that one can wholly dismiss the racial factor in analyzing Malaysian politics. Race still provides a visual clue to any citizen's or politician's ethnic attachment and thus evokes stereotyped reactions to his behavior. Nonetheless, the Malaysian proponents of harmony and "reasoning together" direct their accusations of irresponsibility or extremism not against "racists" but against "communalists."

Ethnicity and Social Organization

Up to this point we have suggested four categories of distinction between ethnic groups which appear most rewarding in the investigation of the nature of inter-ethnic politics and the possibilities for integration in Malaysia: 1) numerical distribution; 2) indigeneity; 3) geographic distribution; 4) occupational concentrations; 5) cultural differences. Finally, we will look at a factor frequently neglected in the consideration of inter-ethnic politics: the distinctive social organizations and the tendency to produce secondary associations in the various ethnic communities. This factor has been left to the last because it overlaps with so many

of the other distinctions dividing the communities.

In Malaya the political relationships are shaped to a large degree by the differences in the sorts of political organizations representing each of the three ethnic groups. These differences have their roots in the communities' structural differences, especially in their unequal penchants for forming secondary associations. This fundamental difference can be traced in large part to the ethnic groups' initial mode of entry and settlement in Malaya.

The most striking contrast is between the longer-resident Malay community's paucity of secondary associations prior to the creation of its leading communal party, The United Malay National Organization, on the one hand, and the multiplicity of secondary associations - political and extra-political - found within the immigrant Chinese and Indian communities.

In addition, there are social differences between the Chinese and Indians due to the particular circumstances under which their respective migrations occurred. The Chinese came independently, under their own labor contracts. They soon paid off their indentures and set up enterprises in the towns, with the help of the capital of their kinsmen already there. The Indians, however, entered Malaya under joint Indian-Malayan British colonial supervision.

They were situated away from the towns working as tappers on the European rubber estates. A great many of these Indian laborers came with the expectation of earning sufficient money and then returning to India. Those Indians who did migrate independently and who set up shops and firms in the towns were separated from the rubber estate population not only by distance and interests but by regional affiliations in the home country and the cultural differences those implied.

The political outcome of these differences have been such as to lessen the probabilities of head-on ethnic clashes. The different sorts of social relationships and organizations which these settlement patterns generated partly explains why only one of Malaya's three ethnic groups has a political party today which validly can claim to speak for the majority of its community. Three monolithic ethnically-based political parties do not confront one another in the Malaysian or Malayan political arena.

UMNO, the one party able to speak for the greater part of one ethnic group, has been able to channel much of its community's new associational energies into its own organization. Unlike the parties trying to represent and mobilize the other ethnic groups, UMNO was not faced with a community which already could boast of considerable diversity and, most important, formal associations to speak for those

kampong (Malay village) social structure on which a potential party can rely for support and legitimacy in the Chinese and Indian communities.

UMNO has had the added advantage of starting its career when its community was still relatively unpoliticized. It was not just secondary associations with which it did not have to compete, there also were few political movements rivaling it for political leadership. By contrast, the Malayan Chinese and Indians, largely due to the stimulus of energetic political movements and upheavals in their home countries, had been fighting political battles among themselves since before World War II. To some degree, therefore, it has been the wealth of associational talents and resources as well as the long period of politicization which has hindered the Malayan immigrant communities in their attempts to act cohesively in Malaya's inter-ethnic politics.

Ethnic Relations and Change

Nothing about an ethnic group or a pattern of several ethnic groups is immutable - not even race. Each factor which has been discussed here is subject to change. Because this is true of the ethnic groups themselves it is therefore also true of the national political communities in which they exist. As the structure and identity of each

Malaysian ethnic group is transformed, the cases of political organization and representation, the styles of political leadership, and the topics of greatest political interest will be transformed.

But change in a multi-ethnic nation is not synonymous with integration. The new conditions in which the ethnic groups operate will not necessarily be ones conducive to trust, identification or cooperation.

In Malaysia, however, there is some indication that the kind of changes now taking shape within the various ethnic groups may enhance the chances for integration. For the Indians and Chinese the dominant trend is toward permanent settlement, while for the Malays it is toward mobility. None of the three major groups in Malaysia today accurately can be termed "immigrant." The Indian Government banned immigration of unskilled labor (e.g., rubber tappers) to Malaya in 1938; the Malayan Government stopped the entry of Chinese women shortly after the start of the Pacific War.⁸ By 1947, 62.5 per cent of the Chinese in Malaya were local-born, 50 per cent of the Indians, and 95 per cent of the Malays. But by the time of the last Malayan census, 1957, the figures for local-born had risen and with them the general stabilization of the peninsula's population: Chinese, 74 per cent local-born; Indians, 62.1 per cent local-born; Malays, 96.9

per cent local-born. For the population as a whole on the peninsula and Singapore in 1957, 77.9 per cent had been born there. 9.

Table 5 Net Arrivals and Departure: States of Malaya

	Malays	Chinese	Indians & Pakistanis	Other Races	All Races
	Thousands				
1955	-26.1	+2.8	+3.1	+2.9	- 17.3
1958	- 3.1	+3.5	+3.1	+6.2	+ 11.5
1962	+ 0.3	+4.9	+7.6	+11.5	+ 24.3
1964	-19.2	-4.1	+9.8	+ 1.0	- 12.5

- (1) This table does not include movements between the State of Malaya and Singapore.
- (2) It is not certain that the figures collected completely cover the arrivals of Malays.

Source: Department of Statistics, Monthly Statistical Bulletin of the States of Malaya, July, 1965, p. 6.

Stabilization of residence is probably one of the more statistically evident changes taking place within the various ethnic groups. But its implication for politics and for communal reconciliation as well as some of the other transformations occurring within the communities are more difficult

to substantiate with hard data. Nonetheless, they are going on and are bound to alter the nature of Malaysian politics.

Change in the character of the Malayan Chinese community and its role in Malaya will depend on several developmental contingencies. One will be the community's future relationship with Feking and Taiwan. The extent to which there are channels for communication and travel to and from these Chinese domains will affect the Malayan Chinese resident's sense of the immediate need to adopt Malaysia as his permanent home and his object of political allegiance. Currently, both of these Chinese nations are geographically and politically distant, and the one which is most accessible - Taiwan - is the one with the weaker cultural and historical pull for overseas Chinese. These distances have acted as a prod toward Chinese investment and settlement in Malaya. This separation from particularly mainland China has also made the Malayan Chinese more susceptible to other cultural influences. This suggests a second contingency, westernization.

As ties to the country of origin weaker, so secondary associations based on homeland distinctions - region, dialect, family name - become less potent. But new values and contacts may take their place as foundations for different sorts of associational activities. This, in turn, will affect the nature of the political parties which now look to the

associations and sub-communal ties for their support. Westernization appears to be making in-roads into Chinese tastes, career choices, family ties, and general cultural references. This process may serve to restrain any Chinese moves towards assimilation in Malaysia. They are cut off from the mother country, but they still have an alternative object of cultural identification other than Malaysia. The question therefore is how much will Malaysian solidarity be made to depend on cultural affinity: can there be a form of political integration which calls for the Chinese political allegiance without their cultural allegiance as well?

Another development to be watched among the Malayan Chinese is the possible closing of the gap between the more parochial Chinese-speaking Chinese and the fewer but more influential English-speaking Chinese. The consequences of a narrowing of this intra-communal division will depend on what serves as the bridge between them. If the split between the "parochials" and "cosmopolitans" is covered over by a new community-wide sense of Malay threat or of international chauvinism, then the greater cohesion could produce a new Chinese militancy in Malayan politics. On the other hand, these two sub-groups could be drawn together by the passing of the older China-oriented generation and the coming-of-age of a new English-stream educated generation.

If this should happen, then the Chinese community, though less divided, in fact, also will be less politically cohesive. This new Chinese community would tend to look to politics for the satisfaction of demands not defined by their "Chineseness".

The Malayan Indian community's development also will hinge on the future role of its mother country and on the persistence or reduction of its internal communal divisions. There is less possibility, however, of Malaya's Indians being so thoroughly cut off from India as the Chinese are from mainland China. India officials from New Delhi come to Malaya and urge the Indians there to commit themselves to their country of residence, but still the dockside at the port of Georgetown, Penang can be seen piled high with luggage waiting for the ship to India which will take Indians "home" for periodic long visits with relatives. Therefore, the development of more permanent loyalties to Malaya is likely to depend less on diplomatic conditions than on the attractiveness of India itself. If India's internal troubles become even more acute or if the Indian government imposes tighter restrictions on travel and entry, then perhaps Malayan Indians will grow more resigned to settlement and citizenship in Malaya and no longer see it as a way-station.

Communal fragmentation among the Indians grows out of cultural, economic, even physical (the northern Indians are usually lighter-skinned than the southern Indians) differences that will be less subject to change than the differences among the Chinese. Malaya's own economic development will have an impact on the future relationships among these Indian sub-groups. The fate of the rubber industry, for example, will affect the occupations and well-being and even settlement patterns of the Indians, especially the Tamils, more than any other single ethnic group. In 1957, of the three hundred thousand gainfully employed Indians, 59.5 per cent were engaged in the primary sector of the Malayan economy. And of these, 83 per cent were employed in the rubber industry.¹⁰ The ups and downs of the international rubber market, as well as the expansion of other types of domestic industry will determine the economic resources and needs of the Indians. It will also determine the sorts of associational resources Indians will have to make these demands, since Indians play such a central role in Malayan trade unionism.

Fundamental change in the character and political role of the Malay community will not be so dependent on events in international relations, though these will be relevant. Change will stem more from domestic social transformations. Most important will be the extent of urbanization and

commercialization. If public policy coupled with economic expansion draw Malays away from the rural kampong and even their home state into the secularized cities and commercial and technical occupations, the structure underlying Malay communal cohesiveness will be drastically altered. The role of religion and religious authorities, the loyalty to the traditional rulers, contacts with non-Malays each will change in the direction of reducing Malay homogeneity and thus political solidarity.

In sum, while increasing stabilization is the most probable motivating force behind change in the Chinese and Indian communities, increasing mobility probably will have the most far-reaching impact on the forms of association and values of the Malays.

The style and policies in Malaysian politics are produced by the convergence of a particular state of political development with a particular network of ethnic characteristics. If either the political setting or the ethnic pattern change the nation's political system changes. This first chapter has tried to describe the salient features of each of the ethnic groups residing in Malaya. But, moreover, it has sought to stress the pattern of ethnic distinctions.

What seems most significant in this pattern is the incongruity of the main distinctions separating the Malays,

Chinese, and Indians. Indigeneity is a positive attribute for only one of the three groups; religion is distinctive for all three but for two it is negative in its political functions; the Malays and Chinese each command impressive numbers but have not been able to translate that into equally strong political organizations, the Chinese because of internal fragmentation, the Malays because of delayed politicization; mutual stereotyping abounds but frequently has assuaged animosities by perpetuating the belief that each ethnic group is content in its own socio-economic ballwick.

The next two chapters examine two separate, but politically intertwined policy areas - education and language - in an effort to discern how these broad and fluid cultural and demographic factors shape the policy-making process. At the same time, these brief case studies will seek to clarify the extent to which these same factors are vulnerable to government manipulation for the sake of national integration.

The changes - intended and unintended - produced by government policy may not only alter the patterns of inter-ethnic relationships. They may as well reduce the significance of ethnicity altogether as a means of explaining Malaysian political behavior. Such a reduction in the political force of ethnicity is not, however, the sine qua non of national integration and certainly may be opposed by federal leaders.

The reason for introducing at least the possibility of the decline of ethnicity as a pivot in the political process is to underscore once more the analytical fact that the character of ethnic pluralism and its relationship to the entire social order both are alterable. As a result, the shape of integration in any political unit is likewise bound to change in quality over time.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION POLICY: THE EMERGENCE OF AN
ETHNIC ISSUE

In the second half of the twentieth century changes in the relationships between ethnic groups are both more self-consciously undertaken and more politically manipulated than in the past. Nowadays not just American social scientists, but Asian and African politicians speak of their government's over-riding task as that of "nation-building." Under this term is housed both economic progress and the achievement of political integration - both prosperity and unity. Neither can be attained without recognition of the distinctive roles of, and the potential friction between the major ethnic groups in the nation. As a result, in a newly independent nation marked by ethnic pluralism the natural transformation of ethnic relations is accelerated and becomes the subject of governmental concern and public debate.

What we will be interested in throughout this brief consideration of Malaysian education is just what sorts of changes are occurring in each ethnic group and in the relations between groups as the result of government policy-formation.

Strategy and Integration

Strategy refers to choices - choices of priorities, methods, timing, and interpretation. By emphasizing political strategies as we will in this discussion the analysis will not be confined to simply the Macchiavellian twists and turns

of politicians. Strategy can serve, as the case of Malaysia demonstrates, as the door leading to broader questions. A government's tactics and long-range maneuvers for achieving and then implementing policies reveal, first of all, that government's particular style of action and what dictates that style and, second, its perception of the immediate political and larger social situation. Furthermore, in some instances - Malaysia is a case in point - strategy comes close to becoming substantive policy itself. Timing, sequence, presentation are seen as being as crucial to the future inter-ethnic relationships as the original intent of the policy.

An integrative strategy is liable to change over time as it responds to natural and induced alterations in the country's ethnic conditions. But what the experience of Malaysia suggests is that effective and successful strategy and policy conceptions do not mean that there will be steady decline of inter-ethnic conflict at every stage. In fact, success, particularly in the early phases, may be witnessed by a notable increase in political conflict between the major groups. Partly as a response to this likelihood, the Malaysian government's strategy has been two-pronged. First, there has been an effort to leave the ultimate vision of an eventually unified Malaysia relatively vague, open to numerous interpretations. In addition, policy-makers have shown a distinct preference

for proceeding toward integration through gradualism and administrative tinkering rather than by sweeping reform.

One suspects that Malaysia is not unique in experiencing the growth of overt tensions and barely concealed communal political rivalries at the same time as its constituent ethnic groups are making their first meaningful attempts at cooperation. Language riots in India, federal tensions in Canada, racial violence in the United States - all of these characterize the later phases of communal contact, not just the initial interaction.

The paradox is really not so mysterious as it might first appear. Conflict, even violence, between communities can only occur if there is at least enough contact and communication among them to generate friction and mutual recognition of their differences. In Malaysia one of the functions of colonialism and of the peculiar sort of immigration patterns was to dampen and discourage even such minimal contact and communication. The diverse forms of education systems that emerged to service the various groups reflect this pre-independence condition of relative remoteness of the Malays, Chinese, and Indians from one another. But with the British withdrawal in the face of Japanese invasion and the frequently deliberate Japanese policy of playing one groups against the other, the first steps were taken toward creating bridges

between the major groups residing on the peninsula. Bridges of mutual hostility and mutual distrust are, nonetheless, bridges. 1.

The rapid post-war moves toward self-government and eventual independence in 1957 stimulated two kinds of inter-ethnic contact, one relatively new for Malaysians, the other somewhat an extension of the wartime relationship encouraging hostility. On the one hand, self-government brought with it the need to find some way in which the major ethnic communities could cooperate politically in the new government. A rash of new parties and short-lived coalitions gave birth finally to the Alliance - a federation of three explicitly communal parties, the United Malay National Organization (UMNO), the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA), and the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) - which has formed the country's government during all ten years of Malayan independence. The press for the three parties to resolve their own differences on government policies, while at the same time maintain their credibility with their respective ethnic groups naturally generated political tensions that had been remarkably absent in heterogeneous Malaya before the war.

On the other hand, while initiation of political cooperation and alliance brought new contacts and increased inter-ethnic controversy, so did the outbreak of terrorism

and guerrilla warfare when, in 1948, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) went into rebellion. As in the Japanese occupation period, when the largest resistance organization was mainly Chinese, the target of the Emergency was identified ethnically, since the MCP was overwhelmingly Chinese in composition. Thus the Emergency was pushing contact of a violent sort between Malayan ethnic groups (the Malayan police and army were made up largely of Malays) at the same time as the new party system and government were increasing contact of a cooperative political nature.

It is not being argued simply that increased contact and inter-dependence consistently produce increased inter-group conflict. If this were the case, "nation-building," or political integration efforts would by their very initiation undermine their ultimate goal. Instead, what is being emphasized here, and what the course of education policy confirms, is the non-linear quality of integrative developments in a multi-ethnic society. In the process of nation-building, progress toward creation of a political inter-dependence and common identity may have to be paid for in the emergence of new areas of inter-ethnic dispute.

In Malaysia, and on the Malayan peninsula in particular, one of these newly disputed areas is education. The new way in which the emerging conflicts between the Malays,

Chinese, and Indians, and between each and the federal government, have been manifested reflects the peculiar ethnic patterns described in the preceding chapter. The nature of these inter-ethnic conflicts influences the type of strategy which the integration-minded Alliance government has adopted in dealing with education.

Issue Priority and Changing Pluralism

The first question to be asked of Malaysian integration strategy is, why give such disproportionate attention to a single policy area, education. The predominance of any one issue in a multi-ethnic political system indicates a certain quality in its pluralism, as well as certain presuppositions and goals held by the current regime.

In any multi-ethnic society there are going to be some issues far more than others that become embroiled in inter-ethnic controversy. What kinds of issues these are and how initially they become so embroiled suggest hypotheses regarding multi-ethnic politics in general. Clifford Geertz has noted that in societies divided by conflicting ties of kinship and community certain realms of social life seem to be especially susceptible to conflict. Whereas in more homogeneous societies such conflicts involving government occur in the distinctly political arena, in these communally divided societies

the arenas are peculiarly peripheral to the strictly political forum. That is, political conflict in a sovereign civil society which was imposed upon a pattern of pre-civil attachments is likely to lean toward its own characteristic battlegrounds.

According to Geertz, "Through primordial issues (i.e., those related to pre-civil loyalties, personal kinship or communal groupings) do, of course, turn up from time to time in parliamentary debates, cabinet deliberation, judicial decisions and, more often, in electoral campaigns, they show a persistent tendency to emerge in purer, more explicit, and more virulent form in some places where other sorts appear." ²

The real point to be made is a broader one. That is, that in any society "political" is an unfixed notion. What is considered properly or inevitably "political" will vary according to the perspective of the given viewer, whether he be a career bureaucrat, a party spokesman, a colonial administrator, or a ethnic leader. It is furthermore true that "political" will have varying definitions not only from sector to sector within a society, but from society to society. In an ethnically-divided state there is a tendency to define politics in a broad fashion because it is the very nature of an ethnic community to support certain communal efforts which benefit its own members and give them a genuine sense of communal dependence and identity. These undertakings almost certainly will

be in areas of social life not controlled traditionally by the central government. Thus when the government, now deliberately intent upon breaking down these walls of alleged communal self-sufficiency, moves to extend its power and responsibility it is more than probable it will meet greatest resistance or distrust in those areas not previously considered the domain of national politics, but rather the domain of communal co-operation.

Moreover, in societies like Malaya the major ethnic groups were not very active in politics prior to independence and the nation-building drive, and so each group is likely to have its greatest capacity for concerted expression and influence not in the realm of politics (or at least domestic politics), but in those areas - such as education - where it has acted as a community in the past. Each ethnic group then quite naturally will seek to transfer the new political contests to those areas where each is best organized, where each feels most strongly a unified community.

In addition to these past experiences which have developed within each ethnic group the capacity for communal action in particular areas, the issues at stake themselves tend to be ones which are fraught with emotion and sentiment. This makes them less amenable to resolution within the usual political forums - in courts, parliaments, or voting

booths. Multi-ethnic societies are not alone in discovering that the predominant issues during the post-independence political infancy are ill-suited to western institutions and procedures. But in a nation forced to contend with the necessarily intangible values, faiths, customs of mutually suspicious ethnic groups the limited appropriateness of institutionalized political forums becomes even more apparent. This is what Geertz is pointing out when he notes the difficulty of confining questions of primordial loyalty to strictly "political" arenas. But if a regime and its leaders are wedded to these formal institutions and practices, they do have a possible alternative; they can attempt to take these questions relating to pre-civil attachments and so break them down and redefi-
 ne them piece-by-piece that they can be handled by the political and institutional methods adapted from western models. This has been one of the major efforts of the Malaysian government in handling education.

The controversies most common among ethnic groups and the state, or between the several ethnic groups themselves involve non-political spheres of life - language, culture, marriage, religion, moral codes - since these are just those grounds on which ethnicity is defined. Consequently, both the form and the substance of policy discussion move into arenas on the periphery of politics. Particularly is this apt

to be so in newly-independent states, where the boundaries between "political" and "non-political" commonly are blurred, due to the uncertainty and fluidity of governmental authority.

But the inclination of policy and debate to move into marginally political spheres is witnessed in politically mature states, such as the United States. The American government's growing interest in legislating so as to alter the structure of the Negro family - an area rarely touched by broad public policy so directly - is an example of this tendency in multi-ethnic states.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one-time advisor to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson on matters of social legislation, prefaced his controversial study of the Negro family by declaring that in a nation seeking integration policy concerns will move from clearly political realms to those below and beyond the normal political sphere. But such a policy transition, says Moynihan, is necessary if the government is to achieve its final integrative objective:

"With these events (i.e., formation of a Negro mass movement, passage of civil rights legislation, election of Lyndon Johnson) behind us, the nation now faces a different set of challenges, which may prove more difficult to meet, if only because they cannot be cast as concrete propositions of right and wrong.

"The fundamental problem here is that the Negro revolution, like the industrial upheaval of the 1930's, is a movement for equality as well as for liberty...

"But by and large, the programs that have been enacted in the first phase of the Negro revolution - Manpower Retraining, the Job Corps, Community Action, et al. - only make opportunities available. They cannot insure the outcome...

"In a word, national effort towards the problems of Negro Americans must be directed towards the question of family structure." 3.

Moynihan deserves quotation at such length in a study of Malaysian politics because he spells out so clearly the far-ranging policy decisions which are called for once a government commits itself to altering the relationship between ethnic communities. Moreover, in his justification of federal action to transform the Negro family he notes that this sort of action is born out of earlier integrative action, that the types of issues which preoccupy a government will change as one integrative problem is resolved and another then becomes visible.

Both of these generalizations concerning multi-ethnic politics are as true for Malaysia as they are for the United States, despite their differences in political experience. That is, the existence of ethnic pluralism itself dictates central characteristics and inclinations within political systems, regardless of other contrasts between them.

The Malaysian preoccupation with education - shared by government and the several ethnic groups alike - is an illustration of this tendency of political controversy to intrude

upon normally politically marginal areas. Inter-ethnic conflict does crop up in other sectors of Malaysian political life - labor, land distribution, civil service criteria, economic planning - but it is peculiarly visible and persistent in the matters of schools, teachers, and curriculum. It is not surprising that education should be so highly-charged politically, since it touches on questions of deep mutual concern to both ethnic groups and governments: e.g., socialization, creation of a truly "Malaysian" culture and identity, communication, social mobility, skills for livelihood.

Schools are established to provide these necessary social tools and in a few nations today is education immune to political intrusion. However, its centrality in Malaysia's politics is due to something more than this universal interest in education. The choices regarding how best to equip the younger generation of citizens with communicative skills, values, cultural references all threaten to destroy certain pre-civil communities or to fragment the nascent nation-state itself.

In a multi-ethnic state often either, but not both, the government and the ethnic groups feels intensely about a particular policy area. In such areas, then, there is less tension and more room for gradualism and accommodation. Military affairs is such an issue-area in Malaysia (at least for the present). The Malaysian government is concerned about

the preparedness and future development of the nations armed forces, but the ethnic groups as such have displayed relatively little concerted interest in military policy. This, of course, is not universally the case in ethnically mixed nations. In Nigeria, for example, the matter of the army's organization has been central to both the federal government and the various ethnic groups, as central as education is in Malaysia.

On a wide range of issues, therefore, there are varying degrees of coterminality of concern between 1) the government and the ethnic groups, and 2) the different ethnic groups themselves. "Co-terminality" refers to the simultaneous convergence of interest, sense of immediate stake in a single area of public affairs by either the government and all of the different resident communities or among the ethnic groups themselves. On issues where co-terminality is highest there is the greatest tension and potentially disintegrative force. When the highly co-terminal issue provokes a conflict of interest that draws the government in - as, for instance, the very concept of Malaysia - the government will act as one of the direct contestants. But there is a second sort of co-terminality - where the convergence is between two groups on a matter with which the government leaders themselves do not have a stake. In this second circumstance the government may be able to act as an "honest

broker" between the conflicting groups.

Education presently represents a highly co-terminal issue, and one in which the government has an immediate interest of its own and thus does not allow it to play a broker-age role with such ease. But education not always has been so. In fact, until fairly recently, education was notable for its low degree of co-terminality. It has been the progress toward integration which has endowed education with its new co-terminality and its accompanying controversial character.

The Pre-eminence of Education

The British colonial administration had demonstrated an interest in certain sectors of education in Malaya, but had concentrated on education for one ethnic group, the Malays. The British were willing to allow other groups to go their own way. Conversely, the ethnic groups themselves did not pressure the government on education matters. The Malay and the Tamil Indians for the most part were willing to let the government take the initiative. The Chinese were willing to organize and support their own educational system without aid or guidance from the British. Consequently, prior to about 1948, ethnic interaction, when it did occur, usually took place in realms other than in education - in labor, internal security, immigration. What little inter-mingling of ethnic groups there

was in education was among the groups' elites. This represented very minor integration but it becomes important for the post-independence policy strategies. For education, therefore, the pre-1948 period was one of low co-terminality and thus low levels of interaction and tension.

If Malaya was to disintegrate or to unite during this early period, neither the dynamite nor the cement would come from education. Such cannot be said today. Why the change? To understand education's transformation from a low to a high co-terminality issue is to begin to get at the essence of Malayan multi-ethnic politics.

The government and the various ethnic communities in Malaya began to converge upon education at the time that independence became foreseeable. There was a realization in the early post-war years that the transition from colonial status to sovereignty would carry with it new demands for unity and self-sufficiency. Both of these would evoke increased demands for the training of the nation's youth. There arose a new self-consciousness within the Malayan political leadership, just then crystallizing, and within the Chinese, Malay, and Indian communities separately, as regarded the sort of education system best suited to the needs of sovereignty. Although such prophesies are always a risk, it can be argued that had not independence become a foreseeable

reality in the late 1940's, education would have continued for some years at least to have remained outside the main arena of ethnic politics. Moreover, the ethnic controversies that exist today would be framed not in terms of "language of instruction" and "education for Malaysians," but in terms of labor activism or subversion or immigration quotas.

To note that in 1945 ethnic debate focussed on Issue X, whereas in 1965 it revolved around Issue Y, is to note much more than a change in political interest. The switch also indicates that ethnic relations and the integrative role of government have undergone a fundamental change. In 1945 the focus in Malaya was the very loyalty of the Chinese; today the concern is with more than this issue of minimal allegiance. Internal security has never moved entirely off stage, but the spotlight now is on matters of cultural and emotional identity. If the issues had remained the legal status of a citizen or the definition of legalistic loyalty, integration would have been of a much more tenuous and pro forma character.

But even to arrive at the point where the ethnic groups and the state find matters of cultural identity and of prestige and influence within the national society to be their foremost concerns necessitates some integrative steps gone before, usually steps which raise the level of inter-ethnic

controversy. Therefore, to note, as numerous commentators have, that Malaya before Japanese occupation was remarkably serene and unmarred by communal strife as compared to the years after World War II is to miss the point. The very reason for that pre-war serenity was the un-integrated character of Malayan society. Total absence of conflict in such a distinctively heterogeneous society is, therefore, usually a sign of separateness and low integration, not of unity and mutual trust.

In addition to these switches of focus between broad policy areas, there will be changes of emphasis within a single policy area. These internal policy transitions also denote changing patterns of integration. Thus, there has been a switch within the education dialogue in Malaya - from an early stress on the use of schools for subversion to a more recent concentration on the integrative role of language in the educational process. In future years there is likely to be another switch - from language to manpower training. By contrast, in Borneo elimination of subversion still figures prominently in education debate. ^{4.}

Policy and the Functions of Ambiguity

Having granted education top priority in the overall integrative effort, the Alliance government worked out a strategy for achieving gradual nationalization of the school system and equalization of educational opportunities for all ethnic groups.

The evolution of Malayan - and now Malaysian - education policy is traced through a series of official reports. Emulating the British, the Malaysian government marks significant alterations of public policy and recognizes public controversy by the appointment of official committee to hear relevant interests' demands and to formulate broad guidelines which will be the basis of subsequent legislation. Official policy becomes identified by its supporters and critics with reference to these committee reports.

In the evolution of education policy three official reports serve as political bench-marks: The Barnes Report of 1951, the Razak Report of 1956 and, most recently, the Talib Report of 1960. 5.

The Barnes Report marked the government's assumption of responsibility for a uniform and nationalized education system. It was prepared and debated during the height of the Emergency, when the country was still under

British rule and was threatened by armed insurrection linked most closely with one ethnic group, the Chinese. The Razak Report came on the eve of independence; the Emergency still was going on but the MCP was routed. The Talib Report came at the termination of the Emergency, after the Alliance had won a federal election handily; it looked forward to the day when, according to Constitutional guarantees, Malay would become the country's national language.

Taken together, these reports show a single-mindedness on the part of the Alliance government. But coupled with this is a flexibility. Constant throughout the post-war period has been the federal government's determination to gain effective control of the education institutions of all the ethnic communities. But its correlate determination has been to avoid the alienation of any of those ethnic groups and to avoid provoking open hostility between the groups. The shifts which the three reports reflect have been in response to the changing political and ethnic conditions. Rather than a surrender of the ultimate objective of educational integration, they have been a means of reconciling these two determinations.

In its first years of rule the Alliance put its stress on the actual extension of federal governmental control. This control became effective in the late 1950's, at the same time as sovereignty was granted and the Communist challenge was

overcome. The government thereupon turned to the harder problem - what was to be the substantive basis of this newly nationalized, standardized school system. This latter issue struck at the heart of the integrative dilemma.

Granting that the government has the skill and power - in Malaya's case, the formidable external support of the Commonwealth as well - sufficient to quash separatist rebellions and to exert minimal authority over social institutions, such as schools or unions, can it succeed in the next step, that of laying the ground-work for a common trust and allegiance among all sectors of the polity? This question raises the issues of socialization and communication. In Malayan education these, in turn, were translated into the issues of school curriculum and the language of instruction.

To resolve the seemingly minor issues of what subjects to teach or what languages to use in what schools requires that the educational policy-makers have a vision of what the society is they are trying to shape through the educational process. What the years following the 1960 Talib Report suggest is that leading political spokesmen in Malaya still are unsure about the precise quality of that vision. Moreover, recent developments in governmental policy lead to the speculation that a principal strategy of the Alliance regime has been to suspend final judgement, to perpetuate ambiguity.

The conjunction of three events - the preparation for independence, rebellion, and the launching of a national educational policy - revealed the many-sidedness of Malaya's ethnic pluralism. The rebellion uncovered the outright disaffection of a large segment of the Chinese community. The disputes over the new constitution disclosed the dissimilar notions of national community. And the education controversy revealed the obstacles to making unity operable. These various aspects of the Malayan situation are still relevant and remain to blur that vision of national identity which must serve as a guideline for educational planning.

In 1951 when the Barnes Commission was formed to investigate and advise the British administration on the future of Malay education and Malayan education in general, schools in the country were, if possible, more fragmented and diverse than the ethnic groups themselves. Not only were there Malay, Indian, and Chinese vernacular (i.e. using the mother tongue as the language of instruction) schools; there were also Koranic religious schools teaching Islamic scriptures and using Arabic and government and Christian mission schools teaching European curricula and using English. One hesitates to refer to this conglomeration of schools as a "system" at all.

In making the educational institutions more coherent - as in the whole process of nation-building - it has never been a matter of simply choosing one ethnic culture as the basis of integration and rejecting all the others. First of all, such a choice surely would cause mass disaffection because any two ethnic groups rejected would represent a majority of the Malayan populations. But also there has always been a cross-cutting of European influences which safely complicate and blur the alternatives. Were there fewer educational alternatives in Malaya - e.e., were the schools less a reflection of its complex pluralism - the issue debate might have produced more explicitly ethnic clashes and thereby prohibited the government from exploiting ambiguity.

Therefore, not just cultural pluralism, but institutional pluralism has permitted the Alliance its luxury of ambiguity as it tries to work out the shape of its long-range goal.

As early as the late nineteenth century, the British authorities had shown interest in education in the Straits Settlements and the Malay States. But their interest was piecemeal and directed largely to the Malays, for whom they felt a special responsibility. The Malay vernacular schools developed out of traditional Muslim Koranic schools that became secularized under the guidance and financial encouragement of

Table 1 Types of Schools in Malaya
(States and Straits Settlements) 1956

1. English-medium schools

<u>Classification of Institution</u>	<u>Post Secondary</u>	<u>Sec. & Post Prim.</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Total</u>
Maintained from gov't. funds (generally gov't. schools)	1	62	127	190
Aided from gov't. funds (generally missions)	-	66	88	154
Maintained by pub- lic corporation (if any) *	-	-	1	1
All other institutions	-	105	243	348
TOTAL	1	233	459	693

* Schools supported by public fund, but neither church
nor communal.

2. Malay Schools (excluding religious schools)

<u>Classification of Institution</u>	<u>Post Secondary</u>	<u>Sec. & Post Prim.</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Total</u>
Maintained from gov't. funds	-	81	1,795	1,876
Aided from gov't funds -	-	-	377	377
Maintained by public corporation	-	-	-	-
All other institutions	-	-	8	8
TOTAL	-	81	2,180	2,261

(Table 1 - continued)

3. Chinese Schools

<u>Classification of Institution</u>	<u>Post Secondary</u>	<u>Sec. & Post Prim.</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Total</u>
Maintained from gov't. funds	-	1	3	4
Aided from gov't funds *	-	46	932	978
Maintained by public corporation	-	-	-	-
All other institutions	-	24	377	401
TOTAL	-	71	1,312	1,383

* These Chinese schools are of several different types depending on the nature of their control: Committee, 994; Mission, 26; Night, 212; Private, 82; "Old Style" Private, 8.

4. Indian Schools *

<u>Classification of Institution</u>	<u>Post Secondary</u>	<u>Sec. & Post Prim.</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Total</u>
Maintained from gov't funds	-	10	35	45
Aided from gov't funds	-	51	842	893
Maintained by public corporation	-	-	-	-
All other institutions	-	-	25	25
TOTAL	-	61	902	963

* Breakdown of all Indian schools by language of instruction:

Tamil	842
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(Table 1 - continued)

Malayalam	6
Telegu	11
Tamil/Telegu	28
Tamil/Malayalam	1
Gurmukhi	9
Hindi	3
Gurkhali	1
Gujerati	1

* of all Indian schools, Estate schools numbered 720.

Source: Federation of Malaya, Annual Report on Education for 1956, Kuala Lumpur, pp. 79-80, 150, 152.

Indian schools also had a history in Malaya of loose ties with the government, but for different reasons than indigenety. Government concern with Malay education stemmed from paternal obligation to the native residents of the colony and protectorates, while British concern with Indian education derived from colonial economic investment in the peninsula and administrative links with British-ruled India. Malayan Indians were clustered on rubber estate and education was treated as part of a labor policy. The Labour Code of 1912 required that estates with a certain number of children establish and staff schools on the estate. These estate schools were for

the most part Tamil vernacular schools covering only the lower primary grades. They were located on the estates and given limited financial grants by the government. Indians in the urban centers were beyond government concern and thus provided schools through their own communal efforts. 7.

Of the three ethnic groups' educational activities, the British were least directly involved in those of the Malayan Chinese. Committees, guilds, dialect and name associations all became sponsors of schools within the Chinese community. The relative autonomy and self-sufficiency of Chinese education can be traced back to their mode of immigration. In immigration and subsequently in education the Chinese were much less reliant on governmental regulation and support. Furthermore the Chinese came to Malaya equipped with a strong tradition of educational mobility. Schools were fostered among the Chinese, therefore, by both the Confucian heritage with its high social regard for educational accomplishment and by the Chinese community's associational proclivity and urban concentrations which facilitated the pooling of resources for the maintenance of institutions. The Chinese schools were modeled on their mainland counterparts and relied heavily on China for teachers and textbooks. 8.

Before the Malayan government's assumption of full responsibility for education, the schools which were most

closely bound to the government were the ones which were least self-sufficient. After the Barnes Report's recommendation of nationalization, the schools hardest hit by this fundamental change of government attitude were the schools which were potentially most self-sufficient. Success of the new policy, as viewed by the government, depended therefore on undermining this self-sufficiency and the detachment it bred.

For the Malays and Indians it was communal helplessness in the field of education that first motivated government intervention; for the Chinese it was communal self-sufficiency. This meant that, since the launching of nationalization, Malayan education policy has simultaneously had to accomplish two quite dissimilar tasks. Regarding the Malays, education policy has been intended to bring the culture "up to date" and to make the Malays capable of providing skills and leadership in an era of modernization; regarding the Chinese, education policy has been intended as an instrument of control and assimilation; regarding the Indians, the policy was to serve both of these ends.

Where these two undertakings are most supportive of one another is not in vernacular education, but in English education. * Put another way - where education policy

* "Vernacular" is used in Malaysia to refer to any linguistic medium of instruction other than English.

objectives are most harmonious is in that cultural stream which is alien to all of Malaya's major ethnic communities.

This is a principal reason for the Alliance government's constant puzzlement and vacillation over English education: it is the stream which is easiest to reconcile with the government's modernizing intentions for all ethnic groups, and yet it does not fit comfortably with the integrative intent of creating a genuinely national community with its own identity. The puzzlement is witnessed not only among federal cabinet ministers, but in fact among the current political elites in all of the ethnic groups.

The aggravation of this dilemma is not lessened by the historic fact that it has been English education which has had the most intimate ties with government during the colonial era. To list the names of the former "government schools" - Victoria Institution, Penang Free School, Raffles College, George the VII School, the Malay College - is to list what are today still the most prestigious schools in Malaya. These schools are the breeding grounds for national leaders, whether Malay, Chinese, or Indian. They were not only taught in the English language, their curriculum was meant to meet the demands of the stiff Cambridge exams.

But the colonial administration did not monopolize English language education, as Table 1 indicates. It shared

the responsibility for bringing Keats and Shakespeare and Charlemagne to Malaya with the energetic Christian missionaries. Mission schools were run mainly by the Catholics, Methodists, and the Church of England, though there were other smaller denominational mission schools as well. These mission schools posed a rather different problem for the architects of national integration. They resisted nationalization not on grounds of ethnic loyalties to particular Malayan communities, but on the basis of religious aims and organizational responsibilities linked to Britain and the United States (Lutheran, Methodists, and Seventh Day Adventists all have ties with the United States).

This brief sketch of the educational situation prior to 1952 suggests the enormous and bewildering variety of relationships between the government and the separate ethnic groups in the vital field of education. The reconciliation of modernizing and integrative ends in the transformation of this educational situation has not been easy. The halting, backtracking, gradualist tactics which the federal planners and politicians have utilized reflect not only their sensitivity to ethnic emotions but their uneasiness with finding a formula for reconciliation.

Gradualism and Non-Confrontation

The government's education planners and political strategists have attempted to pursue both objectives - the training of a modern elite and the fostering of cultural unity - simultaneously. They are putting off as long as possible the reconciliation of these objectives. So far, this delay has served a third objective: the avoidance of ethnic clash or communal alienation from the regime.

The Malayan political style is exemplified by the manner in which nationalization of education has been achieved without facing this necessity. The key components of this Malaysian style of policy-making are gradualism and de-politicization.

In 1952 the federal government took the first steps toward creating a truly national school system. The decisions provoked heated controversy in every ethnic group. The debate revolved around the Barnes Report, but also a second report issued to mollify the Chinese, the Fenn-Wu Report on Chinese Education.⁹

The Education Ordinance of 1952 was the product of this public debate. It designed a new type of school for Malaya, one which eventually was to be the standard school for the nation, the government-sponsored National School.

To soften the blow to the non-Malays, who feared in this the destruction of their own communal school systems, the Ordinance provided for instruction in Kuo-yu and Tamil where the parents of fifteen or more pupils requested it in any government-assisted school. This provision, however, left instruction in non-Malay, non-English languages dependent on the initiative of parents, a condition many vernacular language advocates considered detrimental to cultural conservation.

The 1952 Ordinance also codified previous legislation governing the registration of schools, managers, and teachers. Its long-range goal was the guarantee of free and compulsory education of all children in all ethnic groups between the ages of 6 and 13. This goal is still unobtainable fifteen years later. But this would mean school up through the first part of secondary school, a level very few Malayan children could even have hoped for in 1952. Another step to insure control of this new national school system was the establishment of a federal inspectorate. At the same time, control was matched by avenues of lay participation. Local authorities were provided for through which the citizenry could take part in educational development. This provision proved in the federal ministry's view to be a hindrance and a burden and thus was never affected. Finally, in recognition of the special place of the Malays in the nation, the Ordinance

provided for religious (i.e., Islamic) instruction in government-approved schools with federal financial aid for it. ¹⁰

The next major step in educational development was actually a step side-ways. Policy set forth in 1957 was a response to the over-estimations of the initial policy. The Malayan government showed here its willingness to back-track and modify in order to make most efficient use of resources and to avoid communal hostility.

Introduction of "national streams" in the vernacular schools met considerable resistance from all ethnic groups, though especially from the Chinese. In addition, the demands imposed by the Emergency in the mid-1950's drained the budgetary resources of the federal government. Together, communal resistance and investments in internal security meant that the 1952 Ordinance was left largely unimplemented. This failure led to the 1956 Razak Report and to the Education Ordinance of 1957 which followed its recommendations.

If the Barnes Report laid down the government's commitment to national education, the Razak Report gave that commitment practical meaning. The 1957 Ordinance created Malay medium secondary schools. Until then secondary education was generally confined to mission and government-sponsored English-medium schools and Chinese-sponsored Chinese-medium schools; Malay-medium was a mode of

instruction left to just the lower levels where it lacked either prestige or technical, professional advantages. To create Malay-medium schools at the secondary level - there are, in fact, only two now that go through Form VI - had symbolic significance. It meant and the Alliance meant it to mean that the government was committed not just to elevating them through their own culture.

The 1957 legislation moved to bring the teaching profession under federal supervision by creating a new Unified Teaching Service, separate from the older teaching service which was part of the civil service. Still today there are rivalries and constant comparisons made between the newer and older teaching services by the teachers in either. Most importantly, the legislation dropped the distinction between government and assisted school. Henceforth, all schools, regardless of their former status or origin, would be either a "Standard School" (later labeled "National School") or a "Standard-type School" (later renamed "National-type School"). The Standard Schools would be fully-assisted by government funds and use Malay as their medium of instruction; the Standard-type Schools would be fully-assisted but instead use a language other than Malay. A common syllabus and inspectorate would be operative in both sorts of schools. In other words the formerly government Victoria Institution and the

mission-sponsored Methodists Boys School in Kuala Lumpur would now both be Standard-type schools since they used the English medium but accepted full government assistance.

The 1957 policy was a step backward if it is viewed as a retreat from the concept of a school system composed of a single type of institution. But it is less of a retreat if seen as a growing awareness of federal authorities of just what kind of mixed constituency they were governing. The Razak Report today is looked upon as the watershed in Malayan educational development. After 1957 there was no turning back from the decision for government to take responsibility for educating the nation and creating a standardized school system subject to priorities and goals set down by the federal government.

The Talib Report was issued in 1960 and was followed by the Education Act of 1961. These pushed the standardization and nationalization several steps further and reaffirmed the basic commitment. The major innovation in 1961 was the abolition of fully-assisted Chinese-medium secondary schools (called "middle schools" by the Chinese). Thereafter, at the secondary level (Forms I - VI) National-type secondary schools would include only English-medium (National schools were all Malay-medium). At the primary level, however, all four media of instruction would continue to receive

government aid. Hereafter, in order to receive aid the previously Chinese-medium secondary school would be compelled to convert to either Malay or English. The assumption in all quarters was, though, that this was really no alternative at all, since Chinese schools would almost never choose the Malay-medium conversion. Thus in practice, the Talib Report called for Chinese secondary schools to change to English. Just how much English had to be used in the classroom has never been exactly established and so today numerous formerly Chinese-medium, now English converted schools in practice still rely heavily on Chinese in their instruction.

Part and parcel of the conversion policy was the major change introduced in the examination system. Promotion exams, the decisive factor in any Commonwealth child's career, now would be given in Malay and English only. Students schooled in other media at the primary level would thereby have to gain entrance into secondary school and finally into the university by sitting for exams written in Malay and English.

As for the future, the Talib Report stated that after 1967 - the deadline for making Malay the country's sole official language - Malay would become the "main medium of instruction" in all National and National-type schools. Precisely what this explosive phrase means remains a topic of

argument both inside and outside the Ministry of Education, but it is there on the books.

Finally, the 1961 Act dropped the alternative status of partially-assisted schools. In accord with its steady drive toward full control of the school system, the government was forcing all schools to "fish or cut bait" to make the choice between becoming wholly dependent on government funds and thus accept its jurisdiction, or doing without government financing altogether. 11.

As of this writing, the last major step in education planning was announced in 1965. This time no official report heralded the innovation. Perhaps as an indication of the increasing politicization of Malaya, the new policy was announced in the heat of a political campaign. During the federal parliamentary election campaign of 1964 the Alliance promised the voters that it would introduce "comprehensive education." In Malayan terms, this was a promise, above all, to eliminate the first examination hurdle, the Primary Six exam taken in order for a student to enter Form I of secondary level. Elimination of the Primary essentially opened the Lower Secondary schools (Forms I, II, III) to all students who could get through primary grades. Exams are close to the heart of Malayan - and British - educational philosophy. They determine educational justice, prestige,

public worth. Therefore a campaign promise to eliminate a crucial exam was a politically potent pledge. The promise would benefit all ethnic groups; but it was interpreted widely as especially for the benefit of the Malays, since they were the ethnic group which, as a whole, were considered lagging furthest behind in educational attainment.

Table 2 Number of Government and Government-Assisted Schools - By Language Medium

	<u>1956</u>	<u>1960</u>
Malay-medium schools	2,253	2,338
Chinese-medium schools *	982	1,066
Tamil and other Indian-medium schools *	938	811
English-medium schools	344	469

* Note: The Indian schools were the only type to decline in number in these first years of independence and following the Razak Report. One might have expected Chinese schools to have declined or at least have remained about the same, but their increase is explained in part by the Emergency New Village strategy which gathered Chinese squatters into villages and provided them with social services, including schools, mainly Chinese-medium.

Sources: 1956 figures - Federation of Malaya, Annual Education Report for 1956, Kuala Lumpur, pp. 79-80.

1960 figures - Federation of Malaya, Report of the Education Review Committee ("Talib Report"), Kuala Lumpur, p. 7

Despite the break that this entire post-war policy made with the previous treatment of education, the policy overall has been relatively effectively passed and implemented. There are at least four reasons for the government's apparent success over the last ten-fifteen years in the field of education: 1) the continued vagueness of the ultimate objective; 2) the political weakness and cultural fragmentation of the non-Malays; 3) the predominance of a single party and an English-educated political leadership among the Malays; 4) the immediate and tangible rewards the government could offer in return for acquiescence.

