

## STORMY PETREL OF OPPOSITION POLITICS AND TROJAN HORSE OF MALAYSIAN TRADE UNIONISM

He was born on August 26, 1932 in Kuala Lumpur of relatively humble parentage. The only son of the late Mr. S. Vethamuthu, David was raised at his birthplace – 3rd Mile, Klang Road, Kuala Lumpur – where his parents, both since deceased (he lost his father when he was in his very early teens and his mother breathed her last in 1977), had a small mixed farm and some cattle which he helped to tend for the family to eke out a frugal living. An old boy of the Methodist Boys' School in Kuala Lumpur, he pursued courses on the disciplines of Political Science and Industrial Relations at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, in the USA and simultaneously attended a labour training school in North Carolina.

Both sets of courses – the first made possible by a US Government grant and the other under the auspices of the Congress of Industrial Organisations, stood him in good stead in the years to come for his career as a professional trade unionist cum labour-slanted opposition politician. However, educational embellishments had emerged somewhat belatedly for Dr. David. It was only in 1980 that he had obtained the Master of Commerce degree (M. Com) from the University of New Delhi, India.

In June the previous year, however, he had obtained a Fellowship of the English Association of Secretaries (FEAS). But the plum of his academic achievements only came quite recently when his thesis on "International Relations", as an external Political Science student, was accepted by the Pacific Western University in Glendale, California, which conferred on him a Ph.D. Degree.

It was in the field of trade unionism where David first made his mark and his official biography tags him down as a trade unionist, although it is his avowed concept that trade unionism and politics run as parallel as twin carburettors of the engine of growth and development. He founded and led the Selangor Mill Workers' Union (SMWU) in as early as 1953 and in the following year transformed it into the Selangor Mill & Factory Workers Union (SMFWU).

In 1955 SMFWU went by the new name of the National Union of Factory and General Workers (NUFGW) which enjoyed a wider scope of membership, with David as its General Secretary. He held this office until the union was banned by the then Malayan Government in 1958 – a year after this country attained sovereign nationhood. He subsequently founded and led the Transport Workers Union (TWU) of which he is the General Secretary to this day.

Along with the ban on NUGFW, on 12th May 1958, David was clapped into internal security captivity (then known as the Emergency Regulations) for the first time. He was to experience this unwelcome incident again on three separate occasions. On 12 May 1958, David was arrested and thrown into the lock-up of the High Street (now Jalan Tun H.S. Lee) Police Station, Kuala Lumpur for five days. He was later transferred to the Ashby Road Camp in Ipoh and detained there until 7th July 1958. The budding unionist-politician was released on the conditions that he shall not take as active part in trade union activities for a year, during which he was also barred from visiting Singapore.

His second stint in preventive custody came about in February 1965, when the young, upcoming trade unionist-politician was detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA). David was arrested and kept in captivity at the Kepong Police Station. Despite the pressure exerted upon him, he kept his valiant spirits and refused to succumb to authority. He was released on 10th May 1965 after spending several days in fetters.

*"The woods are lonely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep."*

**- Robert Frost**

**DEDICATED TO ALL FREEDOM -  
LOVING MALAYSIANS**

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# FREEDOM THAT NEVER CAME

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DR. V. DAVID

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# FLASHBACKS

DAVID ARRESTED ON WAY HOME AT MIDNIGHT

STRAITS TIMES

Subversive activities of banned NUGW encouraged by him—Government

## UNION LEADER SEIZED

### Contacts: Known Reds

**KUALA LUMPUR, Tue.**—The general secretary of the banned National Union of Factory and General Workers, Mr. V. David, has been arrested by the Police Special Branch for "subversive activities."

He has picked up his special branch address from the Communist Party office in Kuala Lumpur.

It is stated that David has been arrested for his contacts with known subversives and for his activities in the Kuala Lumpur area.

Mr. David was arrested at about 11.30 p.m. at his home in Klang Road, Kuala Lumpur.

He was taken to the Police Special Branch headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

It is stated that David has been arrested for his contacts with known subversives and for his activities in the Kuala Lumpur area.

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## EX-UNION HEAD FREE TO TRAVEL AGAIN: BAN LIFTED

**KUALA LUMPUR, Wednesday.**  
THE former general-secretary of the banned National Union of Factory and General Workers, Mr. V. David, is free again to travel anywhere outside the Federation.

### Government lifts all curbs on Mr. David

The Government today lifted its year-old restriction on his travelling.

He is also free to hold an executive position in the trade union movement again.

An order to this effect was signed by Inspector W. Sebastian of the High Street police station today.

Insp. Sebastian told Mr. David that his order of detention was suspended without conditions.

Mr. David is now a Socialist Front State Assemblyman and a municipal councillor.

## COUNCILLOR ARRESTED

ENCOURAGED SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES OF UNION

Govt. Says David Was Acting In Support Of Reds

**KUALA LUMPUR, Tues.**—Kuala Lumpur Municipal Councillor and General Secretary of Factory and General Workers, V. David has been arrested by the Police Special Branch.

The arrest took place shortly after midnight last night while David was on his way home. He lives with his widowed mother in Klang Road.

According to Mr. Wong Han Teck, Secretary of the Selangor branch of the Union, six officers of the Special Branch Headquarters in Bluff Road called at the Union Secretariat at about 10.30 last night.

David was not in and while three officers waited at the Union premises, the others went to look for David. They stopped him on his way home.



Mr. DAVID

He was detained for 56 days last year for alleged subversive activities. He was released last June.



V. DAVID

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CHAPTER I  
**PART I**

TOWARDS FREEDOM

**THROES OF NATIONHOOD**



## CHAPTER I

### TOWARDS FREEDOM

**PART 1**

**"Today no country should have a minority race that is regarded as second class citizens".**

**O**n 31st August 1957 a new nation was born. A free, independent and sovereign Federation of Malaya. Malaysia, comprising Peninsular Malaya, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak came into being a midst great elation and hope in 1963. Singapore left Malaysia in 1965. It was expected to respond worthily to the challenging tasks of independence and to continue to give the world an example of co-operation and goodwill between all the races that has been a marked feature of its history.

When the people of Malaya were demanding independence from the British, there was no such thing as independence for a particular group of people but independence for all Malaysians—regardless of race, colour, religion, sex or creed. The people were united in their struggle against colonialism for a common objective — of independence for social, economic and political progress.

Thirty-two years after independence, the hopes and aspirations with which the new nation began have turned sour. Many are dismayed that the fruits of Merdeka are not being shared and enjoyed by all the people.

Malaysians of Chinese and Indian origin had not demanded a separate state though they could have. Unlike some Asian countries where strife and turmoil attended the birth of independence, Malaya began its independent destiny amidst peace and amity. Prosperity was within easy reach of its people but attitudes changed suddenly among those in power. Those in power were keen on preserving their selfish identity and betrayed the objectives of Merdeka and of the people. Disguised racialism is the order of the day. By 1969 when the country was convulsed by race riots, national unity had become a myth, a hollow slogan.

Platitudes about integration are illusory. Integration and national unity could only mean Malaysia for all Malaysians. The majority of the people have been denied their rights and opportunities.

Some incline to think that Chinese and Indians together constitute over 50 per cent of Malaysia's population. The official figures for 1975 are: 5,510,000 Malays; 3,689,000 Chinese; 1,105,000 Indians and 81,000 others. Even if these returns are accurate non-Malays are not an insignificant minority. No race has an absolute majority in Malaysia though the official figures give the Malays an edge of over 2 per cent over all others put together.

Government's policies have aimed at deepening racial divisions and even promoting tensions. This can have serious repercussions on a developing society. T.J. Connelly, Chairman of the British Race Relations Board, said in March 1974:

"Today no country should have a minority race that is regarded as second class citizens. If such a practice is followed, seeds of discontent will be planted that will create problems to hinder the prosperity of the country and unity of its people."

Malaysia cannot afford a minority race and a race problem. It cannot afford racial strife. Racialism has put the clock back for national integration and unity. In fact the country is still in the process of becoming a nation but perverted policies have inhibited and stunned the process.

Western colonialism retreated from South East Asia in the face of the Japanese onslaught. South East Asia's resistance to Japanese occupation is a stirring saga that will be remembered long. At the end of the Second World War, colonialism tried to return to the region to regain its lost domains but Japanese occupation, the resistance to it, and the freedom struggle in the South Asian sub-continent had heightened the people of South East Asia to a new consciousness.

In the pre-war period, beyond the resentment for British policies, there was no common inspiration and no common goals in the Malayan nationalist movements which were communally isolated. The Chinese had their Kuomintang and derived their inspiration from the parent organisation in China. The Malays, least politicised, had a youth movement which wanted joint independence with Indonesia, and an Islamic reformist movement which had nationalist overtones. The Indians played an important role in formation of Indian Independence League during the Japanese occupation.

The Japanese singled the Chinese out for barbaric treatment, largely because of their traditional hostility to the Chinese. The Chinese were in the forefront of the resistance to the Japanese. Indians were concerned only with the liberation of their homeland and supported the Japanese against the British. Malays supported the Japanese in the hope their political supremacy would be restored in a multi-racial country. Thus common interests were lacking in the attitude of various racial segments to Japanese occupation. In fact the Japanese occupation accentuated the racial differences causing deep animosities in Malaya. But this was to be shortlived. There was general revolution against the Japanese rule and there was a conscious attempt and at co-operation among racial groups.

Immediately after the British reoccupation of Malaya, Ahmed Boestaman started a left-wing daily *Suara Rakyat* (People's Voice) which called upon the people to unite in a political party to further the cause of national liberation. Boestaman and Dr. Burhannudin convened the first Malay Congress at Ipoh in October, 1945 and this soon led to the formation of the Malay Nationalist Party.

Mukh Taruddin, an Indonesian by birth, was elected its first Chairman. The MNP was founded on the basis of firm socialist principles, opposed to capitalism. Its leadership was not concerned with the communal question. Boestaman, the socialist brain behind the MNP, believed in the united front of the entire proletariat, irrespective of race, against capitalist exploiters of all communities. The membership of the MNP grew to 10,000 and comprised entirely Malays. Its proclaimed objectives were: a strong central democratic government for Malaya, and the incorporation of Malaya with the Republic of Indonesia. The second objective did not find favour with the rulers, and the other races.

Within a few months of the formation of the MNP, Burhannudin took over as its president and continued in the position until the party was dissolved with the imposition of the Emergency in 1948.

In February 1946, Boestaman had formed the Angkatan Pemuda Insaf — API (Awakened Youth League). About 10,000 Malay youth had joined it. Simultaneously, the Malayan Indian youth were organised into a Seva Dal (Service Corps). The two youth movements worked in co-operation in the Pan-Malayan Council of Joint Action during its early stages in 1947. API also worked in close co-operation with the MNP. In April 1947, Boestaman published a document setting out the political concept of the API. This was considered a seditious document inciting Malay youth to achieve independence by violent means. Boestaman was arrested but was soon freed. The British rulers, not reconciled to Malaya's imminent independence, detained Boestaman in July 1948, immediately after the proclamation of Emergency in June 1948. He was released in 1955 on the condition that he cannot leave Kuala Lumpur without permission from the police. The British feared Boestaman and his influence on the youth became a matter of serious concern. The real freedom fighters in Malaya were courageous men like Boestaman and not those praised by a few political writers and historians who attempt to conceal the truth.

It is also evident from the records that among the early Indian leaders of Malaya, Budh Singh called in 1950 for a fully-elected legislature responsible to the electorate and for the reunion of Singapore and the Malayan Federation. He said that he did not favour dual

nationality but full-fledged citizenship identical with nationality. Thus, Budh Singh identified himself, on behalf of the Indians, completely with Malaya's struggle for independence.

A highlight of organised political activity in the postwar period was the formation of the United Malays National Organisation.

The United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) was founded in 1946 by Dato Onn bin Jafar, Menteri Besar of Johore. He was its president until 1951 when the party's general assembly rejected a proposal by him that the UMNO should throw its doors open to other races to give it a non-communal character so that the advance towards self-government could be accelerated. Dato Onn bin Jafar left the UMNO to form the Independence of Malaya Party on 11th October 1951.

The new party could enlist the support of prominent intellectuals of all races and was expected to be multi-racial in character. But it was a disappointment. It had to encounter opposition from various quarters, especially the UMNO and could make little impact on the rural Malays. The failure of the Independence of Malaya Party was a severe blow to non-communal politics. It would be well to remember that the party comprised mostly of right-wing elements opposed to any drastic change in national outlook. Founded on vested interest, it was supported mainly by capitalist and British elites.

Similarly the UMNO, from the very beginning, was backed by wealthy people and those belonging to the ruling class. Some of its principal supporters were feudal aristocrats. Though the party directed its appeal communally to the ordinary peasantry and the poor Malays, the leadership came from the landed and propertied class. Therefore the UMNO had all along pursued policies which were contrary to the interests of the working class and the peasantry.

The UMNO, from the beginning, maintained that it was formed to protect the interest of the Malays and its aims were limited strictly to furthering the cause of the Islamic religion, preserving the status of the rulers, and at the same time safe-guarding the interests of the Malays against the non-Malays. This concept had been widened from time to time and eventually expanded to cut across the interest of the non-Malays in the country. The Constitution of the UMNO from the time it was formed stated clearly the interest of the Malays would be safe-guarded at all times:-

- To safeguard and preserve the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya particularly the provisions relating to the Muslim religion, Malay language and customs, the dignity and prestige of Their Highnesses the Malay Rulers and the special privileges of the Malays.

- To promote the advancement of Islam and to force its growth as the *modus vivendi* for all Muslims living in the Federation of Malaya.
- To take such steps as may be necessary for the welfare and advancement of its members, the Malays particularly, and the citizens of the Federation of Malaya, generally.

It is clear that the UMNO was based on ultra racialist concept. This does not recognise that the other communities are equally interested in safeguarding their own fundamental interests. At the time of Independence the UMNO played a cunning role. It enlisted the support of the Chinese and Indians in the cause of Independence and used them fully to secure the transfer of powers from the Colonial government. The Chinese and the Indians compromised certain of the fundamental rights of their respective community. This compromise ultimately resulted in problems bringing in its trail great apprehension and foreboding.

Tengku Abdul Rahman became the leader of the UMNO, after Dato Onn bin Jafar's exit. He comes from a princely family and being a Prince himself he was not overzealous about the country's future. Though many might believe that he was sincere, the fact remains that his lack of political foresight has created more complex problems for Malaya. The non-Malays, especially the Malayan Chinese Association and the Malayan Indian Congress had confidence in Tengku Abdul Rahman. As a result the Chinese and Indians took his goodwill further for granted and supported him without realising that he would not be in that position forever.

In fact they trusted him to the extent of giving him a blank cheque at negotiations with the British Government for Independence. This has brought a difficult kind of situation today which is being faced both by the Chinese and the Indians. The UMNO after Tengku's leadership has grown to be an ultra-communal organisation. It has arrogated to itself the jurisdiction, the functions, the objectives and the unity that it shared with the other races in obtaining Independence. Tengku Abdul Rahman's deputy Tun Abdul Razak did not believe in the sharing of power with the other races. He strongly believed in a Malay state regardless of international repercussions. His actions and objectives trespassed into the basic and legitimate rights of the other communities. Tun Razak created groups within the UMNO in the early stages when he was made the Deputy President of the organisation as well as the Deputy Prime Minister. He continued to manoeuvre with the ultimate objective of removing the man who appointed him as his Deputy. When Tengku Abdul Rahman resigned in 1970 Tun Razak made the

UMNO an extremely racialist organisation. Though the ultras were gaining strength through his support at the time of Tengku Abdul Rahman they were unable to exercise much power.

Tengku Abdul Rahman's belief that the country cannot be geared to the right direction without the support of the other communities acted as a brake on the ultras. However, Tun Razak gave them a free hand because he believed that the Malays were the rightful owners and inheritors of Malaya and had the absolute right to rule the country regardless of what the other communities felt. The UMNO from that time onwards has created many problems even within its own ranks. The UMNO today is a party of divided groups, but however divided within themselves they would stand up together against the non-Malays.

Tengku Abdul Rahman declared on 30th June 1952:

"Malaya is for the Malays and it should not be governed by a mixture of races. The Malays must safeguard the rights over this land which is ours for the benefit of our future generations."

In fact this statement of Tengku Abdul Rahman had sown the seeds of bitterness which was clearly reflected in the objectives of the UMNO. However broadminded Tengku Abdul Rahman might have been in his approach to the non-Malays, he has served the UMNO for many years by advocating a policy of Malaya for the Malays, the concept of which is unacceptable to Malaysians whether they are Chinese, Indians or liberal Malays. Again in the early 1960's the Tengku told the Asia Magazine:

"It is understood by all that this country by its very name, its traditions and character is Malay. The indigenous people are Malays and they are on the whole left behind in the economic and professional fields and others have been helped along by the understanding and tolerance of the Malays to be successful in whatever fields they are in. In any other country where aliens try to dominate in economic and other fields eventually there is bitter opposition from the indigenous people. But not with the Malays. Therefore in return they must appreciate the position of the Malays who have been given land in Malay reserve areas and jobs in the Government. Without these where would they go? They can't go into business which is in the hands of the non-Malays, and any how these businessmen quite naturally employ their own people. Therefore if Malays are driven out of everything, however tolerant they may be, there is a limit. Resentment would build up and there would be trouble and those who have found prosperity would also suffer.



The Pan Malayan Islamic Party on the other hand has been growing in its own direction advocating an Islamic concept for the Government and the people: To check the exodus of its own following to the Pan Malayan Islamic Party, the UMNO became more and more communal and vocal where Malay rights were concerned. With permanent rivalry between these two Malay political organisations the non-Malays were gradually losing the rights they once enjoyed and were legitimately theirs.

Tengku Abdul Rahman's leadership was marked by a failure from the beginning to initiate steps for integration to enable the creation of a united Malaya. The UMNO being based on communal thinking did not reverse its original policies in the light of changed context. The UMNO has all along maintained that Malaya is for the Malays. This is disputed by all other communities as the people of Malaya would never reconcile to the concept of Malaya for the Malays alone. It has to be Malaya for the Malaysians. And this reality has to be accepted by the Malays though in fact not in law.

The Malayan Chinese Association was formed on 27th February 1949 by the Chinese compradores. The composition of this organisation was dominated by big businessmen and tycoons who wanted to preserve their vested interests. One of the ways the MCA raised funds was through a lottery scheme. The gross income of the MCA within six weeks of its formation was 2 million Malayan dollars. Among the objectives of the MCA were:

- To foster, safeguard, advance and secure the political, social, educational, cultural, economic and other interests of its members by legitimate and constitutional means.
- To preserve and sustain the need and study of the Chinese language.

At a later stage some of these objectives were deleted from its constitution. Dato Tan Cheng Lock and Colonel H.S. Lee were among its earlier leaders. Dato Tan Cheng Lock comes from a wealthy family, which owned extensive rubber estates. These wealthy big tycoons who wanted to safeguard their vested interests, were prepared to sacrifice the community's interests to achieve their selfish ends. The MCA leadership passed on to Dr. Lim Chong Eu for a short while and later the son of Dato Tan Cheng Lock, Tun Tan Siew Sin, took over the reins of the party. The MCA did not enjoy the confidence of the

working class and the poor. The Chinese community which lived mostly in the estates, tin mining areas, New Villages and other rural areas rejected the MCA organisation that it could not safeguard the interests of the Chinese. The Chinese have always charged the MCA with mortgaging the interests of the community in return for gains to the leadership. Even during elections the Chinese vote has been in favour of the Opposition than the MCA which is part of the ruling Alliance.

The Malayan Indian Congress was founded in August 1946 as a non-political organisation and since its inception has falsely claimed to represent the interests of all Indians in Malaya, and later Malaysia. There is a tendency to look at this event as a "turning point" in the history of the Indian community in the Malay peninsula and vest it with the same significance and connotation as the formation of the UMNO and the MCA have for the Malay and Chinese communities, respectively.

Unlike the formation of the UMNO and the MCA, the formation of the MIC is devoid of any such definitive significance for the creation of an Indian "political" community. Indians in Malaysia account for at least 10% of the population and can therefore play only a peripheral role. It has not been able to create a "political" community of the Indians in the peninsula nor has it been able to weld and consolidate the diverse and isolated elements into a single effective organisation. It was not until the MIC was coalesced with the UMNO - MCA Alliance in 1954 that it entered the main stream of Malayan politics to take a pitiable and unenviable third place.

John Thivy, Budh Singh and a few others were in the forefront of Indian leadership in the late 1940's after the Second World War. In Budh Singh's period the Malayan Indian Congress was the spokesman of Indian interests. Budh Singh was prepared to work with progressive forces and his understanding and co-operation with the Malay Nationalist Party was commendable. Unlike Budh Singh, John Thivy aspired for diplomatic appointment and his ambition was fulfilled when Nehru appointed him as the Indian High Commissioner to Malaya.

R. Ramani, a prominent and successful lawyer, was an ultra conservative who had no support with the communal folk. He was an intellectual snob and his disappointment came when the Nehru Government did not offer him a place in the Indian Diplomatic Service. Frustrated, Ramani agreed to become Malaya's representative in the United Nations. This appointment was offered to him by Tengku Abdul Rahman. He was granted Malayan citizenship on the eve of his departure to the United Nations and his application was disposed of within a few hours. This was unusual, given Malay policy towards

citizenship for Indians and Chinese. His intellectual acumen opened the doors for his appointment to this high office and his performance in the United Nations, especially on the dispute between India and Pakistan on Kashmir, won international fame and recognition. Ramani later became the Chairman of the United Nations Security Council, and he proved to be a brilliant and competent diplomat at the United Nations.

Ramani had served in the Federal Legislative Council as the representative of the Indians before Independence. In 1950 Ramani formed the Federation of Indian Organisations attempting to unite all the then existing bodies representing the Indians. His aristocratic behaviour, intellectual arrogance and affluence brought an end to the organisation he formed. In 1953 Ramani resigned from the Legislative Council with P.P. Narayanan, V.M.N. Menon and M.P. Rajagopal who were also appointed by the British on the issue of the failure of the colonial government to appoint an Indian member in the nominated cabinet system. In an article titled "Why I resigned" Ramani stated:

"The sub-stratum of communalism on which the Alliance was built, criticized the new proposal for Asianizing the civil services on the basis of four Malays to one non-Malay and attached the nationality laws which differentiated between the Malays and the non-Malays with graded rights to different groups."

Though Ramani vehemently disagreed with the Malayan Constitution because of its biased nature, he could not lead the Indians to attain their rightful status in an Independent Malaya. Ramani's failure to lead the Indians, especially during the period of Malayan Independence, left them suffering under leaders who were not in a position to analyse the future of the Indians in an Independent Malaya and the problems that would be faced by them.

Indian leadership did not direct its attention to achieving a fair and equitable share for the community in Malaya; instead the leadership became divided in any concerted effort and turned opportunistic. After the departure of Budh Singh, Indians did not have leadership of courage and determination to face the challenges of an independent Malaya. Indian leadership played it safe without firm principles. Had the Indian leadership displayed firmness and conviction the entire history of Malaysian Indians would have become optimistically different.

# DAVID FREED ON BOND

**FLASHBACKS**

## DAVID TO BE RELEASED

*But he will have to sign a bond first*

### CURE ON ALL TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES

### But He Goes Back To Seat In K.L. Municipal Council

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon.—Municipal Councillor and former General Secretary of the banned National Union of Factory and General Workers V. David was released from custody after 56 days' detention under the Emergency Regulations.

(POH, Thurs. — V. David, secretary general of the banned National Union of Factory and General Workers, who was arrested by the Selangor Special Branch for alleged "subversive activities" on May 12 is to be released.

The decision was taken by the committee of review at its meeting at the detention camp here today. David was brought here from Kuala Lumpur earlier this month.

The committee heard David's objections to his detention under the Emergency Regulations and decided to

release him "conditionally."

He will be free to leave the detention camp as soon as he signs the necessary bond. The conditions under which he will be released are, however, not known. David was represented at the committee of review meeting today by Miss P. G. Lim, of Kuala Lumpur.

He was picked up in a midnight swoop by police in his Klang Road home in Kuala Lumpur a few weeks after the Registrar of Trade Unions had cancelled the registration of the union.

Conditions were set for his release. They were that he shall not take any official or capacity in trade union activities.

He should not be a member of any trade union, and should not be a member of any committee of the National Union of Factory and General Workers.



## Labour Party man wins

### KLM elections

FOR the first time in the Federal capital a Labour Party of Malaya candidate won the Municipal elections on Saturday.

He is Mr. V. David, a professional trade unionist, who contested against an Alliance candidate Mr. Gurdial Singh a merchant, in the Bangsar Ward.

Mr. David secured 1,055 votes while Mr. Gurdial Singh had 618 votes.

Spill votes amounted to 25.

### The count

Thousands of Labour Party supporters who were unable to find a place in the Town Hall where the votes were counted, remained outside.

They almost caused a traffic jam.

Four bank clerks counted the votes while the two candidates paced up and down the hall restlessly.

When the name of the victor was announced the crowd rushed and cheered Mr. David and "hoard" him several times in the air.

Mr. David, in an emotional speech in Malay, English and Tamil, stirred the crowd when he said that he was a poor man not looking for wealth.

"I do not enjoy light and water facilities like most of the people here," he added.

Referring to his victory, he said that the people here realised that the Alliance was not sincere and had not fulfilled their promises.

While on the council, he said, he would do his best for the working masses. "I am not going to make empty promises... but I promise you I will do my best for the workers," he added.

"I will be a stumbling-block to the Alliance future scheme if I find them unsuitable for the working class," he said.

### The supporters

There was a tremendous cheer after each sentence especially when he said that his victory would show the Alliance that workers were now united.

He thanked Inche Ahmad Aw-taman, president of the party, and said that he had spent sleepless nights helping him during the election campaign. Mr. David and Inche Aw-taman were then driven by an open-hood car round the town followed by a procession of cars packed with supporters.

led out to freedom from the Ipoh Detention Camp at exactly 4.30 pm today — ten days after the committee of review had examined his case and granted him release on condition that he execute

### Protect The Federation

is arrest on May 12, the Federation issued a statement explaining that the Federation was formed to protect the Federation from Communist activities and to counter the work of persons engaged in subversive activities.

It alleged that David had "repeatedly by his words and activities that he had been part of the Malayan Communist Party's control of the trade union movement, and to further the party's aims to establish a

## CHARTER II

### THE 1957 CONSTITUTION

**"The Constitution on the basis of which Malaya got its independence has thrown up three other issues of basic disagreement between Malay and non-Malay races. They are: citizenship, language and religion."**

In March 1956, the British government appointed a commission to propose a draft Constitution after ascertaining public opinion for an independent Malaya. It had been agreed at the talks held earlier at London between a Malayan delegation and the British authorities that the Chairman and one other member of the commission should be nominated by the United Kingdom and that Australia, Pakistan, India and Canada should nominate a member each. Lord Reid headed the commission, the other members being Sir Ivor Jennings of the United Kingdom (since Canada could not find a representative and did not nominate any), Sir William Mokell of Australia, Mr. Justice B. Malik from India, and Mr. Justice Abdul Hamid from Pakistan.

**The terms of reference included constitutional safeguards for the "special" position of the Malays and the legitimate interests of others in the country. It was the classic dictum of *divide at impera* in practice. This dictum has its origin in the theory of counter-balance – of creating and deepening differences among various sections of the society in a colony, and had been tried with immense success in British Guiana (now Guyana), in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and India. In India, the system of communal representation, and nay even the communal problem, was a British creation.**

The Reid Commission's report said they found "that as a result of the original treaties with the Malay States, reaffirmed from time to time, the special position of the Malays has always been recognised, and that the recognition was restated in the Federation of Malaya Agreement 1948."

**Implicit here is the assertion that Malaya is a *Malay* Country and non-Malays are aliens and therefore second class citizens. Preserving "special" Malay rights was the device through which non-Malays were to be excluded effectively from the country's political life.**

**The Reid Commission found that at that point of time there were four matters in which the "special" positions of the Malays had been recognised and protected: reservation of land; quotas in recruitment to government jobs; quotas in respect of permits and licences for operation of certain business e.g. goods and passenger transport by roads; and educational benefits like scholarships and bursaries. The commission wanted all these privileges to continue and the entire position reviewed after 15 years.**

The Constitution which finally emerged provided for all these privileges with a few modifications. Instead of a review after 15 years (as suggested by the commission) the Constitution wanted the Yang Di-Pertuan Agung to review it from time to time.

**Even so, extreme Malay opinion was not satisfied with these pri-**

vileges which reduced non-Malays to an inferior status. *Warta Negara*, a Malay newspaper, said on 15 April, 1957:

"Once the national essence of the Malays has been lost, any demand of the Malays is branded as a communal one, even their demand of special rights.

While the status of the Malays has fallen from that of a nation to that of a mere community, a demand has also come from non-Malays for equality for all, which they regard as being democratic."

The editorial stridently asserted that under the cover of democracy, the non-Malays were "trying to trip the national struggle of the Malays for rights and privileges." Furthermore, it was putting across the case for a *Malay* as different from a Malayan nation: it said Malays were the rightful owners of the country and suggested that the non-Malays should be grateful for the generous rights they had been given, instead of being jealous of the special Malay rights.

The Constitution on the basis of which Malaya got its independence has thrown up three other issues of basic disagreement between Malay and non-Malay races. They are: citizenship; language; and religion.

The Reid Commission proposed that all persons born in Malaya after independence should be citizens. Non-citizens might attain citizenship by fulfilling the following requirements:

- \* residence of five to eight years in Malaya (depending on place of residence at the time of Independence);
- \* taking an oath of allegiance;
- \* renouncing foreign citizenship and
- \* passing an elementary test in the Malay language (subject to exemption for one year after Independence).

The final proposals upheld most of the major recommendations of the commission. It was agreed that all those who were citizens before independence (Merdeka) day should continue to be citizens, and that all those born in the country on or after that day should be made citizens by operation of law. The recommendations on citizenship by registration (both of those born in Malaya before Merdeka day and those who were not born in the country but were resident there on that day) and naturalisation were also accepted.

This did not, however, mean that the citizenship issue has been completely resolved. Non-Malay communities had demanded the re-



prospective application of *jus soli*, which would confer automatic citizenship on everyone born in the Federation, whether before or after Merdeka Day. Though in theory almost all non-Malays within the country are eligible to become citizens through naturalisation, there has been a conscious attempt at restricting the grant of citizenship to non-Malays even when they fulfilled the conditions of naturalisation.

Language is the most explosive issue and linked to the language policy is the education policy. Malaysia's educational policy has its origins in the recommendation of the Education Committee headed by Dato Abdul Razak, the then Minister for Education, in 1956. The Committee defined the limits to the use and teaching of Malay, the national language, when it set the ultimate objective of the country's education policy as bringing together the children of "all races" under a national educational system in which "the national language is the main medium of instruction. To give Malay the status aimed at, it was felt that "it must be learnt in all schools, and that the teaching of Malay and the learning of Malay, by all pupils shall be a condition of Government assistance to all schools."

The use of Rumi (Roman) Script was recommended in teaching the national language, provided that arrangements were made for the learning of *Jawi* (Persic-Arabic) script by Muslim pupils.

Teaching of Malay compulsorily through the Roman script was the maximum concession official policy would make while imposing one community's language on the entire nation. The non-Malay races were expected to be grateful that the *Jawi* script was not forced on them along with the Malay language.

As for the official language, the Reid Commission has proposed that Malay be established as the national language but since a very substantial section of the non-Malay population was not fluent in Malay, English was to continue as an official language for a period of at least 10 years. The Constitution accepted these recommendations but also laid two conditions:

- \* no person should be prevented from (other than for official purposes) teaching or learning any other language;
- \* the Federal and State Governments should not in any way be discouraged from preserving and sustaining the use and study of the language of the other communities in the country.

It is unusual for a multi-racial country with a Federal Constitution to have a sole national language. Normally, when there is mention of official language in the Federal Constitution it is to provide equal

status for more than one language (as in the Swiss or Yugoslav constitutions) or there is no mention of language at all (as in the United States or Australian constitutions). It is difficult to imagine the founding fathers of the American Constitution incorporating English as the sole official language of the United States because among the 13 states that initially constituted the union, some were not entirely English speaking. Over the years, the United States evolved into a homogeneous, unified, integrated nation, and language became a non-issue. English is the official language of the United States not because it is enshrined in the Constitution but because it has come to be accepted as such in practice. In any case the United States Constitution was written in English. In contrast we find in India much the same situation that obtains in Malaysia. In a federal set-up, the Constitution provides for Hindi as the sole official language though it is spoken only by less than 30 per cent of the people living in the contiguous Hindi heartland to the exclusion of other well-developed languages together spoken by 70 per cent of the people. The language issue is still an unresolved one in India though officially the entire issue is treated as closed.

When the interim period of 10 years expired in 1967 the language issue was back in focus in Malaysian politics. English had been permitted on sufferance as an additional official language for the duration of the 10-year period. When the time for review came, the National Language Action Front (Barisan Bertindak Bahasa Kebangsaan) was formed by Syed Nasir to demand elevation of Malay to the status of the absolute national language, with no place for English or any other language. The backlash came in the form of non-Malay demand for the continued use of English, Chinese and Tamil for various purposes. A select committee of the Government, headed by Minister for Education Khir Johari worked out the proposals which were incorporated into the National Language Bill of 1967. The Bill ensured Malay's position as the "sole national language" but English was allowed to continue for some official purposes as deemed appropriate by federal or state governments, or by action of the Yang Di-Pertuan Agung. In short, the limited constitutional safeguard for English was knocked out by the 1967 Bill. The use of English was to be permitted entirely at the discretion of the executive authority or Parliament.

A basic intolerance of any non-Malay languages is the key note of the educational and national language policies of the Malaysian Government. The four separate school systems in the country had been converted into a uniform school system to the detriment of Chinese and Indian interests.

Together with Malay special rights and the elevation of Malay to the status of the sole national language and the only medium of instruction in government-aided schools, the racial conflict in Malaysia grew into a new level of antagonism. Language became the vehicle of aggressive Malay racialism that passed for nationalism. It was the ruthless drive for a Malay Malaysia.

Incorporation of Islam in the Constitution as the state religion completed the legislative assault on the cultural pluralism of a multi-racial nation. The Reid Commission had made no stipulation on the issue though the Alliance, for instance, had in its memorandum urged the incorporation of Islam in the Constitution as the state religion. But in the final Constitution, the commission's position was rejected and the suggestion of one of its members, Mr. Justice Abdul Hamid of Pakistan, was accepted, to make Islam the state religion under Clause (1) of Article 3 which reads: Islam is the religion of the Federation, but other religions may be practised in peace and harmony in any part of the country.

Though innocuous looking, this provision had far-reaching implications for State policy, especially in the matter of Malay privileges, jobs and educational opportunities. Far more serious are the political implications. Islam being the religion of the Malays, brought the Malays into a special position vis-a-vis the State. The nexus of religion and politics is limited to the Malay community to the detriment of non-Malay interests. Racial discrimination found a new level of institutionalisation when the special position of Islam is viewed together with other Malay privileges in the matter of citizenship, language, education and job opportunities.

A mythical correlation was sought to be established between the well-being of the country and the promotion of Islam. The nation was sought to be conterminous with Islam.

Whatever the representation made to it from various quarters, the Reid Commission seemed to have decided on the pattern already with a well entrenched special position for a particular racial group.

The Labour Party was very clear about this issue and it told the commission:

"Malaya with a mixture of Chinese, Indian and Malay cultures can be said to be rich in its culture. Yet what do we find? We find an Alliance Government policy to stifle these cultures, by trying to do away with the linguistic advancement of those citizens who would like to further these cultures."

The UMNO, in spite of its understanding and unity with the MCA and the MIC, continued to agitate for the special position of the Malays in the Constitution. And as a result of this the constitution that was recommended stipulated the special positions of the Malays, the rulers and the Islamic religion.

Before Merdeka (31st August 1957), Malaya had a partially elected legislature to pave the way for self-government. But representatives and nominees of the colonial government packed the body. The Alliance, comprising the United Malays National Organisation, the Malayan Chinese Association, and the Malayan Indian Congress held office with Tengku Abdul Rahman, leader of the UMNO as the Prime Minister, who continued until 1971 when he was succeeded by the late Tun Abdul Razak. At this time Tengku Abdul Rahman had understood the complexities of administering a country comprising three major races, with different ethnic groups, religions and the traditional values of the different people. But, however, during his period (1957-71) the Constitution was amended 15 times often in a haste, without ascertaining the views of the people. (The United States constitution, during its last 90 years then has been amended only 24 times.)

The various communities accepted the Constitution in 1957 with fear and suspicion, wondering if the non-Malays would have a permanent place under the Malayan sun. The UMNO was happy because the position of the Malays was completely secured in the Constitution. In recruitment to the civil service the ratio for Malays and non-Malays was 5:1 and this was supposed to be only for a period up to 1970. But this has become a permanent feature, and in a manner the non-Malays will eventually have no opportunity to be in the Civil Service.

The government is with deliberation converting its multiethnic public services into predominantly Malay organisations. According to Dr. Tan Chee Khoon, out of 9,000 persons recruited into the government service from 1969 to 1973, 98 per cent were Malays, and if the armed forces and the police are taken into account, the government recruited about 99 per cent of Malays in this period.

It has even gone to the other areas of recruitment, and the non-Malay, with all his merits, would find no place in the public sectors. Private sector industries are governed by a set of rules and regulations of the government in the matter of recruitment. This restriction prevents the non-Malays from securing employment and have been reduced to the state that they in course of time would not be able to find any place in the public sector.

Tengku Abdul Rahman, the father figure, did not keep to promises and pledges made to the nation before Independence. After the Independence the goals of Independence, the very objectives of struggle for achieving independence by the various communities were betrayed. The question was asked whether Independence would have been a reality if the Chinese and the Indians had not co-operated with the UMNO during the clamour for self-rule. The British being extremely adept at the game of dividing the people and continuing their colonialism would have been happy to see a divided Malaya than a united one. The Malays, Chinese and the Indians stood together for Independence. It must be understood clearly that history can repeat itself. The UMNO was formed merely to oppose the Malayan Union and not as a movement to achieve independence. There were the others who insisted on self-rule. On this issue the Chinese and the Indians were resolutely struggling for Independence, except the Malayan Nationalist Party. The UMNO's role in attaining Independence is extremely insignificant. Whether Tengku Abdul Rahman and his colleagues have stabbed the Chinese and the Indians at their backs is a matter for history to decide. All the same the post-independence era has been one of clear suspicion and hatred among the races who could have co-existed in harmony.

Whether on 31st August, 1957 on the day of Independence, equal treatment of all races was guaranteed by the Constitution, and whether the freedom came to all the people are matters which have to be pondered over before venturing out with answers. The formation of Party Rakyat took place on 11th November 1955. The Peoples' Party, had Ahmad Boestaman as its Chairman and Abdul Wahab bin Majid as the Secretary General. The Party was led by people who had once initiated the struggle and prepared the ground for Malayan Independence. Ahmad Boestaman, after several years in prison, became the first leader of the Peoples' Party. Quite a number of them who associated themselves with the Party Rakyat, the Peoples' Party, were men once held by the British in detention camps for demanding immediate independence. Party Rakyat was born with the blessings of many revolutionaries in Malaya who were then against colonialism and neo-colonialism and who were determined to see that the British withdrew immediately from Malaya.

The Party set itself the following objectives:

- Immediate granting of Independence;
- United Political Front to achieve Independence;
- Wider political rights; and
- The release of all political detainees.

On 31st August, 1957 while the British were transferring powers to the Malayan people the Socialist Front was launched. The Socialist Front, comprising the Labour Party and the Party Rakyat, was officially inaugurated on this day of Independence. The objective of the Socialist Front was that the Labour Party would confine and cater for the workers and the Party Rakyat would embrace the rural peasants, farmers and fishermen with the combination to form itself as a dynamic political instrument in the country. The Malayan People's Socialist Front made tremendous strides after 31st August, 1957. The official resolutions listed the following objectives:

- To organise and maintain in Malaya a united front of all democratic, socialist and political organisations for concerted political actions.
- To strive for the establishment of a democratic socialist state of Malaya by securing for the peasants and the workers *by hand or by brain* the full benefits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereon that may be possible upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of productive distribution and exchange. And *advance* the best obtainable citizens of popular administration and control of each industry and service.
- To secure the merger of Singapore with the Federation of Malaya.
- To co-operate with democratic, socialist organisations in other countries with a view to promoting the objectives of the Front.
- Generally to promote the political, social and economic emancipation of the people and more particularly those who depend directly upon their own exertion by hand or brain for the means of life.

Ahmad Boestaman, the Chairman of the Malayan People's Socialist Front, explained to the Straits Times his views on education:

"I have always stated that as long as the position of English is maintained then the position of Chinese and Tamil education should be on the same level with English. According to the Federal Constitution the position of English should be reviewed in 1967. If the result of the review is to scrap English in fully assisted schools then instruction of Chinese and Tamil should also be ended. If this happens then I should say the three languages should be taught as compulsory subjects in all secondary schools for all time. My contention is that by 1967 Malay will be so well advanced that it would be possible to have it as a sole medium of instruction."

The People's Progressive Party led by the two Seenivasagam brothers, D.R. Seenivasagam and S.P. Seenivasagam submitted a memorandum to the Reid Commission voicing the following demands:-

- Equal citizenship rights for all non-Malays;
- Those born in Malaya and those who have lived in this country during the last five years and are loyal to the country should be given full citizenship rights irrespective of their racial origin;
- All citizens of Independent Malaya should have equal responsibilities and privileges;
- The principle of multi-lingualism should be accepted and the languages of the various racial groups should be accorded official status.

The Seeni brothers had been advocating equality for all people regardless of race. They were attacked by the UMNO, at times to the point of levelling personal allegations against them. However the Chinese and Indian communities gave them all support in championing their cause. The Razak Committee's report on education, came under fire from D.R. Seenivasagam in his speech in Parliament on 7th December, 1957:

"I do say that the recommendations made by that Committee did not reflect the views of the majority of the people in this country. As for the parents, I would only draw the attention of this House to the existence of the banishment laws of this country. Parents of Chinese students are, in the large majority, uneducated, who dare not open their mouths because they feel that if they do something, the Emergency Regulations Sec. 24 will be applied and they will be arrested, detained and possibly put on the next boat to China."

Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman reacted with an unprecedented outburst:

"Can you find a country more democratic than this country? If you can, then I say clear out of here and go there."

Both the Labour Party and the People's Progressive Party had assailed the Razak Report. The Prime Minister had alleged that the Seeni brothers had instigated the Chinese students against the government (in Ipoh). There were in fact many disturbances in Chinese schools over the Razak Report and the Chinese feared that the pattern of education, that is the principal recommendation (making Malay the compulsory language in primary schools) would bring Chinese education in the country to an end.

In the 1959 elections the Blue Print of the People's Progressive Party had said:—

“Every citizen of this land should have equal obligation which he owes to King and country. This is a fundamental principle of democratic socialism. And to obtain this equality the People's Progressive Party of Malaya will strive to amend the constitution. Any kind of special treatment to any one race will inevitably lead to frustration, suspicion and disappointment of the other citizens and the establishment of a true Malayan nation will be retarded. As for citizenship, the Party will seek to amend the laws, relating to citizenship to establish for all time in this country only one class of citizens — all enjoy the same right, privileges and security and owing the same obligation.”

The People's Progressive Party of Malaya condemned Razak's Educational Policy and the manner of its implementation and called for the immediate setting up of an Independent Committee consisting of educational experts free from political attachment to recommend a new education policy. It further demanded:

- That the mother tongue medium of instruction must prevail in all vernacular schools;
- That the medium of examination be the same mother tongue as the medium of instruction;
- That Malay shall be a compulsory subject in all schools but the medium of instruction and examination shall be in the mother tongue;
- That all educational institutions of the various communities be accorded fair and equal treatment;
- That education provided in vernacular schools be recognised as part of the educational system of the country;
- That grants and aid be on a fair and equitable basis for all institutions irrespective of communities;
- That teachers, vernacular or otherwise, be treated equally; and
- That students from all recognised schools after completion of studies be treated equally on merit in relation to the question of employment and no discrimination should exist.

D.R. Seenivasagam, the Secretary General of the People's Progressive Party, moved the resolution in the Federal Legislative Council and his motion read as follows:



"That this Council is greatly concerned over the dissatisfaction which exists in the present education policy of the Government. And resolved that a committee be immediately appointed by the Government to review the present policy and to make recommendations for its improvements or by a replacement by a policy which will meet with the approval of the people of Malaya."

This motion, in fact, was moved in October, 1958 when Dr. Lim Chong Eu was the president of the Malayan Chinese Association, who vehemently opposed the motion in spite of widespread dissatisfaction as to the education system that was being formulated under the Razak Report.

The Socialist Front also made critical comments on the educational system. It emphasised that the use of the National Language as the sole official language is a step taken towards encouraging and fostering such use. It should not be confused with the aim of education in general. Education in general can be given and obtained in any language that is rich enough. Racialist sentiments which are strong in this country must be given the regard according to the racial composition of the citizens. The Socialist Front believed that education must be given in the Chinese and the Tamil languages wherever there was a demand for it.

The Razak Report created many problems. It caused differences among the three parties of the ruling Alliance. The MCA accepted the Report after some hesitation but the Chinese people did not. This embarrassed the MCA and complicated its position in the Alliance.

Educational policies involving elevation of Malay as the sole national language have been the instruments of discrimination against the non-Malays. At the end of the fifth year, secondary school students are screened for admission to the sixth year through the Malaysia Certificate of Education Examination. In 1973, out of 37,126 children who took the MCE examination, 21,061 failed. Among the non-Malays, 27,784 took the examination and 18,470 failed. Of these 14,166 failed solely on account of the results of the Malay language examination.

The conflict of interests had their genesis in the pre-independence period. The Alliance being a loose organisation comprising the UMNO, the MCA and the MIC, had no objectives common to the three racial groups. They thrived entirely on the emotions and sentiments of their respective racial groups. So much so they could not face the post-independence problems like education with any common approach.

The 1957 constitution was the beginning of an assault on the cultural pluralism of the multi-racial nation in which Malays did not have a majority. The 1957 population returns showed only 49.8 per cent were Malays while the Chinese constituted 37.2 per cent and Indians 11.2 per cent. The Constitution, loaded against the non-Malays, deepened the cleavages and provided the framework for a policy that eventually set the clock back for the harmonisation of conflicting interests and the integration of the various racial groups into a united nation.

## CHAPTER III

### POLITICS OF OPPORTUNISM

**"The Alliance has been no more than a voluntary subordination of the identity of the individual party".**

The Independence of Malaya Party was formed by Dato Onn bin Jafar on 11 October 1951 at Hotel Majestic in Kuala Lumpur. Mr. R. Ramani, a prominent lawyer, said at the inaugural meeting: "We are making a tryst with destiny." A thousand representatives from all communities crowded on the roof garden of the Hotel Majestic and cheered spontaneously when the resolution to form the party was adopted unanimously.

P.P. Narayanan, who was the President of the Malayan Trade Union Congress, declared at the meeting: "While the aim of the trade unions was to strengthen their own movement, they must also support any other organisation for political advancement." Narayanan invited Dato Onn bin Jafar, to address the Conference of the Plantation Workers Union of South Malaya to be held shortly afterwards.

When Dato Onn bin Jafar left the United Malays National Organisation, the party passed a resolution recording its sadness and regret over his decision to decline the invitation for his re-election as president for 1951-52, and its gratitude for his guidance and advice and for his sincere, conscientious and hard work for the cause of the Malays. It hoped that he would continue to work unflinchingly for the Malay race, country and religion.

The organising committee of the party comprising Dato Onn bin Jafar, Dato Tan Cheng Lock, R. Ramani, Dato Sir E.C.C. Thuraisingam, Col. H.S. Lee, Abdul Aziz bin Ishak; L.P. Hoffman, Yong Shook Lin, P. P. Narayanan, Saleha bte Mohamed Ali, Fred Arulanandom and Mohamed Soviee adopted the following resolution:

"The object of the Party is to establish a sovereign independent state of Malaya aiming at the well-being and advancement of the people based on equality of opportunities and political, social and economic rights and obligations."

At the first anniversary of the party its Central National Council passed a resolution to say that the IMP would be guided by the following principles:

- The establishment of an Independent State within the Commonwealth based on justice, equality and democracy and the elimination of communalism and class prejudice for the advancement and welfare of the people and to promote the greatest good for the greatest number;
- The recognition of the rights of free enterprise and facilities for protection for all investments subject to the requirements of national interest and security of the nation;
- The equality of opportunity and rewards, irrespective of sex, and the emancipation of women and equal opportunities for physical and mental development for the young;
- Common citizenship and adult franchise;
- The best fruits of democracy and basic freedom and conditions of life which make life significant and productive;
- Promotion of national peace and security and maintenance of just and honourable relations between nations with mutual respect for international law and treaty obligations.

Though the Independence of Malaya Party was a non-communal organisation it partly aimed at protecting the vested interests. A large number of people from the business community, especially those who represent big business industries were staunch and loyal supporters of the party. With these objectives the party could not gain ground among the rural Malays. It tried to attract the Chinese, but the working class Chinese were sceptical about the party.

The party's concept of progress was based on equality of opportunity and of political, social and economic rights and obligations. This held some appeal to the Chinese, and Indians from the urban areas of the business community backed it to protect their vested interests.

The Malays living predominantly in the rural areas were not prepared to share equal status with the Chinese and Indians. Dato Onn bin Jafar was in a dilemma. Though he had earlier aimed at a non-communal state when he formed the Independence of Malaya Party on leaving the United Malays National Organisation he became more pro-Malay to challenge the place which was already captured by the UMNO. In his desperate attempt to woo the Malays he had to make statements

against the non-Malays. As a result of this he not only lost credibility among the rural Malays but also created suspicion in the minds of the Chinese and the Indians who had once adored him. In these circumstances Dato Onn bin Jafar made many tactical errors and was unable to rectify them.

It has been alleged that Dato Onn bin Jafar did not form the Independence of Malaya Party from the basis of non-communal politics but with insincere motives. He had said:

“You must face the fact that in Malaya today, particularly in the political field, we have ambitions of different communities. We have one community that desires to control the destiny of this country on the ground that they are the sons and daughters of the soil. Here on the other hand is another community which also desires to control the destiny of this country on the grounds of economic and financial influence.”

The Malayan Chinese Association took strong objection to this statement of Dato Onn bin Jafar. He had also called upon the democratic government to withdraw the permission given to the Malayan Chinese Association to conduct the prize lottery because it strengthened the economic position of the Malayan Chinese Association and enabled it to buy support with the United Malays National Organisation.

The formation of the party caused misgivings and suspicion in several Malay quarters, notably among the Malays of Kedah who thought that in the fierce competition for political power, they would be reduced to the position of the Red Indians living in the waste lands of the United States of America. A Malay group from Penang thought that in comparison with the Chinese and the Indians, the Malays were political novices.

Malays, especially the working class and the peasantry, were not for a non-communal organisation. Malay nationalism was a dominant factor and Tengku Abdul Rahman who succeeded Dato Onn bin Jafar, continued to promote racial politics in the UMNO, especially with his “Malaya for Malays” slogan. His utterances were viewed with concern by liberal leaders. Raja Ayub bin Raja Hj. Bot, Chairman of the Kuala Lumpur UMNO branch, was forced to warn the Tengku that statements of such nature would hamper the UMNO’s growth as a political organisation among non-Malays. Tengku Abdul Rahman’s pronouncements acquired a sharp communal edge after he took over as president of the UMNO in August 1951. Raja Ayub said in September 1951 that the Tengku was blocking the UMNO’s chances at the municipi-

pal elections in Kuala Lumpur where a large section of the voters were non-Malay. The UMNO youth leader, Mohamed Sophe, branded the Tengku's communal exhortations as "narrow racialism".

Thus communal politics was engineered by these leaders from the beginning. They felt that communal politics was the only way to safeguard their own personal interests. They had no political philosophy based on social and economic needs but appealed to racialism, emotions and sentiments which could be aroused without difficulty. Therefore Tengku Abdul Rahman, though appreciated by certain sections of the community, had always maintained that Malaya is for the Malays. And this concept has brought many problems to the country and handicapped the people who are divided and polarisation of the races has widened.

The Independence of Malaya Party dissolved itself and took the name of Parti Negara which continued with the concept of non-communal politics. However at later stages emphasis was on wooing the Malays by which it resulted in non-Malays gradually leaving the Party. The organisation became ineffective though its leader Dato Onn bin Jafar managed to enter Parliament by contesting elections in the East coast with collaboration and assistance of the Pan Malayan Islamic Party. No one else from the party had opportunity of being elected to any legislature.

The Chairman of the Malayan Trade Union Congress, P.P. Narayanan, on 15 October 1950 had announced that the labour groups in the Federal Legislative Council had decided to go ahead with plans to form a labour party. However the announcement was not followed by steps to form the party. The idea of a labour party gained support among others and the first labour party was formed in Singapore, and later in Penang, and then in Selangor.

In 1951 the Labour Party of Penang was formally inaugurated. The Chairman of this new party was Osman Siru. He told the inaugural meeting that among the Chinese, Malays and the Indians there were people who were economically poor and politically under-privileged and incapable of improving their position because of the dominant monopolistic economy in the country. There cannot be political or economic emancipation of the underprivileged section of these communities without a party committed to a programme of reform through legislative bodies constituted and established by law.

This was the period the Independence of Malaya Party was formed. Discussions were held when necessary at this stage with prominent members of the Malayan Trade Union Congress to secure support for



the Independence of Malaya Party or the Labour party which had already been formed in Penang. At several discussions there were indications that the President of the MTUC, P.P. Narayanan, led the group which opposed the formation of a separate labour party and wanted the trade unions to support the Independence of Malaya Party.

Narayanan opposed the formation of the Labour Party because he felt that it was very important that all the nationalists remain united and worked together. He thought the formation of the Labour Party would create division in the national movement and among the bulk of organised labour which was non-Malay. Others who favoured the move could not secure the support of the MTUC but went ahead to launch a Labour Party in Selangor.

The Labour Party drew its support in the early stages from most of the unions belonging to the public sector. Such unions as the Municipal and Government Labour Union, Uniformed Postal Staff Union, Clerical and Administrative Staff Union and the Penang Teachers Union played a prominent part. Besides this, members of various trade unions who accepted the concept of workers' participation in politics joined the Labour Party. The leadership of the MTUC did not guide the working class to the extent it should have done or create among the workers the political consciousness that was needed. At a later stage the working class had to face many problems. The leadership of the MTUC played a passive role and thus avoided committing support to the group it should have rightfully supported in view of the historical background of the trade union movement throughout the world. The leaders who joined the Labour Party were people who accepted the philosophy that trade unions and political institutions cannot be divorced and they were an integral part of each other and they could even be termed as twin carburettors of an engine.