Not by governmental wisdom or agility alone has the policy been implemented with a fair amount of success. The character of Malaya's multi-ethnicity has given the policy makers advantages that their counterparts in other societies might not share, for instance, the English cultural alternative, the revenue-producing economy, the divisions within ethnic groups.

Communal Fragmentation and Acquiescence

A government's selection of priorities and its verbal encasement of those priorities define the area of conflict in which ethnic communities seek to protect their own interests. How the government breaks down long-range policies into immediate steps and how it rationalizes each step publically in

large measure determine how and where the ethnic contestants confront each other. Strategy involves both the formulation and the implementation of policy.

In the formulative stage the Alliance government sought to insure that no ethnic group could claim not to have been represented in policy councils or given a hearing. Committees for the Razak and Talib education reports included prominent and acknowledged leaders from the Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities, though both Razak and Talib, the Ministers of Education at the time were Malays. The Barnes report was somewhat different. It was undertaken by a foreigner and written because the Alliance had taken over the reins of government. But even then, in 1951, a retort to the Barnes Report's far-reaching recommendation was allowed in the form of the government-sanctioned Fenn-Wu Report. The Razak and Talib committees in addition called for and accepted a large number of advisory memoranda from professional and communal groups - mainly teachers organizations - identified with the various schools systems which felt in jeopardy.

More importantly, the government which in 1956 and 1960 took responsibility for and defended the major educational changes was itself an alliance of parties each of which claimed to represent the interests of an ethnic

community, the UMNO-MCA-MIC Alliance. Thus explicit ethnic representations were made at the investigatory, the recommending, and the final political deliberative stages. The legislature which passed the education bills of 1957, 1961, and 1965 were all popularly elected by an electorate made up - disproportionately, to be sure - of all the ethnic groups. No ethnic group, therefore, could object to the education policy on the grounds of its being excluded from the policy-making process.

This made it difficult for any community to protest with forcefulness that the education policies were illegitimate or the contrivance of a single ethnic group monopolizing political power. Mobilized resistance to public policy calls for a target of responsibility. In Malaysia that responsibility has been shared among representatives of the several ethnic groups, thereby taking the edge off communally-defined resistance.

If conflict encourages interaction, it also frequently promotes group fractionalization. This fractionalizing process may augment political awareness, but it produces a concomitant defusion of policy stances and resources within what before was a natural group with its own common interests. This is what has happened in Malaya. Political conflict over education bred cross-cutting alliances at the same time as it increased communal self-consciousness. Politicization, in other words,

may foster group consciousness, but politicization does not produce inevitably sharper politico-ethnic separateness. The education controversies have shown that persons, all of whom are now more concerned with Malayan government policy than they were, say, twenty years ago, have followed diverse courses of political action in response to that new concern. Some have become more communally chauvinistic, but many others have sought stronger political ties with elites of other communities as the best safeguard of their own ethnic interests.

The reasons for this criss-crossing of communal lines the resultant diffusion of ethnic resources lie in the social developments occurring within every Malayan ethnic group at the very time when politics takes on a new immediacy. None of the ethnic communities is perfectly homogeneous, as Chapter I noted. The seeds for communal fragmentation on broad policy questions were planted long before the Razak Committee convened. But post-war commercialization, urbanization, professionalism, and changing international alliances all have acted to spur on these intra-communal divisions. The decline of ethnic parochialism and the awareness of new sources of prosperity and prestige have made segments of every ethnic group less committed to vernacular media of instruction and traditional ethnic modes of education. These

people may be anxious about the expansion of Malay education, but this anxiety is not likely to be translated into avid support for their own non-English vernacular schools.

Internal upheaval also did its part to dilute communal solidarity. When the Barnes and the Fenn-Wu Reports were being debated and when the Razak recommendations were being hammered out Malaya was in the throes of a civil rebellion. Because the rebels, the Malayan Communist Party, were associated with the Chinese, any ethnic-political debates were liable to be colored with overtones of the Emergency. This imposed considerable restraints on those Chinese who did not support the MCP, but who objected to the government's policy proposals. In times of rebellion it is especially hard to draw neat lines between "loyal opposition" and "treason." And when the rebellion takes a communal form, then charges of disloyalty to the new nation become even more tempting.

The Malayan Chinese Association - the governmental representative of the Chinese by the mid-1950's - appeared relatively passive in its concurrence with the Razak Report. But this may be explained in part to the pressures brought to bear by the Emergency, since the MCA, as spokesmen for all neutral and loyal Malayan Chinese, probably could not risk too blatant opposition without endangering its standing in the government. This was particularly true since the policy being

debated was one which the British and Malayan officials in charge of security felt to be an integral part of overcoming the rebels. Schools were viewed as breeding grounds and recruitment centers for the MCP.

In a one-party-dominant political system in which one major opposition party, the MCP, is illegal and in which a potential opposition party, the MCA, is co-opted into the government, it is not so much the passage of policy as it is its implementation which highlights the problems of national-integration through policy-making.

While the Emergency served as a limitation, on non-Malay resistance to the policy of education nationalization, at the same time it restrained the Alliance government. There was the backing away from the Barnes Report's radical recommendations which demonstrated the Alliance's recognition that the threat to internal security would require more than military suppression. Somehow the fence-sitters among the non-Malay communities must be won over and given assurance that the new nation would not be merely a single-community, Malay nation. Thus it was imperative that the Razak committee assure the public that its intent was "an education policy acceptable to the people of the Federation as a whole."¹². (emphasis mine)

Financial Enticements

After a reliance on military solutions, it became increasingly clear to the Malayan and British officials in the 1950's that victory over the communist rebels ultimately would depend on winning the confidence of the civilian Chinese population. Policies could not be such that they simply alienate those not on the "inside," as they referred to the guerrillas in the jungle. The Fenn-Wu Report made a plea more explicit than that in the Razak Report: "Chinese schools labour under the handicap of suspicion and insecurity. There is need for understanding and constructive guidance and financial assistance based upon educational rather than political objectives." 13.

Integration calls for positive enticements, for some obvious benefit to be reaped by communities willing to surrender part of their individuality for the sake of a larger nation. When the first step toward national integration must be taken during a civil war so colored with psychological overtones the necessity of matching positive and negative pressures in governmental strategy becomes especially acute. Thus, for example, New Village schools in the Chinese squatter relocation settlements were to be more than academic internment centers; they were to offer advantages to the Chinese which would incline them to sympathize with the government rather

than with their communal kin in the jungles. But this meant a sacrifice by the government in its drive toward an integrated school system, since the New Village schools were conducted in the Chinese medium. Consequently, at the same time as federal authorities were trying to curtail non-Malay, non-English education one still finds the number of Chinese-medium schools on the rise.

Table 3 Number of Chinese-medium Schools
 in Malaya

1951	-	1,171
1956	-	1,325
1960	-	1,404

Source: Department of Statistics, Monthly Statistical Bulletin of the States of Malaya, July, 1962, Kuala Lumpur, p.141.

Not until after the Emergency had subsided and the New Villages program ended did the number of Chinese-medium schools begin to decline in response to the government's long-term plan:

1961	-	1,373
1964	-	1,257

In contrast, the other non-Malay, non-English school system, that of the Indian vernacular media, began to decline in number of schools several years earlier, in 1958.

The Indians were not as central to the solution of the Emergency.

The 1957 Education Ordinance not only had to prevent schools from being used to subvert residents' loyalties, it also had to provide positive benefits which would make it worthwhile for the various ethnic communities to give up their separate school systems in exchange for a new standardized, government-inspected school system. The aim was to demonstrate - especially to the Chinese- that the program of national consolidation was more than merely an anti-Chinese policy.

In the long run, it has been the effectiveness of these positive enticements and not the government's capacity to secure legislative passage that has explained the considerable success of the education policy in overcoming Malaya's divisiveness. The enticements depend on three assets which the Malayan federal government possesses:

- 1) economic resources
- 2) control of the examination system
- 3) time - and thus the luxury of ambiguity

Mention of the government's economic resources as assets in affecting unpopular policies requires a brief discussion of the most commonly-made comparative contrast made between the Malays and Chinese. Repeatedly the dichotomy is

made: The Chinese have the economic power, the Malays have the political power in Malaya. There are elements of truth, but the dichotomy is over-drawn. It comes as a surprise to those who have accepted this dichotomy that Chinese communal resistance in education has been overcome for the very reason that the Chinese community lacks sufficient financial resources to preserve their traditional detachment and autonomy. The weakness in the popular dichotomy lies in ignoring the convertability of resources.

The Malays as individuals or as an ethnic group, indeed, are economically weak. Nonetheless, as the predominant member in the national regime they - through their political elite - have access to financial resources that can, and have competed successfully with those of the Chinese community. Convertability of resources is important in any multi-ethnic nation, since it will determine the bases for bargaining among the communities. It is also true, of course, that the economic power of the Chinese has been to some extent convertible into political power, especially through the MCA, whose followers include many of the most wealthy businessmen in the Chinese community. Were it not for the commercial success of the non-Malays the federal government would have much more limited revenues to draw upon. But the Chinese tax-payers and political contributors are in a

vulnerable position because of their continuing status - formal or informal - of "alien". Thus they cannot wield this economically-derived political bargaining instrument with as much forcefulness as could an ethnic group more secure in its claim to legitimacy.

The federal government's financial resources have been used as grant-in-aid to independent schools - mission and communal - that would agree to certain standards and inspections. Gradually, however, grants have been expanded to the point that now the great bulk of schools in Malaya are "fully-assisted," wholly dependent on government subsidies for their capital maintenance, their growth, and their payment of teachers. Conditional assistance has been perhaps the most important of the two-edged tactics used by the government to secure implementation of its education policy. And the fact that today over a fifth of the federal budget is allocated to education is symbolic.

The Alliance has viewed expenditures for education - and thus sublimation of alternative demands - as serving two vital objectives; 1) the modernization of the skills and outlooks of the younger generations and 2) the consolidation of those generations into a genuine "Malaysian" citizenry with common loyalties and orientations toward their society. However, an imbalancing of the federal budget in this manner is a

luxury. A government can afford to invest so large a portion of its financial resources to long-range and positively enticing strategies only when the multi-ethnic fabric of the nation does not pose immediate threats to the nation's viability.

During the Emergency the government could not afford such large expenditures as a nationalized school system demanded. This was a primary reason for the almost virtual inapplicability of the Barnes proposals and the Education Ordinance of 1952. The Razak Committee offered this explanation in 1956:

"In practice few of the provisions (of the Education Ordinance of 1952) were ever carried out. The policy of introducing 'national streams' in vernacular schools was not popular with the Malays and the Indians and was bitterly opposed by the Chinese. The cost of the programme was an even more serious check. Expenditure by the government on education, which was about 11.5 million (Malay) dollars in 1953. As the Federal Government was then faced with a deficit of over \$200 million a Special Committee was appointed by the High Commissioner to consider ways

and means of implementing the policy outlined in the Education Ordinance, 1952, in the context of the diminishing financial resources of the Federation...As a result of the economies which were effected the expenditure in 1954 was stabilized at about 94.88 million dollars and dropped in 1955 to 88.82 million dollars."¹⁴.

By 1956 the federal government alone was spending 104.5 million (Malay) dollars - i.e., approximately 35 million U.S. dollars - on education, with an additional allocation for education under the funds for broader development programs which included adult education and special training projects. (See Table 4.)

Conditional financial aid as an instrument for integration does not assure a policy's success. The extent to which it does succeed in getting the separate communities to submit to outside control and standardization will depend on several factors, all associated with ethnic distinctiveness. The most obvious is the financial weakness or strength of the groups presently supporting their own school systems. This, in turn, depends on the economic-occupational tendencies of the various ethnic groups the government seeks to persuade. The Malays and Tamil Indians, therefore, were the most susceptible to government entre via monetary assistance, since

their concentrations in the underdeveloped rural sector and the rubber estates, respectively, deprived them of wealth enough to support schools without outside aid. On the other hand, the foreign-supported Christian missions, the Chinese, and some of the non-estate (urban professional or commercial) Indian sub-groups were far less susceptible to this sort of "opening wedge," at least on economic grounds alone.

There is a second factor which increased the probability of even these wealthier groups accepting government aid and the conditions that accompanied it. This is the pressure on schools of all sorts, regardless of communal or cultural obligation, to produce students with certain kinds of "marketable" skills complementary to an increasingly technological society. Had it not been for this added factor, many schools might have been content to struggle along with the facilities at their own disposal so as to not be reliant on government funds. This willingness to continue performing the sort of educational role they had performed in the past without deep concern about that role's relevance to the needs of modernization is a principal cause of the persisting relative autonomy of the Malay Islamic schools.

Summary of States of Malaya

Government Expenditure (in Malay \$1,000)

	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u> <u>revised</u>	<u>1964</u> <u>est.</u>
Defense and Security **	123,856	128,765	132,719	167,645	172,312	267,420	262,064
Medical & Health	67,327	70,277	74,657	78,309	83,121	96,793	98,022
Social Welfare	3,496	3,390	3,593	3,571	3,634	8,345	4,597
EDUCATION ***	135,178	149,960	164,960	183,969	218,529	230,000	256,525
Public Works	29,271	24,932	26,674	30,745	32,236	36,502	36,178
Posts & Telecom.	30,503	30,032	31,880	35,495	37,576	40,212	44,350
Admin. Depts.	290,130	295,671	317,547	376,053	385,385	348,608	385,654
Allocation to States	63,519	63,517	62,218	63,686	69,829	83,914	87,009
Emergency	104,758	71,548	41,339	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	848,038	838,092	855,587	939,473	1,002,622	1,111,794	1,174,399

* Only expenditures in the peninsular states are included, not those for Malaysia as a whole.

(Government Expenditure - continued)

** The marked rise in Defense and Security expenditures in 1963 is a response to the "Confrontation" with Indonesia.

*** Additional expenditures for education came out of development funds.

Percentage of total expenditures in States of Malaya
allocated to education:

1958 - 14%

1959 - 18

1960 - 19

1961 - 20

1962 - 22

1963 - 20

1964 - 22

Source: Department of Statistics, Monthly Statistical Bulletin of States of Malaya, July, 1965, Kuala Lumpur, p. 105.

Religious schools are even more impervious to outside monetary enticement than are the highly communal, but secular schools. Ethnic schools and ethnic-religious schools both will resist the temptation to accept government standardization and thus dilution of their own cultural distinctiveness. But strictly ethnic schools will offer less resistance, since their aim still is to turn out students capable of

succeeding in the secular world, since success strengthens their own community's wealth and prestige as well as the students'. These ethnic schools cannot easily resist developments in the field of education, since turning their backs endangers the possibilities for achievement of their graduates. Religious-ethnic schools, however, are more immune to such pressures, since they do not have to rely on such secular measures of education's effectiveness. The Malay Islamic schools, therefore, will be more difficult to bring under federal control than were the Chinese communal schools.

The federal government has sought to overcome this inherent resistance of the Islamic schools by ushering them into the "mainstream" of national and international education. The strategy set in motion within the last year has involved encouraging them to adopt more professionally accepted standards of curriculum and teaching, along with promises of greater financial support, to the religious classes in the national schools as well as to the Islamic schools themselves. The federal ministry has also taken steps to bolster the prestige of the Muslim College, now situated on a new campus not far from Kuala Lumpur. The ministry believes that the way to undercut the parochialism and communal detachment which these schools foster is gradually - again, by reward, not suppression or coercion - to imbue them with secular

standards of measurement, since on religious criteria alone the government's enticements for integration have little appeal.

In other words, for a government to be able to make the fullest use of its own assets in achieving compliance among the different ethnic communities, it either must deal with ethnic groups whose values and aspirations make those governmental assets relevant to their own desires; or the government must somehow alter the groups' or their communal institutions' values so that those assets do become valuable in their eyes.

On the occasion of opening a new religious (Islamic) school in Malacca Education Minister Khir Johari outlined the federal government's plans for up-grading religious instruction, but did not speak of secularization as the objective. Instead Khir Johari told his Malay audience: "I am confident that with the cooperation from the people, particularly Muslims, Islam can be made a 'living force' in the efforts to achieve progress in all fields." 15. The implication was that to be a "living force" the institutions responsible for Islam would have to be less willing to remain cut off and self-sufficient; to be up-graded it could not rely on its own meager resources, but would necessarily come to desire governmental financial and even training assistance.

It is at this point that national integration and modernization converge. They are not mutually inclusive; but when outside pressures, such as the need to introduce rational and mechanical and scientific processes into the economy, make themselves felt on the society as a whole - even though perhaps unevenly - there arise newly shared common needs and desires which may act as bridges across previously separated ethnic communities. This development has posed new opportunities and new quandries for Malayan political leaders. It has made the effort of creating a common educational pattern easier. But it has also increased the uncertainty over the decision about the nature of national community being created.

Although the Islamic schools have been able to hold out and remain relatively unbothered by modernization demands, the other types of communal schools have not, but for different reasons.

The Malay vernacular schools and the Indian estate schools had been dependent on government aid for a period that preceded both the new integrationist policy and the post-war drive toward technological advancement. By contrast, it was not until this post-war era that both the Chinese and the mission schools came to the conclusion that they could not fulfill their educational aims without outside help.

For the Christian mission schools, which were largely English-medium, the post-war years brought the pressure to serve a greater number of children, and serve them with a more sophisticated curriculum, one that turned out students prepared not only in the humanities, but in the sciences and mathematics. These felt-needs by the missions themselves made the government offer almost irresistible. The mission schools were religious schools. But, unlike the Malay Islamic religious schools, they were products of a Western cultural milieu which religious obligation and worldly-rational advancement had always been in dialogue with one another. Furthermore, most Christian missions in Asia came from Europe and the United States not to preach only the Christian gospel, but the broader "Western" gospel as well. For this reason, these religious schools were more sensitive than their Malay Islamic counterparts to modernization's new demands on education. In addition, the missions had always been allowed to operate in Malaya only at the sufferance of the government, whether British or Malayan. Thus, they were more inclined to acquiesce to government policy. Once again, the status of "alien" made an institution especially vulnerable to integrative pressures imposed from above.

The Chinese schools were even more sensitive to the post-war calling for new skills and new training as

criteria for advancement. When the Chinese community's business relations were largely in-grown and businessmen could trade through Chinese channels throughout Nanyang (the Southseas) and with mainland China, there was less need for international western-oriented linguistic and procedural techniques. But as the overseas Chinese were cut off more and more from China after 1949 and as they built up more complex and cosmopolitan business ties, their communal schools were hard put to keep pace. There had been a major reform in overseas Chinese schools after the 1911 Revolution in China, but conditions after World War II required expansion of the Malayan Chinese contact with national and western developments. Teachers no longer could be imported from China as they had been in the past (many Chinese teachers in Malaya and Singapore now are from Formosa). In any event, such teachers were ill-equipped to teach the new subjects which the mobility-conscious Chinese were beginning to consider necessary if they were to maintain their strong economic position in the face of new challenges from the other ethnic groups. If educational qualifications were important to Chinese in the past, they were crucial now.

Wealthy Chinese businessmen (towkays as they are called) could support the less ambitious, more narrowly focussed communal schools. But they were hard pressed to

supply sufficient funds for the highly-trained teachers, the instruction in English, the equipment for science courses that the Chinese community now expected in their children's schools. Had the Malayan Chinese cared less about succeeding in the rapidly changing, competitive marketplace, then the strains on their communal educational system would have been less severe and government offers less appealing in 1957. But, instead, the success motivations of the immigrant Chinese have worked as a major element to assure the effective implementation of the Malayan nationalization of education policy.

Examination Control and Acquiescence

The second asset possessed by the federal government in the realm of education is control of the examination system. This too, becomes an asset only because of the cultural-communal setting in which it is being employed.

It has become increasingly important in the eyes of Malayan parents that their children achieve secondary and even post-secondary education. As a result, the public examination system which determines who will and who will not go on to these higher levels has become an effective instrument for educational standardization in curriculum, language of instruction and promotion criteria.

The government moved from a policy of partly-assisted to fully-assisted school status after 1961. Thereafter, it was all or nothing. At the same time, it moved from diverse exam options to narrow exam options, allowing only Malay and English to be used in giving and writing of promotional exams.

These examination constrictions, perhaps more than any other development have generated extreme frustration among those non-Malays who would like to preserve vernacular education, even if only at the primary level. According to the Razak and Talib Reports, primary schools could exist in Tamil and Chinese and still be qualified for government aid; it was only at the secondary level that English and Malay would be required. In fact, assurance of preservation of vernacular primary schools was a major guarantee in the long-range policy. This was pointed to by the policy-makers as concrete evidence that the government was not going to create a Malaysian national community by whittling down to nothing all of the existing ethnic communities. The primary schools would continue to give all ethnic groups the opportunity to perpetuate their own distinctive cultures.

Nevertheless, once the doors through which a student must pass to gain admittance in the higher training courses believed now to be imperative had been narrowed to

Malay and English, the primary schools in the alternative language media became irrelevant, even detrimental to that elevation. Thus one finds many Chinese leaders who are among the most ardent spokesmen for Chinese vernacular education and who have rallied protest against government policy enrolling their own sons in English-medium primary schools. The dilemma is one facing every communal representative; Malay leaders are not immune. Malays can take promotion exams in their mother tongue (though only recently at the highest secondary levels). But proficiency in English, not Malay, is the path to prestige in Malaysia. So one encounters the headmaster of a Malay-medium secondary school making the observation that he knows that others will be watching him carefully, to see to which language stream he will send his own children.

A magnification of this Malay school headmaster's quandry is the call by the Perak branch of none other than the Union of National School Teachers - one of the most vocal groups urging greater use of Malay - that the federal government use English as the medium of instruction in all Malay-medium primary schools. The Malay teachers' spokesmen explained this unusual resolution by noting that many Malay parents were sending their children to English schools with the result that "Malay schools have fewer and fewer pupils every year." He went on to spell out the classic dilemma in

Malayan education development:

"Those who pass from English schools can easily join the Armed Services or the police as the first priority is given to English-speaking candidates.

"But how could those with only Malay education obtain employment and have security in life?" 16.

The answer being implied by the Perak Malay teachers is that Malay schools must secure their very survival and their graduates' well-being by giving instruction in English.

This suggests that while the examination system is very effective in suppressing the diversity in the educational system - i.e., making not only secondary schooling, but even primary schooling in Chinese and Tamil unattractive - it is much less effective in assuring the relevance and popularity of the educational streams it seeks to promote. Malay is now offered in the promotional examinations, but so far this has not stemmed the tide in the surge of all communities to gain English-medium instruction.

The Malayan examination system confuses and over-awes the uninitiated American. One of the least-mentioned colonial legacies left by the British in Malaya is the labyrinth of formal selective exams. Until 1965, the Malayan child of

any ethnic group who aspired to a university education in English either at the University of Singapore or the University of Malaya, or at any of the other Commonwealth universities - had to run this formidable gauntlet:

- 1) Secondary Entrance Exam - taken after Primary 6.
- 2) Lower School Certificate Exam (LCE) - taken after Form III, secondary school.
- 3) Cambridge Oversea Certificate Exam ("Cambridge") - taken after Form V, secondary school.
- 4) Higher School Certificate Exam (HSC) - taken after Form VI, the last year of the secondary school.

Students could be eliminated from the race at any one of these stages, leaving him the unhappy alternative of quitting his education altogether, entering a private school (which are expensive and are considered educationally inferior), or, at certain periods when they are available, enter a non-academic public school (the government has wavered in its support of such schools, and parents have been less than enthusiastic over them). But for most Malayan parents who had educational ambitions for their off-spring, the passage of these exams, or at least the first three, was mandatory.

Thus the subjects and the language media that were required by the official examiners naturally became the subjects and languages desired by parents. Until 1960 there were separate exams for those Chinese students who were going from Chinese-medium primary to Chinese-medium secondary schools. The Talib Report and the 1961 Education Act eliminated this. 17. This came at the time when government support of Chinese-medium secondary schools was terminated. Moreover, the outlets for Chinese-educated secondary school graduates was threatened, this time at the university level. In 1965, a special committee headed by a respected Malayan Chinese academician, recommended that the sole Chinese university in Malaysia or Singapore, Nanyang University in Singapore, be made more cosmopolitan and more truly national, less of a strictly Chinese institution. Greater attention, the Wang Gung-wu committee urged, should be given to English and Malay language facility and to the more sophisticated technical subjects. 18.

Therefore, even those Chinese students who, despite federal policy limitations and enticements, persist in following the Chinese-medium course through primary and secondary are finding that opportunities for higher education and ultimate prestige are increasingly contingent upon proficiency in non-Chinese languages.

The Alliance Government's control of the examination system has reaped such integrative rewards largely, - as in the case of its financial resources - because it complemented the resident ethnic group's own values. The Chinese traditionally have looked to objective public exams as the means of selection and mobility. The Malays and Indians were inculcated with the notion of selective promotion's legitimacy through their association with the British. Without this previous socializing experiences drawing all ethnic groups into the "examination culture," it is doubtful that the control of examinations would have proved too potent a policy implementation instrument for the Malayan leadership.

An illustration of just how deeply ingrained this examination psychology is in Malaysia is the government's attempt to drop the Secondary Entrance Exam, the first on the ladder, coming at the end of primary grade six. Following its campaign promise of 1964, the Alliance in 1965 introduced comprehensive education through Form III, secondary, thus eliminating the Primary Six exam.

However, ever since it took this dramatic step, the Ministry of Education and many education professionals in Malaysia have exhibited notable uneasiness. Comprehensive education was a proper goal, but dropping a public exam left educators anxious over the future of national academic standards:

how can you measure the quality of given schools and teachers without a nation-wide examination standard? Would academic excellence fall by the way-side in primary schools as the result of the teachers and students no longer having to keep their sights on a final examination? And what about the future of the secondary schools, which now had to accept all manner of students, not just the brightest?

The solution - for the present - has been for the Ministry of Education to introduce a new exam between Primary Six and Form I. This so-called "assessment exam" would not be a new means of selection, but a way of preserving academic standards without forfeiting comprehensive education. If a student did poorly on the exam he might be required to repeat Primary Six, but he would not be barred from going on to secondary school.

In assuring parents that the re-introduction of a primary exam was not a refutation of the Alliance promise, Minister Khir Johari argued that the "assessment exam" was simply to keep up standards by encouraging teachers and pupils to work harder." 19.

The federal government, therefore, was seeking to do two, often conflicting things at once - to push forward in assuring secondary education for all, while also maintaining British-inherited standards of educational excellence. The

tension between these two desires is prominent in any number of former colonies. It exacerbated in Malaysia, however, by the added desire to bring all three ethnic groups into relative educational balance. Comprehensive education was seen in part as a way of raising the Malays' educational level. But can this be done without sacrificing or redefining the government's other goals?

Debates over examinations in Malaysia, then, have ramifications far beyond theories of pedagogy. Although the discussion may be couched in those misleading terms, in reality decisions as to the timing, substance, and language of academic exams are as politically loaded as are the more explicitly political controversies over finances and inspection.

Conclusion

An issue so full of political and cultural consequences as education hardly can escape attention and controversy in a nation self-consciously pursuing national progress and consolidation. Its centrality in Malaysia stems from the Alliance Government's deliberate choice of education as the corner-stone of its "nation-building" effort. But its centrality also is due to the character of an ethnically pluralistic society, where the main threats to national security and mobilization are allegiances to sub-national groups and the values

that bind them together as a community. To overcome or suppress these fragmenting sub-national communal ties necessitates the substitution relationships and values which extend trust and interdependency over a broader social unit. Schools have as their essential function the formation of world-views and skills to act in the world perceived. Therefore, leaders who stake their political worth on the ability to create a national community are eager to utilize these educational institutions for that end.

There is still a choice left to an integrating leadership. It could try to transform the educational process by circumvention, pursuing integration through other sectors and making educational standardization a by-product of those other policies. The Alliance chose the second alternative, tackling education head-on. This choice was made for several reasons. First, the institutionalization of education made its pluralism particularly visible to policy-makers. In few other areas of Malaysian life were the ramifications of multi-ethnicity so blatantly clear. Second, at the moment when the nation-building policy became foremost in the federal government the schools of at least one ethnic group were believed to be recruiting bases for communist rebels. Third, the Malayan government's own resources were especially applicable to educational manipulation. And finally, the experience of British

colonialism had left a strong sense in Malayan elites of all communities of the importance of education.

The Malaysian government in carrying out its education policy has not acted as the agent for any single ethnic group. This has allowed it certain leverage, since it can preserve its room for maneuver by contending with any group pushing too hard that it must satisfy not only them but the other two groups whose representatives sit in Cabinet, the Ministry of Education, and Parliament. But the heterogeneity of the policy-makers also invites suspicions among all ethnic groups.

Educational integration has been assisted by the common heritage of British notions of educational structures and excellence. This common heritage has been especially helpful in achieving coordination among the top policy circles, which are so largely composed of men graduated from English-medium schools. But just like ethnic heterogeneity at the top, this sharing of the British heritage has involved serious difficulties. It has raised aggravating frictions between several of the goals which the integrative leadership seeks to achieve. The uncertainties generated by these goal conflicts have encouraged a preference in the federal government for gradualist strategies and inexact diagrams of the educational and national future.

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL LANGUAGE AND A NATIONAL
COMMUNITY

Jayakan Bahasa Kebangsaan! "Glorify the National Language!"

This is perhaps the most oft repeated political slogan in Malaysia today. It is also the phrase most suggestive of the ambiguity of Malaysian integrative politics.

American experience has suggested that inter-ethnic disputes are best resolved, or at least temporized, if the areas of controversy are translated into non-ethnic terms. For instance, if the American Negro resentment over their exclusion from the higher social levels can be translated from a question of discrimination into a question of economic disadvantage, then it can be handled by the political system without interference of divisive communal sentiments. This is one reason why blatantly ethnic appeals have been taboo in the United States. This fear of representation or advocacy that is explicitly ethnic is not confined to the United States. In fact, it is harder to avoid and arouses even more anxiety in those political systems which are less firmly established and which have to cope with clear-cut ethnic division. Where ethnic pluralism is less diffuse than it is in the United States, there is greater fear of overtly communal issues and representation.

The susceptibility of any real or potential inter-ethnic dispute being translated into non-ethnic terms distinguishes education from language in Malaysian politics. This

has meant that whereas the Alliance government has had the greatest success in implementing integrative policies in education, it has confronted a more serious threat to national stability and cohesiveness in the realm of language. Education can be translated into less explicitly communal issues - manpower needs, teacher training, examination forms. But language is irreducible and untranslatable. It stands nakedly "ethnic" in the Malaysian political arena. The issue of language is also especially troublesome because it highlights the gap between the elites of all ethnic groups and the majority of Malaysians. The elites of every group have a personal stake in the perpetuation of the English language.

The Promise

Unlike education which can be worked out by the federal government without a time-limit, language policy must be framed with a specific deal-line in mind: September 1, 1967. The Constitution of the Federation of Malaya of 1957 included a provision with the promise that after ten years of independence Malay - and no longer English and Malay together - would become the nation's "sole official language" (the Borneo states were given an additional six years). ¹ Not only its untranslatable character, then, but also a fixed time-limit allowed the government less room for policy by gradualism and tinkering.

Not one of the variety of persons interviewed in the course of this study opposed this constitutional guarantee. But implicitly and explicitly there appeared disagreements over the precise interpretation of "sole" and "official", disagreements which the government thus far has seen fit not to clarify. Uncertainty may be difficult to live with, but in a plural society uncertainty may be more comfortable - and more politically congenial for all sides - than precision. "Clearing the air" may sharpen visibility, but also intensify hostilities. Should "sole" be taken literally and absolutely, excluding all other languages? More important, does "official" refer to the minimal formal communications of government, to all government communications, administrative and parliamentary, or does "official" extend even further to become synonymous with "national"?

As language policy bears on education, the question is posed more specifically: Is the constitutional provision for Malay to become the "sole official language" also a guarantee that in the public schools Malay will henceforth be the "sole medium of instruction"? The narrow constructionists reply by pointing to the fine print of the 1960 Talib Report for education. It recommends the inclusion of Malay language as a compulsory subject in the curriculum of all schools and the promotion of "a better knowledge of (the National Language)

among all who live in the Federation." 2. But these provisions stop short of declaring Malay to be the sole medium of instruction. Instead, the final objective, according to the earlier Razak Report, is to create a "national system in which the national language is the main medium of instruction." 3. (my emphasis) Main medium of instruction, according to these narrow constructionists, is quite different, much less absolute than the provision for Malay to be the sole medium of instruction.

During the 1967 heated parliamentary debate on the National Language Bill Prime Minister Tunk Abdul Rahman explained his Cabinet's perception of the linkage between the guarantee of Malay as the National Language and the future of education. Essentially, he argued, it was not practicable at this time to insist that the medium of instruction in all schools should be in the National Language. If this was done, then the children would encounter great difficulty in getting jobs. They could not be lawyers, engineers or doctors. The Tunku concluded, "That is why we have to allow English to be taught - to enable our children to earn a living in the future. Thereafter the Straits Times reporter added only, "The Bill was then passed," 4.

But doubts linger on all sides. The narrow constructionists sometimes sound as though they were engaging more in wishful thinking than in fixed legal exposition.

Furthermore, not everyone in the language and education discussions are satisfied either with the security of this narrow interpretation or with the substance of the policy it implies. There are loopholes in both the Constitution's and the education reports' provisions. Until these are filled the language and education debate and the ambiguity it produces will be features of Malaysian politics. For the present, the Alliance has shown a preference for this continuing debate and uncertainty over the alternative of spelling out the language-education aims more definitely.

There have been three obstacles to the federal leadership's efforts to resolve the National Language controversy:

- 1) The English-speaking leaders' of all three ethnic groups - own ambivalence about the language wishes of their respective communities.
- 2) The impossibility of encompassing language development neatly within the alteration of institutions.
- 3) The various ethnic groups' conflicting perceptions of the relevance of language to national unity.

Differences Between Education and Language Policy

Language has been less amenable to the Alliance's - and the opposition leadership's - preferred mode of political action, that is a style which puts heavy stress on rationality, pragmatism, ambiguity, and gradualism. The so-called "politics of ambiguity" relies for its effectiveness on the capacity to side-step decisions and to shun detailed description of long-range goals, both of which are seen as likely to foster ethnic antagonisms and forces of national disintegration. Pragmatism and gradualism have depended on the ability to translate potentially communal questions into short-term administrative matters which preclude questions of ethnic loyalty or spiritual identity. Because language is so difficult to talk about in other than directly communal terms, and because language is not coterminous with any institution - as education is - language has fitted very uncomfortably into this Malaysian style of politics.

The emphasis on strategies in the analysis of education policy arose from the Alliance government's own inclination, as well as from its analytic advantages. This emphasis reflects the character of the education issue itself. When one moves into the sphere of language this concentration on narrower strategic maneuvers is harder to maintain.

At the crux of the difference between how the federal government has handled education and how it has handled language is the degree to which each of these potentially explosive inter-communal areas is encased in an institutional framework.

Education is a policy field that is almost synonymous with the institutions - schools - which promote it. When government planners talk about altering the nation's educational outlook they can start immediately by weighing various changes in these recognizable institutions. The institutionality of education has had two consequences for the way the Alliance has pursued integration in this area. First, although not able to avoid political debate over education, the government nonetheless has been able to take many education decisions out of the political arena and put them into the realm of administration, where the style of action is less vulnerable to emotionalism and public conflict. Second, once transferred into the administrative sector, implementation of the long-term policy has been undertaken in piece-meal, step-by-step alteration of regulations and processes.

But this opportunity to take education out of the political arena, at least during the interim periods between major reports, has been accompanied by a distinct vagueness as to ends. Instead of having to spell out long-range objectives,

as would be required in political debate, the government has been able to move ahead one step at a time using administrative manipulation. Each administrative or even legislative move in education has been either too specialized or obscure to rally widespread opposition. But with the implementation of each of these seemingly minor changes, integration in education becomes more and more irreversible.

Language poses rather different problems. It cannot so readily be encompassed by institutions. There is no single set of institutions responsible for the promotion of language; there is no single profession, such as teachers, which can be bound to government policy by such ties as wage incentives and licensing. Language has been the focus of intercommunal controversy for the very reason that it cannot be transferred to an administrative office for solution.

Education itself becomes most entangled in divisive communal politics at the point where school policy correlates with the controversy over the National Language policy. Regarding language policy, the Alliance is compelled to talk less about strategy and tactics and more about ultimate aims and national vision. Both subjects make most government ministers and party spokesmen exceedingly uncomfortable. In the realm of language, the "politics of ambiguity" is much more difficult to sustain without the risk of paralysis.

Ironically, while the ambivalence toward language heightens the need for ambiguous politics, at the same time it narrows the possibilities for the effectiveness of that style. In education, any cultural uncertainty caused by ethnicity can be hidden somewhat by the broader common cross-communal desire to build a respected and popular system of education. There may be differing attitudes toward the functions and modes of education, but there is still a broad consensus that promotion of education is good for Malaysia and for each of its constituent parts. If there are disagreements over such things as selectivity, standards, curriculum between the various ethnic groups and their English-speaking leaders, these frequently can be shoved behind the brighter foreground marked by the desire of both the communal "parochials" and the more cosmopolitan "peripherals" to advance education. Such a common ground for consensus makes the cultural ambivalence of the English-speaking leadership less awkward and less debilitating.

Language policy, on the other hand, has revealed more sharply the gaps between the ethnic communities, with little consensus to even vaguely bridge the divisions. Even more significantly, language policy has illuminated cultural divisions within the ethnic communities. It is these latter divisions in particular which have made the Malaysian

government extremely wary of any sweeping promises or definitive blueprints.

There appears to be a wide-spread acceptance of the idea of having a National Language, whether as a positive attribute, a necessary or mere tokenism. But this consensus is shallower and more precarious than the general agreement on the wisdom and rightness of investing in education's advancement. Therefore, public discussion rapidly bears down on the cracks in the language consensus and there are few technical or administrative issues to divert attention. Thus language debate is waged on a platform which is a good deal shakier than that used in the issue of education.

Languages and Social Intercourse

Lines of language usage in Malaysia are more complicated than the broad lines of ethnic distinction. This fact has served to lessen the chances of a head-on collision over language between the three major groups each acting unitedly. Malay - in Rumi, its Romanized form, and Jawi, its Arabic form - English, each of the Indian languages, and each of the Chinese dialects all are utilized in their own special contexts in Malaysian life. Many of these contexts will involve persons of several ethnic groups.

The Chinese dialects and the Indian languages are limited almost exclusively to non-ethnic social interaction. One rarely hears a Chinese and a non-Chinese conversing together in Kuo-yu or any of the other common dialects (unless the non-Chinese is perhaps one of the European "Old China Hands" now sprinkled throughout Southeast Asia). However, one is likely to encounter two Chinese of different dialect groups carrying on private affairs or business transactions in a common Chinese dialect, either Kuo-yu or the dialect predominant in that town or region (e.g., Hokkien in Penang, Cantonese in Kuala Lumpur). Even when each party can speak fluent English or Malay, they may prefer to use Chinese for the sake of informality or privacy.

Similar conditions prevail in the usage of the Indian languages. Tamil is used as the Indian community's own lingua franca, although there are sub-groups which do not call Tamil their mother tongue and which may feel more comfortable in English than in Tamil. In family affairs or on work teams or for the sake of privacy in a multi-ethnic gathering Indians will be heard speaking in Tamil. But there are very few non-Indians who either can speak or read this language so that it serves little inter-ethnic purpose. Thus in Malaysia both Indian and Chinese languages are confined almost solely to intra-communal transactions.

Malay in some form or other can be spoken and understood by probably more Malaysians than can any other single language. However, for most non-Malays the ability to express or comprehend in Malay may be limited to only the most mundane and elementary subjects. The form of Malay which is most wide-spread is the so-called "pesar Melayu," or bazaar Malay. This refers to vocabulary and syntax employed in such minimal social interactions as instructions to a taxi driver, ordering food, bargaining over prices. Many Malaysians who feel quite comfortable speaking Malay for these purposes would be unable to use the language to argue a legal point, describe a handsome building, or express deep emotion. Therefore bazaar Malay, while it is probably the only language in Malaysia that comes close to being a national lingua franca, is confined to those interactions of shallowest meaning to the speakers in ethnically mixed contexts. In addition, Malay is spoken by many persons who cannot read Malay in either its Roman or Arabic alphabets. This fact severely limits its usefulness as a communications bridge between the various ethnic groups. In its written form it is the Rumi (Roman) alphabet which reaches the most heterogenous audience. Malay written in Jawi is primarily for a Malay readership. Thus when Malay phrases and terms are used on road signs, advertisements in cities, documents, it appears in Rumi,

while in Malay communal newspapers, Malay-owned shops, mosques it will be written in Jawi (Arabic).

"Pesar Melayu" is widespread, but the formal Malay language is spoken and read by a much smaller portion of the population. In 1957, only 3 per cent of the Malayan Chinese and 5 per cent of the Malayan Indians over ten years of age were literate in Malay (see Table 2). Nonetheless, it has a much wider utilization in inter-ethnic communication than does either Chinese or Tamil. There is, for instance, a sector of the Chinese community, known as "bapa Chinese," which has lived on the peninsula for four or five generations and speaks Malay as its every-day language. There is also a growing number of younger Malaysians who now have been through public schools and thus have had several years of instruction in Malay (in Rumi) and can use it in more sophisticated contexts than just bargaining at the market. Malay also has wider usage than the other mother tongues because it does have this Roman form, while Tamil and Chinese rarely appear (except in titles and names) in forms other than their own distinctive alphabets or characters.

Persons who do business largely with Malays - such as Chinese and Indian vendors and tradesmen on the East Coast or in rural areas - are likely to carry on affairs with their Malay customers in Malay, though they will speak Chinese

or Tamil with their own friends and perhaps English with the local officials, especially federal officials.

Where the conversation concerns subjects such as public policy, international affairs, science, and technology, and where both parties are able to speak English and Malay, it is likely that the language chosen will be English rather than Malay. When the topics themselves are of a cosmopolitan or technical character, Malaysians are apt naturally to associate them with the language of the West and of international affairs, that is, English. Thus while Malay comes closest to being an inter-ethnic lingua franca in the rural areas, where topics are of a nature associated with the Malay-dominated sphere of national life, in the larger towns English takes on this lingua franca role.

The English language is used fluently by only a small proportion of the Malaysian population. But it is used by those people who carry the greatest degree of inter-ethnically recognized prestige and influence. Furthermore, English is more important than its small percentage of literates suggest because it is the language used to express ideas on those subjects generally considered most crucial to the future of the nation as a whole.

According to the 1957 census (see Table 3), only ten per cent of the Federation of Malaya's population over

ten years of age were literate in English. "Literate" was defined as the ability to read a newspaper or to write a letter in English. In the same year, within the population over ten years of age some fifty per cent were, however, literate in some language. 5.

Table 1 Federation of Malaya - Percentage
Literate in Any Language

<u>Age</u> <u>Group</u>	<u>All Races</u>		<u>Malaysian</u>		<u>Chinese</u>		<u>Indians</u>	
	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>
10 yrs-over	n.a.	51	n.a.	47	n.a.	53	n.a.	57
15 yrs-over	33	47	30	41	32	50	46	54
10-14 yrs.	n.a.	71	n.a.	75	n.a.	65	n.a.	73

Note: The Malaysians (i.e., Malays and indigenous) have the smallest percentage of literates. Furthermore, in the ten years between 1947 and 1957 all ethnic groups' literate proportions grew, but the Chinese and Indians' grew furthest. This fact - or rather overcoming this fact - is a principal motivation behind the government's drive to improve education, especially among Malays.

Source: Federation of Malaya, 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, p. 21.

Table 2 Federation of Malaya - 1957
Percentage Literate in Malay

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>All Races</u>	<u>Malaysians</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indians</u>
10 yrs. & over	25	46	3	5
15-over	22	41	3	4
10-14 yrs.	40	74	5	9

Note: The much higher proportion of Malaysians literate in Malay at the 10 - 14 age level probably reflects expansion of schooling opportunities for the Malays, although in 1957 the percentages of non-Malays literate in Malay was still very small.

Source: Federation of Malaya, 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, p. 22.

Table 3 Federation of Malaya -
Percentage Literate in English

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>All Races</u>		<u>Malaysian</u>		<u>Chinese</u>		<u>Indians</u>	
	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1957</u>
10 yrs. & over	n.a.	10	n.a.	5	n.a.	11	n.a.	16
15 - over	5	9	2	4	5	10	10	14
10 - 14 yrs	n.a.	14	n.a.	8	n.a.	17	n.a.	30

Note: Of the three communities, the Indian has the highest proportion of persons - especially in the 10 - 14 bracket - literate in English, while the Malaysian had the smallest. Furthermore, this

(Table 3 - continued)

distinction grew more marked over the ten year period. There is no verifiable explanation for this, but it may be that the Indians feel themselves the weakest community and believe that they of all three are least able to survive reliant on just their own mother tongue. Furthermore, there has been a notable decline in the number of Tamil-medium schools, a fact which also encourages Indians to enroll their children in English-medium schools.

Source: Federation of Malaya, 1957 Population Census of Malaya, p. 23.

These figures date from the year of Malaya's independence and of the passage of the Razak Report's recommendations into law. In the ten years that have passed since then literacy in all languages and among all communities has undoubtedly risen, though it will require the next census to spell out in detail how far the education policy stressing schooling for all and knowledge of Malay and English in particular has succeeded to reduce some of these marked discrepancies between groups. The higher percentages in every instance among the 10 - 14 year olds suggests that the trend was already in motion in 1957.

Ten per cent (even less in the Borneo states) is a small proportion of a country's population. But it is the composition of that ten per cent which has made English both

a source of genuine frustration and, at the same time, a means of valuable dialogue for Malaysia's ethnically diverse leadership.

A Malaysian may achieve considerable wealth and prestige and yet speak only a single vernacular language. There are extremely successful and influential Chinese businessmen who speak only Chinese - though perhaps several dialects. A Malay religious scholar or a member of a Malay royal family, likewise, may claim high social status and still be linguistically confined to Malay. However, to aspire to a position in Malaysian society that carries with it more than merely intra-communal influence and prestige, and to acquire a position of leadership in national, rather than just one's own ethnic group's affairs, a Malaysian today must be conversant in English. On the other hand, to be conversant only in English may be severely limiting to one's potential influence.

Biographical research recently done by Robert Tiltman underscores the importance of the role of English and, more particularly, English education in gaining national influence in Malaysia.

Table 4 Percentage of Elected and Party Elites:
Major Language of Education

<u>Medium of Education</u>	<u>Cabinet-Party n = 13</u>	<u>Cabinet n = 18</u>	<u>Party n = 33</u>	<u>Total Elite n = 38</u>
English	100	100	67	71
vernacular/ traditional	nil	nil	6	5
vernacular/trad. and English	nil	nil	21	18
unknown	nil	nil	6	5

Source: Robert O. Tilman, "Policy Formation and Policy Execution and the Political Elite Structure of Contemporary Malaya," in Wang Gung-wu, ed., Malaysia, New York, Praeger, 1965, p. 349.

The ten per cent literate in English command the positions at which the decisions on language will be made for the nation. This sector includes Malays, Chinese and Indians. English, therefore, is not the possession or identifying characteristic of any single ethnic group. For this reason it can be used safely by all without fear of appearing to be either a communal chauvinist or a communal "sell-out," or, at least, not a sell-out to one of the other ethnic groups.

Among the list of factors suggested at the outset as those which seemed most pertinent to Malaysian ethnic

pluralism was the availability of a cultural alternative not immediately associated with one of the major resident groups. This factor is most relevant in those multi-ethnic societies which have experienced colonial rule, but colonial rule that did not result in the transplantation of a large European resident community, since in these societies the Europeans and their culture become actors in the domestic social life, not an outside alternative.

There are English people in Malaysia, and their life there has been made famous by Conrad, Maugham, Burgess, and other writers. But as a settled ethnic group they are far less significant than they are in independent Kenya or South Africa. In 1957, of the total urban population on the peninsula, less than 4 per cent were "European" ("European" locally is used to refer to all caucasians, whether from the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, or any of the continental European states).⁶ The European population is most important in the field of economics. Many of the large import-export firms, the larger tin mines and rubber estates, chemical, petroleum, and cigarette companies are owned and managed by Europeans. But Europeans do not figure in the domestic political system, except as a foreign element in the environment which must be taken into account by Malaysian policy-makers. Thus, for example, there has never been a

serious effort to form a European political party, and the harmony-conscious Alliance has never felt compelled to recruit a European partner.

The alien cultural alternative derived from the British rule has stylistic and instrumental appeal. English is associated with the practical needs of operating in the international market and fully exploiting western technical knowledge. In addition, English is a symbol of the standards of social prestige inherited from the British. Thus, in Malaysia the alien cultural alternative binds together pragmatism and status. This situation makes any threat to the accessibility of that culture - e.g., the availability of English-medium schools, the opportunity to gain admittance into universities in England or Australia - almost intolerable both for those Malaysians who have come to measure social status by British criteria and for those who give top priority in policy-formation to economic and technological progress.

Clearly, not all or perhaps even most persons in each Malaysian ethnic group hold these values which put a premium on maintaining access to the English culture. But those who have held the top leadership positions in all three ethnic groups since nation-building was launched are among those who do. Thus, for instance, the Malaysian Chinese community cannot be fully understood without recognition of the division

between the Chinese-speaking Chinese and the English-speaking Chinese. Neither of these sub-groups is linguistically pure, and one finds English-speaking Chinese who also can converse easily in several Chinese dialects and perhaps Malay as well. The most important line between the vernacular-speaking and the English-speaking sub-groups in all three communities seems to be one of education. This division between those Malaysians who have gone through English-medium school and those who either have had no schooling or vernacular-medium schooling is a condition which has greatly complicated the implementation of a National Language policy, but at the same time welded together an effective multi-ethnic leadership. One may wonder whether perhaps these two conditions are mutually inclusive - that is, is the price for an inter-ethnic leadership in Malaysia necessarily frustration and ambiguity and even the risk of communities' alienation from that leadership?

Language and Leadership

It is not uncommon to hear Malaysian Chinese comment that MCA president, Finance Minister Tan Siew Sin, "can't even speak Chinese." In a sense, this castigation of Tan Siew Sin is a corollary to the earlier observation regarding the communal spokesmen's choice of schools for their own

children. Both reflect the skepticism with which language advocates of all stripes are regarded. The implication is that any ethnic spokesman is likely to be di-communalized; to have even achieved that status he probably has had to be proficient in English and this skill detaches him to some degree from his own ethnic culture and outlook. It is the old problem of leadership - to gain enough prominence to be influential requires some distinctiveness which in turn disassociates one from the rank and file.

Among the greatest frustrations felt by the vernacular-speaking leaders in all the ethnic groups is the realization that in the present political context it is men of dual or even questionable linguistic loyalties who are formulating and implementing national policy for language and for integration in general. The suspicion of the rank and file toward the political elite is two-fold: the suspicion of the parochial toward the cosmopolitan sophisticate and the suspicion of the vernacular-speaker toward the English-speaker. In other words, it is not only that the more parochial Chinese or Malay doubts the virtue of the worldly leaders representing them; it is also that the parochial Chinese and Malays probably could not read the memoranda or the party newsletters or understand the conversations of those men supposedly speaking on their behalfs.

Even in the opposition parties the top national posts are held by English-educated men. Thus if a vernacular-speaker doubts that the inter-ethnic cosmopolitan Alliance policy-makers can accurately reflect his interests, he is left with the alternative of casting his ballot for opposition parties which also are led by persons to some extent di-communalized. The Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP) is the most significant exception to this generalization. Its leaders are for the most part Malay-speaking, a fact which sets the Malay opposition party apart from the Chinese-Indian oriented oppositions.

In these opposition parties, whose ideological status is generally socialist and whose ethnic following is largely non-Malay the language of public and organizational communication is English. This is the language used at party meetings and in memoranda and newsletters. If written correspondence is conducted in Chinese or Tamil or Malay it usually means that a second or more printing is made. If these vernacular languages took the place of, rather than supplemented English, it would, in effect, limit the party to a single ethnic community, whereas the strongest case made by these opposition parties is that they are truly non-communal. This reliance of a majority of the opposition parties on English for their own operations weakens their criticism of the Alliance's

promotion of Malay as the National Language.

In the lower organizational ranks in the opposition parties and the Alliance vernacular-educated persons are far more prevalent. It is at this level that there is felt a greater stake in the preservation or advancement of the non-English languages. Thus the division within the ethnic groups on the subject of English is mirrored in the political parties representing those groups.

Because of the link between English and development, as well as that between English and nationally recognized prestige, the differences between the English-speaking policy-makers and their vernacular-speaking followers and critics often manifests itself in disagreements over the importance of pragmatism and progress - progress in the economic and technical sense. Thus when the strongest advocates of the Malay language as the proper foundation for an integrated Malaysia criticize the government for holding back on the full implementation of the Constitutional guarantee for the National Language, their targets raise the problems of Malay's linguistic "maturity." They do not deny its indigeneity to the region or its importance to the Malay identity, but they doubt whether cultural indigeneity is the most appropriate standard by which to evaluate policy alternatives in a nation seeking to catch up with the developed nations. They

offer an alternative standard instead: the capacity of a language to serve as the means of communication in the "practical" affairs of the society in an age of technological and scientific sophistication and increasing international interdependence. Using this measurement these pragmatists find Malay wanting.

In the top policy-making posts of the Malaysian government today are the pragmatists. These are also the person dependent in large part on their English-medium education for their influence. When it comes to making language policy for the sake of integration, as well as progress, they cannot help but feel conflicting emotions for personal, but also for professional reasons.

Institutions and the Promotion of National Language

The ambivalence towards the vernacular languages is coupled with the relative non-institutionality of language in making National Language policy especially troublesome for the current Malaysian regime. Government-instigated integration is facilitated by the conjunction of the social area of policy and specific institutions. Language affects institutions, but it is not identified with or contained by any single institution. Furthermore, those institutions which promote, retard and

transform language are numerous and diverse. Besides their number and variety, the Malaysian institutions which are most directly responsible for language standards and practices have traditionally been free from governmental direction because of previous disinterest and because of British liberalism.

A Malaysian government which seeks to standardize language through the manipulation of institutions despite these problems will have to impose controls - by sanctions, rewards or both - on schools, businesses, publishing houses, mass media, its own bureaucracy, and courts and legislatures. It is little wonder that any government which stops short of totalitarian pretensions - and the Malaysian government decidedly does - is most reluctant to leap into this institutional morass. Nevertheless, the Alliance's campaign to promote the National Language, in accord with its commitment to a national community and the special place of the Malays, does not avoid institutional impingement altogether. But only in education and bureaucracy can the government actually control the language policy.

Besides the schools, the federal government's own institutions are the ones most accessible for manipulation toward language policy ends. Once again, the stage of political development and the period of history are determining factors which affect the degree to which integration can be

achieved by deliberate policy formation. For Malaysia has the advantage of existing in a period when government responsibilities are tremendously expanded, and with them governmental institutions. Moreover, Malaysia is tackling the problems of integration at a time of accelerated politically-directed socio-economic change. Both circumstances give the federal government leverage and resources it might lack in other periods. Expansion of the institutions of government produces an increase in the sheer proportion of the populace dependent on the government for livelihood and career advancement. The Malaysian government can initiate bonuses and other incentives, as well as employment and promotion standards which encourage its ever-growing number of employees to learn Malay.

But until the meaning of "official" in the constitutional language provision is filled out with practical meaning the government's exploitation of its control over its own bureaucracy will remain limited to voluntary incentives. In any event, can a government which prides itself so much on the efficiency of its bureaucracy risk the disruption and professional resentment which rigid language requirements might foment?

It is civil servants themselves, after all, who are among the groups most reliant on the mastery of a language

other than Malay for their own status, since English has long been a criterion for entry into the federal civil service. 7.

Civil servants have the most to lose should English no longer be the chief medium of intra-governmental discourse. In addition to their concern for their own preservation, the civil servants are naturally interested in the maintenance of bureaucratic order and efficiency. The government's National Language Bill in response to this provided for continuing usage of English in governmental administration. When Malay opponents charged that this proviso was a betrayal, Tunku Abdul Rahman replied in a manner any civil servant would approve of: The Prime Minister told the parliament that if the government chose the course of "ignoring public opinion and forcing the issue down the throats of the people - and scrapping the use of English," then the consequence only could be that "the courts would shut and business firms would be able to carry on only with difficulty." He concluded by arguing that such circumstances would serve only to give "those who wanted to stir up trouble the ample opportunity to do so." 8. At another time Education Minister Khir Johari told the critical Malay Writers Association that the only laws then completely translated into Malay were the Marriage and Divorce Ordinance. So to make Malay the sole language in governmental operations effectively would leave Malaysia "without any law." 9.

In the Ministry of Education this reliance on English for status as well as efficiency is best demonstrated by the small but influential group of Chief Education Officers. The CEO has gained his considerable stature and responsibility as the chief agent of the Federal Ministry of Education in each peninsular state by professional experience in the ministry and in the school system, but also by possession of a university Honors degree. This last requirement makes it imperative that a would-be CEO be English-educated, since only English-medium universities offer an acceptable Honors degree. It is not unlikely, therefore, that CEOs and aspiring CEOs from all three ethnic groups looked somewhat anxiously toward the implementation of National Language standards in the federal bureaucracy, and in their own Ministry in particular.

Time and again this fundamental dilemma comes to the surface. The Alliance government has won support and confidence largely due to its deliberately cultivating the image of efficiency, rationality, pragmatism in the face of pluralism and modernization pressures. But to conserve support in the future it may have to take steps which threatens to undermine that valuable image.

Institutionally, the burden of resolving this dilemma has been placed on the education system. The schools were not brought under centralized authority solely for linguistic

purposes; at the outset subversion was given much higher priority than language. But now that subversive infiltration has been checked, the linguistic functions of the public schools has become central to education planning. Text book guidelines, teacher training requirements, syllabus and curriculum, examinations, criteria for promotion - all are designed with at least one eye on serving the official policy of a general national acceptance of Malay as the one language common to all Malaysians.

Other Malaysian institutions are less open to this sort of governmental control and guidance. The ethnically-defined division-of-labor has produced a corollation in the public's mind between many of the institutions and a particular ethnic group. To attempt to impose an integrative policy such as National Language on one of those institutions undoubtedly would provoke cries of communalism against the regime. As a result, there has been little direct pressure put on business, which is mainly non-Malay, to use Malay in its formal dealings. So too, the press has been permitted to continue in its multi-lingual and communal form, with no insistence that the Chinese and Tamil papers be curtailed or that the English-language press change over gradually to Malay, although "Learn Malay" columns are featured in several non-Malay papers.

Formerly, of course, the education system also was considered a communal concern and yet the federal government did risk intervention. However, education as an institutional sector is peculiar in that nowadays it is considered a legitimate realm of any government's interest, in light of both world-wide concepts of governmental function and expectations of governmental responsibilities for the initiation of development in post-colonial states. Private enterprises and the press, on the other hand, are much less widely accepted as areas of legitimate intervention and control. Again, the extent to which the political authorities can successfully take deliberate action to alter the relationship between its ethnic groups will depend not only on the skills of the particular government in power, but also on the concepts of government prevalent at the time in which it is attempting such a transformation. In this period and in countries touched by western European liberalism, the institutions of education are much more ripe for government intervention than are the institutions of business and communications.

Mass Media and National Language:
Electronic Media:

Marshall McLuhan in his controversial book on the mass media contends that schools are behind the times. 10. Instead of still concentrating on the development of students' literacy skills, in this post-literate age schools should be devoting more attention to young people's capacities to critically receive message via the non-written media. In Malaysian schools as well as American schools learning is associated most intimately with the written word. At the same time, outside of the classroom young people of both countries are gaining many of their most formative impressions of their environments and of the more distant world from non-literate media: television, radio, motion pictures. These media, together with the more traditional media of books and newspapers, therefore, have to be accounted for when assessing the impact of mass media of a national language or its possible existence.

In the United States these post-literate media are nationalizing factors, but in Malaysia their potential nationalizing function is frustrated by their linguistic fragmentation. Malaysian educators' own personal uncertainties, as well as their perception of the students' practical needs prompt them

to strive for a population which eventually will be bi-lingual, even tri-lingual. This direction is motivated by the realization that to enjoy or utilize fully the mass media available in Malaysia today the citizen must be equipped to handle two or more languages.

Those media which the Malaysian government does have direct responsibility for are both non-literate and multi-lingual. Of all the various media, these newer electronic media are the most susceptible to government regulation because of their necessarily high degree of centralization; whereas the traditional written mass media and person-to-person media are more diffuse and thus less manageable. If the Alliance were trying to promote Malay in a pre-electronic era it would find its task much more difficult. It would be hampered by the dependence of communication on literacy, a link weakened by electronic media, and by the informal, unstructured character of the non-electronic verbal communication. These road-blocks in an earlier period perhaps would have spurred a regime to risk encroaching on the traditionally independent press.

Television only just now is making a serious impact on Malaysian society. "Television Malaysia" was established only a few years ago, and its viewers for the time being are concentrated overwhelmingly in the urban centers. Where it reaches out to the rural areas it is usually at the sponsorship

of the government's rural development agency, which may, for example, supply a television receiver for a kampong community center. There is only one television channel, but it conscientiously carries programs in all four languages: Mandarin, Malay, Tamil, and English. However, because Television Malaysia is still in its infancy and because the production of programs for this medium is complex and costly, the bulk of feature programs has to be imported. And they are imported chiefly from English-speaking countries - Australia, Britain, and the United States. On any evening one can walk along a new suburban block in Kuala Lumpur's satellite town of Petaling Jaya and hear the rock and roll beats of "Shindig," the gun shots from "Our Man from Uncle," or the precise diction of a B.B.C. commentator, a witness to the cosmopolitan nature of Malaysian television fare.

The difficulty of using the growing popularity of television to promote National Language policies is that the content making this new medium so attractive to the people is an imported content which a developing nation hardly can afford to duplicate out of its own resources. However, as McLuhan has noted, television seems to attract viewers for reasons in addition to its substantive programming, and no doubt many Malaysians watch even those programs whose language of presentation they cannot understand. For instance,

the Southeast Asia Games, which excited a great deal of enthusiasm among all ethnic groups when they were held in Kuala Lumpur in 1965, was telecast on Television Malaysia with only a Malay-language commentary, but drew viewers from Malay and non-Malay groups alike.

Radio, as most newly independent governments have discovered, is far more congenial to official manipulation. It carries lower production costs and it is more accessible to the mass of the public. As of 1965, there were 292,000 radio licenses (i.e., radio receivers) in Malaya proper - that is, 41 licenses per thousand population. This compares favorably with a 13 : 1,000 ratio in Indonesia and a 24 : 1,000 ratio in the Philippines, but it compares unfavorably with the 90 : 1,000 ratio of radio license to population in Singapore.¹¹

Radio Malaysia, modelled after the B.B.C., has two stations. Like Television Malaysia, it is multi-lingual. One radio station carries programs in Malay and English, the other station programs in Chinese. Both broadcast "Learn Malay" lessons throughout the day. Putting the Malay programs on the same station as the English programs, rather than devoting an entire station to Malay, undoubtedly captures a larger and more ethnically mixed audience for Malay programs. Radio also uses some imported English-language programs, but it is less dependent on imports than is television.

Given the increasing popularity of transistor radios, Radio Malaysia has an audience that extends beyond the boundaries of Ipoh, Georgetown or Kuala Lumpur to the rural villages. Television, on the other hand, still is a largely urban medium, a condition which only reinforces the cities' English orientation.

Radio and television coverage are not yet nationwide. And it is possible that the movement of these electronic media, with their abilities to expand their recipients' horizons, to the rural, Malay-dominated areas could increase the desire to learn English rather than encourage the study of Malay.

The per capita rate of film attendance in Malaya has been estimated to be one of the highest in the world.¹² But this is the electronic communications medium over which the federal government has the least control and thus the least capability of utilizing for its own language and integrative ends. The Kuala Lumpur government does retain legal and financial controls on the industry, and during the Emergency a number of films were censored for excessive gunplay, violence and incidents of sabotage.¹³ But if the spate of James Bond and imitation 007 films jamming the capital's movie houses in 1965 was an indication, this type of censorship, at least, has been curtailed. The cases of censorship now tend to be in the area of religion, with certain sections

of films cut so as not to offend the nation's Muslim viewers.

As with television, most of the film medium's content is imported. But the cinematic imports are not so exclusively from English-speaking countries. Japanese, Chinese (Nationalist and Hong Kong), and Indian films appear regularly in the cities on the peninsula, along with a few Malay feature films. The federal government recently has noted the potential political importance of the cinema by creating an elaborate film department of its own. The motion pictures it produces are not the normal commercial fare, but they can be used as shorts in the city theaters and taken around by mobile units to show in the kampongs, giving Malays the chance to see movies in Malay with local settings. This sort of government undertaking can be a means of breaking down rural parochialism and Malay isolation.

In the larger towns the films are generally in English, Hindi, Japanese and Chinese. Furthermore, the subtitles for the English-language films appear to be almost exclusively in Chinese, not Malay. This suggests the extent to which the mass media adheres to the social stereotypes - i.e., the notion of non-Malays as urban and Malays as rural. Even the half-hour of advertisements shown on the screen before each feature is carried on largely in English and Chinese, with a Malay advertisement an occasional exception. In a society

where ethnic pluralism follows commercial, occupational, and residential lines, the extent to which consumer appeals reach each community equally may affect the persistence or alteration of those ethnic stratifications. Currently, neither the advertisements nor the feature films in the cinemas of the larger towns would attract the non-English-speaking Malay. This situation indicates the capacity of the present urban situation to act as an integrator of the newly-arrived Malay resident - or the capacity for the mass media to help prevent the kampong-dweller from becoming a fully assimilated urbanite even though he lives and works within the city limits. Add to this possibility the fact that so many urban Malays work in the government rather than in commerce and, once more, urbanization can be seen as being something less than an inevitably integrating force.

Mass Media and National Language:
Written Media

The capacities of communications media to act as forces for increasing integration or separatism among the Malaysian ethnic groups are most perplexingly demonstrated by the Malayan press (the Borneo states have their own papers in the various languages).

In 1965, there were 28 newspapers in Malaya, with a total circulation of 470,000. ¹⁴. These publications, according to 1952 figures, were printed in seven different symbol systems: English, Chinese, Malayalam, Tamil, Punjabi, Jawi (Malay in Arabic script), and Rumi (Malay in Roman script). In that same year, circulation statistics showed that the Chinese and English papers were dominant, with 45 per cent and 38 per cent of the total circulation, respectively; the Malay language press trailed with only about 11 per cent; and finally the Indian vernacular press fell below that and even declined since the 1947 tabulation. ¹⁵. As in education, due to its internal diversity, as well as the circumstances surrounding its settlement on the peninsula, the Indian community seems to be the ethnic group least able or desirous of maintaining solidarity and distinctiveness as a community.

Unlike the electronic, non-literate media, the written media are doubly exclusivist to persons outside the particular language community: not only sounds, but symbols shut out the non-member. Consequently, even those persons with a fair command of spoken Malay can rarely read the most influential and communal of the Malay-language newspapers, Utusan Melayu, since it is printed in Jawi and most non-Malays who have learned Malay have been taught its Rumi form. The second national Malay-language paper, the Beritan Harian, is

published in Rumi, but it is owned by the Straits Times and thus does not serve as a Malay community paper as does Utusan Melayu. Of course, there are few Malaysians except the Chinese themselves - and this excludes many English-educated Chinese - who are any more capable of reading the Chinese language press. The result is that the only paper which can claim a nation-wide, inter-communal circulation is the English-language Straits Times, published in both Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

The position of the Straits Times, then, is somewhat analogous to that of the English-medium school: the institution most national in scope - i.e., most truly non-communal - also is the least indigenous, the least legitimate as a foundation for national integration if that integration is to be born out of the cultural elements actually resident in Malaysia itself.

The problem crops up with aggravating persistence for nation-building elites: how to find a formula for reconciliation and unity that has both integrity and fairness - integrity based on a culture integral to the society and fairness out of a genuine concern for conflicting communal sensibilities. English in the schools and in the communications media possesses fairness but not integrity. Malay, it is claimed, possesses integrity but not fairness. If a country cannot

have both, then which formula for national integration is most durable - that dependent on integrity or that dependent on fairness?

Much of the controversy over the proper place of the National Language in the social and political systems concentrates on the conflicts between the cultural and the practical-operational functions of language. But the more immediate problem in building a foundation for inter-ethnic trust was dramatically illustrated in the outcry against the Singapore Government's published translations of the Utusan Melayu.

In 1965, before Singapore separated from the Malaysian Federation, the political dialogue came close to the boiling point. Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew was the leading spokesman for the critics of the Alliance and its conception of Malaysian nationhood. Quite naturally, the vernacular press reflected the heat of the debate in its editorial comments directed to their own ethnic audiences. Because of the double barrier of language and script, the vernacular papers need have little fear that what they intend for their own audience will be "over-heard" by other sections of the society. The English-language papers print extremely brief, and usually not very telling excerpts from the past week's vernacular press, and the government Information Department circulates English translations of summaries of the vernacular press,

but these are carefully restricted to authorized personnel.

Therefore, it sparked a minor furor when Lee Kuan Yew's Ministry of Culture in Singapore in its own English newsletter, The Malaysian Mirror, started printing translated selections from the otherwise inaccessible Utusan Melayu, often choosing potentially inflammatory ethno-centric comments of editorials meant only for Malay readers. The debate over such ambiguous and emotional slogans as "Malaysian Malaysia" was tense and confused in any event, but this selective revelation of Malay intra-communal communication intensified hostilities. The mailing of the Mirror to schools in the federation became an issue as well.¹⁶ The resentment over Singapore sending its newsletter to the schools again suggests how impossible it is to isolate education in a non-political corner within a multi-ethnic polity.

Lee Kuan Yew argued that it was imperative to translate the Utusan Melayu so that the rest of the society could hear what notions of the debate and choices were being transmitted to the Malay community. According to the Singapore Prime Minister, "Every day dreadful poison is being poured out in Jawi about the PAP (the governing party in Singapore) being communalistic and anti-Malay." Lee went on to accuse the Utusan Melayu of publishing only Malay or Alliance leaders' speeches and ignoring Lee's own statements:

"If they (the Malay leaders) are bluffing the Malays in the kampongs then it is our duty to pass the message to them. Our problem is to get the message to Malaya." 17.

The federal government has urged the press to adopt its own code of ethics but generally has maintained a laissez-faire relationship with the country's newspapers. At the same time, it has taken a more positive role in shaping the development of other written media, especially book publishing.

The government's agency created specifically to guide publishing - as well as language usage in general - is the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Council for Language and Culture). The Dewan Bahasa probably more than any other single institution is delegated the responsibility for promoting the wider usage of Malay as the National Language. It has never been far from the political controversy swirling around the language policy. The Dewan Bahasa is much more than a passive administrator of federal policy. It has been one of the principal agents of pressure on the sometimes cautious Alliance Cabinet, acting as an institutional lobbyist on behalf of fuller implementation of the National Language promise.

The Dewan Bahasa's activities toward this end are varied. They range from the publication of new text books in history, biology, chemistry in Malay (Rumi), the sponsorship

of Malay reading and composition contests for non-Malays, the establishment of committees to modernize the Malay vocabulary, to the direction of month-long and six-month-long National Language campaigns which include rallies, parades, banners, and special exhibitions.

To some extent, this political pressure group role adopted by the Dewan Bahasa is the result of the energetic leadership of the agency's director, a Malay, Syed Nasir. He has been an active figure in UMNO - too active, in the eyes of some party officials. In 1967, in the midst of the legislative and popular discussion on the new National Language Bill, the UMNO national leadership disciplined Syed Nasir for his outspoken and embarrassing criticism of the government's bill by removing him from his position in the party's executive council.

National Language and a Formula for Unity

The uneasiness with which the federal government has intervened in the traditionally independent sphere of communications and the recent punishment of the over-zealous Dewan Bahasa director both reflect a fundamental uncertainty on the part of the architects of Malaysian national unity over what precisely is the ultimate function of the National Language policy. This uncertainty stems from an even deeper misgiving over the proper formula for Malaysian integration.

Although not usually explained in these terms by Kuala Lumpur officials, an essential objective of the language policy as it is practiced in the school system is to equip all ethnic groups with those linguistic tools which simultaneously will enable the new generation of Malaysians to communicate across communal lines through all the various forms of media available and thus be able to play productive and interdependent roles in an increasingly technological and commercial society.

The real problem arises, however, when Malaysians try to spell out what they mean by "communicate across communal lines." The discrepancies in interpretations is evidence of significantly different notions of integration.

At the core is the contrast between the functional conception of integration and the spiritual conception of integration. This contrast is closely paralleled by the difference between integration conceived of as assimilation or even melting pot and integration conceived of as cultural pluralism. Thus one hears statements to the effect that Malay must be made the sole official language in order to provide a genuine cultural communality at the heart of the nation. According to this spiritual interpretation, the ability of all Malaysians to speak a common tongue will be the cornerstone of this new culture. This new culture will not be artificial; it will be legitimized by

virtue of its roots in the traditions of the region. A nation cannot call itself a genuine community unless there is this unaffected cultural bond, of which language is the most obvious and symbolic thread.

Opposed to this assimilative-spiritual interpretation is a conception which is more at home with the conception of unity based on cultural pluralism and functionalism. This conception puts less stress on the creation of a single national culture and more on the practical necessity for any society to have at least one language in which every-day affairs can be conducted. Some persons holding to this view go on to add a second justification for the National Language. Again couching integration in terms of practicality and pluralism, they note the federal government's obvious need to grant some concessions to the Malays in light of their numbers and their special position as the indigenous community. Fulfilling the promise of National Language, therefore, is counselled by political reality. And it is this sort of political realism which is the sort of cement most to be trusted in nation-building.

This second, functional notion of the aims of the National Language policy grows out of a conception of the Malaysian community as a collection of clearly distinct groups which were brought together and now held together by practical and convergent interests. Just as the acceptance of Malay

as the official language derives from an understanding of the need for some common medium of communication for at least minimal interaction, so the acceptance of a united Malaysian nation stems from an acknowledgement of the benefits of all issuing from toleration, compromise and cooperation despite differences of taste, values, and memories.

If the groom at the wedding is marrying for convenience and the bride is marrying for love, both fully aware of the outlook of the other, the marriage may endure, since bride and groom each have a genuine interest in its viability. But there may be disturbances and even threats of divorce when marital problems arise that call for quite different solutions depending on whether the partnership is seen as founded on convenience or devotion. It is not a matter of either partner being less sincere than the other in entering upon marriage; rather it is a conflict in perceptions of the act of partnership.

This marital analogy is relevant to Malaysia's dialogue over the objective of National Language policy. Generally speaking, the immigrant groups, the Chinese and Indians, represent the groom, who visualizes national unity as a loose confederation motivated by recognition of common benefits; the indigenous group, the Malays, seem to represent the bride, who pictures the unity as founded on common values

and understandings. It is in the discussion of how to fulfill the constitutional guarantee for the National Language that the differences of conceptualization comes to the surface most blatantly, raising questions as to the very nature and durability of the marriage.

In practice, the bride-groom and Malay-non-Malay analogy is an over-simplification because it ignores the ambiguous position of the national elites, many of whom are Malays. This Malay leadership, exemplified in the Alliance Cabinet, has not shown itself unwavering in its dedication to the assimilationist interpretation. Malay leaders have argued the practicality and the flexibility of language policy. The most publicized speech by a Malay leader in which this sort of rationale was offered was Minister of Education Khir Johari's address to the Penang Free School in the fall of 1965. Neither the minister or the site was incidental. Here was one of the country's most influential men, head of the ministry responsible for the course of education, speaking at one of the oldest and most prestigious English-medium schools, to an ethnically-mixed audience. Khir Johari began by recalling a statement by another eminent Malay, the Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Razak, to the effect that English could continue to be used as the medium of instruction in higher education. He assured his audience that the government's

language approach was "very practical and realistic." He continued, "Apart from the need to bind closer together the various races, the Malay language has been chosen as our national language because it has been the language of the great majority of the people living in this part of the world." 18. Even so, the English-educated elites need not fear that government will lose sight of the practical role of English in education. Higher education would still rely on English, though there would be more subjects offered in Malay, because English-language university education was necessary "to help this country produce the professional men and women we need so badly to build up this country of ours, and obtain the benefits from the best of higher education here and abroad." 19.

Another speech by a leading Malay is frequently cited as a clue to the government's understanding of the integrative role of language. The Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman spoke before a Chinese Amateur Dramatic Association, which had just contributed M\$10,000 to the national Patriotic Fund. Speaking before this group in Ipoh in 1965, the Tunku adopted a similar stance of "commitment, but with practicality and flexibility." The government would have to fulfill the guarantees of the Constitution, the Prime Minister told his Chinese listeners. But this need not rule out possible concessions to non-Malay groups. "We must agree that we must

have one language as the official language, otherwise this nation will always be divided." On the other hand, "There was no attempt at any time to reduce the opportunities of anybody to pursue their language and cultural interests because in diversity we look for unity." The Tunku was interpreted afterwards as speaking indirectly to the Malayan Chinese Association, his Alliance partner, assuring the MCA that if it would demonstrate affirmation of the general constitutional guarantee, then there would be no reason why "practical concessions should not be worked out." 20.

But the Alliance's position which seeks to combine constitutional fulfillment with realistic flexibility is not one shared by those Malays who envision something deeper than "practical unity." At the same time as the Tunku and his Minister of Education were assuring West Coast audiences that there was no likelihood of abolishing English education or freedom of cultural diversity, on the East Coast the militant Malay National Language Action Front was passing resolutions which demanded that the Central Government do such things as make local film distributors use Malay subtitles and that State Governments make shopkeepers change their sign boards into Malay. 21.

The Mentri Besar (Chief Minister) of the PMIP-ruled state of Kelantan told this meeting of the Language Front that Tunku Abdul Rahman's Ipoh speech promising compromise was "shocking." Declared the Mentri Besar, "We will not retreat a single step in our struggle to put the National Language in its rightful place." 22.

The calls for more thorough dedication to National Language were not confined to just the Malay-dominated East Coast. At a conference held in Kuala Lumpur at the Dewan Bahasa the Language Front urged such policies as 1) Radio Malaysia stop broadcasting in English except in its overseas service; 2) compulsory passes in the National Language exams for students to proceed to second year at the University of Malaya and at the colleges; 3) proficiency in Malay be made a condition for citizenship and candidacy in elections. 23.

The contrast between the "open door" attitude of the Alliance leadership and the anxiety and demands for explicit guarantees among the rank and file is evident not only among Malays, but among the Chinese as well. During the same period following the Tunku's "concessions" speech in Ipoh the Chinese leaders also encountered distrust among their own followers. In Penang Dato T.H. Tan, Chairman of the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce, a powerful association closely identified with the MCA, urged his Chinese

colleagues to act moderately and to accept the Tunku's assurances as sufficient. Specifically, Dato Tan urged the Chambers of Commerce branch not to call for explicit elevation of Chinese to the status of an official language:

"I plead with you to deal with this emotional issue as responsible leaders. Let us remember it has caused havoc in other countries...

"When Bahasa Kebangsaan (National Language) comes into effect in 1967 as the sole official language, there is nothing - I emphasize the word 'nothing' - to prevent the continued existence of Chinese schools and the use of the Chinese language in this country..."

Like the Tunku and Khir Johari, Dato Tan then went on to explain the practicality that lay behind the choice of Malay as the sole official language. "When we were in London (in 1957)," according to Dato Tan, "talking with the British Government about the independence of Malaya we suggested that as an independent sovereign nation we must have a language of our own....We discounted English because it is the language of the colonial masters, and of the three remaining languages, we felt that Malay was the easiest to learn." Contrary to Dato Tan's plea, however, the Penang branch went ahead to pass a resolution calling on the Central Government to "establish the status of the Chinese language" - i.e., to give Chinese official recognition, not simply vague assurances. 24.

All Alliance leaders are publically committed to the implementation of the constitution's language provision, but special responsibility rests on the UMNO leaders. They carry the overlapping roles of spokesmen for the government - and holders of those ministerial portfolios most directly related to language - and agents of the Malay community. The troublesome fact is that the current Malay leadership is not representative of the Malay culture alone, but also of the western British-inherited culture. Their stances on communal issues is witness to this role duality.

Ironically, the Chinese, Indian, or Eurasian public figure who questions the advisability of the National Language policy is less vulnerable to Malay criticism or hostility than is the Malay figure. It is a greater sin for a member of one's own community to compromise on the policy than for an "outsider" even to reject the policy. Politicians of all ethnic groups in the Alliance are open to accusations of "uncle tom-ism," but the Malay leaders of UMNO have the most to lose.

The Impact of Language Policy on the Various Ethnic Groups

Uncertainty about the ends of language policy is due not only to the ambivalent positions of the national leadership, but to the dissimilar consequences which the elevation

of Malay could have for the separate ethnic groups in general. These potential differences provide part of the reason for the contrasting perceptions of national unity.

To make Malay the common language between the various ethnic groups certainly, if the goal is realized, will give the Malays an advantage in public persuasion and policy formation. But, at the same time, Malays must accelerate their economic and cosmopolitan development. For the National Language policy to serve these developmental ends, rather than simply frustrate them, Malay itself will have to be linguistically modernized. The Malay language has not been the medium of commerce, higher education, technology or science. If it is to fill these roles it will have to be brought up to date. In other words, the Malay language per se could be elevated to official dominance without great advantages accruing to the Malays. Advantages which Malays reap from the policy are dependent on the quality of the language itself.

The Dewan Bahasa is responsible for adding new words and devising new meanings for traditional words to insure that, at the same time that government is promoting the wider social usage of Malay, Malay as a language is equipped to handle the demands imposed by society in the throes of rapid change. This has meant that language policy imposed from above is being supplemented by linguistic transformation

also imposed from above. The terms most relevant for adaptation to and success in the newer socio-economic pursuits, therefore, frequently are ones that the ordinary Malay kampong dweller has never used or perhaps even heard; the Malays, as well as the non-Malays, will have to learn the modernized Malay Language.

The Malays have a second stake in the promotion of Malay over English, one which cannot be written off glibly as mere ethnic chauvinism. There is a preoccupation in Malaysia with the creation of a genuine national community. If the culture which is to serve as the mainstay of this community is to be any more than an artificial facade, then it will have to have ingredients which play a meaningful part in daily existence. A number of symbols and rituals have been borrowed from the traditional sultanates for use in state functions, and the creation of the national king, the Yang di Pertuan Agong, was a conscious effort to carry over the authority of the Malay sultanate in the new state. In practice, though, all of these borrowings are not much more than outer trappings of the political community. What can Malay culture of a genuinely functional and substantive character give this new community its cultural identity? The answer is the Malay language. If Malaysian identity is to be meaningfully Malay in some way, the National Language cannot be allowed to become as superficial

a decoration as the sultanate trappings. But this, in turn, calls for a broad interpretation of the constitutional phrase "sole official language". For Malay to inject the essence of the Malay community into the new national identity, the language should be promoted in not just government bureaucracy and parliament, but in business, research, diplomacy, art, newspapers, and other realms of social interaction with which the government thus far has been reluctant to tamper, for fear of upsetting the ethnic balance and the national prosperity.

In any multi-ethnic society the community which does not dominate the economy and which exercise political advantage through a somewhat de-communalized leadership is apt to search for those communal assets through which it can exert its ethnic pride. This is particularly true in periods of change, when the quality of nationhood are open to inquiry. The Malays' concern with the furtherance of the Malay language seems to be such an instance. The Malay language seems to many Malay spokesmen to be the most valuable ethnic asset the community possesses to make an imprint on the otherwise Anglo-cized-Sin-cized sectors of national life. Those Malays who possess other assets - economic influence, political power, technical skills - will not feel as urgent about Malay language policy as will those Malays who feel most acutely that development is outpacing them personally and communally. It is these

latter Malays, therefore, which form the backbone of the rank and file opposition within UMNO, the PMIP adherents, and the National Language Action Front supporters. It is these people - Islamic teachers, Malay-medium school teachers, Malay intellectuals - who will be in the forefront in the movement to promote and up-date the Malay language.

For the Chinese the function of the vernacular language is rather different, and thus the perceived implications of National Language policy are different from those of the Malays. The Malayan Chinese seem more preoccupied than the Malays with the threat of communal fragmentation, or even dissolution. As a result, the Chinese more than the Malays look upon language as a vitally necessary cement for holding together the disintegrating ethnic community. The Malays look to their language as a possible vehicle for imprinting the nation with their own identity and for equalizing the opportunities for prestige and prosperity. The Chinese, instead, think of language not so much in terms of the nation's character as in terms of preservation of their own sub-national community.

The Chinese appear to have adulesced to the advancement of English, but in accepting the legitimacy of Malay they attach a narrow definition of the constitutional provision. Their anxiety over the future of the Chinese language impinges

on the federal policy mainly in the sense that they foresee the official promotion of non-Chinese languages as leading to the eventual elimination of the Chinese language from Malaya altogether. There are those Chinese who wish to have Chinese elevated to the status of "official language" along with Malay. But whereas the Malays see the elevation of Malay as the means of making Malay the national lingua franca, the Chinese see official sanction as simply a way of preserving the effectiveness of Chinese as a bond among the Malayan Chinese, not as a bond among several ethnic groups.

More than the Malay community, the Chinese is divided by language. One rarely encounters a Malay, regardless of occupation or schooling who cannot read and speak Malay. But among the Malayan Chinese there are many persons who can speak English, but not Chinese, and there are even more who can speak some Chinese dialect but cannot read Chinese characters. The experience of immigration with its dislocating impact, as well as the necessarily cosmopolitan orientation of so commercially preoccupied a community are factors largely responsible for this linguistic vulnerability. Being detached from their mother country and being intent upon worldly success in a world in constant flux and increasingly influenced by western values, there are few common bonds to hold the overseas Chinese together as a distinct ethnic community. Religion,

political loyalty, regional identity, common historical memories - all are doubtful as communal bonds. This has left language to serve the cohesive function in an otherwise diverse, dislocated, and changing ethnic community. This overwhelming concern with language is also due to the absence of explicit outside threat to any other Chinese cultural attribute, such as religion or family law. However, if these were vital sources of Malayan Chinese communal solidarity, then perhaps they would come under greater pressure from outside. One of the reasons that language is the focus of so much external pressure on the Malayan Chinese is because language is so crucial to the Chinese existence as a distinct community in a larger society.

Thus one hears proponents of the Chinese language speaking of the historic importance of the Chinese language, yet not linking that defense with a call for teaching Chinese classics or Chinese history in the schools. Rarely is the meaning of "historic importance" spelled out when the Chinese language is divorced from literary or historical content. In other words, it is not so important that the teachings of Confucius be perpetuated in the overseas Chinese community as it is that a peculiarly Chinese medium of communication be preserved. In the case of the Malayan Chinese, then, the medium is the message. Without this distinctive medium the viability of the community is in serious jeopardy.

Parochialism - growing ethnic-centrism and exclusion - is the fear of the Malays. Disintegration - the disappearance of a distinctly communal character - is the fear of the Chinese. Both anxieties are fed into the political debate over language. What sort of National Language policy can be worked out by the federal government to alleviate both anxieties will shape the fundamental quality of the integrative solution in Malaysia.

Conclusion: The Alliance's Temporary Solution -
The National Language Bill of 1967

On March 3, 1967, the federal government secured passage of its National Language Bill, intended to fulfill the constitutional promise made ten years before. With this bill English was no longer an official language and only Malay retained the status of official language on the peninsula. 25.

The bill presented by the Alliance to the country (it will effect only Western Malaya, not the Borneo states) mirrors the uncertainty of the federal leadership as it pursues an ill-defined integrative goal. Essentially, Malay is elevated in status, but English can be used in official capacities with special sanction of the Yang di Pertuan Agong. Also, English still can be used in both houses of the federal parliament and in the state legislature with the sanction of their

legislative speakers or presidents. Bills and ordinances will continue to be published in the National Language and English, although those in the National Language will be the only authoritative laws. Proceedings in the federal courts will be conducted in the National Language or in English, or partly in both. Nor does the bill bar the federal or state governments from using any translation or official documents or communications in the language of any community if it is necessary in the public interest. Lastly, the new law reasserts the constitutional guarantees under which "no person shall be prohibited from using (otherwise than for official purposes) or from teaching or learning any other language," 26.

What is the practical import of the 1967 Bill?

First, the presentation and passage of the National Language Bill allows the Alliance government to assert that it has satisfied its constitutional obligation and its promise to the indigenous people. In addition, the Bill puts the Malay language into the unique position of being the sole language which can claim usage in governmental affairs as a right; all other languages, including English, will have to appeal to practicality and their usage will be matters of discretion. But are these stipulations sufficient to satisfy the Malays who envision integration as more a symbolic gesture or practical convenience?

The outcries which accompanied the initial announcement of the Bill's provisions indicate that for many articulate Malays the Bill falls short, the obligation remains unfulfilled, the indigenous community has been compromised. But on the other side, the anxieties of the non-Malays were not completely assuaged either. These non-Malays want more than discretionary loopholes to safeguard the preservation of English and the non-Malay vernacular languages.

Above all, the National Language Bill of 1967 is a non-solution. It stands as witness to the English-speaking Malay, Chinese, and Indian leaders' need to satisfy conflicting demands of their respective ethnic groups, and to reach that resolution without allowing the Alliance itself to be dismembered.

The Dewan Ra'ayat, the lower house of the federal parliament, passed the government's bill by a vote of 95 to 11. But that lop-sided victory hides the serious divisions within the Alliance and especially within UMNO, many of whose MPs were dismayed with the compromise deal made with MCA and MIC. Nor was the Opposition united. Although the non-Malay opposition MPs criticized the government for not including specific provisions for preserving Chinese and Tamil, many were obviously pleased with the liberal provisions and the general tone of the bill. Thus among the 11 dissenting votes, 9 were from the Malay PMIP and 1 from the Indian

leader of the PPP and 1 from the Indian leader of the DAP, while other opposition MPs cast their votes with the Alliance.^{27.}

The most outspoken criticism of the bill within the Dewan Ra'ayat came from the PMIP, i.e., from those Malays not tied down by government party discipline. One PMIP member summed up the dismay of the Malay-language enthusiasts when he labeled the bill a "nonsensical instrument." The Malays had waited for this bill for ten years and they finally had received what he termed "a deformed baby." He concluded by declaring that the Malays would continue to fight to protect the National Language and to achieve full realization of the constitutional guarantee.^{28.}

The enactment of the National Language Bill of 1967, therefore, did not terminate the language debate, nor the aggravation it causes the federal policy-makers. This was acknowledged by the Alliance's immediate dispersal of its top-ranking spokesmen throughout the peninsula to explain the bill, its provisions and its intents, and to calm anger and fears on all sides.

As Americans are discovering, the promulgation of laws does not resolve inter-ethnic tensions mechanically. Instead, the passage of a law simply may alter the focus of that tension and bring new participants to the fore. In multi-ethnic politics the passage of a bill signifies recognition of

dispute or indicates some effort to alter the grounds of dispute. But seldom does it mark the resolution of dispute. This is as true in Malaysia's multi-ethnic politics as in the American civil rights controversies.

The repercussions of the National Language Bill are unfolding as this is being written. But already it is apparent that the bill's passage has brought to the surface many of the intra-party conflicts that the Alliance leadership has sought to suppress since the separation of Singapore in 1965. The surfacing of these internal differences will test the strength of the cosmopolitan leadership. It will challenge the fundamental integrative assumptions upon which the Alliance was established. And it will test the capacity of the opposition to offer meaningful integrative alternatives.

CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATION AND ETHNIC POLITICS:
POLITICAL PARTIES

Political Parties and Integrative Models

In Malaysia the governing party and the various opposition parties alike mirror the dilemmas and the alternative strategies which have determined the course of education and Language policy. Moreover, the parties are themselves in no small measure responsible for these dilemmas; to some extent the major parties now have a considerable stake in their continuing irresolution.

Even in relatively homogeneous societies, political parties may be expected to give tacit assent to the society's political norms in their own internal operations. But they usually are not compelled to serve as models for national integration. In multi-ethnic states, especially during periods of insecurity, this role does fall to the parties. And political party which claims to be a potential ruler is expected in its own organizational structure to provide an integrative blueprint which the polity as a whole can emulate.

Having to play this role requires Malaysian parties simultaneously to keep one eye on their substantive programs and the other eye on their organizational image. This two-pronged concern has inclined the parties to adopt political strategies which avoid explicit commitment to any nation-building

formula, for the sake of maintaining their program flexibility and appealing to as broad a cross-section of the populace as possible.

In the ten years since independence the political party and integrative model which has dominated Malaysian politics has been the most ambiguous: a formal tri-communal alliance. The ruling Alliance Party is a confederation of the United Malay National Organization (UMNO), the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA), and the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC). The trials and external challenges with which the Alliance has struggled over the past decade pivot upon the difficulty of maintaining this uncertain organizational formula - or of replacing it. The sort of dialogue that takes place within the Alliance and each of its partners, and within the party system as a whole is really another aspect of the broader Malaysian dialogue which engulfs such policy areas as education and language. The question central to both dialogues is how can a multiplicity of distinct cultural communities protect their respective integrities while, at the same time, insuring the stability and cooperation necessary for security and growth. The Alliance's answer has been in part its own policies of educational centralization and National Language commitment. In addition to these policy programs, the Alliance offered its own party structure as an answer. In

reply, the various opposition parties have presented as alternatives their own policy platforms and organizational formulas.