On 26th June, 1952 the National Council of the Malayan Labour Party was formed by bringing together the various labour parties which functioned at Penang, Selangor, Singapore, Perak, Malacca and Kedah at the State Level. Mohamed Soviee and Lee Mok San were elected as President and General Secretary respectively of the Party. The Pan Malayan Labour Party was formed on 14th August 1952.

It identified the restoration of peace and order in the country as its foremost task. The party should create as soon as possible conditions in which it could work freely for the establishment of the new society it envisaged for the country.

The one time President of the Pan Malayan Labour Party, Mohamed Sopiee, was the Director of the Department of Information serving as a civil servant. Then later he was appointed Malaysian High Commissioner in Ceylon. He was a Member of Parliament of the Barisan Nasional from 1974 to 1978. Lee Mok Sang, the Secretary General of the Labour Party, a civil servant set free of his past activity, became an Accommodation Officer and later the Chief Housing Officer in Kuala Lumpur. He was also posted to Malaysia's High Commission in London prior to his retirement. Osman Siru, Chairman of the Penang Labour Party, has been the head of the Tourist Bureau for several years before which he was a member of the Uniformed Staff Union of the Postal Department. In 1954 the party was renamed the Labour Party of Malaya and later in early 1955 the party set itself the following goals:

- Immediate self-government.
- The Union of Federation of Malaya and Singapore and the creation of a common Malayan nation.
- The investigation of the workings of the Emergency Regulations and banishment laws with a view to repealing or revising the terms in conformity with the basic concept of democratic justice.
- The complete and rapid Malayanisation of the public service by replacement of expatriates.
- A planned economy directed towards meeting the needs of the Malayan people. The Labour Party will strive to prevent the further exploitation of labour by private profit through ensuring public ownership and control of monopolies and inefficient industries.
- To free the peasant from the heavy burden of debt at the hands of unscrupulous landlords and money lenders by state assistance on the following lines:— granting of land to peasants, establishment of agricultural producers co-operative, opening of agricultural banks, formation of collective farming on a voluntary basis.

The pledges and declarations of a party would suggest that it was progressing by responding to the aspiration of the people. The Pan Malayan Labour Party had been one of the earlier parties founded on a non-communal and secular basis and which has had the support of the country's working class. It remained the vanguard of the working

class irrespective of race, colour, creed, religion or sex. The party was supported by those who believed in a common philosophy of integration. However, sadly, some of the top trade unionists were hobnobbing with the reactionary forces wedded to capitalism and the Labour Party which was supposed to be the vanguard of the working class lost its support. In the midst of formidable opposition from reactionary forces and from enemies within the working class, the Labour Party grew into a dynamic, progressive and viable opposition party. It clearly defined its political goal: independence of Malaya should be based on equality to enable and ensure that the fruits of Independence could be shared by every person regardless of race.

Prior to Independence, the Pan Malayan Labour Party was the only political organisation with a non-communal background. It united the various races on the basis of the philosophy of economic equality and social justice to all. Even before Independence the contradiction between the three political organisations the UMNO, the MCA and the MIC continued to exist. Efforts were made for unity among them but such unity bristled with contradictions. Each group was aspiring to further the cause of the race it represented. The question was which race would dominate the others. In the absence of a common philosophy of unity, polarisation was the order even in those days. To substantiate this Dr. Lim Chong Eu received a letter from Tan Siew Sin on 27th September 1956 which stated:

"Briefly my views can be summarised that in the present stage of the country's development we must face the fact that communalism exists in a big way. Even the Malays with their overwhelming voting strength want their special rights written into the Constitution. Some of them are not satisfied with their present plums, i.e. the majority posts and the best of them too in the public service. And they want to extend these highly discriminatory forms of legislature into industry and commerce. 'Warta Negara' talks about the necessity for making the Malays the master race of Malaya. This presumably means that non-Malays are to be reduced to the status of hewers of wood and drawers of water: Shades of Hitler. Others want Malaya to join up with Indonesia. I myself have heard this but the list has one or two UMNO officials. It is unnecessary for me to tell you what this idea if seriously pursued, will lead to.

It is difficult to accept the strength of these various forms of racial fanaticism but at the same time one cannot blame the Chinese and other non-Malays for being slightly nervous, to say the least. The non-Malays therefore have to be communal merely to ensure their survival. A Malayan nation does not exist at the moment and there never will be by the way things are going. Such being the case to my mind the MCA must uphold the Chinese interests first, last and all the time."

The Perak Branch threatened to leave the MCA if the following points were not included in the Constitution expected to be drafted before Independence. It stated:-

- Equal citizenship rights for Indians and Chinese. They should be accorded the same rights as the Malays;
- Those born in Malaya, irrespective of race or parentage, and those who have lived in this country during the past five years and are loyal to this country should be given citizenship rights;
- Responsibilities and privileges of the citizens of Independent Malaya to be equal; and
- Multilingualism should be adopted with the languages of the various races regarded as optional.

It is clear from the statements made by leaders of various political organisations that the question of rights and privileges of the major communities were discussed on the eve of Independence. Fortunately or unfortunately the basic and fundamental question of citizenship rights and privileges was not clearly delineated. As a result, problems rose even after Independence and have remained unresolved. The three parties UMNO, MCA and MIC acted in haste to secure little, realising that even after the transfer of power, the problems of the three races would continue unresolved.

The three political organisations functioned as individual units. It was reported in the *Straits Times* on 12 July 1956:

"A curious feature of the Alliance is that it exists by virtue of a Gentleman's Agreement between these three political parties, the UMNO, MCA and the MIC. This political marriage has never been consummated to define the precise relationship between these partners. To press the analogy further, the partners never became one. Each retained its identity and freedom of action. The Alliance has been no more than a voluntary sub-ordination of the identity of the individual party. for co-operative action was the common objective of winning independence and fighting the elections last years."

A Committee was appointed on 3 July 1957 (before Independence) by the Alliance to look into the possibilities of amalgamating the three political groups into a single organisation. But however the racialist feeling that dominated the thinking of the leadership of the three organisations did not make a single non-communal political organisation possible. There were many attempts at unity but the outcome was negative.

The question of the inclusion of the special privileges of the Malays in the Constitution was an issue and on 4 May 1957 the MCA Central Working Committee agreed to the following:

“To safeguard and preserve the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya, particularly the provisions relating to Muslim religion, Malay language and custom, the dignity and prestige of Their Highnesses the Malay rulers and the special privileges of the Malays.”

This of course became a permanent feature in the Constitution of the country. But at all times the rulers were in absolute power to make adjustments on the special privileges arbitrarily, though it was agreed during earlier discussions that these provisions would only be of a temporary nature. Once it was accepted that the matter would be dealt with by the Malay rulers, the special privileges became a permanent feature and continues after decades.

The MCA was formed in 1949 with the primary object of fostering and safeguarding the social, political, cultural and economic welfare of the Malayan Chinese by legitimate and constitutional means. Its record leaves one in little doubt that it has betrayed the Chinese community.

Similarly the MIC did not play any significant role in the constitutional battle. It has remained a silent spectator. This “May I come in?” party kept itself aloof from the basic question of the rights of the Indian community. The weaknesses of the leadership and the organisation have thrown up many problems, which are yet to find a satisfactory solution. The failure of the leadership has now gone down in history as something which cannot be rectified or reconciled and has compounded the amounting problems confronting the Indian community.

The Malayan Indian Congress formed in the late 1940's did not play an effective political role. It was used as a vehicle by a few to reach the position they aspired for especially in the Indian Government. These leaders held the view that since they had supported the cause of national freedom for Indians in India they should get due recognition from the Independent Government of India. This is evident from the appointment of John Thivy and Raghavan as diplomats by Nehru's Government. The MIC gradually participated in politics by joining the MCA and UMNO in 1954 to contest the Municipal Elections in Kuala Lumpur. K.L. Devasar, the president of the MIC, maintained that when Independence is achieved, the rights of the people should be equal and uniform for those who have made Malaya their home.

After the late K.L. Devasar, V.T. Sambanthan was elected president of MIC. Sambanthan declared himself the guardian of Indians but played a passive role on Indian problems. He began to wear the Indian national costume, of course, for a short period. He gave up the dhoti when the UMNO criticised him for it.

Sambanthan's ineffective leadership excluded Indian representation in most of the negotiations, including the mission that went to London for Independence talks. During 1955-56 a goodwill mission was sent to India but there was no Indian in it. In the same year, in the talks with Chin Peng, the Secretary General of the underground Malayan Communist Party, Sambanthan was again excluded. In 1955 a mission was led by Tengku Abdul Rahman for the independence talks in London, and the Indian representation in these talks was ignored. Sambanthan was a conservative estate owner and was unable to gear the organisation to the required stature of a through-going representative body for the Indian Community. His political knowledge and accuracy were limited. His failure to secure a place for Indians in an independent Malaya will be remembered with grief by posterity. The Indians were left high and dry, thanks to a leader who could not distinguish between rights for his community and the virtues of the country's independence.

## **CHAPTER IV**

# **DISCRIMINATORY ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND SECURITY LAW**

**"But in Malaysia grotesque distortions have been built into the electoral system through a weird manipulation in the delimitation of Constituencies".**



Adult franchise is the governing principle of elections in democratic countries. But in Malaysia grotesque distortions have been built into the electoral system through a weird manipulation in the delineation of constituencies. The obvious aim is to give weightage to the rural community So much so all the votes do not have equal value. Rural votes have more weight than urban votes. And yet the electoral system passes for one based on the unquestionable principle of universal adult franchise.

Neither the Election Commission nor the Department of Statistics releases data obtained before the Merdeka Constitution to reveal the racial composition of each constituency or of the prevailing registered electorate at the 1959 elections.

The uneven communal composition of the electorate is striking, as the following data provided by a scholar K.J. Ratnam (*Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya*, Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1965, p. 187) would reveal:

#### 1955 Elections: Communal breakdown of the electorate

Communal group	Voters	(per cent)
Malays	1,078,000	84.2
Chinese	143,000	11.2
Indians	50,000	3.9
Others	9,000	7
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TOTAL:	1,280,000	100.0
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Contrast this with the communal breakdown of the country's population for 1947 and 1957 and the myth of universal adult franchise is shattered.

#### Population and percentages

Year	Malays	Chinese	Indians	Others	Total
1947	2,428,000 (49.8)	1,885,000 (38.4)	531,000 (10.8)	65,000 (1.8)	4,908,000 (100)
1957	3,125,000 (49.8)	2,334,000 (37.2)	707,000 (11.3)	112,000 (1.8)	6,279,000 (100)

A possible explanation of the unrepresentative character of the system (the overwhelming majority of the rural voters vis-a-vis other sections of the electorate) is that the Malays formed a good majority of the Federal citizens while large segments of the non-Malay population had no citizenship rights. However, it is estimated that though the eligible Chinese vote added up to about half the community's adult population, only one in every four adult Chinese (or one out of every eight Chinese) was a registered voter. This points to a lack of interest or faith in the electoral process.

Of the then Indian population of 650,000 only 50,000 were registered voters — that is one in every seven adults. Indian representation in the electorate was proportionately far less than that of the others.

One finds the same pattern in the 1959 elections — the same absence of correlation between the proportion of each communal group in the total population and in the electorate.

### 1959 Elections: Communal breakdown of electorate

Communal group	Voters (approximately)	(per cent)
Malays	1,217,000	56.8
Chinese	764,000	35.6
Indians	159,000	7.4
Others	4,000	0.2
TOTAL:	<u>2,144,000</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Though the Malays constituted only 49.8 per cent of the population (according to the 1957 returns), they accounted for 56.8 per cent of the registered voters at the 1959 elections. The percentage of Malays in the total population was the same (49.8) in 1947 but at the 1955 elections they accounted for a staggering 84.2% of the voters. The distortion at the 1955 elections was corrected somewhat at the 1959 elections because the Chinese representation in the voters' list went up from a meagre 11.2% to 37.2%, which is closer to the percentage of Chinese in the population. Similarly, the Indian tally went up from 3.9 per cent to 7.4 which still significantly was lower than the percentage of Indians in the population — 11.3.

The most objectionable feature of the electoral system is the weightage in favour of one community in the delineation of constituencies. The effort is to secure as many Malay majority constituencies as possible so that the non-Malays are denied any effective role in politics and government.

At the 1955 elections, the country had been divided into 52 constituencies on the basis of near-equal distribution of the population. But this was far from perfect, as the Election Commission was to say in 1959:

“The Constituency Delineation Commission of the day had made use *faute de mieux*, of an estimate of population prepared in 1953, and based on the 1947 census figures. This estimate did not take into account the redistribution of population brought about by the circumstances of the Emergency, and the actual population figures of the various constituencies in consequence varied considerably.”

It was also found that the constituencies had been based on population figures only, without taking into account the variation in the percentage of citizens in each constituency, even greater discrepancy was to be found between the figures of registered voters.

The Constitution, before it was amended in 1962, had provided that for the purpose of the 1959 elections, each of the 1955 constituencies shall be divided into two, which means into 104 constituencies. At the same time, Article 116 of the Constitution required the Elections Commission to delineate the country into 100 federal constituencies on the basis of the near-equality of registered voters rather than population. Article 116(4) had said:

“Each State shall be divided into constituencies in such a manner that each constituency contains a number of electors as nearly equal to the electoral quota of the State as may be after making due allowance for the distribution of different communities and for differences in density of population and the means of communication; but the allowance so made shall not increase or reduce the number of electors in any constituency to a number differing from the electoral quota by more than 15 per cent. ‘Electoral quota’ here refers to the number obtained by dividing the number of electors in the State by the total number of constituencies allotted to the State.”

According to the Constitution the new delineation was to take effect for the elections after 1959. The Election Commission undertook the task of delineation of the country into 100 constituencies and published its report in 1960. There was a storm of protest inside the UMNO, the dominant partner of the ruling Alliance because it feared that the Malay weightage would be lost and non-Malays would get a greater say.

To overcome the predicament the Constitution was amended in 1962 to scrap Article 116(4) and the Election Commission’s report was set to nought. The country went back to the 104 constituencies of the 1955 elections which was based on the same principle that was practised at the 1955 elections and based on 1947 population figures.

The great variation in the size of the constituencies (in terms of voter strength) indicates the undue weightage to one community disguised as weightage for rural areas because Chinese and Indians live mostly in urban areas where Malay communities are sparse as the following table would show:-

No. of Voters	No: of Constituencies 1964 elections	No: of Constituencies in delineation by Election Commission, 1960
10,000 – 15,000	2	—

15,000 – 20,000	9	4
20,000 – 25,000	38	75
25,000 – 30,000	31	21
30,000 and over	24	—
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	104	100

To the Election Commission, the optimum size of a constituency was 20,000 to 30,000 population because 75 of the 100 constituencies (into which the country was delineated by it) belonged to this category. Only four were small-sized (15,000 to 20,000) and 21 belonged to the 25,000 to 30,000 category, and no constituency had more than 30,000 voters.

But under the delineation that was obtained at the 1964 elections, the number of constituencies with the optimum size (20,000 to 30,000) were only 38. Significantly 24 constituencies with over 30,000 population were created to give weightage to Malays and to handicap the non-Malays.

The constituencies are so divided that it would ensure that non-Malays can never attain reasonable number of seats to be effective enough in Parliament. It has been carefully planned and the Constitution has been amended with the 2/3 majority to suit the UMNO and here again both the MCA and the MIC have not asserted their position and stated their case.

Both MCA and MIC had agreed to the deletion of Article 116 (4) which ensures a fair delineation of constituencies. It is certain that under this system of delineation the Chinese and the Indians cannot and will not have an effective representation in Parliament to check the UMNO's drift.

The then flamboyant Dr. Lim Chong Eu was the President of the MCA when he overthrew Tan Cheng Lock from the leadership of the Chinese community. Dr. Lim Chong Eu said that Tan Cheng Lock was not able to bargain a fair deal for the Chinese community and could defeat him on this plank. Dr. Lim Chong Eu, on 30 November, 1958 declared:

“Firstly we want equality in this country; secondly we ask for an assurance of our way of life, our language and our schools; thirdly we express the hope that we shall find economic advancement and economic equality.”

The representation in the Alliance Executive Committee was another problem forced on the MCA. The UMNO General Assembly proposed that the representation cannot be on an equal basis. Though UMNO has accepted six of its members and six MCA members in the Alliance Council, it proposed that it should have six UMNO and five MCA. The MIC had three members. This conflict of interest arose immediately after Independence. However this proposal was not implemented for some time. Then came the 1959 General Elections and there was a rift between the MCA and the UMNO. On 9 July, 1959 Yong Pung How, the Head of the Publicity Section of the MCA, announced:

"The question of Malayan Chinese Association breaking with the United Malays National Organisation and leaving the Alliance is a very great one because of the issues involved. It is clearly the last thing we want to do but if the MCA is left in a position within the Alliance in which it can get little support of the people it claims to represent, than the situation is completely different."

The Central Working Committee of the MCA under the leadership of Dr. Lim Chong Eu on 9 July demanded the following:-

- That the MCA should be given 40 seats in the Federal Elections because in at least 39 constituencies the Chinese voters out-numbered the Malays.
- That the Alliance manifesto must clearly express its intention to review in general the implementation of its education policy so that the medium of examination in Chinese schools could be the medium of instruction.

The MCA frequently expressed the fear in the event it was not given a third of the seats in Parliament, the UMNO may be tempted to amend the constitution frequently without the assistance of the other parties of the Alliance. To prevent such a situation the MCA had urged that at least 40 seats should be allotted to it at the election.

Dr. Lim Chong Eu wrote to Tengku Abdul Rahman in this connection:

"The fear of Malaysians of other racial origins, Chinese, Indians and Eurasians is simply one of that of Malay communalism. A fear that this unbridled attitude cannot only destroy the kind of progress as Malaysians, which the Alliance plans for but further that it can also lead to the constitutional oppression of the minorities. It has therefore been the MCA's policy ever since the constitutional talks began to support what we consider to be a fair and equitable Constitution which could ensure the equality of the fundamental rights of our citizens and further uphold and maintain this Constitution.

Nevertheless, it is correct to say that the fear still remains and it is kept alive by the provision of the Constitution, which allows amendments to the Constitution by a two-thirds majority. For then in the parliamentary sense, danger of communalism can only be the danger of Malay communalism, for only the Malays can obtain the two-thirds majority necessary in Parliament to effect any changes in the Constitution. We have ourselves watched with anxiety and care the swing in the Legislative Council towards a more Malay attitude caused by the pressure of the back-benchers from the East Coast.

But after the Trengganu election results, I think you will agree with me that it will be hazardous for the Alliance to swing further in that direction and that the only safe way to ensure the destiny of our nation is to hold a firm course towards a Malayan community.

Under the circumstances, I feel that it is necessary for me to draw your attention to how very important it is for the Alliance manifesto to clearly express the Alliance's determination to uphold and sustain the Federation's Constitution, as it stands. We consider an allocation of about 40 of its seats to be equitable and just."

Too Joon Hing, the then Secretary General of the MCA and a former Assistant Minister of Education, said in a meeting of the Central Working Committee of the MCA, on 12 July 1959:—

"Regarding seats in 39 constituencies there was a Chinese majority and asking for only one third of the total Parliamentary seats was quite a reasonable request. The Constitution could not be changed unless the amendment was passed by having two-thirds majority. Already the PMIP, that is the Pan Malayan Islamic Party, which was victorious in the State Elections in the East Coast states was saying that the party wanted to amend it. To safeguard the Constitution and other positions in Malaya we expect a lot of money, time and energy to get Chinese to become citizens and the result was that the Chinese were in the majority in 39 constituencies and our request for one-third was therefore not accepted."

The Tengku reacted with a certain amount of hostility and he declared that the UMNO was prepared to concede the allocation of 32 seats and the selection of candidates, in view of the limited time before the elections. This task would rest in his own hands and he was prepared to contest all the 104 seats in the Federal Elections without the MCA led by Dr. Lim Chong Eu. In response to this statement the MCA called its Central Working Committee to take a decision. Before a decision was taken Dr. Lim Chong Eu made this crucial statement:

"The question now is no longer a simple one of allocation of seats of candidates or of conditions in the manifesto and so on. It is only a question of the reiteration of your faith in the Alliance and the leadership of the Alliance. What will happen with regard to the seating and allocation and manifesto and so on I do not know but I have every reason to believe that its confidence is restored in the Alliance that what we have gained so far in negotiations can be sustained. This is only my belief. That Gentlemen, is the position. I am very sorry that the Central Working Committee cannot give you any clear guidance in this matter."

The Committee voted to accept the offer made by the UMNO 89-80. This in fact was the beginning of the betrayal of the Chinese. A compromise was reached for expediency on a vital matter of principle. Following this Dr. Lim Chong Eu resigned as the President of the MCA. After the MCA had taken the decision the Tengku was unable to keep his promise. Important amendments relating to citizenship and the limitations of constituencies for the Federal Elections were made under the Constitution Amendment Act 1962 and the MCA under the new leadership accepted them without protest though they related to matters of vital concern to the non-Malays.

Colonel H.S. Lee, Chairman of the Selangor division of the MCA, was the most important and influential member of the MCA as regards concession from UMNO. He had compromised and in fact sold the Chinese community to the UMNO for various reasons. A mining tycoon, who had served in Chiang Kai Shek's Kuomintang Army to earn the title "Colonel", Lee has been a reactionary and was traditionally anti-labour. He has compromised with the UMNO on many basic and fundamental issues undermining the rights of the Chinese community.

Dr. Lim Chong Eu who had once vehemently opposed the denial of the legitimate rights of the Chinese by the UMNO is now in his 60's. He has entered the National Front through Gerakan by accepting the stand of the National Front which has replaced the Alliance. This gives a clear indication of the change in his attitude and the betrayal of the Chinese by Lim Chong Eu. Dr. Lim Chong Eu, Colonel H.S. Lee and Tan Cheng Lock will be remembered by the Chinese community for betraying its interests.

On 27 May 1961 speaking to the Foreign Correspondents Association of South East Asia in Singapore, Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman expressed the desire that Malaya should have an understanding with Britain and the people of the territories of Singapore, North Borneo (Sabah), Brunei, and Sarawak, and a plan should be devised



whereby these territories can be brought closer in political and economic co-operation. There was immediate reaction favouring this suggestion from the leaders of these territories and Britain. The plan was seen by the left-wing forces as the design of neo-colonialism and imperialism. Many, especially the left-wing groups, felt that another attempt is being made to subjugate the people of North Borneo and Sarawak under a new type of colonialism. At the same time they agreed that Singapore was part of Malaya and the unity of Singapore with Malaya was acceptable.

The concept of Malaysia provoked Indonesia's hostility in the "confrontation" with Malaya. President Sukarno was totally against the concept of Malaysia and did everything to prevent such a merger because, in his view, neo-colonialism and imperialism were behind the plan. After some time the concept of Malaysia became a fait accompli but in 1965 Singapore was thrown out of the Federation of Malaysia. Singapore became an independent country, while Sabah and Sarawak remained in Malaysia. Geographically both Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak are distinctively different and are far apart.

However large amounts of revenue are being dumped in both these territories to win the hearts and minds of the people. The success of assimilating the people of these two territories with the other states of Malaysia is to be assessed at a later stage. There are schools of thought which believe that Malaysia would have its problems. There are indications of this ahead. At one stage the Chief Minister of Sabah, Tun Datu Mustapha was threatening to secede from Malaysia. The possibilities of secession are strengthened by the distance between Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah and the lack of an effective administrative machinery to control Sabah from Kuala Lumpur. The people of Sabah and Sarawak are not happy with the officers who are assigned to administer the territories. Their hostility is manifest in many forms and they would like the fullest autonomy and if possible a kind of governmental system that would suit the traditional, historical and cultural needs of the territory.

The Internal Security Act of 1960 replaced the Emergency Regulations promulgated on 2 June 1948. The reason given by the British Government for the introduction of the Emergency Regulations was the containment of communist activities. During the period of Emergency the British Government could abuse the powers under the Emergency Regulations. Sir Gerald Templer, the British High Commissioner during the early 1950's, in attempting to eliminate the threat, planned the so-called New Villages. A large number of Chinese farmers were driven into barbed wire enclosures. When these people were being rehabilitated in the New Villages they had to sacrifice their belongings and at times the animals which had been their only source

of livelihood. Such barbed wire camps now are being referred to as New Villages. The face of these New Villages might have changed to a certain degree but their essential character is the same. During the Emergency a large number of innocent citizens were penalised in one form or the other under the pretext of containing communist activities.

The New Villages system was introduced by Sir Gerald as a form of collective punishment denying innocent citizens their freedom. There are a number of New Villages which were once fenced by barbed wire and with check-points installed at the entrances so that dwellers cannot leave their homes without permission. The dwellers of the New Villages were subjected to humiliation and driven to the corner by the security forces which took instructions from the Colonial Government. Sir Gerald has been hailed for his strong arm methods. The Emergency had brought untold misery to the people. The Emergency situation gave the British rights to check and enter New Villages on information or on mere suspicion that there was communist activity there.

This regulation was replaced by an amendment to the Constitution which in fact was the withdrawal of the Emergency Regulations and introduction of the Internal Security Act of 1960 as a permanent statute. This new Act gives the Government power similar to those under the Emergency Regulations and is stricter and tighter than the Emergency Regulations. It denies civil liberty, fundamental rights, allows arbitrary detention without trial in court. Any person can be detained for two years and more without the person being produced in a Court of law. In fact the entire democratic concept is defeated by the Internal Security Act. It has given absolute powers to the ruling parties to victimise and penalise political opponents. In most cases the reason for detaining a person is not given. Once the person is detained charges are fabricated against him and these are heard by the Board set up by the Government and normally this Board has no powers except to hear the complaints and to forward its recommendations to the Government. The Government would determine whether the person should be released or detained further.

Vocal and dynamic political leaders who had been critical about the policies of the Government have often been detained. Leaders of Opposition parties are woken up in the middle of the night and arrested and their houses been searched. The elimination of political opponents has become much easier under the Internal Security Act. If one were to cherish a democratic system and if democracy is to function meaningfully there should be an Opposition and democracy is not a luxury enjoyed unlawfully or a theory to be defended incredibly but it is the means to be used for the welfare of all the people. The Opposition keeps the Government alert. It helps the citizens to perceive clearly

all aspects of the problems facing the country. It represents the opposite view and ensures the sound working of democracy. An inefficient ruling party and an irresponsible Opposition have to share the blame if Democracy drifts into Demagoguery. Without an Opposition Parliamentary Democracy is meaningless and baneful. All men are born equal and entitled to their own opinion on any issue. Difference is not enmity. "On every subject a difference of opinion is possible," says Sir John Stewart Mill, "that truth depends on the balance being struck between two sets of conflicting views. Dialogue and not diatribes help to solve the problems and galvanise activities."

Wide powers under the Internal Security Act are being formulated into legislation from time to time, further curtailing freedom and individual liberty. As a result the country faces the prospect of one-party rule because the laws can be used to eliminate the Opposition.

For example, Opposition parties are not allowed to hold public meetings, but at the same time the Government uses its machinery for holding meetings and ceremonies to meet the people one way or the other. Mass media, especially Radio and Television, are being fully utilised to propagate Government policies.

The Government Information Department serves as the propaganda unit for the Government, while the Opposition is not being allowed to scrutinise the policies of the Government. If one were to carefully examine and analyse the situation it would be found that the citizens are not enjoying the kind of democracy professed by the party in power.

The Internal Security Act hangs like the sword of Damocles over the head of every Opposition member who takes the liberty to criticise the Government and its policies. Any one could be arrested without reason. The recent actions of the Government resulted in the arrests of a number of Opposition members. Not only is the Internal Security Act being used to paralyse the Opposition members: it is also being used to contain the discussions within the UMNO and to prevent the split in it.

# FLASHBACKS

# DAVID FREED ON BOND

## DAVID TO BE RELEASED

*But he will have to sign a bond first*

### CURE ON ALL TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES

## But He Goes Back To Seat In K.L. Municipal Council

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon.—Municipal Councillor and former General Secretary of the banned National Union of Factory and General Workers V. David was released from custody after 56 days' detention under the Emergency Regulations.

IPOH, Thurs. — V. David, secretary general of the banned National Union of Factory and General Workers, who was arrested by the Selangor Special Branch for alleged "subversive activities" on May 12 is to be released.

The decision was taken by the committee of review at its meeting at the detention camp here today. David was brought here from Kuala Lumpur earlier this month.

The committee heard David's objections to his detention under the Emergency Regulations and decided to

release him "conditionally."

He will be free to leave the detention camp as soon as he signs the necessary bond. The conditions under which he will be released are, however, not known.

David was represented at the committee of review meeting today by Miss P. G. Lim, of Kuala Lumpur.

He was picked up in a midnight swoop by police in his Klang Road home in Kuala Lumpur a few weeks after the Registrar of Trade Unions had cancelled the registration of the union.

Conditions were set for his release. They were that he shall not take any official or capacity in trade union activities.

He should not leave the Federation of Malaya. The conditions are binding for a period of one year. It is stated that this does not prevent him from being a member of any trade union. The guarantors for David's release were Mr. P. A. S. Ayanan, Federal Secretary and General Secretary of the National Union of Factory and General Workers, Arokiasamy, Secretary of the Malayan Trade Union.



David was released from the Ipoh Detention Camp at exactly 4.30 p.m. today — ten days after the committee of review had examined his case and decided on his release on condition that he execute

## Labour Party man wins KLM elections

FOR the first time in the Federal capital a Labour Party of Malaya candidate won the Municipal elections on Saturday.

He is Mr. V. David, a professional trade unionist, who contested against an Alliance candidate, Mr. Gurdial Singh a merchant, in the Bangsar Ward.

Mr. David secured 1,055 votes while Mr. Gurdial Singh had 848 votes. Spoilt votes amounted to 25.

### The count

Thousands of Labour Party supporters who were unable to find a place in the Town Hall where the votes were counted, remained outside.

They almost caused a traffic jam. Four bank clerks counted the votes while the two candidates paced up and down the hall restlessly.

When the name of the victor was announced the crowd rushed and cheered Mr. David and "threw" him several times in the air.

Mr. David, in an emotional speech in Malay, English and Tamil stirred the crowd when he said that he was a poor man not looking for wealth.

"I do not enjoy light and water facilities like most of the people," he added.

Referring to his victory he said that the people were not sincere and had not fulfilled their promises.

While on the council, he said, he would do his best for the working masses. "I am not going to make empty promises, but I promise you I will do my best for the workers," he added.

"I will be a stumbling block to the Alliance future scheme if I find them unsuitable to the working class," he said.

### The supporters

There was a tremendous cheer after each sentence especially when he said that the victory would show the Alliance that workers were now united.

He thanked Inche Ahmad Rosdaman, president of the party, and said that he had spent sleepless nights helping him during the election campaign.

Mr. David and Inche Rosdaman were then driven by their own-hood car round the town followed by a procession of cars packed with supporters.

### Protect The Federation

is arrest on May 12, the Federation issued a statement explaining that the Federation was formed to protect the Federation from Communist activities and to counter the work of persons engaged in subversive activities.

It was also alleged that David had "repeatedly" by his words and activities that he was a member of the Malayan Communist Party and that he had been instrumental in the control of the trade union movement, so as to further the party's aims to create

## CHAPTER V

### RAPE OF THE MALAYSIAN CONSTITUTION

"The most peculiar part of the amendments has been the creation of a special class known as the privileged lot."

## **RAPE OF THE MALAYSIAN CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution has been amended on many occasions, in fact it has been amended and tampered with in the absence of any form of reference to the parliament select committee to review the pros and cons of such amendments. Whether a Constitution in a newly independent country should receive such an abundance of amendments is causing anxiety and uncertainty among the people.

Independence on 31st August 1957 gave a Constitution to the nation, but before long the document received drastic changes. These changes have been continuous and some of the changes have trespassed into the rights and liberty of the citizens. The most peculiar part of the amendments has been the creation of a special class known as the privileged lot. In this respect the amendments have not ensured security to the people who do not belong to the Malay race. Let us now look into the various amendments from the time of Independence. This will clearly prove that the rights and privileges of the non-Malays have been eroded and the Government's attempt to curtail these rights has been deliberate by the amendments introduced in Parliament on many occasions.

On the question asked by the people whether the Constitution should be amended, particular attention has been drawn in Parliament by the Opposition on various occasions that any amendment has to be carefully examined and if necessary a referendum must be obtained to bring changes to the Constitution. If we accept the Constitution as a sacred document then it cannot be tampered with to please certain groups of people who are in the hierarchy of power. The constitutional changes from time to time have driven the non-Malays to insecurity — their future has not been assured. "Will the non-Malays have any future at all?" This is being asked not only by the grown ups but also by the children in schools.

The nation cannot find peace and prosperity when a large section of the community remains in suspicion and uncertainty. The amendments introduced on the various occasions have been calculated, designed and systematically framed to eliminate the rights and privileges of the two major communities.

The concept of Bumiputrasim came about in the early sixties. During the time of Independence the bumiputra concept was not an issue at all. If we defined the word 'bumiputra' it can be analysed as anyone except those who have not been born in this country. The interpretation is 'son of the soil' which is also the position of non-Malays who have been born in this country. If the Malays are

accepted as bumiputras, then it can also be argued that the non-Malays are bumiputras because they were also born in this country. This concept of bumiputras and non-bumiputras has further created polarisation, and racial integration which is so openly advocated remains a myth and a farce. The bumiputra concept has divided the people into a privileged class of Malays and the non-privileged class of non-Malays. Even within this bumiputra rank referred to by the Government there are the privileged class of bumiputras and the the Government there are the privileged class of bumiputras and the non-privileged class. It is divided between the haves and the have-nots in the name of bumiputras. The Government has been successfully creating a handful of Malay capitalists who do not hesitate to exploit the majority of the other Malay bumiputras. The bumiputra concept has become a threat to national security because the non-Malays feel that this country is going to be politically dominated by one race against the other two major races. Such a situation can force ugly problems and 13th May 1969 is a classic example when the nation saw a dreadful tragedy in the country. The Government has to now decide whether it would like to see a single nation or a divided nation between bumiputras and non-bumiputras. At the time of independence it was agreed that the Malays will enjoy certain special privileges in employment in certain walks of life for a period of up to 1970, but later the Constitution was amended for the privileges to continue forever. A ratio was designed for employment in the public sector, that is 5 to 1 for a period up to 1970 and after which every person will compete on merits and not on race. Both education and employment in this country have become a racial matter and not based on merits. Whether this is good for a country is the burning question. The non-Malays can no more be considered minorities because their strength and size remain a challenge to anyone who advocates the elimination of the two races.



## CHAPTER VI

### CITIZENSHIP – RIGHT OR PRIVILEGE?

"It must be remembered that citizenship is a right  
and not a privilege."

The agreement reached among the various races of this country for citizenship has gradually been abused after Independence. The Malays and those who champion their cause could not bear to see a large number of non-Malays becoming citizens and competing for opportunities in various fields. The type of citizenship that was earlier agreed upon, that a person either born in this country or born outside with 5 years' residential qualification in this country would become a citizen by application. Those who were born here would become nationals and those who apply for citizenship and their parents who are born in this country would be citizens by operation of law. This method which was agreed was later abused by the Government by amending the laws in which case a person who does not possess a valid birth document would never obtain citizenship even though he or she would have been a local-born. In other cases some would have been born outside Malaysia but have been resident for more than 20 to 30 years here, yet they are not granted citizenship throughout their lives.

In some cases those who were born in this country do not have records of birth. It must be borne in mind that the exercise of registration of births only commenced in 1922, and therefore those who were born before 1922 would not have obtained documents to prove their birth. Then came the Second World War. During the Japanese occupation people who were born could not have had records of their birth. With all these problems the laws have been amended that unless and until a person holds a valid birth certificate an application which is made under form 'G' depends on the discretion of the Minister of Home Affairs who shall decide whether to grant citizenship or not. Under this category there are thousands of applications lying with the Minister, some even for more than 15 years and yet to be decided upon. Similarly, for those who have applied for citizenship by possessing birth certificates, the normal application takes 3 years for processing. Though this could be argued purely as an administrative matter, but the fact remains that the sincerity of the Government is being questioned as to whether it encourages the granting of citizenship, or is attempting to eliminate as far as possible the number of applicants who desire to become citizens. It is a policy matter which involves those who do not possess any record of birth. Here the applicant is at the mercy of the Minister of Home Affairs. When a delegation of several politicians from the MIC met the Minister of Home Affairs he made it clear in categorical terms that he is directly by UMNO not to consider citizenship to those who have applied under form G, that is, those who do not possess a document of birth. This is an attempt to ensure that a large number of people are denied citizenship, and senior

Government Officers are not in any position to consider the merits of the case, but it is purely the discretion of the Minister of Home Affairs.

More than about 250,000 applicants of Indian origin and about 800,000 applicants of Chinese origin are awaiting the approval of the Minister of Home Affairs and many have given up hope because they may not be able to enjoy the right given to them, though they fulfil the requirement of the law in respect of residence, marriage, etc. This again has escalated discontentment among the Indians and Chinese who feel that they have no stake in this country and political superiority enjoyed by the Malays will not allow the others to survive in peace and prosperity as citizens of this country.

It must be remembered that citizenship is a right and not a privilege.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE BUMIPUTRA THEORY

"The Bumiputra doctrine had its origin in the new strategy. The pernicious doctrine has no constitutional sanction."

The 13 May 1969 race riots epitomised the nation's tragic dilemma. A permutation of the racial polarisation promoted by conscious Government policies and the animosity of the election campaign caused the outbreak of violence. The then Prime Minister, Tengku Abdul Rahman however tried to blame it all on the communists and imposed a state of Emergency on May 16 and set up a National Operations Council to administer the country.

But later a Government report admitted by implication that the riots could be attributed ultimately to escalating Malay grievances over the failure of economic policies to redress the relative economic deprivation of Malays as compared with the non-Malays. Acceptance of this interpretation by the Government was tacit admission that Malays were primarily responsible for the riots.

The Government then thought of an economic strategy to meet the situation created by the economic backwardness of the Malays and their feeling of relative deprivation, alienation, and inferiority which had together fuelled the jealousy of the non-Malays to cause the riots. This institutionalisation of the Bumiputra Theory and subsequent policy dates back to the colonial power's refusal to grant equal democratic liberties to the Non-Malay masses in the Federation of Malaya Proposal, 1948. It was yet another hat-trick performed by the British to add spice to their "Divide and Rule" Policy.

The *Bumiputra* doctrine had its origin in the new strategy. The pernicious doctrine has no Constitutional sanction. All that the 1957 Constitution provided was the protection of the special status and privileges of Malays. But the doctrine seeks to extend the special status and privileges and their institutionalisation outside the parameters of the Constitution through devious and subtle means. It seeks to confer on the Malays and the indigenous people (Orang Asli) the status of sole owners of the land.

The dubious rationale behind the doctrine is simple: the Malays are the original and indigenous people of Malaysia and the only people who can claim Malaysia as their one and only country. The Chinese and Indians, being immigrants, have alternative countries to look to in China and India, respectively. It is also contended that prior to the advent of the British, the Malays were the natives of the peninsula and since the Malay Sultans had entered into treaties with Britain, it is logical that sovereignty should return to them. This is supposed to confer on the Malays certain "inalienable rights" over the forms and obligations of citizenship which can be imposed on nationals of non-indigenous origin.

It is however beyond dispute that Malays too are an immigrant race. Javanese-Sumatrans migrated to the Malay peninsula during the 1911 rubber industry boom. According to the 1947 census, about 26 per

cent of the Malays in the Federation were immigrants from Sumatra and other Indonesian areas. In Selangor, Malay population grew from 26,000 in 1942 to 185,000 in 1981 largely due to immigration. Less than 40 per cent of the population had lived in Johore for 36 years, while the immigrants constituted 35 per cent of the Malay population. Far From Chinese and Indians robbing the Malays of their wealth, Javanese Malays entered Malaya to benefit from the riches created by the European and Chinese enterprise and Indian toil.

A substantial section, perhaps even a majority, of the Malays are immigrants after the advent of the British rule and cannot claim to be indigenous to the peninsula. The argument therefore has little to do with Malays being indigenous; it is racist per se because the definition of 'Malays' encompasses all the immigrants from what now constitutes Indonesia. Yet the Bumiputra theory regards the Malays (which includes people of Indonesian origin) as the "definitive race" which is the euphemism for the "master race". Special rights for the "definitive race" are defended on the plea that its characteristics have to be perpetuated. The ethnic origin, it is said, is not important and all that the imposition of conditions means is that the settlers have to be willing to develop the characteristics of the definitive citizen. They will then in fact become definitive citizens and can therefore exercise the same rights and privileges. This laboured attempt at obliterating the line of demarcation between the characteristics required of a definitive citizen and the ethnic origin tries to rationalise the discrimination that has been institutionalised in various forms.

The May 13, 1969 riots was the culmination of a conscious policy of discrimination against non-Malays which encouraged the so-called Ultras in the UMNO. Shortly after the riots, the Minister for Home Affairs, said on 2 August 1969:—

"The ultras believe in the wild and fantastic theory of absolute domination by one race over the other communities, regardless of the Constitution. The moderates under the leadership of the Tengku firmly hold the view that in the Malaysian multi-racial society, such a theory is not just a harmless pipe dream but an extremely dangerous fantasy.

Polarisation has taken place in Malaysian politics and the extreme racialists among the ruling party are making a desperate bid to topple the present leadership .....

I must warn the extremists and others as well, that if the anti-Tengku campaigns or activities are carried out in such a manner ... as to cause undue fear and alarm among members of any community ..... I will not hesitate to exercise my powers under the law against those responsible."



Despite the stern warning to the ultras, the UMNO was yielding to their demands. While appearing to act to contain the Malay chauvinists, the Government cracked down on all non-citizens even if they were permanent and long-time residents in the country, requiring them to seek work permits. Aliens were to get such permits only if qualified people were not available. The drive extended even to citizens. All persons holding citizenship certificates under provisions of Article 30 of the Constitution were required to submit their certificates for revalidation. Article 30 (1) provides for issue of certificates "on the application of any person with respect to whose citizenship a doubt exists, whether of fact or of law, certify that person is a citizen." This order, ostensibly to check on those who might have got certificates under false pretenses, jeopardised the status of 277,000 Non-Malays (by reopening the issue of their citizenship) and threatened their jobs (because non-citizens had to take out work permits to continue in their jobs and occupations). Though most of the certificates were revalidated, about 200,000 applications are still pending.

With the Emergency clamped down in the wake of the May 13 riots, the Government showed a sudden concern for national integration and set up the Department of National Unity to study, evaluate, and implement economic and social programmes designed to promote it. The Department was also asked to "formulate a national ideology", which would "serve as a nexus uniting the people of Malaysia". The statement of the national ideology, called *Rukunegara*, was published on the fifteenth anniversary of independence. *Ruk* is the religious term for the five pillars of Islam which define the basic obligations of a Muslim. *Rukunegara* could be translated as "the five principles of the nation" but has a strong Islamic ideological overtone to it. The five objectives of *Rukunegara* are:-

- greater unity of the nation;
- a democratic way of life;
- a just society in which the wealth of the nation is equitably shared;
- a liberal approach to the rich and diverse cultural traditions;
- and a progressive society oriented to modern science and technology.

The five principles are to guide the endeavour to achieve the ends: belief in god, loyalty to king and country, upholding the Constitution, rule of law, and good behaviour and morality.

official commentary explaining the five principles said:—

- Islam is the official religion of the Federation. Other religions and beliefs may be practised in peace and harmony and there shall be no discrimination against any citizen on the ground of religion.
- Loyalty that is expected of every citizen is that he must be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty the Yang Di Pertuan Agung .....
- It is the duty of the citizen to respect and appreciate the letter, spirit and the historical background of the Constitution. The historical background led to such provisions as those regarding the position of the Rulers, the position of Islam as the official religion, the special position of Malays and other natives, the legitimate interests of the other communities, and the enforcement of citizenship. It is the sacred duty of a citizen to defend and uphold the Constitution.
- Justice is founded upon the rule of law. Every citizen is equal before law. Fundamental liberties are guaranteed to all citizens. These include liberty of the person, equal protection under the law, freedom of religion, rights of property and protection against banishment. The Constitution confers on a citizen the right of free speech, assembly and association and this right may be enjoyed freely subject only to limitations imposed by law.
- Individuals and groups shall conduct their affairs in such a manner as not to violate any of the accepted canons of behaviour which is arrogant or offensive to the sensitivities of any group. No citizen should question the loyalty of another citizen on the ground that he belongs to a particular community."

The *Rukunegara Declaration* was the political preparation for another constitutional assault on democratic rights, to pre-empt any meaningful discussion on the issues behind the 13 May riots — the communal tensions and the Government's past policies in the name of special Malay rights which had heightened the tensions. The Emergency was to end but the restriction on rights of free expression was to continue. A White Paper proposed a series of Constitutional amendments to achieve the two main objectives of the Rukunegara:—

" ... to remove sensitive issues from the realm of public discussion so as to allow the smooth functioning of parliamentary democracy and to redress the racial imbalance in certain sectors of the nation's life and thereby promote national unity."

The Government was not seeking a consensus on the measures it proposed to correct the "racial imbalance" (euphemism for more privileges and special rights for Malays). It was shutting out any discussion on it. In more tangible terms, "sensitive issues" to be removed from public discussion included powers and status of Malay rulers, citizenship rights, Malay special rights, the status of Islam as the official religion; and the status of Malay as the sole national language. All these were issues affecting the right to equality of the racial groups.

The second prong of the Government's policy was the expansion of Malay special rights to secure for Malays a greater share in professions where they were under-represented. The Constitution was amended to reserve places for Malays at higher educational institutions "in the selected courses of study where the number of Malays are disproportionately small."

Such reservation and protection in the matter of admission to higher educational institutions and professional courses of study resulted in inevitable distortions. Malay employment opportunities grew at the cost of the opportunities of others. Data provided in the Third Malaysia Plan amply prove that the share of non-Malays shrank in the matter of admission.

As the following table would indicate, enrolment of Malays for various levels of education went up between 1970 and 1975 and the increase is most striking at the upper secondary level. It jumped from 48.8 per cent to 60.7 per cent while Chinese enrolment dropped from 43.4 per cent to 32.4 per cent and that of Indians from 7 to 6.2 per cent. Assuming the Malays constitute 52.2 per cent of the population as claimed by the Government, in the matter of school enrolments at the upper primary level, there is little correlation between the percentage, population and the share of enrolment.

### PENINSULAR MALAYSIA:

#### ENROLMENTS BY RACE AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION 1970 - 75

1970

	Malays	Chinese	Indians	Others	Total
Primary	759,064	511,729	142,147	8,529	1,421,469
%	53.4	36.0	10.0	0.6	100.0
Lower Secondary	193,054	146,872	36,339	2,270	378,535
%	51.0	38.8	9.6	0.6	100.0
Upper Secondary	43,627	38,800	6,258	715	89,400
%	48.8	43.4	7.0	0.8	100.0
Post-secondary	4,609	5,267	637	106	10,619
%	43.4	49.6	6.0	1.0	100.0

## 1975

	Malays	Chinese	Indians	Others	Total
Primary	875,975	550,064	151,744	9,126	1,586,909
%	55.2	34.7	9.6	0.5	100.0
Lower Secondary	305,700	198,493	54,290	2,988	561,471
%	54.4	35.4	9.7	0.5	100.0
Upper Secondary	101,486	54,095	10,420	1,108	167,109
%	60.7	32.4	6.2	0.7	100.0
Post Secondary	8,817	6,617	804	97	16,335
%	54.0	40.5	4.9	0.6	100.0

A decline in the non-Malay share of enrolments in tertiary education is borne out by the following table. Noteworthy is the phenomenal rise in enrolment for engineering (including petroleum engineering education and diploma courses). Malay enrolment increased four-fold, from 633 to 2,480 while Chinese enrolment declined from 399 to 371, though the Indian share went up from 27 to 47, between 1970 and 1975. Similarly, in admission to science and technology and applied science courses, there was no non-Malay in 1970. All the 218 seats went to Malays. In 1975, the Malays got 1,291 seats, Chinese 378 and Indians a mere 11.

At the degree level, the gap was growing with a vengeance. In medicine, dentistry and pharmacy, Malay admissions quadrupled between 1970 and 1975 – from 100 to 399. Chinese admissions rose from 399 to 542 and Indian admissions from 45 to 60. Though the number of seats nearly doubled, from 581 to 1,021, the Malays gained most. In engineering (including petroleum engineering), the number of admissions increased from 392 to 1135. Malays got five places in 1970, and 737 in 1975 while the Chinese were virtually wiped out of this field – their share shrinking from 4365 to 30. Indians who got a pitiful 11 seats in 1970 found their representation dropping to a mere 7.

MALAYSIA: ENROLMENTS IN TERTIARY EDUCATION BY RACE, 1970 - 1975

	1970					1975				
	Malay	Chinese	Indian	Others	Total	Malay	Chinese	Indians	Others	Total
<b>Diploma &amp; Certificate courses</b>										
University of Malaya	-	-	-	-	-	63	61	5	3	132
University Pertanian Malaysia	458	72	3	12	545	1,691	139	27	1	1,858
University Teknologi Malaysia	390	198	23	7	618	1,557	118	9	12	1,696
Institut Teknologi MARA	1,801	-	-	-	1,801	7,524	-	-	-	7,524
Politeknik Ungku Omar	216	267	10	-	493	744	341	51	-	1,136
Kolej Tengku Abd. Rahman	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,151	46	4	1,201
Sub-Total	2,865	537	36	19	3,457	11,579	1,810	138	20	13,547
%	82.9	15.5	1.0	0.6	100.0	85.4	13.4	1.0	0.2	100.0
<b>Degree Courses</b>										
University of Malaya	3,005	3,861	559	302	7,727	3,590	3,515	504	122	7,731
University Sains Malaysia	68	144	35	5	252	1,205	1,361	179	14	2,759
University Kebangsaan Malaysia	164	4	1	-	169	2,337	126	35	4	2,502
University Pertanian Malaysia	-	-	-	-	-	538	135	22	-	695
University Teknologi Malaysia	-	-	-	-	-	483	80	3	1	567
Sub-total	3,237	4,009	595	307	8,148	8,153	5,217	743	141	14,254
%	39.7	49.2	7.3	3.8	100.0	57.2	36.6	5.2	1.0	100.0
<b>Preliminary and Pre-University courses</b>										
University of Malaya	28	14	6	2	50	190	3	-	-	193
University Sains Malaysia	16	3	-	-	19	92	-	-	-	92
University Kebangsaan Malaysia	-	-	-	-	-	54	5	-	1	60
Universiti Pertanian Malaysia	-	2	-	7	40	99	4	-	-	103
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia	74	-	-	-	74	-	-	-	-	-
Institut Teknologi MARA	341	-	-	-	341	348	-	-	-	348
Kolej Tengku Abd. Rahman	-	1,122	41	2	1,195	32	2,739	157	4	2,932
Sub-total	520	1,141	47	11	1,719	815	2,751	157	5	3,728
%	30.3	66.4	2.7	0.6	100.0	21.9	73.8	4.2	0.1	100.0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>6,622</b>	<b>5,687</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>13,324</b>	<b>20,547</b>	<b>9,778</b>	<b>1,038</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>31,529</b>
	49.7	42.7	5.1	2.5	100.0	65.1	31.1	3.3	0.5	100.0

•• Figures refer only to enrolments in local universities and colleges.  
 •• does not include enrolments in domestic private institutions.

	Malay	Chinese	Indians	Others	Total	Malay	Chinese	Indians	Others	Total
<b>Diploma &amp; Certificate Courses</b>										
Agriculture	458	72	3	12	545	934	109	19	1	1063
Engineering (including) Petroleum Engineering	633	399	27	7	1066	2480	371	47	9	2907
Land & Quantity Survey, Architecture & Town & City Planning	59	5	-	-	64	936	14	-	3	953
Statistics, Computer Science & Actuaries	136	-	-	-	136	267	-	-	-	267
Science Technology applied Science	218	-	-	-	218	1291	378	11	1	1681
Actuarial Science, Fisheries & Forestry	-	-	-	-	-	542	19	6	-	567
Home Science	-	-	-	-	-	69	11	2	-	82
Accountancy	353	34	3	-	390	1354	313	21	4	1692
Business	376	27	3	-	406	1682	388	29	-	2299
Administration & Law	355	-	-	-	355	542	-	-	-	542
Applied Arts	277	-	-	-	277	303	-	-	-	303
Hotel Catering	-	-	-	-	-	380	-	-	-	380
Library Science	-	-	-	-	-	108	-	-	-	108
Mass Communications	-	-	-	-	-	145	-	-	-	145
Secretarial Science	-	-	-	-	-	492	-	-	-	492
Interpretation/ Translation	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	1	-	6
Certificate in English Language Teaching	-	-	-	-	-	36	7	2	2	47
Others	-	-	-	-	-	13	-	-	-	13
<b>Sub-Total :</b>	<b>2865</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3457</b>	<b>11579</b>	<b>1810</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13547</b>

Degree Courses:	Malay	Chinese	Indian	Others	Total	Malay	Chinese	Indians	Others	Total
Arts & Language	2104	870	270	133	3377	1826	429	168	34	2457
Economics	494	661	135	52	1342	1287	339	86	19	1731
Law	-	-	-	-	-	124	62	17	8	211
Humanities, Humanities with Education, Social Science & Social Science with Education	61	41	17	3	122	1833	449	120	10	2412
Islamic Studies	32	-	-	-	32	486	-	-	-	486
Diploma in Education	146	237	36	24	443	240	283	55	10	588
Diploma in Public Administration	16	2	-	-	18	15	7	1	-	23
Science, Science with Education & Applied Science	188	1222	66	41	1517	799	2096	170	29	3094
Medicine, Dentistry & Pharmacy Agriculture	100	403	45	33	581	399	543	60	20	1021
Agriculture	91	208	15	10	324	273	94	20	2	389
Veterinary Science & Forestry	-	-	-	-	-	105	35	2	-	142
B.Sc. Agriculture Business & Agricultural Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	179	36	6	-	221
Engineering (Including Petroleum Engineering)	5	365	11	11	392	361	737	30	7	1135
Architect Land & Quantity Survey, Town & Country Planning & Evaluation	-	-	-	-	-	226	108	8	2	344
Sub-Total :	3237	4009	595	307	8148	8153	5217	743	141	14252
Preliminary & Pre-University Courses	520	1141	47	11	1719	815	2751	157	5	3728
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>6622</b>	<b>5687</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>13324</b>	<b>20547</b>	<b>9778</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>31529</b>

5 Figures refer only to enrolments in local universities and colleges.

6 Does not include enrolments in domestic private institution.

Malay enrolments in tertiary education rose from 49.7 per cent to 65.2, disproportionate to their share of the total population (52.2) while the Chinese and Indian shares declined, from 42.7 per cent to 31.1 and 5.1 to 3.3, respectively. In the University of Malaya, Malay admissions increased but non-Malay admissions dropped. Chinese had outnumbered Malays together in 1970 but in 1975, Malays outnumbered Chinese and accounted for 57.2 per cent of the admissions. The Chinese share dropped from 49.2 per cent to 36.6 per cent and Indian share from 7.3 per cent to 5.2 per cent.