Therefore, to trace the careers of the Alliance and its challengers is to trace the course of inter-ethnic political cooperation and mobilization - its problems and its changes.

Generally, there are three alternative integrative solutions offered in the current Malayan party system, three different structural blue-prints for inter-ethnic political cooperation: ethnic separatism; an alliance of explicitly separate ethnic organizations; non-communalism. The lines between the three are not hard and fast and, in fact, the parties often move back and forth among them as political necessity demands.

Only one political party claims to be a model and advocate of ethnic separatism, the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP). It is a Malay party and makes its appeal and claim to the right to rule on the grounds of the privileged position of the indigenous community and the legitimacy of that community's religious faith as the foundation of governmental authority.

The appeals and claims of all the other political parties on the peninsula are much less clear. The non-communal integration formula is the one which is at least formally espoused by the non-Malay opposition parties. There are two

reasons for their taking this stance. First, the opposition parties, aside from the FMIP, have had a difficult time courting Malay support. Therefore, they must place any hope for eventual electoral victory in a political marriage of non-Malays. If the dissenting Chinese, Indians, Ceylonese, and Eurasians each opt for ethnic separatism, there is little chance of unseating the Alliance or of staving off Malay nationalism.

The second reason for their formally non-communal structure is that they are concerned primarily with economic issues and ideologies. These do not fit comfortably into the common ethnic categories, but are most logically articulated in terms of socio-economic class, regardless of ethnic affiliation. To present themselves as models for ethnic separatism, or even ethnic alliance, would undermine the validity of their ideological platforms and rationales.

The third model offered is a bargaining model, an alliance of three allegedly equal partners, each the agent of a specific ethnic group. This is the formula with which the Alliance Party has won every federal election on the peninsula since 1955. While the "non-communal" parties of the economic left are weakened by their lack of Malay support, the Alliance has had the integrity of its model threatened by a growing imbalance within its bargaining structure. Ideally, the MIC,

MCA, and UMNO should be conceived of as three equal partners, together hammering out compromise solutions to common problems. In practice, however, there is the constant danger that the Malay partner will dominate and that the Chinese and Indian partners will be reduced to mere tokens of genuine representation. The second threat to the Alliance formula is that, while the three partners cooperate at the top echelon, where the bargaining agents share common educational and personal experiences, at the grass-roots level the three partners speak to each other usually out of hostility and distrust.

These three alternative models and the difficulties each party faces in preserving the purity of its own grow out of the different sources of power possessed by each ethnic group in Malaya. Because the Malays, Chinese, and Indians each dominate different sectors of the economy and control numerical advantages in different regions of the federation, no party under the present constitution can hope to rule on a nation-wide scale unless it finds some way to bring together more than one ethnic group in the same party organization.

The crucial role of the Indians in the trade union movement and in the rubber industry, as well as the high proportion of professional men in the community, give the Indians as a group significant leverage in any multi-ethnic party. Indians will have special weight in matters concerning

labor, and their union organizations are potential resources which no modern party can ignore. On the other hand, the Indians' ability to influence any party is severely hampered by the dispersion of Indians in the electoral constituencies and the overall paucity of Indian voters in the Federation. In the 1959 federal elections Indians held an electoral majority in not a single parliamentary district on the peninsula, although they were strong in some estate areas in the west coast states. 1.

The Chinese can make use of their communal commercial wealth, their associational skills, and their relative urban strength to impress their interests on any multi-ethnic party. The Chinese, like the Indians, suffer from the lack of registered voters. But Chinese voters are concentrated in large enough numbers to be able to carry certain constituencies, mostly urban. The greatest concentrations of Chinese voters in 1959 were in Georgetown (Penang), Ipoh (Perak), Kuala Lumpur (Selangor), and Malacca (Malacca). Nationally, however, Chinese voting power is diluted by urbanization. In 1959, Chinese formed more than 50 per cent of the electorate in only 29 of the 104 parliamentary districts; in another 31 constituencies, however, they did make up at least one-third of the electorate. In the west coast states of Perak and Selangor the Indians and Chinese - if united,

which is rare - could out-vote the Malays. ². But the Indians and Chinese are both politically fragmented so that their electoral, associational and financial resources are seldom mobilized to shape the course of any single political party.

The strong position of the Malays in party politics derives from their numerical superiority in the electorate and the nation-wide distribution of those numbers. The same 1959 study showed that Malay voters formed over 50 per cent of the electorate in 60 out of a total 104 parliamentary districts. Moreover, in the so-called "rice-bowl" states up near the Thai border - Kedah and Perlis in the west, Kelantan and Trengganu in the east - the Malays' percentage of the total electorate frequently gets up as high as 90 per cent. In Johore and Pahang Malays also wield considerable electoral strength. ³. The electoral leverage possessed by the Malays is not just a matter of demography; it is also due to the citizenship laws which require ten years of uninterrupted residence in the federation as a condition for citizenship, a law which gives considerable advantage to the indigenous Malays. Added to the legal advantage is the reluctance of many non-Malays to take out Malaysian citizenship, thus reducing their electoral strength communally.

A second peculiarly Malaysian resource which the Malays possess is their ability to confer the legitimacy of

Indigeneity on any political party. Malays have neither organizational experience nor commercial wealth comparable to those of the Indians and Chinese, but without the sanction of indigenous support these more tangible resources are seriously limited and even suspect. In addition, the Malays are more cohesive as a community which makes it somewhat easier to rally their widespread support behind a single party, while the non-Malays divide their numbers and resources among three or four parties.

Every ethnic group in Malaya, therefore, has some political asset which makes it imperative that its interests be given at least token acknowledgement in party program and organization. But the various Malayan parties have chosen different means by which to satisfy this imperative, and no organizational or programmatic solution has been found yet which frees any party from inter-ethnic strains.

Malayan Parties and Voters - 1955-1959

Table 1.

Federation of Malaya: Division of the Population on
Various Bases Relevant to Citizenship - 1957 & 1959

	Malays		Non-Malays	
	'000	%	'000	%
Total population, 1957	3,125	50	3,153	50
Population 21 & over, 1959	1,466	49	1,509	51
Local-born population 21 and over, 1959	1,385	67	683	33
Electorate (estimated) 1959	1,299	59	869	41

Table 2. 1955 Elections: Communal Breakdown of the
Electorate

Communal Groups	Voters	Percentage of Total
Malays	1,078,000	84.2
Chinese	143,000	11.2
Indians	50,000	3.9
Others	<u>9,000</u>	<u>.7</u>
TOTAL	1,280,000	100.0

(Table 4 - continued)

<u>Parties</u>	<u>Seats</u>
People's Action Party (Singapore)	12
(Malaya - now the Democratic Action Party)	1
Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (Malaya)	9
Sarawak United People's Party (Sarawak)	3
Barisan Socialis (Singapore)	3
Socialist Front (Malaya)	2
People's Progressive Party (Malaya)	2
United Democratic Party (Malaya)	1
Independent (Sarawak)	<u>1</u>
TOTAL	159

Note: These figures take account of the 164 federal elections in Malaya. But they do not take account the Separation of Singapore, which eliminated the Barisan Socialis and PAP.

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- * This discussion will concentrate on the parties operating on the peninsula. For a discussion of the quite separate party systems of Sarawak and Sabah, see Chapter VI.

Since the first federal elections in 1955, two years prior to independence, the Alliance has had no effective opposition at the polls. Still, its electoral strength has suffered some fluctuations, and certain constituencies have changed party hands several times over that time. The Alliance made its poorest showing in 1959. This was the first post-independence election. It came toward the end of the Emergency and in the middle of a heated national dispute over education. But even then the Alliance easily secured a parliamentary majority and won control of all but two of the eleven state governments, Kelantan and Trengganu. In the 1964 federal and state elections, however, the Alliance won back some of its parliamentary seats and overcame the PMIP in Trengganu, so that currently only Kelantan is governed by an opposition party.

The notable resurgence of the Alliance in 1964 occurred under circumstances which may qualify the otherwise logical assumption that the Alliance presently is stronger and more impregnable than ever. The 1964 parliamentary and state elections on the peninsula were held during the height of "Confrontation," the Indonesian armed challenge to the newly-formed Federation of Malaysia. In a country threatened by immediate external hostility there is pressure, at least implicitly, on citizens to demonstrate their support of the

government in its contest with the foreign adversary. In Malaya this pressure may have been translated into votes for the incumbent Alliance regime, although there is no hard data to substantiate this speculation.

Moreover, Confrontation's challenge hurt especially those political parties most intimately associated with either opposition to the idea of the Malaysian merger or sympathy with Indonesia. Thus the Socialist Front, a leftist party outspokenly critical of the creation of Malaysia, dropped from 9 to 2 parliamentary seats in 1964. The PMIP, considered to be sympathetic with Sukarno and Indonesia, fell from 13 to 9 seats and lost its control of Trengganu. The Federal Internal Security Act also provided the Alliance regime with an instrument to repress criticism, and several leading opposition leaders were detained under the act during Confrontation.

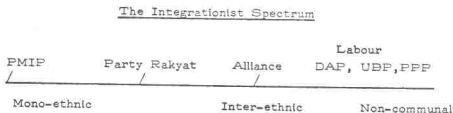
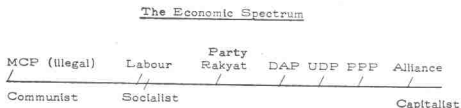
The most significant aspect of the Alliance comeback in 1964 was the apparent invigoration of the MCA, the Alliance's Chinese partner.⁴ In 1959, the MCA was torn apart by a fight within the Alliance over the allotment of candidacies on the Alliance parliamentary ticket. In the end the MCA received only 31 of the 35 seats it demanded. In the process, too, it lost several of its most influential leaders, including MCA president, Lim Chong Eu, who went on

to found the opposition United Democratic Party. Internal divisions, coupled with Chinese disaffection caused by the education dispute undermined the MCA electoral support in 1959. But five years later the MCA seemed revitalized. In 1964, it managed to secure 34 places on the Alliance parliamentary ticket and, of course, it won 27.

With the fall of Sukarno in Indonesia in 1966, Confrontation ended. The removal of this overwhelming concern with a foreign threat will be likely to redirect attention to domestic affairs. In the next federal elections, scheduled for mid-1969, the political context in which the Alliance runs will be greatly altered. With the necessity of demonstrating allegiance to the national government somewhat relaxed, future elections may reveal internal divisions and popular disaffection from the Alliance more starkly than in the past. The 1969 election also will test the ability of the opposition parties to exploit this change.

It is difficult to arrange Malayan parties along any single ideological spectrum. There are really two spectra: the first along the lines of economic ideology; the second along lines of integrationist outlooks.

Table 5. Malayan Political Parties 5.



There is no neat parallel between the economic and integrationist platforms. Currently, it is the integrationist spectrum which best explains the parties' inter-relationship and their respective successes and failures. In the future, however, parties' stands on economic issues could become the determining factor in their strengths. For instance, at present the socialist-oriented parties, such as the DAP, UDP,

and Labour Party, must weigh their economic stands in terms of their impact on communal relations, rather than in terms of their narrower economic effect or appeal. Similarly, the PMIP is best understood in relation to its position on the extreme right of the integrationist spectrum, while its economic stance is difficult to pin-point at all except with reference to its Malay communal advocacy.

The Alliance generally can be labeled conservative on economic issues and reluctantly assimilative on integrationist issues. But such categorizations need to be followed immediately with two important qualifications. The Alliance partners - MCA, MIC, and UMNO - are not uniform in their economic stances: the MIC should be labeled somewhat more to the left, the MCA to the right, and the UMNO vaguely in the center. Second, when one looks at the Alliance structure vertically, there are notable discrepancies between the integrationist outlook at the national headquarters and at the three parties' branch levels. If the latter level were taken as the point of measurement, the MCA, MIC, and UMNO might be placed separately more in the neighborhood of the PMIP.

The Alliance and the Bargaining Model of Integration

Differences within the Alliance arise from the Malay party's need to maintain the Alliance's image as a party of equal bargaining partners, the Chinese party's need to preserve its status as a genuine representative of its own community, and the Indian party's need to keep some semblance of political influence.

These diverse needs cause each of the three partners to regard the Alliance in their own terms. It also has meant that on crucial policy decisions, such as those on education and language, UMNO, MCA, and MIC each have to satisfy not only dissimilar communal demands, but also dissimilar organizational demands. As a result, the Alliance, while it has maintained unrivaled dominance over the Malayan political scene, nevertheless is fraught with internal tensions which have to be quelled if the regime's integrative formula and strategy are to remain effective.

The Alliance as such - as opposed to its individual constituent parties - exists chiefly as a non-policy making administrative office. It has a headquarters in a large office building in Kuala Lumpur owned by UMNO. It has executive officers, none of whom figure prominently in fundamental strategic decisions, a research division headed by a young

Chinese who is a member of none of the three constituent parties, and a periodic newsletter. Candidates of the MCA, MIC, and UMNO run on an "Alliance" ticket, which is put together by the top leadership of the three parties. This ticket has reflected the imbalance in the bargaining relationship within the party. In 1959, of the 104 parliamentary candidates nominated by the Alliance, 69 were UMNO, 31 were MCA, and only 4 were MIC.

Table 6. 1955 Federation of Malay Parliamentary Elections:
Candidates by Party and by Community

<u>Party</u>	<u>Malays</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indians</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>No. Seats Won</u>
Alliance	35	15	2	52	51
Party Negara	29	1	-	30	-
Pan-Malayan Islamic	11	-	-	11	1
Labour (later part Socialist Front)	-	2	2	4	-
National Assoc. of Perak	8	1	-	9	-
Perak Malay League	3	-	-	3	-
Perak Progressive Party	1	-	1	2	-
Independence	<u>16</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	103	20	6	129	52

Table 7. 1959 Federation of Malaya Parliamentary Elections:
Candidates by Party and by Community

<u>Party</u>	<u>Malays</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indians</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Won No. Seats</u>
Alliance	69	31	4	104	74
PMIP	58	-	-	58	13
Socialist Front	11	20	7	38	8
PPP	1	9	9	19	4
Party Negara	10	-	-	10	1
Malayan Party	-	1	1	2	1
Semangat Per- muda Melayu	1	-	-	1	-
Province Welles- ley Labour	-	1	-	1	-
Independents	<u>7</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	157	79	23	259	104

Source: K.J. Ratman, Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Press, 1965, pp. 191, 196, 202-203.

The Alliance is directed by the leaders of the MCA, MIC, and UMNO, most of whom are also members of the Federal Cabinet. Broad questions of policy are hammered out among the constituent party heads and only then are they made public. For example, the controversial National Language Bill of 1967 was subject to debate, compromise, and amendment in the Alliance Council prior to its presentation to the Dewan Ra'ayat. From the newspaper accounts of these council sessions, it appears that bargaining over concessions and guarantees was carried on along communal lines, with the MCA, for instance, taking responsibility for introducing amendments to protect other languages and UMNO taking the lead in insuring establishment of Malay as the official language. 6. Once passed by this joint session of MIC-MCA-UMNO leadership, the bill's passage in the federal parliament was a foregone conclusion.

Once the Alliance Council comes to a final policy decision, then it is the responsibility of each partner's leaders to win compliance from its own rank and file. This often is a more strenuous undertaking than winning formal legislative passage. The Tunku, Tun Razak, and Khir Johari, for instance, will go on tour to persuade the lower echelons of UMNO as to the wisdom of the policy, while Tan Siew Sin and Khaw Kai Boh (Minister for Local Government and

Housing) take steps to quiet any MCA grass-roots dissidence, and Sambanthan and Manikavasagam (Ministers of Posts and Telecomms and of Labour) move to win over any discontented MIC branches. Each party, therefore, not only represents its ethnic groups interests at the top level bargaining table, each also is expected to see that its own ethnic group accepts the final decisions made at that table.

Friction within and between the three partners escalated to a dangerous point in the aftermath of Singapore's separation in mid-1965. To iron out their mutual differences and, most importantly, to keep internal Alliance conflict within party bounds so as not to aid the opposition parties' efforts to open the wedge, the Alliance created a special "Alliance Action Committee."

The composition of this 21-man ad hoc committee suggests the sources of influence and dissidence within each of the Alliance's parties.

Alliance Action Committee 7.

UMNO - 8 members

Inche Khir Johari - Minister of Education and Secretary General of UMNO, Chairman of the Action Committee

Inche Senu bin Abdul Rahman - Minister of Information and Broadcasting and head of UMNO Youth

Inche Abdul Ghafar bin Baba - Malacca Chief Minister and
an UMNO Vice President

Dato Harun bin Haji Idris - Selangor Mentri Besar (Chief
Minister)

Syed Nasir bin Ismail - Director of Dewan Bahasa dan
Pustaka

Dr. Mahathir bin Mohammed - Member of Parliament

Wan Abdul Kadir bin Ismail - Member of Parliament and
UMNO Chief Publicity Officer

Inche Musa Hitam - UMNO Executive Secretary

MCA - 9 members

Dr. Lim Swee Aun - Minister of Commerce and Industry
and Deputy President of MCA

Mr. Khaw Kai Boh - Minister of Local Government and
Housing and a Vice President of MCA

Dato Liew Whye Hone - Perak MCA chairman

Mr. Lee Siok Yew - Assistant Minister of Education and
an MCA executive officer

Dato Foo See Moi - Kelantan MCA chairman

Mr. Quek Dong - Member of Parliament

Mr. Joseph Siew - Member of Parliament

Mr. Robert Goh - Executive Secretary of the Alliance
Headquarters

Mr. Lee San Choon - MCA National Youth chairman

MIC - 4 members

Mr. V. Manickavasagam - Minister of Labour and MIC
Vice President

Senator Athi Nahappan

Mr. S. Murugesu - MIC Secretary General

Mr. Ponnusamy Pillai - Perak State Assemblyman

Each delegation excluded the very top leaders - Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Razak of UMNO, Tan Siew Sin of MCA, and Sambanthan of MIC. But each carefully included the second-in-command, as well as some of the most prominent internal critics of the leadership. MCA and UMNO Youth also included their Youth chairmen, since these sections have been the source of some of the most virulent internal criticism, although the Youth leaders themselves are more representative of the national parties' outlook.

The agenda for the Action Committee touched on those issues over which there has been the greatest intra-Alliance friction: 1) education and the role of the Chinese language; 2) the "Malaysian Malaysia" concept, which includes the issues of second-class citizenship and Malay privileges; 3) the relationship of the three constituent parties within the Alliance structure. ⁸.

But beyond these concrete questions of policy the purpose of the Action Committee was to reaffirm the Alliance's commitment to an inter-communal bargaining relationship. The MCA was anxious to blunt the challenge from the left-wing non-Malay parties, which were then making tentative moves toward more cooperation through the recently-formed Malaysian Solidarity Conference. This threat appeared to be an imminent one in the wake of the ouster of the Chinese state of Singapore and its popular Chinese Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew. The creation of a committee for the express purpose of allowing the MCA to articulate Chinese complaints with Malay-oriented policies, it was hoped, would take some of the sting out of the opposition's accusations that the MCA was ineffectual in pressing for Chinese interests in the government. 9.

The UMNO leadership also had an objective beyond the resolution of the agenda's items. It hoped to squelch the prevalent charge that the Alliance and the federal regime were Malay-dominated. 10. This objective may account for granting the MCA nine members on the committee, while UMNO received only eight places. In addition, there may have been the hope that by allowing some of the more prominent advocates of more Malay orientation in the federal government to have seats at a national bargaining session this would alleviate

the frustrations and hostilities so evident among the so-called Malay "extremists" during the crisis over Singapore.

In the permanent decision-making bodies of the Alliance - the Executive Council and the larger National Council - the representational distribution is approximately the same as in the Action Committee, although UMNO and MCA here have equal representation. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged by Alliance officials that UMNO is the party which usually takes the initiative on most issues. The MCA and MIC can exert influence over the final decision, but they do so by pressuring UMNO. This sort of process is indeed bargaining; but it is not a bargaining among ethnically-separate equals. Rather, it is bargaining between the most homogeneous - i.e., English-educated, cosmopolitan - sectors of all three partners (for instance, discussion most probably is carried on in English) and it is bargaining with unwritten ground rules which make one of the three partners the "most equal."

UMNO - The First Among Equals

Since the beginning of the movement toward independence there has been little doubt that the Malay community would possess the strongest political position in the new country. The citizenship requirements, and thus voting strength, together

with the sheer numerical superiority of the Malays made its political role decisive. Added to these advantages was the theory that the indigenous community had a special part to play in determining the course of the new state.

The widely accepted fact of Malay political dominance has its practical reality in the superior organization power of UMNO in the Alliance and in the party system as a whole. UMNO was the first of the three Alliance parties to be formed and it was UMNO which took the initiative in bringing together the MCA, and later the MIC into an electoral alliance.¹² UMNO leaders hold the most important Cabinet posts - Prime Minister, Foreign Minister (both portfolios are held by Tunku Abdul Rahman), and the Ministries of Education, Interior, and Rural and Economic Development. Furthermore, the Tunku's heir apparent is already designated, another Malay, Tun Razak, now Deputy Prime Minister. Among the top Cabinet posts, only the Minister of Finance, held by MCA chief Tan Siew Sin, is held by a non-UMNO man, although MIC and MCA leaders do hold some of the lesser portfolios.

In a society of a different ethnic character this Malay-UMNO predominance in politics would be a positive force for integration - i.e., the numerically superior and indigenous ethnic group should be politically dominant if the political system is to reflect accurately the social base. However,

Malaysian ethnic pluralism is not such that one ethnic group stands out clearly above several obviously minor ethnic groups, and thus the Malay political superiority is constantly in danger of losing touch with social reality- especially as that reality changes so that the other ethnic groups are more settled and more qualified for citizenship and the vote. Only if the Malays had no close numerical competitor, such as the Chinese, and if they had economic power equivalent to political power could UMNO's predominance in the Alliance government not be worrisome for the Alliance leadership.

But given the social and economic context, for the sake of stability and organizational effectiveness, UMNO has had to be scrupulous in its dealings with its Chinese and Indian colleagues to insure that the public image of the Alliance fits the public conception of the Malayan society: a delicate balance between three ethnic groups, none of which can be alighted or alienated.

The threats to this desired image of the Alliance come from two current trends: the increasing pressures from UMNO's own communal constituents for more Malay aggressiveness, and the growing indication that its non-Malay partners are losing their bases of political support. The outcome of these two trends is the picture of UMNO more and more controlling party in the Alliance and the Alliance, therefore, less and less a valid model for an integrated Malaysia.

Pressures on the top echelon of UMNO have emanated from both outside the party and within its own rank and file. It is especially vulnerable to intra-party criticism because UMNO depends so heavily on its role as a genuine representative of the entire Malay community. In a society in which politics revolve around ethnic organizations and desires, it is awkward, if not impossible, to be effective as a communal party if the party speaks for only a part of an ethnic group. Thus for the UMNO organization to live up to its claim to be the Malay agent in the federal government, it must be able to satisfy and hold on to the support of all sectors of the Malay community, regardless of their indiscretions, their short-sightedness, or their parochialism.

Since its establishment in 1946, UMNO could make this claim, with only slight exaggeration. There have been alternative parties seeking to represent specifically Malay interests, but only the PMIP has made any noticeable dent on UMNO's claim. One of UMNO's national vice presidents, the Menteri Besar of Malacca, told an audience of party rank and file, "If and when UMNO falls, the Malays will fall with it because UMNO has been the bulwark of the Malays in this country for more than twenty years." Suggesting the uncertainty of the future, he ended by warning, "It will continue to play its part to safeguard the Malays and uphold their rights

if the masses continue to have faith in it and support it wholeheartedly. 13. A spokesman for the small Malay Leftist Party Rakyat immediately retorted that the Mentri Besar's speech was simply evidence that the Malay masses were in fact losing faith in UMNO. 14.

UMNO rests its claim to represent the entire Malay community on several facts. It has won the majority of Malay votes in all federal elections since 1955. Moreover, it is the only Malay party that has presented a slate of candidates on a nation-wide scale. An electoral process and regular national elections is a boon to any organization asserting communal representation, since it can demonstrate concretely the extent of its support. An interest group making such a claim is on far shakier ground, but then, it does not open itself to the risk of electoral refutation either. The second basis for UMNO's claim is its support of the Malay traditional rulers. From its birth, UMNO has courted the backing of the Malay sultans, thus wedding electoral authority with traditional authority. UMNO, in fact, took up as its first cause the resistance to the British plan to greatly reduce the role of the sultans. It forced the British to retreat on this point. Finally, UMNO points to its close association with many non-Malay groups in the Malay community, such as the Malay school teachers associations and Malay business groups and the leading Malay-language paper, Utusan Melayu.

Critics within and outside UMNO among the Malays generally are persons who wish that Malaysian national identity were being shaped more along Malay cultural lines and who are pressing for Malays to be given top priority in programs of economic and social development out of deference to their indigeniety.

UMNO's national leadership has branded these Malay spokesmen as "ultras" or "extremists" and has warned them that their demands threaten to wreck the delicate structure on the political system. Within their own party it has taken numerous steps to reduce the embarrassment and pressure coming from these Malay advocates. They have tried to tighten central control of the party headquarters over the frequently indiscreet local branches and UMNO Youth. 15.

On numerous occasions the Tunku or Tun Razak has been compelled publically to rap the knuckles of some state branch which has passed a resolution calling for a broader interpretation of the National Language provision or some other sensitive issue. In addition, one of the not-so-young federal ministers, Senu of the Ministry of Information, was made head of UMNO Youth in hopes that middle-aged leadership would exert a moderating influence on the younger rank and file.

Toward the same end, the UMNO leaders in Kuala Lumpur have disciplined several of the most prominent national party officials when they have begun to air their dissatisfaction with the bargaining, compromise style of Alliance decision-making. In the midst of the debate over the National Language Bill the Director of the Dewan Bahasa, Syed Nasir, was deprived of his seat on the party Executive Council as punishment for his public support of the bill's Malay opponents such as the National Language Action Front.¹⁶ The departure of the party Secretary General, Ja'afar Albar, is not so clear a case of discipline, but his resignation following the ouster of Singapore was greeted with more relief than protest from men such as the Tunku, Tun Razak, and Khir Johari. Singapore's departure from Malaysia in August, 1965, was judged by many to be caused in part by the fear of Alliance leaders that Singapore's continued presence in the federation would arouse such aggravation within the Malay rank and file that the UMNO moderates might lose control or would be forced to take drastic action that could only seriously antagonize the non-Malays.

Ja'afar Albar was one of those who in the spring and summer of 1965 was particularly strident in his denunciations of Singapore and Lee Kuan Yew. The motivations and decisions surrounding the separation are still open to

speculation. Nevertheless, it is highly probable that the Tunku and his closest advisors concluded that the only way to relieve intra-party tensions threatening to tear UMNO apart was to eliminate the cause of those tensions, Singapore, since it was impossible to eliminate their own Malay followers. At the same time as they got rid of Singapore, however, they could serve warning to their own Malay "extremists" and the ready acceptance of the resignation of Ja'afar Albar served this purpose. Ja'afar Albar held a press conference on August 11th to announce his resignation. He began by saying, "Gentlemen, I have good news for you. The Ultras are going out." 17. Albar's replacement was intended to reinforce UMNO's stand for moderation. Khir Johari, Minister of Education, was made Secretary General. Musa Hitam, chosen in part for his youth, was appointed Executive Secretary to look after the day-to-day affairs of the party and to symbolize the capacity of UMNO to absorb the younger generations of Malays.

It has been more difficult to reduce the external pressures on UMNO, most of which is channelled through the Malay conservative FMIP. The FMIP has been looked to with sympathy by some of UMNO's own dissidents as well. The FMIP by itself does not represent a potent threat to UMNO's national dominance; presently it controls only one state government

and holds only nine parliamentary seats. But the PMIP, weak though it is, is the one genuine alternative for those Malays seeking a communal representative but dissatisfied with UMNO's brand of gradualism and inter-ethnic accommodation. Just the existence of a party which campaigns for greater Malay privileges, fuller implementation of National Language, and stricter adherence to Islam in state affairs is troublesome to UMNO because it can do little to meet this sort of challenge without jeopardizing its ties with the MIC and MCA.

To preserve the effectiveness of its organizational and integrative strategies UMNO somehow must persuade the Malays that in the long run their own communal self-interest will be served by cooperation with the other ethnic groups, and that such cooperation does not rule out steady investment in the Malays' own social and economic progress. Furthermore, it must convince its largely kampong-dwelling constituents that, although its national platform is authored by an English-speaking, urbanized, secularized leadership, the party itself is not divorced from or about to betray the values of Malay culture and tradition. This second argument might be the most difficult because the visible contrast between the styles of life of the UMNO ministers in Kuala Lumpur and the rural villages are so striking. Furthermore, the more conservative PMIP has been quick to point out this stylistic

gap and to imply that style represents not only tastes but values. Thus, in a recent by-election in a heavily Malay district the PMIP put up posters showing Tun Razak sitting at a lavish meal with Chinese, the clear implication being that this future Prime Minister was dining on pork, a mainstay of the Chinese diet and an abhorrence to the Muslim Malays.

MCA and MIC - Bargaining Agents or Tokenisms?

The second threat to the Alliance bargaining integrationist model is the weakness of its non-Malay partners. The precariousness of the MCA and MIC is due largely to the features of the ethnic groups they purport to represent. Both parties represent "alien" communities. Suspicions of disloyalty, or at least noncommitment to their country of residence compel the parties representing their interests to bend over backward to reassure the indigenous group of the immigrants' good will and moderation. The rebellion fomented by the Chinese-led Communist Party did little to assuage the Malays' fears; that experience made discretion and caution all the more imperative for any non-Malay parties seeking national acceptance.

In addition, the MCA and MIC have a relatively small number of potential voters to draw upon, even were

they able to win all the votes in their respective ethnic groups. Citizenship limitations and communal disinterest make it impossible for either non-Malay partner to call the Alliance's electoral tune. This explains the minority of places these two partners receive on the all-Alliance parliamentary ticket.

The plethora of communally-based associations in the Indian and Chinese communities is a third factor which inhibits the MIC and MCA. Both must compete for ethnic group members' time, money, and loyalty against a vast range of associations, most of which are only indirectly affiliated with either Alliance party, if they take part in Malaysian political life at all.

Then too, the non-Malay Alliance parties are frustrated in any attempts to mobilize and unite their ethnic communities by the social and cultural diversity of each. Divisions of language, religion, caste, regional origins all provide sub-communal loyalties which frequently obscure the larger ethnic group interests. Many of these, of course, serve as bases for the non-party associations with which the MCA and MIC must compete.

Lastly, these two parties face not only communal associational rivalries, but allegedly non-communal opposition in the form of economically oriented opposition parties. These opposition parties all draw on chiefly non-Malays for support

and direction. Their platforms generally focus on social and economic issues, rather than explicitly communal issues, though the implications are communal in most cases. Their activities present an alternative to communal organization in federal politics and thus once again undercut the political cohesiveness on the Indians and Chinese.

None of these five conditions have as frustrating an impact on the Alliance's Malay party. UMNO seeks support from a more homogeneous community, united by religion and language. Although there are immigrants within the Malay community, mainly from Indonesia, they have been more easily assimilated and have not seriously qualified the political security and aggressiveness that has accompanied the status of indigeneity. Furthermore, even allowing for less than absolute homogeneity among the Malays, their community has been less prolific in secondary associations and thus its major political party has less competition than do MIC or MCA. No political parties to date have been able to win much support on a non-communal platform and so undercutting Malay political cohesiveness.

The Weakest Reed: The MIC

The Malayan Indian Congress - its name deliberately reminiscent of the major part in the Indian homeland - is

even more debilitated by these several factors than is the MCA. 18. Several years ago one Indian observer characterized the MIC as a "dilapidated house divided against itself." She went on to say that despite the party's role in the federal government the "(Indian) masses are generally apathetic to the MIC." 19.

There are important economic divisions within both the Chinese and Indians in Malaysia, but the Indians have crystallized those divisions by their notable involvement in trade unionism. The Indian community contains business groups and largely Indian-led and Indian-supported labor unions. Any political party which purports to represent the national interests of the entire Indian community somehow must embrace both business and organized labor. The MIC has been less than successful in doing this. It is probably the most liberal economically of the three Alliance parties, but it must compete for Indian labor's support with opposition parties that are not partners in a relatively conservative alliance and which can therefore be outspokenly socialistic. In other countries parties which represent an ethnic group totalling only ten per cent of the population have been able to wield considerable influence in governing coalitions. Therefore, it is conditions such as this economic split, rather than just lack of numbers, which explain the MIC's comparative ineffectiveness as a potent bargaining agent in the Malayan Alliance.

The MIC was born out of a conference of Indian association delegates in 1946. It was patterned after the Indian Congress and was opened to any Indian - citizen or non-citizen - domiciled in Malaya and of at least 18 years of age. A major argument at that time was over the criterion of Malayan citizenship for MIC membership. The decision for wider membership rested on a recognition that a Chinese or Indian party in Malaya which defined its ethnic representational role strictly in terms of Malayan citizenship would effectively exclude a significant portion of those persons on whose behalf they allegedly spoke. Citizenship and residence are not synonymous in many multi-ethnic nations; it is the residents who must be represented if the central government's policies are to be implemented with their desired integrative effect. At the same time, however, these parties speaking for many non-citizen residents are handicapped. For while their ethnic integrity and effectiveness depend on their encompassing as large a segment of their communities as possible, their national political legitimacy depends on their demonstrated commitment and allegiance to the state, as symbolized by the adoption of national citizenship.

Joining the Alliance was one way in which the MIC could reconcile these needs. The party could represent the whole of the Malayan Indian community and yet show its

earnest dedication to the new nation by cooperating with other ethnic parties and taking on the responsibilities for government. But the MIC did not join the Alliance at its inception; it was the last of the three partners to join. This tardiness was due to the splits within the Indian community.

UMNO and MCA first cooperated in the Kuala Lumpur municipal election of 1951 and consolidated their alliance after their electoral victories of 1952. But not until 1954 did the MIC make up its mind that its best course lay in Alliance membership. Between 1952 and 1954 the MIC wavered between two rival coalitions. The MCA-UMNO alliance's opposition in these early years was led by the now-defunct Independent Malaya Party (IMP). At that time the IMP and MIC both stood out against communally-defined politics. The MIC ran candidates in the 1952 Kuala Lumpur elections on the IMP ticket, but two of its three candidates defeated their Alliance opponents. But after the MCA moved over to UMNO, the IMP was left with a heavy Malay and Indian majority, tarnishing the party's non-communal image. With the first federal elections coming up, the IMP moved to reorganize and the MIC was forced to choose between the two coalitions. The reorganized IMP became the Party Negara, headed by the former UMNO leader, Dato Onn bin Ja'afar. After being unable to arrive at a satisfactory agreement with

Party Negara, which was becoming increasingly Malay-oriented, the MIC finally cast its lot with the MCA and UMNO. In so doing, it gave up its earlier stand against communal politics and opted for a politics of inter-communal cooperation.

Since 1955 the MIC has run its candidates on the Alliance ticket and has received Cabinet portfolios in the federal government, its party leaders now heading the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. To this extent the MIC has secured access and influence in the top levels of Malaysian government, despite its constituency's numerical inferiority. Nevertheless, it clearly is the lowest-ranking member of the Alliance. If the MCA and UMNO leaders can reach agreement on a policy it seems that the MIC can do little to prevent the government's adoption of that policy.

One would expect the Indian partner in the Alliance to have greater influence because of the Indian community's dominant role in two important sectors of the Malayan society - rubber industry and trade unionism. Were the Indian community more fully mobilized these communal attributes might be more effective bargaining instruments within the Alliance than in fact they are. But the rubber tappers are physically cut off from the rest of the Indian community on the estates where they work, live, and go to school. The large and powerful

National Union of Plantation Workers is Indian-led, but it has preferred to eschew direct political involvement and in politics inclines to be more sympathetic to the opposition parties on the left. Furthermore, the Indian Chamber of Commerce and the Indian-led unions, such as the NUPW, frequently have eyed each other with indifference and even hostility. Also, a large sector of the Indian community, the Ceylonese Indians - who often do not see themselves as "Indians," though they are Hindus and speak Tamil - are not eligible for MIC membership.

The resolutions passed by the 1965 national conference of the MIC were concerned chiefly with just one sector of the Malayan Indian community - the Indian Tamils, and in particular, the Tamil estate workers. The resolutions receiving the most publicity included a call for more federal aid for Indian schools and legislation for the compulsory teaching of vernacular languages (i.e., Tamil) in assisted schools. The MIC delegates also called on the government to grant assistance for laborers affected by the fragmentation of estates, as well as for the creation of mobile health dispensaries for estate hospitals. Finally, the conference suggested that the Tamil New Year be declared a public holiday.²⁰ The narrow scope of these national party resolutions suggests that the MIC has decided in the face of an immensely diversified

community to concentrate on representing, and thus appealing for support from its largest sub-group, rather than the community as a whole.

Two incidents illustrate the MIC's relative impotence. The first occurred during the 1951-1952 education debates, before the Alliance had been formed. In 1950 the British colonial administration created the Barnes and Fenn-Wu committees to recommend the steps for development in Malay and Chinese education. No committee was established to look into Indian education in Malaya. The MIC indignantly set up its own committee and submitted its report as the Memorandum on Indian Education in the Federation of Malaya. In it the MIC committee accepted Malay as the national language and reiterated "its desire and willingness, nay, its eagerness to cooperate with the authorities and all races in the Federation to produce citizens with a Malayan background and Malayan loyalty..."²¹. But the MIC committee objected to the Barnes Report's recommendation against the continuation of vernacular language education in languages other than Malay and English at the primary level. It accused the Barnes committee of putting political considerations - i.e., satisfaction of Malay demands - before "sound educational principle."²². On this point the MIC was in accord with the Chinese investigatory committee.

The Barnes Report's proposal for the elimination of Chinese and Tamil vernacular education in the new school system ultimately was rejected; but was due more to the objections of the Chinese than to those of the MIC, since, after all, the Chinese opposition was in the form of a conclusion of a government-sponsored committee. Despite MIC's urging, the government declined to appoint an official committee to study Indian education, thus denying the Indian community equal status in the national debate over education policy with the Chinese and Malay communities. The MIC was able to accomplish its own ends only when those ends corresponded with the interests of one of the other ethnic groups.

The second example of MIC weakness and reliance on support of another ethnic group is one of the intra-party decision-making, rather than national policy-making. The Alliance puts up a single ticket in the federal parliamentary elections, and the distribution of candidates among its three parties becomes a test of the relative strength of each within the Alliance. The normal nomination pattern has been for the Alliance leadership to allot the greatest number of candidates to UMNO, the second largest number to MCA, and the fewest to MIC. Still, there is room left to bargain at each election. In 1959 the MCA made a bid for more candidates. Lim Chong Eu failed to get what he demanded for MCA, but

he did succeed in stirring up an internal dispute which brought into doubt the very viability of the Alliance and the wisdom of the Alliance formula for political union. The MIC Central Working Committee overrode MIC President Sambanthan and decided to follow MCA's lead in demanding more slots on the ticket. The MIC also failed. But what is telling about the MIC's status and bargaining potential is that not only did it fail to get its way, it also failed to make its demand a national issue. MIC frustration and disaffection within the governing party did not so readily escalate into a controversy over whether the Alliance pattern was valid and viable.

Nevertheless, the MIC does have seats in Cabinet; it does give councils; it does symbolize the Indian's commitment to their country of adoption. All of these things are as important to UMNO as they are to the MIC itself. If the ruling party is to formulate policy relevant to the public in all its diversity, if it is to symbolize the promise and practicability of inter-ethnic cooperation and common commitment, the Alliance and its UMNO leaders cannot afford to have the non-Malay partners' participatory roles decline to the point of meaninglessness and mere tokenism. The apathy with which the MIC is treated by the Indian community is a cause for consternation, therefore, not only to MIC but to UMNO. It suggests that the Alliance no longer is viewed as

an inter-communal party of mutually influential agents. More immediately, disaffection from the MIC implies a movement of Indians to rival parties, most of which do include prominent Indians among their leaders.

If this worry is serious in the case of the MIC, it is acute regarding the MCA. The Indians are only 10 per cent of the Malayan population and many are not eligible to vote. But the Chinese represent 35 per cent of the population and have a much larger proportion of voters. To lose the support of the Indians through the demise of the MIC would endanger the integrative image of the Alliance; but to allow the MCA to become an empty shell would risk not only image but national power.

MCA: Opposition or Access?

The MCA is burdened with some of the same general problems as the MIC in mobilizing the ethnic group it supposedly represents in the Alliance. But although the Malayan Chinese are heterogeneous, their linguistic, religious, and regional divisions are not as sharp and as frustrating to political mobilization as those among the Malayan Indians. Furthermore, while Malayan Chinese may still take pride in the accomplishments of their mother country, they are more effectively cut off from it than are the Malayan Indians from

India, and therefore, the MCA is not as obliged to respond to domestic conditions in the home country; nor is it compelled to spend so much energy in persuading its Malayan ethnic constituents of the necessity to give primary attention to Malayan politics rather than homeland politics. In at least these respects the MCA's task of representing a formerly immigrant ethnic group is less difficult than that of the MIC. The principal burden, however, which the MCA carries and the MIC does not is the memory of the Emergency and the link it has forged in many minds between the rebels and the Chinese community. If the MIC is hampered by communal divisiveness, the MCA is hampered by the necessity to over-compensate for past disloyalties.

The Malayan Chinese Association, in fact, arose in 1949 out of the tensions generated by the Emergency.²³ It was not launched as a political party, but as an association to symbolize the allegiance of the non-rebel Chinese to the nation and the new government. The MCA began, as have so many Chinese organizations, in order to perform social services for its own ethnic group. The difference was, though, that the MCA's function was toward the Chinese community so as to prove a point to the non-Chinese population. In this sense, the MCA was an important departure from earlier community-oriented Chinese associations which

acted to reaffirm Chinese self-sufficiency. The MCA's creation ended this era of communal detachment and political isolation, but only with the impetus supplied by the Communist rebels. But termination of communal self-sufficiency is not synonymous with full integration. The MCA still was an openly communal organization, intended to serve the interests of one community, but now this has to be done through co-operation with other ethnic groups, not alone.

The MCA did side with the non-communal IMP in its first years, but joined with UMNO in an electoral alliance three years after its founding. It may have been coincidental, but these first elections, the Kuala Lumpur municipal elections, came at the same time as the first education debates, a policy controversy which brought all communal groups into the same public arena at the moment when the first steps were being taken to prepare for eventual independence and national consolidation. Within the crucial years of 1951-1952 constitutional issues were being hammered out, educational development given its direction, subversion fought, and power distributed. The convergence of these decisions perhaps hastened communal organizations such as the MCA toward direct involvement in national politics. Groups which formed to represent ethnic interests were mobilized and thrust into politics in Malaya more by these debates over the future of

the society than by the electoral contests, as has been the case in some other multi-ethnic nations. But once the electoral process is imposed upon the policy debates, then any organization wishing to have a direct impact on policy is pushed toward political party, rather than just ethnic interest group activities. This is what happened to the MCA as it changed from a communal association to a communal political party.

The MCA has garnered important benefits from its membership in the Alliance government, especially top Cabinet posts, a voice in fundamental policy decisions, visibility as a major party, and support of those Chinese associations seeking governmental favor. What these assets add up to essentially is access: the capacity to communicate Chinese sentiments and interests to the highest policy-making levels of government.

But membership in the Alliance government has had its drawbacks for the MCA. The MCA risks "uncle tomism." In exchange for access, the MCA has to compromise, make concessions that sacrifice the interests of its own ethnic group. It must support federal policies which aim at promoting the Malay community. In making these concessions, the MCA argues that the Chinese, as immigrants and as a minority, have to be accommodating and patient in the face of the desire for advancement among the indigenous population. This

is the price of peace, which is good for business, and legitimacy, which is the criterion for effective political influence.

To some extent, oddly enough, the MCA's position is more awkward and precarious than that of the MIC because of its acknowledged political weight. The MIC has to be resigned to accommodation because the Indian community is so small; its expectations are lower and thus its frustrations in influencing Alliance policy is reduced. By contrast, the Chinese carry a significant proportion of the electoral vote and exercise enormous influence over the direction of the national economy. Together these are formidable resources with which to press Chinese communal demands. Nevertheless, the persistence of special Malay privileges, the effective reduction of Chinese-medium education, the alleged preference given Malays in school promotions, the energetic pursuit of the National Language program, the supposed mistreatment of Singapore, the refusal to augment MCA places on the Alliance ticket - all of these things, as perceived by the Malayan Chinese, make it seem that the MCA is not exploiting its potential resources to the maximum in the name of Chinese interests, but is sacrificing them needlessly on the altar of peace and harmony.

However, political resources can be used effectively only if their utilization is deemed legitimate by the other

parties at the bargaining table. Because their loyalty and national commitment still is doubted in a significant sector of the indigenous community, the Malayan Chinese cannot exercise what political weapons they possess so fully that it will cause that doubt to blossom into suspicion and perhaps even to ostracism.

This sort of argument leads to another. MCA spokesmen contend that the current UMNO leadership is about as good - tolerant, worldly - as the Chinese can hope for. If the Chinese, by rash exploitation of their potential power, stir up fears in the Malay community that UMNO leadership is going to be subject to severe pressures. The result will be either to push the present UMNO leaders toward more Malay-oriented policies, or, worse, to bring about their downfall and the installation of more chauvinistic Malay spokesmen with which the MCA and the Chinese would find it very troublesome to deal. It was this line of thought that made the MCA so wary of Singapore's and Lee Kuan Yew's aggressive espousal of the non-Malay cause; it appeared to be jeopardizing the leadership of the UMNO moderates.

The hardest sort of accomplishment to rest one's case upon in politics is what has not happened. But the MCA's case for Chinese backing and confidence is just that - it is due to MCA's presence in Cabinet and to its strategy

of restraint that the federation is not more narrow in its concept of integration, that the Chinese are not at a greater disadvantage, that Malay chauvinism is not more rampant.

The disaffection threatening the MCA grows out of a Chinese frustration with appeasement. All three parties in the Alliance are led by men somewhat detached from their community's cultural milieu. But the gap between the leadership and the rank and file is distinct in each party. The UMNO leaders are English-educated, but several of them also are of traditional noble birth and carry such traditional Malay titles as Tun and Tunku; all of them can speak Malay, and they frequently appear at formal ceremonies in Malay customary attire. The MIC leaders are English-educated, often in a profession, but they are further cut off by linguistic and regional characteristics: Devaser was a northern Indian, Sambanthan is a southern Tamil Indian; neither could identify with his entire ethnic community. The current MCA leadership is English-educated, business-oriented; its President, Tan Siew Sin reputedly cannot speak Chinese at all. Rank and file Chinese are heard to remark that the MCA leaders are so anxious for harmony because of its primary concern with the stability needed for business prosperity.

The most vocal criticism of the MCA has come from within the party in its lower organizational levels. The

national leadership has taken steps like those employed by UMNO to dampen this disruptive dissent. The case of MCA Youth leader Sim Mow Yu and his dismissal from the party highlights the sorts of quandries which now permeate the whole MCA organization.