The Rukunegara ideology, the ban on public discussion of "sensitive issues" and a new Sedition Act together concentrated in the Government new powers with which it could muzzle any opposition to its policies.

A two-pronged economic strategy to realise the Rukunegara objectives was spelt out in the New Economic Policy, the goals of which were summarised as follows in the Second Malaysia Plan:

"..... The first prong is to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty by raising income levels and increasing employment opportunities for all Malaysians, irrespective of race. The second programme aims at accelerating the process of restructuring Malaysian society to correct economic imbalance, so as to reduce and eventually eliminate the identification of race with economic function. This process involves the modernisation of rural life, a rapid and balanced growth of urban activities and the creation of a Malay commercial and industrial community in all categories and at all levels of operation, so that Malays and other indigenous people will become full partners in all aspects of economic life of the nation."

Creation of a "commercial and industrial community" among the Malays, so that they own and manage 30 per cent of the commercial and industrial sectors by 1990, is the objective of the Policy to restructure ownership. Among the public corporations set up to implement the public sector segments of the economic plans are: the Rural Industrial Development Authority (RIDA) which was reorganised in 1966 and renamed Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA or Council of Trust for the Indigenous People), Perbadanan Nasional or PERNAS (National Corporation), an investment holding company which has formed over a dozen subsidiary companies to engage in Insurance, Shipping, Foreign Trade, Construction, Engineering, Off-Shore Mining and participates in numerous joint ventures with private firms; the Urban Development Authority (UDA) to plan and implement urban renewal and development; the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA) to plan industrial development and make loans to industry, Komplek Kewangan (Financial Complex), to finance



and sponsor private Malay commercial and industrial projects, and the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA), to assist farmers and peasants to overcome marketing problems. In addition each State has formed State Economic Development Corporations (SEDCS) to co-ordinate and promote development projects at the State level.

The government-sponsored agencies, in addition to providing credit and technical assistance, established industrial and commercial enterprises in joint venture with Malay entrepreneurs or in trust for them. These agencies would create the share capital and hold it in trust for Malays as they accumulate savings, and these enterprises showed sustained profitability. Value of equity stock held by Malay individuals and interests increased by 43.6 per cent per annum since 1970. As a proportion of all equity capital, the share of Malay interests expanded from 2.4 per cent to 9 per cent in 1975. This, as the Third Malaysia Plan admits, was possible largely due to increase in share capital held by public sector agencies which can be said to be holding these shares in trust for the Malays and other indigenous people.

The objective of 30 per cent Malay ownership and management of all industrial and commercial activities by 1990 can be achieved only by a rapid reallocation of the gross national product and the job opportunities on a racial basis in favour of the Malays. Malay wealth is being created out of public wealth, through the tax payers' money.

Privileges and quotas for Malays and creation of Malay capital out of public funds involves restricting opportunities for non-Malays and affect the overall growth of the economy. Distributive goals have gained a priority over growth goals. A healthy and expanding economy can accommodate the competing claims of Malays and non-Malays but by stunting the growth of the economy, the Government's New Economic Policy will hit the non-Malays first and the Malays eventually. The new opportunities for the Malays have come so far out of the growth increments of the economy made possible largely by non-Malay effort. The growth increments will become smaller and smaller until it ends up in stagnation.

The Third Malaysia Plan (1976-80) sets a total investment target of around \$44,000 million, of which 40 per cent is to be from the public sector and the rest from the private sector.

This assumes a growth of nearly 10 per cent per annum in real terms of private sector investments. The actual growth in 1976 (though a relatively depressed year) was only 3 per cent in real terms.

**PENINSULAR MALAYSIA: OWNERSHIP OF SHARE CAPITAL IN LIMITED COMPANIES, 1970-75**

	1970		1971		1972		1973		1974		1975		1971-75(%)
	\$ million	(%)	\$ million	(%)	\$ million	(%)	\$ million	(%)	\$ million	(%)	\$ million	(%)	
Malays & Malay interests	125.6	2.4	210.1	3.5	286.0	4.2	436.6	5.3	628.4	6.7	768.1	7.8	43.6
Malays .. ..	84.4	1.6	114.5	1.9	131.1	1.9	173.8	2.1	207.4	2.2	227.1	2.3	21.9
Malay interests ..	41.2	0.8	95.6	1.6	154.9	2.3	262.8	3.2	421.0	4.5	541.0	5.5	67.4
Other Malaysians ..	1,826.5	34.3	2,104.7	35.8	2,418.3	35.7	3,035.8	36.6	3,451.4	37.1	3,687.3	37.3	15.1
Chinese .. ..	1,450.5	27.2	1,693.7	28.8	1,935.4	28.6	2,308.9	27.8	2,626.4	28.2	2,755.9	27.9	13.7
Indians .. ..	55.9	1.1	71.7	1.2	75.3	1.1	97.4	1.2	111.3	1.2	119.2	1.2	16.3
All others .. ..	320.1	6.0	339.3	5.8	407.6	6.0	629.5	7.6	713.7	7.7	812.2	8.2	20.5
Foreign .. ..	3,377.1	63.3	3,573.1	60.7	4,059.0	60.0	4,813.0	58.1	5,233.3	56.2	5,434.7	54.9	10.0
Total private sector	5,329.2	100.0	5,887.9	100.0	6,763.3	100.0	8,285.4	100.0	9,313.0	100.0	9,890.1	100.0	13.2

- \* Includes institutions channelling private Malay funds such as Amanah Saham Nasional (National Unit Trust) MARA and Lembaga Urusan dan Tabung Haji (Pilgrims Welfare and Fund Management Board).
- \* Shares considered to be held in trust by agencies such as MARA (excluding Amanah Saham Nasional) PERNAS, UDA, SEDCS, Bank Bumiputra and Bank Pembangunan (Development Bank).
- \* Non-residents, Shares held by individuals and net assets, in 1970 prices, of branches of companies incorporated abroad.
- \* Excludes Government and its agencies except the trust agencies.

With such low growth in private investment, it is doubtful if the bumiputras are to gain control of 30 per cent of the total equity stock by 1990 (against just 7.8 per cent in 1975). This needs an annual average growth rate of 25.8 per cent between 1976 and 1990 whereas the growth in the share capital projected under the Third Malaysia Plan for other Malaysians is at an annual average rate of 15.5 per cent. According to one estimate, this would require \$1,000 million of bumiputra capital a year over the next 14 years, i.e. \$14,000 million in all. Even this figure is hard to achieve except at the cost of the tax-payers. Other estimates place the need at \$20,000 million.

Since the first Malaya Plan 1956-60, Government investments in economic and social development increased more than seven times, education and housing getting high priority in the earlier stages. In the later stages, a public sector was built up to engage in industrial, commercial, banking, insurance and mining activities. All these are being virtually handed over to the Malays though they were built out of public funds.

Malay special rights have been extended to the private sector of the economy by requiring commercial and industrial houses to obtain quotas for employment of Malays to more skilled and higher paid managerial jobs, thus impairing the managerial efficiency. Corporate enterprises were required to reserve a specified proportion of their stock shares for exclusive sale to Malays.

The New Economic Policy aims at correcting racial economic disparities through a greater economic balance among various races, so that the current identification of race with economic function may eventually be eradicated. In practice, it has turned out to be an attempt at diverting resources generated by non-Malays for the benefit of the Malays, even to the point of jeopardizing the overall economic growth.

The thrust of the policy is a progressive reduction in income imbalances and restructuring of employment and ownership patterns such that within a generation all racial groups in the nation will participate in the process of development and benefit from it more approximately in accordance with their representation in the population.

The Third Malaysia Plan tries to emphasise the relative poverty of the Malays by citing data on Mean Household Incomes for 1970. In comparison with a mean monthly household income of \$264 for the country as a whole, the average varies from as low of \$172 for the Malays to levels above the national average of \$304 for the Indians, \$394 for the Chinese and \$813 for the other groups. Data on incidence of poverty by race reflect the same pattern. Of a total of 900,000 Malay households, 65 per cent were poor and among the 160,000 30 per cent were poor.

Taking all poor households together, the Malays accounted for 74 per cent of the total, followed by Chinese (17 per cent) and Indians (8 per cent), others accounting for about 1 per cent.

**PENINSULAR MALAYSIA: HOUSEHOLDS IN POVERTY  
BY RACE, 1970**

	All Households (000)	Poor Households (000)	Poverty incidence (%)	Percentage of total poor households
Malays ..	901.5	584.2	64.8	73.8
Chinese ..	525.2	136.3	26.0	17.2
Indians ..	160.5	62.9	39.2	7.9
Others ..	18.8	8.3	44.8	1.1
Total ..	1,606.0	791.8	49.3	100.0

There is no denying the fact the Malays are relatively poor. But poverty cannot be divided or classified along lines of race. The attack on poverty has to be total and not based on a racial approach.

The results of the Government's effort to restructure employment would prove that Malays gained at the cost of others. According to the Third Malaysia Plan, employment grew by 3.5 per cent per annum against a population increase of 2.8 per cent in Peninsular Malaysia or by about 523,000 jobs for the period 1971-75. Malay employment expanded by 4 per cent per annum, Chinese by 3.1 per cent and Indians by 2.8 per cent. Share of Malay employment in manufacturing, construction and mining trade went up from 25.3 per cent in 1970 to 32 per cent in 1975 while its share in agriculture remained the same at about 1970. Chinese employment rose in aggregate terms in these sectors but its share in percentage terms declined in all sectors except in series. The share of Indian employment rose in agriculture, mining and manufacturing but fell sharply in the utilities sector.

PENINSULAR MALAYSIA: EMPLOYMENT BY RACE AND SECTOR, 1970 AND 1975

1970	Malays (000)	Percentage of sector total	Chinese (000)	Percentage of sector total	Indians (000)	Percentage of sector total	Others (000)	Percentage of sector total	Total (000)	Percentage of total employment
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	951.1	67.6	300.9	21.4	142.0	10.1	12.0	0.9	1,406.0	50.3
Mining & quarrying	21.1	24.8	56.3	66.0	7.2	8.4	0.7	0.8	85.3	3.0
Manufacturing	76.3	28.9	172.6	65.4	14.0	5.3	1.0	0.4	263.9	9.4
Construction	16.8	21.6	55.9	72.0	4.7	6.1	0.2	0.3	77.6	2.8
Utilities	8.0	48.2	3.0	18.1	5.4	32.5	0.2	1.2	16.6	0.6
Transport, Storage & Communication	50.9	42.6	47.3	39.6	20.4	17.1	0.8	0.7	119.4	4.4
Commerce	82.5	23.5	229.1	65.3	37.5	10.7	1.8	0.5	350.9	12.6
Service	229.9	48.5	169.2	35.7	66.4	14.0	8.5	1.8	474.0	17.0
<b>TOTAL:-</b>	<b>1,436.6</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>1,034.3</b>	<b>37.0</b>	<b>297.6</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>2,793.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Population	4,822.0	52.7	3,274.0	35.8	987.0	10.7	73.0	0.8	9,147.0	100.0
Labour Force	1,563.00	51.5	1,111.6	36.6	334.4	11.1	26.0	0.8	3,035.0	100.0
Unemployment	126.4		77.3		36.8		0.8		241.3	
Unemployment (%)	8.1		7.0		11.0		3.1		8.0	
<b>1975</b>										
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	1,032.6	67.3	317.6	20.7	170.3	11.1	13.8	0.9	1,534.3	46.2
Mining & quarrying	27.7	33.1	47.6	56.9	8.0	9.5	0.4	0.5	83.7	2.5
Manufacturing	120.1	33.1	217.3	59.9	24.3	6.7	1.1	0.3	362.8	10.9
Construction	28.1	28.8	58.6	60.2	10.2	10.5	0.5	0.5	97.4	2.9
Utilities	13.1	61.2	3.0	14.0	5.1	23.8	0.2	1.0	21.4	0.7
Transport, Storage & Communications	76.0	47.2	60.4	37.5	23.5	14.6	1.1	0.7	161.0	4.9
Commerce	145.2	31.6	281.8	61.3	32.3	7.0	0.5	0.1	459.8	13.9
Services	302.0	50.6	217.8	36.5	68.0	11.4	9.0	1.5	596.8	18.0
<b>TOTAL:-</b>	<b>1,744.8</b>	<b>52.6</b>	<b>1,204.1</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>341.7</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>3,317.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Population	5,510.0	53.1	3,687.0	35.5	1,105.0	10.6	83.0	0.8	10,385.0	100.0
Labour force	1,873.1	52.2	1,297.9	36.2	389.0	10.8	30.0	0.8	3,590.0	100.0
Unemployment	123.3		93.8		47.3		3.4		272.8	
Unemployment (%)	6.9		7.2		12.2		11.3		7.6	

Unemployment rate is estimated to have fallen significantly from 8.1 per cent in 1970 to 6.9 per cent in 1975 for the Malays. However, the number of unemployed among the Malays increased marginally from 126,400 to 128,300. Unemployment rate among the Chinese increased from 7.0 per cent in 1970 to 7.2 per cent in 1975 while number of employed rose from 77,300 to 93,800. Among the Indians unemployment rate rose from 11.0 in 1970 to 12.2 per cent in 1975 or from 36,800 to 47,300.

Thus while the unemployment rate for the country as a whole fell, and significantly so for the Malays, it rose sharply among the Indians and was more or less steady in the case of the Chinese. Unemployment among Indians is not in a reasonable balance with that of other communities and the Third Malaysia Plan says an effort should be made to correct this distortion by 1990.

Efforts to advance Malay employment in the secondary and tertiary sectors is to be accompanied by diversion of more non-Malays to agriculture but still the Chinese share of employment in agriculture is likely to remain the same. It will be the Indians who will be left with no option but shift to the primary sector.

Government allocations for industry and services (mainly to industry) up to 1980 add up to \$ 1,700 million and much of it is for bumiputra institutions like the MARA, PERNAS and its subsidiaries, the Bumiputra Investment Fund and for State Economic Development Corporations. Bumiputra promotion agencies like the PERNAS will get bigger allocations of public funds which means non-Malays will have to pay more income tax, or if the funds are to come out of public borrowings, the coming generations of non-Malays will have to pay to redeem the debt.

The special treatment of bumiputra has been taken to such a degree that it has caused acute embarrassment to leaders like Tengku Abdul Rahman. In his weekly column on 9th May 1977 in the Star, the former Prime Minister said:

"There is so much talk about Bumiputra (sons of the soil and primarily the Malays) today that it appears in the minds of the others (races) that they are being turned into second-class citizens in the country."

## CHAPTER VIII

### AFTERMATH OF MAY 13 1969

"Constitutional provisions of special rights for Malays roused Malay expectations to a degree the Government could not fulfil them."



## AFTERMATH OF MAY 13 1969

The National Operations Council, set up in the wake of the 13 May 1969 riots, in a report on 9 October 1969 (*The May 13 Tragedy*) blames the upheaval on a variety of factors which fall into two categories. The first may be categorised as basic: "Visibly, a generation gap and differences in interpretation of the constitutional structure by the different races in the country, and consequently the growing political encroachment of the immigrant races against certain important provisions of the Constitution which relate to the Malay language and the position of the Malays, principally Articles 152 and 153" The second set of factors may be categorised as being proximate to the riots: "the incitement, intemperate statements and provocative behaviour of certain racialist party members and supporters during the recent General Elections: the part played by the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) and secret societies in inciting racial feelings and suspicion; and the anxious, and later desperate mood of the Malays with a background of Sino-Malay distrust, and recently, just after the General Elections, as a result of racial insults and threats to their future survival and well-being in their own country."

Even if one were to go by this assessment, it is obvious that "the differences in interpretation of the constitutional structure by different races in the country" were at the root of the conflict and other factors merely interacted on an existing situation. When Malaya became independent in 1957, non-Malays were persuaded to accept symbols like Malay as the national language, and special rights for Malays as temporary arrangements to raise the economic and educational level of the Malays so that they could enjoy "economic" parity with the non-Malays. There was an implied promise that all communal issues would be reopened for negotiations after a time-lag. However, after Singapore's exit from the Malay Federation, Malay chauvinism gained a new edge and expectations of Malays were roused to a degree that the Government could not fulfil.

But Malay thinking on this was reflected in the report of the National Operations Council which suggests that these special rights and privileges are not negotiable. The report says:

"Although a Constitution is the fundamental law of a country, there are some provisions in the Constitution which are more basic than others and, therefore, are 'entrenched' in it."

The 'entrenched provisions' include, according to the report:

*the whole of Part III* which are provisions relating to citizenship: and even after the Proclamation of Emergency it is provided in Article 156(A) that provisions in this part shall not be suspended or modified;

- Article 171 which provides for Federal guarantee of the Constitution of each State and the rights and prerogatives of the Malay Rulers;
- Article 152 which provides for the Malay language to be the National Language and ultimately to be the sole official language;
- Article 153 which provides for the responsibility of the Yang DiPertuan Agung to safeguard the special position of the Malays and legitimate interests of other communities in accordance with the provisions of that Article;
- Article 159 which provides *inter alia* that any amendment to the provisions relating to the Malay Rulers (Articles 38, 70 and 71) and the special position of the Malays (Article 153) shall not be passed without the consent of the Conference of Rulers.

The last of the "entrenched provisions" is self revealing in nature because Article 159 provides that any amendment relating to the Malay rulers or Malay special rights cannot be passed without the consent of the Conference of Rulers. The obvious intention is to foreclose any change in the status quo.

The Report enters a syllogistic argument in support of the "immutability of these provisions of the Constitution." They are the result of an agreement between all communities, the product of consultation and compromise and represent binding arrangements between the various races in this country, and are the underpinnings on which the Constitutional structure such as fundamental liberties, the machinery of Government and a score of other detailed provisions are built. Therefore, if the entrenched provisions are in any way eroded or weakened, the entire Constitutional structure is endangered, and with it, the existence of the nation itself.

The consensus claimed for these provisions, if any, was the result of good faith among non-Malay sections who genuinely believed that after a time-lag they would be reviewed. There was no consensus on any category of provisions which are now being described as "entrenched"

Constitutional provision of special rights for Malays roused Malay expectations to a degree the Government could not fulfil them. This resulted in extremist tendencies within the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), the principal ruling party which believed that Malaysia is for Malays. Tengku Abdul Rahman, in his book *May 13 – Before and After* refers to a "struggle for power going on inside the UMNO as between those who built the Party and helped in our independence and the new elements, the "ultras". "According to the 'Ultras'," the Tengku says, "this country belongs only to the Malays

and to the Malays alone" but he counsels moderation for the extremist elements who want to overturn the Constitution to the detriment of non-Malay interests.

The Report of the National Operations Council refers on the attempts at forcing a racialist polarisation at the 1969 elections. "These opportunists ranged from one extreme, those who misrepresented and attacked Article 153 of the Constitution to the other, that exploited fears among the Malays that they would be overwhelmed by the non-Malays. Even more extreme were those who questioned the historic rights of the Malays to regard themselves as the indigenous people of Malaysia." And again, political parties at both extremes harped incessantly on "Bumiputeraism" on the one hand, and Malay poverty on the other.

The non-Malay articulation of their rights and the mood of defiance reflected in the questioning of the Malay claim to regard themselves as the indigenous people are but a backlash of the strident Malay assertion of special privileges when they were in fact due for a review. There was no outright consent to any "entrenched provisions" in the Constitution; these were regarded as transient provisions subject to change or modification. No provision of the Constitution is above debate, even if it is called an "entrenched" provision and there was nothing in law to bar such a debate as part of an election campaign. Majority communalism engenders minority communalism. Malay assertions that they are the majority and the indigenous race and the implied suggestion that others were usurpers and interlopers were bound to have their backlash.

The more immediate cause of Malay frustration leading to the 13 May riots was the outcome of the 1969 elections. The Alliance of the UMNO, MCA and the MIC dropped in votes from 58.4 per cent in 1964 to 48.4 per cent and won fewer seats in Parliament — 66 against the 74 it held. It did worse in the States, securing 162 seats and 47.95 per cent of the vote whereas it had won 241 seats and 57.62 per cent in 1964. The MCA performance was even more disheartening. It won only 13 seats in Parliament against 27 it held and 26 seats in State legislatures against 67 it held. The Alliance lost control of Penang, Perak and Trengganu States while it gained only half the seats in Selangor State.

The MCA and the MIC lost their credibility with the UMNO leadership after their poor showing. The Alliance as a whole saw in the election results a serious challenge to its claim that it represented the nation through its three constituent communal organisations.

The desperate mood of the Malays, to which the National Operations Council Report admits, already existed against the larger canvas of Sino-Malay distrust when the General Elections were held.

Statistics relating to the 13 May riots would corroborate the view that it was a Malay offensive against the non-Malays.

	Death	Injuries by firearms	Injuries by Other weapons	Arrested	Charged in Court
Malays	25	37	90	2,077	1,133
Chinese	143	125	145	5,126	2,907
Indians	13	117	9	20	20
Others	15	1	15	66	51
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>9,143</b>	<b>5,561</b>

The 13 May riots, as pointed out by Prof. Gordon Means, "drastically polarised the country into two hostile paranoid populations" What followed -- the Rukunegara strategy, which had both political and economic components, sharpened the polarisation. Politically, the Rukunegara strategy sought the integration of the country into a cohesive nation. However, nation building cannot be achieved through a political barter between the UMNO, the MCA and the MIC. The ruling Alliance, comprising these three parties, tried to broadbase itself through the National Front formed in 1974. The Alliance is part of the Front and it represents mechanical balance between the three major racial groups and a tenuous political arrangement whose sole objective is to pool votes to defeat any secular party challenging the power deal. It does not represent any fusion or cohesion. The Chinese and Indian leaders who have been part of the Alliance have only surrendered the interests of their respective communities to a race which wants political dominance by virtue of its claim to numerical majority.

As Clifford Gee says, the Alliance "is one of the most remarkable examples of successful practice of the art of the impossible in the whole sphere of new-state politics -- a federated non-communal party of sub-parties themselves frankly, explicitly, and on occasions enthusiastically communal in appeal, set in the context of primordial suspicion and hostility that would make the Hapsburg Empire seem like Denmark or Australia. -On the surface of things, it ought not to work." It might appear to work but it is only postponing issues. The fact that the tenuous communal balance has been held through an equally tenuous political balance since the 13 May riots is no guarantee that it would last for years. The apparent success of the Alliance conceals more than it reveals. What would be the impact, for instance, of the defeat of the Alliance party or even a significant erosion of its support at some future elections?

Cleavages in the society have not only reinforced each other but have made new political alignments difficult. The Rukunegara strategy aims at assimilation of the Chinese and the Indians into a *Malay* and not a Malaysian way of life. This is an impossibility because Malay-isation has in practice become synonymous with Islamisation. This would have been difficult even if the proportion of Chinese and Indians to the total population were significantly smaller. The Chinese and Indians have religions and cultures much older and richer than that of the Malays and would not let themselves be Malay-ised in the foreseeable future. The Rukunegara strategy has not succeeded in assimilating even the Islamic people of Sabah and Sarawak, not to speak of the *Orang Asli* who have their own ethnic religions.

The economic implications of the Rukunegara strategy are equally serious. It seeks to create a Malay capitalist class, comprising a few millionaires. The solutions offered by the New Economic Policy for the relative economic backwardness of the Malays is the diversion of Chinese and Indians to the agricultural sector, and the shifting of Malays to secondary and tertiary sectors to secure a better racial economic balance. The solutions are *per se* capitalist. Capital formation on behalf of the entire population could take place at the cost of the tax-payer but private Malay capital can be accumulated only by exploitation of the rural masses who are predominantly Malays. Paradoxically, the exercise at creating a Malay capitalist class is being undertaken with the ostensible objective of reducing the exploitation of rural Malays by capitalists with political clout.

The result of the Rukunegara ideology in the economic field is the creation of a double – edifice system of exploitation. While the general exploitation of the urban and rural masses continues at one level, at another level the non-Malay people are sought to be exploited to facilitate and accumulate bureaucratic capital towards the growth of State capitalism. The two-edifice system of exploitation can only lead to redistribution of the country's wealth in favour of the Malays and promote State capitalism under Malay control. In sum, the strategy can retard economic growth in the long run, causing a breakdown of the ill-conceived system.



*Dr. V. David addressing the Annual Delegates Conference of the National Union of Factory and General Workers (NUFGW) in 1955.*



*Dr. V. David and Dr. P.P. Narayanan at a meeting with former Prime Minister YTM Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj after Dr. David's release from detention in 1958. The Tunku took the opportunity to make a humorous remark which caused both Dr. David and Dr. Narayanan to laugh.*

## CHAPTER IX

### THE DAP MAKES THE GRADE

"From the mid - 1960's the DAP had been showing its undaunted spirit through the slogan of Malaysian - Malaysia as the key to true nationhood."



The Democratic Action Party had its origin in the People's Action Party that is ruling Singapore. When the city state separated from Malaysia in 1965, the re-registration of a new party came into being on 19th March 1966 as the DAP. From its very inception the party had found itself in a hostile position to the MCA. Taking note of the inequalities prevailing in Malaysia, the DAP considered the MCA and the MIC inadequate in their role to represent the Chinese and Indians of the country. Hence there has to be a more vigorous champion to take up the task and it naturally falls on the DAP.

It was during the 1969 elections that the DAP made itself felt as an effective Opposition. It polled about 14% of the votes winning 13 parliamentary seats. In the State Assemblies the DAP secured 12% of the votes cast winning 31 seats. Having been well entrenched at all levels of the national scene, the DAP wages unceasingly a campaign against social injustice. The party follows a positive course in its quest for preventing social injustice. From the mid-1960's the DAP had been showing its undaunted spirit through the slogan of Malaysian — Malaysia, as the key to true nationhood. This acts like a catalyst having sunk in the minds and hearts of all who owe loyalty to the country though they may not by racial origin belong to the indigenous people of the land.

Few Opposition parties could get that large ground swell as what the DAP has been able to muster. Any bickering at the top level of DAP cannot affect the party machinery which has the resilience to remain intact by virtue of its popular appeal. The DAP is a dynamic Opposition party and has displayed at all times a remarkable capacity for drive and thrust away from mental and moral stagnation. It now enjoys a vast fund of goodwill in and out of Parliament. The party does not compromise its principles for immediate gains by associating with other Opposition parties that lack the integrity of purpose, nor the will to resist injustice.

The DAP believes in appealing to objective realities when disparities arise. It sees that no one community dominates the other under whatever guise. A communal issue in its view is a national problem and should not be swept under the carpet as a matter of convenience. Having established itself firmly in the urban areas, the DAP now fans its inroads into the rural districts, and there is a growing sign of all round progress.

The manifesto of the Party stresses in bold terms its stand as a national political body, and not just that of a communal front organisation waging a verbal battle without any tangible results.

The image that the Party strikes through the Malaysian Malaysia posture carries the spark of a rallying point for all those suffering from

an anomalous handicap. Priority is always given to the elimination of poverty of all the people irrespective of race. As regards racial barrier, it strives for extensive communication in all the languages currently used by the various races of the nation. As at present Bahasa Malaysia has become the sole medium of communication and English, Chinese and Tamil have been pushed into the background, thereby denying their right to exist eventually.

DAP's main objective is to create a sense of belonging among the various races so that no one feels deprived of his rights. This is the surest way of getting rid of social unrest and thus ensuring stability for all time.

On the economic front it stresses the fact that poverty knows no racial barrier and any solution based on racial considerations can only aggravate the problem and end in failure, because only the privileged few could enjoy benefits through such ill-conceived plans. The Party has been outspoken on a wide range of topics: defects in public housing projects, hospital shortcomings and lack of public utilities and facilities. It keeps an eye on corruption and draws the attention of the law to bring the offender to trial and conviction. The Party categorically calls into question the improper use of the Internal Security Act which is being abused by those in power.

There is an ideological current in the function of the Party when it undertakes the role of protecting the underdog, the minority and its subcultural stratum. There is an increasing number of non-indigenous communities who find their future bleak without prospects for them or their children. This, along with lack of opportunity for higher education among the affected section, forms a matter of serious concern to the DAP in its Opposition stand with the firm conviction that justice must be done to all without fear of favour. It has the will and consistency to serve the nation in a rational and enlightened way unmoved by emotional attachments or dogmatic sentiments.

Above all the policy of the DAP is based on a pragmatic approach to all problems facing the nation. It believes in attending to the basic needs of all races in a stage by stage progress that can bring about a welfare state as the ultimate goal. The dream of our future lies in this achievement.

The DAP in the 1978 elections had won 16 parliamentary seats. This shows the confidence the voters have in the Party's policies. The role the DAP has adopted is that of a constructive Opposition. It provides the checks and balances so that the Government will not abuse its powers. The Party labours hard to bring about national unity through common endeavours by all races sharing alike both the problems and the prospects the country has in store for them.

The Opposition in this country is handicapped because the mass media do not give the same treatment as what is being enjoyed by the ruling party. Radio and Television act graciously on behalf of the party in power. Even with that handicap to secure three fourths of a million votes is something of a credit for the DAP. That means 20% of the votes cast have gone in its favour.

There are numerous problems facing the nation and the crying need of the broad masses is totally neglected by the conservative Government because it sees the world through the eyes of the upper and middle classes who are already comfortably placed. But the silent majority of the depressed people who live on the bare minimum and eke out an existence always look on the Opposition to voice their grievances for redressal. It is always not correct to say that just because the ruling party has a majority in Parliament all the people are with the Government bench in ruling the country.

Ultimately the Government in power would have to be people-oriented in this age of progress. The DAP earnestly desires such an outcome in due course, though there are obstacles littering the path towards that realisation at present.

Responsibility should go to the DAP for exposing the \$2.5 billion Bank Bumiputra Malaysia Finance (BMF) scandal which has charred and coloured the credibility of the National Front Government.

# FLASHBACKS

SUNDAY MAIL

## LABOUR SCORES SUCCESSES IN TOWN POLLS

# Alliance wins only 18 out of 37 seats

### FIRST DEFEAT IN KUALA LUMPUR: BUNGSAR GOES TO UNION MAN

THE Alliance won only 18 of the 37 seats contested in yesterday's Municipal and town council elections held at eight centres in the Federation.

Of the other 19 seats, the Labour Party of Malacca took 11, the Malayan Party of Malacca got three, the Peoples' Progressive Party of Ipoh won two, and the National Association of Perak one. The other two seats went to independents.

The Alliance suffered its severest defeat in Bungsar, where it failed to get a single of the three seats—two for Rahang Ward and the third

for Lobak Ward. All three seats went to Labour. In Penang the Alliance got only one out of five seats. Labour scored a notable success, securing the other four seats.

The Alliance fared similarly in Ipoh, winning one of the four seats.

Mr. D. R. Seenivasagam, secretary-general of the Peoples' Progressive Party, followed up his recent success in the Federal by-election, being re-elected for Greentown.

Progressives scored another victory in Sillbin Ward, where their candidate, Mr. Toh Seang Eng, erstwhile MCA "rebel," defeated the Alliance candidate, Mr. A. K. Subramaniam, by 212 votes.

In Malacca, the Alliance won two out of the six seats. The Malayan Party were the most successful taking three seats, the other going to Labour.

In Taiping the Alliance and the Labour Party shared the four seats equally.

However the Alliance got a clean sweep in Butterworth, Bukit Mertajam and Johore Bahru. Winning all the four seats in each town.

In Kuala Lumpur, where only one seat for Bungsar Ward was contested, the Alliance suffered its first defeat in a local Municipal election.

### K.L. DEFEAT

Mr. V. David, general secretary of the National Union of Factory and Commercial Workers, beat his Alliance opponent, Mr. Gurukul Singh, by 713 votes.

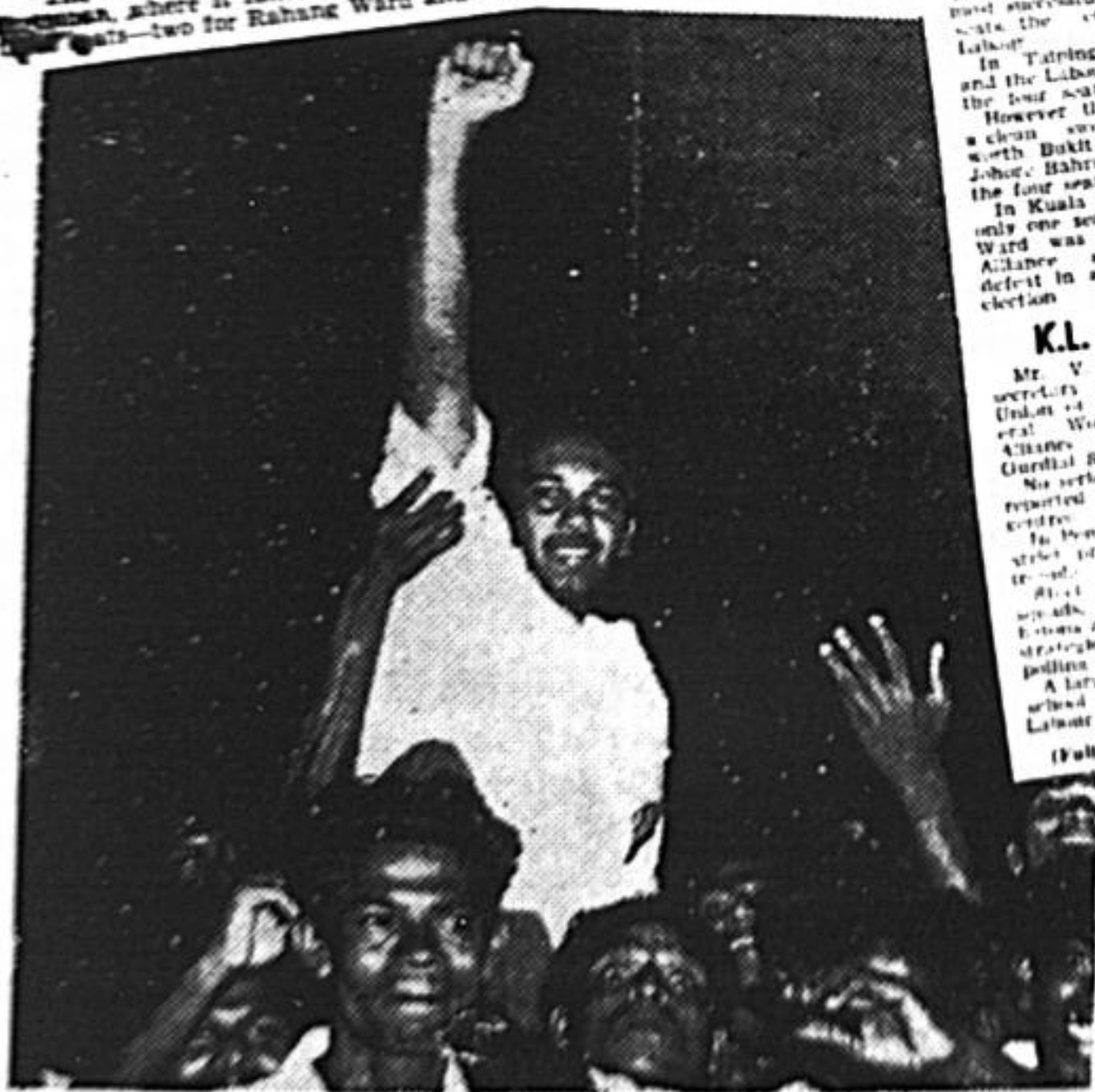
No serious incidents were reported at any of the centres.

In Penang the Police took strict precautions to avert trouble.

At least 100 riot squads, armed with rifles, batons and tear gas, manned strategic points near the 11 polling stations.

A large number of Chinese school students acted as Labour agents.

(Full results in Page 3)



## **CHAPTER X**

### **TUN ABDUL RAZAK : ARCHITECT OF AUTHORITARIAN DEMOCRACY**

"The most important aspect of Abdul Razak's entry into the topmost position of Prime Minister is that, he was an autocrat first and a Prime Minister later."

Tun Abdul Razak Bin Hussein took over the controls of leadership from Tengku Abdul Rahman in 1970 as an aftermath of the May 1969 racial riots. Tengku Abdul Rahman's unceremonious exit from parliament was most unusual in the context of Malaysia's pomp-loving society. There was not even a motion of thanks introduced in Parliament by his successor to record the nation's appreciation for the Tengku's services. The most important aspect of Abdul Razak's entry into the top most position of Prime Minister is that, he was an autocrat first and a Prime Minister later.

Abdul Razak became the Director of the National Operations Council immediately after Emergency was declared in 1969. This was followed by the suspension of all political activities in the country until 1971. This period can be considered as the most critical moment for the ultimate survival and direction of democratic rule in Malaysia.

The National Operations Council, which derived its powers from the Emergency Regulations, had absolute authority on the conduct of internal and external affairs, and there was no balancing mechanism to review its decisions. The armed forces were despatched all over the country by Razak with two intentions — firstly, to quell the civil uprising, and secondly, to put the fear of uncertainty into the minds of one and all.

Multi-racial collective leadership breathed its last, and religious fanaticism became an intimate bedfellow with ethnic segregation. The much-quoted "graded rights" defined by the late R. Ramani were geared into effective momentum by Abdul Razak, and slowly but surely the Malays elbowed their way into the centre, displacing the Chinese and Indians in "calculated haste".

The Malays received the unalloyed support of Razak and his immediate Deputy Tun Dr. Ismail, and the duo chalked out bold and definitive plans to permanently dismember the opportunities of the non-Malays from the political and economic spheres. The weak and limping MCA and MIC played a submissive role and remained a silent witness to the undemocratic machinations of UMNO, much to the frustration of the non-Malays who had given their respective leaders an impressive mandate in the 1969 elections. Razak achieved this through two means – by the legalisation of injustice, and the systematic elimination of the non-Malay element from the decision-making process by the reverse use of the domino theory.

This can be further explained in tangible terms. Fields such as education, employment in the civil service, land allocations, study loans and grants, low-cost housing, entrepreneurial and industrial priorities were all “heavily tilted against the non-Malays”, with simultaneous assaults on the legal and constitutional mechanisms, aiming to justify these motives. In other words, groundwork for what was to follow was laid during the Emergency and gradual construction on these foundations was undertaken after it.

Razak became the Prime Minister of the nation in 1971, and one of the first things he set about to do was to give substance to the much-disputed New Economic Policy, popularly known as the NEP. The Policy, among other things, identified the poverty levels of the races, and when implemented, was expected to “eradicate the socio-economic imbalance among the races.” In the guise of this, “favoured access” was given to the Malays in employment, education and commerce.

A statutory requirement of 30% Malay participation in all business ventures was quickly introduced, and companies that had hitherto ignored this were required by law to “restructure” their equity.



It was initially agreed that the Policy shall be in force until 1990, after which it will be repealed. But recent developments indicate that the Malays will demand for the Policy to be continued even after 1990, much to the frustration of the non-Malays. Razak made it possible for the implementation of "structured democracy" with little fuss, as the laws were already being tailored to the requirements of the Malays.

In 1971, Malays owned only 4.3% of Companies, other Malaysians owned 34% and Foreigners 61.7%. Today some 20% (according to official sources) of the equity of Companies is owned by the Malays, 45% is held by Foreigners and 35% by Chinese and Indians. With only hardly a year left until the deadline, the Bumiputra share has to increase to hit the target. *It should be clearly understood that the increase so far in Bumiputra share-holding has been paid for with public money.* The Government had said the economy must grow at an average annual rate of 7.8% in this period to keep the NEP on its track.

But export earnings dropped, and economic growth was not satisfactory. Razak had little choice but further tighten his Government's grip on the future of the non-Malays. He introduced crash loan schemes, land development projects, massive civil service recruitments and glamorous but unprofitable Government-backed commercial ventures to satiate the unfair and ethno-centric appetites of his supporters.

Appointments to the civil service were made on an ad-hoc basis, with little consideration for merit, experience, aptitude and ability. Most Malaysians will remember Razak's deputy, Tun Dr. Ismail's much — publicised statement:

"We will leave no stone unturned until we ascertain that the civil service has within its confines as many Malays as it can possibly support."

This remark created mild ripples of dissent and protest from the MCA and the MIC, but the leaders did nothing to set right the grossly unfair racial composition. The civil service became top-heavy, and the officials manning the departments became arrogant, proud and egoistic as a result of their new-found prosperity that came as a "gift from the sky".

Inefficiency and sluggishness became the normal phenomena, and the ordinary taxpayer was left high and dry, bereft of any minimal vestige of service as consideration for prompt payment of his taxes. Scholarships were given in "generous excess" to Malay students wishing to pursue their education abroad. The advent of a fashionable "Anak England" (Son of England) younger Malay generation spawned the

uncontrollable intrusion of exotic and foreign values that were at cross purposes with local customs and manners, thus increasing the already visible gap of discord between rural Malay parents and their overseas educated, liberally oriented children. Razak's policies were beginning to take a toll on social customs and manners among Malays in particular and Malaysians in general.

Malay graduates with virtually no experience were appointed to top civil service positions, and their sudden leap from a rural atmosphere to an elite urban environment made them all the more proud and emotionally unstable. The conflict of values had lasting effects on the children of such newly affluent Malays, leading to further social disintegration. The successful Malay executives were led to believe that their mental prowess and academic calibre were par excellence, thus resulting in the permanent closure of young, enquiring minds and subsequent social crystallisation.

The quality of the education system was adulterated to accommodate the limited academic capacities of the Malays. The Malay language was implemented with full vigour as the sole medium of instruction, and English was gradually de-emphasized and relegated to a subordinate second language status. Overseas universities became wary of this trend of change, and introduced stiffer entrance requirements to safeguard their reputation and academic competitiveness. It is little wonder that the students, enrolled in primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions were the guinea-pigs of constant Government academic experimentation, and the resultant impact on their educational careers was of grave concern.

The Indians and Chinese then were lost without proper leadership direction, because the MIC and the MCA leaders did not effectively represent their communal interests to the UMNO. The Indians were so submissive and passive that the then MIC President, the late Tan Sri V. Manickavasagam, declared in total exasperation when asked to comment on the civil service:—

“The Gods may be willing (to grant boons)  
but the priests” demur.

The “priests” were the senior civil servants who implemented the Government policies to the disadvantage of the non-Malays, namely the Chinese and Indian sectors of the community.

Razak commenced his decisive attack on the freedom of the people by amending the Sedition Act in 1971. The Act, which is in effect an adapted version of the Sedition Act of Britain, 1912, oppressed freedom of speech and expression to extremely alarming levels that it smelt of dictatorship ingredients.

The Act was amended to prohibit "indiscriminate" discussions of further sensitive issues — the Bahasa Malaysia language policy, special rights of the Malays, special roles of the royalty, and the policy restricting citizenship to non-Malays (which were entrenched provisions). The Act includes utterance of words, importing, printing, publishing, reproduction and of publication with such tendency. The act of Sedition is deemed to be committed even if one only prepares to commit such an act or conspires with any person.

The Act gives five instances:

- \* To bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection against any Ruler or against any Government;
- \* To excite the subjects of any Ruler or inhabitants, the alteration of any matter as by law established, otherwise than by lawful means;
- \* To bring into hatred or contempt or to excite dissatisfaction against the administration of justice;
- \* To promote feelings of ill will and hostility between different races or classes of the population.
- \* To question any matter, right, status, privilege, sovereignty or prerogative established or protected by the provisions of Part III of the Federal Constitution or Articles 152 and 181 of the Federal Constitution.

The Act further says, the intention of the person committing the offence is immaterial if the effect of the act is the creation of the forbidden seditious tendency.

It also stipulates that any person who receives innocently seditious material must surrender them to the police as soon as he knows its contents. The burden is on him to prove that at the time the publication came into his hands, he did not know the contents.

In a later development, the Honourable Mr. Justice N.H. Chan, summed up the judicial view on Freedom of Speech in a sedition trial in 1986:

"Freedom of speech is a fundamental right of citizens in a democratic country. No democracy worth its name can do without it, for it claims to cherish the ideals of a government by the people for the people and must allow free discussion on all matters pertaining to the political and social life of the people."

By personal freedom I mean the freedom of every law-abiding citizen to think what he will, and to go where he will on his lawful occasions without let or hindrance from any other persons.

Everyone in the land should be free to think his own thoughts — to have his own opinions, and to give voice to them, in public or in private ..... and free also to criticise the Government or any party or group of people.

We hold that no man has any right to dictate to another what religion he shall believe, what philosophy he shall hold, what shall be his politics or what view of history he shall accept. For instance, it is open to the community and to the Press to complain of a grievance. It might be the province of the Press to call attention to the weaknesses or imbecility of a Government when it was done for the public good."

The learned judge clearly defined the necessity for freedom of expression in a democratic nation like Malaysia. Abdul Razak's deliberate interference in democratic freedom, using the arm of the law, is lucidly explained by this judicial pronouncement.

The typical partisan attitude of the Malay politicians is amplified by the present Agriculture Minister, Sanusi Junid when he stated as follows on 16 September 1985 at the opening ceremony of the University Technology Malaysia main campus in Scudai, Johore Bharu.

"Anyone who touches on or questions the special rights and privileges of the Malays is a traitor."

It is little exaggeration to say that Razak inculcated these attitudes in the minds of the Malays as a causative effect of his visibly biased political policies in favour of the Malays.

Razak can therefore be called an extremist who cunningly engineered the psychology of the Malays to feel that they are the rightful owners of this nation, and that the non-Malays should be treated only as second-class citizens or "visitors" here for employment.

However, some interesting observations have been made by academicians on the origin of the Malays.

Professor Peter Goethals, a well-known anthropologist, states as follows:—

"Urbanised members of Bornean groups, such as the Dusun, Iban, and Melanau, *Closely resemble the Chinese* physically, and they are frequently Christians.

There are no Malay and Indonesian terms for race in the strict biological sense: "their terms (eg. bangsa) always distinguish groups at least partially according to cultural features. The distinction between race and culture is thus an analytical rather than a native distinction, but useful for comparison."

Prof. James L. Peacock, in his paper "Malaysia: Cultural and Racial Meanings", says:

"The term 'Malay' (orang Melayu) denotes in many contexts persons not ordinarily considered racially Malay but who practise the Muslim religion (to 'masuk Melayu' means both to become Malay and to enter Islam) and who speak the Malay language. *Muslim Arabs, Indians and Pakistanis are in many contexts termed Malays.* And certain of the early twentieth century Malay nationalistic movements (and related Muslim movements) were led by *cultural Malays who were of immediate Arab, Indian or Pakistani ancestry.*

I use the term 'racial' not in the strict anthropological or genetic sense but in the sense used by Malaysians themselves when they speak of a man as being of the Arab, Indian, Pakistani or Malay race — that is, born of a mother and father of perhaps only of a father descended from one of these groups."

The above academic references help to fortify one very important fact — that the Malays are *not* the natives of Malaysia, and that they have migrated from neighbouring countries like Indonesia, India, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The term "bumiputra" ("sons of the soil") is, therefore, obviously erroneous and is a mere political gimmick.

Razak was heavily responsible for entrenching this wrongful notion on the native status of the Malays, and has created irreparable harm to the political stability and ethnic harmony of the nation.

Statutory bodies like MARA (Majlis Amanah Rakyat), FELDA (Federal Land Development Authority) and FAMA (Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority) were encouraged to expand their operations and enable Malay ownership of agricultural land, houses and commodity trading ventures. A good number of these projects failed miserably due to improper management and financial misappropriation, costing the Government millions of dollars in losses. A significant portion of these losses were written off by the funding authorities, hoping that the initially acquired assets, free from encumbrances, would be able to generate revenue. But this too proved a failure because a good number of Malay businessmen sold their licences to non-Malays and leaned back in their comfortable cushioned chairs and relaxed in their newly built air-

conditioned offices. Unscrupulous non-Malay middlemen took advantage of the Malays' lazy attitude and became instant millionaires by merely negotiating deals between willing Malay sellers and non-Malay purchasers. This "Ali Baba System" subsequently came to light at very heavy Government expense, with the Government taking over the "sick units", complete with liabilities, damaged equipment, creditors and unsold stocks.

The welfare system introduced by Razak for the Malays rang the knell for inter-ethnic goodwill forever. The Chinese and Indians became more depressed and upset over the betrayal of their respective communal cause by their leaders in the ruling party.

Abdul Razak, who usurped the leadership from Tengku Abdul Rahman, was suffering from leukaemia (blood cancer) and succumbed to it in London in 1976 where he was sent for treatment. Thus ended the life of a political mastermind who engineered inter-racial tension on a permanent basis.

History will long remember Abdul Razak for fortifying the already visible demarcation between the Malays and non-Malays, and their on-coming generations will certainly regret to learn that the opportunistic and racially biased manoeuvres of this political nihilist have permanently segregated the people of this small but beautiful country.

## CHAPTER XI

HUSSEIN ONN :

REGIME OF PACHYDERMATOUS

CIVIL SERVANTS

"Perhaps the only Prime Minister in Malaysia's history who has handed over the reins of government to the bureaucracy is Hussein Onn."



Hussein Onn succeeded Abdul Razak in 1976 as the third Prime Minister of Malaysia. Hussein's distinguished family background, coupled with a clean and honest personal disposition, were certainly at a tangent with the political storm that was brewing within the confines of the National Front in general and UMNO in particular. The ever-increasing racial tension and personal animosity between the captains of UMNO and the component parties inflicted a heavy toll on Hussein's leadership direction and ultimate grasp of the party machinery.

Hussein was a transitional leader. He had the support of the National Front Government and entered UMNO only in 1969, at a time when there was a leadership struggle between Tengku Abdul Rahman and Tun Abdul Razak. It should be noted that Hussein was relatively a new comer into the political arena when viewed against the backdrop of a front-line Malay leadership comprising senior politicians with decades of public experience.

It must be clearly understood that Hussein's active entry into Malaysian politics was characterised by two dominant factors that were existing then, namely the feeling among the Malays that Malaysia belongs to them alone, and the utter lack of mutual trust between the races as an aftermath of the racial riots in 1969.

It can be stated without a shade of doubt that Hussein's government is well known for the high handed actions of the administrators in the civil service, thus sowing the seeds of bureaucratic arrogance and indifference in Malaysia's already crowded and inefficient civil service. The various departments were expanded in leaps and bounds, with little consideration for merit, qualifications, experience and abilities.

In 1979 senior officials began a massive recruitment exercise called "OPERASI ISI PENUH." It could probably be their intention to bring in as many Malays as possible into the civil service and make them the automatic beneficiaries of Government assistance.

As much as 120,000 civil servants were recruited over a span of about six months, and little or no time was spent to check their credentials and suitability.

#### OPERASI ISI PENUH CIVIL SERVICE RACIAL BREAKDOWN

Category	A	B	C	D	Total
Malays	31,139 60.4%	25,009 64%	165,890 67.6%	262,843 72%	484,881 69.1%
Chinese	13,632 26.4%	10,149 26%	50,356 20.5%	23,616 6.5%	97,753 13.9%
Indians	4,917 9.5%	2,250 5.8%	15,875 6.5%	45,357 12.4%	68,399 9.8%
Ibans	183 0.4%	231 0.6%	2,218 0.9%	4,086 1.1%	6,718 1%
Kadazans	196 0.4%	439 1.1%	3,418 1.4%	9,677 2.6%	13,730 2%
Others	1,489 2.9%	971 2.5%	7,663 3.1%	19,697 5.4%	29,820 4.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,556</b>	<b>39,049</b>	<b>245,420</b>	<b>365,276</b>	<b>701,301</b>

## HOUSING LOANS

Generous housing loans at extremely low interest rates (4%) were given to almost every Malay applicant who requested a house. Misuse and abuse of these facilities ensued, leaving a trail of dissatisfied eligible applicants amidst politically influential successful applicants who had conveniently acquired possession of two or more houses.

Several low-cost housing schemes were begun and "favoured access" was given to the Malays for the purchase of the houses. The repercussions that followed are only too well known.

## THE REGIME OF CIVIL SERVANTS

Perhaps the only Prime Minister in Malaysia's history who has handed over the reins of Government to the bureaucracy is Hussein Onn. His rule was one of "political representation in absentia" and was often the focus of criticism by political observers locally and abroad.

The inadequacies of his leadership were directly proportional to the levels of corruption and inefficiency that had crept into the Malaysian Civil Service. Corrupt officials demanded huge sums of money at all public service counters and checkpoints for the normal and routine clearance of their workload. Customs, immigration and road transport officials were probably the most "fortunate" among them all — there was virtually no one to check them or conduct a performance audit of their functions. This enabled them to have a field day at the expense of the multitude.

The police officers enjoyed a salary revision during Hussein's term of office, and this was perhaps reason enough for them to be more corrupt than ever before!

## THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN

The emphasis on bumiputraisim continued from the Second Malaysia Plan into the Third Malaysia Plan during Hussein's term of office. The Third Malaysia Plan (1976 — 1980) set a total investment target of around M\$44,000 million within the currency of the Plan, of which 40% was to be taken by the Public Sector and 60% by the Private Sector. The precise public Sector figure was M\$17,400 million and that for the Private Sector M\$26,600 million.

Though the growth level predicted by the Economic Planning Unit was 10% in real terms during the tenure of the Plan, the actual growth during the relatively depressed year of 1976 was only around 3% in real terms. *It therefore proved that targets for public spending were being met while those for private investment were not.*

It is an extremely disturbing and potentially alarming indication of the lofty levels of erosion that public accountability and political credibility have undergone in the hands of an insensitive power centre.

An interesting point that keen political observers would like to put forward in the context of Malaysian politics is the conspicuous dichotomy that exists between membership access systems to the Parliament and State Assemblies on one hand and the Local Councils on the others.

Access to Parliament and State Assemblies is through the ballot box, while appointment letters decide the members who constitute the Local Councils. The obvious defect in this system is that the element of public representation is not complete in every decision – making arm of the Government.

A Royal Commission report in the sixties on the Local Councils pointed out this disparity, recommending that the original system of elections for the posts of Councillors be revived. The report further stated that appointment of Municipal Councillors was an erosion of public accountability and should not have been permitted in the first place.

The Government has bypassed and ignored these recommendations, and the appointment of Councillors continues unabated. All these enigmatic political ramifications have had a delimiting effect on the quality and direction of public participation in national affairs. Ruling party members and supporters are appointed Councillors by the Government, and there is no representation from the Opposition. Rules, by-laws and administrative procedures can be implemented with minimum fuss, at the ultimate expense of democracy.

Hussein was more moderate in his policies and pronouncements when compared with his predecessor Tun Abdul Razak. He was genuinely interested to ensure that Malaysia belongs to all the races and not to the Malays alone. It is noteworthy to state here that Hussein and his father, the late Dato Onn Jaffar, left the UMNO in 1952, because they strongly felt that the party membership should be open to all races and not just the Malays. If this had been possible, multi-racial collective leadership would have become a reality in Malaysia, and the political development of the country would have taken a totally different direction.

Hussein's moderate nature was evident in many of the actions that ensued after his election as Prime Minister. He was quite candid and blunt in his views on the Malays, more so when it involved their socio-economic and political status amidst the other races.

He openly declared:

"We cannot be jealous of the success of the other communities who are way ahead of us. If we are in the clouds, negligent and sluggish, we cannot expect other communities to come to a standstill to wait for us. Perhaps what I have just said is unpleasant. However, I believe that UMNO can be safeguarded and remain forever only if its members and leaders are frank, sincere and honest."

Hussein introduced the much-debated Industrial Co-ordination Act to monitor the performance and direction of the New Economic Policy. Under the Act the sale of shares that are offered by companies to the public must comply with guidelines given by the Trade and Industry Ministry, that is 30% of shares must be sold to Malays. All publicly listed organisations were required to register with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and their business activities were closely watched by the Government to ensure that Malay participation in business was not neglected or conveniently bypassed by predominantly Chinese business entrepreneurs.

The National Unit Trust Scheme (Amanah Saham Nasional) was introduced to increase Malay participation in the national economy. Despite the word "national" the scheme was only meant for Malays. Money collected from Malays was invested in Government – held securities, thereby ensuring definite profits at minimum risk. The shares were underwritten by the Central Bank, and the investment portfolios were exclusive and lucrative projects. The strong arm of the law was used to pry open the corporate sector, and companies were required by law to succumb to compulsory Malay – held equities in all their business ventures.

The Amanah Saham fever spread and permeated into every known sphere of Malaysian business, creating anxiety and panic in the minds of the other communities wishing to participate actively in commerce. Amanah Saham's investment arm, the National Equity Corporation (Permodalan Nasional), went on a "buying spree", gobbling up large chunks of shares in lucrative business ventures with complete Government support at virtually no risk.

Hussein had, during the tenure of his office, always attempted to strike a balance between the racial extremism of some of the UMNO members and his own multi-racial development concepts. He launched UMNO's national co-operative society, Koperasi Usaha Bersatu Malaysia Berhad, and membership was open to all races, though it was meant basically for the Malays. He had an extraordinary way of blending contemporary uni-racial political priorities with long-term multiracial social objectives, and it must be understood that he did achieve reasonable results.

The Malaysian economy during Hussein's period did fare reasonably well. Malaysia was able to override the gloomy world recession because of the continued high demand for the country's two primary products – rubber and tin.

The rate of inflation in Malaysia in 1979 was the lowest compared with other members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The rate of increase in inflation for Malaysia was 3.6% as compared to 4.9% the previous year. One of the most important economic developments in 1979 was the realisation of the country's commodity diversifying programmes.

In terms of financial assets, the total export revenue in 1979 amounted to an estimated M\$ 21,025 million divided into the following major contributions:

Rubber	=	20%
Manufactured goods	=	19%
Petroleum	=	16%
Palm Oil	=	11%
Tin	=	10%
Sawn Logs	=	9%
Sawn Timber	=	4%
Others	=	11%

It would be evident from the abovementioned figures that Hussein's diversified economic programmes saved the country from the vagaries of market forces.

Perhaps in response to the Malaysian Airline System – Airline Employee Union (MAS-AEU) dispute the Hussein Government decided to amend the existing labour legislation, especially the Industrial Relations Act and the Trade Union Act. When the proposals were made, they included sweeping powers to be given to the Registrar of Trade Unions and the Labour Minister, the curtailment of workers' rights to strike on a pre-defined set of issues and the mechanism for dialogue between the Union and the Government.

The Malaysian Trades Union Congress was quick to protest against the amendments, and called the proposals a "War against Workers". Finally, however, the Government did implement several changes to the proposals and the new labour laws were passed in Parliament on 4th April 1980.

Hussein's name will be recorded in the annals of Malaysian Labour as the person heavily responsible for strangling the freedom of the trade union movement in Malaysia.

The Government's autocratic hold on organised labour has remained ever since and the present economic and political uncertainties have made matters worse.

The political squabbles within UMNO were getting more and more difficult for Hussein to manage. Internal differences had sapped party strength and tended to weaken his Government. There was little Hussein could do from keeping down the rising influence of Mahathir Mohamad, then Deputy Prime Minister and Musa Hitam, then Minister of Education.

Despite the fact that Hussein was a good-hearted politician in his own merit, he lacked the ability to take full charge of the country's affairs. His physical and mental alertness could not match the demands of his position, and had therefore made him incapable of asserting his stamp of individuality on national matters.

He had little alternative but to arrange a smooth transfer of the country's premiership to Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the then Deputy President of UMNO.

Hussein Onn announced his decision to step down when he inaugurated the annual delegates conference of the Johore Bharu Division of UMNO which he headed. The reason for his resignation was poor health, following a coronary bypass operation in London earlier in the year.

On 16 July 1981 Hussein handed over the reins of Government to Dr. Mahathir Mohamad and upheld Tengku Abdul Rahman's pattern of handing over power to his successor and retired gracefully from Malaysian politics. He was subsequently appointed as adviser to Petronas, Malaysia's petroleum corporation.

Hussein Onn's term of office marks a transition in Malaysia's political development. The period before May 13 1969 was characterised by multi-racial tolerance and mutual acceptance, while the years that succeeded the 1969 riots indicated an acute impatience on the part of the Malays to upgrade their socio-economic position and establish their political strength. The iron hand of the law was used firmly to grab the economic advantages of the non-Malays and give them to the Malays at very high socio-political expense.

Racial polarisation and communal selfishness were having their last laugh.



## CHAPTER XII

### DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD : INSTITUTIONALISATION OF CORRUPTION

"It is little exaggeration to say that Mahathir is the architect of institutionalised corruption in Malaysia."

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia's fourth Prime Minister, took over the reins of Government from Hussein Onn on 16 July 1981 when the latter retired from active politics as a result of a serious heart ailment.

Dr. Mahathir is perhaps the only Prime Minister in Malaysia's political history whose reactionary attitudes have sown the seeds of inter-ethnic discontent to hitherto unparalleled levels. The growing discord between the races was fanned by his frequent and inconsistent statements and pronouncements primarily aimed at the proletarian groups.

Mahathir invented many attractive slogans to hoodwink the populace and give himself the singular credit of being diametrically different from his predecessors. Slogans such as "Leadership by Example," "Clean, Efficient and Trustworthy Government," "Nationalism is the Key to Progress," and "Increased Productivity for Increased Development" were attractive platitudes pumped out in ever-increasing frequency to take the people's scent off pressing socio-economic problems like unemployment, insufficient educational opportunities and the like. Mahathir gave Malaysians one hundred days to evaluate his leadership abilities immediately after taking over Prime Ministerial office.

He believed in an "Open Government" and encouraged the mass media to comment and criticize Government policies. All these lent apparent credence to his Manifesto that the failures of the previous Prime Ministers were due to their utter lack of understanding the people's needs.

Mahathir has been aptly described by a foreign journalist as "the modern but inadequate Houdini of Asian politics." He attempted the "sleight of hand" technique in his pronouncements vis-a-vis implementations, but has grossly failed to sustain his deviatory but expressionistic capacity in the light of gloomy political and economic realities that have bedevilled the country since 1982.

Mahathir's rule can be cited as the period in Malaysia's political history when the Pandora's Box was opened. Racial tension, economic depression, corruption, maladministration, unemployment, religious fanaticism, social injustice and political instability began to rear their ugly heads amidst widespread international concern over the rationality of the country's foreign policies.

The civil service was given "a shot in the arm" in an apparent attempt to "revitalise it and nurse it back to health." Mahathir introduced several novel measures to tone up the quality of service rendered by the Civil Administration. The clocking-in-system was implemented in all Government departments to ensure punctuality and efficiency among civil servants. Expensive time recording machines were imported from overseas and installed in all Government offices throughout the country. Elaborate departmental procedures were initiated to administer the punctuality levels of staff. A lot of bureaucratic red tape and administratively reticular rules were initiated to "tone up the efficiency of the civil service."

Mahathir propagated the "Open Office Concept" – Partitions in many Government offices were removed, and senior officers seated among their subordinates in an apparent attempt to "break down hierarchic barriers and provide better service to the public." Little did Mahathir realise that civil service efficiency had to go hand in hand with a corruption-free political system to ensure a viable, clean public administration.

It is little exaggeration to say that Mahathir is the architect of institutionalised corruption in Malaysia. Corruption in Malaysia is often spoken in terms of entire departments receiving under-the-counter payments for speedy approval of licences, permits, land allocations and the like. Every functionary, from the director right down to the office messenger, has a share in the "takings", and this has permeated all levels of the administrative and decision making processes.

Officials employed in departments like the customs, road transport, immigration, public works, inland revenue and agriculture, as well as those in local councils and statutory authorities, have amassed fabulous wealth for themselves and their superiors at the expense of the public.

It is most regrettable that the Mahathir Administration has also sown the seeds for institutionalised corruption at its very best form. The officials of the various Government departments work in concert to ascertain the uninterrupted flow of public funds into the ruling party's coffers, and the spillovers are shared among the principal political lieutenants.

Such a facility has enabled the mushrooming of business enterprises headed by influential ex-politicians and senior civil servants, and well have these "super businessmen" taken advantage of the weaknesses in the Mahathir Administration for their own material advancement. There appears to be a "triangular system of transfer" wherein the lead participants are the commercial sector, the civil service and the political hier-

archy. Profits generated by the private sector are channelled to the civil service, which in turn transfers them to the politicians at the helm of the decision – making process. By doing so, the political considerations in the policy – making sphere are well camouflaged by the reticular and often variegated civil administration to the utter detriment of a tax-paying populace.

Numerous examples can be quoted in this context. Plush holiday resorts, luxury apartments and exclusive hotels have been constructed in sizable proportions after Mahathir became Prime Minister, notwithstanding the maze of high-cost multi-storeyed buildings that line the main streets of Kuala Lumpur and other major towns. The Dayabumi Complex, Putra World Trade Centre, Mediterranean Club, Saujana Golf Club, Raintree Club and Promet Tower are salient examples for the gross misuse of public funds, and there are many similar projects of larger financial magnitude in various stages of completion all over the country.

Perhaps to top it all is the massive Bumiputra Malaysia Finance (BMF) loans scandal involving \$ 2.5 billion of the people's hard-earned money. BMF, a Hong Kong-based subsidiary of Bank Bumiputra Malaysia Berhad, loaned the money to Carrion Holdings, a construction company in Hong Kong. The directors and executives who were largely responsible for the disbursement of funds were Lorraine Esme Osman, Dr. Rais Saniman, Ibrahim Jaffar and Datuk Hashim Shamsuddin. The Carrion Holdings director who received the loans was George Tan. The whole scandal came to public notice when the assistant general manager of BMF, Jalil Ibrahim, who was assigned to investigate the scandal, was murdered on 18 July 1983.

The death of Jalil Ibrahim sparked off a chain of reactions in the political and commercial circles of both Malaysia and Hong Kong, culminating in the temporary closure of the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange and a total collapse of Malaysia's financial credibility. The Malaysian Dollar hit an all-time low in the foreign exchange market, with investors and financiers frantically transferring deposits to Singapore and Australia.

An enquiry committee headed by Auditor – General Tan Sri Ahmad Noordin Zakaria studied the loans fiasco in great detail and came up with a thirteen – volume report. Legal proceedings are currently being pursued by the Malaysian and Hong Kong governments, and their results are awaited. Mahathir refused to appoint a Royal Commission of Enquiry despite the people's calls to do so.

The BMF scandal lifted the covers off the inherent frailties of the Mahathir Administration and exposed the frightful levels of institutionalised corruption. It is more than obvious that the Central Bank, the Finance Ministry and the Prime Minister's Department had deliberately closed their eyes for a fee, and the legal transactions that effected the out-flow of Malaysian dollars into Hong Kong were conveniently ignored.

It is apt to mention here that Mahathir and Musa Hitam were branded extremists and ultras by Tengku Abdul Rahman and expelled from UMNO at the height of the May 1969 racial riots. The Tengku foresaw the possibility of Mahathir and his henchmen usurping the reins of power from their superiors in the future and lead the country to utter ruin. It is in the interest of the nation at large that the Tengku decided once for all that Mahathir's toxic political influence should not be allowed to permeate the Malay political fabric. The Tengku banned his book, "The Malay Dilemma", in an obvious attempt to stamp out Mahathir's personality from national politics. Mahathir immediately lifted the ban on coming to power.

Tun Abdul Razak, oblivious to this or otherwise, readmitted Mahathir and Musa into UMNO, with the added intentions of defying and embarrassing the Tengku. Mahathir and Musa climbed the rungs of the political ladder and reached the topmost positions of the Party in 1981. How right the Tengku had been in eliminating Mahathir's political ambitions in the UMNO, judging from the trend of affairs that subsequently dominated the country's socio-political direction!

Mahathir meddled with the Constitution by giving notice that even the symbolic role that the hereditary rulers of the Malay States have had in the past in the legislative process would be reduced. Until then the nine Sultans had traditionally given their assent to Bills passed by their own State Legislatures. This assent will no longer be required. Parliament had already amended the Constitution to make royal assent by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong superfluous. If he does not sign a Federal Bill within fifteen days of passage, it automatically becomes law in any case.

While these and other moves were accompanied by highly visible slogan campaigns, the move to limit the rights of the Sultans to be part of the legislative process was done not only with extra-ordinary haste but also with a secretiveness.

Before Parliament sat on July, 25, 1983, the Bill at issue, which contained twenty-two amendments, was not even made available to the Bar Council, a statutory body of lawyers which has traditionally played an important advisory role. This role had been downgraded in recent years despite apparent promises made by Mahathir to consult the legal profession on matters pertaining to the laws of the nation.

Even more surprising, in view of the much-touted liberalism of the Mahathir Administration, was the summoning of the local Press to the Prime Minister's Department for a "briefing" before the Bill was tabled. The message was simple: Play down the debate on the amendments relating to rulers. Protests by some senior editors were brushed aside.

When the debate on the Amendment Bill began in Parliament, it soon became obvious that the Government was determined to push it through with a minimum of discussion and publicity. The leader of the Opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP), Lim Kit Siang, described the debate as a "Wayang Kulit" (shadow puppet play). "We see the shadow but not the substance, as nobody seems to be brave enough to deal with the real substance of the amendments", he said. In fact, none of the usually expansive backbenchers of the National Front had anything to say on the amendments. Lim's speech, which was arguably among the best heard in Parliament was not reported by any newspaper.

The Opposition leader did not have to argue that Royal Assent was essentially a formality because the Constitution makes it clear that "the Yang Di Pertuan Agong shall signify his assent." But Lim made the point forcefully that the amendments were simply unnecessary. Lim argued that there were adequate provisions in the Constitution in the event of the incumbent King being either unable or unwilling to sign a Bill: the Deputy Yang Di Pertuan Agong can sign the Bill if it is not given assent within fifteen days.

The amendment, it was argued, could set a dangerous precedent that threatened the system of refining the law. In fact, there are provisions to return the Bill to Parliament if the Deputy also refuses to give Royal Assent. Legal experts say that if there is an impasse, the Conference of Rulers can meet to elect a new Agong and Deputy. In short, any question of Royal Assent being refused need not arise.

Refining of the law includes three readings in the Lower House, passage by both Houses, Royal Assent and Gazetting. If the chain is broken there could easily be another break brought about by the Executive which, with its huge and absolute majority in Parliament, could amend the Constitution to have a law "deemed to have been passed by Parliament" if it is not passed by Parliament within, say, fifteen days.

A heated demonstration and resistance from the rulers proved futile, and the amendments were once again "bulldozed" through Parliament at the expense of democracy and rule of law.

The economic scene during the Mahathir era does not show any signs of promise. Malaysia is deep in the middle of the recession and economists say the worst has yet to come. The economic growth of the nation shrunk to less than 3% in 1983, and many corporations retrenched thousands of workers. About 110,000 workers have been retrenched by the electronic and mining industries, with primary commodities like tin, rubber and oil palm taking a suicidal nose-dive into the abysses of no-return. The national debt rose to \$60 billion, with the massive BMF loans scandal taking almost 5% of the total toll. The Malaysian dollar registered very low exchange levels, and banking circles have frozen the issue of loans to the construction industry. A serious over-supply of commercial office space has resulted in a drastic drop in property prices, with millions of square feet of office space going abegging in Kuala Lumpur and other big towns.

Members of Parliament belonging to the ruling National Front receive allocations of \$ 100,000.00 each to service their respective constituencies, and are also given special consideration with respect to speedy approvals and implementations of development projects.

Allocations such as these are not available to the Opposition, though the Parliamentarians of the Opposition represent the people in their own Constituencies. It is the intention of the Government to deliberately strike a disparity between constituencies held by the ruling party and those by the Opposition, thereby attempting to encourage the voters to opt for the ruling party.

This is tantamount to subdued sabotage of the democratic process with the use of financial muscle.

The Mahathir Government has permitted the entry of more than one million illegal migrants from Indonesia and the Philippines, and they have taken up virtually all the available employment opportunities, thus leaving Malaysian workers in a quandary. These illegal migrants are also criminally disposed, and the increasing number of assaults, murders and armed robberies stand mute testimony to the seriousness of the situation.

To rub salt on the already painful wound, Musa Hitam has signed a joint labour agreement with Indonesia to legalise the uncontrolled entry of Indonesian workers into Malaysia, all in the guise of "easing the labour shortage in the plantations." A similar agreement has also been signed with Bangladesh to tap cheap labour from that country. Mahathir's anti-labour attitude has grown out of all tolerable proportions and strangled the future of Malaysian workers striving to earn a decent living. In an apparent move to "ease the financial burden of the



Government." Mahathir introduced the privatisation concept as a prelude to the exploitation that was in the offing. Government agencies and corporations are currently being sold to private enterprises in the interest of "increased productivity and profitability."

The people are actually being taxed twice, once in the form of statutory levies and again in the form of tolls, service charges, surcharges, and the like. The nett result is the unbridled exploitation of workers with little or no rewards. Job security and legal accountability have been thrown to the wind, and newly appointed employers hire and fire anybody at will, with the employees having little or no legal redress.

Mahathir's political meddling took another step in the recent Sabah State elections, with the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) led by Joseph Pairin Kitingan winning an impressive majority. Mahathir instigated the Berjaya party and the United Sabah National Organisation (USNO) to stage a demonstration, challenging the leadership of Pairin Kitingan. Berjaya's Harris Salleh and USNO's Mustapha Harun have received Mahathir's "oblique encouragement" to oppose the appointment of Pairin Kitingan as Chief Minister of Sabah, despite his having been constitutionally elected by the people there.

A duly elected State Government was sabotaged to such an extent that Pairin Kitingan was forced to dissolve the Assembly and request fresh elections. Elections were again held on 5 and 6 May 1986, with the PBS again obtaining a massive majority to form the State Government.

There cannot be any Prime Minister in the annals of Malaysian history as corrupt and unscrupulous as Mahathir. He has been referred to as the world's sixth richest Prime Minister by the "Fortune" magazine. Though Mahathir has denied this allegation, he has not found it necessary to sue the magazine for libel and defamation of character. One can therefore read in between the lines and put two and two together.

The uncontrolled exploitation of the people must be stopped; the common man should be given the chance to make a decent living without fear. It is most unfortunate that the people have given a political exhibitionist like Mahathir Mohamad a mandate to rule, and grievously have they paid the price for their naive and gullible nature.



*Dr. V. David being chaired by his jubilant supporters after his impressive victory in the 1986 General Elections.*

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE 1986 GENERAL ELECTIONS

"The Government has used the racial factor as the criterion to delineate the various state and parliamentary Constituencies."

## THE 1986 GENERAL ELECTIONS – A CRITICAL REVIEW

It would perhaps be in the fitness of things to attempt a critical review of the General Elections which were held in August 1986. The elections were held amidst widespread speculations that the nation would be in for another strong dose of ethnic violence as evidenced in May 1969. It was rather fortunate that the sordid incident of 1969 did not repeat itself in 1986. However, the situation is still simmering in the mind of every Malaysian who had lived through this social holocaust.

### Results of the 1986 General Elections

It would be interesting to observe that the trend of the Malaysian electorate has two main limbs to it:

- \* The urban limb
- \* The rural limb

If we take a closer look at the various tables provided, it would appear that the National Front has done well in the remote states with a predominant rural Malay population; namely Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan and Trengganu.

The Opposition, led by the Democratic Action Party, has generally performed well in the more urbanised states with a predominant non-Malay population; namely Penang, Federal Territory and Negeri Sembilan.

If viewed carefully against the social backdrop of Malaysia, it will be evident that the generally well-educated urban population has voted for the Opposition while the largely less-educated, religiously enthusiastic rural population has voted for the National Front. This goes to prove without a shade of doubt that the educated people in the country have become disillusioned and dissatisfied with the performance of the National Front and have shown their displeasure through the ballot box.

## PARLIAMENT

Party State	National Front (BN)	Democratic Action Party (DAP)	Islamic Party (PAS)	Other Parties	Independents	No. of Seats Allotted
Perlis	2	.				2
Kedah	14					14
Penang	5	6				11
Perak	19	4				23
Selangor	12	2				14
Negeri Sembilan	5	2				7
Malacca	4	1				5
Johore	18					18
Pahang	10					10
Terengganu	8					8
Kelantan	12		1			13
Sabah	15	4			1	20
Sarawak	21	1			2	24
Federal Territory	3	4			1	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>177</b>

## STATE ASSEMBLIES

Party State	National Front (BN)	Democratic Action Party (DAP)	Islamic Party (PAS)	Other Parties	Independents	No. of Seats Allotted
Perlis	14					14
Kedah	25		3			28
Penang	23	10				33
Perak	33	13				46
Selangor	37	5				42
Negeri Sembilan	24	4				28
Malacca	17	3				20
Johore	35	1				36
Pahang	32	1				33
Trengganu	30		2			32
Kelantan	29		10			39
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>15</b>			<b>351</b>

## SUCCESS RATES

### PARLIAMENT

Party	Seats Contested	Seats Won	%
National Front (BN)	177	148	83.6
Democratic Action Party (DAP)	64	24	37.5
Islamic Party (PAS)	98	1	1.0
Independents	52	4	7.7

### COMPOSITION OF PARLIAMENT

Party	Seats Won	%
National Front (BN)	148	83.6
Democratic Action Party (DAP)	24	13.6
Islamic Party (PAS)	1	0.6
Independents	4	2.2
TOTAL	177	100

Ruling Party (National Front) – 83.6%  
Opposition (Democratic Action Party,  
Islamic Party and Independents) – 16.4%



## Unfair Vote Weightage

The National Front has made a clean sweep of the States of Perlis and Kedah by virtue of the unfair weightage given to rural votes as against urban votes. In other words, the number of votes in a state is not consistent with the number of registered voters on the electoral polls.

For example, a typical urban constituency like Bukit Bintang in Kuala Lumpur has 67,548 registered voters represented by one parliamentarian while a typical rural constituency like Kuala Pilah has 35,433 registered voters, and again represented by one parliamentarian. This means that every rural vote is worth twice an urban vote as illustrated in this case, and it may perhaps even be more if the number of registered voters in a rural constituency is even smaller than that quoted above.

Another classic example to analyse is the Puchong Constituency in Selangor, which is by far the largest parliamentary constituency in Malaysia with 81,005 registered voters represented by one parliamentarian. If the Kuala Pilah constituency were used as a yardstick, then the Puchong constituency should actually be delineated into two separate constituencies comprising of about 40,000 voters each and represented by a correspondingly increased number of parliamentarians. Experience shows that this has not been the case in Malaysia, as the Government has used the racial factor as the criterion to delineate the various state and parliamentary constituencies.

The "First Past the Post" voting system that is practised in Malaysia is a colonial carry-over from the British, and it is time that better electoral alternatives, for example the preferential voting system practised in Australia, be considered here.

A Royal Commission would be able to effectively and independently analyse the seriousness of the problem, provided the Government is willing to appoint such a Commission for this purpose. Politicians, past and present, have frequently called for a Royal Commission to study the electoral system, but their calls have remained mere echos in the wilderness. The Government has deliberately become hard of hearing, in an attempt to sustain and safeguard vested political interests, nepotism and institutionalised favouritism.

Perhaps parliamentary democracy in Malaysia is wedged between the twin blades of pretended altruism and manipulated secularism.



*Dr. V. David, Secretary-General of the MTUC, greeting Tun Hussein Onn, Malaysia's former Prime Minister, at the latter's residence during Hari Raya in 1980.*



*Dr. V. David, Secretary General of MTUC, greets YAB Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, on the occasion of Hari Raya in 1980. With Dr. David on his right is Dr. P.P. Narayanan, President of MTUC.*

## CHAPTER XIV

### UMNO: A PARTING OF WAYS?

"What we see in Malaysia today is a dramatic rise in political awareness among the Malays. This awareness is real, and is here to stay."

There is no gainsaying on the fact that the Malays have become disillusioned with the UMNO leadership, and well have they showed it in the party elections held in 1987. The emergence of two teams, A and B, with Dr. Mahathir Mohamad and Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah heading the respective teams, saw the demise of Malay unity in the country. The Malay urban elite, with its new-found riches and status derived through the New Economic Policy, could not equate itself with the needs and ambitions of the predominantly rural-based proletariat. The resultant tension that ensued engendered the emergence of a new trend of leadership in the party which generally felt that it was about time the Malays reassessed their political direction and changed course.

In the elections that were held, former Deputy Prime Minister, Musa Hitam (he had since resigned from the Cabinet) and Finance Minister, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah lost to present Deputy Prime Minister, Abdul Ghafar Baba and Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, respectively by very narrow margins. The rather marginal victories of the two leaders, which reliable sources claim as not being devoid of "engineered" electoral procedures, indicated one very clear perspective: that the Malays themselves need to breathe fresh political air. The predicament of the other races in the face of these developments is only too obvious.

I shall not dwell upon mere chronological details, as this is not the purpose of this book. What I would desire to discuss is the impact of this political dichotomy on Malaysian society in general and the Malays in particular. The trivial issues of the entry and exit of several leading Malay politicians aligned to the two teams are not unknown to Malaysians.

When we take a macro-social view on Malays in Malaysia, it will be quite obvious that their development as a race in the socio-economic spheres has largely been due to the gifts of the Government. These gifts have taken several forms, right from outright cash grants to scholarships, soft loans, employment and thanks to the New Economic Policy, corporate ownership. All these gifts have come from Government coffers with a high political price tag. The restructuring and distributive efforts of the Government, as enshrined and recommended by the New Economic Policy, did not materialise, and the fruits of prosperity were shared, rather greedily, by a coterie of politicians and their immediate satellites skirting the fringes of the Power Centre. This is certainly not what the Malays bargained for when they gave their mandate to UMNO to form the Government.

The segregation and compartmentalisation of Malays have taken a two-fold effect – the creation of a small but growing entity of Malay businessmen and professionals holding influential positions in Government-controlled and State-influenced Companies, and the resultant growth of yet another body politic of Malays who have been unable to obtain the required answers using the cold arithmetical formulae of the ruling party. This disenchanting group has now held hands with the B team leaders to jointly chalk out a more equitable and just deal for the Malay community as a whole.

Notwithstanding these, nepotism and clique patronage have weighed down heavily upon the very credibility of the Mahathir Government and cast tangible aspersions on the ability of Dr. Mahathir to “lead the way to prosperity”. Mahathir’s men who have held the controls of many a Mahathir – bound company began to occupy important portfolios in the Legislature and the Senate. One good example of such a political protege is Farid Ariffin who was appointed a Senator first and a Deputy Finance Minister later. Farid literally entered the portals of the national decision-making process through the kitchen door, as the back-door would have been a little too distant for Mahathir to wait.

Increasing numbers of Mahathir page-boys were found in key positions all over the country, and UMNO’s “shell companies” like the Fleet Group, United Engineers Malaysia (UEM) and Shapadu Holdings acted in tandem with Mahathir’s dream of creating a fiefdom out of national resources.

All these socio-economic aberrations drove a decisive wedge between the Malays, and needless to say, the rich Malays exploited their poor colleagues without a qualm.

*What we see in Malaysia today is a dramatic rise in political awareness among the Malays. This awareness is real, and is here to stay. As long as the present leaders in UMNO do not recognize this, deliberately or otherwise, the political, ideological and religious septation of the Malays is inevitable in a developing country like Malaysia.*

Judging from current trends in political thinking, the day for the formation of a United Opposition Front as a viable alternative to the National Front is not far off. Western-educated Malays have realized the futility of harping on racial and religious issues to sustain and promote their political rights. Their liberal education has made them more than merely being aware that religion and race cannot be an end in themselves, and good leadership, coupled with a clean government, are the only solutions to their recurring problems.

The ever-increasing levels of corruption, abuse of power and mismanagement have made the message clear: that Malay unity is in the Intensive Care Unit and that the present UMNO leadership does not have the recuperative powers. It has now become a matter of urgent necessity that reconstructive leadership surgery be done on an ailing political institution, and the new wave of consciousness under the stewardship of Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah is doing exactly that.

The famous English poet S.T. Coleridge said: "Recrimination is the Defence of the Weak Mind". Quite oblivious to this, Mahathir Mohamad undertook a vigorous and active countrywide campaign to boost his sagging political image by criticizing those individuals not in agreement with his autistic policies, and even the judiciary was not spared his glib and incisive tongue. These campaigns, commonly known as "Semarak" or Loyalty to the People Sessions, were organised at very high cost. It is said that it cost around M\$500,000 to organise one such campaign, and more than five or six sessions were held all over the country, with the Government footing the bills.

The second echelon of Malay politicians are slowly but surely reaching a stage of maturity, a stage in which religious and cultural trivialities will take a back seat, while rights and economic justice will emerge to the forefront. This is indeed a laudable state of affairs to start with, and its snowballing effect will have a definitive and permanent impact on the very future of multi-racial politics in Malaysia.

# DETAINED

## 19 picked up in swoop

Reports  
Pages 2



Mr Lim Kit Siang ... DAP secretary-general



Dr Chandra Muzaffer ... Atran president



Mr Lim Fong Sang ... Chinese educationalist



Mr Chan Kit Chee ... MCA vice-president



Mr Karpal Singh ... MP for



Mr Lowe Teong Beng ... Chinese educationalist



Mr P. Puan ... MP for Ipoh



Mr Ravi Kishan Nook ... Deputy Assemblyman



Miss Chee Hong Leng ... UPM lecturer



Mr Lim Guan Eng ... Kuala Lumpur MP



Sen Tan Chin Ho ... Youth vice-chairman



Mr V. David ... MP for Perak



Mr Lee Chuan Fook ... former Assemblyman



Miss Meunakshi Reiman ... DAP legal adviser



Mr Ho Seng ... MP for



Mr Tan Ka Sheng ... UPM vice-president



Miss Lim Chee Oi ... Atran women's leader

Mr Lim Pte Foo ... managing editor of Housing and Property Magazine

Mr James Lai ... president of First Baptist Church

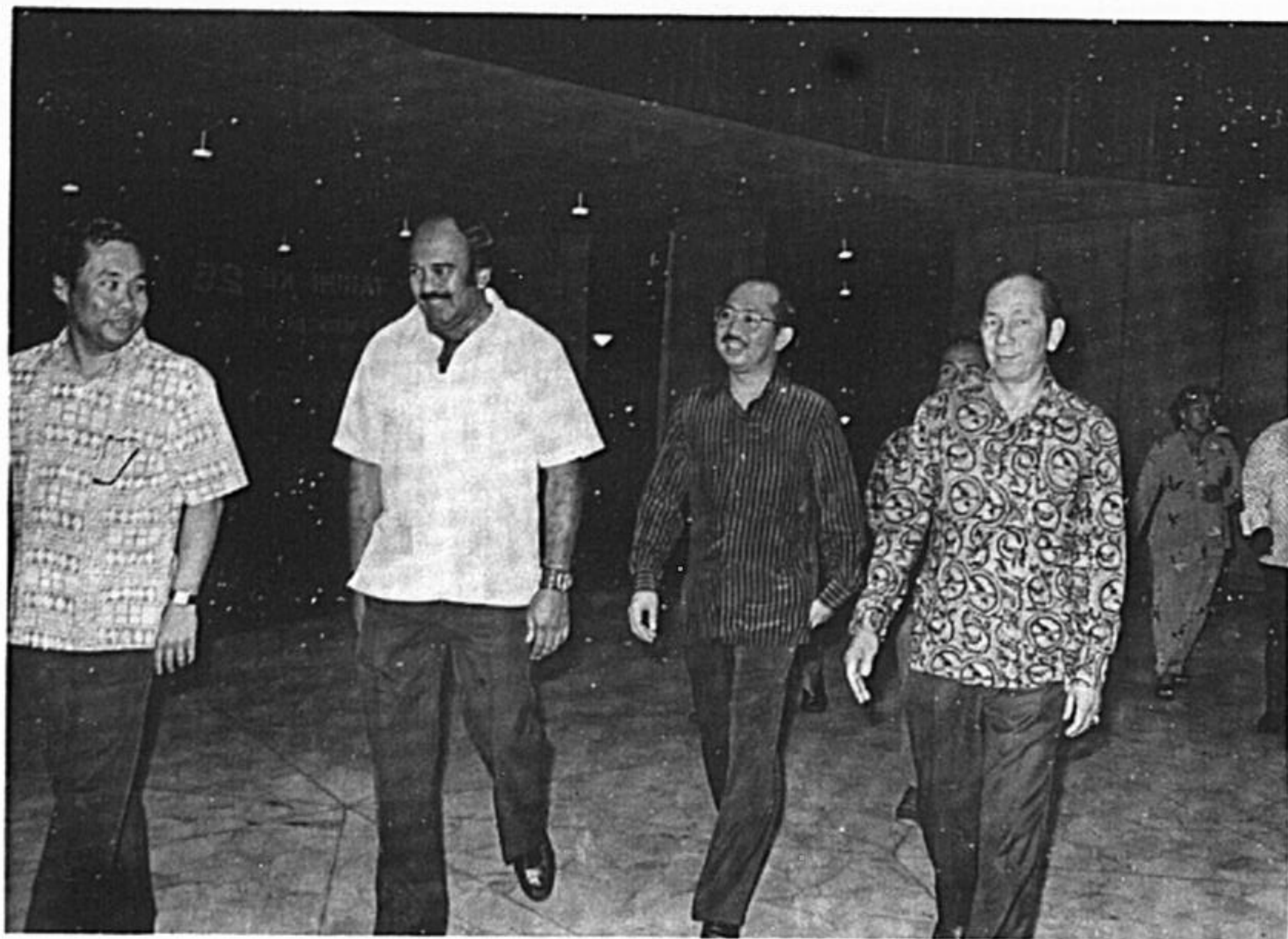


**PART 2**

**SELECTED**

**PARLIAMENTARY SPEECHES**

**1971 – 1982**



*Dr. V. David is seen here with YM Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Transport Workers Union in 1978*

## CHAPTER I

### FREEDOM SHOULD BE SUSTAINED

"The democratic way of life has not been made strong  
it has become weaker."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, and Honourable Members of this House, after 22 months of ordeal, anxiety and political uncertainty we have gathered in this Hall to decide the destiny of our nation which has been divided by racial discord and most explosive communal strife. We have today gathered under the same roof with the sole object that Parliament must function effectively and continue to remain as the symbol of democracy. However, we are happy that Parliament has resumed in the midst of rumours and various forms of speculations. For 22 months Parliament was staggered, tampered with, choked and its legitimate functions were suspended – the very concept of democracy fell prostrate on the ground. For more than 22 months political instability clouded the skies of Malaysia. We are glad that Parliamentary rule has finally become a reality though we are still in doubt and yet to understand the type of Parliamentary democracy we will be enjoying.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, a new era of understanding and unity among the people of Malaysia will have to begin. For this era, we who believe in the concept of democracy, hold the highest hope. The hopes of democracy have not been fulfilled. The democratic way of life has not been made strong – it has become weaker. The spirit of Constitutional Government has flickered like a dying lamp for the last 22 months. During the 22 months of arbitrary rule the light from that lamp has disappeared from the entire nation. We have watched darkness fall upon our motherland. And as we watched there approached an important time for us – the renewed hope of Parliamentary democracy. We fully contribute to the ideal that Parliament should serve as the supreme body and its decisions shall be the final in determining the destiny of this nation.

Parliament has on many occasions amended the Constitution – at times in a most haphazard manner without having the time to examine the serious effect that it will have on the nation. These proposed amendments to the Constitution will have far reaching effects in shaping our national character and determining the type of society that is desired by those who hold the reins of power.

We have to draw clear distinctions in our minds: firstly, on the proposed amendments as it stands; secondly, on the method of implementation. Let us examine the credentials of the Government and we can observe that in the past the Government had failed to implement and administer the laws justly and fairly. A strong suspicion and fear looms in the minds of all citizens whether the Government will

rise itself above party politics when implementing the various laws. The implementation of any law in a country is vital because it has a direct effect on the life of the ordinary people. Past experience cannot justify that the Government has been impartial in the implementation of the various legislations for which it has sought the support of this House. The implementation of the amendments is vital because the Government's motive in amending the Constitution has not placed itself above suspicion. The motive and intention, however, is under strong suspicion. The Government has a record which, if examined, would reveal that it had at most times abused its powers in dealing with political opponents and critics of the Government. The Constitution was hastily amended at least on the following instances. To win a political battle in favour of the Alliance in Sarawak, the Constitution was amended, secondly, to eliminate Singapore from Malaysia, the Constitution was amended, which was politically motivated.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Sedition Act was enacted by the NOC rule and the explanation by the Government was that it was to prevent racial expressions which will inflict injury on any one community. Let us ask ourselves whether the Government was able to implement this law above political considerations. The answer is "no." I am prepared to quote examples. The recent UMNO Delegates Conference created an explosive racial climate where members were permitted to question the citizenship rights of a prominent trade unionist because he was critical over the labour policy of the Government. At this juncture let me pose a question to the law-makers - whether the Government acted strictly within the powers under the law. Secondly, the MCA had a meeting sponsored and participated by some of the Ministers to consolidate Chinese unity. Again, racial expressions were the overtones. Will this be allowed in the case of Opposition parties? I am sure the Ministers in the Government will be able to answer this question.

Sir, the Chairman of our Party, has called upon the Government to introduce a Motion in this House condemning the May disturbances. We are not concerned who were responsible, directly or indirectly. Whoever they may be, they should be deplored and condemned. We strongly condemn the May 13 incidents.

We are fully convinced that the Government is not sincere to the people. It has proved to be unfair and unjust. Social justice and civil liberties are the pre-requisites of democracy and if this is denied then it will ruin the very democratic institution which we are desirous of building.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we must categorically state in no uncertain terms that we fear the form of implementation the Government has in mind, and we doubt whether we will be extended justice as we are being considered as critics of the Government and its policies. The people outside this House fear, as we do, because they are not certain that these laws will be implemented justly and fairly.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the 22 months of NOC rule the working class has been the victim of social injustice. The workers have been pushed from pillar to pillar and post to post. The workers who have contributed in large measure towards nation building and economic construction have been severely victimised on the advice of inexperienced economic planners who have failed to realise that in the absence of a contented working class industrial peace and progress will be an illusion.

Laws have been enacted that are one-sided and have destroyed the democratic system of trade unionism. The labour laws are contrary to the Prime Minister's assurance to bridge the gap between the "haves" and "have-nots". Steps taken by the Government are a clear indication to weaken the strength of workers' unity. Divide-and-rule policy has been the guidance of the Government, of split the trade unions into bits and pieces. The Government has violated all fundamental principles that are laid by the Human Rights Charter and the ILO Conventions. The legitimate rights of trade unions have been struck a severe blow.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must draw the attention of the Honourable Minister of Labour that if anyone wants to learn race relationship, he need not fly abroad to learn it. He can learn it from the trade unions. The trade unions are classic examples for racial unity and racial harmony in this country. Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no need for these amendments to labour laws as the May disturbances had nothing to do with the trade union movement of this country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have with me a table of seating arrangements of the Dewan Rakyat which was, of course, given to me where the members especially of the Government have been identified not as Alliance but as UMNO, MCA and MIC members. This racial distinction is also an indication of the Government's desire to maintain racial politics. Are we to believe that the Government is no more an Alliance Government, or have the three communal parties withdrawn from the Alliance? Are we to make reference in future to UMNO members, MCA members and MIC members? If this is so, we would be pleased to hear from the Government.

Further, I must draw the attention of this House that acting within the spirit of the proposed amendments, the three communal political organisations, UMNO, MCA and MIC, have no right to continue their existence. If they do exist, then the very purpose and intention of the amendments will be defeated. The Prime Minister in his lengthy deliberation has advocated the desire of the Government to build racial harmony and to build a multi-racial society.

We fully support his view, but we are yet to understand how a multi-racial society can develop when the Government itself is desirous to continue with racial politics. The three political parties referred as UMNO, MCA and MIC are communal organisations aspiring to protect racial interest. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, Sir, if the Government's implementation policy is going to be just and fair, then the three communal organisations should cease to exist the moment the proposed amendments to the Constitution are adopted in this House. The continued existence of these political organisations would only mean that, on one side, while the Government is preaching integration, on the other side, it is firmly committed to racial politics.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me caution and warn the Government that any abuse of the powers by those who hold the reins of power would not contribute to a united Malaysian nation. We respect the Constitution and we will act within the Constitution but when the Government violates the Constitution we will not hesitate to expose and oppose. The views of the people shall prevail and any abuse of power by exploiting the poor and the ignorant by those who are in power will not create a just and prosperous society. Threats and intimidation by those who are in power will only end in disaster, but those of you who are in power should examine your heart, your conscience, your courage, and your sense of justice. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are here to seek and to construct a society based on social justice, economic equality with political freedom. To bridge the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots", we have to work towards a socialist society based on the type of socialism that is most desired and suited to the multi-racial society of Malaysia.

24 FEBRUARY 1971



## CHAPTER II

**DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES SHOULD NEVER BE  
COMPROMISED FOR POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY**

"If we permit one party to dominate our lives,  
democracy would become meaningless and will  
ultimately collapse."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have the role of a dynamic, constructive and progressive Opposition in this House. We, of course, commit to play a most distinct and effective role in this House bringing into realisation the views and aspirations of the people.

Sir, it is a fundamental principle of the democratic system that the majority rules. The function of the minority, however, is equally fundamental. The vital element in the balanced operation of democracy is a strong, alert and watchful Opposition. Sir, that is our task for the life of this Parliament. We have emerged as a vigorous and public spirited Opposition party. As an Opposition, we retain the right to criticise the policies of the Government of the day. If we permit one party to dominate our lives, democracy would become meaningless and will ultimately collapse. Sir, we believe deeply in the principles that we stood for in the general elections in 1969. It is our constitutional duty to debate the policies of the administration and to express ourselves freely and openly. Sir, let not the House make an error — we will not be opposing just for the sake of opposition. Ours will be an Opposition aimed at building a strong, united, multi-racial, dynamic and progressive Malaysia and strive towards creating a just and prosperous society. Sir, as an Opposition, we will establish ourselves in a manner that will create a national character for the party we represent. We will echo the voice of the masses in this House.

Mr. Speaker, Sir we have today before us the Speech of His Majesty the Yang Di Pertuan Agung. The Government's future policy has been reflected in the Speech from the Throne. Sir, we have examined in a most detailed form the past performance of the ruling party and its so-called blueprint for the future. Although the nation is heading to a turning point, unfortunately, at this crucial juncture, the Speech does not basically reflect the views and aspirations of the vast majority of the people of this country.

Sir, when one scrutinises the policy of the Government in the past, it gives us no encouragement to expect that there will be any form of change or, we may call, winds of change that should solve the problems of the nation.

Sir, we think that there will be no improvement because the Government lacks the sincerity of purpose and dedication. Promises have been dishonoured and powers have been abused in the past, thus giving no confidence at all on the Government's professed intentions.

His Majesty's Government in the Royal Address, threw a lot of barren platitudes and promises, which we have seen in previous Addresses, and when one dispassionately scrutinises its performance and actions during the 22 months of NOC rule, one would note that political expediency had over-shadowed sincerity and rationality of purpose.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are a responsible, rational and serious-minded Opposition party and imbued with a sense of national purpose and reconstruction. We are of the firm belief that we have a sacred duty both within and without Parliament to create the necessary socialising elements which could be conducive to racial harmony and political stability. I repeat here that it is not our duty to oppose just for the sake of opposition. Our sincerity in supporting the Rukunegara and the Constitution (Amendment) Bill provides ample testimony of our good intentions and to see that the nation survives. Nor do we believe in playing to the racialist gallery outside the Dewan, and like good men come to the Dewan to justify policies in the name of consolidating racial harmony and solidarity.

Sir, we are level-headed, rational and objective in our approach, well aware of the economic, political and social ills of our multi-racial society. We have consistently and vigorously adhered to the Rukunegara and non-communal philosophy. Based on the latter, we gave a sober and dispassionate analysis of the total situation facing the country in the 1969 general elections. Sir, in this House, in examining the Government's blueprint for the future we do the same.

Sir, His Majesty's Gracious Address emphasised the need for vigilance to ensure that the tragedy of May 13th shall never recur, and expressed confidence that Parliament and the people will cooperate with the Government in the building of a united and progressive nation. It also emphasised that the essential objective is the creation of a "more just society". In order to achieve the latter, His Majesty's Government stated that the main objectives of the so-called New Economic Policy are, first, to eradicate poverty among the have-nots irrespective of their racial origins and second, to obtain and strengthen national unity.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me state categorically that I do not quarrel about these laudable objectives. What troubles and agitates me is that the Alliance Government for the past 15 years (including the 22 months of NOC rule) has earned the reputation for making a host of barren platitudes and paying lip service to them. Sir, I thought that the Government would turn a new leaf after the May 13th riots. But sad to say, the actions and performance of the Government during the past 22 months do not at all give comfort to us, least of all allaying the fears and anxieties of the vast majority of the people regarding the implementation of economic and social policies.

Sir, in addition to failing to mention the "hows" of achieving the above, the Government has the audacity to make a hollow and fallacious claim that its labour laws and amendments will be of great benefit to the country and will help to promote good employer-employee relations. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is an absolute illusion by the Government. Sir, the people of Malaysia and the whole world know that the Government's anti-labour laws have clipped the wings of the trade union movement and had stifled and emasculated the fundamental rights and liberties of the working class.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, before going into the exercise of the cunning of the Government's anti-labour laws, let me point out the commissions and omissions of the Government during the past 15 years including the 22 months of NOC rule. These, of course, will advance my argument that the Government is not sincere in its preaching of democracy, economic equality and social justice. Sir, we in the Opposition, have all along followed the letter and spirit of the Malaysian Constitution. Our philosophy, unlike that of other organisations, is not only to preach fundamental values and socialising elements that will be conducive, desirable and practical to the consolidation of inter-racial harmony and multi-racial solidarity but also to practise it in our daily lives both within and without the political arena.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, sad to say, the Government has repeatedly violated the tenets of the Rukunegara. Sad to say, there is lack of political maturity on the part of some of the Alliance leaders.

If the Government needs, we are prepared to give facts and figures to back up our arguments. Sir, it is not enough to proclaim good ideas. We must have good men to practise good ideas. As Confucius said, "We cannot carve from rotten wood." No matter how good the plan is, without proper people it cannot succeed and it is bound to fail. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Alliance should see that their members practise the Rukunegara. The democratic and patriotic life of Malaysia depends as much on the Government as the Opposition. Sir, as far as the Opposition is concerned, we are prepared and determined to play our part. The Opposition on its part is determined to be a strong, tolerant, capable and progressive multi racial entity, representing the legitimate interest of the different communities in this country. Our methods to gain support is not by setting up one race against the other but by making them unite and assist each other.

Sir, in broad terms the Government emphasised the needs for vigilance to ensure that the tragedy of May 13 shall never recur. We, in the Opposition, fully support this and we are aware that in order to prevent its recurrence the Government must, mercilessly and impartially, stamp out racial fanatics wherever they may be. But, Sir, we in the Opposition are concerned by the way some of the Cabinet Ministers and members of a component party of the Alliance go about talking about the May 13 riots. Sir, it is being used by certain Alliance members as a political argument to support certain Government policies. It is unwise and unethical for the Government to exploit the May 13 riots. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in certain instances including in a by-election in Malacca recently, some of the leaders of the ruling party spoke of the riots as though it was an historical event deserving both fear and reverence. Too much indiscriminate talk of the May 13 riots would only sustain an unhealthy atmosphere. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we, in the Opposition strongly reject the political philosophy that seeks to justify major policies using the riots as a principal argument. We appeal, to the good sense of the Alliance leaders to put a stop to this before it is too late, not only in public meetings but also in future election rallies.

Sir, let me deal with the professed objectives of the Government's creation of a just society. The main objective of this policy, as the Government says, is to eradicate poverty among the have-nots, irrespective of their racial origins and, second, to obtain and strengthen national harmony.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in order to achieve the above, the Government should adopt a more rational economic and social policy unfettered by political interest, psychological feudalism, corruption and short-sighted stop-gap measures. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the wanton waste of public funds and erection of prestigious buildings which have aggravated the economic situation must not only stop but must be seen to be stopped once and for all.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government talks about a plan to enable officials of both sides, of the Government and of the private sector, to establish closer contacts in order that collaboration can mutually reinforce each other's efforts in promoting the growth of the country's economy. But, Sir, we do not know how the Government intends to achieve this, but let me warn the Government that political blackmail and mailed-fisted politics towards the private sector will not create the conducive atmosphere for collaboration. It could only create bad effects of a catastrophic nature.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in addition, His Majesty's Speech has conveniently side-tracked the issue of efficiency in the Government sector. The word "efficiency" has connotations of a subjective nature. But, Sir, there is no doubt that increasing corruption, malpractice and psychological feudalism have considerably dissipated the taxpayers' money and had brought about inefficiency and lethargy. Sir, we must warn the Government not to treat these despicable, contemptible and contagious elements lightly as it has done by failing to mention these in the Gracious Speech. We, Sir, in the Opposition, stress that to wipe out these contagious elements, which in the long run may eat into the vitals of our society, the Government should not only attack the root of the problems but also should cast its net wider to trap not only the "small fish" but more important the "big fish". Of course, Sir, this will be a major task of the Anti-Corruption Agency. Sir, every time the Government announces its catch (and that too not too frequently) it somehow misses the slippery "big fishes". We ask the Government to wake up from its sleep before it is too late. Let the Government, Sir, examine the various Swiss banks and other banks where certain members, even in this House, have conveniently taken shelter by one way or other to protect the ill-earned money through different sources.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the speech from the Throne it is stated that: In endeavouring to build a dynamic, just and progressive society, Our Government, with the advice and co-operation of the National Consultative Council, has formulated a number of principles which will serve as a guide to our way of life. These principles were proclaimed as Rukunegara on 31st August last year. We exhort all our people to understand and observe the principles embodied in the Rukunegara."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Opposition, as I said earlier, accepted the Rukunegara in good faith with the hope that the Government would also strictly adhere to the spirit of the same. But, however, it has become a disappointment, a terrible disappointment, to us when the Government itself has violated the principles and spirit of the Rukunegara on many occasions. The actions and deeds of the Government and the Ministers, Sir, have given rise to the feeling that the Government is not prepared to follow what it expects from the masses of this country. Sir, the Rukunegara has been violated, as I said earlier, by the various Ministers by making irresponsible utterances too often. Let me remind this House that if the people are to respect the Rukunegara and forge national unity and identity, then the Government must be prepared to set the pace and act in a more responsible manner. Mr. Speaker, Sir, His Majesty declared, and I quote:

"One of the aims of our Government is to create a more just society. As one of the means to this end, Government has formulated a dynamic and practical economic policy. The main objectives of this policy are, firstly, to eradicate poverty among the have-nots irrespective of their racial origins and, secondly, to obtain and strengthen national unity."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government claims that it is dedicated to the creation of a just society. We fully realise the desire of some governments, of course, to give a status of social equality and provide economic opportunities for the common people. Sir, how could a Government build a just society when it has not been able to provide.

9th March 1971



## CHAPTER III

### PEOPLE'S RIGHTS AND THEIR ELIGIBILITY FOR EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

"The State must be in real charge of planning and implementing on the basis of the needs of all our people, irrespective of racial origin."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have gone through very closely the 266 pages of the Green Book, the blueprint of the Government for development as embodied in the Second Malaysia Plan for the years 1971-75.

Sir, although there are certain deficiencies, I consider it on the whole definitely a bold and realistic programme. But the question arises whether our Government has the nerve and stamina to sincerely implement this programme. Furthermore, Sir, the Government has admitted that it has failed to overcome the three crucial and formidable challenges, namely, poverty, which I consider to be the ulcer of the nation, unemployment and redressing of the economic imbalance.

Sir, I believe that in order to tackle these problems, the Government should overhaul its machinery and change its attitude in order to squarely, fairly and justly implement them. It is no use to have the finest development plans unless the right people are available with the right skills and determination to translate these plans into action and tangible results. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is no use paying mere lip-service to these laudable objectives. As far as the responsible Members of the Opposition are concerned, we would not tolerate hypocrites who are going to deceive the nation. Sir, if we can castigate some of our own members for not practising what they had preached, how can we allow to go scotfree members of the Government who deviate from the laudable objectives, laudable as far as laid on paper? Therefore, Sir, as far as the responsible Members of the Opposition are concerned, we would fight to the bitter end to see that the Government closely adheres to the letter and spirit of the Malaysian Constitution, Rukunegara and the implementation of this plan. Sir, I like to make some pertinent observations and certain constructive suggestions with regard to this Plan.

Firstly, Sir, I believe that the Government should aggregate and articulate fairly and justly the needs of our multi-racial population in order to bring into realisation the two prongs of the New Economic Policy. In other words, a multi-racial approach should be adopted in order to solve our formidable and challenging problems. Then only can we forge a strong, united Malaysian nation.

Secondly, the Government should galvanise our multi-racial people to involve themselves in development projects. In other words, the people can only become committed to development if they feel that they have a stake in this country.

Sir, the First Malaysia Plan has not fulfilled its economic growth target in general terms which is not meaningful as far as the greater sections of the poor and downtrodden are concerned. This is due to the fact that unemployment had increased to 8% in 1970 compared with its set target of 5.2% and the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots" has increased to unimaginable proportions.

Sir, there can be no quarrel with the prophesied policy of the State — a just society through the elimination of poverty, irrespective of race, by restructuring society. But I disagree with the means and methods that are employed.

Sir, in trying to achieve a just society, your objectives seem to be the creation of a racial middle-class which must mean one or two things, that is, expanding opportunities for the small racial, administrative and director-ship class — that is creating more avenues for them in business and commerce through legislation. Of course, this is being now done. Sir, it is obvious that it will never benefit the mass of the people who are agriculturists, farmers, fishermen, etc. Secondly, this policy will only help to create a stronger petit bourgeois class who in turn will be protecting their interests against the mass of peasants and workers.