In brief, Sim Mow Yu publicized the discontent over the MCA's accommodation on both education and language policies among the party's lower echelons and among Chinese associations loosely affiliated with the MCA. As the embarrassment became more disturbing and the National Language deadline grew closer, the MCA national leadership concluded that it no longer could tolerate internal dissent on such a touchy inter-ethnic issue. Finally, in October, 1966, it took the dramatic step of expelling Sim Mow Yu from the MCA. This was more drastic than either UMNO's demotion of Syed Nasir or its acceptance of Ja'afar Albar's resignation. The MCA accompanied Sim Mow Yu's expulsion with a warning to other members to follow the national leadership issues so crucial to the government and the Alliance as language. Tan Siew Sin put it this way to the press:

"We in the MCA do not tell our members not to disagree with us or discuss controversial issues. But where the language is concerned, the less we discuss the matter in public the easier it is for the central leadership to reach a solution.

I hope that as a result of these two

resolutions (i.e., expulsion of Sim Mow Yu and support of the National Language), everyone will leave this matter to be settled by the Alliance leaders." 24.

Each of the Alliance parties exercises firm central discipline over its nation-wide organization; but it is not absolute. It is challenged by independently-minded branches and youth sections, and by those extra-party associations with memberships overlapping with that of the party. More than either the MIC or UMNO, MCA suffers from this type of challenge, because of the numerous associations for which most overseas Chinese communities are noted. Sim Mow Yu was the focus for the intra-communal contest over language largely because he stood at the point where so many of these associations converged.

Sim Mow Yu's most important positions were head of the active and vocal Chinese School Teachers Association (Chinese teachers in Chinese-medium schools) and a state (Malacca) leader of the increasingly obstreperous MCA Youth. Thus he represented an independent association which naturally would be intimately concerned with language and education policies, while also representing the younger - though Sim himself is middle-aged - restless party rank and file, many of whom feel their career opportunities being stifled by national policies favoring Malays. Both groups in recent years

have voiced dissatisfaction with the acquiescence of the English-educated Chinese leadership to UMNO plans for an integrative formula which seemed to them weighted heavily against the vernacular-speaking Chinese.

In 1965 Sim tried to exert pressure on the government - more specifically, on the MCA leadership and on the Tunku - by mobilizing the various non-party communal associations behind a formal petition demanding a more prominent status for the Chinese language and Chinese education. The Malayan Chinese Guilds and Associations' memorandum was submitted directly to the Prime Minister. It charged that the 1952 Education Ordinance was "introduced with intent to destroy the Chinese language" and that the more recent 1960 Education Review Report had treated Chinese discriminatorily. Nevertheless, the memorandum stated the guilds' and associations' support of the National language "unreservedly" and acknowledged the language issue to be a "sensitive problem." In other words, these Chinese petitioners stayed within the bounds of legitimate debate, as defined by the inter-communal political mores in Malaysia. But they demanded additional insurance from the government - in the form of constitutional amendment and revision of the 1960 Talib Report - that would not only preserve the Chinese language and education, but would encourage Chinese in the school curriculum, in parliament,

in government notices, in transport, and in the mass media.²⁵

The efforts of Sim Mow Yu and the Chinese association ultimately came to little. Their proposed rally in the capital was squelched by stern warnings against fomenting "racial violence" from both the Deputy Prime Minister Tun Razak and the Minister of Interior Dato (Dr.) Ismail. The petition submitted to the Tunku received no satisfactory response. The Chinese language activists, both within and outside MCA, were left frustrated. They faced a seemingly irreversible policy trend which they believed threatened them communally and professionally. At the same time, they were strictly limited in the reactions they could make because of the ground rules of inter-ethnic politics which required public support of National Language and renunciation of any tactics likely to upset inter-ethnic harmony.²⁶

The extraordinary expulsion of a ranking party leader was not just to silence one critic within the MCA. It was more generally a disciplinary action and a "word to the wise" to the guilds and associations, who look to the MCA for access and representation in Kuala Lumpur and to the youth sections of the party. At the time that Sim Mow Yu was ousted, MCA leaders met with sixty representatives of the Chinese guilds and associations to discuss the language issue. And within a month after the expulsion the leadership had firmly

requested and received the public backing of MCA branches throughout the peninsula, though not from all of them. 27.

Several months later the MCA made major amendments in the party constitution aimed at "encouraging party cohesion." Amendments included the creation of disciplinary committees in each state. 28.

The role of non-party associations is discussed at greater length in the following chapter, but here it is worthwhile stressing two basic facts of Chinese political life in Malaysia. First, any political party, whether in government or in opposition, must cultivate support from a wide range of Chinese groups, most of which existed prior to the parties and are autonomous from the parties. These groups are likely to be less prone to adopt or accept the style and strategy of inter-communal cooperation, compromise, and toleration of Malay demands and aspirations than are the parties, which have to reach decisions in an ethnically pluralistic political arena. Second, however, most of these Chinese associations have no channel to government decision-makers except through the Chinese partner in the Alliance. And as the federal government gets involved in more and more sectors of economic and social life, these associations have a growing need to have this sort of governmental access, and, therefore, despite their disagreements with MCA, they become increasingly dependent on the MCA to provide that access.

In summary, what the case of Sim Mow Yu illustrates is how vulnerable the MCA is to embarrassment from within its own ethnic constituency. The embarrassment jeopardizes its good standing within the Alliance, since UMNO bases its respect for MCA largely on MCA's ability to win support for federal policy among the Malayan Chinese. The case also demonstrates the dilemma of the Malayan Chinese: whether to surrender communal interests and perhaps even communal distinctiveness and identity for the sake of accessibility to policy-makers, or to risk losing this useful channel so as to more fully exploit the community's potential political resources. The MCA's quandary is analagous to that of a large but immigrant ethnic group in many multi-ethnic states - how to achieve acceptance and confidence and yet safeguard communal integrity; how to pursue distinctive communal interests in politics and yet not isolate the community from top government circles.

To vindicate its formula for multi-ethnic political reconciliation the Alliance has to find a way to hold together the disparate members of its constituent parties, curtailing divisive internal quarrels and maintaining confidence in the moderate leadership. At the same time, the success of the Alliance also depends on the continued weakness of the opposition parties.

Non-Communal Alternatives to the Alliance

Like the Alliance, each of the opposition parties, despite their dissimilarities, present themselves as program advocates and as models for national integration. Aside from the unabashedly communal PMIP, all of the Alliance challengers are allegedly non-communal. That is, they accept members regardless of ethnic identification and they build their platforms on the concept of government responsibilities defined in non-ethnic terms. The frustrations which these parties have encountered in trying to make this model practicable is at the root of their limited success in rivalling the Alliance.

On the peninsula there are four parties which charge that the Alliance cooperative solution of an inter-ethnic confederation is mistaken. Each in its own way asserts that political cooperation and eventual national unity should be grounded in sentiments other than ethnic loyalty. Even if initially communal loyalties allow for cooperation, in the long run they will make true unity and national identity impossible and in the short run they will obscure some of the most serious problems which government should be remedying. To solve problems that are social and economic rather than narrowly ethnic, the governing party has to be bound together by common interests superseding ethnicity. The most pressing demands which the

Malaysian government ought to be worrying about are not inherently Malay, or Chinese or Indian - even though they may be articulated by one of these groups more loudly than by another. Regardless of who gives them expression, the demands arise from class status and economic condition, not from ethnicity as such. Of course, the difficulty of presenting such an argument in contemporary Malaysia is that all too often occupation, status, urbanism, are all dictated by ethnicity; therefore, what in a more ethnical homogenous society would appear as a socio-economic class demand takes the form in Malaysia of a communal demand and often becomes inextricably wound up in ethnic sentiments. Thus to treat Malays' demands for increasing developmental investment as strictly the demands of simply rural people at the lower end of the economic scale is to neglect the emotionalism attached to the Malays as the "sons of the soil," the bumiputera, a term which is used frequently as a synonym for indigenous people. Thus a rural demand in Malaysia immediately is entangled in the indigenous-alien ethnic distinction.

For this alternative organizational model to compete successfully with that of the Alliance the opposition parties (again excepting the PMIP) have to demonstrate first of all that they are in actuality non-communal, or at the least, that they are fully multi-communal. In addition, they must persuade

the public that the major issues of the day are essentially non-communal issues calling for non-communal solutions. None of the opposition parties thus far have been able to convince the majority of the Malayan electorate that either condition exists or that it is desirable.

The opposition has been hindered especially by their inability to gain Malay support and by their failure to indicate that any one leftist party has more than a remote chance of attaining power. The close relationship between these two hindrances created a vicious circle for government critics. Due to the numerical strength and moral edge possessed by the Malays, any party set upon winning national power has to cultivate Malay support. Besides the strategic need for Malay backing, there is the Malays' symbolic importance, since without significant Malay following, non-communal parties become in reality Chinese-Indian parties.

The Malayan Communist Party - now outlawed, but still active up north near the Thai border - failed in its rebellion chiefly because it was unable to win Malay sympathy. Its public image as a predominantly Chinese party immensely aided the British and Malayan counter-guerrilla effort. Not only could the government claim that the MCP was not a national movement at all; it also could press the non-combatant Chinese to take an overt stand on the side of the government

so as to prove that they were not rebel sympathizers. There is some fragmentary evidence that today the remnant MCP band in the northeast is renewing its attempt to woo Malays. But the courtship is directed particularly to the Muslim Malays who live in sizeable numbers over the border in Thailand. 29.

Of the major opposition parties the Labour Party probably is the furthest to the left ideologically. It is also the most out-spoken in criticism of the Malaysian merger. Several of its leaders, as well as those of its former ally, Party Rakayat, have been held in detention by the government on charges of subversion. This has outraged their remaining representatives and led them to focus much of their criticism on the government's persecution of opposition parties. The Emergency and Confrontation, as well as general anxiety over the possibilities of domestic inter-communal violence, all have made the role of political opposition precarious in Malaysia.

The other opposition parties on the left have come out in favor of the Malaysian merger, but they too are obliged to demonstrate continually their loyalty and goodwill. In Malaysian terms this means to disavow communal separatism, acknowledge the special place of the Malays, support the National Language, and operate within the established electoral-parliamentary process.

But even following all these implicit rules-of-the-game does not assure a political party of trust, not to mention support, in Malaysia's multi-ethnic politics. The party must provide a working model for ethnic cooperation plus development and stability.

The Socialist Front sought to bring Malays into its opposition camp with a formula not unlike that of the Alliance, although its ideological platform was premised on economic rather than ethnic interest. The now-defunct Socialist Front had its base in Penang and was composed of the Labour Party and the Malay Party Rakyat. In 1966 the two parties split. But until then, the S.F. leaders advocated a political program founded on the conviction, as one leader put it, that "man is first of all a stomach." Thus it might be necessary from an organizational standpoint to form the Malays into a separate party, but that party viewed its followers not primarily as Malays but as poor rural people patronized by the colonialists and neglected by the cosmopolitan Malayan leadership. 30.

The break up of the Socialist Front illuminated the strains suffered by a party seeking to make a non-communal appeal. The Labour Party and Party Rakyat split over issues which by now sound familiar: conflicting definitions of integration, dissimilar interpretations of the National Language guarantee, disputes between the Chinese-speaking and English

speaking Chinese. Added to these divisive forces was a clash of personalities, which crystallized in the selection of party candidates for Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Georgetown, Penang, the Socialist Front stronghold.

The Socialist Front officially supported the National Language. This is political etiquette for any legal party; what is crucial for any party's public image and internal cohesiveness is the interpretation given to the policy. On this point, the Socialist Front, like the Alliance, was less than united. Moreover, the S.F. lacked the Alliance's cohesive leadership at the highest levels which could hold the combination together despite grassroots conflict. The Malays in Party Rakyat, although supposedly viewing its constituents as economic men, in fact held a broader vision of the ends of National Language policy than did their non-Malay colleagues in the Labour Party, especially its Chinese-speaking contingent. This policy division apparently coincided with an immediate controversy between the English-speaking leadership and the Chinese-speaking rank and file of the Labour Party over the Georgetown elections. 31.

Since early 1966 the Labour Party has been operating on its own. Party Rakyat always has been the lesser of the S.F.'s two partners, but it was important to the Labour Party in a symbolic rather than an electoral sense. Now

without its Malay partner, the Labour Party is deprived of its multi-ethnic image. It may continue to argue that the country's problems are economic and social, but it speaks from a platform which is essentially non-Malay. This makes economic and foreign policies offered by the Labour Party sound like covert appeals for Chinese and Indian interests, whether they are or not.

The United Democratic Party was born out of the internal split in the MCA over the allotment of Alliance candidates. The UDP was founded and is headed today by Lim Chong Eu, a Penang Chinese, who was formerly President of the MCA.

The Democratic Action Party was born out of another split, this one between Singapore and Malaysia in 1965. The DAP, now led by Devan Nair, a labor leader and close associate of Lee Kuan Yew, began as the Malayan People's Action Party, but had to be reorganized and prove its autonomy from Singapore after the separation.

The People's Progressive Party perhaps is the most territorially confined party, based in Ipoh, Perak. It is led by two Ceylonese Indian lawyers, the Seenivasagam brothers, both of whom are members of parliament.

All of these parties claim to be non-communal, but all have attracted mainly non-Malay support. All of them

are led by English-speaking members of parliament, although they have taken stands on the side of preservation of vernacular languages. All of them are less than nation-wide in their organizational structures and their electoral competitiveness.

Most of these parties took up Lee Kuan Yew's slogan of "Malaysian Malaysia" as the summation of their non-communal conceptions of national integration. But "Malaysian Malaysia" has definite ethnic overtones, since the abolition of the distinctions between ethnic communities would mean the equalization of status among all citizens regardless of ethnic identity. This raises the explosive issue of Malay special privileges. Therefore, when the non-communal opposition parties, backed electorally mainly by non-Malays, wave the "Malaysian Malaysia" banner it is taken by many persons of all groups to mean that these parties support a redefinition of Malaysian nationhood so that the distinctive status accorded to its indigenous people is eliminated. Thus the slogan has tended to reinforce the image of the parties such as UDP and DAP as communal parties for non-Malay interests, rather than non-communal parties not interested in ethnic affiliations.

A major bone of contention between Lee Kuan Yew and the Alliance was the People's Action Party's political forays onto the peninsula. The PAP had a power base in Singapore which the Alliance could not touch and the PAP

was led by a politician of great stature and appeal. Despite its poor showing in the 1964 Malayan elections, the PAP was potentially the toughest challenger which the Alliance had met.

For many non-Malays the PAP seemed to be the answer to their most gnawing dilemma; in the PAP there was an object for support that did not seem to necessitate the sacrificing of all realistic hope of political leverage and access. In the past, even if they were discontented with the way the MIC and MCA represented their interests, these non-Malays were hesitant to withdraw from the Alliance because the prospect of the alternative parties appeared so bleak. But now in Lee Kuan Yew's PAP there seemed to be a party that could be more aggressive than the non-Malay Alliance partners, but which, at the same time, had definite promise of achieving national power, not simply remaining a peripheral gad-fly. It was even suggested that the PAP and Lee might replace the MCA as UMNO's major ally.

Some of this is sheer speculation, but the prominence of this speculation and hope aroused fears within the Malay community and within the MCA. The Malays, especially the so-called "ultras" saw the PAP party rivalry as in fact an ethnic rivalry. The MCA understandably was anxious about a potentially virile rival to its status as the official representative of the Chinese community.

The PAP theoretically was non-communal, but having its home base in Chinese-dominated Singapore it appeared as much a non-Malay communal party as any of the other leftist parties in Malaya. Thus when Lee first broached the idea of extending PAP activities across the causeway he considered PAP partnership with the Malay UMNO. When UMNO turned down this suggestion the PAP set up branches of its own and eventually competed on an independent ticket in the Malayan elections.

With the PAP reduced to the Malaya-based DAP, the Alliance once again faces no immediate threat from either the economic left or a non-communal model.

PMIP: The Ethno-centric Alternative

The Pan-Malayan Islamic Party is an exception on several counts, all of them interrelated. First, the PMIP is the only party in Malaya which is explicitly religious in definition and program. Second, it is the sole party which makes no claim to embrace more than a single ethnic group. Third, it is the only practical communal alternative for the Malays who are dissatisfied with the Alliance; the non-Malays have three or four parties which are implicitly concerned with non-Malay interests. Finally, the PMIP is the one party on the peninsula not led by English-speaking politicians.

The most telling question to be asked about the PMIP concerns its mono-ethnic orientation. Why, if all the other parties have to manifest some form of inter-communalism, can the PMIP persist in its narrow ethnic appeal and still remain legitimate? The answer is that only a Malay party in opposition can afford this luxury in Malaysia without going beyond the pale of political mores. A Malay party in government, such as UMNO, cannot afford to speak solely for Malays unless it also forges tangible links with representatives of the other ethnic groups over which the government must rule. A non-Malay party in or out of government is suspected of divisiveness or disloyalty if it does not at least theoretically espouse the cause of inter-communalism. But a Malay party out of government can risk exclusiveness. It can be charged, as the PMIP has been, with being ill-advised, short-sighted, and impractical; but a Malay exclusivist party is much harder to brand as disloyal because it speaks for the one community that has no other country with which to affiliate. During the Confrontation, however, the security afforded by being Malay was made more tenuous for the PMIP, since Confrontation brought the country into a war with another Malay state, Indonesia. Thus during Confrontation loyalty to the Malay community and loyalty to the Malaysian state for once were not synonymous. It was possible for a Malay to argue

that his ethnic sympathies belonged to Indonesia, the state's enemy, because Indonesia was a more thoroughly Malay state than was the more heterogenous Malaysia ruled by a mixture of Chinese, Indians and Malays. Confrontation, consequently, put the FMIP's ethno-centrism under fire, and several FMIP leaders, among them its president, Dr. Burhanuddin, were detained on charges of aiding and abetting Indonesia. 32.

However, the FMIP still remains a mono-ethnic party. And because of its communal exclusivism, it is the one Malayan party which can make its appeals largely in terms of cultural goals. Other parties do come out in varying degrees for protection of their communities cultural traditions, but the platforms generally are veiled and the main thrust of their appeal lies in non-cultural platforms, since they must seek the support of more than one ethnic group. In addition to the lesser political importance other ethnic groups place on their own religions, this is one reason why the FMIP alone gives such prominence to religion. In fact, some of the FMIP's staunchest backers are Islamic teachers. The Malayan constitution declares Islam to be the state religion and delegates to the Malay sultans the responsibility for protection of Islam. This is coupled, however, with provisions for freedom of religion. Furthermore, because of their own personal backgrounds and their interest in national prosperity and

modernization, the UMNO leaders, who are also Muslims, give little more than nominal attention to religion. The Alliance program and integrative vision are secular.

UMNO's stance thereby leaves ample opportunity for a Malay opposition party to promote an alternative conception of the nation and its desired direction and policy priorities. The PMIP would have the state religion made more than symbolic and ceremonial, making it a basis for practical policy decisions and a guideline for national development. The PMIP is not simply more parochial than UMNO, it is also a party less driven by the desire to emulate Western commercial, scientific and technological accomplishments. For these more tradition-bound Malays more than for the already-uprooted, commercialized, and urbanized Chinese and Indians and English-educated Malays, modernization is not only not so desirable, it is even a threat to ethnic integrity. Religion has become the focus for this more general perception because Islam seems to be the most visible and wide-spread bastion against secularization and communal dissolution - even more so than the Malay language, which is subject to administrative transformation.

A 1966 parliamentary by-election in the Perak district of Krian Laut highlighted some of the PMIP themes and the political conditions which limit the effectiveness of their appeal.

Krian Laut is one of the few districts on the west coast in which the PMIP has gained a toe-hold. It is a rice-growing area with a large Malay population. The by-election was viewed as a test of the Alliance's - especially UMNO's - support among rural Malays.³³ The two contestants were an UMNO division chairman, a 34 year old adult education supervisor, and a PMIP state assemblyman, also 34 and a former religious teacher. The PMIP sent in their most prominent spokesmen, mostly from Kelantan, to drive home the theme that the Alliance had neglected the padi farmers and inshore fishermen and that "Malays, indeed, were better off in the colonial days."³⁴ In one rash moment a campaigning PMIP member of parliament said that the PMIP wished it could detain Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman because he "gave away the special rights of the Malays to other races," and because he "sanctioned the arrest of Islamic religious teachers in Kelantan."³⁵

Krian Laut had an electorate of 26,953; of these 18,634 were Malays, 6,801 were Chinese, and 1,518 were Indians.³⁶ The PMIP lost the election in balloting which brought a 75.4 per cent turnout.³⁷ There was a strong indication that the PMIP owed its loss in part to the non-Malay vote. While the Malays may have split not too unevenly, the 80 per cent of non-Malay registered voters who turned

out were believed to have voted overwhelmingly for the Alliance-UMNO candidate.³⁸ Although Krian Laut is a predominantly Malay district, the non-Malays, if fully mobilized, can swing the outcome. This is frequently the case in a country where all ethnic groups are scattered throughout the country. For this reason the Alliance sent in MCA's Tan Siew Sin and other Chinese ministers to persuade the relatively small non-Malay electorate to vote, first of all, and to vote for UMNO's candidate. Tan Siew Sin told Krian Laut's Chinese that "the surest way to disaster is to be neutral in this by-election."³⁹ In other words, the Chinese had to be persuaded that they had a personal stake in what seemed to be an internal Malay community contest.

The only mono-ethnic party which has even a remote chance of achieving political power in Malaysia is a Malay party. But, as the PMIP has found out, the dispersion of the various ethnic groups forces even a Malay party to be sensitive to non-Malay appeals. The PMIP's strength therefore is concentrated in the areas with the heaviest Malay concentrations - on the east coast, especially in the states of Kelantan and Trengganu. The current PMIP leader, Dato Mohammed Asri bin Muda, is an M.P. from Kelantan and Kelantan's Chief Minister. The PMIP is likely to remain regionally circumscribed unless it can make its appeals of Malay

nationalism and religious militancy more relevant to a Malay population increasingly in contact with secularized modes of living and reliant on the central government for greater access to its benefits.

Conclusion

For the future, the shape of the Malayan party system will be determined largely by the capacity of the ruling Alliance to resolve the conflicts and assuage the discontent within its own ranks. The fates of the other political parties will depend to a great extent on how successful the Alliance is in this task.

For their own part, the leftist, mainly non-Malay parties' electoral appeal might be enhanced by greater inter-party cooperation. There have been signs in the past year or so that the DAP, UDP, and PPP, in particular, are trying to avoid public conflict and weakening competition at the polls. In February, 1966, there was a conference in Ipoh to lay the foundation for at least minimal unity, although the end was more grandiously termed a Grand Opposition. The PPP, UDP, Labour Party, and DAP took part. The Party Rakyat and FMIP, the two Malay opposition parties, chose to look on from outside. ⁴⁰. At present there is no Grand

Opposition, but if there is cooperation in distributing candidates, the Alliance might face more formidable opposition in 1969 parliamentary elections.

The initiative, nonetheless, rests with the Alliance. Only if its constituent parties lose their leadership status in their respective communities to such an extent that access to government inner circles comes to mean less to the voters than more aggressive advocacy of felt ethnic needs, can the opposition hope to get a foothold in federal power.

Two recent proposals for changes in the Alliance organization serve to emphasize the difficulties inherent in the Alliance integrative and organizational solutions. The first proposal was made public in 1966. It was a suggestion that the Alliance open its doors to direct membership. At present the only way that a Malaysian can join the Alliance Party is by taking out membership in one of the constituent parties, UMNO for the Malays, MCA for the Chinese, and MIC for the Indians. This membership scheme is consistent with the Alliance conception of the appropriate integrative process: Individual Malaysians are first and foremost members of an ethnic community; but they rightly should desire to work together with members of other ethnic groups to solve common national problems. The ethnic party, then, acts as a mid-wife for national allegiance and cooperation.

But this indirect affiliation membership scheme has several drawbacks. First, it effectively excludes all Malaysians who do not fit neatly into one of these three major ethnic categories - e.g., Eurasians, Ceylonese, Europeans. Second, it discourages Alliance membership by those Chinese or Indians, for instance, who are disenchanted with the MCA and MIC, but who still think the Alliance is the only realistic party alternative on the scene. Direct membership which by-passed the necessity of joining a constituent communal party would allow both of these sorts of potential Alliance members to join.

The reaction of the top Alliance leadership to this membership proposal, however, has been one of caution and seeming reluctance.⁴¹ Essentially, they want to hold the direct membership idea at arm's length because they are fearful that the Malaysian polity is not yet ready to take this step - from inter-communal cooperation to political assimilation. To go ahead with direct membership would be to acknowledge that the explicitly ethnic conduits are becoming irrelevant. Ultimate, says the Alliance leadership, assimilation may be a proper goal, but that is still beyond the foreseeable future. Tan Siew Sin, explaining the necessity of a "spirit of give and take" in Alliance dealings, said that the MCA simultaneously had to keep UMNO's trust in it and also unite the Chinese:

"The end is Malaysian unity. Malaysian unity or the creation of Malaysian consciousness and nationhood must necessarily involve two stages.

"In the first stage, the main racial groups must be united themselves before they can work with other racial groups.

"Only when we have consolidated communal unity can we move on to that wider unity of all Malaysians which must clearly be our ultimate goal." ⁴².

An UMNO leader made a similarly vague pledge. An UMNO vice president told an audience of party members that their party was committed to working for Malay interests and that, though it was the Alliance's final aim to have membership in which "races and blood do not count," this may not "be achieved in our lifetime." ⁴³.

The second proposal originated from outside the Alliance. Two Ceylonese associations suggested that the Alliance accept a fourth communal partner, a Ceylonese part. This would be a logical extension of the Alliance concept. But to bring additional communal associations into the Alliance in practice would only aggravate the problems of bargaining and compromise with which the national leadership already has to contend. Consequently, the Alliance executive secretary put off the Ceylonese, suggesting that they first concentrate on solving the differences between the Malayan Ceylonese Congress and its competitor, the Ceylon Federation of Malaya. ⁴⁴.

Just as in the fields of education and language, the federal Alliance leadership is caught in a bind between commitment to preservation of ethnic groups' integrity and commitment to national unity. The solution which the governing elite has chosen so far has been minimal satisfaction of both commitments for the present and indefiniteness regarding the final resolution of the two in the future. In the political party system this has taken the form of central control in the hands of an ethnically-mixed, but commonly English-educated, peripherally communal elite. Added to this has been the avowed attempt to win party support of all ethnic groups and the assurance that national policy decisions will be made with due concern for sub-national ethnic interests through inter-ethnic bargaining within a single party.

CHAPTER V

ORGANIZATION AND ETHNIC POLITICS:
VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

Organization and Communalism

In Malaysia it has been the political arena which has been the primary meeting ground for at least the elites of the various ethnic groups. Likewise, it has been the political parties which have been the most important organizational frames for inter-communal relationships. By contrast, Malaysia's non-party organizations have been much more exclusivist and ethnically homogeneous.

In a multi-ethnic country where no single community can govern effectively by itself political parties are likely to be either inter-communal or allied with other communal parties if they have genuine aspirations to power. Ethnic pluralism as thorough-going as that in Malaysia separates members of different communities along social, linguistic, religious, and to some extent even geographic lines. The people they live with, marry, gossip with, and worship with all tend to be persons of the same ethnic affiliation as themselves. It is only in politics, and chiefly national politics, that these lines are broken down and persons of different ethnic groups are compelled to forge some kind of enduring and workable relationship with one another.

More than any other development, it has been the growing politicization of the Malaysian society since the end

of World War II which has pushed Chinese, Malays, and Indians together in joint efforts and organizations. A warning, however: with every step toward increasing politicization there will be an inevitable increase in cooperation or integration between ethnic groups. There may be a point of diminishing returns. The growing restlessness of the previously passive Malay rank and file is just one indication that politicization may reach a point at which the urban, cosmopolitan leadership is challenged for precisely its increasingly inter-communal outlook.

Unlike political parties, non-party associations are legitimately able to pursue expressly communal ends. The parties are dealing with the society as a whole and its future unity and progress and thus, according to the unwritten rules of Malaysian politics, foreswear any narrow communal objectives. But the non-party organizations, which are concerned with only particular segments of the population and are not expected to be instruments of reconciliation, are not under such rules. Many of the most prominent associations do, in fact, seek to bolster their acceptance and influence by publically rejecting communalism; nonetheless, it is non-party associations that make the most explicitly ethnic demands on the political system.

This has meant that all of the parties, but especially the Alliance parties, have encountered the strongest pressures for ethnically-defined platforms from interest groups outside their own organizations or from party-affiliated organizations which have some autonomy of their own.

For example, the MCA has been pressed to take a more adamant stand on the language and education issues by the Chinese guilds and clan associations. It was these groups which Sim Mow Yu approached when he wanted to prod the MCA leaders in Kuala Lumpur. The MCA party organization itself could not have voiced these demands safely; to have done so would have over-stepped the bounds of acceptable party activity on these delicate issues.

All of the Malaysian ethnic groups are not equally prone to develop secondary associations. The Chinese and Indians, due to the uprooting experience of immigration and their intra-communal divisions, have a much greater wealth of associations than do the Malays. Proclivities for associations are not static for any ethnic group, but to date it has been the Chinese and Indian political parties that have felt the most pressure from autonomous organizations. One of the most striking differences between UMNO and the other political parties has been UMNO's capacity to embrace almost its entire ethnic community, including its non-political associations.

There are secondary associations within the Malay community, but to a greater extent than in the non-Malay communities, those associations were sired by and are dependent on either UMNO or the federal government. While MCA and MIC are pressured from without, UMNO is more apt to be pressured from within.

Not only do the three ethnic groups differ in their tendencies to form non-party associations, they also differ in the kinds of associations they establish. The contrasts stem from their respective occupational, residential, religious and kinship characteristics. The Chinese have secondary groups clustered around just about every imaginable social activity: business, crafts, recreation, religion, education, language, family name, regional origin in China. The Indian associations are almost as varied. But Indians add to this list trade union associations, which if not wholly Indian in membership, are chiefly Indian in leadership.

The Malays are neither markedly immigrant nor heterogeneous nor urban. These conditions have lessened Malay propensity toward creation of such secondary associations. And whereas the MIC and MCA came into being after a plethora of associations existed in their own communities, UMNO preceded a Malay movement toward secondary organization. UMNO had the opportunity which the other parties did

not to channel the associational energies of its own ethnic group into those sorts of associations which it considered supportive of its own political efforts. Thus in a rural kampong the secondary associations may consist of the UMNO cell - which may or may not be active except at election time - the government-sponsored Woman's Institute, perhaps a farmers cooperative, a Home Guard organized by the federal government during Confrontation, and the mosque committee.¹ Of these, only the mosque committee is without ties either to UMNO or the Alliance government.

Teachers Associations

There is one type of association which is active in every one of the major ethnic groups - teachers associations. In any developing country teachers are among the most articulate non-political groups. In Malaysia they have become the spokesmen and often the mobilizers of communal interests which frequently extend beyond strictly educational matters. The teachers associations are not discussed at length here because they are "typical". They are of particular interest because they touch on such a wide range of conditions which affect the role of secondary associations in Malaysian politics.²

Although present in each ethnic group, the teachers associations differ in their communal roles and thus shed light

on the contrasting political consequences of associations among the Malays, Chinese, and Indians. Furthermore, the fact that teachers groups are among the most aggressive and vocal groups in each community again suggests the centrality of education at this stage of Malaysian development. The often tortuous diplomatic maneuvers between the multiplicity of teachers groups also indicate how difficult it is to establish meaningful bridges across ethnic gaps. Finally, the dealings between the teachers and the central government provide another vantage point from which to view the Alliance mode of integrative politics.

The most discouraging - to the observer and the would-be educational leader - fact about Malayan teachers associations is their number. At this writing, on the peninsula alone there are some nineteen different organizations which claim to represent some segment of the teaching profession. The number is maddening; but it is also suggestive. It is an admonition against over-simplifying inter-ethnic relationships. If Malaysian inter-ethnic relationships followed the broad communal divisions, one would expect there to be only three, not nineteen teachers groups: one for Malay teachers, one for Chinese and one for Indian. Instead, one finds associations reflecting intra-communal divisions and inter-communal overlappings. One report counted as many as forty

different teachers associations, but many of these are tied together in loose confederations. 3.

The Malay teachers are broken into state organizations. All three communities' teachers are divided by educational degrees attained, by school level at which they teach, by their medium of instruction, and by sex. Some of these divisions - such as medium of instruction - encourage ethnically homogeneous association; other - such as kind of teaching credential - encourage ethnically mixed association. Multi-ethnic politics and the sorts of organized relationships that under-gird it are not as neat and tidy as a census chart would lead one to believe. Nor, therefore, is the process of integration simply a matter of bringing together three monolithic communities. The political party system suggests this fact, and the teachers associations confirm it.

The dismaying multiplicity of teachers associations also is reflective of corollate fact - the complexity of the Malaysian school system. Even in the past, when the Chinese, Malays, and Indians were considerably more detached from one another, the school system was notable for its diversity. Today, despite the government's deliberate program of nationization and standardization, the Malaysian schools present a kaleidoscope of forms. Divisions within the teaching profession are equally as kaleidoscopic. There are four language

streams in the school system: Chinese, Tamil, Malay, and English. There are primary schools, lower secondary schools, and upper secondary schools, as well as several different types of higher educational institutions (technical institutes, teachers colleges, the university). One does not have to be a mathematician to be impressed by the variety of bases such a system provides for divisions of professional interest.

At the peril of adding more confusion than order, let me simply list some of the teachers groups now operating on the peninsula. The teachers in Sabah and Sarawak have their own separate organizations.

National Union of Teachers (NUT)

- mainly English-medium school teachers
- the largest single union, with 5,000 members
- ethnically mixed

Malayan Teachers Union (MTU)

- a newly-formed loose confederation of some 19 teachers groups and 27,000 members.⁴
- many of the groups listed below are affiliates of the MTU, but have retained their separate identities.
- ethnically mixed

Women Teachers Union

- founded to achieve equal pay and benefits for women in teaching
- ethnically mixed

Graduate Teachers Union

- teachers who possess a university degree and largely teach at the upper secondary level and thus in English-medium schools
- ethnically mixed

College Trained Teachers Union

- teachers who received their credentials from a teachers college; could teach at either primary or lower secondary school level
- ethnically mixed

United Chinese School Teachers Association

- Chinese teachers teaching in Chinese-medium schools, most of which will be at primary level

Chinese Teachers Union

- acts as a trade union for the Chinese-medium teachers, but includes fewer than the corresponding association.

Union of National School Teachers (Kesatuan Kebangsaan Guru-Guru Sekolah Kebangsaan)

- Malay teachers teaching in the Malay-medium National Schools, thus mostly at the primary level and lower secondary level.

Association of Teachers of English in Chinese Schools

- mostly Chinese

Tamil Teachers Union

- Indian teachers teaching in Tamil-medium, and therefore primary schools

Religious (Islamic) School Teachers Association

- mostly Malay

Day Training College/Centre Trained Teachers Unions

- teachers who may not have gone beyond Form III
- secondary and have been trained at stop-gap training centers while teaching; primary level
- ethnically mixed

The most important lines of division in the teaching profession are language medium of the school where the teacher serves and the kind of teaching credential he has earned. Neither is determined solely by ethnic affiliation, though ethnicity may be an important factor. Thus virtually all teachers in vernacular-medium (non-English) schools are from that particular ethnic group themselves, and the demands of these teachers groups are apt to be highly colored with ethnic as well as purely educational interests. On the other hand, the cause espoused by teachers possessing university degrees or teachers in upper secondary levels are likely to coincide with the interests of non-Malay, because a disproportionate number of Malayan university graduates are non-Malay. This sort of interest articulation-by-innuendo does not add clearly to Malaysian politics, but it does allow certain interests to be articulated legitimately rather than being suppressed as injurious to national harmony. It also permits the Alliance

to deal with these groups in the style it prefers, the style of pragmatism-cum-ambiguity. Political demands are translated into questions of steps for rational development, leaving unanswered the ultimate target of that development.

Although teachers groups avoid sharply ethnic claims, they still are more ethnically defined than are the political parties. They can make demands that a Malaysian political party would shun or water down for fear of sounding too chauvinistic or parochial. The teachers associations are restrained in their potential communalism, however. They are part of a nation-wide school system on which the government stakes its prestige. As a result, the teachers have to be chary of embarrassing or antagonizing the government. Moreover, as much as any interest sector in the country, the teaching profession is subject to the cross pressures of ethnic identification and the western, English-language culture, and these blunt or complicate communal sentiments.

There are two ways to slice into the relationship between the teachers associations and political integration. The first is to look at the sorts of cooperative ties which the teachers have created to pursue their interests. The second way is to analyze the relationship between the teachers and the central government.

Organization for Interest Articulation

The diversity of teaching positions and interests and thus of bases for organization are the result of the laissez-faire origins of Malaysian education. It has been only since the war and especially since independence that there have been extensive government efforts to coordinate all levels and streams of education. Current organizational moves within the teaching profession are an attempt to match this same course of unification. Government integration policies, in this respect, have begotten new bases for interest organization, rather than visa versa. The progress of the teachers toward unification is several steps behind that of the government. Both the teachers organizations and the school system reveal the extent to which Malaysia is still short of full integration - the extent to which the constituent parts still think at least as much in communal terms as in national terms.

The progress of the Malayan teachers toward greater organization cooperation has been accompanied by an increase, rather than a reduction of conflict - between the teachers themselves and between the government and the teachers.

"The teachers of Malaya are an uncommonly quarrelsome lot," scolded the Straits Times editorially.⁵ Efforts to unify the plethora of associations into a single all-embracing

professional organization currently revolves around the newly-established Malayan Teachers Union and the older National Union of Teachers. Briefly, the MTU, headed by the leaders of the Women Teachers Union and the Graduate Teachers Union, has sought to bring all the pre-existing teachers groups into one organization which would thereafter be the spokesman for the entire profession before the government. The NUT was involved in the initial discussion, but soon parted ways and has been the MTU's harshest critic.

The most interesting point of controversy between the NUT and MTU is their conflicting notions of organization. The question at the outset was whether the new union should redefine the classifications of interests within the teaching profession or should design its organizational structure along the lines of the pre-existing unions. The NUT favored the former. It argued for a new union which would have only four subdivisions, one for each of the four language streams in the federal school system. Opponents of the NUT plan urged instead that the new organization include almost as many sub-divisions as there were teachers associations so as to recognize the continuing heterogeneity of the teaching profession.

The MTU has been modelled according to this second plan. However, the pre-existing unions affiliated with the MTU have been reluctant to dissolve their own organizations to permit direct teacher membership in the MTU, as was the original intent.

The NUT - MTU debate is reminiscent of a similar debate among the political parties. The conflict over the two organizational plans concerns conceptions of the realistic basis of integration. Once again a national organization self-consciously perceives itself as a model for national unity. Viewing one's own organizational design as a national blueprint is prevalent among all kinds of associations in a multi-ethnic society which see their own interests as immediately affecting the course of national development. The teachers groups are this kind of association, connecting their own professional welfare with the interests of the nation as a whole, partly because of the government's self-conscious educational planning. The MTU, therefore, perceives that teachers have genuine interests that cannot be defined in ethnic terms and thus contends that there need to be a large number of sub-divisions in all-embracing teachers group in order to take these interests into account. Whereas the NUT argues that organizing a national union around the four language streams is not intended to reinforce communalism, but simply to acknowledge the social and occupational reality and to build on that reality so as to be a more effective cooperative body.

There have been other, more subtle arguments between the two protagonists, ones that emphasize the complexity of pluralism and education in Malaysia. Aside from

debating the wisdom of the NUT's four-stream design, the MTU charges that the NUT's motive for proposing this plan is one of self-interest. According to these critics, the NUT recognized that being the principal organization for English-medium teachers, it was perhaps the strongest single pre-existing union, for the same reasons that English-speaking groups tend to dominate all of the country's most influential organizations. Furthermore, the NUT is led largely by Indians (a Sikh is President and a Ceylonese Tamil is General Secretary). Therefore, the NUT could be assured of support from the much smaller and weaker Tamil teachers union. In a new teachers union founded on the four language streams, consequently, the NUT would carry the most weight, and the English-medium teachers would continue, as in the past, to be the leading negotiators between the teachers and the Ministry of Education.

Regardless of the NUT's own intentions in urging a linguistically-structured association, it is clear that the occupational language groups do not mirror a simple three-way split between Malays, Chinese, and Indians. The addition of the English-speaking group in the profession blurs ethnic lines. The domination of the English-medium teachers group by the Indians, further blurs communal lines by creating a natural bridge between the ethnically-mixed English-medium teachers and the vernacular-speaking Tamil teachers.

There are some nice ironies here. The MTU symbolically is headed by a Malay, the President of the Malay Teachers Union. In practice, though, the MTU, like the NUT, is under the guidance of English-speaking Indians. The head of the Women Teachers Union is a forceful and articulate Indian lady, who is headmistress of an English-medium Methodist girls school near Kuala Lumpur. Her colleague in consolidating the MTU is a Ceylonese who is head of the Graduate Teachers Union and headmaster of another English-medium Methodist school, a boys school in Ipoh.

Given these similarities between the principal combatants, it is not surprising that the other unions, especially those composed of vernacular-medium teachers, look upon the debate as less than central to their own immediate needs. This may be one of the chief reasons for these other unions hesitating to dissolve their separate organizations to become direct members of the MTU. The continuation of their organizations insures that their particular interests will have an effective advocate and will not be lost in the verbal war between the MTU and NUT English-speaking leaders.

The Teachers and the Government:
Professionalism or Politics

There are two aspects of the relationship between the teachers and the political system. On the one hand, there are the interactions between the teachers associations and the Ministry of Education or the Cabinet. On the other, there are the relationships of the individual associations and the various political parties both in government and in opposition. Many of the problems of unifying the teachers reappear in the teachers' political activities.

Added to the dispute over organization are differences over tactics and strategy in pursuing teachers interests within the federal government. The conflict is due less to ethnic differences than to contrasting notions of professional propriety. The MTU sees itself as an association of professionals with a special responsibility for educational standards. It is a body concerned with teachers' salaries and benefits, for which it bargains with the teachers' employer, the central government. But bargaining should be carried on as ministers and professionals, not as politicians. In post-colonial societies there is apt to be considerable insecurity and thus a cautious protection of any social status which relies on alien western criteria. Teachers of all the Malaysian

ethnic groups are likely to share this anxiety. The MTU's perception of itself and of its appropriate mode of action denote this common concern for acting as professionals so as to safeguard that status.

The NUT has a quite dissimilar notion of its role vis-a-vis the government. It, too, is concerned with securing teachers' benefits; but it goes after them more aggressively, less as professionals and more as trade unionists.

Significantly, the NUT is the only one of the teachers groups which is a member of the Malayan Trade Union Council (MTUC), the largest trade union organization in the country. The NUT, in fact, is among the most influential MTUC members. Its influence derives both from the activism of the current NUT leadership and from the natural prestige that accompanies teachers in a country where education is believed to be the key to modernization. In accord with this view of itself as primarily a trade union, the NUT has departed from the professional-to-professional bargaining tactic, favored by the MTU, and has threatened strikes to win its case. The NUT's aggressiveness obviously gets under the skin of the federal policy-makers. As in party affairs, Alliance leaders prefer to settle disputes not in public but behind closed doors, where pragmatic compromise is conducive and where differences do not disrupt orderly governmental

operations. Thus, this Straits Times editorial undoubtedly was read sympathetically by ministry officials:

"An independent commission is sitting on the teacher's grievances, and the government has an assurance to abide by its recommendations... "...Does the NUT really believe that its boycott will improve the atmosphere for the talks? Inche Khir Johari's statement shows that it is having the opposite effect. And the worsening relations between the NUT and the other unions on the Teachers Panel is proof of another kind that stagey displays of militancy can lead to a dead end." 6.

Unionism in Malaysia still shoulders the burden of the Emergency and its connection with political opportunism. 7.

If the MTU teachers lean toward caution out of a sensitivity to professional decorum, the NUT teachers adopt a moderate and often halting activism because of an awareness that trade unionism is still on probation in Malaysia. Although the NUT has been more aggressive and more inclined to strike tactics, it has backed down from many of its threats and has voiced assurances to the government and the public that it has the best interests of the educational system and national welfare at heart.

The suspicion of trade union militancy has led other teachers groups to adopt certain organizational strategies. The Chinese school teachers are especially vulnerable to suspicions inherited from the Emergency, since the Chinese schools were thought to be hot beds of subversion at that

time. Were it not for this legacy one might expect the Malaysian Chinese to be much more active in the country's trade union movement, instead of leaving it so largely to the Indians, a fact which further curtails trade unionism's effectiveness in Malaysia. For instance, the Chinese school teachers have two organizations to protect their interests. The largest and oldest is legally classified as an association; it does not come under the restrictions of the Trade Union Ordinance. The United Chinese School Teachers Association is the main vehicle for the Chinese teachers' protest against the Alliance's education and language policies. Led by Sim Mow Yu, this association spear-headed the writing of the joint memorandum to the Prime Minister from the Chinese glans and guilds. But, in addition, the Chinese school teachers have a trade union, which bargains for salaries and benefits. The union is the lesser of the two organizations. The Chinese teachers have been less vitally concerned with salaries than with the fate of the Chinese-language education and have devoted less attention to the union organization as a result.

The teachers groups most active in pressing the government on matters of occupational benefits are the groups least communally defined. The NUT cuts across ethnic boundaries, as does the English-stream itself; the Womens Teachers Union and the Graduate Teachers Union also are

ethnically mixed, since the criteria for membership excludes no language stream, and even if their members come chiefly from the English stream, that too is ethnically mixed. These are the organizations which speak out most regularly - one should add the Day Training Center-trained Teachers Union as well, also ethnically mixed - on matters of material benefits: equal pay for women and men, medical and housing benefits, higher salaries, revised credential standards. They differ among themselves over tactics, but they share a preoccupation with occupational rewards and only secondarily are interested in ethnic concerns. These inter-communal groups restrict their conception of their interests to such matters as do not impinge upon sensitive questions of basic governmental policy. Salary rates, equalization of pay, credentials - all are issues that can set off strikes and disrupt school operation; but they do not question the fundamental policy orientation of the Alliance government toward educational integration and promotion of Malay and English.

If a teachers group includes representatives of all ethnic communities, then it is wiser - for the sake of organizational harmony - to limit the group's advocacy to causes which do not divide Malays versus non-Malays. Teachers of all ethnic identities want better housing; but not all teachers are equally fearful over the demise of Chinese and Tamil

secondary schools. Therefore, these ethnically heterogeneous groups are built on platforms of inter-ethnic interests, letting other groups pursue ethnic interests. The associations whose members are from a single ethnic community have less worry about fragmentation resulting from involvement in fundamental policy issues regarding federal goals. Indeed, their members have an immediate occupational stake in those goals and so expect their associations to speak out on them.