Thirdly, Sir, the policy, by its very nature, will generate racial ill-will in the long run. Sir, is the aim of the State to expand the present racial middle class to include engineers, technocrats, accountants and scientists, and at another level, factory workers, mechanics, technicians, etc.? Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all such an aim must be seen as an integral part of an overall policy, a policy that does not seek merely to expand the middle class which, by its very nature, will always remain small, and therefore opportunities for the mass will always be limited. Secondly, you cannot achieve this aim merely through quotas for quotas in themselves are limited. It reflects patch work and the absence of cohesive organised thinking. Mr. Speaker, Sir, thus it is our contention that an effective economic policy will require readiness on our part to gain real and effective control over the economy of the country. The State must be in real charge of planning and implementing on the basis of the needs of all our people, irrespective of racial origin. This you can only do if you are prepared to take bold and brave measures, measures that will not be regarded favourable by both foreign and local capitalists — Sir, it must be appreciated this is Malaysia — because the trend of economic planning and organisation in most democratic Asian and African States is in that direction. The old laissez faire method where ad-hoc solutions were sought is most outmoded. It cannot meet the aspirations of the common people. Mr. Speaker, Sir, greater control and regulations over dividends declared by foreign companies,

greater check and supervision of these companies, and vice-versa, deployment of capital provisions and training facilities for our people and creation of employment opportunities are absolutely necessary.

Sir, the State must play a greater role in education since education is vital for socio-economic needs. The State can help in securing textbooks for needy pupils. In this connection, it must explore possibilities of establishing a co-operative society where teachers' unions and parents' associations can participate. The State must increase financial assistance to needy pupils by utilising the loan system more extensively to provide loans and scholarships. In fact, this will help to overcome any feelings of deprivation that may exist in a particular community. The thrust of this aid must be directed to scientific and industrial education.

Sir, the present policy of establishing credit institutions, providing of fertilisers, buying nets, in the agricultural economy, are at best piecemeal efforts. To be really effective, the State, through a co-operative effort, should take charge of all the supply and production lines connected with marketing, packing, and the provision of basic economic facilities. In fact, Sir, today co-operatives exist, but they are controlled by the middlemen themselves.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in order to eradicate poverty and to correct racial economic imbalance, the Government should see that there is a balanced growth between the agricultural and industrial sectors. In order to redress the racial economic imbalance the Government should have conducted a survey to find out how unemployment in the urban and rural areas has serious implications racially. Sir, I am deeply concerned that the Government had conveniently failed to mention in detail the survey conducted by the Department of Statistics between the middle of 1967 and May 1968. The Malaysian Socio-Economic Sample Survey of House-holds was planned and designed by a U.N. statistical adviser, Mr. Choudhury, who is now the F.A.O. Agricultural Census Adviser in Malaysia. Sir, let me quote certain facts and figures as revealed by the 1968 Survey as reported in March 7, 1971 in the Sunday Times: "The most significant aspect of the Survey was that unemployment throughout the country was growing steadily, with the Indians being the hardest hit. In 1962, the unemployment rate amongst the three major races was practically the same at around 6 per cent. But in 1968 for the Indians the figure touched the 10.3 per cent mark, an increase of 4.3 per cent. From 6.1 per cent in 1962 the unemployment rate among Malays in terms of the available labour force dropped to 5.8 per cent. Six years later a decrease of 0.3 per cent. For the Chinese the unemployment rate had gone up by 0.9 per cent to 6.9 per cent."

Sir, the survey added that the sharp increase in the unemployment rate among the people of Indian origin might be due to the fragmentation of estates and stagnation of employment opportunities in the estates, the traditional stronghold of the workers of Indian origin.

Another reason might be the inability of these estate workers to make any perceptible inroads into other types of occupations. Sir, the employment rate as a percentage of the labour force which includes all those between 15 years and 64 years for Malays and Chinese was about the same in 1968. For Malays it was 91.2 and for the Chinese 92 per cent. The Indians however showed a particularly low employment rate of 87.7 per cent. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I call upon the Government to closely study this important socio-economic survey and redress accordingly the racial unemployment imbalance within the context of the two prongs of the New Economic policy.

In addition, Sir, employment priorities should be given to the financially poor but to those who have the necessary qualifications. It really pains, Sir, for me to see that whereas all the members of one family are fully employed, while in the other family no member is employed although some of its members are in the same age group and have the same qualifications, as the former. In this way, to bring about an equitable distribution of wealth and reduce the gap between the haves and have-nots will be an illusion.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want from the Government a categorical assurance that this sort of affairs would not continue. I hope that the Government would issue directives that in order to bridge the gap in per capita family income among our multi-racial people the poor and the down-trodden who have the necessary academic qualifications be given priority in employment in both the private and public sectors without any prejudice whatever occupation it may be in the private sector.

Sir, while the Government is embarking on its Second Five-Year Plan, it is moving towards the direction of throwing 4,000 temporary clerks and their families numbering about 20,000 as destitutes into the streets. Is this, Sir, part of the programme and development the nation expects within the context of the Second Five Year Plan? If the Government's intention is to create stability, then the 4,000 clerks should be absorbed into the various departments unconditionally. The Government should not forget that the Government is obliged to accord to every citizen a living.

I call upon the Government to save the 4,000 clerks who have served the nation at the time the nation needed their loyal and devoted service.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, poverty, both rural and urban, is an ulcer to the nation. In the field of rural development, the fruits of rural development have not really reached the grass-roots level. I regret to say that the Alliance Government has also neglected urban planning, even in the case of physical and social problems arising from urbanisation and urban growth in Malaysia. Even if there is any urban planning at all, it has been done on a fragmented and ad-hoc basis; only recently an Urban Development Authority has been established.

Sir, the shortage of urban land is due to competition for its varied use, the increasing of rural population, who are mostly in the lower income bracket or unemployed, moving to the urban areas, and the Government's failure to provide sufficient lowcost housing has created welfare problems of a national character which call for national and rational solution. Urban renewals should be implemented cautiously and should not be made to be interpreted by the people affected as a renewal programme but the recognition of the people's good. This cautiousness is especially necessary where the people affected comprise largely one racial group. In respect of urban planning, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I suggest the following:

- to pay more attention to town planning;
- to initiate measures in order to make Local Authorities to have long-term plans over capital development expenditure instead of an annual basis;
- priority should be given to placing sociologists, community relations specialists together with economists, geographers, and architects in the newly established Urban Development Authority.

In addition, Sir, it is essential that it should not only work closely with Local Authorities and State Governments but it should also take vigorous steps to co-ordinate physical, economic and social planning, that is to see that this department fulfils the needs of the people.

Sir, I believe that the Government should adopt a vigorous and balanced rural and urban development programme to complement each other. In addition, it should also initiate rural industrialisation and urbanisation programmes in the rural areas. The national economic planning of the Government could only achieve its aims if the Government aggregates and articulates the multi-racial problems of the have-nots of all communities. I, for one, Sir, fully agree with the Honourable Minister with Special Functions and Minister of Information when he spoke on the debate on the Royal Address at the Dewan Negara

on March 23rd, 1971, and I quote: "what this country needs, and needs badly, is a creative, enlightened and affluent group comprising all races whose activities ramify in all spheres of life. It is this group which should be the biggest group that will form the economic and social infrastructure in order to bear the burden on which liberal democracy can flourish." What I believe is that the quantification of laudable objectives must be matched with practice. This is extremely important for the Second Five-Year Plan if at all it is to succeed.

Sir, the Opposition has all along stated that education should be orientated towards science and technology. In addition, the setting up of colleges and universities should not be politically motivated. Responsible members of the Opposition believe that right educational programmes play an important part in the socialising process. At present there are three universities and a number of colleges in West Malaysia. We hope the standard of education will be maintained and that students who come out of the universities and colleges would be given employment. If not, an unhealthy situation will develop as that has developed in other parts of Asia. I suggest that more technical and vocational colleges be established in the East Coast of West Malaysia and also in East Malaysia.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, a balanced approach should be adopted to develop complementary industries, This would create greater employment and also avoid problems of supply of resources and bottle-necks. In fact, it should bring desirable linkage effects. The Government should also ensure a balanced growth in infrastructural and industrial sectors. In addition a balance should also be achieved between agriculture and industry. Development of both have to be planned and phased, so that one complements the other.

Sir, recently, the increase in prices of consumer goods has given rise to concern especially to people of the low-wage earning group. A casual relationship exists between the rise of other prices to increased prices at the source affecting some house-hold goods and imported goods from tinned milk to mutton. Sir, the Government should conduct an enquiry into these causes and the extent of the rise and its implications. The role of the importers, wholesalers and shop-keepers should also become important, so that prices are not increased exorbitantly.

There are variations too in prices where there is competition among shopkeepers and suppliers. The Government should also study the range of prices in industries and services enjoying a monopoly.



Mr. Speaker, Sir, a number of applications for Federal Citizenship have been turned down by the Government without assigning any reasons. This gives room to believe that the Home Ministry is not scrutinising the applications with an open mind and in accordance with the provisions of the law. The Government should review its administrative procedures with a view of assisting the public. There are cases where applicants have waited for months and after which, they receive a rejection letter. This attitude should change and members of the public must be provided with all facilities and assistance.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, obviously what is needed is a basic re-orientation in economic planning. New slogans like the New Economic Policy are alone not enough. They must have the capacity and courage for bold and just implementation.

14 JULY 1971.

## THE ISA ARRESTS



**LIM KIT SIANG, 46, Opposition Leader, DAP secretary-general and MP for Tanjung BORN Feb 20, 1941, in Batu Pahat. Obtained his LLB (Hons) in 1977.**

DAP national organising secretary between 1967 and 1969. Won the Bandar Melaka parliamentary seat in 1969. MP for Kota Melaka and Assemblyman for Kubu. Retained the Kubu seat in 1978 and was elected Petaling Jaya MP. Elected MP for Kota Melaka in 1982 and in the last election was returned as MP for Tanjung and Assemblyman for Kampung Kolam.

Detained under the ISA in May 1969 and released in October the following year.

*(arrested at Jalan Bandar police station, KL, 7pm Tuesday)*



**Dr V. DAVID, 55, MP for Puchong and secretary-general of Malaysian Trades Union Congress**

BORN Aug 26, 1932. Received his doctorate from the Pacific Western University, California. General secretary of the Transport Workers Union and member of the International Labour Organisation governing body.

Joined the Labour Party in 1951 and when it was dissolved in 1968, joined Gerakan. Quit Gerakan in 1978 and joined Pekemas and then the DAP.

Was Assemblyman for Pantai and MP for Bangsar. Elected MP for Damansara in 1978 and MP for Puchong in the last election.

## CHAPTER IV

### FOREIGN POLICIES : A PANORAMIC VIEW

**"The complete neutralisation of Asia is extremely important to expect peace and stability in the Asian region."**

Sir, let us take a panoramic view of the entire Budget presented by the Alliance Government. The Budget, Sir, has neglected to correct the economic imbalance of the Malaysian society. We in the Opposition are perturbed over the manner of the Government's proposals to solve the economic ills that dominate this nation. Sir, the Budget has offered shelter to the rich and those who are able to pay a higher price for economic and social development of the nation. The Budget further strikes the poor and weak below the belt. The 'haves' will still be in control of the nation's wealth while the "have-nots" will be looking for crumbs. The economic policy of the Government is geared towards making the rich richer and the poor poorer. The results of the Alliance Government's economic policy will only create a small percentage of racially orientated capitalists against the multitude of the people still living in poverty and misery. Sir, the Budget lacks the required dynamism and progressive outlook to eliminate the sufferings of the have-nots. A nation's economic policy must be directed towards creating a society where the nation's wealth can be shared equally. The growth of unemployment is posing a serious threat to peace and prosperity. The Government has not found a positive solution to this problem except empty promises and slogans. Frustration and disappointment among the people is growing from time to time. The Budget does not make provision for improved living standards of the people living in the rural areas — new villages, estates and mines. The prices of sugar and milk have been increased without any justification. Sir, the Opposition strongly opposes the increase of prices in essential commodities. While the prices of goods have risen the wages of the workers remain the same. The Government should revise the wage structure of the workers to keep pace with the increases in prices. The introduction of 5% Sales Tax by the Alliance Government is aimed at the consumers who are mostly the poor peasants and workers. Therefore, Sir, the Budget is against the poor and the downtrodden.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we hail the entry of China into the United Nations. The development of Asia calls for a reappraisal of the Foreign Policy of the Alliance Government. Seven hundred million people have joined the world body and this is the victory of the Asians against the imperialists and reactionary forces masquerading as the people's representatives.

The determined and meritorious people of China have joined the rest of the people of Asia to fight against all forms of imperialism and work within the framework of the principles enunciated at the historical Bandung Conference of the Afro-Asian people.

Sir, the United States' defeat in its foreign policy on Asia is a lesson to the American lackeys who oppress the people of Asia with arms aided by the United States imperialists. Sir, the U.S. has no moral or legal right to remain in Asian soil. The U.S. troops from Indo-China should be completely withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the complete neutralisation of Asia is extremely important to expect peace and stability in the Asian region. Sir, the foreign policy of our Government has been more in line with the American foreign policy. Sir, American aggression and war policy in Asia has been the cause of poverty and misery not only of one country but also in the entire Asia. Sir, in the neighbourhood of Malaysia, Vietnam is faced with a serious problem and the Vietnam problem must find a political settlement and there can be no military solution. Sir, it is strange that the Alliance Government has maintained a non-committed policy towards the United States aggression in Indo-China. Either the Alliance is not prepared to earn the displeasure of the United States or it is committed to a reactionary foreign policy aimed at strengthening decaying military blocs in Asia.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the advance of history and social progress gladdens the hearts and inspires the people of the world and throws into panic a handful of decadent reactionary forces who do their utmost to put up desperate struggles. Sir, the United States in collaboration with other reactionary countries has committed armed aggression against other countries — subvert the legal governments of other countries — subject other countries to its political, military and economic control — support corrupt leaders and bully other countries at will. Sir, the Central Intelligence Agency is active in Asia and I do not iron out that it is not also active in Malaysia. Sir, the CIA was the cause of the over-throw of Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia. Sir, the CIA Asian nations must be prepared to fight against such CIA strategies to maintain the integrity and sovereignty of the respective nations.

Sir, although there are twists and turns and reverses in the people's struggles, adverse currents against the people and against progress, in the final analysis, they cannot hold back the main current of the continuous development of human society. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the world will surely move towards progress and light and definitely not towards reaction and darkness. I have reasons to believe that Malaysia's Economic Planning Unit is largely influenced by the United States. May I warn at this juncture that no nation in Asia has succeeded in its economic reconstruction with the assistance of American advice but on the other hand more economic ruins have been witnessed when and where the US has played a major role in shaping the destiny of Asian nations.

Therefore, Sir, the Economic Planning Unit in our country is American orientated and with capitalistic designs which will only create chaos and destruction.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have heard a lot about neutralisation of South-East Asia, and Malaysia is supposed to be committed to this Foreign Policy. The Malaysian Government has called for a neutralised zone in South-East Asia. If this is correct, Sir, then the Five-Power Defence Pact calls for rethinking. Further military pacts in Asia would only complicate and confuse the people of Asia. This may involve peace loving nations into conflicts and war. Each country should be responsible for its own defence and security and expecting assistance directly or otherwise from the power blocs will only mean a threat to peace and stability in Asia.

Sir, the commencement of diplomatic relations with China should now not be delayed any further in view of the changed world situation, and Malaysia's trade relations which have already begun now should pave the way for immediate recognition of the People's Republic of China. Recognition of 700 million people in China is vital for Malaysia to live in peace and harmony. Talks between representatives of Malaysia's Foreign Office and the Chinese Government should immediately take place to establish diplomatic relations. Relations with North Vietnam and North and South Korea should also be normalised. Sir, Asia is in turmoil and to save Asia from the scourge of war, cordial relationships between Asian nations are vitally important, regardless of their political ideologies.

Sir, the Malaysian Government is committed to a policy against the South African apartheid policy. Sir, in South Africa 3½ million whites hold unimpeded power over 14 million non-whites. The non-whites' right to work, to worship, to vote, to learn, to participate in any social, communal and political activities is curtailed and abolished in South Africa.

Other statistical comparisons may be made as follows:

Sir, foreign involvement in South Africa is substantial. More than 60 American Companies are in operation administering investments worth US\$ 800 million and reaping profits of US\$100 million a year at a return of around 12%.

Sir, the U.S. business involvements in South Africa help support the South African Government in maintaining and extending its apartheid policies. This support has taken many forms, including supply of oil and assistance in exploration of oil. While foreign investments in South Africa have grown, the abuses of apartheid have become more pronounced. Non-white political organisations have been banned with their leaders being held as prisoners. While foreign economic support may not actually encourage such abuses, there is no doubt that there is "oblique encouragement".

The so-called progressive forces in the UMNO should exert pressure on the Alliance to demand the withdrawal of American investment from South Africa. If the so-called self-styled progressive forces in UMNO are only shedding crocodile tears, then I can understand their political dilemma.

Sir, we strongly oppose the control and plunder of the recipient countries in the name of "Aid." Malaysia is no exception from obtaining aid from so many countries. Sir, the US Congress has now commenced to cut foreign aid towards many countries, especially many developing countries, because of certain countries taking the line to support China's admission into the UN. Sir, the results of the voting is a total defeat to the US policy and as a result of this, economic pressure is exerted on most of the developing countries.

Most people think that the rich countries are really aiding the poor countries. They ignore the fact that the real aid from the industrialised countries to the developing countries does not exist in the real sense. The various programmes which go under the collective title of aid represent a very complex mixture of different kinds of relationships between rich and poor communities. At worst, these programmes are consciously dictated to establishing domination over the recipient country or exploiting its economy to its disadvantage.

Sir, during the period of 1961-1971 over 90% of all aid was bilateral and only 8% was channelled through multilateral agencies. The donor countries attach strings to this aid. Normally these strings dictate that the money shall be spent within the donor country "tied" to purchase in the country thereby ensuring an export market for that country and restricting the ability of the developing country to develop production of such commodities by itself. In this way, the relationship between rich and poor - the poor being the producer of raw materials and the rich the manufacturer - is maintained. The Alliance Government which at all times is receiving aid should examine whether such aid is basically advancing the nation's economic development or it remains a cover for unlimited exploitation.



Mr. Speaker, Sir, the existing labour laws are a mockery to the term "democracy." The denial of individual freedom, civil liberty and legitimate rights of an individual is reflected in the provisions of the labour laws. Fundamental principles are involved in the provisions of the labour laws. It is a most undemocratic, dictatorial, repressive piece of legislation designed to destroy the very foundation of democracy. The rights of an individual is of paramount importance in society, if peace and prosperity are to be assured. So, what is wrong with an individual holding office both in a political organisation and trade union? Where is social justice? Where is the basic freedom of association? Does the Alliance Government subscribe to the United Nations Charter on Human Rights? If it does, then this legislation is against the very spirit of the Human Rights Charter.

This law was introduced with political vengeance. The Alliance has no business to speak in the ILO sessions because it does not respect the high ideals of the International Labour Organisation. You have trampled the very democracy and human rights under your rough and thorny feet. The agony and anguish of many of us remain as an unhealed scar.

The law introduced on the 9th of October, 1969 was said to be of a temporary measure. If it was only for a period to meet a peculiar situation, then why was it not repealed?

The NOC which was instrumental to legislate this monstrous legislation has now ceased to function. Is it not just and fair that the laws that were passed then should also be repealed as the country has returned to normalcy? The May 1969 episode has been used to further crush all civil liberties.

Let not the Government drive the people to despair, whereby all hopes and confidence in democracy will be shattered. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the people have given a massive mandate to rule but not to deny one's freedom. The Government's action is an invasion into the fundamental right of the trade unionists. The Alliance act is a deliberate massacre on human rights. You have trespassed into the sacred field of civil liberties. If both the Government and the Opposition are to place any belief in the basic concept of democracy, then the rights of trade unionists should be restored.

The Alliance has enacted these laws because they have been discredited among the workers of this country. They are unable to compete with us. They are unable to mobilise the workers. We have been trade unionists all our lives and then only we entered politics after being trade unionists. We never went from politics into trade unions.

Therefore, the bogey talk that the trade unions may be used for political purpose is a farce and a weak argument. If we accept the democratic system, then the arena should be kept open to competition.

Sir, the amendments to the labour laws introduced on 10th October 1969 were to meet a peculiar situation and now the nation is no more facing a situation which warrants such laws. Even at that time the amendments to the labour laws were absolutely unnecessary, because the trade unions had remained intact as non-communal organisations. If I may be allowed, I would like to quote from the statement made by the Prime Minister on 12th December 1971 at Ipoh which reads as follows:-

“There are times when the rule of law may be put under some strain by extraneous events. I strongly believe that an infringement of the liberty of the person must only be provisional and must be removed the moment circumstances no longer warrant it.”

Sir, the Prime Minister himself had admitted that any infringement of the liberty of the person must only be provisional. Then why is this piece of legislation not removed?

The denial of individual liberty has been deliberately designed for trade unionists. This is most unjust, unfair and contradicts the assurance given by the Prime Minister in Ipoh on 12th December 1971.

Sir, the trade union movement seeks the immediate repeal of all amendments introduced on 10th October 1969 because the nation has since returned to normalcy. The continuation of these laws would only mean that the Government is determined to destroy the very structure and foundation of organised labour.

At the two-hour speech of the Finance Minister not even a mention was made of the 350,000 workers who live in the estates. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the workers in the estates have the right to live as any other citizen of this country. The estate workers have long been denied the basic human necessities. They have been exploited by absentee landlords and now by local capitalists. Sir, the white men in the past thrived on the blood and sweat of the estate workers, if one may ask how Britain was able to build the great empire, this was by plundering and exploiting the poor and defenceless workers of the colonies.

At present there are more than 350,000 plantation workers with their dependants totalling about a million. This figure excludes the smallholders. Most of these workers work, live and die within the plantation environment – effectively removed from the wider society.

This depressed working class alone with the smallholders produce 40% of the total export earnings of the nation. In spite of these workers occupying the most unique position in our national economy, they do not own cars or enjoy the luxuries that are provided in our modern civilised world.

Sir, the estate workers have a right to a living wage. The present wage of the estate workers can be referred as mere subsistence and not wage in the real sense. The plantation "big business" has been allowed to dodge the very basic human issues. The workers have no job security in the estate and when they lose their jobs, they are discarded with no more thought than one gives consideration to an old worn-out shoe. They do not own a bit of land. If they lose their jobs, they also lose their homes and they are forcefully thrown out of the estates the moment they cannot work any more.

Sir, the estates are known to be private properties by the laws enacted during the British regime. The workers, as soon as they lose their employment in the estates, are ordered out with their belongings and in many cases the workers have to seek shelter at the road-side temples or in the five-foot ways. While the workers are in employment, the estate management exercises the right on the workers by even restricting as to who can and who cannot visit them. The estate owners control the social contacts and visits of the workers. This system remains the same even till today. Sir, the Opposition calls upon the Government to declare all estates and places of employment as public properties where any worker could have the right to move freely without any restriction, directly or otherwise imposed. Sir, we are now living in the Twentieth Century and we should oppose any form of attempts by estate owners to treat the estate workers as slaves. Sir, it is shocking that 78% of workers live in estate-owned quarters.

The estate workers should be offered State land to build their own homes and live when they retire from their jobs. Sir, 90% of the estate workers do not own a plot of land in this country. The Government should alienate State land to estate workers so that they can feel more secure.

Sir, accommodation provided for the estate workers is far below any human standards. A stable for a horse in present times is much better than the houses provided by the estate owners. Bugs and mosquitoes feed on the poor and innocent workers. Cleanliness and sanitary conditions are most disgusting. Drainage facilities and latrines are not to the modern standard. 43% of the houses are without electricity.

Malnutrition, malaria and worm infection are common in estates. Sir, the estate environment is divorced not only from luxuries but from certain minimum necessities which human standard of living demands.

Sir, most of the estate clinics are managed either by unqualified or under-qualified dispensers and hospital assistants. The medicines are the cheapest mixtures without any value for the necessary cure of the sickness.

There are no proper facilities for recreation in the estates. The physical conditions of the workers are not cared for by the estates. Sir, the children are not privileged to enjoy the benefits of the modern world. The estate owners must provide the facilities and equipment for sports and physical training.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the education of plantation workers' children poses a dangerous situation. The environment in which these children grow does not promise them a bright future. Children live in over-crowded and depressed plantation quarters. They are also victims of the typical one room, one teacher schools. Even assuming the construction of proper schools, the family's basic income and living conditions must be fundamentally altered if the plantation workers' children are to successfully compete with children from schools in the towns.

Sir, the presence of malnutrition, malaria and worms is also relevant to the quality of teachers. For too long the depressed world of the plantations which houses more than a million of our people has been effectively cut off from national views and national concern.

Sir, Encik A.M. Ismail, President of the Senior Government Officers' Association, said in July, 1964:

"Rubber yields have gone up by 500 to 700 per cent in 68% of the acreage owned and replanted by big estates. Why is the estate worker not given a share of this steadily rising profits? The fall of 30% to 50% in the price of rubber still leaves large profits for the estates that have replanted. Estates that have not replanted have themselves to blame and should not penalise the workers."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, poverty and lack of proper educational facilities place the estate workers as the poorest in our society. Child labour is predominant. Children at the tender age of twelve have to work to subsidise the income of their parents to exist.

Sir, in 1970 the total number of

estate schools were	..	..	..	..	..	661
pupils	..	..	..	..	..	79,449
teachers	..	..	..	..	..	3,261

Most of the schools in the estates are in a deplorable condition. Some are even in a state of collapse. Very little care is given to the upkeep of the schools. Most of the schools are neglected and maintained as a windowdressing for visitors with:

- lack of required number of teachers and supervisors;
- lack of competitive spirit due to unhealthy environment of the schools;
- extremely poor facilities – no development of extra – curricular activities e.g. exercise, inter-school sports, etc.

Mr. Speaker, Sir the Government cannot ignore the plight of about a million people living in the estates. They must be part of any development that the nation undertakes. The entire schooling system in the estates calls for re-orientation. They should be accorded the opportunity and facilities enjoyed by schools in the towns and cities.

Sir, industries must be built around the estates to enable the younger population to find jobs in the various trades. Trade and vocational training schools for estate workers are also necessary if they are to be seen gainfully employed.

It must be honestly admitted that the Alliance Government has completely neglected the estates and had never made any attempt to include them as part of the economic and social development of the nation. The estate workers are the poorest in our present social order and there can be no bridging of the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots" without a new deal for the estate workers. Social and economic upliftment of the estate workers is absolutely necessary to reflect the sign of prosperity in our Malaysian Nation. Estate owners should be compelled to meet certain social amenities of the workers and this can only be done by an enlightened Government which is prepared to accept the plight of the estate workers and seek improvement in their living conditions with genuine intentions.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we know the amount of money that is being collected in the estates but unfortunately the estate workers are the most depressed workers in our society. I would in fact invite the Minister of Finance to think of ways and means to see that proper conditions can be provided to the workers and also to compel the estate management to see that the welfare of the estate workers is adequately protected.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when we talk about foreign policy and our relations with the neighbouring countries, we cannot ignore the plight and suffering experienced by one of the countries in Asia, namely Malaysia.

11 January 1972

## **CHAPTER V**

### **ROYAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR LAWS URGENTLY NEEDED**

**"The labour laws should reflect the progress and development  
this country is now facing."**



## **"ROYAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR LAWS URGENTLY NEEDED"**

I propose that a Royal Commission be appointed by the Government and I do not think that we have had any Royal Commission in this country so far in respect of the labour laws. In many countries, especially in England, after many complaints from the trade unions, a Royal Commission was appointed to review all the labour laws — to listen to the trade unions and workers and come out with positive recommendations. Today, Sir, I request the Government to consider the possibility of appointing a high-powered Royal Commission headed by distinguished personalities in this country to make suitable recommendations after consulting organised labour and various interested parties, so that the workers will be relieved from the long agony and anguish they are facing. The labour laws should reflect the progress and development this country is now making. We cannot go on with the old out-moded system of industrial relations and the concept of conciliation.

Section 60 of the Employment Ordinance advocates 8 hours work. Those companies which were employing workers for 12 hours and so on have now split the wages to justify that \$4/- wage paid is for 8 hours and the rest of the amount is overtime. We are in fact going to have one or two Civil Court cases. There is no need for a union to go to the Civil Court. This is as a result of the ineffectiveness of the Labour Department Enforcement Section, where the law is being misinterpreted by certain Officers at the District level and therefore the Union has been forced to go to the High Court to obtain a ruling.

Sir, this could have been avoided if we had a proper conciliatory system and a proper Enforcement Section which will work without fear or favour. At all times mistakes made by the employers are excused, but mistakes made by the workers, according to the interpretation of certain Labour Officers, cannot be excused.

A Royal Commission for the appointment of which I have called upon is urgent and important, especially in view of the Five Year Malaysia Plans and also to give a new spirit and new look to the trade unions and workers of this country a Royal Commission should be appointed. I hope the Prime Minister will intervene in this matter and appoint this Commission as early as possible.

The conciliation process takes six months or more for the Minister to finally dispose of the case. His verdict is binding on both parties. For these six months the worker is unemployed and he is full of tension and anxiety while waiting for the findings of the Minister. In the case of the employer this delay does not in any way affect his industry. In the final analysis, the worker is the victim of the long process of the legal complications.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Industrial Court which is supposed to hear dispute over dismissals and other matters has also misunderstood the basic functions of the Court, resulting in the defeat of the purpose for which it was established in 1967. The late Sir George Dehlers had established certain cardinal fundamental principles where he had made it clear that the Industrial Court is not a court of law but a court of equity. The workers have experienced many disappointments over cases of dismissal heard by this Court. In a number of cases the Court had admitted that the dismissal was wrong but at the same time had refused to order reinstatement. Cases referred to the Industrial Court are on the basis of disputes where the employer on the one side contends that the dismissal was justified and on the other side the Union representing the worker contends that the dismissal was wrongful. In such cases where the employer had failed to prove that the dismissal was justified the Court has not recommended reinstatement. Sirs, it is a pity that decisions of the Court have sowed seeds of discontentment among the workers. Confidence of the workers towards the Court has been shaken. No trade union is prepared to go through the long ordeal in an Industrial Court to prove its case when the Court considers that its duty is only to hear the case and not to solve the dispute justly and fairly. I am of the firm belief, Sir, that the Court is groping in the dark in the absence of proper legislation and guidance and also the Court fails to understand that its functions are to see that social justice is not brought to the rock bottom. However, the trade unions in this country have made strong representations to the Minister of Labour in this matter. I am sure the Minister cannot deny the fact that an element of doubt has been cast on this Court.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the statistics of the Ministry of Labour state that at least 250,000 people are unemployed in our country. This figure, of course, excludes the 60,000 employed in Singapore at the mercy of the Singapore Government. For a nation of about 11 million people this figure is most disappointing. The population growth of 3% per year with an inflow of thousands of school-leavers and drop-outs annually will definitely pose a social threat to the nation if it is not tackled intelligently and with sound economic planning.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, employment opportunity remains no more measured by the yardstick of merit but is being based in most cases on racial bias. This has added frustration, and has undermined the integrity and dignity of the young generation. Sir, a silent discontentment prevails in the minds of youths. They fear to express their plight due to threats and intimidation but they will freely express their feelings through the medium of the ballot box when the time is right.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is most alarming that 11 per cent of the people of this country are unemployed. In the United Kingdom where four per cent of the people are unemployed, they have found that this posed a serious threat to the social and economic advancement of that country. But in this country, as I said, the people are unable to demonstrate their opinions freely, in view of the various laws that curtail and undermine their individual freedom. However, Sir, the Minister of Labour has to give clear thinking to this matter to save the situation from creating further chaos in this country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am strongly against the present labour laws: the Trade Unions Act of 1959 and also the Industrial Relations Act. The Malaysian Trades Union Congress has more than once stressed the importance of a Royal Commission to be appointed by the Government to review all aspects of the labour laws in view of the modern development and advancement of the country. The Minister of course has not given serious thought to this request. In view of the widespread discontentment only a Royal Commission can carefully examine the anomalies that are existing in our labour laws.

Sir, the Employment Ordinance is a replacement of the Labour Code introduced in 1912. Many events have taken place in the country especially after independence and to accommodate within the process the labour laws need drastic changes and such changes can only take place by the Government appointing an independent commission with members from the Government, workers, employers, and also from international labour agencies where they could give expert advice on certain rights and privileges of labour.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this House I expect the Minister to make some prompt announcement on the request for a Royal Commission. Though such Royal Commissions have been appointed in many countries and these Commissions in the various countries have from time to time reviewed the labour laws existing there, in this country we did not have such a Commission even though there had been peaceful agitation for reformation of the labour laws for many, many years, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hope and I verily believe that the Minister responsible will definitely look into this matter carefully.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no doubt that the decline in the efficiency of the Civil Service is steadily growing. I am sure the Government will desperately refute my allegations but senior civil servants will admit it but not openly due to ruthless victimisation. Sir, this can be attributed to two main factors:

- Promotions not based on experience, efficiency and merit.
- Allowing racial sentiments and nepotism to supersede merit.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as promotions are not considered on merit, this has opened the the way for cronism, nepotism and malpractice. The effects of this will soon be felt and this will result in the inability on the part of the Government to implement successfully the Second Malaysia Plan. No Government in this world will be able to implement its programme unless and until it has an efficient Civil Service. This, of course, Sir, the Government should learn from Singapore and its success should be a lesson to Malaysia.

Let me quote a statement made by the ex-Prime Minister, the Honourable Tengku Abdul Rahman:

"The legacy left by the British would not suffer in efficiency and integrity in the years to come."

Many senior Government servants are disillusioned and have come to the final conclusion that as they are being quietly victimised by barring promotions and juniors superseding the seniors, they look forward to the day of retirement without having any form of bad record in their tenure of service. Sir, this of course is a most unhealthy sign and would greatly endanger the smooth operation of the Civil Service machinery. This can only be remedied by reviewing the Government's policy on promotions and recruitments to the Civil Service.

Sir, this is one of the causes also for the brain-drain, which we are now experiencing. Many people who have been frustrated have left the shores of Malaysia to find better opportunities in the neighbouring countries and also in other parts of the world.

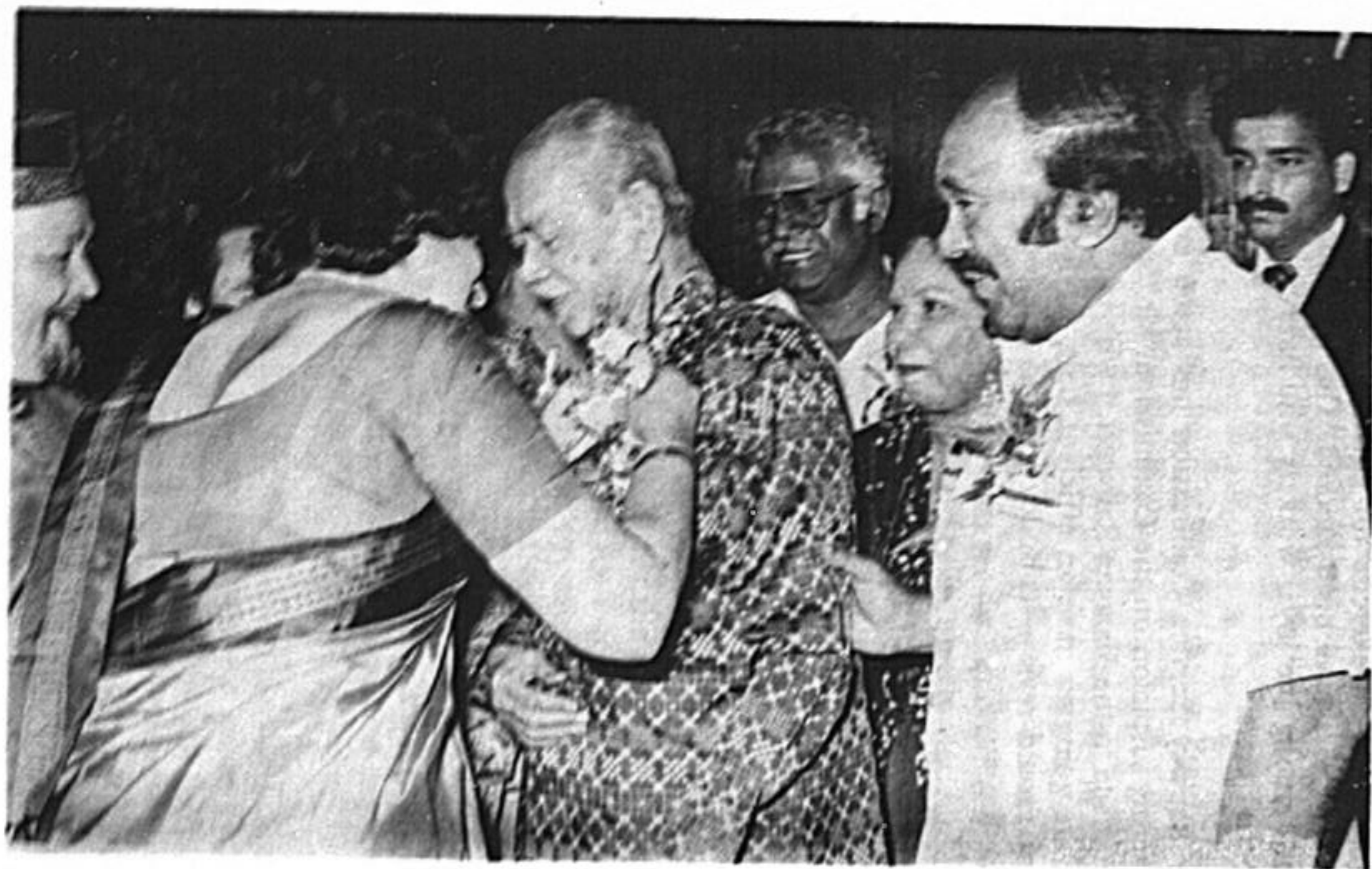
Mr. Speaker, Sir this is vital in view of the implementation of the Second Malaysia Plan and the Government should do everything possible to have a most contented Civil Service if we are going to succeed in our Second Malaysia Plan.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I charge that the Railway Service Commission has acted in contravention to the recommendations made by the Suffian Commission. To substantiate my argument, here are the facts: Acting appointments in the Railways - Officers have been officially asked to act in promotional positions but ultimately after acting for a good number of years, they were disappointed as they were not confirmed in their appointments. But unfortunately those who had not been acting in such positions were selected against those who had acted for a number of years.

The Malayan Railways has accepted the entire recommendations of the Suffian Commission and has implemented the same except in the case of acting appointments. In this case the recommendations of the Suffian Commission have been deliberately disregarded. Sir, in a recent promotion exercise for guards and signalmen those who have acted for years have been ignored. This has caused wide-spread repercussions among the loyal workers who have served the Railways for a number of years.

Sir, the Railway Service Commission has acted in a most unjust manner creating suspicion on the Commission. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when reference is made to the Malayan Railways, I wish to state in this House that if we are going to have an efficient train service, I am sure the Government should review its policy towards promotions and recruitments in the Railways.

2 February 1972



*Dr. V. David is seen ushering in BAPA MALAYSIA YTM  
Tunku Abdul Rahman to a special reception held in the  
latter's honour on 22 March 1986.*

## CHAPTER VI

# RACIAL UNITY AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION

**"The Government's laudable declaration to unite the various races remains as an illusion and a nightmare."**



Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have perused the Address made by His Majesty and as the Government's policy is reflected in this Speech, to my astonishment, I do not observe any spectacular light thrown to eliminate the fear and suspicion that dominates the minds of the people of this country. During the past few months, large elements of confusion and suspicion have registered in the minds of the people. Most of these are well-founded suspicions because of the day-to-day actions and hasty changes in the Government's policy from time to time which drives the people to despair.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the period between 13th May 1969 and now calls for critical analysis: the number of legislations introduced between this period and the adverse effects they have on the people. Vital aspects of the fundamental rights of the people have been tampered with by Government's frequent pronouncement of changes. Some of these changes can be termed as anti-national and anti-social. The changes are not aimed at progress but they tend to retard the progress of the nation as a multi-racial society.

It is my firm belief, Sir, that the Government's laudable declaration to unite the various races remains an illusion and a nightmare. The actions of the Government during this period from May 1969 prove as an undeniable fact that the Government is not moving towards the creation of a united Malaysian nation. Glaringly, the Government has exposed its manipulations to divide the nation into racial groups.

Sir, our educational system alone will not build a society which will think and feel in terms of Malaysian without racial affiliation to any one particular race. It is, of course, paradoxical to assume that by establishing various committees such as National Unity Council and Goodwill Committees, the nation has achieved the ultimate object of creating racial harmony. To me the suspicions between races have become wider and wider. Young men and women who form the present generation feel that they are not offered the opportunity to make a decent living.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, recent months have shown that the Government is extremely fond of setting up various bodies and committees for numerous matters but many do not suit the function.

Sir, we view that the Press is a very powerful public forum. The healthy sign of democracy is to hear and to be heard. Any Government that forgets all democratic taste, norms and decency can only be termed as a fascist type of administration. There are strong indications that members of the Government often warn journalists on certain statements that are not in favour of the Government. This, of course, recently happened in the State of Penang. If this is true, then the Government is gradually aiming to bring the Press under its control by methods of bullying tactics.

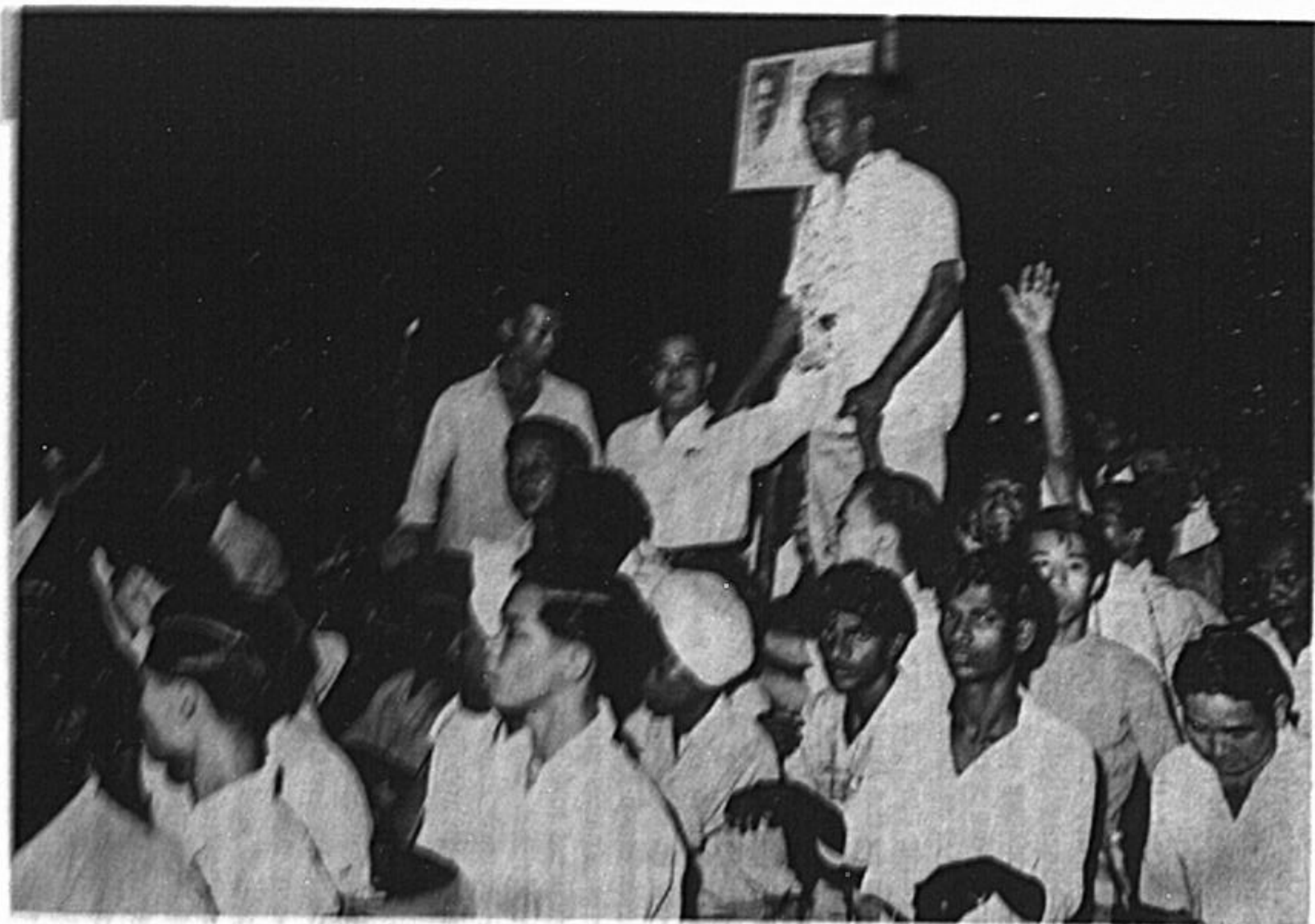
Mr. Speaker, Sir, the fidgety Ministers who frequently harrass the Press should stop this because they are only building or creating a monstrous system of society which will be unhealthy and which will have far-reaching effects. We stand for the freedom of the Press and public opinion should not be tampered with or hindered directly or indirectly. We call upon the Government to ensure the full freedom of the Press. The Press must be free to publish all matters of public interest whether it is from the Government or from the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Parliamentary debates and the concept of public opinion seem to remain as a window dressing for the Alliance Government. From the activities of the Government from time to time it can be glaringly observed that the Government expects Parliament to continue as a rubber stamp. The seriousness of debates has become of little value to the Alliance. The Alliance does not consider that Parliament is supreme. All major decisions are being made at UMNO level and all important announcements are being made in party meetings rather than in Parliament. This, of course, is wrong. We consider that whichever party is in power, that Parliament is free and, as such, the actions of the Government should be within this context. Sir, otherwise Parliament will become a joke.

Sir, in my view, Parliament is on the decline. This is largely because its proceedings have degenerated into a steam rolling process. Let me warn that Parliament is ceasing to be a focus of national interest. This cannot be convincingly explained away by the preponderate majority which the Government commands. Democracy loses its character and utility when those who wield the Parliamentary leviathan have little time or use for the voice or opinions of the minority. It is important, Sir, how one obtains power, but equally important is how one uses it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is an element of truth to the allegation that the discretionary powers possessed by the Ministry of Home Affairs in dealing with application forms for citizenship are on the brink of abuse. The Constitutional rights of the individual are not being carefully weighed in dealing with applications. Particular reference should be made to those who apply under Form G; though the residential qualification and other requirements are being complied with, in many cases Form G is being used for those who either were not able to register their birth during the Japanese Occupation or had lost their certificates. Applications are being dealt with contempt and prejudice. Many who have reasons to qualify have been rejected. Stereo-typed replies are sent to applicants after a long ordeal of sometimes two years and more. This is most unfair and is an attempt to prevent large number of our people from becoming citizens and deprive them from exercising their right to vote in elections. Sir, a complete review on this matter is absolutely necessary. Further, applications by local born persons should not take more than a month as such applications do not go through an elaborate process and even in these cases it takes a year or more. My complaints are the day to day experience of the people and unfortunately I do not expect an appropriate reply from the Ministerial Bench, as arrogant and flamboyant replies are nothing unusual.

Sir, my colleague has made reference to the labour laws. I wish to make particular reference to one or two vital points in respect to labour laws. Sir, not only are the workers flabbergasted with the undemocratic labour laws of our country but they are being administered, interpreted and applied against the poor, meek and the defenceless workers. This pitiful spectacle is experienced in many cases of dismissal of employees. The law pertaining to dismissal calls for immediate report to the Minister of Labour within thirty days. The Ministry is authorised to conduct an inquiry under section 16A, of the Industrial Relations Act.



*Dr. V. David celebrating his victory in the First  
Parliamentary Elections in 1959 when he was elected  
to the Bangsar Constituency.*

## CHAPTER VII

# TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND CIVIL LIBERTY

**“The quality of the students produced by our neighbours is an example that our education system calls for reorganisation.”**

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the educational system of Malaysia has created chaos and ultimately will only produce incapable and intellectually retarded students. Widespread frustration, discontentment and suspicion prevail in the minds of the parents over our educational system. Their suspicion is further strengthened by the children of the Ministers who are not being accommodated within the system that is being introduced by the Government. They often secure places for their children abroad in expensive schools and universities in a climate free from tropical heat, mastering English. Here it is highly questionable that if an educational system is not suitable for the children of the Ministers who are responsible for the system, how can it be suitable to the others?

Sir, the fiasco caused in our educational system is apparently clear by the mass failures. The number of failures and dropouts in our schools is an exemplary proof of the fact that there is something extremely wrong with the entire educational policy of the Government. An educational policy should be geared towards progress in the field of science and technology, but unfortunately our system further creates backwardness in our society. Sir, the Singapore educational system has offered some form of satisfaction and I am sure a similar pattern will be most fitting to our multi-racial society. Mr. Speaker, Sir, manipulation and manoeuvring in examination papers by the relevant authorities has further deepened the belief that the Government is not interested in creating a multi-racial society. The quality of the students produced by our neighbours is an example that our educational system calls for re-organisation. The children at least for a period of years should be allowed to become familiar in their mother tongue. A nation's heritage, culture and understanding can be only achieved by instilling in the fertile minds of the children racial tolerance and understanding.

Sir, Government's survey and re-approach to the educational policy is absolutely necessary. The present system and the manner of education itself demonstrates racial prejudice and misunderstanding. The Government must eliminate this fear from the minds of the people.

I must now congratulate the MARA Institute of Technology for adopting a pragmatic attitude towards education. I have been told that English is the medium of instruction in the Institute. The necessity for English has become important after considerable realisation. It is my humble view that an inquiry into the entire educational system is necessary for the following purposes:

- To probe into the present streams of education both in the primary and secondary schools to enable and accommodate within our national progress and development by bearing in mind the complexity of a multi-racial society.
- To make recommendations that will enable the children of this country to acquire the highest level of education that will be valued and recognised in any part of the world, and produce a generation that will be equipped with knowledge that is in no way inferior to that acquired by students of other countries.
- To formulate and recommend an educational policy that will ensure and assure the people of this country that there shall be no threat or danger to the various languages of the different races in this country, keeping within the spirit of our Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hope the Minister of Education will consider the proposals with an open mind. Sir, the estate schools and the children of these schools have been the most neglected in this country. Of course, this is not an exaggeration. The Government has ignored the plight of the estate schools. Extremely poor conditions and lack of proper administration are the basic reasons for the present position of the estate schools. Sir, I humbly invite the Minister of Education to offer this House an assurance that he will take concrete measures to reorganise the conditions of estate schools.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there has been widespread discontentment among Nanyang and Indian university graduates who have been ignored and are being subjected to humiliation by the Malaysian Government.

We are convinced that the Nanyang and Indian graduates of renowned Universities have a sufficient level of academic standard. The Government's refusal to recognise these graduates is deliberately aimed to prevent a certain section of scholars and educationists to compete with other local graduates. Sir, in Singapore the Government Service has largely accommodated the Nanyang graduates and they have proven their capabilities that they are second to none. The Government should free itself from the colonial heritage and should recognise the degrees of Asian Universities without any form of discrimination. Government's apathy and inconsiderate view towards Nanyang graduates calls for explanation. In view of the other development, we stress the need for the immediate recognition of Nanyang and Indian university graduates.



Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to touch on the Internal Security Act and the arbitrary detention. Sir, detention and persecution of politically active persons is legitimised through the Internal Security Act and the Public Order and Prevention of Crimes Ordinance 1969. The final crunch is through the Banishment Ordinance 1959.

Sir, the activist and sometimes politically innocent are arrested under the Internal Security Act and are sent to one of the camps. After serving their term or during the term of two years or so they are thrown into one of the prisons either at Pudu or Seremban under the Banishment Order. Their citizenships are then withdrawn. The concerned person is then served with the Order of Banishment. Pending his banishment he is kept in the prison. There have been as many as fifty in Seremban and about five in Pudu Jail. Pudu Jail is for the women. There are cases where while a person has just applied for his citizenship, he is thrown into Seremban Jail with a Banishment Order. Not all banishees are politically motivated. Some have been inside prison for about ten years. Questions have been raised in Parliament with regard to this and until then the exact figures will not be known. It appears that China is not willing to accept them.

Sir, the treatment accorded to banishees is far worse than that of criminals. They are not allowed food or book parcels. They are allowed to listen to the Rediffusion but when the news item appears, the volume is switched off. Newspapers are allowed twice a week and even that after certain columns are censored. Prison authorities do not allow the diet prescribed by doctors.

Sir, one Lee Nyot Moy aged 16 years in 1967 left school and was a rubber tapper in Ulu Choh, Johor Bahru, participated in the pineapple workers' strike and dispute: charged in Court and sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment. On the second occasion, she was bound over. Sometime in December 1967, she was arrested under the Banishment Ordinance and sent to Pudu Jail. She was there till 3rd January 1972. She was born in Johore and her mother was born here and is also a citizen. The Ministry withdrew the Order only on 3rd January 1972.

Ng See Hong, now aged about 28 years, applied for citizenship in August 1966. He passed his Malay Language. Before the result of the application was released, he was detained under Internal Security Act and kept in Muar Detention Camp. On expiry of two years, he was thrown into Pudu Jail, pending banishment. Both his parents are citizens and so are his two sisters and one brother. One sister was detained in Batu Gajah. Her name is Ng Hee Kiok alias Hwang Hee Kiok. Both the brother and sister are from Nanyang University. They were expelled by the Singapore Government as many were expelled at that time.



Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have all the time opposed the Internal Security Act and arbitrary arrests. Government's review of the detainees is important because a number of cases have been cited in the course of address.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government must realise that we cannot have one laughing eye and at the same time another weeping eye. The removal of poverty cannot be achieved by the Alliance Government and its garrulous Ministers. It can only be achieved by all the people working together. It would be mere hypocrisy and hyperbole to tell the people that the UMNO would be able to correct the economic imbalance. Any racial approach to the economic and social problems can only drive the nation into chaos and pandemonium. We observe communal overtones when Government talks about the "haves" and "have-nots." We are fully in support of re-structuring the society and bridging the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots." Poverty and misery calls for no race, colour, or creed.

A socialist approach regardless of racial identification is the only solution to correct the economic imbalance of our nation. The recent census reveals that the estate workers are the poorest in our country. Those who serve in the Economic Planning Unit should advise the Government and the Ministers not to play racial politics when tackling economic problems. The people of our country have tremendous potential and the Government has been unable to focus the attention in moving the people together in achieving a just and prosperous society. The success of the Second Five-Year Malaysia Plan depends on the extent of how the people of this country are united with confidence. Any move to shatter their confidence would only result in the failure of the plan. Therefore, the pre-requisite for the success of this Plan is racial integration by respecting the cultural traditions, language and heritage of all communities towards the process of creating a united Malaysian nation.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Opposition calls for the absolute withdrawal of all American forces from the Indo-China soil. We also advocate that the Americans must stop bombing the poor and innocent people of Vietnam.

Sir, the presence of American troops in Asia is a danger to peace and prosperity in the Asian region. The Alliance is confused over its foreign policy while the Ministers talk about non-alignment. Reactionary foreign policy has been the creed of the Alliance. The Honourable Member for Segamat Utara at the last sitting of Parliament, had cautiously questioned the necessity for the Five-Power Defence Pact,

Therefore, it is time that this Pact should be reviewed with the fast-developing events in this region. It is a shame on the part of the Alliance Government for supporting the Pakistani Army in the massacre of the people of Bangladesh. At the last sitting of Parliament, we warned the "prophets" in the Foreign Affairs Department that Bangladesh will emerge as an independent nation. Our prediction has come true.

We are proud that we have foreseen the inevitable truth that would ultimately emerge in the Asian region. It is most surprising to note that Malaysia should speak against the liberation movement of Bangladesh during their just struggle to free themselves from military tyranny and brutal massacre. At least now we hope that the Malaysian Government will commence immediate diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level with Bangladesh without waiting to see what the United States is going to do next.

We call upon the Government for the immediate commencement of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. Many months have passed since the Government commenced trade relations with China, but at the same time it is not prepared to commence diplomatic relations. Once again, we call upon the Government not to be hypocritical but to commence immediate diplomatic relations with Bangladesh and the People's Republic of China.

12 MAY 1972

## CHAPTER VIII

### CRITICAL COMMENTS ON BUDGET PROPOSALS

**"Only the equal distribution of wealth in a country can attain the goal of abolishing the gap between the haves and the have-nots."**

With your permission, Sir, I rise to make my critical observations on the Budget for 1973 presented by the Honourable Minister of Finance. I have attempted to examine closely the Budget from all angles, but I am still in doubt whether the Budget has the absolute wisdom to narrow the gap between the "haves" and the "havenots."

This is the second Budget presented in this House after the introduction of the Second Five-Year Malaysia Plan. One of the fundamental objectives of the Plan is to eliminate poverty among all races and correct the economic imbalances. "Social justice", or "masyarakat adil," is the slogan of the Government, but unfortunately the conditions created by the actions of the Government and the presentation of this kind of Budget proposals are not geared towards social justice.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Second Five-Year Malaysia Plan is designed to outline the strategy for and take the initial steps in the furthering of this objective. In doing this, the Plan is based according to the Government on a two-pronged national economic policy: firstly, to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty, secondly, to re-structure the society to correct the economic imbalances with the aim of reducing and eventually eliminating the present identification on race with location and economic function. This is what the Government has been advocating but, however, the Budget does not indicate that social justice is within the reach of the people of Malaysia.

Sir, only the equal distribution of wealth in a country can attain the goal of abolishing the gap between the "haves" and the "havenots." The creation of a small percentage of racially-orientated capitalists cannot and will not solve the problem of the poverty-stricken peasants in the rural sector of our country.

Sir, the tax proposals made by the Honourable Minister of Finance are ridiculous. To increase the revenue, there is no need to increase the price of fruits. Sir, this is an attempt to deny the poor people to enjoy fruits in this country.

There are many ways of earning revenue in this country. The Minister of Finance, who has a capitalistic mind, will not make any move that would displease the big businesses. From the tax proposals, it is absolutely clear that the big businesses have been exempted from taxation. Why did not the Minister increase the income tax of individuals who earn more than \$ 10,000 a month? This, of course, could have earned more revenue than the required amount. The higher income groups have been left out, while the poorer section of our community

have been over-taxed and not once but many times. Of course, this is the price the poor people of this country have to pay, as they have given the mandate to a capitalist-orientated Government.

Sir, the Honourable Minister of Finance in his lengthy address stated: "The rise in food costs was primarily due to the rise in the world price of sugar and dairy products."

Sir, the Minister has misled the House by stating that the world price has been the cause for the increase in the price of sugar. This is absurd and unrealistic. Sir, at our door-step, in Singapore, the price of sugar is cheaper than in Malaysia. I do not know how the Minister will justify the increase in price in this country. This will also demonstrate that the Government has failed to keep a check on the price level.

Sir, Malaysia grows rice and much emphasis has been placed on agriculture and land development. According to the Government, double cropping in many rice growing States has been a great success, but the irony is that the price of rice is more in Malaysia, a country which grows rice, than in Singapore where there is no suitable land to cultivate rice. Sir, the Government cannot deny the fact that the price of rice and sugar is definitely cheaper in Singapore than in Malaysia.

Sir, it is time that the Ministers visit Singapore to learn the secret as to how Singapore is able to maintain low prices for essential commodities and at the same time the workers there enjoy better wages than those in Malaysia.

Sir, the price tags are not the solution, but only with effective control can price levels be maintained. The Government should be bold enough to specify the prices for essential commodities and any prices above that should be made an offence. Even for this purpose, an effective machinery to implement decisions is absolutely necessary. It can be easily said that the exercise on price tags is a complete failure, and instead of bringing down the price, it has encouraged an element of increase in the prices of essential commodities. The consumers, especially from the poorer class, are paying more than what they used to pay before the price tags were introduced. Therefore, a solution has not been found, but Singapore is ahead of us. It is paradoxical on the part of the Government to make sugar-coated announcements in the Press and at the same time being unable to deliver the goods. The hard-hit consumers are today being exploited while the level of wages has not been increased. The people of this country, Sir, are looking towards the Government to offer them a standard of living where every individual can enjoy the fruits of national prosperity. With this hope and confidence, a massive mandate was given to them to rule the country, but not to abuse. Sir, the people are looking forward to achieve the following objectives:



- equal opportunities and chances in life;
- more humanity in our society;
- more social justice regardless of race, colour, creed, religion or sex;
- more freedom for the individual and respect for his basic and fundamental rights; and
- more security and freedom from fear and want.

Sir, the success of the Second Five-Year Malaysia Plan is another illusion to justify the Government's forthcoming failures. At a recent meeting of the Dewan Rakyat the Minister of Finance had sounded a warning. This warning was attributed to the reduction of rubber price in the world market.

This is an indication to show to the people that if at all the Second Five-Year Malaysia Plan fails, it is because of the fall in the price of rubber. May I take this opportunity to quote the statement made by the Minister of Finance on August 8th 1972 in this Dewan Rakyat:

"The natural rubber industry of Malaysia is today at the crossroads. Only four months ago, on April 5th, 1972 last, to be exact, the price of rubber reached its lowest level in 23 years. Even today, rubber prices are still too low, perhaps artificially low, and rubber price levels are crucial to the entire economy of our country. Rubber accounts for no less than 12% of the Gross National Product, 26% of employment and 30% of total earnings. In spite of its major and pervasive impact on the Malaysian economy, its price is largely determined by external factors over which we have no control whatsoever. This, of course, is particularly unfortunate, but it is something we have to live with."

Sir, the Government indicated that it requires \$14,350 million in development expenditure, by drawing the public sector to commit \$8,297 million. It is also stated by the Government that the major economic growth aimed under the Second Five-Year Malaysia Plan is 6.5% annual growth of G.N.P. with 3.7% growth per year in per capita income. The Government has also committed in this House that it would be creating jobs for 600,000 people within a period of 5 years. Two years have passed and it is correct to say that, within the terms and meaning of the Five-Year Plan, 240,000 people should have been gainfully employed by now. I can challenge the Government, Sir, that even half of this number have not found jobs. This further adds to the frustration which is already accumulating among the people. The Opposition is of the view that in the event the Government doubts its ability to succeed in the Second Five-Year Malaysia Plan, it may call for a mid-term election in order to further deceive the people by way of seeking another fresh mandate under the pretext to complete the Plan.

We are confident that public awareness will not permit the Government to evade from its responsibilities and the commitments it has made to the nation at large.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at this hour, when the Malaysian Government seems to have at least committed through the Press, to neutrality and non-alignment, it is of paramount importance to commence with warm, sincere, definite and positive relations with Singapore. Singapore being a country geographically and historically more close to Malaysia than any other country, dialogue with Singapore with firm commitments is vital. Let us look towards a new horizon in our relations with Singapore. We have observed that the Government is sending teams of people, both from the Civil Service and other sectors, for training elsewhere. This training, I am sure, can well be found in Singapore. Singapore's achievements during the last few years is noteworthy. The Malaysian Government cannot deny the fact that many things have been copied from Singapore during the last few years.

Sir, for a multi-racial Malaysia, Singapore is an ideal place for the training of young men and women because most of our problems are similar. We should not be ashamed to learn from others and correct our failures. Though we have attempted to copy good things from Singapore, unfortunately we do not have the nerves and guts to implement them effectively and efficiently because of nepotism, cronism and all forms of malpractice. May I, at this juncture point out that if we send our men and women for training to countries which are inefficient and corrupt and where the economic system has failed, you can rest assured that we will have nothing to learn from them except incurable illness which could be possibly brought to this country by those who go abroad for training. It is my view, Sir, that Singapore and Malaysia should work together towards a common objective for the construction of a social and economic system that will foster peace, prosperity and a new living for the people of both countries. The social amenities that have been provided to the people of Singapore call for praise. Let us learn from a country which has succeeded at our very doorstep than wandering in the wilderness to learn about success. May I also state that all political actions must proceed from realities, from facts but not from aspirations and ambitions to maintain the power of one's Government. Any policy that ignores these principles runs the risk of being wrecked.

Sir, we applaud the success of the Labour Parties of New Zealand and Australia. With the change of Government written on the wall more changes could be expected in the Asian region.

Both the Governments have categorically stated that they will review their military commitments in South-East Asia. The new Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Gough Whitlam, has also indicated the desire to withdraw the Australian troops from Malaysia. Neutralisation of South-East Asia was strongly advocated by the late President Charles de Gaulle who had stated that peace and stability in Asia could only become a reality if every country was allowed to manage its own affairs without foreign military intervention. The election victory of the Labour Party in Australia is the dawn of a new era whereby the winds of change are bound to sweep through Asia.

Sir, we take strong exception to Mr. McMahon's statement where he has justified that the presence of Australian troops in Singapore was to forestall any conflict between Malaysia and Singapore. It is not surprising that the "prophets" in our Foreign Affairs Department did not refute this particular statement. Let us not create another Vietnam or Indo-China. Withdrawal of foreign troops is a pre-requisite for peace and stability in Asia.

Sir, with reference to the estimates, particularly for the Ministry of Labour and Manpower, I am surprised at the manner in which the Minister of Labour and Manpower is handling industrial disputes. The recent chaos in Port Kelang is a classic example where it was established beyond any reasonable doubt that the concept of industrial relations in this country calls for a radical change. The Industrial Court which heard the dispute between the Harbour Trade Union and the Cargo Handling Corporation did not understand the working of the port. It would have been better if members of the Court had carefully examined the workers of the port with relevance to the huge profits reaped by employers in the port area. Some of the recommendations of the Industrial Court on this dispute were beyond imagination and calls for criticism. For example, the reduction of the work gang from 10 to 8 workers was aimed to increase the workload of an employee in a period when trade unions and workers are bitterly struggling to reduce the workload which involves physical strain and mental fatigue. The Court decided on terms and conditions much inferior to what was agreed to by both the parties before the matter was brought to the Industrial Court. The Court should have understood that if the Union had been satisfied with the offer of the employers, then there was no need for the matter to be referred to the Industrial Court. It is questionable why the Court did not question the wisdom of the employers who had hidden their profits and hoodwinked the members of the Court at the ultimate expense of the workers.

I have to draw an inference on the hearing because the Court is losing its independence and image. It is high time for the Minister of Labour and Manpower to enquire into the working of the Cargo Handling Corporation and now it is being financed and the amount of profit that is earned by the middlemen system in Port Kelang. A Commission of Enquiry into this matter is of utmost importance to clear the mess created by the Court which did not understand the dispute.

The Minister of Labour and Manpower must strengthen the Department which deals with conciliation. It is observed that this Department has become completely weak and ineffective during the last few years. When commenting on the Industrial Relations Department, it must be said that the Enforcement Department under the Ministry of Labour is no better. Certain officers who are responsible for enforcement have completely escaped from their responsibilities. They have allowed employers to evade from meeting the requirements of the Labour laws and to defy all established laws.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is sad to note that our civil servants only receive 48 weeks' pay in a year whereas Singapore civil servants receive 52 weeks' pay. The 13 months' salary introduced to the civil servants in Singapore has rectified the anomaly that existed for many years. Sir, it is time that the Treasury should pay 13 months' wages to the workers who have been cheated of their four weeks' hard earned money.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I understand that the CUEPACS has made representation in this respect and we will see in the future that more representations will be made by many other unions. Therefore, it is only reasonable and fair for the Ministry of Finance to consider the representations made by the Unions for 13 months' wages.

The Minister of Finance has stated in his Address:

"The Labour Force Sample Survey of April-May 1972 estimates urban unemployment at 10.2% and rural unemployment at about 6%. More than four-fifths of the unemployed are below 20 years of age. "Not long ago Penang faced a serious unemployment problem. Today, I venture to predict that in the foreseeable future it will face the opposite problem, i.e. a labour shortage. This dramatic transformation has occurred because the State Government was not satisfied with waiting for industries to come to it. Instead its Chief Minister, Dr. Lim Chong Eu, went out of his way to persuade industries to come to Penang. This effort had paid off handsomely."

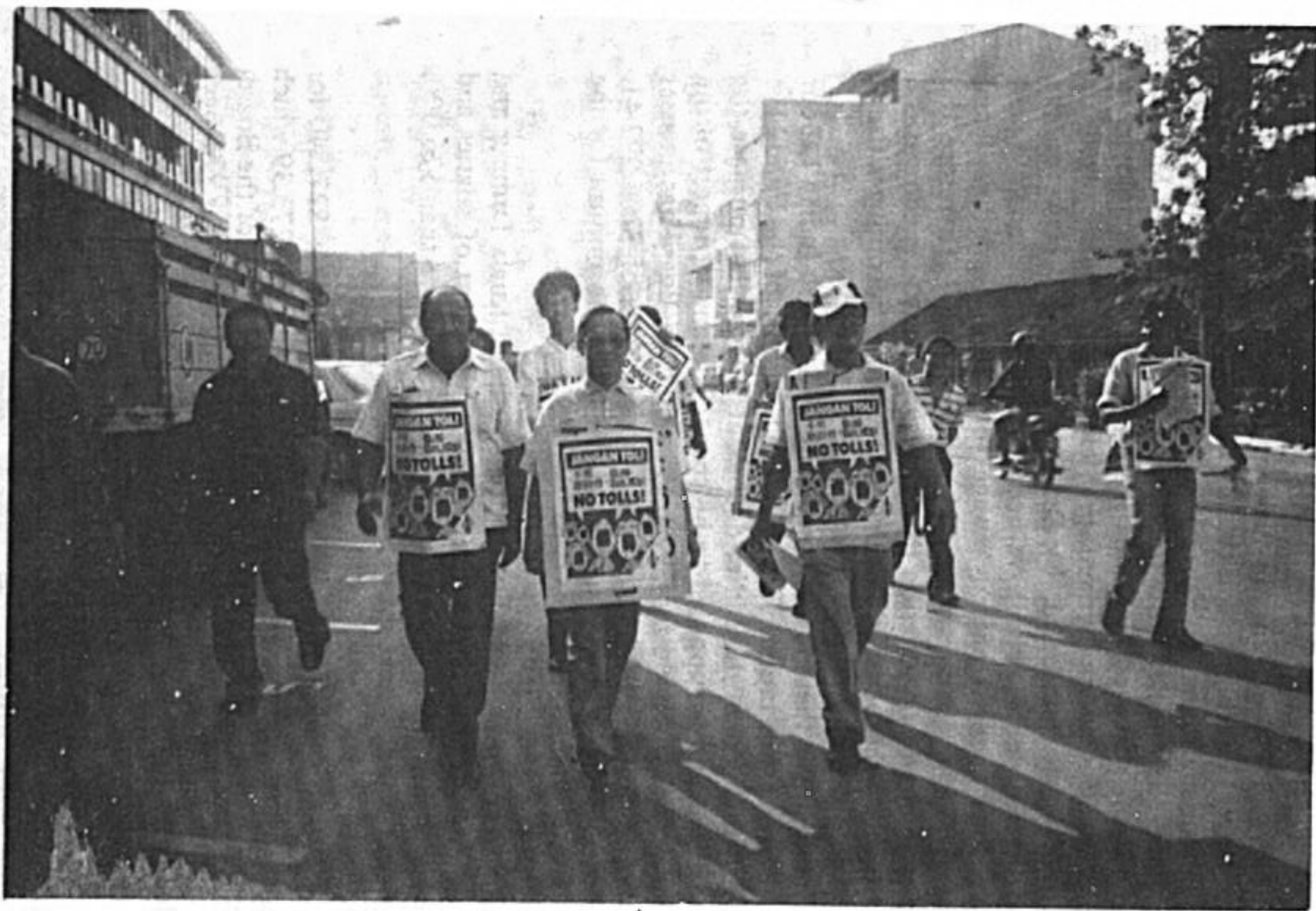
The figures quoted by the Minister of Finance are highly debatable. The report is purely based on the persons registered with the Employment Exchange but not the actual percentage of persons looking for employment. However, figures of unemployed persons both in the urban and rural areas have been on a steady increase between 12 per cent and 15 per cent. In Penang this is not less. It is about 15 per cent. Dr. Lim Chong Eu has stated with pride that he has broken the back of unemployment. This is his desperate attempt to confuse and misguide the people. From the time he became the Chief Minister of Penang he has quoted fictitious figures of potential employment opportunities. The unemployment problem has not been solved, as it has been widely publicised, by Dr. Lim Chong Eu. However, the small number of people who have been employed in Penang are paid extremely low wages. Oppressive wages of \$2.00 is another denial of social justice and contrary to "Masyarakat Adil." Therefore the growing unemployment situation threatens our country in comparison with the size of the population. Unemployment is becoming a threat to peace and prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a mystery behind the South Indian Labour Fund and its administration. The object and purpose of the Fund have been clearly defined in the earlier documents – for what purpose the monies of the Fund is supposed to be spent. The annual report of the South Indian Labour Fund for 1970 states that the Board has an asset amounting to \$3,909,300 bringing an annual interest of \$208,992.41. The Board also states that it had spent the following amount for the year: :

"Maintenance of two Old Folk's Homes, one in Kuala Lumpur and the other in Nibong Tebal, over \$96,000. Payment of salaries and allowances to members of the Board and staff, more than \$76,000. Payment towards scholarships over \$27,000."

On the item of education, the Board had only spent \$27,540 for the year. The amount is much lower compared with \$76,273.39 which has been spent on salaries and allowances to the members of the Board. From this one can assume that the item of education has not been accorded top priority by the Board.

11 December 1972.



*Dr. V. David participating in a "No Tolls" protest organised by the Democratic Action Party (DAP) in 1987.*

## CHAPTER IX

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL, SPECIAL PRIVILEGES TO NONE

**"The present state of affairs in the public service does not allow all races to share in the social and economic development of the nation."**



Mr. Speaker, Sir, this House is debating a most vital document which has a direct effect on the lives of more than 10 million people. The Mid-Term Review has been made in haste. Some of the figures in the Review are either desperately miscalculated or systematically designed to mislead, misinterpret and hide certain bitter facts which this House is legitimately entitled to know.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when the Second Malaysia Plan was introduced in 1970, we heard the echo in this House that the objective of the New Economic Policy was to promote national unity through a two-pronged strategy and the most interesting aspect of this objective is, "Eradicating poverty by raising income levels and increasing employment opportunities for all Malaysians, irrespective of race." The so-called national unity has remained an illusion. It is unfortunate that the Minister responsible for national unity is not here.

Sir, I regret to say that the Government has defeated this declaration in spirit and deed in the last three years. The Alliance Government has allowed its pledge to fly in the air and has acted contrary to this principle.

Sir, to substantiate my argument, I take the privilege to quote a statement which appeared in the Straits Times of 11th September 1972 by the Honourable Minister of Health:

"Health Minister, Tan Sri Lee Siok Yew, is unhappy over the present nurses' recruitment exercise because the recent intake does not reflect the racial composition of the country. More than 90% of the nurses recruited recently came from a particular race, he told newsmen today.

The explanation from the Public Services Commission was that there have been very few applications from the Chinese and the Indians, the Minister said. On the other hand, he added, he had received many complaints from unsuccessful Chinese and Indian applicants. He called on those unsuccessful Chinese and Indians in 1972 and last year to write to him."

Sir, this itself has clearly shown the conflict between the Ministry of Health and the Public Services Commission. Sir, though the Public Services Commission was bewildered by the statement since the cat was let out of the bag, it attempted to justify its action by explaining in the Press, but unfortunately the figures given by the Public Services Commission did not elaborate on the number of applications received for the

post of nurses from the various races, except that it stated the number of persons interviewed. This shows that the majority of non-bumiputra applications received were either pitched into the waste paper basket or were completely rejected.

The Government was placed in a dilemma and the statement of the Minister of Health was a clear admission of fact as the situation does not confine to appointments in the Health Department alone, but dominates the entire public sector – the Civil Service. So while the Government continues to stress and reiterate the need for racial balance in the private sector, its own recruitment policy on employment in the public sector does not reflect a multi-racial composition of the Malaysian population.

Sir, may I, at this juncture, quote a statement from the Minister of Labour and Manpower which appeared in the Press on 30th October 1972:

“The Government wishes to see a fairer racial composition at all levels. Under the Government policy the labour force should comprise between 40–50% Bumiputras, 30–40% Chinese and 15–20% Indians.”

Sir, it is sad to say that this has not been put into practice as far as the public sector is concerned.

Sir, there is an element of uncertainty and fear that has crept into the minds of the non-bumiputra citizens, the young especially, who have lived here, who were born and bred here and who have never seen any other country besides Malaysia. The question has been asked whether the employment opportunities in the Government Service have been completely closed for citizens who are non-bumiputras. Sir, this unpleasant and frustrating situation will not contribute towards national unity, which is the clear objective of the Second Malaysia Plan and also reiterated and emphasised clearly in the Mid-Term Review. Sir, there has been a tendency among members of the Alliance to quote the Rukunegara in the event the citizens demand for their basic and fundamental rights. Sir, I would like to quote a section of the Speech, in Page 2, of the Prime Minister:

“The progress that we have made in the first 3 years of the Plan has exceeded our expectations. The foundations that we seek for a society based on the Rukunegara are today much more solid than they were in 1969 when racial conflict threatened the very fabric of our multi-racial society.”

Sir, the concept and the philosophy of the Rukunegara have been ignored and forgotten by the Alliance members. Sir, may I draw the attention of this House not to hide behind the principles of the Rukunegara. The principles enunciated in the Rukunegara do not deny the citizens of this country from standing up for their basic and fundamental rights. The principles of the Rukunegara, especially on the rule of law, states as follows: "Justice is founded upon the rule of law. Every citizen is equal before the law. Fundamental liberties are guaranteed to all citizens."

Sir, the Constitution is the bedrock on which the rule of law is based. The Constitution gives every citizen his rights which are not at the mercy of any one particular race. These fundamental rights are the basis of any democracy. It would be no exaggeration to say that unity and integrity of this democratic nation could only be built upon a basis of fundamental rights irrespective of race, religion, class or creed, Sir, the great ideals of freedom and equality found their way into the law books because they were implemented in the hearts and souls of men before written constitutions were thought "to put no bricks in the building but to be the bread of life". Sir, the object of incorporating them into the Constitution is to guarantee the effect of exercise and to ensure that they sink deep into the soul of a nation and become its immaculate axioms.

Sir, therefore, we call upon the Government to explain why it has failed to keep the promises and pledges for the creation of a multi-racial Malaysia. Sir, the Government must review the recruitment position in the Government services which has tarnished the image of a multi-racial Malaysia.

Sir, the Honourable Prime Minister stated on 1st February 1971, at the official opening ceremony of the National Productivity centre:

"One of the Objectives of the New Economic Policy, is the eradication of poverty among our people irrespective of their racial origin. The present policy strongly underlines our belief that a programme to conquer poverty must transcend racial lines and it must benefit all our people irrespective of race and irrespective of whether they are in towns or in the rural areas."

Sir, the Malaysian Chinese Association and the Malaysian Indian Congress which have maintained absolute silence in this racial imbalance in the public sector do not reflect the views and the aspirations of the communities they are supposed to represent. Sir, the MCA and MIC lack the moral courage and guts to stand for justice. This action is a betrayal of the communities they claim to represent. I must

Sir, the Mid-Term Review states in a paragraph:

"The employment objectives of the Plan were to create some 596,000 new jobs so as to absorb the greater part of the 645,000 new entrants into the labour force during the period."

The Review further adds that the unemployment position in 1970 was about 7.5% and, on the other hand, it also states that the unemployment position will be reduced to 7% in 1975. This shows that at the end of the Second Five-Year Malaysia Plan, the Government would have only succeeded in achieving the reduction in unemployment by 0.5% — in fact a mere scratch on the surface.

Sir, the Government's statement that 348,000 unemployed people have been offered employment is most misleading, vicious and the figure is fictitious. Sir, I quote certain figures from the report of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower published in the Press which are glaring and contradict the figures appearing in the Mid-Term Review of the Second Malaysia Plan. Sir, the Straits Times on 19th December 1970 stated:

"About 162,000 people registered for employment in October, according to the Ministry of Labour. This showed a small decrease from 163,681 at the end of October 1970. The October figures, however, show an increase of about 1,900 job seekers against the same period last year."

The Straits Times on 13th October 1972 stated as follows:—

"The number of job seekers who registered with the Employment Offices throughout the country till the end of August was 169,011. In August new registrants — 13,831; found jobs — 2,512."

The Straits Times on 29th January 1973 stated:—

"About 160,000 people sought jobs with employment services of the Manpower Department, Ministry of Labour and Manpower at the end of October last year. Of these only 2,109 were placed in employment during the month, the Monthly Report for October of the Ministry stated."

Sir, from these figures, it is almost certain that the Government could not have provided the jobs for 348,000 people as stated. I do not accept the percentage of unemployment given in the Report as it is based on the figures obtained from the Employment Exchanges. The actual situation of unemployment is much higher than 7.5%. This is because of the fact that thousands of workers do not seek the assistance of Employment Exchange for securing jobs due to the nature

of jobs — estate workers, mine workers construction workers — and also because of frustration of workers not being able to secure jobs through the Employment Exchange for so many years. Even by accepting the figure of 7.5% unemployment in this country, by the end of 1975, only ½% would find jobs. i.

According to reports of the Ministry of Labour, jobs are found for 2,000 workers per month, on an average 24,000 a year. By this, 72,000 people could have found jobs during the last three years. Therefore, the figure of 348,000 is misleading and it is not a true figure. Sir, the paragraphs in this Report are designed to project political stability, but in reality unemployment continues to remain a serious threat to the nation. Sir, the unemployment position cannot be less than 12% even today. It could only be more.

Sir, the Review admits in one of the paragraphs that “unemployment among Indians, however, has worsened considerably.” I am so sad, Sir, that the Minister of Labour and Manpower — the President of the Malaysian Indian Congress — is not here to listen to the statement. He must be able to answer this. Sir, this justifies my argument that employment in the public sector has been restricted and prevented to non-bumiputras.

Sir, fragmentation and clearance of estates for development projects have thrown many estate workers out of employment. Sir, the Government had not rehabilitated the retrenched or dismissed workers through proper schemes for alternative employment. Rehabilitation of retrenched and dismissed workers is vitally important to offer a livelihood for thousands and thousands of estate workers who have contributed to the development and progress of the Malaysian economy.

Sir, a section of the Report says:

“The Government with the participation of the managements of estates and mines, has also launched a home ownership scheme for the workers.”

This scheme, however, merely remains on paper. Many estate and mine workers have become destitutes in the absence of dwelling houses after retirement. All the time, for 40 or 50 years, the employees in the estates have lived in estate quarters and when they are dismissed or retrenched, they have no homes to rehabilitate themselves. I wish to stress on the problem of the Indian Community in our country in the absence of any revelation by the President of the Malaysian Indian Congress. Not only the Indians form the highest percentage among the unemployed but, according to a survey carried out by the Statistics Department, they perform generally the lowest paid and meanest jobs. Sir, the Murad Report on drop-outs has reiterated that the rates of drop-outs and illiteracy are highest among the Indians.

Economically also, the Indians are the worst affected as is reflected in the following facts. In 1969, the Indian ownership of share capital of limited companies in Peninsular Malaysia was a mere 0.9%. The percentage has since gone down. In a survey conducted on beggars by the University of Malaya students in the city of Kuala Lumpur on 2nd. October 1972, it was revealed that out of the 162 beggars they found, 143 were Indians. Both the President and the ex-President of the Malaysian Indian Congress are answerable as they have created more beggars instead of giving a new life to the Indian community.

Sir, the above facts make the Government slogan hollow. In reality this fantastically deceptive slogan of correcting economic imbalance means the creation of a few Malay millionaires and capitalists leaving the vast majority of the Malay, Chinese and Indian rakyat in abject poverty.

28 November 1973.

## **CHAPTER X**

### **FOREIGN COLLABORATION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT : AN OVERVIEW**

"ASEAN nations cannot ignore the existence of other countries in Asia."



Sir, as far as ASEAN is concerned, much has been said in the Press about regional unity and so on, but the fact remains, Sir, that ASEAN nations cannot ignore the existence of other countries in Asia and if there is any desire on the part of these countries who are members of ASEAN, it is only proper that efforts are made to bring in those non-member countries as members. In the event of a Common Market, with the limited number of countries at present, most of them depending on foreign manufactured goods, any attempt to establish a common market would be a complete failure.

Recently, Sir, we read in the Press that the Australian Prime Minister was speaking in terms of Pacific Regional Unity and the details, of course, have not been announced or spoken about. But definitely the Australian Prime Minister is of the view of a broader unity in the countries among the Asian region. Sir, when speaking on regional unity, one cannot ignore the existence of the 700 million people in China, which is also the main buyer of our rubber. Sir, it would be more proper and practical for our Prime Minister to review the entire ASEAN concept in the light of the statements made by the Australian Prime Minister. Some of the countries are still in doubt as to whether ASEAN is intended as an organisation for the purpose of mutual interest in terms of economic and social interests or whether this would be or become a military bloc ultimately.

Sir, these doubts can only be cleared by a wider participation of countries and also bringing in countries which are neutral or non-aligned and if it is made into a Pacific Regional Organisation, an organisation which could to a certain degree, stand on its own in terms of a viable common market.

Sir, I am sure the Prime Minister will view this with concern in the light of other developments in this country.

Sir, again, the Five Power Defence Pact has not been reviewed and we have advocated in this House that the Five Power Defence Pact should not remain in its present form which creates an element of suspicion in the minds of some Asian countries. Though the Australian and New Zealand Governments, after being elected into power, have called for review, the Malaysian Government has attempted to sidetrack this issue by not firmly committing in one way or another.

Sir, I would call upon the Government to scrap this Five-Power Defence Pact which is not necessary at the moment and this would create a better image for this country among the non-aligned and neutral countries. Sir, whatever interpretations or arguments may be placed in this House, we cannot escape the fact that this Five-Power Defence Pact is a military pact and it should be scrapped at the earliest possible convenience to safeguard regional security.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, much has been said about diplomatic relations with China. When the present Prime Minister took over the reins of the Government he made drastic changes in the foreign policy and one of these changes has been moves to establish diplomatic relations with China, and it is almost three years since then. I hope, Sir, when the Minister concerned replies, he will clear the illusion except that the Government has been offering unfounded excuses that certain technicalities will have to be ironed-out.

Sir, we are depending much on China now for the sale of our rubber. The largest purchaser of rubber seems to be China at the moment. Again, Sir, the Government must make up its mind to have diplomatic ties or it must make a statement giving the reasons why it is not prepared to have diplomatic ties with China. It gives an impression to this side of the House that the Government is playing for time and actually it is not sincere or earnest in wanting to establish diplomatic ties with China. I hope, Sir, when the Minister concerned replies, he will clear this.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there has been a tremendous increase in the price of petrol but this is one of those countries which has been in support of the Arab cause and all the activities in the past and even at the present moment. But I do not know what is wrong with our foreign policy, because we are facing the same problems in the price of petrol.

The secret of this has not been explained. Though the production of petrol has been limited by the Arab countries Press reports say that the countries which have been in support of the Arab cause will not suffer.

Sir, the increase in petrol prices can affect the prices of consumer goods. This adds inflation which has reached its peak. I would like to know from the Minister concerned what is the fundamental reason for the increase in the price of petrol as this country is said to be unaffected by this control in petrol, by virtue of Malaysia being in active support of the Arab cause. It is only proper that the Minister clarifies this anomaly when he replies.

## CHAPTER XI

**RACIAL EQUALITY AND UNITY ARE THE  
TWIN-CARBURETTORS OF HARMONY**

"Integration and national unity within its context  
should be a true Malaysia for all Malaysians."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are debating the Speech from the Throne for the 4th time in the life of this Parliament. While we are debating this most important and crucial Speech, we have to go back to the historical and political development of Malaysia. First of all, let us recollect the day when political power was transferred from the British Government to the then Malayan Government in the year 1957. On 31st August 1957 at the Merdeka Stadium the instrument of power was handed to the then Chief Minister of Malaya, Tengku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj. The moment power was transferred the Tengku was proclaimed the Prime Minister. When we demanded Independence from the British, there was no such thing as independence for a particular elite group but independence for all Malaysians. We believed then that we were all Malaysians regardless of race, colour, religion, sex or creed. With this hope we fought against the British colonialism together with a common objective of independence for social, economic and political progress of all the people irrespective of race. But, unfortunately, it was a disappointment to many who thought Independence would be in this correct perspective and with its true value. We are today bewildered and dismayed that the benefits of Merdeka are not being shared and enjoyed by all the people. The Chinese and Indians did not then ask for a separate State which they could have done. Many countries in Asia, after independence, ended in turmoil. In this country, with the support of all races with one hope — for a bright future — Independence became a reality, and peace and prosperity were within reach of all people. But suddenly, attitudes changed among those in power to preserve their selfish identity, betraying the objects of Merdeka and have become traitors to the just cause of the people. Racialism in disguise is the order of the day, envisaged and propagated by the Alliance. All economic planning and social progress is aimed against integration but geared towards racial polarization. As I have said, if the Chinese and Indians had then asked for a separate State each, this country would have ended up like India and Pakistan or like Israel in the Middle East or similar to Singapore separated from Malaysia. Fortunately, the people rose above communal and racial lines. As socialists, we are against such communal and racial thinking. The people trusted the then leadership of the Government, but today the people are under severe persecution, politically and economically.

Here is a Government which survives purely by dividing the people by race, thus creating a minority of "haves" against the majority of "have-nots". From 1968, national unity has become a myth and an empty slogan. Integration has become a bluff. Anyone who talks about integration is deceiving himself and deceiving all his fellow beings. What is integration in Malaysia? Is there any sign of integration at all in this country? The answer is "no". Integration and national unity within its context should be a true Malaysia for all Malaysians. But in this country of ours, the rights and privileges have been blatantly denied to the majority. Recent population census confirms that the Chinese and Indians are no more in absolute minority — they are more than 45% of our population. Everyone is asking the question: Is there a place for them under the sun in our country? Their future is bleak, assessing from the methods and ways the Government is implementing its policies.

Sir, is there classification in this country known as "First Class Malaysians" and "Second Class Malaysians?" I am sure the Prime Minister would be in a better position to answer this. The way the Government has approached its economic and social problems indicates that there are two types of Malaysians. For I, who was born and bred in this country, would not like to be a second class Malaysian and am entitled to live equally with all Malaysians whether they be the Malays, Chinese or Indians. Fortunately or unfortunately, knowingly or unknowingly, attempts are being made to create a division among the races. This, of course, is dangerous, and the humiliation experienced by the people will have tremendous adverse repercussions in our developing society. Let me refer to Mr. T.J. Connely, Chairman of the British Race Relations Board, who was reported in the Straits Times dated 25th March 1974 as follows:

"Today no country should have a minority race who are regarded as second class citizens. If such a practice is followed, seeds of discontent will be planted that will create problems to hinder the prosperity of the country and the unity of its people."

Sir, many civil servants and those employed in statutory bodies are frustrated and disillusioned. From 1969 an elimination process has commenced in the public sector and the statutory bodies as far as Malaysians of Chinese and Indian origins are concerned. For instance, if one may ask an employee in the public sector as to the progress he is making in his job, the answer would be as follows:

"I am a non-bumiputra — therefore the chances of my promotion are absolutely nil and I am just counting the days for my retirement."

This type of statement does not come from one person but from thousands who are subjected to humiliation by the denial of promotion opportunities. This state of affairs is not only confined to promotion, but also in the case of recruitments. After 1969 among those recruited for jobs in the public sector and statutory bodies not even 10% of Chinese and Indians have found places. Is this the type of Malaysia we are going to create? If it is so, I can only say that there is going to be chaos in this country and the floodgates will be open to extreme elements who will not believe in the constitutional form of Government. It is up to the Government and those who hold the reins of power to remedy the situation. But, of course, there is the Malaysian Chinese Association, which is supposed to represent the Chinese community in this country, and the Malaysian Indian Congress, which is supposed to represent the Indian community, but with great regret none of the two organisations has any standing among their own communities. They have lost all guts and they are not here by right but as a favour, as a window dressing, to show to the world that we have a multi-racial Government. The MCA and MIC have sold their own communities and they have mortgaged the people's interest just to preserve the interest of a few individuals.

Sir, we are here to live as citizens with equal status and if this Government tries to ignore the "have-nots" in this country then I am sure they are heading for trouble. Deliberately and systematically with calculated objectives, the Government has denied the rights and privileges to a large section of the nation's population — national unity is in its naked form and exposed in its true colours. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the time has come for the various communities to stand up and demand their rights and if the Government thinks that they are not going to give the people their rights, the time will come when there will be a new breed who will take these rights. History has proven that wherever and whenever people were denied their rights, rights have been taken by those who have been denied them.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, bearing in mind the multi-racial nature of our society and with a view of sharing the nation's progress and prosperity by all the people, a quota system in employment especially in public sector is vital. The former Minister of Commerce and Industry and now the Minister without Portfolio, Honourable Tuan Mohamed Khir Johari, once said that job opportunities should be distributed as follows:—

Malays	..	..	..	44%
Chinese	..	..	..	40%
Indians	..	..	..	16%

It is not only the responsibility of the Government to see justice being done to all races but it must make sure that all the people have a fair stake in this country. The Government must now alleviate the fear of insecurity.

Racial integration has become an absolute failure even in schools. Communal feelings have been kindled and planted in the tender and fertile minds of the children. The seeds of bitterness have been sown among school-children. If one may ask a student why he is not in the science stream, the simple answer would be as follows:-

"I am not a bumiputra though I scored the best marks in Science"

Here itself, in schools, racial hatred and feelings of ethnic segregation are being planted. Disunity among children is created by an educational system which is communal and will always keep the generations to come divided. Surely, if the Government wants, it can provide facilities for all the children desiring to enter the Science stream. The late Tun Dr. Ismail on the eve of his untimely death sounded a warning to the nation — he declared that this is a multi-racial and multi-religious country. His statement still echoes in our ears and remains in our memories. What has happened to this concept and philosophy which came from an elderly statesman? Are we deliberately deviating from these principles or have we forgotten and disregarded the fact that we are living in a multi-racial society? Mr. Speaker, Sir, these are matters which the Government should search in its heart and soul.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Public Services Commission in this country is only independent in name. It remains a mere rubberstamp to the policies of the Government. The composition of the Commission will undoubtedly confirm that it is there to take instructions and not use its discretion. In my view these commissions are a waste of public funds because their activities have not justified the reasons for which they were established. Recruitment for jobs and promotions are purely based on racial considerations than merit. Qualifications, experience, capability, quality, integrity and dedication are all suspended in favour of racial consideration. In the event an engine driver goes for an interview for promotion, he will be asked to explain the badminton match between Malaysia and Indonesia in Bahasa Malaysia. It is not necessary for him to know about the engine though his job is of a highly technical nature. Some of the questions asked by the Commissions are stupid and ridiculous. This is the reason we have derailments daily. In other words, Sir, the Public Services Commission or the Railway Services Commission appointed for recruitment appears to be basically against the Chinese and Indians. It is not hearsay and you will confirm it by a visit to any department. In future or in the next five years they will be systematically eliminated from the Statutory bodies and the Public



Service. In the Malayan Railways, there may be a person acting in an appointment for three years, but he will not be confirmed and neither will he be made permanent because the only fault of his, is his birth and racial origin.

He has committed no other crime. Is this what you call integration and national unity? Is this what you call a true Malaysia for the Malaysians? Sir, racial discrimination has reached a level that people have to say it whether one likes it or not. We have been sweeping the dust under the carpet: we have to say it whether one likes it or not. We have been running away from realities: and we have been hiding from the bitter facts. Restructuring of society today appears to be the elimination of the Chinese and Indians from all forms of jobs in the public sector and statutory bodies. Is this the definition of the term "restructuring of society?" It is systematic elimination. We often talk about loyalty and also talk about the Rukunegara. The people who talk about the Rukunegara are the people who are violating it. Rukunegara states that no person should be denied his rights, and here is absolute denial of all the legitimate and constitutional rights of the individual.

Sir, His Majesty in his Royal Address said:

"We are pleased to note from the Mid-term Review that during the first three years of the Second Malaysia Plan, the progress achieved exceeded our expectation. This means that the foundation on which Malaysian society based on the principles of the Rukunegara is to be built has become stronger."

Sir, the actions of the Government are completely contrary to what has been said by His Majesty.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, how long is this nation, how long are the people of this country going to tolerate this nonsense? Let us end this type of thinking and rise above racial discrimination and sectarian priorities and move towards a fair deal for all the have-nots in our country regardless of race. If this injustice continues, it will tear the entire fabric of our nation. It will cut down the very roots of the already decaying society where racial prejudice is dominant and rears its ugly head in all forms. We have seen many nations collapse. The destruction of many social systems is due to racial prejudice.

But, in this country, it is going to be worse. This could be another lesson to the prophets who are leading the people of this country into the unknown and mysterious path. Whether we will reach the destination or not is a matter to wait and see. This is a racially orientated Government which ignores and disregards the communities which have lived in this country and who have made this country their permanent

home. Are we going to tolerate all this and wait to see the doomsday, or are we going to stop this? It is for the people to decide how it should be stopped and if the people can be aware and conscious of their rights, I am sure the Government cannot take away their rights.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I crave your indulgence at this juncture to refer to the Constitution of this country which states as follows:-

Article 8

“All persons are equal before the law and entitled to the equal protection of the law.”

Further it is also stated in the same Article:

“Except as expressly authorised by this Constitution, there shall be no discrimination against citizens on the ground only of religion, race, descent or place of birth in any law or in the appointments to any office or employment under a public authority or in the administration of any law relating to the acquisition, holding or disposition of property or the establishing or carrying on of any trade, business, profession, vocation or employment.”

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the provisions of the Constitution have made this clear in no uncertain terms. It has emphasised the need for social justice, but, unfortunately, we have a one-track-minded Administration which attempts to correct the economic imbalance through so-called racial lines. This, of course, will fail. A classless society can save the nation from its economic ills.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, here is another most outrageous and vicious atrocity conducted in the granting of citizenship especially to those who applied under Form G (for persons who do not have a valid birth certificate). The Minister responsible is armed with powers to reject an application without assigning any reason. These discretionary powers are being abused to the maximum. In certain cases, the applicant, after waiting for 3 years, would receive a reply from the Minister stating that his application has been rejected. But the fact remains that the Minister denies him the right to become a citizen though an eligible person who has all the necessary qualifications under the law. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a matter of policy, and the Government should make a categorical statement whether it desires to grant citizenship to residents who have made this country their permanent home or not. Among 100 applications made under Form G may be 5 applications would be approved by the Minister and the remaining 95 would be rejected. It is a long ordeal and indefinite wait for the applicants who are disillusioned and driven to despair by the time they receive a reply from the Minister of Home

Affairs. Mr. Speaker, Sir, where is our national ideology the Rukunegara? In my view, the provisions of the Rukunegara are being tampered with and being destroyed: trampled under the very feet of those who are responsible to uphold it and they are being shattered by those who are supposed to protect it.

As for the delays, Sir, the powers in the hands of the Minister of Home Affairs are wide and at times he chooses to apply these powers in a most arrogant and arbitrary manner. Mr. Speaker, Sir, are we to understand that we have reached a point where the Government is no more sincere in extending citizenship rights to the residents of this country?

If it is so, why not the Government make a statement to this effect? Mr. Speaker, Sir, day in and day out thousands of applicants wait and wait with their hearts wide open whether they can be part of the Malaysian social institution for which they have worked and contributed in the past. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government has never been sincere and honest with the people of this country.

All of us are aware that those who applied for citizenship and were made citizens surrendered their certificates under the amnesty extended by the Government. The people were later not allowed to become citizens. In fact, these people have been honest with the Government and should have been allowed to qualify as citizens. Here, again, the Government has not considered their cases favourably and has not kept its promise. Those who were born here and do not have birth certificates are not being given citizenship. The Government must understand that in certain States, registration of births became compulsory only in the year 1922 and after. Therefore, it is most unfair to demand for birth certificates when there was no opportunity for the people to have registered.

Sir, I have been informed by certain quarters that the Government is not going to dispose many of the citizenship cases and are waiting for the General Elections to be over to reject the applications in toto. If this is true, then it is the violation of the principles of the Rukunegara and undermines the very spirit of the Constitution.

Sir, "Man does not live by bread alone." There are other requirements for the human life. All human beings irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex have the right to pursue for both material well being and spiritual development in conditions of dignity and economic security, and if this is denied then there is no purpose in existence of human life. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is boldness to state what human beings need when they are born. One might say that we need these qualities to survive, to grow and to help our ideals in the crucial trials in which we live in. The people of this country gave the Alliance a massive mandate,

but the mandate was to rule fairly and justly and not to discriminate and create racial divisions among the people. The mandate was given to serve the people and not to mortgage their interests. With an absolute majority, the Alliance is of the view that it can do anything and everything under its rule and can disregard social values and constitutional rights of the people. The arrogance of the Government is the sign of its destruction sooner than expected.

Sir, His Majesty in his Royal Address declared:

“Our Government is fully aware that at the present moment, inflation is a major problem faced by our country. Our subjects especially those with lower incomes are the worst hit by it. My Government takes a serious view of this problem.”

He also added, Sir:

“We are sad to know that although our country possesses an ample supply of rice, our subjects are experiencing difficulties in obtaining it at a reasonable price.”

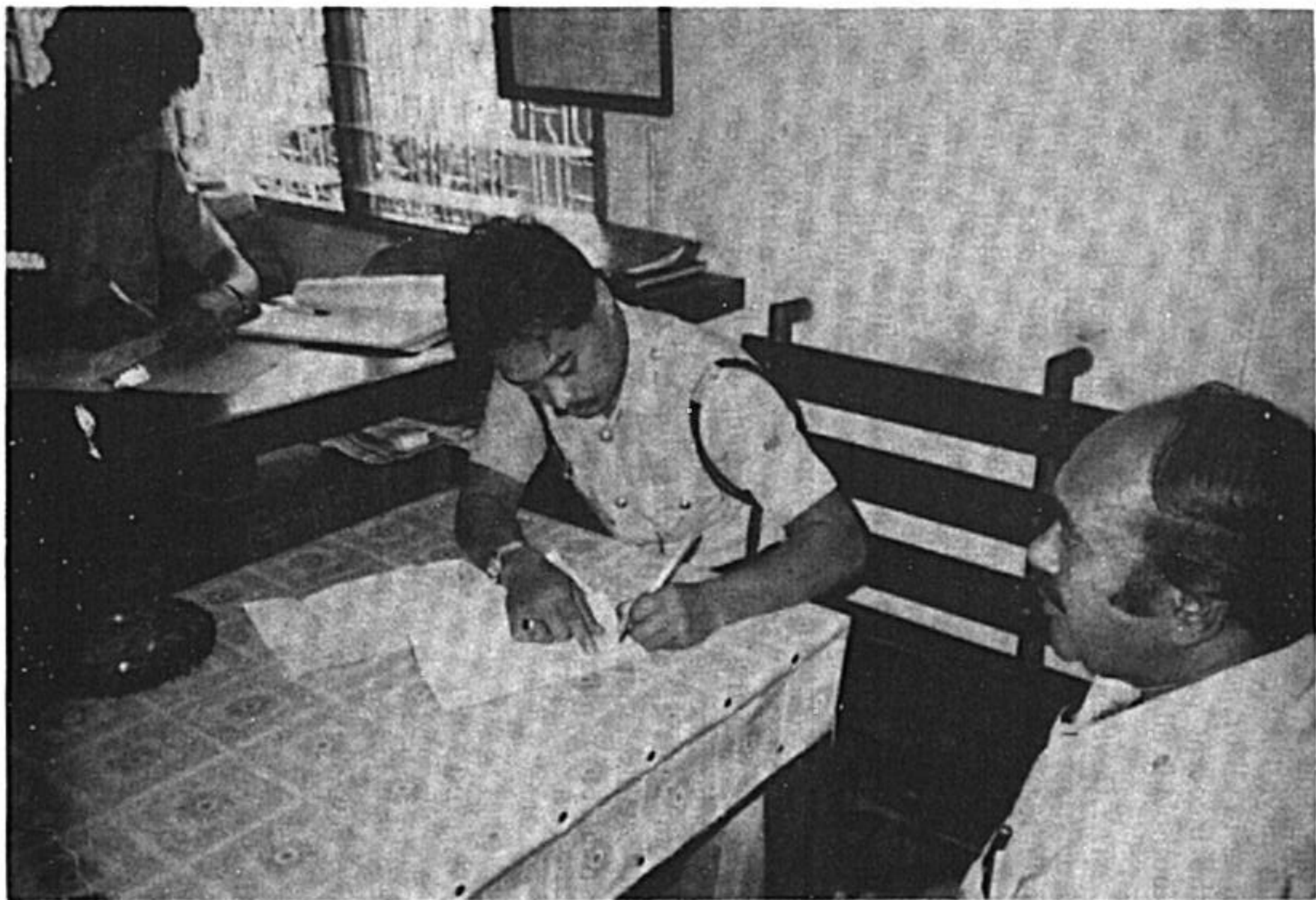
Mr. Speaker, Sir, the burning issue among the people is inflation. The people of this country are almost on the verge of starvation. The have-nots are in great distress and struggling to survive in the midst of the spiralling of prices. Prices of essential commodities have risen beyond proportion. Despite the Government's laudable slogans that prices have remained unchanged and, instead of being reduced, they have increased from time to time. I have my doubts as regards the Lembaga Padi dan Beras Negara (LPN). Before this body was established, Sir, we could easily obtain Mahsuri rice all over the country, but from the time the LPN was established, the same Mahsuri rice is obtainable in Singapore but not in Malaysia where it is being produced. The Government became alarmed by the situation and desperately removed the Chairman of the LPN. Here let us ask: why was there no investigation made on the conduct of the Board by the Government? The fact remains that something has gone wrong and the LPN is under grave suspicion not only by the Opposition but by the entire public.

It is customary on the part of the Government to sweep the dust under the carpet but now the cat is out of the bag. How can it keep telling people that the Government is clean? Corruption is dominant in the branches of Government's administrative machinery. An inquiry should be instituted to find out to what extent the LPN has been assisting and abetting the hoarders, racketeers, profiteers and black-marketeers.

I am, of course, making a serious statement in this House. Definitely, there is no need for the Chairman of the Board to be removed within months of his appointment if nothing has gone wrong within the organisation. Why is it that we are unable to obtain Mahsuri rice for some time when the same could be obtained in Singapore? This is a mystery. The corrupt Alliance with the full support of their corrupt men in all branches and sections of the Administration are exploiting the innocent public, workers and peasants. Corruption has gained a foothold in all branches of our economy.

The Government has stated that inflation has been imported, but I must say in this House that inflation has not been imported, it has been locally manufactured. Of course, there can be a small element of imported inflation, but inflation has been created by the reactionary economic policy of our ill-planned and defective system. It has been created as a result of people in the various branches of our Government assisting and abetting the hoarders, profiteers, racketeers and black-marketeters. This is the reason why we find a small number of millionaires at the expense of thousands of poor people in this country. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we warned the Government when it introduced the 5% sales tax, that this was the beginning of a sad era – an era of towards economic chaos and disaster – and this had been brought about by the incompetent economic planning of the Government. The economic ills of this nation have to be shouldered by the entire Cabinet which should be answerable to the people.

17 April 1974



## CHAPTER XII

### A BASIC LIVING WAGE IS AN INELUCTABLE NECESSITY

"It is a social evil on the part of society to see the workers underpaid."



Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave of this House to move a motion on basic living wage. The motion reads as follows:

"That this House, desiring to save the workers from oppressive wages and unlimited exploitation, grant leave to the Member for Datuk Keramat to introduce a Bill intituled BASIC LIVING WAGE ACT, 1974 which seeks legislation to fix a basic living wage by law and that any wage that is paid by industries below the wage that is specified in the law shall be an offence; that employers would however be permitted to offer more but not less than the BASIC WAGE; that Trade Unions would be entitled to negotiate more than the BASIC LIVING WAGE by mutual collective agreement for the BASIC LIVING WAGE is only the minimum, not the maximum."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when seeking leave to move this Bill, first of all, in the light of rapid industrialisation and in the midst of foreign capital playing a major role in our developing economy, it is absolutely necessary that some form of legislation should be there to prevent greedy entrepreneurs coming to this country to reap the maximum profits within a short period.

Sir, there should be some form of standard where the worker is allowed to earn a living within the terms and definitions of the international standards – the ILO Conventions – so that the worker could live with his family in frugal comfort in a civilised community, and it is the responsibility of the State to see that such legislations are framed to allow the workers to enjoy the economic development of the country.

Sir, when all is said and done about the Second Malaysia Plan and the New Economic Policy, the beneficiaries of all this progress and development should be the workers. But if they are allowed to be exploited ruthlessly by capitalists and those who invest in this country with no other motive except to reap the maximum profits, then I am sure the Government is not keeping within its intended objectives.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we find most of the industries in this country paying a daily wage of \$1.50, \$2.00 and the maximum of \$12.50 in certain electronic factories. If this is so, the Government is abetting and aiding employers knowing fully well that this is insufficient in this country in the midst of the prevailing inflation with \$1.50 or \$2.50. The Bill seeks legislative protection. Such protection is found in many countries of the world and in all those countries, though the minimum wage law is there, the trade unions at all times have negotiated more than what is specified in the law.

Sir, it is a social evil on the part of society to see the workers underpaid, i.e. paid below what they are entitled to. This matter has been raised in this House many times but the Government has found an excuse in rejecting it by saying that the workers in the urban industries are well paid. Sir, this cannot be a genuine and reasonable cause to delay the implementation of a fair living wage.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Malaysia has played a prominent part in the International Labour Organisation and other United Nations Agencies and I think it is time that this country should have laws that would protect the social element of the workers. Sir, among all factors in any country, the human factor is the most important factor and if the human factor is ignored or allowed to be exploited, then we are not reaching the so-called masyarakat adil – social justice.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it would be needless for me to elaborate at length as by this motion I am only seeking permission to introduce the Bill. There are no other motives, except that from the trade union point of view and from the workers' point of view it is time that that we should have a living wage law, a law that will give protection to the weak defenceless and innocent workers of this country. We have allowed investors to exploit our workers to the maximum and many industries have reaped profits within a short period which normally cannot be done and this has been done at the expense of the sweat of the poor workers.