Government and organizational needs therefore converge. The government can handle most readily administrative issues such as salary rates and professional training criteria and thus would prefer to deal with external interest groups on such issues. For their part, the major teachers unions, because of the caution bred by the Emergency and by their own ethnic mixtures, feel safer concentrating on such administrative questions while shunning the fundamental issues surrounding education, issues which in Malaysia inevitably lead to ethnic loyalties and political involvement.

The government's vehicle for handling teacher interests of a professional character has been the Joint Council of Teachers, established upon the recommendation of the 1960 Education Review Committee. The Joint Council nicely exemplifies the Alliance style of coping with external demands. It translates them into less divisive terms and then absorbs their spokesmen.

The Joint Council includes representatives of all the various teachers groups. It was intended to be an independent bargaining agent to negotiate with the government. But its independence is compromised by its creation by government act. Furthermore, it is restrained in its dealings with the government by the prevailing reluctance of the teachers' representatives to exploit fully their sanctioning powers. In practice, the principal advantage of the Joint Council has been that it provides the fragmented teaching profession with a common platform and a channel of access to the Ministry of Education and the Cabinet. The government hereby has supplied a common meeting ground for ethnic groups which was unattainable outside the political system. This is similar to what has happened in the party system.

The feud between the MTU and NUT has disrupted the Council. Some have charged that the Education Ministry did not exert pressure on the teachers to resolve their internal differences and to unite because as long as the teachers are entangled in their own quarrels they will have less energy to focus on the government. It is true that the teachers' bargaining position is relatively weak in light of their prestige and organizational proclivity. This weakness is explained by the teachers' preference for the narrower issues of occupational benefits, their absorption into a government-authored

negotiating council, the profession's fragmentation, and the distaste for militant unionism. All of these conditions make it easier for the federal government to deal with the teachers.

Teachers and Party Politics

The Ministry of Education has made it clear that it views teachers as professional public servants, not as potential political cadres. Minister Khir Johari told a meeting of NUT delegates that teachers "found dabbling in politics would be asked to resign." The government's fear was partly of teachers opposing Alliance candidates at the polls. It was also concerned lest politics take over the classroom. Education and schools are intensely political topics in Malaysia. Teachers' involvement in politics threatens to aggravate the government's problems in implementing its education policy. 8.

When the teachers deal with the political parties instead of with the Ministry they are less passive. In the parties the most important teachers groups are not the inter-communal unions, which dominate the Joint Council, but the ethnically defined associations. It is these latter groups that are more concerned about fundamental policy than about occupational benefits.

Among the vast variety of secondary associations to which the MIC and MCA have to appeal, the Indian and

Chinese teachers groups figure prominently both as potential cadres and as interest petitioners. The Tamil and Chinese teachers groups are most active on matters regarding language course offering and the media of instruction in schools and the ethnic implications of government teacher training programs. On such issues the teachers are liable to act as ring-leaders, rallying other non-party communal associations which have a stake in preserving the community's ethnic identity.

The teachers press their interests on the MCA and MIC in several ways. The vernacular school teachers tend to be among the most articulate people in their communities and are natural recruits for the lower ranks of the political parties. They are not likely to reach the higher levels of the MIC and MCA hierarchy because of their inability to carry on dealings in English. Vernacular-speaking members of any ethnic group in Malaysia may be among the most active rank and file, but rarely attain top leadership. As a result, when there is tension between the leadership in Kuala Lumpur and the various branches outside the capital, one can expect to find vernacular-speaking teachers in the front ranks of the dissidents.

The Chinese school teachers have toyed with the idea of withdrawing their support from the MCA because of the MCA's inability to protect what the teachers believe to be

interests vital not only to their own occupational well-being but to the preservation of Chinese communal life. So far they have remained at least nominally in the MCA camp. Their rationale is similar to that of the ordinary Chinese rank and file. What can the opposition parties offer the Chinese teachers? The opposition has a few members in parliament, and they can speak out more freely in criticism of UMNO than can the MCA M.P.s. But Malayan policy is not made in parliament. Do the opposition parties have any say in the Federal Cabinet? Do they have any men in top posts in the Ministry of Education? It is the familiar choice between opportunity for protest and opportunity for access. The Chinese teachers have chosen access.

The Tamil teachers are not heard from as much as the Chinese teachers, due to their own small numbers and the weakened position of Tamil-medium education. They work through the MIC. On one occasion the Tamil teachers tried to persuade the Ministry of Education to alter examination requirements so that the Tamil teachers, most of whom have only minimal credentials - another factor weakening their public position - could qualify for more advanced education and thus more prestigious and higher-paying teaching status. They employed three tactics. First, the Tamil teachers staged a hunger strike in front of the Ministry of Education offices

in down-town Kuala Lumpur to dramatize the cause of an otherwise small interest sector and to embarrass the Minister of Education. Second, the Tamil teachers sought out the NUT to speak on their behalf, since the NUT is much more influential and because it combines an Indian leadership with a fluency in English. To make an effective public appeal in Malaysia it must be expressed in a language that can be understood by the public which drives past the ministry's offices and by the Minister and his advisors. Tamil does not fill these requirements, and so the NUT must speak for the Tamil-medium teachers. Third, the Tamil teachers sent a delegation to the Minister of Labor. 9.

The Labor Ministry was not directly relevant to the teachers' plight, but the Minister himself was. The Minister of Labor is Manickavasagam, a vice president of the MIC, and a member of the Alliance Executive Council, himself a Tamil. In a multi-ethnic government any minister can serve at least two important roles: he is head of his particular ministry and its spokesman in the Cabinet; he is also the chief advocate for his own ethnic community on any matter that elicits ethnic sentiment, regardless of whether that matter is germane to his own portfolio. The assumption is, however, that members of the multi-ethnic Cabinet will be appointed to those ministries which are likely to be of most

constant and direct pertinence to their own communities. Indians hold the federal portfolios of Labor and Post and Telecommunications in recognition of the large proportion of Malayan Indians occupied in manual labor and in the public services, such as the post office. Chinese head the Ministries of Housing and Local Government, Finance, and Commerce to reflect the preeminence of Chinese in construction, municipal affairs, and business. Malays are Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Development, Interior, Education, and Culture in recognition of the importance of developing the nation's culture and foreign image along lines consistent with the identity of its indigenous community.

Usually just below the Minister will be an Assistant Minister of another ethnic group. If the Chinese teachers feel they will not get a sympathetic hearing from the Malay Minister of Education, they will go directly to the Assistant Minister of Education, who is Chinese and is also a leading MCA official. The MCA man now in the Education Ministry's second position is not only Chinese, he is a Chinese-educated Chinese. This appointment was a deliberate gesture by the MCA leadership to regain the confidence of the Chinese-speaking rank and file. Nonetheless, this Assistant Minister, while Chinese-educated, also happens to be fluent in English.

The Malay teachers may be the most influential of all the communal teachers groups. Their influence can be traced to several circumstances. Many are not peculiar to the Malay teachers but are correlates of some of the distinctions that more generally separate the political condition of the Malays from that of the non-Malays.

The Malay teachers groups are divided into autonomous state organizations. But even with this fragmentation they are not faced with as much organized competition for the attention of party leaders as are their Chinese and Tamil counterparts, who are more united. The Malay community is characterized by few organized interest groups which are not creatures of UMNO or the government. The Malay teachers have worked for UMNO ever since the early days of Malay nationalist agitation following the war. But they have remained autonomous. The fact that there are few Malay organizations which UMNO can recruit and that there are few non-party groups petitioning UMNO enhance the political influence of the few autonomous interest groups that do operate within the Malay community.

The Malay teachers also can afford to be less cautious in promoting their interests. The Alliance's platform, the official education reports, and the Constitution all encourage that priority be given their schools. The Malay

teachers' political advantage is comparable to that enjoyed by the FMIP. Both are able to push communal interests more openly than are associations or parties in the non-Indigenous communities. But like the FMIP, the Malay teachers are not totally immune from accusations of self-centeredness and opportunism. Thus even the President of the National Union of National School Teachers, the leading Malay teachers group, which joined the NUT in a work-to-rule action, felt it necessary to publically declare that this tactic in no way suggested disloyalty to the King.

"It is within our rights, under the Trade Union Ordinance, to take industrial action in our struggle to protect the interests of our members.

"As Malay teachers, we have only one country. Our loyalty to Malaysia and the King should, therefore not be doubted." 10.

It is significant that the Education Ministry official to whom the Malay teacher was responding had needed the Union with charges of not just disloyalty to the nation, but to the Yang di Pertuan Agong, a symbol of national allegiance more for the Malays than for the non-Malays.

The Malay teachers' influence also is bolstered by their direct access to top-decision-makers in their own ministry. The Tamils felt they had to petition the Minister of Labor to defend their cause. Chinese teachers prefer to work through the Assistant Minister who is Chinese. The

Malay teachers, however, can take their case straight to the Minister of Education Khir Johari, to the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister (Deputy Prime Minister Tun Razak was formerly Education Minister and has continued to take a strong interest in education policy), all of whom are Malays. Malays also occupy the important policy positions of Chief Education Advisor and head of the Examinations division in the Ministry.

The Malay teachers long have been a valuable ally of UMNO, but now they are viewed also as a source of dissidence and annoyance as well. The teachers have been the single most outspoken critic of the Alliance's gradualist, accommodating approach to education and language, calling for more Malay-oriented policies within UMNO and through their own associations and autonomous organizations such as the militant National Language Action Front.

The signs of the teachers taking a stance more independent of UMNO may foreshadow a general political transformation within the Malay community toward less reliance on UMNO for organization and representation. This sort of development, of which the Malay teachers are just a clue, would presage greater heterogeneity within the Malay community, increasing politicization, and greater difficulty for any one political party to embrace the entire ethnic group and its communal associations.

The Malay teachers' moves toward independent political activity have taken two forms. The teachers have been active in a non-partisan organization whose purpose has been to mobilize ethnic support for a more energetic enactment of the National Language policy. The National Language Action Front is not the arm of any party, but its membership is mainly from the FMIP and lower echelons of UMNO. It has been a source of irritation to the Alliance. On the eve of the passage of the National Language Bill the Chairman of the Front, Inche Yahaya Ismail, said the Front "would continue to doubt the sincerity of certain leading UMNO members" in carrying out the language pledge. Dewan Bahasa Director Syed Nasir defended the Front's public demonstrations contending that the organization's actions might be regarded "as a show of their concern that their rights in regard to language would disappear."¹¹ These are the Malay articulates that UMNO and the Alliance must convince if they are to retain the confidence of the Malay community, since it includes many of the most influential and vocal non-English speaking Malays: Malay school teachers, UMNO local cadres, religious teachers, Malay intellectuals.

The second type of political involvement emerging among the Malay teachers reinforces this possibility of UMNO's loss of confidence. In the 1964 state and parliamentary

elections Malay teachers in Kelantan gave some assistance to the opposition FMIP, although it was done covertly. Kelantan is a rather special case in federal politics and should not be taken as denoting a nation-wide development. But even in Kelantan, a very conservative Malay-dominated state, the Malay teachers in the past had thrown their weight behind UMNO. The Malay teachers who did aid FMIP candidates had to do so covertly because they are federal employees and thus finally responsible to Alliance ministers in Kuala Lumpur. But the FMIP, with its strong stand for a thorough-going Malay-ization of the society, including the school system, can make a communal appeal which UMNO finds it impossible to match, even in the face of possible disenchantment of its teacher allies.

The Malay teachers have political advantages that the Chinese and Indian teachers do not. But they, too, are caught in a bind. First of all, teachers of all language streams are government employees and depend on the federal government for improvement of their schools and for advancement of their own careers. Secondly, all of the communal teachers groups seeking to influence fundamental educational policy find that their best recourse lies with their ethnic agent in the Alliance, because of the divisiveness and marginality of the opposition. The teachers in vernacular-medium

schools have the most to lose or gain from government policy decisions on language and education, but they find themselves within the ranks of a party dedicated to compromising on all ethnic demands and to underwriting English education.

In the end, the teachers associations have their greatest impact on the political system not so much as independent interest groups or as building blocks for opposition parties, but rather as the unsettling elements within the ruling party, keeping that party's cosmopolitan leadership in touch with their more parochial constituents in the different ethnic groups. The ethnic teachers associations stand at the extreme right of the integrationist spectrum. There are few groups in Malaysian politics which are further apart than the United Chinese Teachers Union and the National Union of National School Teachers on the question of the proper definition of a united Malaysia. The Alliance has managed to embrace both, but not without severe strains.

The Malay Islamic teachers hug that extreme ethnic separatist pole on the spectrum even more closely. The Malay teachers in the Malay-medium National Schools have gone through a standardized training program, are employees of the federal government, teach a curriculum intended to foster inter-ethnic harmony. The Islamic teachers are responsible to the state governments, not to Kuala Lumpur; their

curriculum is not set according to national goals but to the religious values of one ethnic group; and their training is limited both in duration and in relevance to national perspectives. Those religious teachers who do become involved in national politics have fewer personal and institutional restrictions imposed on them to refrain from support of a communalist opposition.

The religious teachers are not mobilized into any tightly-knit national organization. But individually they have become the backbone of the PMIP.

To diffuse and transform this potentially hostile and independent interest group the Alliance government has taken several steps. Its underlying strategy, as with the teachers in general, has been to encourage teachers' dependence - willing dependence - on the central government. It is part of a broader plan to de-communalize religious education in the Malay community. At the same time as Kuala Lumpur has been offering assistance to upgrade Islamic education, it has been enticing religious teachers themselves to take advantage of the opportunities for advanced education, security of government accreditation, and better salaries. At the same time, therefore, that Islamic education is made to serve the ends of elevating the living standards of the Malays, Islamic teachers in that educational system will be

encouraged to adopt a broader outlook on public affairs and their own professional role. If the Alliance policy succeeds the educational system should be brought one step closer to integration and a potentially powerful interest sector weaned away from the opposition.

By much the same strategy the Chinese school teachers have been politically emasculated. The government utilized the two-pronged strategy of transforming the schools in which the Chinese teachers served and incorporating the teachers themselves into a government service. The Chinese school teachers now are limited to either Chinese-medium National-type Schools at the primary levels, which are government-assisted, or to the poorer - financially and academically - Chinese-medium private schools. The education policy which limited secondary education to only English and Malay was a severe blow to the Chinese teachers as an interest group.

The Malay Islamic teachers currently are in a position vis-a-vis communal influence and government independence analogous to that of the Chinese teachers in the late 1940's. Ethnic change does not occur evenly in all ethnic groups in a society at the same time. The Chinese and Malay communities have not been equally affected by government moves to dilute communal cohesiveness in politics. Whereas the Chinese have been deprived of some of their most important bases for

communal political action, the Malays retain most of their's, although they are not highly developed. The Islamic school is such a base; so is the state government. The Alliance policy to assimilate Malay-religious education would reduce the communal usefulness of both.

Conclusion

Just as governments can alter the overall patterns of inter-ethnic relations through policy-making, so they can affect the character of secondary associations with which they have to deal. The Alliance government's alteration of the Malaysian school system has deprived some associations of their common denominators, while broadening the interest bases for new associations.

Western political analysis frequently assumes that political interest groups precede governmental action and that government policy is to a large degree the product of external group demands. But the Malaysian experience implies that interests first may be articulated in government circles; only after officials and policy-makers have given expression to what they discern to be a need in the society, and perhaps not even until policy based on that conception is implemented, do individuals of government feel it necessary to organize for the

group activism in national politics. While labor leaders, such as those in the MTUC, have shunned organizational involvement in politics out of self-imposed notions of propriety, the Alliance government on its part also has made it clear that it views trade unionism properly to be a rational, discreet, and publically responsible bargaining agent. It has displayed impatience with any union tactics it considers injurious to national development. The Minister of Labor defended a newly tightened law regulating labor's activities by warning:

"(Organized labor) enjoys a substantial degree of freedom of action and speech which is rarely tolerated in many other parts of the world... Of late these unions appear to have gone on a mass campaign of criticism and damage to the image of the public services as a whole and to the Government of the day.... "These (liberties to take union action) should not under any circumstances be interpreted by them to mean the government is either weak or fearful of their organizational strength." 14.

Several conditons could alter the role of interest groups in Malaysia and thus endanger the Alliance style of political bargaining and reconciliation. As suggested above, new issues could take the spotlight which stimulate organization in social sectors neither so immediately reliant on government nor so institutionalized. Also as the memory of the Emergency fades and as internal security becomes less tenuous, trade unionism may be less wary of overt political activism and even start to assist opposition parties (some

union leaders now are active in parties like the DAP and Labour Party, but as individuals not as union spokesmen). Furthermore, there is every possibility that if communal barriers are broken down increasingly there will be a greater pool of resources and members for groups interested in national affairs not simply ethnic groups affairs. Lastly, the Malay community just now is beginning to reach a stage where the detachment from traditional ties - through urban migration, secularization, technical careers - stimulates a need for secondary associations. As the Malay social milieu becomes more heterogeneous and less stable Malays may find that UMNO alone is not sufficient for handling its demands and increasingly may press government from the outside rather than relying on UMNO and the Alliance for representation.

CHAPTER VI

FEDERALISM AND ETHNIC PLURALISM

Malaysia: An Opportunity for Comparison

A theme throughout this discussion of Malaysia has been the variety of forms - and thus variety of political implications - of multi-ethnicity. To describe any polity as "multi-ethnic" really tells very little. To diagnose the political implications of that sort of pluralism it becomes necessary to delineate the precise nature of the inter-ethnic network at hand: the number of significant ethnic groups, the major distinctions between them, their relative political maturity, and other variables discussed in Chapter I.

A second theme which has reappeared continually here has been the fluidity of any pattern of inter-ethnic relationships. The number, culture, politicization of any one of the resident ethnic groups is subject to change. Change in any single group or in several groups simultaneously will alter the lines of separations, conflict and dependence among the several communities. This sort of alteration cannot help but have reverberations throughout the political system - changing natural alliances, issue concerns, sources of influence, perceptions of goals and rewards.

Finally, this analysis has noted the extent to which the character of individual ethnic groups and the nature of

relationships between ethnic groups can be reinforced or transformed by deliberate policy decisions and strategy choices made by government. The government and the current regime are molded by the multi-ethnic context in which they must operate. But they are not simply passive; the government and ruling party can seek to rearrange that context so that it will be conducive to their programs and be supportive of their authority.

All three of these themes can be validated only by comparative analysis. Only by holding up one multi-ethnic polity beside another can the relative significance of each of the myriad of variables relevant to ethnic politics be ascertained and the possibilities for change fully appreciated. Malaysia offers a peculiarly splendid opportunity for the comparative study of multi-ethnic politics. Especially, it provides an unusual chance to analyze the relationship between federalism and ethnic pluralism. Malaysia is a single political entity; but it embraces numerous political sub-units and, more importantly, numerous distinct multi-ethnic networks.

So far we have concentrated on only one of these networks: the Malayan peninsula, from the Thai border down to the tip of Johore. In this chapter we will expand the scope of analysis to include three additional multi-ethnic contexts: Singapore, Sarawak, and Sabah. Each of these

could be studied separately and each deserves as extensive discussion as has been given to the peninsular polity. But here we will have to deal with Singapore, Sabah, and Sarawak briefly and in broad strokes. The intent is not to present a detailed account of these three multi-ethnic networks, but, instead, to use them as opportunities to treat multi-ethnic politics and the problems of political integration comparatively and thereby to draw out some of the further implications of the themes which the Malayan experience has provoked.

When the Malayan situation is viewed from the perspective of comparison several factors or conditions are underscored. First, the existence of a federal structure is surprisingly peripheral to an explanation of Malayan politics; whereas it is central to the understanding of the larger Malaysian political system. Second, Malay identity and the political status accorded indigeneity are not necessarily mutually inclusive, as one might surmise if the peninsula were viewed by itself. When Malay ethnicity and indigeneity become detached from one another, no longer synonymous, then the establishment of political priorities and sources of authority in a multi-ethnic situation is greatly complicated. Third, while in Malaya the development of integrationist policy has proceeded from an initial preoccupation with internal security to a later emphasis on socialization and modernization this

developmental sequence is not inevitable. In the Borneo states of Malaysia the two steps are distinguishable, but are coming almost simultaneously. This gives issues and integrationist objectives a different coloration than on the peninsula and makes disciplinary actions in the name of harmony more open to question.

Federalism and Ethnic Pluralism

Federalism has been one of the most common solutions in multi-ethnic states. A federal structure combines the advantages of unity with those of limited autonomy. It has been adopted by numerous modern states as a means of reconciling the forces of nationalism with those of ethnic separatism. Federalism provides for dual citizenship, dual allegiance, and dual authority. Yet the dualism as organized within the framework of federal institutions enhances the nation's ability to survive rather than fostering divisiveness which will tear it apart. It is a neat, though intricate solution to one of politics' most persistent problems - diversity within unity.

In practice, federalism can take a variety of forms. Nigeria, Canada, Australia, Indonesia, Switzerland, and the United States all have adopted federalism. But their social,

political, and geographical contexts have been widely dissimilar. Consequently, history has given their federalisms different twists and tendencies. Among the most significant distinctions between various federal systems is the relative weight of central and constituent state authority and responsibility. In some countries federalism opens the way to the steady process of nationalization, the constituent states becoming less and less autonomous, popular attention and loyalty increasingly directed toward the center. In other countries the process is reversed: federalism reinforces the sub-groups by giving them legal status and political power; the central government thus has a progressively harder time holding together the nation-state as a unified polity as the state become increasingly jealous of their autonomy. Nigeria and Canada are examples of this latter process, in which federalism has meant less than an unwavering progression toward nationalization of political life. The United States exemplifies the contrary trend - though even here the states are by no means defunct. Indonesia and Burma fall somewhere in between, there being evidence of both nationalization and decentralization acting upon the political systems almost simultaneously.

One thing seems certain: the federalist formula is no guarantee of a nation's lasting solidarity. Federalism

can encourage fragmentation as well as unification, though at least it may give the latter an opportunity. A corollary is that once underway, either tendency need not be steadily progressive. Changes in the composition of the population, such as occur with immigration waves or internal migrations, and changes in the widespread concerns of the polity - a switch from interest in economic security to social equality, for example - may alter profoundly the trend that federalism initially set in motion.

A crucial factor determining whether federalism will promote or retard national unity is the extent of ethnic homogeneity in each of the constituent states. If the federal structure originally was designed so that state boundaries closely parallel ethnic group concentrations, and if circumstances after the founding encouraged the persistence of these separate concentrations, then one might anticipate that nationalization would not easily issue out of federalism. If, on the other hand, the states were drawn initially so as to dilute ethnic concentrations, and if future developments stimulated even greater mobility between states and greater ethnic diversity in all the states, then one might expect federalism to spur a sense of national identity overshadowing state allegiances.

Until Singapore's separation in 1965, there were at least three quite distinct types of federal relationships

encompassed within the Malaysian Federation:

- 1) The Malayan states - central government federal pattern
- 2) the Singapore - central government pattern
- 3) the Sabah and Sarawak - central government pattern.

The impact of multi-ethnicity has been a prime source of distinction between these three federal patterns. But ethnicity has not been the sole force working for variation within Malaysia's overall federal structure. Historical experience, pace of politicization, physical separateness, and economic autonomy all have to some degree determined the effect that any given ethnic mixture would have on the shape of relations between a particular state and the central government. It is the character of ethnic division plus a particular cluster of these additional factors which sets apart Malaysia's three styles of federalism.

Table 1 Population of the Constituent Parts of
Malaysia, by Community - 1960

	<u>Percentage of total in each state</u>				
	<u>Malays</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indians & Pakistanis</u>	<u>Borneo Indigenous</u>	<u>Others</u>
Federation of Malaya	49	37	11	-	2
Singapore	14	75	9	-	2

(Table 1 - Continued)

	<u>Malays</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indians & Pakistanis</u>	<u>Borneo Indigenous</u>	<u>Others</u>
Sarawak	18	31	-	51	-
Sabah	5	23	-	61	8

Source: Derived from T.E. Smith, Background to Malaysia, London Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 3.

Table 2 Population of all Malaysia, Excluding
Singapore

Approx. Percentage of Total Possessed by Each Group

Malays	44
Chinese	36
Borneo Indigenous	9
Indians	9

Source: Robert Tilman, "Political Forces in Malaysia," Asia, Spring, 1967, p. 53.

Federalism and Ethnicity on the Peninsula

The Malayan federal system essentially is one of centralized political control. The states on the peninsula are ill-equipped to oppose, or even effectively bargain with the federal government. As the evolution of education policy suggests, it is the central government which possesses the initiative in crucial policy areas. The states' preferences and variations may figure in the central government's formulation of policy, but this has been due more to Kuala Lumpur's own anticipation of states' reactions than to the states' own ability to press their interests.

Malayan federalism is marked by a general absence of parallelism between ethnic concentrations and state boundaries and by the existence of supra-state bonds extending back to the period prior to independence. Both circumstances lessen the likelihood of strong state separatist movements; this in turn reduces the differences between central and state policy programs. In addition, centralization is encouraged by the combination of political and economic weakness in the Malayan states. The dependency of all of the states on the financial resources of the central government makes them especially vulnerable to federal pressures. Even in a state perceived distinct educational needs which Kuala Lumpur was neglecting

or overriding, the state's own financial weakness would make it difficult, if not foolhardy to attempt to set up a state school program independent of the federal ministry. As we have seen, the central government has been quite successful in employing financial sanctions and incentives to secure adherence to its education policies. This has been as true in gaining states' acceptance as in gaining ethnic groups' acceptance.

Political dependency reinforces federal dominance in Malaya. None of the states, with the exception of Kelantan, possesses an independent power base from which to mobilize political support. In 1967 the Alliance Party controls ten of the eleven state governments, and the Alliance itself is a highly centralized organization, offering little opportunity for a state Alliance organization to act on its own. The Menteri Besars - chief ministers in each state - and other top political officials in the states owe their positions to their good standing with the Alliance leadership in the federal capital, rather than to a local organization loyal to them personally. As a result, these state leaders are not apt to become leaders of protest against a policy, such as education, on which both the federal government and the Alliance have publically staked so much of their prestige.

There is one aspect of education policy in which the states have carried considerable weight. That is religion. The 1957 Federation of Malaya Constitution specifically sets aside religion as a responsibility of the states. This provision might have been taken more lightly by the central government if it were not coincident with a political reality - the identification of the states governments, the seats of the traditional sultanates, with Malay communal prerogatives. In the states which were formerly part of the Straits Settlements and directly subject to the British Crown - Penang and Malacca - this identification of state government with Malay interests is less pronounced. However, in all the remaining peninsular states the state governments are looked upon as the special guardians of Malay rights and customs. The federal government, therefore, has been extremely wary of intervening in religious affairs. Despite a growing impatience in Kuala Lumpur with Islamic religious education, the Federal Ministry of Education has been moving with utmost care in its effort to incorporate the religious schools into the national school system. It has framed its policy carefully in terms of improving and assisting religious education, not of diminishing it or of undercutting state responsibility.

The acknowledged danger is that if the government moves too aggressively it risks embroiling education in a

federal-state contest, which so far has been avoided. What is more, the federal contest over religious education would have definite ethnic overtones. It could weld together the issues of Malay priorities and states' rights. Certainly the United States' experiences during the Civil War and in the current civil rights controversy have shown the danger in allowing this convergence to occur. The Malay sultans have been able to stay out of political battles. But a convergence of states' rights and Malay priorities would catch the sultans right in the middle. The Alliance and federal officials have good reason to want to avoid a controversy so fraught with disintegrative elements, the Alliance because its superiority derives largely from UMNO's deep roots in the state governments, and the federal officials because implementation of policy depends on cooperation at all levels.

In Malaya the municipal level, rather than the state level, has been the major source of resistance to federal domination. Both the weaknesses of the state government and the ethnic group distributions have tended to make the municipalities the surrogates for the states in the Malayan federal system.

While the state governments have been identified with Malay interests, the municipal governments have been more closely associated with the interests of the non-Malay

due to the urbanization of these ethnic communities. Moreover, while the state governments are controlled by the same party that rules in Kuala Lumpur, the municipal councils have been the opposition's focus of power. The opposition parties are relatively ineffectual on a nation-wide scale, but they have managed to win majorities in such important urban centers as Ipoh, Georgetown and Seremban. Kuala Lumpur is governed by a non-elective administration.

Ethnic concentration and political power overlap on the municipal level whereas they do not at the state level. The state governments are sympathetic to Malay interests largely due to traditional ties between the Malays and the sultanate, not because on a state-wide scale the Malays are clearly predominant. The municipalities give the federal government most of the effective resistance it encounters. Yet they, too, are relatively tame, the town councils, like the states, are dependent financially. Moreover, they have even less constitutionally-assigned responsibility than do the states. In education, for instance, the municipal council has very little bargaining power. Its greatest importance is as a visible forum for criticism of the federal policy. The municipalities may not be able to alter policy, but they do help to sustain the otherwise feeble opposition parties.

Recently there has been talk about converting all of the municipal governments into non-elective and thus non-political administrations, such as now governs Kuala Lumpur. The federal government sponsored an official commission to investigate the proposal. For the present local elections have been suspended. ¹ The debate which this investigation sparked is symptomatic of the kind of federalism existing in Malaya. Whatever obstacles there are to the centralization of federal relations have their roots chiefly in the municipalities, not the states, since it is in the towns that ethnic concentrations and political power detached from those of the federal level converge. But convergence is not sufficient to alter the imbalance weighted toward the center. The federal government still has the superior enough position to undertake an investigation aimed at undoing that convergence by eliminating the local governments as bases for opposition party power.

The Singapore - Central Government Federal Pattern

The second type of Malaysian federalism was short-lived, but its career is instructive in pin-pointing the effect of ethnic pluralism on a federal relationship. The Singapore - Central Government relationship was distinguished from the peninsular federal pattern by the greater degree of autonomy

enjoyed by the constituent state. This contrast was due to the very different sort of politico-ethnic character of Singapore. Singapore was also one of the Straits Settlements, along with Penang and Malacca. But in 1957, when they were incorporated into the new Malayan Federation as an independent state, Singapore was left out and remained under British rule until 1963. As a result, Singapore had a far greater opportunity to develop its own political system separate from any central authority. When it came to negotiating terms for merger, Singapore came to the bargaining table with appreciably more political power and sense of self-identity than the other constituent states.

Compounding this political individuality was Singapore's distinctive ethnic composition. The lowest percentage of Malays found in any of the peninsular states, according to the 1957 census, was in Selangor, where the Malays represented only 28 per cent of the total state population (a close second was Penang and Province Wellesley which together had 29 per cent Malays).² Thus in every state in the Malayan Federation - premised as it is on the special position of the Malay community - at least one-fourth of the population is Malay. In the federation as a whole almost 50 per cent of the population is Malay. Singapore presented a radically different ethnic situation. A mere 14 per cent of the island's population

was Malay when the Malaysian federation was being negotiated; 75 per cent were Chinese; 9 per cent were Indian. 3. Furthermore, the large Chinese majority was represented politically by a dynamic Chinese-led political party which had considerable experience in government. The Singapore Malays had no political party of their own and were generally peripheral to Singapore party politics (a Singapore Alliance was launched after merger but remained a minor party).

Even given the different federal stipulation on which the Singapore-Central Government relationship was founded, this combination of a high concentration of non-indigenous population and a self-sufficient political power base could not be absorbed successfully into the expanded Malaysia.

At the outset there appeared to be advantages in the merger for both sides. Singapore would be given a valuable economic tie with the promise of trade benefits; Singapore's PAP government would gain security to off-set the possible political unrest fomented by the Communists left on the island; and Singapore would not be left adrift once independent from Britain, a Chinese island in a Malay archipelago. For its part, Kuala Lumpur, which until 1961 had rejected the merger because of Singapore's large Chinese majority, now would be able to off-set that disturbing ethnic feature by simultaneous incorporation of the largely indigenous Borneo

states, also gaining independence from Britain. Kuala Lumpur would allow Singapore to maintain responsibility for its own labor and education affairs, as well as its health and social services. But the central government would be able to exercise authority in security matters on the island. This provision was of great concern to the Alliance, since it was extremely anxious over leftist agitation there and was eager to have direct jurisdiction. In addition, Singapore accepted a representational formula under which Singapore would be proportionately under-represented in the federal parliament: 15 elected members in the lower house, the Dewan Ra'ayat, and 2 members in the Senate. By contrast, the states of Sabah and Sarawak together were to have 40 members in the Dewan Ra'ayat and 10 in the Senate, even though Singapore's total population was several hundred thousand larger than that of the two Borneo states. ⁴.

The short-lived membership of Singapore in the Malaysian federation indicates that there may be limits to the functionality of federalism. It seems that if certain features of the constituent states and the central government persist, or are exacerbated by drawing closer ties, then federalism as a structural pattern alone cannot stem the disintegrative tide. In the case of Singapore, federalism did encourage, rather than dampen certain politico-ethnic disintegrative forces;

these finally led to the separation of Singapore from the federation in 1965.

First of all, the federal merger opened wide the Chinese-led PAP's files of political vision. The PAP no longer was restricted to a largely mono-ethnic political arena. The party now envisioned expansion into broader and ethnically more complex realms - the states of Malaya. The Federal merger also intensified the divisive tensions within the national governing party, the Alliance. Prior to the 1963 merger the MCA was plagued chiefly by internal frustration but with only ineffectual political rivals externally. But with the entrance of Singapore and its Chinese leadership and organization the MCA encountered a much more vital rival, one which it was not sure it could overcome. For UMNO, too, Singapore became a source of deep fear and suspicion. Moreover, the anxieties were most acute in the same UMNO circles which already questioned the commitment of its English-speaking leadership to Malay rights and priorities. Therefore, Singapore's entrance simultaneously raised a new external challenge for the Alliance's Chinese partner and generated profound internal strain within its Malay partner.

Ethnicity alone does not account for the breakdown of this second type of federal relationship. The explanation lies in a combination of certain political conditions with certain

ethnic conditions. Put another way, the older peninsular states are more amenable than is Singapore to federal rule because circumstances in Malaya dilutes even the highest co-incidence of ethnic concentration and state boundaries.

Kelantan and Singapore: A Comparison

The factors which made the Singapore-Malaysian relationship untenable are illuminated by a comparison of Singapore with a Malayan state at the opposite ethnic and socio-economic pole from it, Kelantan. A comparison of this sort - between two political situations so blatantly dissimilar - may appear too facile to be meaningful. But, in fact, it is the effort of Malaysia to encompass so vastly dissimilar political-ethnic conditions that makes the federal experiment particularly interesting. Also, the very sharpness of the contrasts between Kelantan and Singapore re-emphasizes the variety of political systems which justly can be labeled "multi-ethnic."

Kelantan and Singapore both stood out in the federation for their coincidence of a single ethnic groups dominance and state boundaries. Singapore could not be contained ultimately within the federation and yet Kelantan could. The question is why - why does one ethnic-state conjunction lead

to disintegration, while another conjunction does not? The answer suggests some of the variables shaping the mutual impact of ethnicity and federalism.

Kelantan is the northern-most state on the east coast, sharing a border with Thailand, by which it once was ruled. Kelantan is perhaps the most traditional of all the Malay sultanate states, and Malays in other states look to it as the source of authentic Malay culture.⁵ Singapore, on the other hand, has been separated from the peninsula's Malay heritage by water and by historical experience. Singapore has been populated chiefly by non-Malays for over a century; as early as 1860, Chinese inhabitants made up 61 per cent of the island's population.⁶ And whereas Kelantan's remoteness left it relatively untouched by European imperialist venture, Singapore became a pivot in world trade and diplomacy in the sixteenth century.

Despite these striking dissimilarities, Kelantan and Singapore share one characteristic that figures centrally in the politics of federalism: both states are marked by relative ethnic homogeneity, a rare possession for any Malaysian state. In Kelantan Malays represent over 90 per cent of the state population.⁷ In Singapore the Chinese amount to 75 per cent of the state population.⁸

Table 3. Distribution of the Malay Population by
States in Malaya - 1957

<u>State</u>	<u>Number of Malays</u>	<u>Percentage of Total Population</u>
Trengganu	256,349	92
Kelantan	463,292	91
Perlis	71,268	78
Kedah	475,747	68
Pahang	179,113	57
Malacca	143,252	49
Johore	444,907	48
Negri Sembilan	151,426	41
Perak	484,878	39
Penang and Province Wellesley	165,081	29
Selangor	<u>291,393</u>	<u>28</u>
Malaya, Total	3,126,706	49.8

Source: Ooi-Jin-Bee, Land, People and Economy in
Malaya, London, Longmans, 1963, p. 146.

Table 4 Singapore: Percentage Distribution of Population
by Racial Groups, Selected Years

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Number</u>	<u>% Malays</u>	<u>% Chinese</u>	<u>Indians & Pakistanis</u>	<u>% Others</u>
1947	938,144	12.1	77.7	7.4	2.8
1952	1,127,000	12.9	76.6	7.8	2.7
1957	1,445,929	13.6	75.4	8.6	2.4
1962	1,732,800	14.0	75.2	8.3	2.5
1963	1,775,200	14.0	75.2	8.2	2.6

Source: State of Singapore, Annual Report, 1963,
Singapore Government Printing Office,
1965, p. 80.

It is the quality of a state's dominant ethnic group, however, not its percentage, that has been the decisive factor shaping the state's federal career. Kelantan's dominant community is indigenous; Singapore's is immigrant.

In Malaysian, as well as in Malayan politics the distinction between indigenous and immigrant is a primary determinant molding the relationship between states and the central government. The Kuala Lumpur government is dedicated, by constitution and party platform, to the special protection and promotion of the nation's indigenous people, even while it also is wedded to the nation of a harmonious multi-ethnic nation. A fundamental rationale underlying the merger of the disparate parts of the former British empire in the archipelago in 1963 was the guarantee of continuing dedication to the region's native peoples. Kuala Lumpur could not accept Singapore into the federation until it discovered some formula which assured that natives would not be displaced by "aliens". The formula worked out by Malaya and Britain was the linkage of Singapore's entrance with that of the Borneo states. There were numerous practical advantages - i.e., security, financial, commercial, diplomatic - for enlarging the federation; but practicality could not supercede the moral and legal commitment, since that was an essential source of the federal government's raison d'etre. In the strategy of federal expansion, as in the

strategy of education development, Kuala Lumpur has to satisfy two, often conflicting imperatives: progress and integrity. Indigeneity is the cornerstone of Malaysian national integrity.

Kelantan has been the cause of worry and frequent irritation for the federal government and the Alliance Party because it has supplied the base for strident Malay communalism and for its political standard-bearer, the FMIP. Kelantan is governed by the PMIP and is the sole peninsular state not under Alliance control. Nevertheless, Kelantan's Malay politicians have only a slim chance of achieving their communalist goals on a nation-wide scale or of ever holding power in Kuala Lumpur.

The importance of Kelantan, then, is not so much as an immediate threat to Alliance national control. More significantly, Kelantan poses a test for the Alliance-authored formula of national integration. If that formula is to be vindicated, Kelantan's communally-minded Malays must be won over. But neither Kelantan nor the central government can afford to cut itself off from the other - no matter how strained their relations become. The central government needs Kelantan for the very reason that it is a seat of Malay culture; whereas the PMIP state leaders need the rest of

the Malayan peninsula because of its historical centrality to the Malay sense of identity, and for the more practical necessity of funds and assistance for state development even along traditional Malay lines. 9.

Not so with Singapore. Because the island-state's population is overwhelmingly non-indigenous, the central government did not have a morally-loaded obligation to satisfy its demands. Beyond its practical benefits, there was no moral reason why the central government had to hold on to Singapore at all costs. Indigeneity is the source of political morality in Malaysia. That is, satisfaction of claims based on grounds other than indigeneity can be argued for their short-term and long-term practicality, for their contributions to prosperity, even peace. But satisfaction of claims based on indigeneity of the claimants can be justified not only by these practical arguments but by arguments of national mission, national obligation. Kelantan can press its case on moral grounds, but Singapore had no such leverage with which to influence the central government. As soon as the federal government and Alliance leadership were persuaded that practicality called for the severance of ties with Singapore, there was little to stand in the way.

Singapore's separation naturally, was a harsh disappointment to the Tunku and his advisors, who were mainly

responsible for fashioning the Malaysian federation. But the point is that it was a disappointment, not a repudiation of the Alliance formula for integration. What had been amputated from the body politic in August, 1965, was not an indigenous community, nor was it all of the non-Malay community. Singapore represented a portion of one non-indigenous community, which by its aggressiveness seemed to have threatened the delicate balance between commitment to Malay privilege and commitment to multi-ethnic harmony.

Indigenity as a factor in federalism explains a great deal about Malaysia's experience, but not everything that sets apart two such states as Kelantan and Singapore. Another central element is political self-sufficiency. Kelantan is the only state governed by an opposition party on the peninsula, but the PMIP suffers handicaps that severely limit its ability to utilize Kelantan as a base from which to challenge the central government. The PMIP is explicitly non-ethnic, with little possibility of expanding its following beyond the Malay community. In addition, the PMIP is conservative and traditional, offering little for those Malays who wish not simply to wrest power from the non-Malays but to do it on a modern, internationally respectable platform. Then, too, although the PMIP does have the backing of a local elite, the Islamic teachers, it nonetheless lacks a single leader able

to capture national interest and imagination. Finally, the PMIP governs a relatively underdeveloped state, even in Malaysian terms. Kelantan leans heavily on the federal government for financial and technical assistance. For the 1966 - 1970 First Malaysian Plan the Kelantan State Government drew up projects costing about M\$ 143 million. The State Government intended that it should bear only 10 per cent of the total expenditure; the rest was to come from Kuala Lumpur.¹⁰ All of these inhibitions make the PMIP and Kelantan more of a nuisance than a genuine threat in the eyes of the ruling Alliance.

But Singapore's governing party presented an immediate and far-reaching challenge to the Alliance's pre-eminence. Whereas Kelantan is a base for a party that has little chance of unseating the Alliance, Singapore was the base for a party that could not be shrugged off as a mere annoyance. The PAP had everything that the PMIP lacked. It had built a political stronghold of its own, and without any aid from the Alliance. In September, 1963, just after the formalization of the Malaysian merger, the PAP competed in the Singapore elections and came away with 37 of the total 51 seats in the Singapore Assembly.¹¹ Although its support came chiefly from Indians and Chinese, the PAP's platform was such that, given the right domestic situation in the future, it could attract urbanized, commercialized Malays as well.

Unlike the PMIP, which faces the well-entrenched UMNO, the PAP entered a political arena in which its potential competition was fragmented and tarnished by dubious loyalty and histories of electoral failure. Among the leftist opposition parties in Malaysia - the PAP's potential support lay in Sabah and Sarawak as well as Malaya - the PAP stood out as the one party with proven governing ability and with a career which included defeat of a Communist front party, the Singapore Barisan Socialis. Along with these assets was the PAP's possession of a spokesman of sufficient stature to match even the Tunku in public prestige and appeal, Singapore's Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew. More important than Lee's ability to compete with the Tunku for headlines and audience turn-out was his capacity to overshadow the head of the MCA, the older, more conservative, less aggressive Tan Siew Sin.

Electoral data does not seem to substantiate these speculations regarding the nation-wide appeal and strength of the PAP. The PAP's significance in Malaysia lay in its potential or, more accurately, in its opponents' own estimation of PAP potential. There was only one electoral test of the PAP's drawing power outside Singapore, the Malayan parliamentary elections of 1964. In that election the PAP fared poorly. There had been a tacit agreement when Lee Kuan Yew

and the Alliance decided on the terms of the merger that the new federation would be sliced up into acknowledged spheres of influence: the Alliance would retain its domination of pen-^{12.}insular politics, and the PAP would have its head in Singapore. Party development in the Borneo states was so nascent and so uncertain that no party could claim them for its own; but the assumption was that something akin to the Malayan Alliance would prevail there and would naturally accept Malayan guidance.

In 1964, however, Lee and the PAP were frustrated in making an impact on the central government. Singapore was under-represented in the Federal Parliament, and the PAP had been turned down when it offered to replace the MCA in the Alliance. It had no Cabinet portfolios. So the PAP looked to the fertile political ground on the peninsula and decided to extend the party's base across the causeway. It angered the Alliance and most specifically the MCA, for which it was a direct threat, by setting up branches in the Malayan states, concentrating on the west coast where most non-Malays reside. It aggravated Alliance leaders even further by actually running parliamentary candidates in direct competition with the Alliance ticket. Out of 15 PAP candidates, however, only one - Devan Nair, running in heavily non-Malay Selangor - managed to secure a parliamentary seat. Today Devan Nair heads the PAP Malayan remnant, the Democratic Action

Party, which is charged with remaining Singaporean in its political inclinations.

The PAP's poor showing in 1964 would appear to have vindicated the Alliance and relieved fears of effective PAP encroachment; but this was not the case. Instead, the Alliance was more than ever wary of Lee Kuan Yew and his party, and thus of Singapore itself. After all, the 1964 election was only the beginning, and the Alliance had had the benefit of the pressures of the Confrontation working on its behalf.

There was a feeling of anxiety that went deeper than merely anger at an allegedly broken political promise. Here the factors of immigrant ethnic concentration and political rivalry met. For, by symbolically crossing the causeway from Singapore to the peninsula and confronting the Alliance on its own territory, the PAP had broken down the necessary separation between two fundamentally different types of federal relationships. The incorporation of so large and energetic a Chinese community as Singapore's had been shunned in the past and accepted in 1963 only with an awareness of the risks and difficulties involved. The solution was to establish a type of federal pattern that would minimize those problems, a pattern allowing for more autonomy than between Kelantan or the other Malayan states and the central government.

In other words, Singapore could be taken into the federation only if there was no attempt to impose on it the same sort of integrative formula imposed on the older states. Singapore presented so singular an ethnic-political condition that it required a distinctly different integrative solution. The agreement that Singapore continue to handle its own labor and education affairs was one part of this solution: the agreement that the PAP and Alliance stay out of each other's ballwicks was another ingredient. Hence, when the PAP began to set up party operations on the peninsula it was in effect breaking down this nicely balanced concept of federalism which had been rooted in the recognized differences between Malaya and Singapore.

Today the future of Singapore-Malaysia relations is uncertain. There are many leaders in both countries (Singapore is an independent state) who foresee the restoration of some kind of political partnership as inevitable, given the proximity and common interests of the two. For the present what is most important about Singapore's brief membership in the Malaysian federation is the light it shed on the character of Malaysian federalism and the integrative premises upon which it is founded. Where there is relatively little uniform ethnic-state parallelism federalism follows one path. Where there is marked parallelism then a different pattern is

generated. But both patterns will be shaped as well by the extent to which a dominant ethnic group in any federal state can translate its popular superiority into real political leverage-organization, votes, and resources.