Sir, I seek the support of this House without any party affiliation or party feelings because this is good for all and it is for the cause of the workers. If such a law is brought about, we can save the workers from all forms of pitfalls which are being experienced by the workers.

## CHAPTER XIII

ALL OF US BELONG TO ONE FAMILY : MANKIND

"The composition of the communal political parties in the National Front is a testimony for racial polarisation."

His Majesty the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong has declared open the 5th Parliament — the nation has celebrated the 21st Year of Independence — The people of this country recently went through a mid-term poll. Though the National Front has been given the massive mandate to rule for the next five years, the DAP has also been given the mandate to be the largest, effective, coherent, loyal and constructive Opposition. The polls have demonstrated that 45% of the electorates are opposed to the policy of the Government and they have registered their protest through the medium of the ballot box. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government cannot ignore the role played by the DAP as a leading, credible Opposition in the highest legislature of the nation.

For democracy to function meaningfully there should be an effective Opposition. Democracy is not a luxury to be enjoyed unlawfully or a theory to be defended incredibly but a means to be used for the welfare of all people. It is the Opposition that keeps the Government on its toes, ensuring its efficiency. It helps the citizens to perceive clearly all aspects of problems facing the country, represents the opposite views and ensures the sound working of democracy. An inefficient ruling party and an irresponsible Opposition should both be made responsible when democracy drifts into demagoguery. Without an Opposition parliamentary democracy is meaningless and baneful. All men are born free and entitled to their own opinion on any issue. Dissent is not enemy action.

John Stuart Mill said:

“On every subject on which difference of opinion is possible — The truth depends on a balance to be struck between two sets of conflicting reasons.”

Dialogues and not diatribes help solve problems and galvanize activity.

For the last 20 years of Independence the so-called racial integration envisaged by the present Government seems to have failed. Racial polarisation has become the order of the day. The composition of the communal political parties in the National Front is a testimony for racial polarisation. Former Finance Minister and now the Financial Adviser to the Government Tun Tan Siew Sin on 14th July stated in an interview to the Utusan Melayu:—

“Sorry to see that communal polarisation is on the upward trend, especially amongst the youth. The only remedy for this is to make the National Front a single political party instead of the present system of having several political parties as its component members.

denial of fair public trial and invasion of privacy. When human beings are forcibly abducted from their homes – interrogated incessantly at the pleasure of their captors and such things happen where we live, all those who truly value human rights must speak out. The right to enjoy civil and political liberties – freedom of thought – of religion – of assembly – of speech – of the Press – freedom of movement – all these are the basic foundations for human rights.

The Internal Security Act of 1960 on arbitrary arrest and detention without trial is against the very principle of basic human rights. The refusal to grant citizenship to all those who are eligible on the basis of agreement reached with the Colonial Government during Independence is a denial to the people to live freely. Curbs on the freedom of the Press, – and the disproportionate delineation of the constituencies are all undermining the concept of a free society. The denial of one's language and culture is again a danger to our institution, and the actions of the Government are an indication that the country is moving towards dictatorship and tyranny.

The time has come for the close scrutiny of the Constitution and the danger which has arisen to democracy in the country. For this, the DAP proposes an independent commission to be headed by a High Court Judge with legal experts, representatives of all political parties, trade unions and public institutions to study and make recommendations to the extent of violation of human rights that was caused by the numerous amendments to the Constitution that has been made in the past and how this could be restored with relevance to the agreement reached between Malaysia and the Colonial Government at the time of Independence. The Prime Minister, on 13th July 1976, declared in Parliament:—

“Some people always ask whether the Constitution should be amended from time to time, or whether it should be amended at all ..... a Constitution is a current document and, therefore it is bound to develop. Our society is not static and cannot be governed by a document which is unchanging ..... obviously a balance has to be struck between the two points of view, whether unsatisfactory or inappropriate provisions should continue to be regarded as sacred and immutable, or whether they should be amended according to current needs and thinking.....”

The DAP is not against amendments to the Constitution for progress but it opposes the stripping of the freedom and rights of the people. Therefore, amendments should only confine to advancement and not impose restrictions and curbs denying the rights of the people. The Constitution and the policy of the Government must be fair and just to all, irrespective of the colour of their skin and religious beliefs.

Yet with all the laudable objectives of a multi-racial society, the Constitution was amended in 1962 to facilitate the electoral system in favour of a particular political party with racial orientation. The rural weightage is a clear discrimination in our Constitution. To maintain control of the political system the Constitution was amended by the then Alliance. And to this lopsided political philosophy the MCA and the MIC contributed. Adult franchise is the governing principle of elections in democratic countries. But in Malaysia grotesque distortions have been built into the electoral system through a weird manipulation in the delineation of constituencies. The obvious aim is to give weightage to a particular area. The result is that all the votes do not have equal value votes of a particular race have more weight than the other votes. And yet the electoral system passes for one based on the unquestionable principle of universal adult franchise.

Then came the amendments to the Constitution to make arrest and detention without trial absolute, replacing the Emergency Regulations of 1948 with the Internal Security Act, 1960. Arrest and detention without trial has become a permanent feature in our Constitution. The classic example of this is the continuous detention of the Honourable Member for Sungei Besi Mr. Chan Kok Kit and the Honourable Member for Batu Gajah, Mr. Chian Heng Kai. Though they won the Parliamentary elections with an overwhelming majority while remaining in detention, their continued detention is against the wishes of the people. These men are being held for the very purpose that they think differently from those who hold the reins of power. If this is a crime then they should be produced in an open court for trial and the allegations against them substantiated.

The registration of voters and the system practised at the moment is against free elections. Voters are being prevented from registering in some centres at the time of registration.

Those registered do not find their names in the electoral books. Certain registration centres prevent the people from registering under the pretext that forms are not available. Even registered voters do not find their names in the electoral books due to manipulation where it is likely that forms are destroyed if it is of a particular community.

There are reasons for this suspicion because a large number of voters registered do not find their names. Is it not fair that the registration exercise should continue through out the year and not for a limited period? The election office functions throughout the year and we see no reason why the registration cannot be conducted throughout the year. The disappearance of names in the electoral register calls for

proper investigation. An element of suspicion has arisen that in constituencies of the Opposition the electoral books do not carry names of electorates of a particular community fearing that they may not vote for the National Front. The Election Commission, being an independent body, should rise above all forms of suspicion.

Further the voting age should be brought down to 18. As a young nation and in view of social and educational development the voting age should be lowered, to ensure that the young exercise their basic rights.

Government's decorations and awards have become extremely cheap and have become open to much criticism at all levels. Awards like PPN and PJK have become common to the extent that whatever competition rises for official positions in the ruling party, the contenders always bear in mind that the office will ultimately lead them to decorations and awards. Today the awards have become political rewards for supporting the ruling party. This only shows the abuse in the conferment of the awards.

The awards should strictly confine to persons who have rendered meritorious service to the community, especially to those who are handicapped. For instance those who serve the blind, the deaf, spastics, the aged and orphans. The volunteer workers who devote their valuable time with no return should be recognised. The Prime Minister, I am sure, does not wish this abuse of awards and decorations to continue. Even some with criminal records have been bestowed with awards. The recommendation for awards should not come from component parties of the National Front. They should come from the various departments confirming the service rendered by respective persons in social-welfare and volunteer work. This prevents abuse and ensures that worthy persons will receive awards for commendable services. The entire nation is aware that these awards are being abused and as a result these decorations have lost their respect and value. If we examine the past awards, especially during pre-election this will determine that a number of them are not fit for the awards. If awards are based on the criterion of political favour then we are only undermining Their Highnesses the Rulers and His Majesty, the King who are misled by Government recommendations.

October 1978.



## CHAPTER XIV

### MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN: CAUSE FOR CONCERN

"The poor have remained poor since Independence. Particular reference should be made to the urban poor."

I have a panoramic view of the Mid-Term Review of the Third Malaysia Plan. The terminology and phraseology create high hopes in the minds of the citizens of this country. The doubt rises whether the three Malaysia Plans have contributed to the restructuring of society and have narrowed the gap between the haves and the have-nots as envisaged by the Barisan Nasional. Inflated data and figures increase the hopes of the citizens, but whether this would be translated into meaningful reality is again questionable. From examining the Mid-Term Review the facts speak for themselves. Implementation of the Government's laudable objectives has remained a mere illusion.

Page 33 of the Mid-Term Review states:

"The social conditions of the estate workers have also been improved through the provision of basic amenities. Facilities for housing, potable water, electricity and medical coverage have been provided during the period by estate managements in response to policy measures enunciated in the Plan."

The conditions in the estates remain the same as they were in the colonial era. Health, sanitary and housing conditions have never met changes though we are living in a new era. The classic example to this would be Carey Island, where the estate workers do not even have drinking water after many years of independence. The restrictive measure on their movement, within the estate and outside, create an impression that the workers are still living in colonial bondage under slavery. While the British managers enjoy the facilities of a swimming pool with piped water, the unfortunate workers of the estate do not have within their reach even clean drinking water and are dependent upon rain water. Is this what we call restructuring of society in a modern era?

There has been a grave concern over the increase of drug addicts in this country. The young, especially the unemployed, have been dragged into the consumption of drugs on a large scale. Millions of dollars are being spent on the so-called effective control of the spreading of drugs, but this remains in print and as the Government's declaration of policy, but has not found routes of implementation. The authorities in certain quarters are abetting and aiding the spread of drugs. The controlling authorities, though knowing fully well of the trafficking of drugs and the areas, are not prepared to act swiftly in the national interest.

Many children of high society and rich families are drug addicts and they escape the provisions of the law by influence and money. What is the police doing about all this? The argument offered by the police is that they are prepared to arrest them but there is no availability of good rehabilitation centres where the addicts could be reformed in stages. The millions spent by so many organisations have become an abuse when there are no definite, positive and urgent measures to combat drugs and reform those who have been addicted. There is widespread alarm among the people of this country in the way drugs are spreading in society and at the same time unable to find a source by which this could be prevented. There is also a widely accepted view that drugs are being trafficked across our frontiers along Padang Besar, the dividing boundary between Thailand and Malaysia. Is that not proof enough that our frontiers are not secure, and that punishment for drug trafficking should be mandatory, such as death, and this should also apply to those authorities who abet the use of this tragic and dangerous human killer?

Officers, whether they be police or others, on having been detected and proved to have been associated with drugs, either directly or indirectly, should be seriously dealt with without fear or favour. The Opposition proposes that rehabilitation centres must be operated under a crash programme, with speed and with utmost urgency. This is the only way by which we could contain the menace of drugs.

Pages 27 of the Mid-Team Review states:

“During 1976–78 various programmes and projects have improved the economic and social welfare of the poor and other lower income groups.”

The poor have remained poor ever since Independence. Particular reference should be made to the urban poor. I will list a number of kampongs in the heart of Kuala Lumpur which lack the basic amenities of drinking water, sanitary facilities, electricity, sewage disposal and proper roads. In this list I could easily include Kampong Paya, Kampong Abdullah Haji Hukom, Kampong Lembah, Kampong Pantai, Kampong Pantai Halt, Kampong Kerinchi, Kampong Pasir Segambut, Kampong Tengah, Kampong Masjid, Kampong Sirih and many more areas. Twenty-one years of independence have not even brought drinking water to these unfortunate people.

Though the Government has declared its intention to provide stand pipes and electrification under the First Five Year Plan, both in the rural and urban areas, it is not within the reach of the poor as they are being denied these facilities on grounds that these people are living in squatters.

Discrimination in the granting of Permanent Residence to persons who have brought their wives after marrying them abroad, is a common phenomenon in Malaysia. The immigration officers are either ignorant of the law or they are deliberately directed to deny permanent stay to those women who have married Malaysian husbands. In this category, would this permission be also denied to Ministers' sons who are married to women outside Malaysia? There must be a clear directive to the immigration officers to adhere strictly to the law and not be guided by political influence and push around the weak and the innocent.

"Page 235: Under the Third Malaysia Plan, the Immigration Department was allocated \$6.8 million, of which \$4.5 million was expended during the period 1976 - 78."

There is a strong belief that thousands of Indonesians are working in Malaysia on special permits, known to be a yellow paper. If this is true, we would like to know from the relevant Minister whether these people are bona fide residents of Malaysia, and if not, what their residential status is. This information is important, to understand the ulterior motive on the part of the Government to flood the labour market with illegal immigrants.

Millions of dollars have been spent to develop MAS. The present debacle is another indication of how public funds are being misused. The taxpayers are paying for the ills of the Government as the MAS had become a losing concern for the last number of years. The present dispute between the MAS and the AEU is a clear example of how the Government has mishandled the entire MAS problem. Let us ask what has happened to our National Airline, the MAS.

Page 170 of the Report: "Airport facilities continued to be expanded and upgraded including the installation of navigational aids like radar and instrument landing system (ILS) to cope with the rapid growth of air traffic for both passenger and freight. The growth of passenger traffic was estimated at 25.6% increasing from 3.9 million in 1975 to 4.9 million in 1978. As for Peninsular Malaysia, during 1975 to 1978, the number of passengers grew from 2.2 million to 2.8 million, while in Sabah and Sarawak the growth was at 23.5% from 1.7 million to 2.1 million passengers. Similarly the growth in freight traffic was significant, rising from 30,046 tonnes in 1975 to 76,560 tonnes in 1978, an increase of 154.8%. Malaysian Airline System (MAS), under its expansion programme, acquired three new aircraft consisting of two DC-10s and one Boeing 737, bringing the total strength of its fleet to 25 aircraft. MAS also increased its international route network to cover additional cities: Perth, Jeddah, Melbourne and Frankfurt."

The Registrar of Trade Unions, by a letter dated 8th January, 1979, directed the Union to immediately strike off from the membership register 874 Union members for their alleged participation in an illegal boycott of overtime work. Amongst those de-registered were four Executive Council members and two principal officials. It is also reported that amongst those who were de-registered by the RTU were workers who were on annual leave and were not involved in the dispute and one who had died sometime back! This clearly indicates that the RTU did not make an investigation but depended on the biased report of the management. Can anyone blame the AEU members for their militant stand when justice is not meted out fairly? Is this the way industrial relations is handled by the authorities in a democratic country? In so doing the RTU'S action was like pouring oil to an already growing fire.

The authorities were not satisfied with the weakening of the Union by the removal of almost one-third of the Union Membership. To make it worse, the Union was given a show-cause letter why it should not be de-registered. The Union was given almost two months to reply the letter and also ordered not to indulge in any of its normal activities other than to reply to the show-cause letter.

One cannot help but feel that the RTU was not concerned in resolving a simple industrial dispute as soon as possible but went on to castrate the Union so that it could not even go to the negotiating table even if the Union wanted to do so. Instead of assisting to find a quick solution, the actions of the authorities prolonged the dispute and it was allowed to fester and spread. From a simple industrial dispute the Government knowingly or unknowingly by its actions helped to turn it into a national and international issue. The Government must conduct an investigation and those who were responsible for wrongly advising the Government should be brought to book. The Government is urged to enable AEU to resume negotiations by lifting the prohibitory order served by the Minister of Labour and Manpower be withdrawn.

The expulsion of Mr. Johann Haul, the Assistant Secretary General of the ITF while he was attending a seminar in Penang was the starting point in making the dispute into an international issue. Did he do anything other than his duty by giving his support for the workers who were being beaten down with a big stick because of an industrial dispute?

The international trade secretariats like ITF are recognised bodies by ILO and other international trade union organisations. Support given to its affiliates should not be misunderstood or misconstrued as interference in the internal affairs of a country. The ITF'S duty and obligation are to assist workers who are their members in their struggle

for socio-economic justice. As such any misinterpretation of their role is unfair. The ITF has played a significant role in assisting workers in the developing countries. Let us not do anything to condemn the ITF in general. Such action would aggravate matters and our country would face further difficulties, and would also undermine the investment climate.

We cannot ignore the world opinion. As we have the right to comment on South Africa, Rhodesia, the Philippines and the Middle East similarly others have the right to comment on our ill doings. Human rights and democracy cannot be isolated and it is a concept universally accepted. World opinion is necessary especially when we are spending millions of dollars on trade missions to attract investment. Let us not deceive ourselves. If we do not want the goodwill of other nations, then we might as well forget foreign investment. The choice is before the Government. Make up your mind wisely and honestly.

*The arrest of MAS workers under the ISA on alleged grounds of tampering with MAS aircraft is nothing but a mere fabrication and a method devised to threaten and create fear in the minds of the workers and to destroy their solidarity. The police action is to be viewed with grave concern and should be condemned as undue interference in an industrial dispute. This action aggravated and worsened the situation and did not help to settle the problem. The unfounded allegations against the workers tampering with the planes and the arrest of the workers by the police did nothing more than to widen the gap from finding a possible solution to the existing problem.*

The application of the Internal Security Act in an industrial dispute is contrary to the spirit of the Act. When the ISA was debated in this House an assurance was given by the Government that it would never be used against the workers who seek redress of genuine grievances. The workers concerned, including Mr. Donald Uren, the ITF Asian Representative, should be released immediately or in the event there is evidence that the detained persons have acted against the established law they must be tried in an open court.

The move by certain quarters to form an in-house union for the MAS workers is a deliberate attempt to weaken the Union and divide the Solidarity of the workers. This should not be allowed to happen as it is the Government's declared policy to encourage national unions.

The MAS dispute reached this critical stage mainly because of the interference by politicians. They have caused confusion in the dispute. At one moment they ride on the backs of the Union for their own selfish ends and then turn against them and let them down. The MAS episode clearly indicated the damage and confusion politicians like the UMNO Youth Leader has caused.

The Committee set up by a handful of MAS workers to "save MAS" was an illegal committee, encouraged to split the solidarity of the workers. The RTU ruled that this committee was a legal committee. One cannot help but feel that this committee was encouraged and supported by the MAS Management, the authorities and political parties to break the solidarity of the workers. This committee set up office and operated in an expensive hotel, the Jayapuri. The rakyat would like to know from where this committee obtained its funds if any collections were made from amongst the handful of members, if it obtained permission from the authorities for such collections. Public funds have been spent in Jayapuri.

What actions has the Government taken on this expenditure which is outside the budgetary allocation for MAS? The findings of such an investigation would be very interesting and revealing. Such action, if encouraged, is going to be used by other employers to break up unions, thus resulting in more industrial unrest and frustration among the workers.

Both the Minister of Labour and Manpower and the Minister of Communications have contradicted in their statements all along in the MAS/AEU dispute. While the Minister of Labour advocated the provisions of the Trade Unions Act, 1959 and maintained rightly or wrongly the legality of the dispute, the Minister of Communication offered piecemeal settlement outside the orbit of conciliatory machinery available in the Ministry of Labour and Manpower and thus created further confusion. It is viewed with concern whether both the Ministers are working in a parallel within the National Front Government and there is lack of co-ordination and a communication gap at the level of the Ministers. The public is aware that the present chaos was created by the Ministers themselves who lack the basic knowledge of industrial relations.

We are not blaming them for their ignorance as none of them have been associated or have lived and worked with the trade union movement. There is an absolute need to revamp the Ministry of Labour and Manpower especially the Conciliatory Division to ensure that the UMNO Labour Bureau does not play the role of the Industrial Relations Department of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower. Let us ask the Minister of Labour and Manpower if the UMNO Bureau intervenes in all trade union disputes, then what will be the function of the Industrial Relations Department of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower?

The working class in this country has always maintained that the problems of the industries should be approached purely as an economic and social issue and have exercised its activities beyond the machinations of racialism.



It is shocking to observe that the UMNO Labour Bureau has manipulated on racial and religious tones which is against the very spirit of the nation's Constitution and the national character of Malaysia. The Prime Minister should act without fear or favour in this respect if he still believes in the true essence of a United Malaysian Nation.

The abuse of the Internal Security Act and detention without trial trespass into the rights of human dignity and detaining trade unionists under the pretext of Arbitrary Laws is highly questionable. The Opposition calls for the immediate release of all those detained or they be produced in a Court of Law where natural justice could prevail.

The Government must take immediate action not to prolong the MAS dispute any further and also take steps to prevent any escalation of the dispute which was bungled from the start. The Government should be held responsible if any adverse actions happen both nationally and internationally which might affect our economy.

I call on Government to.

- Immediately release all those workers including the ITF Representative who have been detained in connection with this dispute.
- Rescind the prohibitory order issued and served on the Union so as to accord it legal and representative status.
- Direct both the management and the Union to immediately commence negotiations on the Union's claim.
- Restrain political parties from further interfering in this trade dispute.
- Reject the formation of a House Union for the MAS workers which is detrimental to the solidarity and unity of the workers.

MARCH 1979



*The author with Opposition Leader, the Honourable  
Mr. Lim Kit Siang, while attending the World Conference  
on Human Rights in Madras, India in 1983.*

## CHAPTER XV

### LABOUR FREEDOM HAS BEEN SHACKLED TO THE GUARD-POST OF POLITICAL DISCRIMINATION

"The concept of industrial relations has yet to be understood within the broad context of human relations."

Drastic amendments are being introduced to the Industrial Relations Act, 1967. The amendments are not favourable to create industrial harmony or peace that are envisaged both by the workers and employers.

The concept of Industrial Relations has to be understood within the broad context of human relations. Both the Government and industry are not dealing with deadwood, but with living human beings. In dealing with human beings one has to understand the basic elements that are necessary to generate a feeling of trust and confidence.

We are today faced with problems that are created and designed by personnel of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower who surely lack the understanding to generate the climate that will preserve and nurture industrial peace. The advisers to the Minister of Labour and Manpower are of the view that human behaviour can be controlled by holding the "big stick" without realizing the human factor. Among all factors in industrial relations, the human factor stands out foremost.

In the course of 1965, at the height of Confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia, the workers were stabbed at the back by the promulgation of the obnoxious Essential Regulations. The Essential Regulations were decreed on May 13, 1965 preventing strike action in essential industries. The reason for this then, as claimed by the authorities, was that the nation was beset with the crisis of the Confrontation mounted against it by Soekarno-led Indonesia.

The Annual Report of the MTUC presented to the 15th Annual Delegates Conference on December 9, 1966 reported as follows:-

"The Government as was to be expected, conveniently forgot all its commitments to the workers in the country. Thus, the Essential Regulations, relating to Trade Unions, which were said to be temporary in nature, are likely to become a permanent feature of the Government's Industrial Relations policy. Despite the promises, public declarations and pious assurance made during the meetings, there is no sign that the Regulations would ever be withdrawn. The Government had finally shown its true colours which spell disaster for workers. If even now they remain indifferent, disinterested and unwilling to accept their obligations and responsibilities, then the possibilities of workers' salvation will become all the more remote."

“Malaysia has now become the employers’ paradise. Spoon-fed by the pioneer status, protected under the federal laws and their interests especially looked after by the Ministry of Labour, it is little wonder that many of them have become arrogant, anti-union and have increasingly shown the tendency to act like the overlords of the medieval ages. The Essential Regulations have been outrageously exploited and that too with the seemingly active connivance of higher officialdom. Apparently this is what the Government means by an ‘open society’ with free inflow of foreign capital.”

Again, in 1967, the Industrial Relations Act was introduced, preventing strikes particularly in the Essential Industries and making arbitration compulsory. From this period onwards, the workers lost their sacred weapon to collectively take steps to obtain a just living.

For the third time the Industrial Relations Act of 1967 was drastically amended on October 9, 1969.

*The labour movement, if it is to have self-respect and dignity, must reject outright the very many obnoxious amendments proposed. Let us make our position clear, before we go any further, in our comments on the proposed amendments. Social and economic justice must be the ultimate goal of any labour policy. It must be given a pride of place and should be one of the driving principles of Government policy.*

*The concept of social and economic justice is a living one. It must give substance to the Rule of Law, and above all the concept must give meaning and significance to the ideals of Social Justice. The amendments now proposed, tragically do not in any measure reflect those ideals.*

*On the contrary, they appear to be designed to unduly control the labour movement and impose upon it very arbitrary decisions by the authorities concerned.*

We must emphasise once more, even at the risk of repetition, that the trade unions cannot support laws that suppress labour and are glaringly unjust and arbitrary, which in the final analysis, would defeat rather than further the ends of justice.

It must be quite decidedly understood that if industrial harmony is to be maintained to enable better industrial climate for investment, then this objective cannot be achieved by the kind of amendments to the laws that are now being proposed. The best investment climate that can be achieved is through the development of industrial democracy and not by investment and monetary policies alone, or for that matter through oppressive labour legislation which are often conveniently utilized as a kind of “investment incentive.”

In the harnessing of the human resources, organised labour definitely has a greater role to play than presently thought of by employers and the Government, which itself is a substantial employer. It need hardly be emphasised that as a means of harnessing human resources, all parties involved must make every effort to develop and promote ideas of human equality, freedom and fellowship and create a living democracy in industry.

Industrial democracy in the deepest sense of the term is something which must grow out of positive social settings in industries and undertakings and it must enter into a natural way of life.

**SECTION 5(2)(b)** We cannot accept any provision that gives an employer the power to interfere in the freedom of association of a workman. The existing provision itself is unacceptable. Sub-Section 5(1) on 'prohibition on employers' should not be subject to exclusions as provided for in Sub-section 5(2). This Sub-section should be deleted altogether.

**SECTION 44A** As mentioned earlier, Trade Unions must be allowed to exercise their ultimate weapon in the face of unfair labour practices. The words 'and any circumstances' are too sweeping and over-encompassing.

The MTUC cannot accept the kind of restrictions imposed in the amended version of the Schedule on Public Utility Services. Public Utility Services should, by definition, cover only those services that are organised and run by public authorities for the public generally. It should not include privately owned services, like banks or transport services, etc. The existing Schedule itself covers a very wide area of public utility services that have to comply with the provision of Section 43.

The amendments are a deliberate curb on the normal functions of the trade union movement. Neither the Opposition nor the trade union movement can accept these amendments because they will snowball problems in industry, rather than solve them. The normal functions of a trade union must be recognised and acknowledged in order to acquire social justice for the toiling masses. The Opposition strongly deplores and opposes the amendments.

April 1980

# Conditional release for seven ISA detainees

By RASLAN BAHAROM  
and S. BALA

TAIPING, Fri. — Seven ISA detainees, including DAP vice-chairman Dr Tan Seng Giaw and central working committee member Dr V. David, were released from the Kamunting detention centre today.

They were set free about 4.30pm and taken to the main bus station. They were accompanied by three prison officers.

Six of them were seen boarding taxis for undisclosed destinations, while Dr Tan was met by the DAP Assemblyman for Assam Kumbang, Dr Kong Cheok Seng.

The others were United Chinese School Committee Association president Lim Foong Seng, Chinese educationist Sin Mou Yu, Aliran Kuala Lumpur branch secretary Theresa Lim Chin Chin, Universiti Pertanian lecturer Cecilia Ng Choo Sim, and Pas legal advisor Haji Suhaimi Said.

Dr Tan told newsmen that all of them were released with conditions.

He has to report to the Petaling Jaya police station on the first day of every month and he has to report whenever he wants to leave Selangor.

He said Haji Suhaimi, of Pahang, is confined to Temerloh.

Dr Tan said he was well treated, but he hoped the authorities would

upgrade the medical facilities at Kamunting.

"The detention has made me more determined to struggle for a more democratic and better country, but not through violent means," he added.

In KUALA LUMPUR, DAP acting secretary-general Lee Lam Thye said Dr Tan and Dr David told their wives of their release late this afternoon.

"The DAP headquarters here was informed of their release by the detainees' wives late this evening," he added.

He said the DAP welcomed the release of Dr Tan and Dr David but called upon the Government to re-

lease five other DAP leaders still under detention.

They are DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang, national deputy chairman Karpal Singh, deputy secretary-general P. Pato and central working committee members Lau Dak Kee and Lim Guan Eng.

The seven DAP ISA detainees were among 106 people arrested in October last year.

A member of Theresa Lim's family, who did not want to be identified, confirmed she was freed.

IN PENANG, Cecilia Ng's mother, Madam Mary Joo Hong Eng, said she spoke to her daughter on the telephone shortly after her release.



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE EMPLOYMENT ACT SHOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH FUNDAMENTAL LABOUR RIGHTS

"The basic living wage should take precedence in the Employment Act."

Workers of Malaysia expected drastic social reform in the amendments to the Employment Act, 1955 but have been sorely disappointed. The Government has repeatedly expressed concern over rural workers and to our dismay the amendments do not protect the interests of the rural workers. May be the Government was not sincere when setting out to win the hearts and minds of rural workers, the farmers – fishermen – and others who are caught in the vice of unscrupulous middlemen and who are exposed to exploitation in the absence of legislative checks and controls. The Opposition insists that the rural workers be effectively covered in all labour legislation.

The workers expected greater benefits such as changes in EPF contributions, but again the Government has never given thought to offering employers' 18% EPF contributions which could stand in good stead for the worker when he reaches the age of retirement.

Old age pension – and other progressive means of social reforms – are within the expectation of Malaysian workers so that they could keep in step with progress and development.

The Employment Act, 1955 is the amended and modified version of the Labour Code introduced in as early as 1912 when the British planters were at the helm of colonial rule.

The basic living wage should take precedence in the Employment Act. This will protect the workers from wages that are far below fast rising living costs. Besides this, the hours of work should now be reduced to forty hours per week to bring about a five-day week without any loss in the take-home pay of the worker. The five-day week has for long been adopted in a number of developing countries, and Malaysia cannot be an exception. There are a number of developing countries which are already thinking in terms of and working towards a five-day working week. The workers need more rest and need adequate time to spend with their families and the community at large. These are related to social and human factors which the Government should give serious thought to. Development and progress cannot be isolated and they should be applied in all spheres of our advancement. While nations are reducing working hours the proposed amendments call for as long as 10 hours' work on a staggered basis, whereby a worker reporting for duty at a given time has to be around the place of employment for ten hours though he may have few minutes of intervals which will be neither productive to him, give him adequate rest nor could he leave the workplace. The Opposition strongly opposes the 10 staggered hours of work which will surely be abused by employers.

Let us remind this House that industrial development has to be proceeded side by side with social progress. The human factor in any country forms the very essence of peace, prosperity and national progress. Below standard conditions designed primarily to attract foreign capital would be injurious to social development and national character.

The Government has advocated that it has a responsibility to unorganised workers and if it is really so, the exclusion of the unorganised workers in the rural sector is contradictory to its frequent pious utterances.

The Opposition calls for drastic reforms in the Employment Act, 1955 to ensure that workers of this country become the beneficiaries of development and progress. Old-age pensions – security in time of unemployment – reduced working week – enhanced annual leave – better health facilities and other social amenities are basic guarantees for industrial peace and stability.

JUNE 1980

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE BUDGET SHOULD REFLECT NATIONAL, NOT RACIAL IDEALS

"The untold misery of the nation's vast population remains an open secret."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, once again, for the 23rd year we are debating the budget allocation to determine the fiscal priorities of the Government for the ensuing year.

Government has always attempted to hide its weaknesses by backbenchers continuing to praise the Government though there remains a gap between the haves and the have-nots that is widening instead of being narrowed. The untold misery of the nation's vast population remains an open secret. There has been more publicity and propaganda than actual performance. The State-owned Television and Radio have always ensured that the media are fully utilised to overshadow the basic problems existing within our society — the economic ills and mismanagement of the State. The Press is surviving at the pleasure of the Minister of Home Affairs, who is the authority for the annual renewal of licenses and who thereby ensures that the voice of the State prevails. The arms of the Press have been restrained and twisted so that it serves no purpose other than that of being the Government gazette and all these perpetuations are continuing in the name of democracy and the services to the people. With all this hypocrisy we wonder where we are heading to.

The Ministers who are supposed to represent the various communities have embarked on the keynote of political expediency and have surrendered themselves to the whims and fancies of the party in power. Obviously some of our Ministers have betrayed their own conscience and mortgaged the interest of the people at large. We have been disillusioned and disgusted in the manner racial polarisation has taken place in the country. Further, the Government is dividing the people into communal compartments by rousing emotional feelings from time to time.

In the case of appointments and admission to institutions of higher learning, there has been absolute racial apathy. People are being segregated, based on racial structure and although racial unity is the slogan, it has not been given true meaning in reality.

Distinguished citizens including independent statesmen have expressed their concern over these unfortunate state of affairs. May I, with the approval of this House, take the privilege to quote a recent statement made by Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Koon, the redoubtable retired Opposition MP, in a recent edition of the Asia Week Magazine.

"When the Government formulated the New Economic Policy in 1969 they said that they would do everything for the Bumiputras.

So the 2nd Malaysia Plan of 1971 – 1975 only emphasized the problems of eradicating poverty, meant merely Malay poverty but among all the poorest in this country are the estate workers who are non-bumiputras. Slowly the Government realised that it cannot solve the problems of this country on racial lines, so it was almost unwittingly cheated. There was no talk about multi-racial projects. This is implemented at the grass roots level as a continuation altogether, but it isn't implemented. Those non-bumiputras wealthy enough will leave this country and those who cannot leave and should they feel so frustrated may become attracted to the jungle as willing recruits for the insurgents. If you really want to restructure society we should see three types of faces in the Government offices but we see only one type – the Malays. Is this how we give help to everyone in our country? The degree of polarisation is greater particularly among the young people. The Government keeps one section of the people happy while the others are unhappy. With one section terribly frustrated, it is a far cry from creating national unity which was there when we achieved national independence 23 years ago. And if we didn't have somebody at the top saying the right things, the conditions would be far worse but at least we have a Prime Minister who is multi-racial to the Malaysian approach to problems, thus giving hope to the non-bumiputras. We cannot afford to wait too long, otherwise things will grow up again."

Where is Malaysian unity? Yet we call ourselves Malaysians. We cannot have two types of citizens in the country – first class citizens and second class citizens. Those who are born and bred here and have made Malaysia their home should be classified as Malaysian citizens, regardless of whatever race they may be. I have spoken on this in the past and continue to speak from the bottom of my heart that all Malaysians should remain as classless citizens.

There cannot be double standards for citizens in the country. If we do, then we are only leading the country to chaos and deterioration and racial conflict which will be destructive to the progress of society.

*Corruption is rampant in our society. Corruption is of the highest degree in housing development. Government keeps on shedding crocodile tears from time to time. We read statements in the Press of Government calling for cheap houses, Government urging developers to be reasonable but the more we read the papers, more and more corruption creeps into their columns. Receiving money under the counter by developers is so common that it is no more a secret. If a person wants to buy a house, he has to pay under the table. The Government is fully aware of these malpractices but what is it doing to find a just solution?*



We cannot survive by statements alone. There must be practical action to meet the problems of the people. In the present context no single wage earner belonging to the IMG group in our country can buy a house because their prices range from \$100,000 or more and continue to increase every minute, everyday and every month. The Government has not made sincere attempts to curb corruption among public officials involved in big housing schemes. They are not interested in the community they are serving. Their interest is to make themselves rich as quickly as possible.

This statement is made by a distinguished personality who has been out-spoken in Parliament for the last many years and he himself, after witnessing Government polarisation, has concluded that a change must come. When will the change come? Will the change come at all in this country with the people at the top at all times attempting to deny the rights and privileges of certain communities?

Recently Government promoted 155 customs officers to senior grade. Out of this, 140 were Malays, 5 Indians, 9 Chinese and 1 Eurasian. How does this reflect the racial composition of appointments in Government Service? No only in the Customs Department but in fact in all departments in the country, it is 90% or 95% recruitment of one race, thereby denying other races of the opportunity to serve the Government. We can also make references to the Telecoms, PWD, Postals, Railways, National Electricity Board and other Departments in the country. If this situation continues what will be the future of this country? Can we achieve the desired national unity and integration? From the action of the Government and from the point of view of the implementation of policies, it is absolutely clear that it is keeping the various communities apart. We, who are sitting here as Members of Parliament, cannot tolerate any more of this sad situation.

The time has come for the Government to make up its mind to decide whether it would offer employment on a quota system, for example Bumiputras 44%, Chinese 40% and Indians 16%. If this is not done the other communities will be eliminated from Government services and this state of affairs is not going to help the Government, the society or the community. Peace and prosperity can only be achieved if there is absolute national unity in our country. We find that the Government does not intend to integrate the Government Service. The non-bumiputras are being driven against the wall for no reasons and for no sins committed by them.

These people who are holding top positions in the Government Service can afford to own properties worth millions and I do not know what the role of the NBI is. We wonder if the Government has taken stock of those who have heaped enormous wealth at the expense of the poor people.

*We would propose that a Housing Board be set-up, a Board that would constitute members from the various sectors – Government, employers, consumers, industrialists, and trade unions in order to make the Board representative, meaningful and effective and so that it can ensure that homes can be bought at reasonable prices and thereby put an end to exorbitant prices. Let us look at Singapore. Singapore has shown that it can stamp out corruption and provide homes for all the people, regardless of one's social standing. If this is so, why not learn from our neighbours who have succeeded in housing? This is a fact that is internationally accepted.*

For the last few weeks; Government spokesmen, including the Ministry of Home Affairs, have been talking of the need to import labour from neighbouring countries. We oppose strongly to the bringing in of workers from abroad when our workers are leaving the country in search of employment in Singapore and in the Gulf countries. Why are we looking for labour outside when we have enough at home? There is no labour shortage in plantations and estates. The estates remain as they were 50 years ago. Facilities in these estates have not improved. They have not kept pace with the development and progress of our nation. The estates and plantations have remained the same as during the period of indentured labour many decades ago. If the estates and plantations could be improved with facilities like housing, recreation and entertainment and fair wages, I am sure that thousands of young men and women will not leave the estates if they can find better standards of living in the place where they were born and bred.

The estate owners in this country and the absentee landlords must now think in terms of the workers being Malaysian citizens and should not identify them with indentured labour. There is no need for importing labour which will be a deleterious step that will eventually prove dangerous.

*I wonder how large numbers of Indonesian workers have moved into Johore. In most of these cases, illegal immigrants are given documents by the immigration authorities. To my knowledge immigration laws have not been changed but there have been certain powers vested in the hands of immigration authorities – knowingly – directly or indirectly – and these powers have allowed them to issue a yellow document for entertaining illegal immigrants to Malaysia. If this is so, would the Government be prepared to allow others who desire to come and work in Malaysia? If not, there cannot be separate sets of laws for the Indonesians and another set of laws for those from the other parts of the world. If we are going to allow migrant labour we are inviting many other problems with it, and the Government is doing so at its own peril. But we on this side will not accept the reality and fact, that there is any labour shortage. Let the Minister of Home Affairs*

investigate. I am sure that he is aware that some 100,000 or more immigrant Indonesians have entered Malaysia. How could he account for this when the immigration laws have remained unchanged? The Minister himself is answerable to this House. I went through his categorical explanation as to how many Indonesians are here — working in various parts of Malaysia, who have come for employment and enjoy the privilege of immigration documents issued to them on the spot.

The Minister cannot hide from this glaring fact which everyone knows and we would like to have an explanation from him. Let me pose a question: Is this a political move?

Recently the people of Malaysia read in the Press of the strike in an electronic factory in Bayan Lepas, Penang. All the time the Government has said that unions have advocated strike action, but surprisingly unusual stoppage of work has taken place in an industry which is not organised and which has not allowed its employees to be unionised. Here the Government is unable to find out who is really responsible for the stoppage of work. I am not prepared to debate on the merits and demerits of this crisis but the fact remains that a large degree of frustration dominates the minds and social conscience of the working class in the electronic industry. For the last 5 years the workers have been aspiring to have a union registered for the workers in the electronic industry, but the Minister of Labour and Manpower and his advisers have not lent a reasonable hearing to this claim. However the Ministry has prevented unionisation of the electronic workers.

There are more than 100,000 electronic workers who have a definite and positive reason to become unionised. We would expect that we can resolve this matter in our local forums and thereby prevent the trade union movement from taking this issue to international forums. The Minister of Labour and Manpower has his duty and is responsible to answer as to why he has not allowed the electronic workers to be organised.

The phraseology "bumiputras" and "non-bumiputras" has created a large degree of misunderstanding among the various communities. Who are the bumiputras and the non-bumiputras? According to our interpretation and terminology, those who have been born in Malaysia are bumiputras and there cannot be a different form of justice just because a person is of Malay, Chinese or Indian origin. Those who have been born in this country are bumiputras irrespective of their racial origin. I was born in this country and I will continue to make the claim that I am a bumiputra and there is no law to prevent me from making such a claim because the interpretation of bumiputra means "sons of the soil". I was born in Malaysia, bred in Malaysia, living in Malaysia and

will die in Malaysia. Therefore, this is my motherland and there are millions of Malaysians who are bumiputras, born and bred in Malaysia regardless of what his or her racial origins are, they are born in Malaysia and are therefore bumiputras. There cannot be two interpretations over this and all bumiputras therefore should be accorded similar privileges.

We are the people who will rise to the occasion to defend our motherland. If we believe that national unity should be achieved in the right perspective, then all those who were born in this country and live in this country should become bumiputras and let the Government be sincere and not play politics purely to gain votes from one community. We content that the Government has misled the people and betrayed its own conscience. All Malaysians have the right to be called as bumiputras and there cannot be bumiputras and non-bumiputras among those who have been born and bred in this country and who will live in this land and die on it. Their devotion and loyalty is only to this country. They are prepared to die in its defence, should the occasion arise.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we cannot talk in terms of national unity without all citizens having been accorded equal status. I would therefore propose that a quota system be introduced in respect of housing, land development, employment and education, the right to citizenship and the exercise of distinct cultures and languages. A former Minister in Tengku Abdul Rahman's Cabinet, then the Minister of Trade and Industry, the Honourable Khir Johari, had clearly stated that in employment, equal opportunities should be offered to all Malaysians based on the following ratio:

Malay Origin	—	44%
Chinese Origin	—	40%
Indian Origin	—	16%

Let this be a yardstick in providing other benefits to Malaysians and this can be a guideline for such implementation of the proposed quota system.

*The budget missed the basic need where the public is driven to hardship due to the enormous increase in prices of essential commodities. Price of rice and sugar continues to remain at high peak. Price control remains an illusion. Government enforcement measures have helped traders to hoard and cartel the prices. A Price Board is absolutely necessary to control prices, especially on the basic human necessities for survival. The enforcement unit is a failure and they have contributed more to spiral than curb it, because the traders have to pay the officers to keep them away from periodic checks, which amount is passed to the consumer by adding to the final selling price.*

The Enforcement Unit is a farce and a Price Board with powers to determine the prices can provide the remedies. The nation is suffering from an inflated economy and it is the duty of those in power to check the same with sincerity, honesty and not by providing invalid and hackneyed excuses.

The Government is answerable to the various problems facing the administration of the Federal Territory. By having an elected Mayor instead of an appointed Mayor as is the practice today, this duty can be discharged efficiently and effectively.

The present setup of the administration is to say the least, erratic if not chaotic. The departments which administer the services to the people in this capital city are often found to be overlapping, duplicative and therefore ineffective.

One example is that when a tree has fallen over a house or a number of houses and help has been asked for, it has happened in the past that there have been confusion over which department is responsible to this S.O.S. call. The cleanliness within the city area calls for adverse comments.

Corruption in the Federal Territory administration is rampant. Shopkeepers, restaurant owners and individual petty traders and hawkers are being harassed day after day by those in authority in order to make a quick buck from these poor people.

The health facilities are also inadequate when taking into account that the population of the Federal Territory which keeps on increasing at an enormous rate year after year. Public confidence has been shattered over the city administration. The tax payers of Kuala Lumpur demand service and not vile propaganda.

It is surprising that the Government keeps on presenting its policies while at the same time the top people in authority keep on sending their children to study abroad. This shows clearly that the Ministers themselves have no confidence in our educational system. What is not good for the Minister cannot be good for the people. A radical change in the educational system is necessary to suit the needs of the nation. Early education at primary level should be allowed to be in one's mother tongue. Tamil schools, particularly, are given a raw deal and the trust of the community placed upon the Government has clearly been displaced. Crime, robbery and all forms of criminal violence continue to be on the rise in the Federal Territory, in spite of all the so called efforts being made by the police to curb the same. Rapport between the police and the public is lacking. The members of the public fear to make a complaint to the police because the complainant is harassed more than the accused. A new spirit among the police is necessary to create an atmosphere of understanding between the police and the public.

## CHAPTER XVIII

# PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND RACIAL EQUALITY

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM

THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM

**"To victimise the Opposition for speaking the truth does not reflect the basic norms of parliamentary democracy."**

Let me remind this August House that the stability of the Government does not completely depend on its numerical strength alone, but also on its ability to carry the whole nation with it on important issues. It requires the capacity to assess and harness the national consensus by cutting across political barriers, rising above party politics and taking an elevated view of national problems.

*The National Front has not identified the national issues, but continues to speak of threat to the security of the country. The Opposition is not being consulted on national issues but held in contempt and malice. If the National Front believes in the concept of Parliamentary democracy then it must be able to accept criticism whenever the Government commits mistakes. To victimize the Opposition for speaking the truth does not reflect the basic norms of parliamentary democracy. It is a parliamentary practice to consult and discuss national issues with the Opposition. We have an Opposition leader in this House and it is incumbent upon the Government to discuss national issues and matters with him, in keeping with the norms of parliamentary democracy. Unfortunately, this does not happen in our country.*

The Government has created fear in the minds of the people that the legislators from the Opposition are merely second class members who cannot get things done and civil servants seldom entertain any requests from the Opposition parliamentarians. The civil servants should stop meddling with politics, and the civil service should remain above politics. Civil servants should stop naming ruling party parliamentarians through whom the public should make representation. This is absurd because those who are in the administrative service should only confine themselves to the merits of the complaints and requests and not the party the individual is affiliated to. Let us not deceive the nation and show the world that we have accepted the very spirit and practice of parliamentary democracy when we have abandoned the norms of democracy.

Let us pose a question. Who is communal, the UMNO, MCA and MIC, or other parties? The poisonous racial emotions are provoked by the National Front and not the Opposition. The venom of the viper is in the National Front's own camp and not any where else. Each of the three main communal parties in the National Front often kindles and fans racial politics, but this is not considered offensive and racial, but when the Opposition calls for a fair and just policy to all communities it is accused of being racial. Is the National Front prepared to dissolve the three communal parties to project a non-



communal single party? Now who are the hypocrites! Hypocrisy is right at the doorstep of the Barisan Nasional. The Barisan Nasional's survival completely depends on racial sentiments and by denying economic and social justice to the people. The DAP is a non-communal party based on the concept of one nation, one people.

*Malaysia has an unemployment rate of more than 7% and yet we have allowed employers to import illegal immigrant labour. Though we have more than 315,000 Malaysians unemployed, employers have employed some 100,000 Indonesian illegal immigrants to work in the plantation industry.*

*The employers are deliberately misleading the public by claiming there is a shortage of workers in the plantation industry. This is utter nonsense and balderdash.*

*According to a survey conducted by the National Union of Plantation Workers last year, it was found that of the 216 estates surveyed, only 11 faced labour shortage. This shortage was found to be about 15 to 20%. Over 124 estates did not experience any labour shortage and in 41 estates there was a surplus of labour.*

The shortage of labour in the plantation industry has been brought about by the migration of youths from the rural areas to the towns. Our youths have been forced to seek employment in the urban areas due to the competitive wages offered. Further, living and working conditions in the estates have not changed since the colonial days. The lot of the estate workers has not changed since the colonial days and the estate managements are still operating under the colonial shell.

The status of the estate worker must be enhanced, and enhanced immediately and they must be given a stake in the industry itself. This is the only way to beat the shortage of workers in the plantation industry.

We are unable to understand how some 100,000 Indonesian illegal immigrants were able to enter the country to work in the estates. How did they enter the country? Surely, they could not have been parachuted into the country! It is obvious these 100,000 illegal Indonesian immigrants entered the country with the tacit approval of the authorities.

The Government cannot disclaim knowledge of the presence of such a huge number of illegal Indonesian immigrants.

*The presence of illegal Indonesian immigrants in Peninsular Malaysia and in Sabah and Sarawak constitutes a threat not only to the livelihood and employment opportunities of our people but could become a security problem with disastrous consequences to the nation.*

*What galls the people is that Malaysians who marry foreigners are subject to so many restrictions and find great difficulty in bringing their wives into the country, but some 100,000 illegal Indonesian immigrants are able to enter the country with considerable ease.*

The Government cannot remain silent on this grave and vital matter. The Ministry of Home Affairs cannot claim to be unaware of the presence of such hordes of illegal Indonesian immigrants. The Government owes an explanation to this House and I hope it would be an honest and truthful one.

There is no house sold by any developer without payment being made under the counter. Though the price may be \$50,000/- the under counter payment could be another \$20,000/- and finally the house would cost \$70,000/-. Are we to believe that the Government does not know of this practice? The Government knows, but it has a vested interest in the big businesses of this country. It is impossible for a worker, either a blue collared worker or a white collared worker, to own a house as the costs incurred are well beyond his means.

*A three - roomed terrace house is no less than \$70,000/- in a reasonably located area. For whom is the private sector building houses? They build for people with black money illegally earned, and these are the kind of people who can afford to buy them. Wage earners cannot dream of owning a house in their life time if the present pattern continues.*

The developer often privately confesses that his price has to be exorbitant to overcome Government bureaucracy by greasing the palms of the officers. Finally this has to be passed on to the purchaser. What is the Government doing about this? The Government has abdicated its responsibility to the people. The Government must undertake a crash programme to build thousands of units of low-cost homes to cater for the needs of the people, especially those in the lower income group.

A Housing Board with representatives from both Government and social institutions should be set up to overcome the acute shortage of houses and the hanky-panky involved in the housing industry. The Government has a moral obligation to the people and should not adopt a lackadaisical attitude in the matter.

The closing of the Tamil Malar Daily has confirmed the denial of the freedom of the Press. The Government statement alleges that an objectionable article was published and if this is so, then those individuals who were responsible for the publication of the objectionable article should be punished but not the entire Tamil reading public. The Tamil reading community has been collectively punished without reason. We are a multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-lingual society.

No one has the right to undermine or smear any religion and hurt the feelings of any particular community. Only those who are responsible should be punished and not the entire Tamil reading public and the 150 workers who earn their livelihood in the Tamil Malar Press. Let the Government not tarnish the image of this nation abroad. We appeal to the Government to reconsider its decision and to allow the Tamil Malar to resume publication immediately.

MARCH 1981

## CHAPTER XIX

# THE FOURTH MALAYSIA PLAN : BLUEPRINT FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**"Effective and truthful implementation of the Fourth Malaysia  
Plan will rest in the hands of the civil service."**

I have witnessed the passing of the First Malaysia Plan, the Second Malaysia Plan and the Third Malaysia Plan. The Plans as presented in the past gave fresh hopes to the people of our multi-racial, multi-religious Malaysia. But the hopes diminished in the course of their implementation. Socio-economic inequality became the cry of many except a few who are in places where they can enjoy the meat and leave mere crumbs and bones for the unfortunate of our society. The fear of racial polarisation has been confirmed in the process of translating the objective of the plans into action in the past. Let it not be forgotten that poverty knows no racial barriers or boundaries.

We have before us the Fourth Malaysia Plan and as we peruse it, doubts arise in the minds of those who have made Malaysia their home, as to whether the non-bumiputras will be left behind in the progress and prosperity envisaged in it. Will all Malaysians have a fair share of the economic prosperity under the plan? Or are the people compartmentalised by their ethnic origin being denied their rightful share? This is what is uppermost in the minds of the people at large.

The Second Malaysia Plan called for the restructuring of society based on social justice but its introduction and application were based on race thereby further disintegrating the people of the country. Will the Fourth Plan, instead of contributing to racial unity and harmony, undermine the fabric of this nation with discord and disunity?

The administrative service of any Government is the life stream of the nation. Effective and truthful implementation of the Fourth Malaysia Plan will rest in the hands of the civil service. What is the position of the administrative service today? Its efficiency and dedication has been reduced by 40%. Why should this be the state of affairs? It is because we have made promotions and recruitment on racial and political considerations. The juniors supersede the seniors in promotions. Junior and inefficient officers direct experienced and intelligent senior officers. Discipline is no more a criterion in the administrative service. We have large recruitment of quantity and not quality. Files do not move and decisions lag far behind. Many senior civil servants have left the service for want of job satisfaction. The same situation exists in the Government medical service. Promotions and recruitments are beyond the reach of non-bumiputras.

You have denied them the sense of belonging. You have relegated them to the rank of second class citizens. How on earth can you build a United Malaysian Nation, when your policies are lopsided and deny social justice? You have to correct yourself before it is too late.

The Fourth Malaysia Plan must provide more seats of higher learning. No one should be denied education based on his race – religion or creed. Another university in West Malaysia is necessary to discourage students from going abroad for their studies. Students have to leave our shores because they are denied places in our local tertiary education system. Education should be within the reach of all, regardless of one's social status or ethnic affinity. Thousands are looking for places in Malaysian institutions of higher learning but are compelled to leave Malaysia disappointed in order to acquire education in foreign lands. Their parents having to spend more of their hard earned money has necessitated by their having to minimize their other domestic expenses. What is the Government doing with regard to all this?

While being unable to provide education to all, why not allow private universities to be sponsored by public institutions? Why was the Merdeka University denied? The Government is aware that private colleges and universities are part of the education system in all countries. The rejection of the Merdeka University was a political move by the Government. The Opposition continues to support the Merdeka University and any other institution sponsored by the public to further the interest of education. The Fourth Malaysia Plan must envisage the setting up of more universities to absorb all those who desire to acquire education based on merit.

Land distribution by the State should be only for the landless poor, but this is not the case in our country. The Assemblymen and Parliamentarians of the ruling party are granted state land through influence and their high positions. Some have become millionaires by being granted Government land in order to serve their greed and to enable them to become rich overnight. This House will be extremely keen to have a list of persons who are serving and have served in the past as Parliamentarians and Assemblymen who have obtained State land, with the acreage and their names of their families through whom they have successfully grabbed State land. Land should be given only to the poor landless who are prepared to work on the soil they are given. I would request for all in the party parliamentary committee to probe into this matter with the hope of confiscating the lands that have been acquired by elected Assemblymen and Parliamentarians.

Once upon a time our foreign income was purely based on the export market of rubber and tin but this has changed. Our total export of rubber for 1979 was worth \$ 1,650 million, against timber worth \$ 16,005 million. Crude Petroleum has taken the second place in our export market – \$12,034 million. Tin was only \$72 million. These figures show that our economy has shifted from rubber and tin to timber and petroleum.

Crude Oil will be a major export commodity of Malaysia in the next few years. Who will benefit from all the off-shore drilling and the quest for crude petroleum? Are we intending to allow the gigantic multi-nationals to exploit our national resources, leaving the Malaysians as losers all the time? There has already been well founded allegations against the multi-nationals and the collaborators in Petronas. What has the Government done to rise above suspicion? Who are the persons involved in Petronas? What is their background? Are they experienced in the drilling of crude oil? What is their social status? How rich have they become? These are the questions which are not only being asked by us but by the average tax-payer as well. Petronas should not be just to create jobs for a few who have abetted and aided the party in power on all its misdeeds. Petronas should comprise persons with integrity — calibre — and character — to safeguard our national wealth. The Fourth Malaysia Plan and its completion depends on the earnings from our national resources. Let us not be misled and swindled by the multi-nationals who have the least interest in Malaysia and its development. The time has come to shake up Petronas and its administration and to enquire into the state of affairs of multi-nationals. To what extent have they plundered our national wealth by enjoying the bread and leaving the crumbs to Malaysians?

The nation is suffering in the hands of hoarders and black-marketeers. The big businesses are holding the nation to ransom. The sugar kings of Malaysia have dictated terms to the Government. They decide on the price of sugar and not the Government. Government announcement on the price of sugar is a voice in the wilderness. The sugar tycoons have ignored the Government. The same fate is faced in the case of condensed milk. A weak ineffective Government has fallen victim in the hands of big business manoeuvres. Was the Barisan Nasional able to check and control the price of sugar? No! It has miserably failed! Therefore, for the big business the Government's directives are no more than a joke. Only the Government can explain this state of affairs. After all who is affected? The poor and not the rich. The current prices of essential commodities have no relevance to the growth figure stated in the report as 12% annum or 4.9% in real terms.

The prices in some cases have risen beyond 100% such as in the case of sugar and condensed milk. There has been no check as to prices and in spite of Government's many assurances they have continued to rise. We cannot accept the fact that the Government is unable to control prices but that it does not want to do it. It wants to make the rich, richer and happier. The 4th Malaysia Plan, unless it is implemented with an element of caution of prices, will not let the people see a bright future.



What has the Government done on public housing during the three five year plans? Certainly an extremely poor performance. Housing unavailability is due to failure of the administration in the absence of proper planning. Though funds are available, housing has not been accorded top priority. The snail's pace move by the authorities will not be able to meet the demand. Housing calls for crash programmes and the target under the Fourth Malaysia Plan is insufficient and calls for more than the volume of 100,000 units per year. Only such a scheme can meet the urban shortage in housing, while the public is seeking a shelter over their heads, the private developers are squeezing the people in the light of shortage of public housing. Let us face realities and act and not just talk.

There was no need to increase the rates on electricity supply to homes. The NEB is wasting public funds. There is a Security Unit in the NEB which is a colossal waste. There is more pilferage in the NEB after the Security Unit has been established. When there were only ordinary watchmen, there was strict control on the NEB stores but with the Security Unit, there are more thefts. What happened to the Klang Contraught Power Station theft? Is it not true that large amounts of goods were stolen and the inquiry is still pending? Who were involved in this? Are the security men themselves involved in the theft? The NEB administration needs cleaning up. If the NEB could control the utilisation of its funds, there is no need to place the burden on consumers. The consumers have been made to pay high tariffs due to the failure and mismanagement of the NEB.

There are more than 200,000 stateless residents in Malaysia. Most of these residents have resided in Malaysia for decades. Their applications under Form 'G' are pending approval from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Some are waiting for more than ten years. What is their fate under the Fourth Malaysia Plan? Why not additional funds be allocated to the Ministry concerned? Why not additional funds be allocated to the Ministry of Home Affairs to set up a new unit to clear these cases which should have been approved promptly on receipt of the applications?

Are the discretionary powers of the Minister concerned being abused? Does the Government have any moral values when it drives the thousands of residents into grave doubts, — suspicion — and uncertainty? How can they be part of this nation when they are treated with contempt and disgrace for no offence on their part? Is it a crime to have been born in another country though they have spent the most valuable part of their lives on Malaysian soil? The Government cannot sweep this under the carpet. A definite answer is required, and it should be given soon.

What do the Malaysian Chinese and Indians have at stake under the 4th Malaysia Plan? The Indians as usual have not even been left with crumbs from the 'Master' tables and the Chinese are driven to further frustration. What about housing for the estate workers? What about social amenities to people living in the new villages? This Government cannot ignore the estate workers when plantations are being converted into housing development units. Workers are prepared to make way for progress and development. Unfortunately they are left homeless upon being removed from their dwellings. They are made homeless and they have no place in the housing development projects — Shah Alam will confirm my statement! More than 300,000 workers employed in more than 3 million areas of rubber estates have not been given a fair share in the economic development of the country. The plantation workers are living in the most deplorable conditions, but the politicians have risen high by using the Indian masses as ladders.

The Plan deals with education. What are we asking for when we talk about education? Are we only confining ourselves to primary education and secondary education? What about Tamil Schools in the plantations? Roofs in some schools are leaking and children are exposed to rain and sunshine. Some of them have no toilets and some schools stand on pillars eaten by white ants ready to fall at any time. Financial allocations made to Tamil Schools in Perak, have been transferred to Kelantan for other schools. The Indian community has been thrown into the drain with helpless leaders who achieve no more than receiving awards during the birthdays of His Majesty and Their Royal Highnesses. Let us do some real soul searching. Are we here to endorse and support all the things handed out? To swallow them even if they are bitter? To me the 4th Malaysia Plan remains the same as it was the case under the past three five-year plans. The Indians have no place in all the four plans.

Most Ministers have not seen the new villages. The new villages are yet to receive the benefits of modernisation. Clogged drains, lack of medical facilities, absence of proper roads, drainage and public transport are permanent problems of the new villages. The Chinese community has been dumped without any guarantee as regards trade, employment and education and are thus unable to enjoy the benefits of Government plans. The leadership of the Chinese community is sitting with the UMNO in order to feather its own nests. Nothing productive has been achieved for the Chinese community. The Chinese have nothing in store under the 4th Malaysia Plan.

The Public transport system is a living excuse. Lack of proper co-ordination has been the real cause for the dilemma. The public, especially the wage earners who use the buses, has been driven into tremendous hardship. Buses do not run on schedule; breakdowns,

traffic jams and other hazards place the commuters in the most unfortunate position. We call upon the Minister of Transport to appoint a commission to make a detailed study of our road transport system with the object of providing cheap, efficient and serviceable means of transport.

In the course of the 3rd Malaysia Plan, we have not forgotten the wounds of 4th April, 1980 when amendments to the labour laws were introduced. They struck below the belt with such telling force. The Government confiscated the basic legitimate rights of the working class. We will not forget this day and we seek restoration of our rights under the 4th Malaysia Plan. Labour has been all the time kept in a low profile by the Malaysian Government. This nation cannot project an impressive image to the world if it continues with the present set of repressive labour laws. Harassment and intimidation of the trade union movement are provided for under the law and have empowered the Minister of Labour and Manpower to victimise trade unionists who hold opposite views to that of the Minister of Labour and Manpower. It should be understood clearly that the prosperity of this nation depends on the hands and brains of the working class and any attempts to ignore them will end in chaos.

With 24 years of Independence the Telecommunications Department is unable to satisfactorily service the taxpayers of this country. Applications for telephones are kept in shelves collecting dust for years before they are attended to. Why is this inconvenience to the public when neighbouring Singapore can provide excellent service to tax-payers? Why can't we do the same when we have abundant natural resources to tap from? If the Minister of Telecommunications is unable to meet the demands of the public, he should resign and make way for others. Let not the public be deceived.

APRIL 1981

## **CHAPTER XX**

### **MALAYSIANS DISAPPOINTED OVER THE BUDGET**

"The nett result of the recent Budget, if carefully scrutinized, is for the rich and not for the poor."

The hopes of the people diminished when the recent budget proposals were introduced in Parliament. While taxes on certain luxury items were reduced — the prices of essential items such as food have remained the same.

The Government has thought it fit to impose tax on fruits which should be allowed freely into the Malaysian market. Apples, oranges and grapes are being unreasonably taxed, and that is the reason people cross the causeway into Singapore to purchase fruits. The price of condensed milk today is \$1.20 per tin. Poor families with children suffer as a result of the frequent increases in food items.

The nett result of the recent budget, if carefully scrutinized, is for the rich and not for the poor. The poor have more to lose than to gain. Taxes on consumer goods have not been lifted. The entire budget proposed by the Barisan Nasional has not relieved the poor consumer from the enormous burden of high cost of living in the absence of any increase in earnings.

### *"Malaysia may face a deficit in 1982"*

While the revenue for 1982 stated in the Government budget will be about seventeen thousand six hundred and eighty three million dollars \$17,683,000,000.00 – operating expenses will be seventeen thousand three hundred and nineteen million four hundred and sixty eight thousand seven hundred and twenty dollars (\$17,319,468,720.00) leaving a balance of three hundred and sixty three million five hundred and thirty one thousand two hundred and eighty dollars (\$363,531,280.00) which is only 2.05% in difference. From this it is almost certain that with our export trade imbalance and the continued low price of rubber in the world market, the expected revenue will decline, at the same time increasing our operating expenses which will lead to a deficit budget for 1982. Therefore in the final analysis our economy is unsound and we are facing an economic dilemma.

### *"Tragedy of the poor"*

The disparity between the haves and the have-nots has widened. The echo of restructuring the society and the elimination of poverty in the spans of the Second and Third Malaysian Plans continue to remain no more than illusions and mirages. A minor percentage of the rich have accumulated wealth and ownership of property to an extent, which in terms of reality, the poor are losing to the level of becoming destitutes. The restructuring of society and the application of social justice have only placed a few Umno-Putras to become millionaires overnight. These millionaires have acquired house ownership running to more than a million dollars and a fleet of Mercedes Benzes at their door steps to maintain their false prestige with unaccountable funds at the expense of the taxpayers. The so-called Bumi-Putraism is not for the poor Malays, but for the rich only.

This is a state of affairs aimed to keep happy the Umno-Putras who readily kindle the emotions and sentiments of the Malays through their radical racial overtones. This is particularly manifest now in the State of Johore where poor fishermen have become jolted into the realisation that they are being taken for a ride and exploited to the maximum by the leadership concealing itself under the veil of Bumi-putraism to unashamedly enrich themselves. With racial gimmicks, and political dishonesty the nation cannot solve its socio-economic pro-

blems. Poverty has no racial barriers and the socio-economic approach has perforce to be on a non-communal basis. The Opposition will champion the cause of the poor Malays, Chinese and the Indians purely based on the burning needs of the have-nots, to ensure that all Malaysians enjoy the nation's prosperity irrespective of race, colour or creed.

The economic disparity is being widened from time to time in our country. The haves and the have-nots are in constant conflict as regards amenities and ownership. A classic example of this disparity is found in choice of homes where you find water taps in every nook and corner — in some cases up to 15 to 20 taps flowing even in the form of fountains. At the same time there exists cases where 30 families have to share a single public stand pipe.

This is the tragedy of the implementation of the New Economic Policy. Leave alone rural areas. Even in the urban areas such problems of the poor prevail to alarming degrees. I will give you as example Kg. Pasir, Kg. Haji Abdullah Hukom, Kg. Pantai, Kg. Sg. Penchala, Kg. Kerai, Kg. Bahagia, Kg. Segambut Dalam, Kg. Sentul, Kg. Ang Seng, etc. Therefore the New Economic Policy has not found tangible solutions to the problems by way of effective implementation. Water and electricity supply to many homes in Kuala Lumpur have been denied under the New Economic Policy. The Opposition calls the Barisan Nasional to search its heart and admit the fact that the poor have been hood-winked by empty promises and pledges.

### *"Rising Inflation"*

The annual inflation rate for Malaysia jumped upwards to 11.3% in June this year. Statistics show that the Consumer Price Index rose rapidly by 1.5% between May and June, largely due to the increase in food-prices and in the cost of rent, fuel and power and services of all sorts. For the 3rd month in succession this year, the inflation rate has increased by 10%. In April, the market trend showed that the consumer price index increased by 0.8% and thereby crashing through to a double digit level for the first time in seven years.

The increase indicated faster acceleration as the year passed this mid-point. Statistics reveal a 9.5% increase over the previous year on essential commodities such as eatables, etc. What is the reason for the increase? This cannot be taken to be 'imported' inflation as most of the eatables are produced within the country. This cannot be 'International Inflation' that crept into Malaysia as it has no relevance to the explosion of prices in Malaysian markets.



Unchecked blackmarketeers, abetted and aided by the authorities have made it impossible for the average wage earner to survive especially the ones with large families. The Government has miserably failed to control the prices of essential items of goods. The Barisan Nasional has turned a deaf ear to the poor consumers. Household income can only become meaningful if prices remain at a level where the consumer will wield purchasing power. Of course, the rich have no problem as they, in fact, have vast sums of money at their disposal. The rich, in fact, have an endless purchasing power regardless of prices. The Minister of Trade and Industry has to explain the position and definite steps have to be taken to check the hoarding of foodstuff and spiralling of prices. The Opposition proposes a price board to determine prices for essential commodities and to ensure that all those who violate such prices are penalised to the maximum.

*"Foreign Wives And Government's Apathy"*

During the last few months public attention has been drawn to the Government's gross injustice to citizens having married foreign wives. For years, citizens of Malaysia have married foreign wives and it had never been an issue even after 1962. Unfortunately by misinterpretation and prejudice, the former Minister of Home Affairs has bungled in respect of the Immigration Department by twisting the provisions of the law. The criterion has been that foreign wives must have lived with their husbands for some of the time in the course of the five-year span. In fact, this means that a foreign wife who has been two years with her parents and then returned to live with her husband for three years was eligible to become a permanent resident of Malaysia by virtue of her husband being a bona-fide citizen of the country. The phrase "has not been living separately" is now being interpreted as "must have lived with", a disqualifying clause and this is being read with a qualifying clause. Matters have been worsened by immigration officers who have no knowledge of the Constitution and the rights of the citizens. The right to choose one's spouse is an inherent right which needs no legislation. The State cannot impose controls on such choices.

In 1980, the Government made a ruling on policy which is detrimental to the very spirit of the Constitution. The late Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak, in his capacity earlier as the Deputy Prime Minister, assured the Parliament (in 1962) by introducing an amendment to the Constitution and there he said:

**QUOTE:**

*"There will be no difficulties in case of genuine marriages for a federal citizen who genuinely wants to get married outside and bring his wife to settle here permanently. It will also be possible in genuine cases to obtain a Permit to live permanently in this country."*

It was maintained all along that the wife of a citizen had the rights to enter the country and upon arrival she does not require a permit for entry. The former Minister of Home Affairs had reiterated in several places that to have one's wife in Malaysia from outside was a privilege and not an entitlement. Here I must draw your attention to the Constitution which is absolutely clear. Article 15 of the Malaysian Constitution states that a foreign wife is entitled upon application to be registered as a citizen if her entrance is substantiated with adequate proof. The criteria set up in the Constitution are that:—

- She resides in the country throughout the two years pre-  
ceding the date of application for citizenship;
- She demonstrate her intentions to reside here permanently;  
and
- She be of good character.

It will be incorrect for the Government to harrass foreign wives who join their husbands who are citizens, by imposing undue restrictions. I reaffirm that it is the right of a citizen of this country to marry a wife from any part of the world. The Malaysian Government desperately attempts to confuse the issue between entitlement and privilege. It is certainly not a privilege but a right. If the Government does not rectify the position by withdrawing the undue pressure on foreign wives, let me warn that it may become necessary for a court action to determine this under our judicial system. Let the Government avoid such a situation which will further undermine our national image.

How can national unity be achieved when you have drawn a demarcation line between the bumis and the non-bumis? Who are the bumis? My firm contention is that all those are born on Malaysian soil are Bumiputras. The vexatious phenomenon and misconception of bumis and non-bumis should disappear from our midst to enable all Malaysians to acquire a sense of belonging and claim that they are part and parcel of this nation. The division is created by false notions and the National Front has succeeded in dividing the people based on the British imperialistic theory of divide and rule. When you talk about

national integration why not the Government introduce laws to dissolve the UMNO, MIC and MCA which are communal parties, and advocate non-racial politics? Racial politics must go and for this UMNO, MIC and MCA must go by replacing them with non-communal political parties. *In one breath our Government says that communalism is a national arch enemy of the country, but in the next it tolerates and nurtures the vile system of communal compartmentalisation.*

What are the functions of the National Unity Board? The problem of national unity will not be achieved, just by having a National Unity Board. The National Unity Board depends on the policy of the Government for effecting the process of integration. I would call upon the Government to scrap the National Unity Board which has only created employment for a few bureaucrats and has devoured substantial amounts of public funds.

When the Government embarked in creating Rukun Tetangga bases it did not realise that through gimmicks and rhetoric it cannot deceive the people. Recruitments were made on a voluntary basis to protect lives, homes and property which really should be the job of the police. But later, it became compulsory which of course was ultravires to the Constitution. By this voluntary system the Government intended to establish national unity but has failed dismally. When we examine why it has failed, we find that it is because the people of Malaysia have not been given a sense of belonging and when such sense of belonging is not there, any move to rub it down would prove to be a failure.

This could only be stimulated among the people with policies and programmes of the Government on a multi-racial basis. Most of the Rukun Tetangga bases are now surviving for purposes of leave certificates to justify absence from work places. Most have realised that the Rukun Tetangga is only a political gimmick and this is meant for Ministers to visit the bases and make political propagandist speeches at the expense of the tax-payers. The entire exercise has fizzled out. Then, why wait? Just scrap it. Give people what they need without any discrimination. This is how national unity can be achieved, and not through Rukun Tetangga. Do not drain public funds on projects that are bound to fail.

Thousands of illegal migrants have crossed over to the borders of Malaysia. Knowingly or unknowingly, directly or indirectly, the Government has abetted and aided these migrants. What is the reason behind the Government's encouragement of this exodus? The immigration laws have strict provisions and disallow anyone to migrate into this country. Thus, it is shocking that the authorities have allowed

such a vast inflow and have legalised some of the migrants after their entry. When a citizen is told that he cannot bring his legally wedded spouse from a foreign country, we do not know how the Government has justified the existence of thousands of illegal migrants from Indonesia. The seriousness of these migrants coming to Malaysia has in some cases threatened the rice bowl of Malaysian citizens. The plantation industry in this country is doing everything possible to use migrant workers to replace local employees so that employers could have the advantage of giving wages which are smaller than what they have to pay for legalised local labour.

No one in this country would believe that the Government is not aware of this malpractice. It is aware but it has a political axe to grind. The Opposition calls for an explanation from the Minister of Home Affairs on this illegal exercise. The former Minister of Home Affairs thought it unfit to answer this question when it was raised earlier in this House. What is the purpose of Parliament if questions are not answered and allegations are not responded to by the party in power?

\$ 23 million have been misused in Gula Negeri Sembilan. Only a formal enquiry could ascertain who swindled the funds which rightfully belong to the people.

It is easy to say that Gula Negeri Sembilan has decided to close down, but the Negeri Sembilan State Economic Development Corporation (SEDC), is answerable to the public. The NBI must move in and after investigation those who are found to have misappropriated public funds should be tried in our courts. In this instance, the Opposition calls for a public enquiry to be appointed by the Government.

We have Parliamentarians of dual standards. In our discriminatory system the Barisan Nasional Members of Parliament are allocated \$ 100,000/- per year for projects and other activities in their respective constituencies. Unfortunately the members of the Opposition have been denied this right. The matter was raised with the former Prime Minister and as usual he had no time to answer this most vital question of justice. We invite the Prime Minister to explain why this amount has not been allocated to the Opposition members. The funds in the Treasury are public monies and the Opposition MPs have equal right to them as those of the Government benches.

The criterion in a game is participation, not victory. Whether the Malaysian team wins or loses in a game is immaterial. The important factor here would be whether we are fielding the best team in international competitions. The Football Association of Malaysia has bungled and brought disrepute to our national team. In the first place, it should give adequate protection to the players who represent the national

team. This protection is sadly lacking in Malaysia. The players do not enjoy paid leave in some cases during training and at times their livelihood is at stake where their families are denied reasonable regular incomes when their breadwinners participate in the national team.

The private sector which is profit-motivated is least bothered about our national players and is often not prepared to accommodate them with paid leave. The welfare of our national team players should be given adequate attention. The coach should have a say in the selection of players and there should be no interference from players who are not directly involved. The FAM President Datuk Hamzah Abu Samah has come under the severest criticism for the reverses suffered by the national team, from the pre-Olympic Tournament in Kuwait on to the Silver Jubilee of the Merdeka Tournament and even thereafter. The best thing for him to do is to bow out honourably and not to pass the buck of blame to his other Council members.

When a politician is in charge of any organisation, there is bound to be politicking and in sports particularly this is a bad thing to happen.

Both the Chinese and Tamil schools in urban and rural areas have been completely neglected. These schools do not receive fair treatment from the Government. Especially in Tamil schools, the teachers are involved in MIC politics and their duty to the students is neglected, while they are politicking they have no time to teach the students. Most of the schools in the rural areas, especially those in estates, do not have hygienic facilities and roof leakage is common whereby students are exposed to sun and rain. The Ministry of Education gives a very cold reception to these schools. As far as possible they expect these institutions to eliminate themselves.

What is happening to our broadcasting system? The Government owned-broadcasting system has been manipulated and placed at the disposal of the Government for party propaganda. Dissatisfaction has risen from all quarters as to our Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM). Programmes are not to the satisfaction of the members of the public. Most of the programmes have been drawn on the whims and fancies of the individuals who are responsible for the programmes. The DAP reiterates that the channels and networks of RTM should be as follows:-

In the event the Government has no ability and capability to manage the RTM efficiently as a mass-media organisation to serve the people in a fair and just manner, then it should turn it into a Corporation like the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

For the last 20 years complaints have been made on the Klang Hospital and I have personally raised this matter in Parliament many years ago, making reference to this Hospital as a "Slaughter House"

My remarks have been confirmed recently by His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor. What are our national priorities? If our priorities are to provide basic amenities to the people, then health should be accorded top priority. What is the delay in completing the Klang Hospital where patients are left in the corridors, exposed to rain and sun due to lack of space and beds?

It is most regrettable that although the late Tan Sri Manickavasagam had been the Member of Parliament for the constituency of Klang for 20 years, this hospital has even to this day remained a monument of decay and organised neglect. Within the context of our national health system the disgrace of Klang Hospital can only be remedied if there is a new hospital built immediately as a crash programme based on the fact that we are dealing with human lives and not garbage.

The National Electricity Board has to revamp itself to provide proper service to the consumers. The NEB lacks the required efficiency and initiative. The element of dedication is absent in the NEB. Engineers fresh from colleges with no knowledge of the working system have created chaos both in the Federal Capital and in the State of Selangor. They cut open trenches at random for cable laying and such cables are not laid for months and the roads which are cut open remain unclosed.

Persons who are responsible for laying cables and cable joints do not promptly attend to their duties and as a result they create inconvenience to the members of the public along the roadside where earth is washed up and messed into thick mud. The NEB needs to be shaken up and its efficiency should be improved by strict disciplinary measures. At the same time the officers should realise that they are servants of the people and paid by the tax-payers.

Frequent black-outs have become common phenomena in our country. Mismanagement of the NEB has caused millions of dollars of loss for industries and hardship to the public when there is a power failure. The NEB should devise and implement the necessary remedies. Within the context of the laudable objectives of the new leadership of the Government calling for efficiency, the Opposition hopes that firm action will be taken to remedy the situation.

The acute shortage of public housing has become a major problem in the city of Kuala Lumpur. The City Hall has announced that it would build 30,000 houses under the Fourth Malaysia Plan during the next five years. Even with the completion of the 30,000 houses, the Federal Territory Authority will not be able to meet the demand of the public. The population of Kuala Lumpur is growing at the rate of 7% per year. Only a crash programme of 100,000 houses per year for the next five years will be able to overcome the real need for houses in our metropolis.

Freedom of the Press is the freedom of expression. Any form of restriction on the freedom of the Press would mean that the nation is withholding news of public interest from the people. The mass media should function as a fully independent entity. The harassment of the Press through the compulsory renewal of annual permits is an indirect form of threat to the Press and a warning to it to toe the line of the Government by only publishing the Government views and not those of the others who hold views contrary to those of the Government.

Press responsibility is different from Press freedom. If the Press evades responsibility, there are laws to deal with it. But the basic principle of freedom of the Press should be maintained and safeguarded. We need public awareness and enlightened citizens. For this, healthy mass-media, free from Government control and threat, are absolutely necessary. The present denial of the freedom of the Press is only weakening our democratic system.

The Opposition calls upon the Government to withdraw the yearly renewal of permits for publication of newspapers as this provision is contrary to the basic norms of democracy. Let us ensure a free Press to build a healthy and dynamic nation.

28 OCTOBER 1981

**PART 3**

**FOCUS**



The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work done during the year. It also mentions the various committees and sub-committees set up for the purpose of carrying out the work assigned to them.

The second part of the report deals with the work done by the various committees and sub-committees during the year. It mentions the various reports and recommendations made by them.

### FUTURE WORK

The third part of the report deals with the future work to be done during the next year. It mentions the various projects and schemes to be undertaken and the resources required for their execution.

Yours faithfully,  
[Signature]

## CHAPTER I

**TEXT OF ADDRESS PRESENTED AT A SERIES OF  
DIALOGUES ORGANISED BY ALIRAN KESEDARAN  
NEGARA (ALIRAN) ON 9 SEPTEMBER 1984 AT THE  
STATION HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR.**

CHAPTER 1

TEXT OF A LETTER PRESENTED AT A MEETING

"It is dolefully true that Malaysia has fairly significant levels of institutionalised corruption."

STATEMENT BY THE AUTHOR

## **CORRUPTION**

The word 'corruption' has been defined by lexicographers as a state of physical and mental retardation, with specific pertinence to its polluting influence on the psyche of Man.

It is a commonly accepted axiom that "power tames and corrupts", but the crux of the problem lies in who it tames and who it corrupts.

We shall discuss corruption at two levels, namely, material corruption and mental corruption:

### **1. Material Corruption**

Material corruption refers to the illegal and unfair means of earning benefits by side-stepping or circumventing established procedures of control. Material corruption very often involves the unlawful receipt of money in its direct or indirect form.

Material corruption can again be defined into the following categories:

#### *Individual Corruption*

This involves the unlawful and often unsafe negotiations that involve two individuals or two groups of individuals. This is often seen in the various enforcement arms of the Establishment. The giver, in this case, is often a person or a firm which has everything to gain by giving the concerned individual or group of individuals (takers) a 'cut' in the monetary profits in question.

In individual corruption, it is often the personal honesty and integrity of the individual or group of individuals that is put to test by the givers. The ability to resist temptation is often stretched to the maximum. In situations like these, the existence of periodicity of such "instances" is not regular, and is often unknown to anybody else outside its confines.

#### *Institutionalised Corruption*

Institutionalised corruption refers to unlawful activities conducted with the connivance of entire departments, or even the Government. Institutionalised corruption is a parallel system of illegality and is as well organised as apparently legal systems. As a result of this, it is

extremely difficult to identify the principal causative elements behind these activities because the entire fabric of human resources is absorbed in the collective conscience of corruption.

Glaring examples of institutionalised corruption are evident in dealings between commercial organisations and Government departments involved in the enforcement of regulations, particularly in the fields of public transport, real estate management, shipping, civil aviation and finance.

It is dolefully true that Malaysia has fairly significant levels of institutionalised corruption, and this has been permitted to continue unabated to the unfortunate detriment of our society. There are many examples that can be quoted in this context. The massive failures of Government agencies and corporations bear grim testimony and stand mute witness to the levels of institutionalised corruption currently prevalent in our plural society.

Hefty commissions are exchanged under the counter between real estate developers and land office officials when transacting deals for construction of houses and commercial complexes. A middle-class administrative functionary of many a Government department often owns assets discordant with his income and has also been able to ward off investigative efforts.

Under institutionalised corruption it is also apt to include divergent irregularities and "material rewards" often given to functionaries to accelerate the pace of administrative procedures. An obvious example of this nature is evident in the ports of the country, where administrative delays can cause shipping companies a fortune in port duties. The relevant departments, especially Customs, Immigration and Road Transport, are even "taken care of" by these shipping companies regularly.

Institutionalised corruption of this nature can be regarded as the worst of its kind, because the functional arms of administration are being paid to do what they are supposed to!

### *Indirect Corruption*

Indirect corruption can be defined as the transfer of mutual benefits for services rendered without exchange of cash. Indirect corruption often involves transactions between countries on previously agreed terms. In this case the benefits accorded by the giver to the taker are often in the form of invisibles meant for favourable realisation at a predefined period. The BMF scandal involving luminaries of two governments is a clear example of indirect corruption and is also indicative of disastrous levels of damage that can result in situations like these.

## 2. Mental Corruption

Mental corruption or psychological corruption is the deleterious influence of external forces on Man's psychological wellbeing. Unfortunately, mental corruption is imposing a heavy toll on Malaysia's relatively young populace. Mental corruption, according to Karl Jung, the famous German psychologist, is the continued, unabated bombardment of the personal unconscious and collective unconscious on the "Id" and "super ego" portions of the human mind, respectively.

The recent slanderous remarks bordering on racial extremism expressed by a Member of Parliament illustrates the effect of mental corruption on the personal unconscious, while the recent socio-political developments in Iran are clear cases of mental corruption on the collective unconscious.

Mental corruption can be further classified as follows:

### *Moral Corruption*

Moral corruption is the impact felt on traditional values of society as a result of external influences. Moral corruption can be attributed to uncontrolled infusion of external or foreign ideologies. This often results in a state of confusion and instability on the part of the individual, hence causing undesired effects. Teenagers are more susceptible to moral corruption because they are still in their impressionable years, and have yet to form fixed notions and views which will help them develop their sense of values. The general feeling that alien cultural influences on an unprepared teenage mind is harmful, lends food for thought.

Instances of moral corruption cannot be wholly attributable to the circumstances described above, due to the fact that the human mind is quite unique in its behavioural patterns. Internal influences of a harmful nature can have equally serious effects on the younger generation. There is a great void of diversity with regard to moral standards, and profound analysis is required before attempting to prescribe a panacea for this ailment.

### *Religious Corruption*

Religious corruption is actually a resultant force, not a causative one. It normally stems from an imperfect and hazy understanding of a particular religion and its guiding principles. Religious extremism is often a convenient vent to pent-up violence intending to seek personal gains.

It can be confidently stated that every religion in this world emphasizes the need for the "milk of human kindness" namely, mutual cooperation and understanding. Many genuinely innovative and creative religious concepts have been deliberately misconstrued by myopic present-day politicians to suit their contemporary personal gains. There is a clear line of demarcation between religious enthusiasm and unbridled violence. This demarcation must be taken cognizance of in good time before attempting to obviate the dismal recurrence and irresponsible broadcast of religious corruption.

### Submission

Various observations made earlier are typical of human behaviour under conditions of duress and uncertainty. The Government, through its various units of social reform, must attempt urgently to discover viable solutions before irreparable harm sets in.

Corruption, as seen above, is evident at different levels and in different forms. In-depth research must be conducted by the institutions of higher learning, and there should be active participation from representatives belonging to the various sectors of Malaysian society.

The *Sine Qua Non* of success in this respect is sincerity coupled with undivided cooperation. I have attempted to give a moderate over-view of corruption in its various forms, and further discussions and dialogue sessions would go a long way in identifying this problem in a detailed manner, thereby enabling better levels of remedy.

**CHAPTER II**

**PAPER PRESENTED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA ON 22 JULY 1985**



"Labour and Capital in Malaysia are at cross purposes."

## LABOUR AND CAPITAL IN MALAYSIA

### General

Malaysia, comprising eleven states of the Malay Peninsula and two states of Sabah and Sarawak in the island of Borneo, has a population of about 14 million people. More than two-thirds of the total population live in Peninsular Malaysia.

The country has a predominantly agriculture-based economy and derives its revenue from the production and sale of primary commodities like rubber, oil palm, tea, cocoa, timber and petroleum. Malaysia is also a leading producer of tin, which is mostly extracted from mines using the open-cast or gravel-pump method.

Industrialisation programmes are being initiated by the Government to diversify the economy and obviate total dependence on agriculture. The industrial projects in operation are mostly light or medium-type joint ventures with British, German, Indian, American and Japanese companies, some of which have been given pioneer and tax-holiday status.

## **Labour in Malaysia**

The labour force of Malaysia was estimated at 5.1 million in 1980. Out of this total labour force aged 10 and over, about 83% lives in Peninsular Malaysia, 7% in Sabah and 10% in Sarawak. The labour force is expected to grow at the rate of 3.1% per annum.

Despite the lower rate of population growth, the revised age structure of the population indicates a more rapid growth of working age of 3.0% per annum compared with 2.8% estimated in the Fourth Malaysia Plan.

The labour force of Malaysia is still young with about 60% in the age group of 15–34 years. About 53% of the new labour market entrants during 1981–85 will be in the age group of 20–34. New entrants into the labour market aged 15–19 years are expected to grow at a relatively slow rate of 0.6% per annum and their share in total labour force is largely due to an increased retention of youth aged 15–19 years within the school system.

## **Female Labour Force Participation Rates**

With higher educational attainment, participation rates of females are expected to rise especially in the age group of 20–24 years. It is estimated that while the aggregate female labour force participation rate (LFPR) is expected to rise from 45.2% in 1980 to 45.8% in 1985, the labour force participation rate for females aged 20–24 years is expected to increase from 56.6% to 59.0%. As for the males the aggregate LFPR is expected to increase from 85.4% to 85.6%.

## **Urban Labour Force**

With increasing urbanization, urban labour force is expected to grow rapidly. Urban labour force in Peninsular Malaysia is expected to grow at 4.9% while the rural labour supply will only increase at 1.5% per annum. Youths have a propensity to migrate to urban areas in view of their higher education and also of their higher expectations in terms of wages and working conditions.

## **Labour Force Survey**

The labour force survey of 1980 gives information on the structure and distribution of the labour force and on employment and unemployment in Malaysia.

The working age population of Malaysia was estimated to have been 7801.6 thousand out of which 2737.5 thousand were outside the labour force leaving about 5064.1 thousand in the labour force. Persons considered to be outside the labour force are housewives, students, retired or disabled persons and those not interested in looking for jobs. There are more females in the working age population than males, but majority of the males, about 2190.6 thousand were outside the labour force, leaving about 1724.6 thousand to participate in the labour force. Persons who are outside the labour force mainly are found in the 15-34 age group. About 60% of the labour force are in the 15-34 group. The males form 66% of the labour force are in the 15-34 group. The males form 66% of the labour force and the females about 34%. The participation rates of males are higher than those of females at every age group. The peak for the female participation is at 20-24 years and it declines to the age group of 30-34. This could be due to the general tendency for women to work between the time they leave school and the time they have their first child, after which they tend to stop work.

### **Employment**

The slowdown in economic growth has resulted in a deceleration in labour demand and the overall employment situation has weakened. Employment grew by an average rate of 2.9% per annum compared with 3.6% achieved in the decade of the 1970's. *Consequently, unemployment in Malaysia has increased from 5.6% in 1980 to 6.0% in 1983.* In 1984 the employment situation was still weak though there is an apparent recovery of the world economy.

The total number of jobs increased by 3.1% from 5,244,800 to 5,406,900 in 1984. At the same time labour force has increased by 3.3%. *Consequently the unemployment rate has risen from 6% in 1983 to 6.2% in 1984.* The partial freeze on new intake of staff and the continuing austerity drive in the public services sector, together with the increasing number of school leavers, are expected to exert pressure on the labour market.

### **Issues And Challenges For Employment**

*Since 1980, global economic developments have not been favourable to Malaysia.* The world economy in the 1980's has been forecast to grow more slowly than the previous decade and has been characterised by uncertainty as to the durability of sustained growth in the industrialised nations. *Furthermore, the continuing increasing trend of protectionism will have an adverse effect on Malaysia's prospects for economic growth and job generation.*

Since 1980 there has been a substantial shift in the pattern of employment growth from more productive external oriented sectors of the economy towards non 'tradable' sectors, particularly construction

and services. Furthermore, with the exception of construction, employment generation is more rapid in the public services sector due to the Government's mass recruitment programmes, commonly referred to as 'civil conscription'. Employment in manufacturing grew only by 2.2% in 1981-83. There was also an absolute decline in employment in the mining sector. The outmigration of younger and better educated youth to urban areas has contributed significantly to the shortage of agricultural labour in specific agricultural activities.

### **Illegal Migrant Labour**

Perhaps the biggest headache to the employment situation in Malaysia is the illegal migration of Indonesian workers to Malaysia. The Government has permitted these workers to take up employment in the rubber estates and at construction sites, and the official excuse given is the shortage of labour.

There are close to one million illegal immigrant workers in Malaysia, and they do not possess any valid travel documents or residence permits. The Government has given them uninterrupted entry because the Indonesian workers are predominantly Muslims and can even pass off as Malays. It is the intention of the Malaysian Government to increase the Malay population of the country to sustain its unquestionable political supremacy, and it has been reported that a sizable number of these illegal immigrants even possess Malaysian citizenship papers.

*The crime rate in Malaysia has increased tremendously because these illegal workers are criminally disposed.* Moreover, their illegal immigrant status precludes any police investigation due to the lack of substantive evidence.

The illegal Indonesian workers have displaced Malaysian workers in many fields of employment because they are willing to work longer hours for lower wages. The employers do not provide any statutory employee benefits like Employees Provident Fund, Group Personal Accident Insurance or Social Security. This has twisted the situation to the advantage of unscrupulous employers who are laughing all the way to the bank.

### **Capital in Malaysia**

The current economic slowdown, coupled with the Government's policies, has discouraged investments from overseas. The New Economic Policy (NEP) stipulates that 30% of all shares in private companies must be allotted to the Malays, and that the workforce of the establishment must reflect a fair representation of the Malay community.

The recent financial scandal involving Bank Bumiputra and its Hong Kong-based subsidiary, Bumiputra Malaysia Finance (BMF), has spelt the loss of MS 2.5 billion (about US\$ 1 billion) to the Government, thereby further burdening the poor taxpayer. Banking circles overseas have lost confidence in the stability of Malaysia's financial situation, and potential investors are playing safe by being very cautious in their business pursuits. *It can be categorically stated that there has been no new industrial venture in Malaysia since 1982.* This has contributed to the increase in unemployment among youths in the 15-34 age group which has been discussed earlier.

The national car project recently initiated by the Government may further rock the boat by causing an impact on the existing automobile assembly industry. A significant portion of the important components have been imported from Japan, and the Government is trying to boost its prestige by pretending that the car has been made locally. Many workers may have to be retrenched due to poor profits, and this is a vicious circle in terms of the Gross National Product (GNP), the security situation in the country and the resultant political stability. *The economies of scale in this respect will definitely be very deleterious to the wellbeing of all Malaysians.*

## Conclusion

*Labour and capital in Malaysia are at cross purposes.* If this trend continues unchecked, the aftermath of any socio-political event arising out of this would be very difficult and painful for this young nation to bear.

**CHAPTER III**

**PAPER PRESENTED AT WOLLONGONG UNIVERSITY,  
AUSTRALIA ON 21 JULY 1985**

**"Multi-racial collective leadership does not exist in Malaysia any-  
more."**



## RACE RELATIONS IN MALAYSIA – A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

### Races in Malaysia

The Malaysian society is plural in nature and multi-religious in origin. The major races living in Peninsular Malaysia are the Malays, Chinese and Indians, with a sprinkling of Eurasians. Kadazans, Bajaus and Muruts form a major group in Sabah, while Dayaks and Ibans form a large portion of the population in Sarawak. The Malays are predominantly Muslims, the Chinese are Buddhists, the Kadazans are Christians and the Indians are Hindus. Some of the other minor groups are either a mixture of Muslims and Christians or are animists.

### Origins of Races in Malaysia

The Chinese have their origins from the province of Szechuan in the southern regions of China. The Malays, contrary to popular belief, originate from Indonesia, especially from the islands of Sumatra and Java and are not the natives of Malaysia – the actual natives of Malaysia are the aborigines or indigenous people found in the jungles in small and scattered numbers, and these include the Ibans and Kadazans as well. The Indians mostly originate from the South Indian states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, and a sizable number of Ceylon Tamils also form an integral part of the Malaysian Indian community.

## **Early Race Relations in Malaysia**

Early race relations in Malaysia were confined to very minimal levels of communication. This could be attributable to the linguistic and religious barriers that existed then.

The Chinese spoke Cantonese and Hokkien, the Indians spoke mainly Tamil and the Malays spoke only Malay. As a result of this, little or no communication existed between the early settlers then. Communication, if any, was restricted to barter exchange and many concepts became mutually understood through familiarity. Moreover, religious and cultural peculiarities did not encourage racial integration. The Chinese lived in clans, the Malays lived among their sub-communities and the Indians resided within their own sub-communal confines which are often the perpetuation of sentiments and emotions related to Indians hailing from similar districts in India. It must be noted that inter-racial relations then were more secular in nature and were devoid of any semblance of integration or cross-cultural exchange.

## **The Second World War and Its Impact On Race Relations**

It has often been held by historians and political observers that the Second World War acted as a 'social catalyst' that effected significant changes on the character and magnitude of inter-racial relations in the then Malaya. The Japanese onslaught on battle-weary British forces helped to establish a hitherto unexpected, in fact unimaginable, social revelation – that the sun *does* set in the British Empire. Military skill and swift battle movements exercised by the diminutive Japanese could ultimately spell the defeat of the powerful British forces.

*The calamities and economic vagaries of the war had permanent effects on the quality and relative value of race relations in Malaysia.* People from the different communities realised that they had to unify their available resources and help one another for the sake of survival. Food was scarce, civil amenities were destroyed, health facilities were grossly insufficient, and death in the hands of cruel Japanese soldiers was always imminent.

Given the backdrop of these circumstances, the races living in Malaya realised that they had to patch up their ethnic differences at least till the Japanese left the country, and help one another as much as possible. It can be stated that race relations in Malaya during the Japanese Occupation (1941–1945) was that of *compulsive communication under duress* for the sake of mere survival in severely testing circumstances.

### **Race Relations in Post-War Malaya up to Independence in 1957**

The direction of ethnic relations took a significant turn after the Japanese were defeated by the Allied Forces in 1945. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 by the Americans was followed by a chain of social and nationalistic explosions in Malaya and her neighbouring countries. The Malays, Chinese and Indians became aware of their political rights and strove to form a leadership league that would ultimately take over the reins of Government from the British.

The United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) were formed to represent the interests of the Malays, Chinese and the Indians, respectively. The pioneers and founding fathers of these organisations were Onn Jaffar, Tan Cheng Lock and John Thivy. Tengku Abdul Rahman, the then president of UMNO, was given the responsibility of leading the team for negotiations with the British, and Malaya became an independent nation in 1957.

The first Government after Independence was formed by the Alliance Party, which was a combination of the UMNO, MCA and MIC. Tengku Abdul Rahman laid the foundation stone for multi-racial collective leadership in Malaysia, and we shall attempt to examine its level of success in a later part of this discussion.

It has been pointed out by many political observers that *there has been a gradual but definite erosion on the extent of trust placed by the other races on Malay leadership and political integrity since the dawn of independence*, and the initial charm of multi-racial leadership idealism suffered a severe blow when racial riots broke out in Malaysia in 1969.

### **The Effect of the Emergency on Inter Ethnic Relations**

Tun Abdul Razak wrested the leadership from Tengku Abdul Rahman in 1969 and declared a state of Emergency until 1970. *The political uncertainty that ensued as a result of this action rang the knell of racial goodwill in Malaysia.* Each racial component became intensely suspicious of the other, and the Malays took control of the political affairs of the country forcibly from the other two communities 'in national interest'. *Racial cooperation, if any, existed only at a superficial level with mere exchange of social pleasantries and has been the same ever since.*

## The New Economic Policy (NEP) in the Context of Racial Integration

The aftermath of the May 1969 racial riots saw a drastic change in the political direction of Malaysia. The New Economic Policy (NEP) was introduced to adjust the economic imbalance that existed between the various races. The Malays were given 'favoured access' to employment opportunities and tertiary education. Vast amounts of money were given out as scholarships and loans to enable the Malays secure at least 30% of the national economy by 1990 through university education and business ventures. *Slowly but surely the non-Malays were denied their rightful place in the sun*, with the Malays enhancing their material and social gains at the expense of the deserving Chinese and Indians.

The disparity became so great and obvious that many young non-Malay intellectuals openly criticized the rationale behind this. The Sedition Act and the Internal Security Act were amended to give the Government more teeth and political supremacy to the extent of arresting and detaining critics without trial for unspecified periods of time. *The process of social erosion was having its last laugh.*

### Multi-Racial Collective Leadership in Malaysia in the Eighties

*Multi-racial collective leadership does not exist in Malaysia anymore.* The present National Front Government is a loose marriage of many political parties and is nothing but a big tea party. *No real inter-racial commitment exists within the component parties, and each party is actually misusing its racially representative status to enhance the personal material prospects of its leaders.*

## DIVERSITY IN UNITY

The type of inter-racial relationship in Malaysia is an unfortunate reversal of the popular axiom, 'Unity in Diversity'. *Deep undercurrents of racial bias and ethnic preferences permeate the very foundation of Malaysian politics.* The Malays have used UMNO as a vehicle and have taken the law into their hands. They have given themselves the necessary legislative protection to publicly promote their racial sentiments. The actual racial composition of Malaysia does not justify the political supremacy of the Malays.

The percentage breakdown of the races is as follows:

Malays	—	44%
Chinese	—	40%
Indians	—	16%

e non-Malays form a combined majority of 56%, but do not possess proportionate political clout. Official statistics released by the government are often watered-down versions of the actual facts and figures, and have been manipulated to project a Malay majority. It is obvious from this state of affairs that the Indians are being given a raw deal in the whole exercise of the New Economic Policy.

The Prime Minister has made a recent announcement that the New Economic Policy will be continued even beyond 1990, until such time the Government feels that the Malays have become sufficiently self-supporting. *This is a matter of subjective opinion wholly within the political precincts of the Government*, and the non-Malays are going to face endless problems like unemployment, underemployment, denial of opportunities and unsuccessful business ventures.

### **Racial Sentiments and their Cumulative Effect on the Individual Psychological Well-Being of Malaysians**

*The individual psychological well-being of Malaysians is greatly dependent on the quality, extent and impact of inter-ethnic relations.* The present generation of Malaysians were born after Independence and have little or no knowledge of the type of inter-racial communication that existed when their ancestors set foot on Malaysian soil about a century ago.

It is therefore imperative that we make our observations 'per se' and include as little as possible the historical effects on inter-racial relations that caused changes in the racial behaviour of their ancestors.

### **The Psychological State of a Typical Malay Individual in Malaysia Today**

A typical Malay individual (often referred to, though erroneously, as 'bumiputra' or 'son of the soil') in Malaysia has all the cards in his favour, both politically and materially. He needs only to have the minimum academic standards to obtain admission in local tertiary institutions and also gain financial assistance for his education. He needs to possess only minimum managerial or entrepreneurial skills to qualify for a business loan to start off a commercial venture. His eligibility status in the New Economic Policy makes it possible for him to attain 30% shares in well-managed and reputable business projects with little or no effort.

He enjoys political and social mobility as a direct result of his newly acquired 'privileges' and can secure lucrative employment in the civil service to a large extent and in the private sector to a slightly lesser extent.

He has forgotten his roots and is confused between his emotional and material needs caused as a result of drastic changes in his lifestyle that have not been gradually earned through hard work and painfully acquired skills.

### **The Psychological State of a Typical Chinese Individual in Malaysia Today**

A Chinese individual in Malaysia is torn between his parochial ideals and the realities of the socio-economic scene. His ethnic instincts urge him to promote his business and professional prospects within his community, but the political conditions of Malaysia do not permit him to do so.

He has to give up at least 30% of his business equities to the Malay individual next door, and also appoint him in a senior managerial position in his own company which his family members had taken years to establish.

The Chinese individual has to pretend ignorance of ethnic sensitivities when going about doing his business rounds, and has to publicly acknowledge, however little it may be, that he is an inseparable partner in the New Economic Policy that aims to give equal opportunities for one and all.

His pride for the Chinese way of life, its cultural heritage and linguistic beauty has to make way for a Malay language medium education forced down his throat by the Government. There has been significant dilution of his independence and prestige by the Government through the arms of compulsive legislation.

He is uncertain what the future holds for him and is retracing his steps to take stock of his achievements and failures before embarking on new plans.

### **The Psychological State of a Typical Indian Individual in Malaysia Today**

The typical Indian individual in Malaysia is precariously perched between the devil and the deep blue sea. He knows that the rate of success of his race in the business and professional fields is negligible when compared with the Malays with their newly acquired wealth and status, and the Chinese with their initial economic advantage. He will therefore not be in a position to compete with them in these areas of activity.

His parents and grandparents toiled their lives in the estates under the European planters, and kept little for him to begin his life with. If he had achieved any success in his higher education, it was because of his own hard work coupled with the material assistance that he managed to receive from his sympathetic relatives and friends now and then.

The only option available to him at the moment is to secure employment (which is becoming increasingly difficult) in a well-established organisation and try to gain a firm foothold in its administration and management.

His deep love for the Tamil language and its culture has been greatly affected by the Malay language medium education system of the Government, and he also knows that a Tamil language medium education for the first six years of his academic career would leave a lasting effect on his prospects of tertiary or professional education in terms of quality and prestige. *He has little alternative but to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds.*

He suffers from emotional insecurity because he does not know what step to take next and where to go. The political realities of the country are compelling him to settle for mediocrity though he knows that he can excel in his job or profession if given the chance.

### **Race Relations in Malaysia in the Future**

The 1969 racial riots have left a permanent scar on the face of inter-ethnic relations in Malaysia. The political and social changes that ensued have more than established the theory of Social Crystallization, that 'every component of a society attempts to crystallize its aims and objectives in itself and wilfully avoids the fluidity of change and uncertainty'. *This process of social crystallization will ultimately result in pockets of affluence and comfort existing amidst poverty and need.*

*Societies created as a result of such deleterious socio-political mutations will ultimately fold in on themselves. They not only defeat the purpose of healthy inter-racial intercourse but also sow the seeds of political unrest and are thus the wind vanes of civil war.*

## CONCLUSION

Freedom, in my opinion, is not the mere conferment of a legalised independent political status to the people of a country. It is the unalloyed and unfettered right of the populace to liberally exercise their norms of tradition, culture, religion, language and values in peaceful co-existence and mutual acceptance within the framework of justice and security.

Freedom of this kind has yet to be enjoyed by Malaysians. My optimistic bent of mind prevents me from saying "will not be enjoyed", because every cloud has a silver lining. Political, social and economic changes have transformed many a nation from nothing to everything and vice-versa, and it is this inevitable but rather conscious element of psychological evolution that drives a decisive nail in the capsule of nationalism. I would like to draw apt reminiscence to this concept from the words of contemporary Indian poet M.M. Mehta:-

"Freedom came at midnight – It has not dawned yet."

Freedom from the shackles of autocratic conformity, freedom from the tentacles of social prejudice and freedom from the predatory influence of corruption are the three ineluctable ingredients of altruistic "FREEDOM".

Let us work tirelessly to achieve this difficult but ultimately rewarding objective to ensure the sustenance of one and all in this beautiful land of ours.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is the end-product of several years of deep thought and research. I must state that a very conscious attempt has been made throughout the book to refrain from merely discussing contemporary national issues which have little bearing on the main purpose of this publication.

The thrust of this book is on the identification of purely empirical concepts attending the birth, growth and development of a young nation like Malaysia, and what needs be done to ensure the sustenance of a true Malaysian-Malaysia in which racial harmony, civil liberty and loyalty take precedence over all other ephemeral priorities.

My task will not be complete if I do not express my profound appreciation and sincere thanks to the following individuals who have made all this possible:

- Mr. Mohan Ram, Mr. Anddy Rozario and Mr. S. Venkateswaran for their research and editorial support;
- Mr. S.T. Chandra Mohan and Mr. Andy Yong for design and lay-out assistance;
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- Mr. Stephen Chin, for consenting to undertake the publication of this book; and
- Last, but certainly not the least, to all my colleagues, supporters and well-wishers who have encouraged and motivated me in no small measure to bring out this publication.

After reading this book, if my readers begin to feel that our young and beautiful country is in need of a new social order that would be compatible with the ever-transitional process of change, I shall consider my task well done in the true spirit of loyalty and patriotism.

30 NOV. 1990

Dr. V. David

David's third spell of arbitrary incarceration came about on May 13, 1969 in the wake of the racial turmoil of that year, also under the ISA, saw him spend 63 "memorable" days as a prisoner of Conscience in the mosquito and cockroach - infested Kuala Kubu Bharu Police Station lock-up.

Dr. David's October 27, 1987 arrest and detention, his fourth under the ISA, along with 106 other Malaysians of a wide and varied range of human endeavours, evoked the widest publicity both at home and abroad. The Geneva-based ILO and the Brussels-centered ICFTU voiced their protest and resentment over Dr. David's detention and their call to have him released bore no immediate result.

Just prior to his detention, David had attended a pre-conference session of the AFL-CIO in Miami Beach in which he had raised questions over the violation of labour and trade union rights in Malaysia. This made out a case for the AFL-CIO to petition to the US Government to have Malaysia removed from the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) list of developing countries enjoying export duty-free status.

Dr. David is also a member of the Executive Committee of the ICFTU, member of the Steering Committee of the London-based Commonwealth Trade Union Council (CTUC) and a Vice-President of the Asean Council of Trade Unions (ATUC). His most salient contribution to the cause of education is reflected by the fact that he is the founder and prime mover behind the Port Klang-based Workers' Institute of Technology (WIT). This stay-in Transport Workers Union's technological training progeny is about the only private sector institution of its kind in this region.

David's political aspirations bloomed with his entry into the first Parliament in 1959 when he was elected from the Bungsar Constituency, simultaneously acquiring a seat in the then Selangor Legislative Assembly. In the House of Representatives of that inaugural Parliament, David had attained the distinction of having been the youngest Member of Parliament then.

He savoured salient parliamentary successes in three of the General Elections which followed those conducted in 1969 (Dato Keramat, Penang), 1978 (Daman-sara) and 1986 (Puchong - the largest parliamentary Constituency in the country), on electoral majorities ranging from the convincing to the overwhelming. With the recent demise of Health Minister, Tan Sri Chan Siang Sun, David reigns as the sole surviving pioneer MP of the nation's torch-bearing Parliament of 1959.

Essentially David is a humanist and a human rights campaigner. He has a soft spot and helping hand for those in less fortunate position than he had been from time to time in his trade union cum political career. To sum up, he is a unionist, educationist, philanthropist, academician, writer, speaker and politician - all rolled into one.

On a personal note, the biographer is gratified for having been associated with this dynamic David and is confident that the vocally-incisive and action-oriented go-getter will continue to vigorously and relentlessly crusade for the cherished goals of equality, freedom and justice and that, in the process, he will eventually slay the Goliaths who had chosen to be his antagonists.