Singapore's influence on Malaysian integrative developments will survive despite separation. The fact that Singapore is now independent and that Lee Kuan Yew is head of a government capable of formulating its own domestic and international policies may increase the Malaysian Chinese frustration with the second-place role of the MCA in their own nation's politics. For the Malaysian Chinese, Singapore - the "third China" - may become that external object of pride and identification which has been deprived them because of Peking's isolation. It is probable that Malaysian Chinese will use Singapore as a measuring rod by which to evaluate their own condition. For instance, Singapore's education policies will have less direct effect on them because of separation, but the fate of Singapore's Chinese-medium schools and universities will be watched for indications of the fate of Chinese communal culture. There are signs that even under a Chinese regime, traditional communal education is headed for hard times. 13.

In education the Chinese of Singapore and Malaysia face a similar dilemma. They can maintain a Chinese-medium

school system and thereby cultivate the linguistic bonds of community at the price of greater gaps between the Chinese-medium and English-medium graduates and possible retardation of modernizing processes; or they can gradually terminate formal Chinese-medium education and give whole-hearted support to English-medium education and thereby risk the loss of Chinese communal distinctiveness but maximizing chances for success in terms increasingly defined by western culture. This is as sensitive an issue in Singapore as it is in Malaya, which suggests that the dilemmas of the overseas Chinese are not the product of multi-ethnicity alone. Perhaps the controversy in Singapore is even sharper because it is fought and strictly within the ethnic family, without so much concern with non-Chinese challenges (although the Singapore government has declared Malay an official language). Lee Kuan Yew, himself an honors graduate of Cambridge - as is his lawyer wife - appears to be leading the PAP regime toward a policy stressing English and English-medium schools. In this development the Malaysian Chinese have been reduced to foreign on-lookers, but they are not disinterested on-lookers.

The Malaysian Malays' political problems also have not ended with the ouster of Singapore. Singapore did not create the tensions within UMNO between the communal moderates and communal extremists; it only accentuated them.

With Singapore out, those tensions have receded, but they are still alive, as the controversy over the National Language Bill two years later demonstrated. The separation of Singapore is explained in large part by the desire of UMNO leaders to eliminate the nettle aggravating Malay anxieties and spurring intra-party acrimony. If Singapore made the MCA conscious of the shakiness of its communal following, it made the UMNO leadership all the more sensitive to the potential for intra-communal and intra-party splits among the Malays.

The Borneo - Central Government Federal Pattern:
A Case of Mistaken Identity

Sabah and Sarawak - together referred to as Eastern Malaysia - are dissimilar from one another in major respects. But their relationship with the central government and the problems it has raised spring from a common assumption—a mistaken notion of ethnic identity.

Singapore did not allow for such confusion because its Chinese character was so pronounced that there was little question of assuming bonds of cultural identity with Malaya. Sabah and Sarawak were recognized to have peculiar features which required granting more autonomy than on the peninsula. But, at the same time, the two Borneo states were believed

to have a fundamental affinity with Malaya that Singapore lacked; thus despite provisions for autonomy this third federal pattern would allow for greater trust and cooperation than was possible with Singapore. While it is true, at least, that Sabah and Sarawak have remained within the federation while Singapore has broken off, the basic projection of Borneo-Malaya affinity has proved inaccurate.

Neither Borneo state has the financial resources or the political cohesion to challenge the central government as forcefully as did Singapore, but both have proved more difficult to integrate into the enlarged federation than initially was anticipated.

When Kuala Lumpur indicated a new interest in creating some formal link with Singapore, the first problem tackled was how to offset the influx of Chinese this would bring into the federation. The answer was Borneo. In the early 1960's Britain was intent upon reducing its commitments "east of Suez." This policy included divesting itself of the two underdeveloped Borneo territories. Talks among the British and Malaysian governments produced what became the rationale for the Malaysian federation: Singapore's Chinese would be counter-balanced by the indigenous populations of Sabah (then North Borneo) and Sarawak.

The reason the Borneo territories were seized upon as a solution was not only Britain's eagerness to withdraw, but Malaya's belief that these less-developed states did share a common cultural identity with the peninsula, which made them logical extensions of Malayan domain. The essence of this shared identity was thought to be the fact of indigenelty: the largest single ethnic communities in both Malaya and Borneo were communities native to the archipelago.

Legally, a Malay is defined as a person who habitually speaks the Malay language, is a Muslim, and follows Malay custom.¹⁴ But once so defined, those person with these characteristics see their collective soci-political uniqueness as residing in their claim to indigenelty. That is, the criteria for membership in the ethnic group is one thing, but the grounds on which the ethnic group defines its peculiar role in the larger society is another thing.

More than language, more than religion, more than mode of habitation, more than historical experience, it was the fact that the Malayan Malays were the community native to the peninsula that determined their political role. It was not the superiority of Islam which elevated it to status of State Religion; it was not the literary merits of Malay which justified its institution as sole office language; it was not racial superiority which called for constitutional privileges for

Malays in citizenship, civil service, land allocation. The official justification for these priorities was the Malays' historic roots in the region.

Hence, when the Alliance looked across the Straits of Malacca to Borneo it saw not Dusuns, Dayaks, Bajaus; it saw "Indigenous peoples." It was the status of indigeneity - not language or religion or even custom - which the Malayan Malays and the Borneo native peoples shared and which would be the foundation for their presumed common political outlook and their ability to work together to counterbalance the influence of the Chinese and other immigrant peoples.

Defining ethnicity is troublesome for outside observers and domestic politicians alike. Earlier in this paper we tried to break down this catch-all term by analyzing the multitude of elements which can delineate one ethnic group from another. Different groups define their collective distinctiveness along different lines; one group may consider physical appearance as the touchstone of its identity, while another uses language, and another uses religion. What the Alliance government did was to assume that because the Malayan Malays define their communal political distinctiveness in terms of their indigeneity to the archipelago, any other group in the region with that characteristic naturally would concur with Malayan Malay interests.

This was the perception from the vantage point of Malaya. Moving across to Sabah and Sarawak the perspective changed. For one thing, the Malays in Borneo were not considered indigenous. The term "Native" in the Borneo context did not embrace the Malays, who were descendents of people most of whom had migrated from Sumatra and other parts of the archipelago. While the Malays in Malaya and Ibans or Kadazans in Borneo might share a claim to indigeneity, the latter did not feel this commonality automatically with those Malays with whom they had the closest contact in their own states. It is these Borneo Malays, not the Native peoples, who currently enjoy the closest relationships with the Malay leaders on the peninsula. This, in turn, lessens the sense of identity between even the Malaysian Malays and the Sabah and Sarawak Natives. The Malaysian Malays have become associated politically with the non-indigenous Malays in their own states.

Ethnicity and Political Identity in
Sabah and Sarawak

At least two things stand out in the Eastern Malaysian census figures (see Table 5). First, the Chinese are the one group predominant in both Sabah and Sarawak. In fact, it has been suggested that in all of Malaysia, at the time of merger, the Chinese were the major element common

to all its diverse parts. But this commonality offers frustration rather than the impetus for cohesion. For the Chinese neither can be used as the foundation for integrating the new federation, because of their "alien" image; nor can they be used as a negative object for unity, as a target of common hostility, since the Alliance bases its legitimacy on the realization of inter-communal cooperation and harmony, not on communal exclusivism.

The existence of large numbers of Chinese in each of Malaysia's constituent parts, however, does have implications for the applicability of the Alliance strategy. The Chinese presence in both Borneo and Malaya has made the Alliance concept of communal bargaining and compromise as relevant for the newer states as it has been for the older federation.

The Chinese presence, probably as much as that of a large indigenous population, led by Kuala Lumpur to believe that the Alliance solution could be exported and made the core of the Sabah and Sarawak political processes, just as it had become for the Malayan political process. That exportation has not been accomplished with notable success so far is due to the non-Malay character of the indigenous peoples and to the belated start that the Alliance Party got in the Borneo states.

Table 5. Population of Eastern Malaysia

Population of Sabah By Community - 1960

<u>Community</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent of Total</u>
Kadazan (Dusun)	145,229	32.0
Murut	22,138	4.9
Bajau	59,710	13.1
Other Indigenous	79,421	17.5
Chinese	104,542	23.0
European	1,896	0.4
Others	<u>41,485</u>	<u>9.1</u>
All Communities	454,421	100.0

Source: Sabah, Annual Report, 1963, Jesselton,
Government Printing Office, 1964, p. 7.

Population of Sarawak by Community - 1960

<u>Community</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent of Total</u>
Sea Dyak (Iban)	237,741	31.9
Land Dyak	57,619	7.7
Melanau	44,661	6.0
Other Indigenous	37,931	5.1
Chinese	229,154	30.8

(Table 5 - Continued)

<u>Community</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent Total</u>
Malay	129,300	17.4
Others	<u>8,123</u>	<u>1.1</u>
All Communities	744,529	100.0

Source: Joan Rawlins, Sarawak 1839-1963, London
Macmillan and Co., 1965, p. 189.

The second fact which stands out from these census tables is the heterogeneity of the indigenous peoples themselves. If "Other Indigenous" were broken down, the diversity would be even more remarkable. Language, religion, style of life, mode of subsistence, all divide these groups in various combinations. But those ethnic distinctions which have become most relevant for the groups' political affiliations and interests have been those which set them apart furthest from, or tie them most closely to the Malays. In other words, the ethnic characteristics that serve as bases for political action are those which have been most directly touched by the formation of Malaysia. For the merger for Sabah and Sarawak was the event which propelled most of their peoples into modern

politics - or into domestic rather than home country politics in the case of the Chinese. These characteristics are language and religion.

Religion and language are not the sole issues around which internal and federal politics revolve in Eastern Malaysia. Trade policy, taxation, Malaysianization of the civil service each have been the focus of deliberation and contention. But it is language and religion which are most visible in the political debates arousing communal sentiments. Each has stimulated a sense of separateness or a sense of community between certain sectors of the Borneo population and the federal government. This usually comes down to a matter of aligning with the Malay leadership in Kuala Lumpur or resenting their intrusions.

Religion and Ethnic Identity in Borneo

In Western Malaysia - i.e., Malaya - Islam is the formal religion of more than 50 per cent of the population (virtually all of the Malays and a minority of the Indians). Islam was given special sanction and protection in the Malayan Constitution, Christian proselytism is forbidden among the Malays, Islamic instruction is assured in all government schools, official ceremony on state occasions is filled with the symbols

of Islam. In Eastern Malaysia Muslims are a definite minority. Christianity, which claims only about 5 per cent of the Malayan population, is much more widespread.

Table 6 Religious Persuasion in North Borneo (Sabah) and Sarawak, According to the 1960 Census

<u>Religion</u>	<u>North Borneo</u>		<u>Sarawak</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Christian	75,247	16.6	77,755	15.8
Muslim	172,324	37.9	174,123	23.4
Others (Hindu, Confucian, Buddhist, animist)	206,850	45.5	452,651	60.8

Source: Commission of Enquiry, North Borneo and Sarawak ("Cobbold Commission"), Report, Government Printing Office, 1962, p. 103.

The Muslims are composed of Malays, Melanaus, and a smaller group, the Biayas, in Sarawak. In Sabah the Muslims are mostly the coast-dwelling peoples, the Malays, Bejaus, Iilanuns, Suluks and Kadayans. In the interior Islam has not had as strong an impact, and the native groups have retained

their own animistic forms of religion, although recently Christian missions have made some in-roads. ¹⁵. In Eastern Malaysia, therefore, Muslim is a term frequently used as a synonym for Malay or the Malay's natural allies. This divergence between indigeneity and Islam is the first important loophole in the ethnic-political assumptions beneath the Malaysian merger. Islamic symbolism does not provide the same sort of political link that it does among Western Malaysia's dominant ethnic group; in fact, it has been an object of suspicion.

In Malaya the Malays have never been conquerors or more than nominal rulers of the non-Malays. Likewise, although Muslim leaders used the sultanates to preserve and protect Islam, political power had not been wielded by the Malays to convert the non-Muslims. Consequently, the Chinese and non-Muslim Indians see themselves partly as non-Muslims, but without memories of attempted conversions or serious fears over the suppression of their own religions. This is one of the reasons that religion has not been a major inter-communal issue in Malaya.

In Sabah and Sarawak the image of Islam among non-Malays and non-Muslims is quite different. The Muslim sultanate of Brunei until the last century was the focus of political power in the area which now constitutes Sabah,

Brunei, and Sarawak. Brunei's sultanate was not only Muslim, it was Malay and "foreign". At one time the Brunei Malays ruled over a broad territory and carried Islam with them. Today, consequently, Malays are associated in the minds of Borneo's indigenous peoples with a historical memory of foreign rule. The Brunei Malays who now are scattered throughout Sabah and Sarawak are descendants of former conquerors. Furthermore, the memory of that rule is linked with the memory of attempted religious conversion. Unlike Malaya's non-Malays and the Chinese in Borneo, the indigenous peoples of Borneo were subject to religious proselytism. Today the political repercussions are the fears of the Sarawak Ibans and the Sabah Kadazans of renewed efforts at Islamic conversion because of the Muslims' new allies on the peninsula.

The Sabah and Sarawak negotiators in 1962 insisted upon guarantees of religious autonomy and Muslim non-intervention in the Report of the Inter-Governmental Committee, which set down the conditions for federation. According to the IGC provisions, the Heads of State in Sabah and Sarawak are not to be Heads of the Muslim Religion in the state, as they are in Malaya. The Report requires a two-thirds majority consent in either state legislature to put into effect the Malayan constitutional provision restricting the propagation of non-Islamic religions among Muslim peoples.

It also guarantees that federal money will not be granted for the establishment of Muslim institutions or Muslim instruction, even for Muslim persons, without the agreement of the respective state governments. ¹⁶ Therefore, in the tell-tale area of education, there is much more inter-ethnic wariness concerning religion than there has been in Malaya, where the federal government makes much of its moral and financial commitment to Islamic education in the national school system.

Language and Ethnic Identity in Borneo

There is no single language which is predominant because of widespread usage and association with a major resident ethnic community, as is the case with Malay on the peninsula. Malay does serve as a lingua franca in Eastern Malaysia, but it is not the mother tongue of Borneo's largest ethnic groups, the Kadazans, Ibans, or Chinese.

Literacy among persons over ten years of age in both Sabah and Sarawak, according to the 1960 census, was somewhat over 250 per thousand, i.e., 25 per cent. Whereas over half of the population over ten years of age was illiterate in some language in Malaya. ¹⁷ Literacy rates vary dramatically among the several communities and in the various languages. Under 10 per cent of the population over

ten years of age in Sabah and Sarawak were literate in English. As in Malaya, it is this small sector that has achieved post-primary education and which make up the inter-communal elites. For the Chinese, the second largest group in both states, English and Chinese are the only significant languages of literacy: in Sabah in 1960 only 18 in every thousand Chinese claimed literacy in Malay, whereas 173 in every thousand Chinese claimed literacy in English. 18.

Table 7 Literacy (ability to read and write a letter)
per mille By Language of Literacy and By
Community: Sabah - 1960

<u>Group</u>	Literate in:	<u>Malay</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Other</u> (Chinese etc.)
Dusun (Kadazan)		82	33	16
Murut		93	5	4
Bajau		73	9	3
Other Indigenous		152	37	20
Chinese		18	173	505
Others		238	129	100
All Communities		95	75	136

Source: L.W. Jones, North Borneo: Report on the Census Population Taken on 10th August, 1960, Kuching, Government Printing Office, 1962, p. 85.

In summary, despite the shared attribute of indigeneity among the largest communities, there are major differences between the federal contexts of Malaya and Borneo. Islam, from which so much of the nation's legitimacy and symbolism is derived, is much less prevalent in Borneo than it is in Malaya. Furthermore, the ethnic mixtures of Sabah and Sarawak are more complex than even that of Malaya; in Borneo Malays are numerically a minor group and the native peoples are split among many communities. Language and communal affiliation do not neatly coalesce in Sabah and Sarawak. Malay is the only language approaching a popular lingua franca, but it does not evoke the same cultural loyalties as it does in Malaya because it is not the mother tongue of most of the groups that use it.

Differences Between Sabah and Sarawak

The two Borneo states frequently are mentioned in the same breath as if they were siamese twins. They do present many of the same ethnic-federal problems for the central government, but they are by no means identical.

Both Sabah and Sarawak pose for Kuala Lumpur the problem of redefining integration in recognition of the separability of indigeneity and Malay identity. Furthermore,

both states cast doubt on the appropriateness of the Alliance party formula outside Malaya and thus call for a new assessment of the relationship between party system and political integration. Lastly, Sabah and Sarawak demand a new conception of federalism which includes more autonomy than needed in Malaya but less self-sufficiency than presumed in Singapore.

These common political aspects are combined with important dissimilarities. Sabah and Sarawak both are ethnically heterogenous to a remarkable degree, but their heterogeneity takes different forms. Although Malays are one of the smaller groups in both states, they are more important numerically and politically in Sabah than in Sarawak. The roles of overseas Chinese differ too. The Sarawak Chinese have been more aggressive, more highly mobilized politically. Closely associated is the greater threat of internal subversion felt in Sarawak than in neighboring Sabah, even when both were in the middle of the Confrontation emergency. Each state is considered economically underdeveloped (Malayan officials say "backward"), but of the two, Sarawak is the weaker in trade and resources.

Anyone picturing Sabah and Sarawak as Tweedledum and Tweedledee would be surprised at the paucity of direct intercourse between the two states. This may be changing now in the realm of party politics - especially opposition

politics - but in the fields of education, administration, security, and agriculture there is more interaction and cooperation with Malaya and Singapore - a three hour jet flight away - than with each other. ¹⁹. This is partially explained by the cultural and historical differences which separate the two. It means that in federal relations the central government has to deal with the two states separately, although many of their problems are common. But it also means that if there is a movement toward disintegration and even succession from Malayasia, it is likely not to be a coordinated move by Sabah and Sarawak together. The dissolution of federal ties between Kuala Lumpur and Sarawak does not make a dissolution of Kuala Lumpur-Sabah ties inevitable. Of the two Eastern Malaysia states Sarawak currently appears the most restless.

As in Malaya, the debate over education policy provides a vantage point from which to analyze the political impact of ethnic pluralism. Education development also clarifies some of the similarities and differences between Sabah and Sarawak.

Education and the Formation of Malaysia

The IGC negotiations gave considerable attention to education. The IGC Report designates Sabah's and Sarawak's education a subject of federal responsibility -

unlike Singapore - but surrounds the federal authority with important qualifications which give the two states more autonomy in education than enjoyed by the peninsular states.

Inter-Governmental Committee Report Provisions
Pertaining to Education in Sabah and Sarawak 20.

Education

"Certain aspects of religious education have been dealt with under the heading 'Religion'. In addition:

(a) although Educationwill be a federal subject, the present policy and system of administration of education in North Borneo and Sarawak (including their present ordinances) should be undisturbed and remain under the control of the government of the state until that government otherwise agrees. In particular:

- (i) the present policy in the Borneo States regarding the use of English should continue;
- (ii) knowledge of the Malay language should not be required as a qualification for any educational opportunity until such time as the State government concerned considers that sufficient provision has been made to teach Malay in all schools in the State;

- (iii) there should be no application to the Borneo States of any Federal requirements regarding religious education;
- (iv) State provisions for the special position of the Indigenous peoples should continue to apply;
- (v) The Directors of Education in the Borneo States, who would be officers serving in Federal posts and responsible to the Federal Minister of Education through the Ministry of Education, should carry out the same duties as they do at present in consultation with the State government concerned.
- (vi) to enable local wishes to be fully consulted and taken into account as far as possible, the Directors of Education of the Borneo States should continue to be advised by the respective existing Boards of Education and the local Education Committees; and
- (vii) in the case of Sarawak the local authorities should continue to be used as agents for primary education; and

(b) when expansion of higher education facilities was being considered by the Malaysian Government the requirements

of the Borneo States should be given special consideration and the desirability of locating some of the institutions in the Borneo States should be borne in mind."

Religion

"Sections 36 and 37 of the Malayan Education Act, 1961, should not be applied to North Borneo and Sarawak; Federal Law should not provide for special financial aid for the establishment of Muslim institutions or the instruction in the Muslim religion of persons professing that religion in respect of North Borneo and Sarawak without the concurrence of the State Government concerned; and the Federal Constitution should be amended to secure that where federal law provides for special financial aid for Muslim institutions or Muslim religious education in pursuance of Article 12 (2) the Malaysian Government would grant to the North Borneo and Sarawak Governments proportionate amounts for social welfare purposes in these States."

National Language

"Malay should be the national language of the Federation of Malaysia, but Article 152 should be modified in its application to the Borneo States to secure that:

"for a period of ten years after Malaysia Day (i.e., until 1973) and thereafter until the State

Legislature otherwise provides, the English language shall be an official language and may be used in the Legislative Assembly and for other official purposes in the States, whether Federal or State purposes, including correspondence with Federal Ministries and Departments."

Both Borneo states conceive of their cultural and social conditions as calling for an educational program unlike that now planned for Malaya. In particular, Sabah and Sarawak fear the use of the school systems to propagate Islam. Also, they are notably dubious about the appropriateness of Malay-medium education as a top priority in the schools development. In both states there is more communal separateness and less government control than now evident in Malaya, both of which indicate the retarded rate of political and social integration in Eastern Malaysia. If the central government, therefore, is to duplicate its education policy in Sabah and Sarawak it must 1) accelerate the unification of the school system under government supervision and 2) persuade the Borneo leadership and public of the wisdom and practicality of the National Language policy and its educational application. The first of these tasks is proceeding at a reasonable pace, though it still falls short of Malaya; but the second task is meeting marked resistance. The difficulty in accomplishing

this second task is tied directly to the difficulty of reproducing Alliance parties and thus Alliance regimes in Sabah and Sarawak.

Education and Politics in Sarawak

The dialogue over education in Sarawak has been largely two-sided - between the British ex-patriate officers who have administered the Sarawak government and the Sarawak Chinese community. The absence of the other ethnic groups from this public discussion is witness to the infancy of Sarawak politics, not to education's irrelevance for the non-Chinese. The Native peoples, who together form a majority of Sarawak's population, in the past have been represented in the dialogue by the ex-patriate officers. It is only now, after the creation of Malaysia, an event spurring political activity in all communities, that the non-Chinese have started to take an active interest in the course of education.

In Malaya the education debate found each of the major communities, plus the English-educated elites of each, taking stands to protect or promote their own communal interests - especially language - in the formulation of policy.

In Sarawak, by contrast, the debate has paralleled communal associations much less strictly. If Sarawak were a replica of Malaya, one would expect to find the articulates of the Dyak, Malay, Iban, Chinese communities each urging policies which mirrored their own ethnic affiliations. This has not been the case. Instead, for most of the past seventeen years - since the Chinese school riots of 1951 - public discussion has revolved around Chinese-medium education and English-medium education, with the British officials speaking on the behalf of the Natives urging English-medium education for their constituents.

The merger of Sarawak with Malaya has expanded the education debate. New participants entered, most importantly the central government in Kuala Lumpur, which pressed for more attention to Malay-medium education. The controversy over education still does not parallel communal divisions as closely as it does in Malaya, however. But it is now more complicated than prior to 1963. In the near future it is likely to bring a wider spectrum of Sarawak's own multi-ethnic society which will complicate political dealings even more. But their entrance probably will be not on communally-defined platforms - e.g., the Ibans organizing to urge the establishment of Iban-medium schools. Instead, it is likely that the non-Malay, non-Chinese ethnic groups in Sarawak will press for

expanded English-medium educational opportunities and expanded educational facilities in general.

If the largest ethnic group in Sarawak, the Ibans, with the probable support of the remaining expatriate officers, should mobilize behind a policy of priority for English-medium education, there would be a collision with the central government. The result would be an education debate which tied communal conflict to federal-state conflict, a linkage assiduously avoided in Malaya. In the federal dispute with Singapore education was not an issue because of the constitutional provision leaving it a state matter. Without such a provision there is greater chance for education to get involved in communal and federal disputes in Sarawak. In such an instance - this is speculation, admittedly - the consolidation of a multi-ethnic party opposed to the central government might be facilitated, since English finds some support among all Sarawak ethnic groups, not just their elites. Such a party development issuing out of an education dispute would further intensify any strain between Sarawak and Kuala Lumpur.

In Malaya we noted that education did not capture the center of the political stage until other issues had been resolved at least partially. The sort of issue with which a society is primarily concerned reflects its stage of political integration. In a country profoundly uneasy about its internal

security and viability the issue receiving most attention is apt to be security, not education. Or, if education is debated in this early period, it will be out of an interest in education's relevance to domestic security. In this sense, Sarawak can be viewed as standing approximately where Malaya stood in the early 1950's. Achieving minimal security still receives top priority, and education policy is frequently discussed in terms of that priority. There is an added element, however, which Malaya in those early years did not have. This is a distant federal regime which already has achieved its own security and is interested now in education as it relates not only to security but to socialization and economic progress. Thus in Sarawak the stages of security and socialization preoccupations are coming much closer together, making the establishment of policy priorities somewhat more ambiguous.

By 1957 the Emergency had passed its peak and independence was granted; Malayan education policy was viewed more and more in terms of education standards themselves. In 1967 in Sarawak the Confrontation with Indonesia is over, though there still is lingering anxiety over the activities of insurgents. But although peace with Indonesia will lessen the preoccupation with the school system as an opening wedge for subversion, there will not be an automatic lessening of tensions

generated by education issues. In fact, the transition may bring the opposite. In Malaya and Sarawak the shift in issue perspective draws a greater cross-section of all of the ethnic groups into the public discussion. Whereas the issue of security is likely to be hammered out within the government itself and is likely to have a quite definable goal, the issues of language-of-instruction, higher education criteria, and conditions of financial assistance are harder to contain within the narrow circles of cabinet and ministry and have goals which are more problematic.

The Sarawak Chinese and the Development of an Issue

Sarawak's experience in consolidating the educational system reveals even more than did Malaya's the division within the Chinese community over the question of integration. The Sarawak Chinese intracommunal dispute, in turn, demonstrates how intimately education is bound to the changing character of an immigrant ethnic group. The Chinese school strikes of 1951 and 1955, as well as the controversy over the "conversion" plan in 1962, found the Chinese communal associations, schools, political organizations, and perceptions of ethnic survival all inextricably linked together. Some Chinese have criticized the Sarawak government for not being

more sensitive to this complexity in its efforts to transform the Chinese school system. When the government touched the Chinese schools they inevitably set off a chain reaction which went to the heart of the community.²¹ For the Chinese, a government policy to alter education is a policy to alter the character of their community.

Until the end of World War II Sarawak's Chinese schools were operated independently from one another and from the government by various Chinese dialect and commercial associations. But after the war, with the encouragement of the British administration, the Sarawak Chinese moved to unify their schools. Creation of the Chinese Board of Managers, with representatives of fourteen dialect and commercial associations, was intended to give the Chinese schools coordinated direction and to reduce internal competition which only divided the Chinese and made their community more vulnerable to external pressures. The Board of Managers, which ran four Chinese middle schools in Kuching, initially was controlled by Chinese political conservatives and moderates. The school strikes of the 1950's marked the debut of an energetic leftist movement within the Chinese community and the eruption of political dispute which still today deeply divides Sarawak's Chinese. The Malayan Chinese were split in a similar way by the Emergency. But in Malaya the Chinese had more meaningful political alternatives.

The early 1950's was a time of leftist uprisings throughout Southeast Asia. In Sarawak it marked the birth of the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP). The 1951 and 1955 school strikes pitted Chinese conservative-moderates against Chinese radicals, the traditional community leaders against the younger militants of the SUPP. The moderates had exercised their leadership through their control of such communal organizations as the Board of Management. Therefore, the SUPP challenged this established communal leadership in the schools. The Chinese school system became the arena for intra-communal power struggle.

The controversy ranged over broad political ideologies, but more immediately over the Sarawak Chinese community's relationship with the British administration. The older leadership was critical of the British but believed communal interests to be furthered by cooperation with the colonial government and acceptance of limited grants-in-aid for the Chinese schools. The leftists of the SUPP rejected this course. They believed communal preservation to be dependent on virulent resistance against steps toward government control such as financial assistance to community schools.

In Malaya the analagous dispute spilled over communal boundaries and developed into a full-scale civil war. Under such circumstances, even though the Malayan Communist

Party was mainly Chinese, the Chinese community had a greater chance to develop alternative political organizations and to build genuine alliances with other ethnic groups opposed to the rebels. But in Sarawak the SUPP was not outlawed; it did not head a nation-wide insurgency. The controversy did not envelop all ethnic groups and give birth to other ethnic parties who might serve as allies. Not until a decade later, with Malaysia and Confrontation, did the controversy become national and multi-ethnic in scope. In the earlier years it was confined largely within the Chinese community itself, the only dialogue outside being with colonial officers. Consequently, opponents of the SUPP were not pushed to mobilize an effective political organizational alternative, one that could combine with non-Chinese moderate-conservative parties. At the crucial integrative period when the UMNO-MCA alliance was being forged in Malaya the conflict remained largely intra-communal in Sarawak. The older Sarawak Chinese leadership relied on their communal resources - their personal prestige, their traditional non-political associations - and on their tenuous ties with British officialdom. Of course, even had the Chinese moderates looked for non-Chinese allies they would have discovered few prospects in this period. The politicization of the several ethnic groups has been uneven in Malaya; it has been even more uneven in Sarawak, a fact which has

made reproduction of an Alliance party there more difficult than on the peninsula.

The outcome of the Chinese school strikes was SUPP success in gaining control of the Board of Management. It accomplished this by establishing strong footholds in the schools and among students and by winning control of many of the leading Chinese associations represented on the Board. Thus when in 1962 the Sarawak colonial government went further than offering limited grants and proposed a plan whereby the government would give full assistance to those Chinese middle schools which converted to English-medium, the SUPP and the Board of Management led in opposing the plan.

As of 1966, three of the four Chinese middle schools in Kuching, Sarawak's capital, had not converted to English and continued to operate under private Chinese control. The Board's fourth school, known today as Kuching High School, exemplifies some of the intricacies of the intra-communal struggle. Kuching High School formerly was directed by the Board of Management, by way of the Teochew dialect association. The Teochew Association has been one of the few associations to hold out against the SUPP. When the Board of Management rejected the "conversion" plan, the Teochew Association insisted that the SUPP and the Board relinquish its control of this one school and return it to the

Association. Kuching High School then accepted the government's assistance offer and now is in the process of converting to English medium.

But Kuching High School's backers have no political home. The private Chinese schools have been able to resist government incentives because they have the support of an energetic political organization. In Malaya government offers of aid in exchange for standardization were more effective partly because the Chinese schools there had been discredited by their connection with the communist insurgency and partly because the prospect of independence made the Chinese political leadership feel that accommodation with the rest of the society was imperative. In Sarawak, however, while the Chinese schools were politically entangled, they are supported by a legally recognized party with a broad base of communal support. In Sarawak it is those Chinese who lean toward accommodation and government aid who are left without a political vehicle to mobilize their community and to represent their views forcefully before government.

The MCA's counterpart is the Sarawak Chinese Association (SCA). The SCA is acknowledged, even by its sympathizers, to be little more than a front to supply the new Sarawak Alliance government with token Chinese representation. The SCA symbolized the problems of the Malayan

Chinese Association in extreme. In the 1963 indirect elections for the Sarawak legislative assembly, the Council Negri, of the 23 Alliance members elected, only 2 were of the SCA. And of the total 36 elected members of the Council Negri, only 9 were Chinese - even though 30 per cent of the registered voters were Chinese. 22.

Until recently, education policy in Sarawak has focused on this one ethnic group, the Chinese. The absence of other ethnic group representatives and organizations helped to keep the policy dispute a Chinese-government dispute and to show still unended divisions within the Chinese community. These divisions and the lack of any ethnic parties equivalent to UMNO with which moderate Chinese could ally undercut the effectiveness of the sort of government incentives that had proved so successful in integrating Malaya's educational system.

The Alliance Formula in Sarawak

The culmination of the changes in Sarawak politics since merger has been the breakdown of the Sarawak Alliance.²³ In Singapore no attempt was made to build an Alliance government; a feeble Alliance Singapura was formed, but it was conceded that the PAP already was entrenched too firmly to

be able to duplicate Malaya's party solution on the island. Sarawak, on the other hand, presented the Malaysian federal regime with virtually virgin political territory - with the irritating exception of the SUPP. The SUPP took a public stand against the formation of Malaysia, asserting that merger would bring imposition of Malay rule and suppression of otherwise natural Chinese political dominance in Sarawak. Therefore, a pro-Malaysia Sarawak Alliance would have to be formed without the most experienced political party already in existence. The Malayan Alliance did not have to exclude any such well organized popular party; the closest equivalent was the Malayan Communist Party, which was underground.

The Sarawak Alliance could not be a perfect replica of the Malayan Alliance due to Sarawak's greater ethnic complexity. But it did try to embrace all of the major communities, including the Malays, Ibans, and Chinese. Nevertheless, there were marked differences between the Malayan Alliance and its off-spring. There was not one party per ethnic group in the Sarawak Alliance; there were two Dyak parties and two Malay parties. Also the Chinese partner was not the strongest organization in its own community; the SCA's credentials as communal spokesman were much more questionable than were the MCA's. And perhaps a determining difference was that the Sarawak Alliance was not led by a Malay.

Sarawak's Chief Minister until 1967 was an Iban, Stephen Kalong Nngkan, leader of the Sarawak National Party (Party Negara or SNAP). All of these differences have raised the question whether the Alliance formula is applicable to the sort of multi-ethnic context existing in Sarawak.

The Alliance government in Kuching managed to hold together throughout the Confrontation (1963 - 1965), when attention was fixed on suppression of Indonesian aggression and internal subversion. The latter was defined as both communist and ethnic, as it had been in Malay, although in Sarawak these were linked with a non-Chinese, non-Communist aggressor. The leading domestic subversive organization was the Clandistine Communist Organization (a title supplied by the government), and it was believed to get most of its sustenance from Sarawak's Chinese and to be using the SUPP as a front organization. ^{24.} While Confrontation was going on the Kuching and Kuala Lumpur regimes concentrated on joint efforts to repel the foreign aggressor and suppress internal rebellion.

But with the termination of Confrontation after the fall of Indonesia's Sukarno, the strains between the state and central governments became increasingly apparent. Kuching resisted federal direction, but simultaneously felt that it was not receiving due attention or aid from the federal ministries.

Furthermore, the end of Confrontation coincided with the separation of Singapore. Since the whole Malaysia scheme rested on the rationale that the Borneo states were incorporated to counter-balance Singapore, the split opened the way for a fresh examination of the functions and quality of Malaysian federalism.

The Mayor of Kuching and moderate chairman of the SUPP, Hong Kee Hul, summed up one section or opinion in post-separation Sarawak:

"Most people here were reconciled to Sarawak's being in Malaysia. But Singapore's separation has started people asking why should Sarawak stay in. We should at least have an opportunity to reconsider this question." ²⁵.

Tensions between Sarawak and Kuala Lumpur came to a head in the Alliance Party, not in a particular issue area. In June, 1966, Sarawak Chief Minister Stephen Ningkan announced that he was "sacking" his leading Malay cabinet minister. He charged the Minister for Communications and Works, Inche Abdul Talb, with collaborating with "outsiders" - the Alliance leadership in Kuala Lumpur - to overthrow the Sarawak regime. ²⁶ Kuala Lumpur reacted by mobilizing support among Sarawak state legislators, who petitioned the Governor of Sarawak for Ningkan's dismissal. ²⁷ Ningkan thereupon appealed the case to the country's High Court, which handed down a decision to the effect that the Chief Minister had

been dismissed unconstitutionally. 28. It will take state elections - now scheduled for 1968 - to clear up the confusion. But in the interim the Sarawak political scene is in disarray. The new Chief Minister is another Iban, Tawi Sli, a choice of Kuala Lumpur. The Alliance still forms the Sarawak government, but it has lost Ningkan's Sarawak National Party, which is now in opposition. And the balance among the remaining partners is unsettled.

This political hostility and disintegration casts doubt on the exportability of the Alliance party formula, and therefore, more fundamentally on an integrative pattern. This pattern assumes that agents of continuant ethnic groups have enough in common with one another and enough control over their own communities to be able to bargain on common ground and carry their communities along with their compromises.

The Malayan Alliance has been able to enforce central discipline and thereby maintain cohesion chiefly because it controlled the federal government and could use its resources for rewarding and punishing Alliance state organizations. Sarawak poses a different problem for party organizers and political integrators. In Sarawak the federal Alliance's attempts to exert central control have helped to make the state Alliance untenable. The Sarawak Alliance dissolution was due as much to conflicts over federal intervention as to differences

over strictly intra-state affairs. Whereas federalism has proved functional for the Alliance integrative formula in Malaya, it has proved disfunctional for that same formula in Sarawak.

For the purposes of Kuala Lumpur, the Sarawak Alliance has had two serious weaknesses. First, it does not include an effective Chinese agent. The Malayan Alliance is concerned over Chinese disenchantment with its MCA partner, but the MCA is a much more vital and genuine communal bargainer than is the Sarawak Chinese Association. The intra-Alliance fight over Ningkan's dismissal went on with remarkably little participation of the SCA.

With the likelihood that attention will focus more and more on domestic affairs, especially on matters of concern to the central government, the under-representation of the Chinese in the Sarawak government jeopardizes any bargaining over policy. Furthermore, the new issues are likely to be those in which the Chinese have the greatest stake - language, education, taxes, trade.

The Alliance's second weakness is closely related to the absence of effective Chinese representation. The political turmoil of 1966 indicated that one Alliance party does not agree inevitably with another. The original conviction was that by reproducing an organizational scheme one could insure

common political outlooks and facilitate central-state cooperation. Aside from the variations in the Sarawak Alliance necessitated by the state's peculiar ethnic composition, the real obstacle to political cohesion with Kuala Lumpur has been the different political perspectives of the indigenous parties of the two Alliances. Just as Malaysia was considered a natural federation because of the states' common denominator of indigenous peoples, so the Alliances were foreseen as natural partners because they were all led by indigenous political leaders. The stubbornness of Iban leader Stephen Ningkan was just the most visible evidence that this prediction was a faulty one. The most natural cooperation among the Borneo and federal Alliances has not been among the indigenous leaders, but among the Malay leaders, whether or not considered indigenous. The Alliance formula in Sarawak may have to be re-examined along with the federal design in general to determine what are the bases of commonality and identity and their implications for inter-ethnic cooperation within Sarawak itself and between Sarawak and Malaya.

A Sarawak Alliance might become more amenable to central government's guidance if it cut off those partners most insistent on Sarawakian autonomy. The present Sarawak Alliance, without Ningkan's Iban party (though it still contains another Iban-Dyak party) and without an effective Chinese

representative, may work more easily with the federal Alliance. But this defeats Kuala Lumpur's first objective - building a Sarawak Alliance which serves as a meaningful inter-communal political agent. The Alliance organizational formula is intended to act as an integrative force by serving two functions - linking the lower levels of the federal system with the central policy-making leadership at the national level and bringing together spokesmen of all major ethnic communities under a single organizational umbrella. What the Sarawak experience has demonstrated is that these two necessary functions may conflict with one another so that federal unity and inter-ethnic organizational cohesion are not mutually supportive.

Sabah: Education and Federal Intervention

On the whole, Sabah has been less troublesome for the federal government than Sarawak. In Sabah there is no equivalent of the energetic SUPP; there is no history of school strikes; there has been no grave threat of internal subversion.

Nevertheless, Sabah shares some of Sarawak's restlessness within the Malaysian federal structure. In Sabah, as in Sarawak, this restlessness has surfaced in the state Alliance organization. The Sabah Alliance currently suffers

from the same sort of fragmentation which has undermined the Sarawak Alliance in its role as an agent for federal policy implementation and integration.

Sabah has not had such stormy politics as Sarawak, but it too has sought more federal autonomy than the central government is inclined to permit. Prior to his resignation as Federal Minister for Sabah Affairs, the Kadazan leader Dato Donald Stephens, put it this way:

"Perhaps we want autonomy on certain subjects. Or perhaps we want to tighten the machinery here and there.....

We would like to have firm and concrete commitments on development.

We (Sabah) were not responsible for Singapore's secession. I therefore put it to the Alliance. Let us re-examine Sabah's terms of entry into Malaysia. I am not asking for secession...." 29.

Educational development in Sabah highlights some of the conditions uniting and separating the two states of Eastern Malaysia. Sabah education has been a private concern for the most part until recently. In both Borneo states it was primary education where the British administrations were most directly involved. Government-sponsored primary schools were intended to serve the Native peoples, and they were conducted in Malay. There has been increasing emphasis, however, on English instruction for the Borneo natives, in response to their own desires, according to the expatriate officers. 30. The motivation is not hard to find. Although Malay is the

Lingua franca for daily transactions, it has not been the path to social prestige, civil service promotion, or higher education - any more than it has been in Malaya. The difference is that in Malaya Malay is a source of communal attachment and pride for a major ethnic group; Malay does not enjoy this status in the Borneo states and thus has had an even harder time establishing itself in education. At the time of Malaysian merger, and still at this writing, there are no secondary schools in Eastern Malaysia using Malay as the medium of instruction. For the Iban or Kadazan child who attends government primary schools in Malay there is only a limited chance for continuation to secondary or higher education because he will have to change languages in mid-stream. As these native ethnic groups become more aware of the opportunities available beyond their parochial, rural universes, the desire for extended education, and thus English, is apt to increase - unless the central government can radically alter the status of Malay-medium education in Borneo.

The majority of Sabah's schools are not government-sponsored, but are operated by Christian missions and Chinese communal associations. In both Sabah and Sarawak until a few years ago virtually all secondary schools were independently directed. This has meant that in Borneo the Chinese have made up a disproportionate sector of secondary school graduates

because of their community's provision of secondary schools and because of their proximity to the larger towns where post-primary education was available. In 1962, in each of the Borneo states there were over four times as many Chinese as indigenous children in the secondary schools. 31.

The main turning points in government education policy have been the extension of government control and assistance and the greater stress on English-medium education, both in the government primary schools and in the private Chinese schools. In Sarawak these watershed provoked political turbulence within the Chinese community. But in Sabah education evolution has been notably calmer. One reason is that Sabah's expatriate administrators have been less anxious over Chinese-fostered subversion. They have felt less driven to impose government control as a means of achieving internal security. Integration in the school system seems to be a matter of less urgency in Sabah and, consequently, there has been less drive to mobilize the Sabah Chinese to stave off external intrusion. It may be, therefore, that the more relaxed pace of educational consolidation is a principal reason for the Sabah Chinese community not having created an opposition party comparable to the SUPP.

In its 1963 Annual Report, the last before merger, the Sabah government placed heaviest emphasis in education on

providing a place for every child of primary school age by 1971. In addition, it proclaimed its determination to extend secondary education, especially in the rural (i.e., indigenous) areas, to develop vocational training facilities, and to expand facilities for teacher training. ³² Sarawak, by contrast, was committed to these goals, but also seemed to lay greater stress on integrating the school system and reducing the educational gap between the Chinese and non-Chinese. ³³

The Sabah government has been more successful in extending its authority over the educational system. In Sarawak there are seventeen primary schools and thirty-eight secondary schools listed as "non-aided" and thereby fully private; whereas in Sabah there are only seven primary and six secondary schools so detached from government control. These figures reflect the organized and politicized resistance met by the Sarawak government from the Chinese - although a significant number of unaided schools are also under mission direction. The contrast also indicates the greater centralization characterizing the Sabah state government. Both states use local committees but in Sarawak these committees have executive responsibility for education, whereas in Sabah they are merely advisory. Sabah's centralization is another factor allowing for greater federal control over its state policies. The Sarawak education officials similarly point to the important role of local authorities

as one more distinction between their state's education situation and that of Malaya.

Sabah is not in full agreement with the central government's long-range educational policy - or, rather, Sabahans distrust what they imagine to be those long-range goals. But it has been more amenable to federal guidance than has Sarawak. Symbolic of its closer ties with the federal government is Sabah's acceptance of a federal officer as its state Director of Education. Sarawak has refused a federal officer in this sensitive post, which remains occupied by a British expatriate. The current Director of Education in Jesselton is a career officer in the federal Ministry of Education, formerly a Chief Education Officer in the Malayan states. His appointment represents the direct involvement of the federal government in Sabah's education policy formulation. He is there because the Sabah government accepted him to replace a British officer, part of the general move towards Malaysianization urged by Kuala Lumpur.

Table 8 Extent of Government Control of Education:
Sabah and Sarawak - 1964 and 1965

Sabah: Numbers of various types of schools - 1965

<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Language</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>
1. Government:	Malay	235	-
	English	6	9
	Chinese	3	2 (gradually converting to English)
2. Native Voluntary: *	Malay	116	-
	English	16	-
3. Government-Aided:	English	66	9
	Chinese	107	2 (converting)
4. Non-Aided:	English	7	1 (Seventh Day Adventist)
	Chinese	-	5 **

* Native Voluntary schools are a stop-gap measure by the villagers themselves; they presently are being taken over by the government, as were the similar raya'at (popular) schools in Malaya during the 1950's.

** These five Chinese secondary schools were established only a short time ago. Until then the government

(Table 8 - Continued)

** had objected; but with the pressure of secondary school shortages, the Sabah government relaxed its policy.

Source: Sabah, Department of Education, Jesselton, mimeo., 1966.

Table 9 Sarawak: Numbers of various types of schools - 1964

<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Language</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>
1. <u>Government and Aided:</u>			
- Government	English	-	16
- Local Authority-Native	English	644	-
- Local Authority-Other	Chinese	10	-
- Private Committees	English	2	-
- Mission-Native	English	111	3
- Mission-Other	English	25	11
- Mission-Other	Chinese	5	-
- Chinese Committees	Chinese	244	-
- Chinese Committees	Chinese-converting	-	9
TOTAL		1,021	29

(Table 9 - Continued)

2. <u>Non-Aided:</u>	<u>Language</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>
- Private Committees	English	3	20
- Mission	English	6	7
- Mission	Chinese & English	-	1
- Chinese Committees	Chinese	8	10
TOTAL		17	38

Source: Sarawak, Department of Education, Annual Summary for 1964, Kuching, mimeo., 1964.

Malaysianization is another point of contention between the Borneo states and the central government. It is not a matter simply of sentimental attachment to the colonial power or emergent nationalism. Rather, it is a matter of inter-ethnic politics within Malaysia itself. Kuala Lumpur would like to accelerate the departure of the British expatriates because it sees their continued presence in Borneo as an obstacle to fuller integration of Sabah and Sarawak into the federation. Their presence also makes it more awkward for Malaysia to retort to charges from other nations that it remains a British "puppet." But, furthermore, the

central government sees the expatriates as siding with the Borneo Native peoples against those federal policies intended to create a genuine Malaysian identity based on the National Language. For instance, the British officers are understood as the chief proponents of English-medium education, urging the Native peoples to resist expansion of Malay-medium schools. That is, from the point of view of the central government, the British expatriates are an element frustrating the natural alliance between Malaysia's indigenous peoples.

At the same time, replacement of the expatriates leaves an administrative vacuum that neither Sabah or Sarawak have the trained personnel to fill. It is another indication of the Borneo states' desire to maintain their own integrity that they are committed to the Sabahization or the Sarawakization -, not just Malaysianization - of the government services. One rarely hears Selangor or Penang or Tranggau calling for federal officers in their states being from their own states. Sabah's acceptance of a Malayan CEO as its new Director of Education, therefore, is significant for at least three reasons. It is a step toward the reduction of British influence in Sabah. It is also a concession to the central government. And the appointment represents another difference between the federal relations of Sabah and Sarawak.

The Malayan Director of Education has exercised his authority with a discretion that denotes the central government's own recognition of Sabah's sensitivity to federal intrusion. Nevertheless, even those Sabah officials who resent the appointment of a federal officer admit that in the end Sabah's educational development hinges on financial and technical assistance from Malaya. The presence of a federal officer only mirrors a fact of life.

Federal money was a crucial factor in nationalizing the school system on the peninsula. It enabled the federal government and the Alliance to pursue a policy of integration by incentive rather than by suppression. The movement from limited grants-in-aid to full assistance angered those religious and communal groups which sought to maintain their independence through perpetuation of distinctive educational systems. But their anger grew out of frustration, frustration over not being in a position to refuse the money that the government was offering.

In Sabah and Sarawak the federal government is employing much the same strategy of incentives to win over the states as it did in Malaya to win over the various ethnic groups: needed financial support in exchange for compliance with broad federal policy objectives. The First Malaysia Five-Year Plan includes substantial outlays for Sabah and Sarawak education; Malaya still is the major recipient, however.

Table 10

Malaysia: Development Expenditures for
Education (M\$ million) 1966-1970

<u>Level of Education</u>	<u>Malaya</u>	<u>Sabah</u>	<u>Sarawak</u>	<u>Malaysia</u>
Primary	54.6	7.8	12.3	74.7
Secondary	188.7	14.2	29.2	232.1
Technical *	30.8	2.9	2.8	36.5
University	30.0	-	-	30.0
Teacher training	28.5	2.3	1.1	31.9
Other educational training	35.4	-	0.2	35.6
TOTAL	368.0	27.2	45.6	440.8

* For Malaya, post-secondary level only.

Source: Malaysia, First Malaysia Plan 1966 - 1970,
Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office,
p. 172.

In Malaya the contest over whether or not to accept funds was largely a communal contest. In Sabah and Sarawak it is more complicated because of the added importance of state pride which does not coincide with any one ethnic group.

As in Malaya, a central question in the debate over federal funds will be the extent to which those funds are tied

to National Language policy objectives. The 1962 Inter-Government Committee Report guaranteed that Sabah and Sarawak would not have to comply with the National Language policy until 1973, ten years after the formation of Malaysia. The UGC Report also stated that the federal government would have final responsibility for Borneo's education, but that the states' education systems would be left "undisturbed" and that any major changes introduced by the states would have to get federal approval. 34.

The agreement had all the ear-marks of Alliance integrative strategy. There is provision for pluralism, but with little question as to where ultimate policy-making authority resides. There is time to allow for gradualist implementation of policy. But there is enough ambiguity as to what that policy ultimately will be to permit flexibility and significantly different interpretations. The major source of doubt in Borneo regarding this federal education relationship is the Talib Education Report of 1960 with its stipulation that Malay will become "the main medium of instruction." The question is what precisely does this phrase mean and then how far will it be applied in Sabah and Sarawak, where Malay-medium education lags far behind that in Malaya.

These questions, so central to the ultimate meaning of Malaysian integration, still are to be answered in Malaya.

But in Sabah and Sarawak their irresolution feeds state-federal tensions, as well as communal anxieties.

Sabah's Relative Placidity

If one side of the ethnic-political coin is policy development, the reverse side is party politics. Each shapes the other, and both grow out of the interaction of ethnic groups and the political system. This is as true of Sabah as it has been for the other multi-ethnic situations within Malaya.³⁵

The contrast between Sabah's and Sarawak's political party systems serves as a warning: two states may have very similar ethnic compositions and yet produce quite different forms of representation. Both states have more than three distinguishable ethnic groups; in both the largest single group is a native community; the second largest group in both is Chinese; both contain relatively small Malay communities plus numerous other minor native communities; both are cut off geographically from any established political system; and both states have undergone British colonial rule.

And yet Sabah's politics generally have been less explosive. Internally, Sabah has had little or no militant opposition mobilized against either the pre-Malaysian British administration or the post-1963 Alliance Regime. Externally,

Sabah has managed to establish much more amicable- though not wholly acquiescent - relations with the Malaysian central government.

These differences between states so ethnically similar as Sabah and Sarawak deserve much more thorough analysis. But several reasons can be suggested for further inquiry. One is the less paternalistic, less-Malay-oriented outlook of the Charter Company, which governed Sabah (then North Borneo) until World War II. While the Raja Brooke regime in pre-war Sarawak adopted policies to restrain the immigrant Chinese, the Charter Company was eager to exploit economic resources and so encouraged rather than dampened Chinese enterprise. This may account for the greater sense of frustration and even alienation among the Sarawak Chinese as opposed to the relative conservatism of the Sabah Chinese.

Another factor which may explain Sabah's relative political quiescence is the availability of an outstanding Malay political figure to serve as the bridge between the government in Jesselton and the Alliance leadership in Malaya. Sarawak's lack of such a figure has made effective political communication and coordination, not to mention trust, between state and federal governments relatively ineffectual.

Neither of these politically calming factors are necessarily permanent. In fact, there is evidence that

Sabah's political solutions to ethnic pluralism and federalism are on increasingly shaky ground, and that Sabah may be entering into a political era marked by greater political-ethnic conflict and state-federal tension.

It is worthwhile to take a closer look at these two factors which have distinguished Sabah's political expression of its ethnic pluralism from that of Sarawak - first the relative political quietude of the Sabah Chinese and then the role of Sabah's Malay leader. Both factors have shaped the Sabah Alliance.

Sabah's Vulnerable Alliance

The low level of political activity among the Sabah Chinese and the absence of an effective opposition party - at least, until the 1967 state elections - are intimately related. Until these elections, what organized political competition did exist was within the governing Alliance, between its two non-Chinese parties - the Malay-Muslim United Sabah National Organization (USNO) and the Kadazan (Dusun) United Pasokmomogun Kadazan Organization (UPKO).

In Malaya and Sarawak it has been the politically mobilized expression of Chinese dissatisfaction which has provided the backbone of the opposition. In neither case has the

entire Chinese community been ranged against the existing regime; Chinese parties are found within both the Malayan and the Sarawak governments. But the organizational and financial resources of the Chinese, plus their politicization dating back to their involvement in the ideological struggles in China, have made the Chinese communities the logical launching pads for numerous political parties - parties in government, legitimate opposition parties, and insurgent parties.

As the states where they reside become more politicized and as political organization depends less heavily on communal foundation, this casual relationship between Chinese political mobilization and the existence of a multiplicity of parties will decline in importance. But when the political systems are just crystallizing, the extent of the Chinese community's political involvement is a major determinant of the shape of the particular party system.

It might be fruitful to ask the same question of other multi-ethnic political systems. Are there certain ethnic groups whose degree and character of political involvement and organization disproportionately determine the character of the political competitive system as a whole?

Without a strong opposition party or a vital Chinese communal party Sabah invited consideration by a party such as Singapore's PAP. But because of the tacit agreement

that the Borneo states were to be under Malaya's political tutelage the PAP was rebuffed. But there is still the possibility of other outside parties entering Sabah from Malaya. Currently, however, the only communal option for the Sabah Chinese is the impotent Sabah Chinese Association (SCA). the SCA, like its counterpart in Sarawak (though their initials are identical they are separate organizations), has been the minor partner in the Sabah Alliance, playing a role similar to that of the MIC in the Malayan Alliance. The crucial difference is that the MIC's potential constituency is only 10 per cent of the population; whereas the Sabah Chinese Association's potential constituency is 23 per cent. Turning this point around, given the importance of the SCA, the potential disaffection from the Sabah Alliance Party is almost one-fourth of the state population.

Due to the political marginality of its Chinese, Sabah's politics since the early 1960's has been the politics of the Malays and Native non-Malays. In Sarawak Malay-Native bargaining and competition has been the focus for Alliance politics; in Sabah, however, it has been the focus of the entire party system's politics.

Sabah has a proportionately smaller Malay community than does Sarawak. Malays are less than 5 per cent of Sabah's population. Nevertheless, the Sabah Malays have a

more cohesive and influential political organization. The Sarawak Malays are split between several parties and have no public leader of stature. The Malays in neighboring Sabah, on the other hand, are represented by the United Sabah National Organization, perhaps the single strongest party in the fledgling party system. USNO made the best showing in the state's first direct elections in April, 1967, although it could not win a legislative majority.

Moreover, while the Sarawak Malays are without a prominent leader, Sabah Malays are led by Tun Mustapha. Tun Mustapha was selected and trained by the British for a leadership role. Since Sabah's independence and the merger he has stepped down from his initial ceremonial post of Yang di Pertuan Negara to take a direct part in state politics. He has been the head of USNO and one of the top two or three personalities in the Sabah government. Tun Mustapha has an advantage not available to other Sabah leaders and not exploitable currently in Sarawak - the confidence and open support of the Malayan Alliance leadership. Until May, 1967, he was a federal minister; now he is head of the Alliance regime and Sabah's Chief Minister. Sabah, thereby, in the person of Tun Mustapha has what Sarawak lacks: a Malay possessing the prestige and political base to act as a personal link between the federal and state regimes. Stephan Ningkan could

not fill such a role; nor could Dato Donald Stephens, the UPKO leader who was Sabah's first Chief Minister.

The role played by Tun Mustapha and the extent to which it has consolidated the position of the state Alliance and made federal intervention easier seems to substantiate the hypothesis that integration in Malaysia depends partly on a sympathy between indigenous leaders. The corollary is that in incorporating the Borneo states there was an over-simplification regarding what elicits that sympathy between indigenous groups. Tun Mustapha's effectiveness as a link between Sabah and the federal leadership derives less from his indigeneity than from his identity as a Malay. The existence of a Tun Mustapha has corrected the mistaken assumption upon which Malaysia was originally launched. But an individual leader is an extremely precarious basis for political integration among states and ethnic groups.

Both the marginality of the Chinese and the pre-eminence of Tun Mustapha are subject to alteration. Indeed, within the past year Sabah's Alliance has begun to suffer from some of the same disintegrative tendencies already witnessed in the Sarawak Alliance. USNO is in a more powerful position than ever before; but, like the remnant parties of the Sarawak Alliance, it has paid for that augmented power with the defection of its principal communal partner. USNO

dominates the Sabah Alliance, but it is a communally poorer Alliance. UPKO, the Kadazan-led party of the former Chief Minister Donald Stephens, competed against its former Alliance partner in the 1967 state elections and then refused to join the new Alliance regime. Currently it is Sabah's main opposition party. UPKO has not defined itself strictly as a communal organization. Therefore, it could possibly become a genuine alternative to other non-Malays and non-Muslims dissatisfied with the USNO-SCA Alliance. This might have special significance for the Sabah Chinese.

There is also the possibility of more political interaction between the opposition parties in Sabah and Sarawak and Malaya. To date, about the only political cooperation has been through the three Alliance organizations, and this has been chiefly through the Alliance Native and Malay parties. In the summer of 1967 there began talks between UPKO's Donald Stephens and Sarawak National Party's Stephen Nngkan, both former Chief Ministers, former members of state Alliances, and both representatives of largely Native non-Malay parties now in opposition. Such talks may come to nothing, but they also may begin to bring Sabah and Sarawak closer together in an organizational and even communal sense. Such a development surely would heighten the obstacles to federal control, since it would stimulate a growing sense of

of political commonalty between Eastern Malaysia's native non-Malay communities. In their joint statement at the end of the talks UPKO and the Sarawak National Party accused the Federal Government of violating the spirit and letter of the Malaysia agreement. They said that "if Malaysia was to succeed the Federal Government must recognize the different status of Sabah and Sarawak in the Federation" and must give up its "neo-colonialistic approach" to the Borneo states. The communique also said that UPKO and the Party Negara deplored the fact that the State Alliance parties both in Sabah and Sarawak had become parties to "the now apparent plan of the Grand Alliance to eliminate states rights in the two Eastern Malaysian States." 36.

Table 11

Recent Elections in Eastern Malaysia

Sarawak State Election - 1963

1. Registered electorate: Percentage of each community registered as electors:

Malays	55 per cent
Chinese	30
Other Natives	40

2. Election results at District Council and Council Negri (Legislative Assembly) and Federal Parliamentary levels:

(Table 11 - Continued)

	<u>SUPP</u>	<u>PANAS</u>	<u>Alliance</u>	<u>Independents</u>
Percentage of total <u>vote</u> won in District Council elections:	24.5	15	30.5	30
Percentage <u>seats</u> won in Council				
Negri:	4	14	64	8
Federal parliamentary seats-percentage of				
Sarawak delegation:	12.5	12.5	71	4

Source: Michael Leigh, The Chinese Community in Sarawak,
Singapore Malaysia Publishing House, Ltd.,
1964, p. 53.

Table 12

Sabah Legislative Assembly Elections - 1967

1. Electorate: 183,116 registered electors in 30 contested constituencies (2 constituencies uncontested, with only USNO candidates).
2. 88.4 per cent of the registered voter turned out to vote.
3. Results of direct elections for State Legislature: Number of seats contest and number of seats and votes won by party:

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats contested</u>	<u>Seats won</u>	<u>Votes won</u>
USNO	23	12 (plus 2 won without contest)	63,905

(Table 12 - Continued)

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats contested</u>	<u>Seats won</u>	<u>Votes won</u>
UPKO	24	12	64,767
SCA *	6	5	15,524
Independents	26	1	14,306

* The major up-set of the election was the defeat of SCA leader and then Chief Minister Peter Lo by another Chinese running as an Independent.

4. At this writing it is uncertain how the federal parliamentary delegation will be divided.

Source: Straits Budget, May 3, 1967.

Conclusion

Two obstacles frustrate political integration in the larger Malaysian Federation - defining ethnic affinity and finding agents for representation.

Disintegration within the Eastern Malaysian state Alliances casts doubt on the transferability of the Malayan solution for inter-ethnic political integration. The failure of the Alliance formula in Borneo can be traced to two conditions:

1) the division between the Kuala Lumpur-backed Malays and the more autonomy-minded indigenous groups - a division symbolized in the departure of the Iban Party Negara from the Sarawak Alliance and the Kadazan UPKO from the Sabah Alliance - and 2) the ineffectuality of Chinese representation in both Borneo regimes.

The troubles besetting the Sabah and Sarawak Alliances stem from more fundamental problems of political integration. Success of the Alliance formula in Borneo necessitates a broad agreement between the central and state governments over the operation of federalism. Such an agreement requires a revision of the original conception upon which the Malaysian federation was constructed - i.e., that communities which are indigenous to their own territories will share common political goals and outlooks, despite their communities' cultural and historical separateness. Smoothly functioning federalism between Eastern and Western Malaysia depends on the reconciliation of two communally-Muslim peoples, who desire central intervention to bolster their own communal interests believed to be consonant with those of the national leadership; and the federal conception of the non-Muslim indigenous peoples, who want greater recognition of the peculiar needs of the Borneo states.

In addition, a harmonious Malaysia depends on the creation of more effective representative agents for communal interests in Sabah and Sarawak. Political integration as it has been worked out in Malaya is premised on the conviction that an effective government in a multi-ethnic state must be able to prevent the political disaffection of any whole ethnic group and must be able to dilute the pressures that any one ethnic group can bring to bear on the government. The instrument insuring this integrative condition is the inter-communal bargaining party regime. Sabah and Sarawak until recently had the structure but not the substance of such an instrument. Realization of the gap between structure and substance led to the dissolution of the structure as well.

How does federalism affect the course of national integration in a multi-ethnic society? Malaysia's experiences suggest several tentative answers. Federalism and ethnic integration exist in a chicken-and-egg relationship. The given ethnic situation will be a major determinant of whether federalism is established at all and, if so, in what form. But once launched, the federal structure will provide new channels and goals for the several ethnic communities in the nation.

The extent to which federalism retards or hastens centrally-promoted political integration will depend on the ability of any federal sub-unit to act as a power base for a

party at odds with the central government. The Malayan Alliance's domination of all but one of the peninsular states has reduced the chances of any state rebelling against federal policy; the weakness of the PMIP has curtailed even Kelantan's tendencies toward autonomy. The PAP, by contrast, was secure enough in its political power not only to resist federal control but to challenge the federal regime on its own home territory. The Eastern Malaysian party systems still are too fluid to give either a pro-central government or a states' rights or communal party a clear advantage.

Briefly, then the optimum situation for federalism to breed nationalization of political life is one in which state boundaries cut across, rather than match ethnic group divisions; in which the multi-ethnic party governing at the federal level has a strong organization with roots down to the state level; and in which the federal government has sufficient resources to offer attractive incentives to states and communities willing to comply with federal policy.

But optimum conditions are rarely available in politics. Still, it is possible for some type of integrative relationship to develop in less-than-optimum circumstances. Kelantan is witness to this possibility. With a Malay concentration and an opposition party government, Kelantan is, nevertheless, unlikely to break away from the Malaysian federation.

Likewise, Penang, with its large Chinese community, its electoral support of leftist opposition parties, its physical separation from the peninsula, also is not on the verge of secession. These states, as well as the Borneo states, testify to the possibility of national unity surviving in seemingly unfavorable conditions. Neither is the threshold of disintegration fixed. In Malaysia it will depend to an important degree on the federal government's - more particularly, the Alliance leadership's - level of tolerance: how much diversity and autonomy can the Alliance regime tolerate in the federation? This, in turn, will depend on the Alliance's own policy objectives and on the pressures imposed upon it from outside and from within its own ranks.

Ethnic divisions by themselves, therefore, cannot explain the success or failure of any given federal system. The explanation has to be looked for in the particular convergence of ethnicity, institutions, bases of power, and policy objectives.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Issues and Integration

One way to analyze political relations among several ethnic groups is to study the development of a particular governmental policy that brings the groups into contact with one another. But the field of policy in which government and ethnic groups alike have an immediate stake will vary from country to country and from time to time. This variation in itself suggests something about the quality of the multi-ethnic pattern and its political consequences. The rise and fall in prominence of certain issues denotes changing inter-ethnic concerns and political relationships.

The relationships among Malaysia's ethnic communities, and between each of them and the government are not static. The evolution of education policy has reflected this constant change. The elevation of education from a matter of primarily communal concern to an affair with which the national government and the articulates of all ethnic groups are vitally interested indicates a fundamental alteration in the political character of Malay-Chinese-Indian relations. The rise of education to a status of dominant political issue in the Federation suggests a politicization of inter-ethnic patterns, an increase in inter-dependency, enlarged cooperation, and the greater probability of conflict.

The substance of the education policy - unification of the school system, creation of a Malaysian curriculum, promotion of the National Language - has brought Malays, Chinese, and Indians into closer contact with one another; even when in separate schools, the policy has guaranteed that the younger generations of each community will share a common socialization experience. But aside from substance, the actual process of policy formation has motivated integration. Regardless of content, the hammering out of policy intended to impinge of the essence of communal identities will compel otherwise detached ethnic groups into some sort of interaction, even if at the outset that interaction may take the form of conflict. It is in this sense that government policy-making may be a positive shaper of inter-ethnic patterns, not simply a passive object of given ethnic conditions.

During the Emergency education was viewed with one eye to internal security. Gradually over the past decade security has declined as a basic impetus for education policy. This denotes a general growth of confidence in at least the elemental viability of the Malayan and Malaysian polities. Currently, within education the spotlight is on medium-of-instruction, not security; there has been a displacement of a preoccupation with minimal allegiance by a greater concern with utilitarian and emotional bonds between citizens. This change

in emphasis - the displacement of issues rarely is absolute - suggests that political integration in Malaysia has progressed several steps since independence in 1957, extending now below peace and order to common interests.

It is more than likely that the patterns of ethnic relationships and politics will change still further in the future. Those changes will have their reflection in issue priorities. There will be switches in emphasis within the general area of education itself. And there will be switches in emphasis from education to other large policy areas.

Within education the language question has yet to be resolved, and it may be that irresolution is the Alliance style of solution. The National Language Bill and the 1960 Talib Education Report both affirm the special status of the Malay language, in accordance with the Alliance's commitment to the unique role of the Malay community; and yet both policy statements leave the practical effect of that commitment open to varying interpretations, and permit the use of languages other than Malay so as to prevent the alienation of non-Malay groups and the stagnation of secular development.

While language continues to be debated there is apt to be increasing attention given to two other spheres of education policy - religious instruction and higher education. It may seem paradoxical that these two facets of education

should rise to political prominence simultaneously. But this development points again to the mixed and non-linear character of the integrative processes. Religious education relates to a continuing attachment to primordial values and loyalties, whereas higher education is linked to new aspirations in a technological and western-influenced culture.

Why should these two issues be coming to the fore in Malaysian politics at the same time? Part of the answer resides in the particular nature of Malaysia's ethnic pluralism. Islamic education would seem to be one of those areas that would be attacked at the earliest stage by any cosmopolitan government set upon breaking down the main bulwarks of ethnic parochialism. But Islamic education is associated with the Malayan ethnic group which has prior claim on the national government for protection, not demolition of its ethnic distinctiveness. For this reason Islamic education, although an element retarding Malay integration, was left untouched by the national policy-makers in the first stages of their nation-building drive. Now, however, there is a feeling - still expressed cautiously by wary officials - that to allow religious education to continue unassimilated is intolerable. It is intolerable because it threatens to leave Malays further behind economically, a condition which will exacerbate Malay frustrations and hostilities, and also because Islamic education

provides a base for political organizational challenge to the ruling party.

Until now integrative pressures through education policy have been directed largely at those ethnic groups least capable of resisting - the immigrant non-Malays, who were anxious to prove their loyalty and to achieve professional and commercial success. But in taking up the issue of Islamic education the federal leadership ventures on to more dangerous ground. It will be attempting to exert pressure on that ethnic group most certain of its right to membership in the polity and least susceptible to the incentives of commercial and secular achievement.

Therefore, the rise of religious education as a central political issue will produce different types of political interaction. It will require concentration on different channels of communication - e.g., the non-Malay partners in the Alliance will not be of much use to policy-makers and administrators, and perhaps different kinds of incentives. What is more, this next step in the integrative process is likely to generate new conflict, taking the form of intensified challenges to UMNO and especially to its cosmopolitan national leadership.

At the same time as the religious values and attachments of the indigenous community become a major concern of government for the first time, higher education, seemingly

worlds away from the kampong Koranic school, is bound to receive more political attention. While the religious education issue illuminates the problems of assimilating the indigenous ethnic group, the higher education issue reveals more starkly the persistent dilemma of nation-building: the tension between the requisites of economic development and national identity. An official commission has been appointed to carry on an intensive study of Malaysian higher education; a hint as to the anticipated controversy this report will set off if the government's decision to withhold public release of its findings and recommendations.

At present Malaysia has one university, the University of Malaya, located just outside the capital. University instruction is conducted overwhelmingly in English; the university relies heavily on European instructors, although most departments are headed by Malaysians; and a disproportionate number of the university's 3,000 students are Chinese and Indian. In addition, as the policy justifications at the secondary school level indicate, Malaysia relies on Commonwealth and now United States institutions to train much of the country's needed technical and professional personnel. There is also the British-inherited inclination toward academic subjects with an implied denigration of technical and applied subjects. All of these conditions raise awkward questions for a national

regime dedicated to not only modernization, measured by western criteria, but the creation of a truly Malaysian society.

In significant respects the issue of higher education will pose many of the same political difficulties for the Alliance leadership as has the issue of National Language. The issues of centralization of the school system and transformation of Islamic education place the federal leaders in the position of trying to persuade or coerce groups outside of the top political circles. But the issues of language and higher education place the same leaders in a position of having to reconcile contrary desires and values within themselves. In deciding on how far to push Malay in university instruction, how to bring more Malays into higher education without surrendering traditional standards of selectivity, how to provide the skills needed for agriculture, science and business without sacrificing the virtues of humanities and the arts, how to make the faculties more truly Malaysian without compromising academic excellence, how to make Malaysia educationally self-reliant without cutting cherished Commonwealth ties - in all these decisions the Alliance leadership and the top education advisors will not be battling against outside groups so much as they will be choosing among their own mixed and frequently conflicting needs and aspirations. As in National Language, the policy product is apt to be characterized by irresolution and ambiguity.

If this study were to be repeated ten years from now education probably would not be selected as the subject for the case study. While emphasis within education are changing, at the same time public concern is moving from education to other policy areas. Education certainly will be politically sensitive for years to come, but it may not so dominate the Malaysian political stage as it does now. The sorts of issues which take its place will be determined first by the federal government's own changing perceptions of the needs and goals of the nation and, second, by new integrative relationships themselves. Prophecy is not the function of political analysis, but it is fruitful to suggest some of the issues that may hold the Malaysian political stage in the future as a way of indicating some of the possible ramifications of these two variables.

So far issue transition has been from security to socialization and from a colonial orientation to a domestic orientation. In the future, changing integrative patterns and government needs are likely to generate greater interest in economic policy and foreign affairs.

The Alliance regime has operated on the presumption that a principal bastion of inter-communal harmony is economic prosperity. So long as the immigrant communities, in particular, have confidence in, and reap genuine benefits

from the Malaysian economy they will be willing to make communal sacrifices and to tolerate the special position of the Malays. So long as there are rewards issuing from present societal arrangements, even those who regret the loss of communal autonomy will be reluctant to risk disorder by pressing communal demands relentlessly.

There are two contingencies which could upset this economic pillar in the Malaysian edifice. The first is to a great extent beyond government control; that is, the possible decline of international rubber and tin markets, on which Malaysian prosperity depends. The second contingency is more political. This is the possibility of increasing pressure by the Malays, who are now largely rural or are employed in non-commercial service occupations, to gain entrance into the commercial sector.

A corollary to the Alliance notion of prosperity fostering social harmony is in the belief that the non-Malays will not be threatened in that sphere of society from which they gain most rewards, the marketplace. But the very drive toward common socialization, which has motivated the government's education planning, has made it more probable that all ethnic groups, not just the traditionally commercial-urban groups, will want to participate in the business and industrial sector of society. It is impossible to standardize the education-

socialization system without also encouraging similar ambitions among all of that system's graduates. Investment in rural development and expansion of government service posts may satisfy this new demand, but only partially. As the Malaysian society does become more genuinely integrated, can the agricultural sector remain a Malay domain while the business sector remains a Chinese-Indian domain?

Consequently, progress in integration through successful policy implementation may give birth to a new issue - economic distribution - which is likely to rock the very foundations on which the Alliance formula is based: cooperative inter-communalism. This is, the Alliance solution is one in which accommodation, harmony, and progress are assured because each separate ethnic group has its own organizations and own spheres of influence and reward. This separateness allows for ordered and pragmatic cooperation and bargaining with minimum threat to all, or at least some sacrifice for all. But if this formula works too well, that separateness becomes untenable, and the organizational representation of that separateness becomes artificial. If opportunities for commercial and industrial access become a major issue in the future, it will be simultaneously a tribute to the Alliance's integrative effectiveness and a severe threat to the Alliance's formula for that success.

Within a year of the termination of a serious threat to internal security, Confrontation, Malaysia has become more involved than ever before in international affairs, especially regional affairs. This new interest in foreign policy is a sign that Malaysia is able to act as a consolidated entity, that it need not be preoccupied wholly with just holding that entity together. To some extent this new interest was forced upon Malaysia, especially in having to present an acceptable image at the abortive Afro-Asian Conference, scheduled for 1965 in Algiers, and in having to reach some solution to Confrontation with Indonesia. But, more recently, in efforts to establish instruments for Southeast Asian regional cooperation, Malaysia seems to be acting more on its own initiative.

Foreign policy is an area particularly susceptible to inter-ethnic conflict in a society many of whose ethnic groups migrated from other nation-states. For this reason Malaysia, for instance, has eschewed diplomatic ties with both Taiwan and Peking to avoid alienating any portion of her large Chinese population. The federal government, likewise, has acted with discretion in the Indian-Pakistan dispute, although its sympathy with India led to a break in relations with Pakistan. Aside from the ties of ethnic groups to mother countries, there are ties of culture between Malaysian communities and certain foreign states. The Malay community is indigenous but its

Islamic attachments lead many of its leading spokesmen to sympathize with other Islamic states. The federal leadership has to take this into account in its relations with Indonesia, Pakistan, and the Arab countries.

In international affairs race becomes a factor of greater policy relevance than it is in domestic policy formation. The widespread belief that Indonesia and the Philippines - despite the two-year conflict with both over Borneo - are Malaysia's natural allies in Asia grows out of a sense of racial community among the Malays of Southeast Asia. Regardless of its validity, the popularity of this notion leads the federal leadership to be wary of its regional alliances taking on anti-Chinese overtones.

A nation unsure of its viability will shun commitment in areas most conducive to inter-communal conflict. Malaysia, therefore, has given foreign relations lower priority not only because of an overriding concern with internal affairs, but also because of fears that foreign policy choices among nations with bonds to some of its own ethnic groups would only accentuate communal distinctions all the more.

But as the Federation feels more secure it is likely to assert itself in international affairs. Malaysia has taken the initiative in several of the recent efforts toward Asian regional cooperation. This new interest in foreign policy

risks activating those communal sentiments allowed to lie somewhat dormant in the last decade. But it also may push Malaysian national unity a step further by giving citizens of all ethnic affiliations a sense of distinctiveness as a nation, not just as separate communities within the nation.

Foreign policy emphasis stops acting as a disintegrative force and becomes a force for integration only after a certain degree of national unity already has been achieved. The repercussions of Malaysia's new international initiatives in domestic politics will provide one indication as to whether Malaysia indeed has attained more than that minimal level of unity.

Notes

Introduction

1. Fred Riggs, Administration in Developing Countries, Boston, Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1964, p. 159.
2. Lucian Pye, Aspects of Political Development, Boston Little, Brown and Co., 1966, p. 65.
3. See Milton Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, New York, Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 7-76; Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot, Cambridge, The M.I.T. Press, 1963, pp. 10-23.

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1. Ool Jin-Bee, Land, People and Economy of Malaya, London Longmans, Green and Co., 1963, p. 140.
2. Guy Wint, ed., Asia: A Handbook, London, Anthony Blond, Ltd., 1965, pp. 44-45.
3. Commission of Enquiry, Another Borneo and Sarawak ("Cobbold Commission"), Report, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, 1962, p. 103.
4. Harry Groves, The Constitution of Malaysia, Singapore, Malaysia Publications, Ltd., 1964, pp. 212-216.
5. Norton Ginsburg and Chester Roberts, Malaya, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1958, p. 139.
6. Ibid., p. 135.
7. Ibid., pp. 193-194.
8. Ool Jin-Bee, op. cit., p. 123.
9. Ibid., pp. 123-125.

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10. Ibid., p. 155.

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1. See Lewis Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict, New York, The Free Press, 1956.
2. Clifford Geertz, "Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in New States," in Clifford Geertz, ed., Old Societies and New States, The Free Press, 1963, pp. 124-125.
3. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," in Lee Rainwater and William Yancey, The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy, Cambridge, The M.I.T. Press, 1967, pp. 48-49 (pp. 2-3 of the original report) and p. 93 (p. 47 of the original report).
4. See Chapter VI for a discussion of education policy in Sabah and Sarawak.
5. Committee on Malay Education, Report, ("Barnes Report"), Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, 1951. Leonard Barnes was an Oxford University sociologist appointed by the British High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney.

Federation of Malaya, Report of Education Committee of 1956 ("Razak Report"), reprinted in full in: Federation of Malaya, Annual Report on Education for 1956, Kuala Lumpur.

Dato (now Tun) Razak bin Hussain was Minister of Education at the time; he currently is Deputy Prime Minister and is expected to become Prime Minister when Tunku Abdul Rahman retires.

Federation of Malaya, Report of the Education Review Committee of 1960, ("Talib Report"), Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, 1964. Rahman Talib was then Minister of Education; he later resigned in the midst of a public scandal.

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6. For a brief history of the various school systems in Malaya, see: Federation of Malaya, Annual Report on Education for 1955, pp. 2-19; D.D. Chelliah, A History of the Educational Policy of the Straits Settlements, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, 1940, pp. 50-79; Ho Seng Ong, Education for Unity in Malaya, Penang, Malayan Teachers Union, 1952, pp. 39-52.
7. For a discussion of Indian education, see: Usha Mahajan, The Role of Indian Minorities in Burma and Malaya, Bombay, Vora and Co., 1960.
8. Regarding Chinese education, see: Wolfgang Franke, "Problems of Chinese Education in Singapore and Malaya," Malayan Journal of Education, vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 182-198; Douglas F. Murray, "Chinese Education in South-East Asia," The China Quarterly, No. 20, October/December, 1964, pp. 67-95.
9. Federation of Malaya, Chinese Schools and the Education of Chinese in Malaya, ("Fenn-Wu Report"), Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, 1951. Fenn was an American educator, Wu was a Chinese official in the United Nations.
10. Federation of Malaya, Annual Report on Education for 1956, p. 18.
11. Federation of Malaya, Report of the Education Review Committee of 1961, and Federation of Malaya, 1961 Education Ordinance, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, 1961.
12. Report of the Education Committee, 1956, reprinted in Federation of Malaya, Annual Report on Education for 1956, p. 49.
13. Quoted in Margaret Clark, The Malayan Alliance and Its Accommodation of Communal Pressures, 1952-1962, unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1964, p. 135.
14. Report of the Education Committee, 1956, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

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15. Straits Times, April 11, April 12, 1966.
16. Straits Budget, May 31, 1967.
17. Federation of Malaya, Report of the Education Review Committee, 1960, pp. 30-33.
18. Nanyang University Review Committee, Report ("Wang Gung-wu Report"), Singapore, mimeo., 1965.
19. Straits Times, May 13, 1966.

Another matter relating to the examination system is the continuing use of the Cambridge Secondary exam, taken prior to entrance into Form VI, the final year of secondary school for university-bound students. Some ministry officials and outside educators would like to scrap this British-composed exam and substitute for it an exam written by Malaysians themselves. Thus far the Ministry has favored continuation of the Cambridge exam, contending that for the present Malaysian students must be qualified to gain acceptance into overseas - especially Commonwealth - universities. Retention of the Cambridge exams will insure that Malaysian students and schools are meeting these Commonwealth standards. See Straits Times, April 18, 19, May 23, 1966.

Chapter III

1. Harry Groves, op. cit., pp. 150-151.
2. Federation of Malaya, Report of the Education Review Committee, 1960, p. 12
3. Report of the Education Committee, 1955, in op. cit., p. 50.
4. Straits Times, March 4, 1967.
5. T.E. Smith, The Background to Malaysia, London, Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 5.

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6. Ooi Jin-Bee, op. cit., p. 140.
7. For a discussion of the development of the Malayan civil service, its British inception and recent Malayization, see Robert O. Tilman, Bureaucratic Transition in Malaya, Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1964.
8. Straits Times, March 3, 1967.
9. Straits Times, February 27, 1967.
10. Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media, New York McGraw-Hill Publishers, 1965, p. ix.
11. Guy Wint, ed., op. cit., pp. 44-45
12. Ginsburg and Roberts, op. cit., p. 185.

According to 1965 figures, attendance at movies for one year totalled nine times per head of Malayan population: Wint, op. cit., p. 44.
13. Ginsburg and Roberts, op. cit., p. 186.
14. Wint, ed., op. cit., p. 44.
15. Ginsburg and Roberts, op. cit., p. 173.
16. Sunday Times, July 25, 1965. Translated excerpts from Jawi-Malay to English also were published in the PAP's party newspaper, Petir.
17. Straits Times, June 28, 1965.
18. Straits Times, October 22, 1965.
19. Loc. cit.
20. Straits Times, September 26, October 5, 1965.
21. Straits Times, November 2, 1965.
22. Straits Times, November 6, 1965.

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23. Straits Times, December 15, 1965.
24. Straits Times, December 29, 1965.
25. For an account of the events leading to passage of the National Language Bill of 1967, see Margaret Roff (formerly Margaret Clark), "The Politics of Language in Malaya," Asian Survey, vol. 7, No. 5, May, 1967, pp. 316-328.
26. Straits Times, February 24, 1967.
27. Straits Times, March 4, 1967.

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1. T.G. McGee, "The Malayan Elections of 1959", The Journal of Tropical Geography, vol. 16, October, 1962, p. 74.
2. Loc. cit.
3. McGee, op. cit., p. 72.
4. Frances Stanner, "Malaysia's First Year", Asian Survey, vol. 5, no. 2, February, 1965, pp. 116-117.
5. For another perception of the party spectrum, see: R.S. Milne, "Politics and Government", in Wang Gung-wu, ed., Malaysia, New York, Frederick Praeger Publishers, 1965, p. 331.
6. Straits Times, February 23, 1967; March 3, 1967.
7. Straits Times, September 2, 1965; September 3, 1965.
8. Straits Times, September 3, 1965.
9. Straits Times, September 3, September 11, 1965.
10. Straits Times, September 3, 1965.

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11. From interview with high-ranking Alliance officials, March, 1966.
12. For a brief account of the formation of political parties after World War II, see K.J. Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Press, 1965, pp. 142-174; or K. J. Ratnam, "Political Parties and Pressure Groups", in Wang Gung-wu, ed., op. cit., pp. 336-345.
13. Speech by the Malacca Mentri Besar, Inche Abdul Ghafar bin Baba, to an UMNO meeting in Province Wellesley, Straits Budget, June 7, 1967.
14. Straits Budget, June 7, 1967.
15. In the aftermath of the split with Singapore, Khir Johari, newly appointed Secretary General of UMNO, announced that there would be a major tightening of party organization and that, as part of this move, all press statements by UMNO officials would have to be cleared by his office. Straits Times, October 12, 1965.
16. Straits Times, March 15 - April 1, 1967. In the end, the UMNO Council did not have to take action because Syed Nasir resigned, after serving on the Council for 15 years.
17. Straits Times, August 12, 1965.
For accounts and interpretations of the events leading to Singapore's separation and Jafar Albar's role in those events, see: Jean Grossholtz, "An Exploration of Malaysian Meanings," Asian Survey, vol. 6, no. 4, April, 1966, pp. 227-240; R.S. Milne, "Singapore's Exit From Malaysia," Asian Survey, vol. 6, No. 3, March, 1966, pp. 175-184.
18. This discussion of the MIC draws heavily from materials in Mahajani, op. cit., especially pp. 218-278.
19. Ibid., pp. 276-277. Mahajani made this observation in 1959, but it remains valid.
20. Straits Times, November 29, 1965.

21. Memorandum on Indian Education in the Federation of Malaya, submitted to the government by the Indian Education Committee, 1951, as quoted by Mahajan, op.cit., pp. 240-242.
22. Loc. cit.
23. For a perceptive analysis of the MCA's career with the Alliance, see Margaret Clark, op. cit.
24. Straits Times, October 1, 1966.
25. Working Committee of Chinese Guilds and Associations of Malaya, Memorandum, August, 1965, submitted to the Prime Minister in the form of a petition.
26. This narrative was gained from interviews with MCA and Chinese association leaders involved, December, 1965. See also Margaret Roff, op. cit.
27. Straits Times, November 1, 1966.
28. Straits Times, January 31, 1966.
29. Robert Shaplen, "letter from Bangkok", New Yorker Magazine, March 18, 1967, pp. 167-171; New York Times, January 14, 1966.
30. Interview with a leading spokesman in the Socialist Front, December, 1965.
31. Straits Times, December 15, 19, 1965; January 10, 11, 1966.
32. With the end of Confrontation the federal government said it was considering the release of Dr. Burhanuddin, along with Labour Party leader Inche Ishak bin Haji Mohamed and former Minister of Agriculture and Co-operatives, Inche Abdul Azziz bin Ishak. All three were arrested in 1965 on the charge that they had received large sums of money from Indonesian agents. Straits Times, March 3, 1966.
See also Straits Times, March 11, 1966, for a statement by the Malay Minister of Transport, Dato Sardon, accusing the PMIP of being sympathetic with Indonesia.
33. Straits Times, March 14, 1966.

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34. Straits Times, March 9, 1966.
35. Loc. cit.
36. Straits Times, March 12, 1966.
37. Straits Times, March 14, 1966.
38. Straits Times, March 13, March 14, 1966.
39. Straits Times, March 11, 1966.
40. Straits Times, February 5, 1966.
41. Straits Times, December 20, 1965, reported that the Alliance Executive Council had approved this "open door" policy. But later personal interviews with Alliance officials suggested that in fact the proposal had aroused some controversy in the Council, and a final decision was suspended.
42. Straits Times, September 11, 1965.
43. Straits Budget, June 7, 1967.
44. Straits Budget, July 12, 1967.

Chapter V

1. Peter Wilson, A Malay Village and Malaysia, New Haven, HRAF Press, 1967, pp. 57-59. Also personal communication with Heather Strange, Rutgers University, who studied a Malay kampong in Trengganu (Wilson's kampong was in Selangor).
2. Unless otherwise noted, all material concerning teachers associations was gained from interviews with officials of various teachers groups.
3. Straits Times, January 15, 1966.
4. Straits Times, August 21, 1965.

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5. Straits Times, May 4, 1967.
6. Straits Times, May 17, 1967.
7. K. J. Ratnam, "Political Parties and Pressure Groups", in Wang Gung-wu, ed., op.cit. pp. 343-344. See also Charles Gamba, The Origins of Trade Unionism in Malaya, Singapore, 1962, and Alex Josey, Trade Unionism in Malaya, Singapore, 1958.

Analysis of pressure groups, especially non-union groups, has been sadly lacking in Malaysia. This neglect is due in part to the relative scarcity of politically influential groups bridging ethnic gaps; but it is a subject now deserving far more attention.

8. Straits Times, August 6, 1965.
9. For detailed account of the Tamil teachers' efforts to alter the Ministry's training and credential requirements, see: Straits Times, January 6-11, 1966.
10. Straits Budget, July 19, 1967.
11. Straits Times, February 25, 1967.
12. From interview with Ministry of Education officials, February, 1966.
13. I am grateful to Gerald Maryanov, North Illinois University, for suggesting this variation in the process of interest articulation.
14. Straits Budget, July 5, 1967.

Chapter VI

1. Straits Budget, May 10, 1967. The DAP called on all opposition party councilors to resign from local council in protest against the federal government's suspension of local elections.

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2. See Table 3, Chapter VI.
3. See Table 1, Chapter VI.
4. For a brief and clear discussion of the terms of the Malaysian merger, see T. E. Smith, Background to Malaysia, London, Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 32-41. For an official account of the agreement, see Malaysia, Report of the Inter-Government Committee, Kuala Lumpur, Government Printing Office, 1962.
5. Wilson, op. cit., p. 34.
6. State of Singapore, Annual Report, 1963, Singapore, Government Printing Office, 1965, p. 44.
7. See Table 3, Chapter VI.
8. State of Singapore, op. cit., p. 80.
9. At a state ceremony the Sultan of Kelantan called for understanding and cooperation between the central and state governments to help Kelantan over its "difficulties". The PMIP leader, Kelantan's Menteri Besar, followed with a pledge of loyalty to the Sultan and promised to work for good relations with Kuala Lumpur.
Straits Budget, July 19, 1967.
10. Straits Times, December 15, 1965.
11. J. Norman Farmer, "Malaysia 1965: Challenging the Terms of 1957," Asian Survey, vol. 6, no. 2, February, 1966, p. 112.
12. Milne, op. cit., pp. 179-180.
13. Nanyang University Review Committee, op. cit.
14. The distinction between "Native" and "Malay" varies within Malaysia. Under Article 153 of the Malaysian Constitution, which concerns land reserves, the term "natives of the State" is substituted for the term

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"Malays" which appears in the 1957 Constitution of Malaya. "In Sarawak Malays, if citizens, are included as 'natives,' with twenty races, plus persons of mixed blood if exclusively derived from natives... In Sabah the term 'native' is less well defined, being a citizen born in Sabah or to a father domiciled there who is the child or grandchild of a person 'of a race indigenous to Sabah.'" Unfortunately, this last phrase is left undefined. Groves, op.cit., p. 206.

15. Nigel Heyward, Sarawak, Brunel, and North Borneo, Singapore, Eastern Universities Press, Ltd., 1963, p. 25.
16. Malaysia, Report of the Inter-Governmental Committee, p. 5.
17. L. W. Jones, North Borneo: Report on the Census of Population Taken on 10th August, 1960, Kuching, Government Printing Office, 1962, p. 79.

In Malaya literacy among the various communities is as follows:

Malays	47%
Chinese	53%
Indians	57%

Smith, op. cit., p. 5.

18. Jones, op. cit., p. 85.
19. This conclusion is drawn from interviews with officials and educators in Sabah and Sarawak. Not one interviewee mentioned joint projects or mutual assistance.
20. Malaysia, Report of the Inter-Governmental Committee, pp. 4-5, p. 3, p. 16.
21. This account of Chinese intra-communal conflict over education in the post-war period is derived from interviews with a number of politically active Sarawak Chinese. See also Michael Leigh, The Chinese Community of Sarawak, Singapore, Malaysia Publishing House, Ltd., 1964.

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22. Leight, op. cit., pp. 55-56.
23. For a description of the events surrounding the dismissal of Sarawak's Chief Minister, see Dennis Warner, "Malaysia After Confrontation," The Reporter, January 26, 1967.
24. For the government's own analysis of the character of internal subversion in Sarawak, see Sarawak Information Service, The Danger Within: A History of the Clandestine Communist Organization in Sarawak, Kuching, Government Printing Office, 1965.
25. New York Times, September 14, 1965.
26. Straits Times, June 13, 1966.
27. For a day-to-day account of the events around Stephen Ningkan's dismissal, see Straits Times, June 13-22, 1966.
28. Straits Times, September 8, 1966.
29. Straits Times, September 9, 1965.
Dato Donald Stephens resigned as both Federal Minister for Sabah Affairs - a post that at the time of appointment was considered "a kick upstairs" - and as head of the UPKO two months later. See Straits Times, November 3, 1965.
30. Most of the upper level education officials in both Sabah and Sarawak still are British expatriates. This impression of policy emphasis was gained from personal interviews in the Department of Education in Kuching and Jesselton, February, 1966.
31. Guy Hunter, Southeast Asia: Race, Culture and Religion, London, Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 81.
32. Sabah, Annual Report, 1963, Jesselton, Government Printing Office, 1964, p. 74.

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33. See K.G. Robinson, "M.G. Dickson - A record of Achievement," typescript, 1966. To be published in the Sarawak Gazette. Dickson was Sarawak's Director of Education over most of the post-war period. His successor is Robinson.
34. Malaysia, Report of the Inter-governmental Committee, pp. 7-8.
35. Interest group politics still play a very minor role in Borneo politics. There are teachers associations, but they are not yet an important political force, and they have been absorbed into government advisory councils. But the associations exist and new ones are beginning along both communal and inter-communal lines as in Malaya. There seems to be almost no contact between these Borneo teachers groups and the more experienced groups on the peninsula.
36. Straits Budget, July 19, 1967.

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