

*As a Matter of
Interest*

Tunku Abdul Rahman

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Front cover photograph: The Tunku in his study.

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Foreword

Once again a collection of my thoughts and views on people, events and issues, past and present, with which in one way or the other I have been connected or which are of interest and concern to me, are offered to the reading public. This collection is based — as was the case with *Looking Back* and *Viewpoints* — on articles which have appeared over the past couple of years in my weekly column AS I SEE IT in *The Star*.

It is the privilege of old men to reminisce. In my case I do so because I wish to place on record for future generations what I have witnessed, done, said and felt during the course of the momentous times in the fashioning of this country through which I have lived and participated.

I have no doubt that future historians — let alone present ones — will delve into my life-work and activities and come up with their theories and interpretations of why I did what I did, or even just simply of what I did. I leave that to them. But for the record there is no substitute for a first-hand account by the actor himself. It is then up to others to draw their own conclusions. Above all, in offering this third collection of thoughts and reminiscences to my fellow Malaysians, I hope that the up-and-coming and future generations will find in its pages a clear picture of events as we saw them and of how it was and how it seemed to be to me and those of my generation. I hope that in so doing, they will come to have a better understanding of the background of this country of ours.

In preparing this present volume my thanks as always go to Mr. Jee Guan Huat who helps me in my work when I am in Penang, and to Mr. Cheah Phee Cheok who assists me whenever I am in Kuala Lumpur. They are still my “old faithfuls” after all these years.

The Path to Independence

31 August 1977

A. The Day Datuk Onn Left UMNO

What Malaysia has achieved since independence under the rule of UMNO and its partners, the MCA and the MIC, and now the Barisan Nasional of Gerakan, PPP, Berjaya, Sarawak Alliance and so forth, is a miracle.

If UMNO and its partners in the Barisan Nasional can continue to carry on the administration with the same understanding and fairness, then I feel there is no reason why there should not be continued peace, prosperity and happiness in the country.

Going back to the early days, when Datuk Onn decided to give up UMNO, most gloomy forebodings were felt in the party and all those well-known in the UMNO hierarchy left with him.

All kinds of people were suggested as Datuk Onn's likely successor. Then my name was proposed to my utter surprise, because I had never been among the top circle of UMNO leaders. Then support poured in from all parts of the country, and there was no getting out of it.

It was a pleasure for me to accept, though I had to admit with all humility, that it would be a hard task for me to face up to the many problems to be resolved, coming as I did after Datuk Onn, the founder and leader of UMNO.

The Malays, from all over the Peninsula, including some prominent leaders such as Tun Razak, Sheikh Ahmad of Perlis and a few others who knew me personally, asked me to take over the leadership. But what really influenced me was the Malay Graduates' Association led by Dr. Ismail and Datuk Suleiman, his brother, who promised all-out support for me.

I wrote to Tun Razak to say that, provided UMNO members would not play politics like monkeys up the post, I would certainly take up the leadership.

To quote from UMNO's tenth anniversary journal:

A new chapter in the history of UMNO was opened on 26 August 1951, when a new man was appointed president of UMNO, a man in whom the people had confidence as the person to lead the party, and that was Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra. When he was appointed president of UMNO he left government service in order to give full time to the party.

Before he could start work he was confronted with so many difficulties. Many divisions and branches kept silent as to whether to carry on or not, or as the Malay saying goes, *Hidup segan, mati tak mau*.

Many of the members of UMNO were rather shaky in their attitude towards the party. Others left to follow Datuk Onn and joined his new party. There were some who stayed on, but would do nothing except to wait and see.

Only the truly loyal members swore to serve UMNO to the bitter end.

In Perak, where UMNO was the strongest, Datuk Bukit Gantang tried to dissolve the party and start one of his own called the Perak National Party, which subsequently fought Perak UMNO led by Ghazali Jawi. It met with a miserable defeat at the state election without winning a single seat.

The secretary-general of UMNO and the chief clerk at headquarters resigned. Some members of the committee remained behind to make trouble.

All the strong men of UMNO left and joined Datuk Onn. They also passed word round to the effect that UMNO would die within three months, or six months at the most, for it had no place in the heart of the Malays.

Above all, it had no money.

But UMNO, thanks to Allah, not only survived the period but gained strength and grew from success to success. It took on a new life. Everywhere the growth of UMNO's divisions and branches was spectacular, astounding and phenomenal. In Singapore where there was only one division before, many new branches and divisions sprang up.

I was advised by Dr. Ismail and Datuk Suleiman not to go to Johore yet, as headquarters was full of people who were not yet certain as to whom to serve, Datuk Onn or me.

But they were of the opinion that some of the important members at the headquarters would continue to serve Datuk Onn to my despair and cost.

"Let us make a quiet investigation and retire these people before you take up residence in Johore," they said.

So I decided to come to Province Wellesley where I had a small house in Telok Ayer Tawar and employed one secretary-cum-clerk-cum-peon to help me run UMNO.

One thing I had to do which was important and immediate, was to get funds for UMNO. The only thing I could do was to dispose of the fourteen shophouses I owned in Penang. They were in Cecil Street, Nanking Street and adjoining Penang Road.

My house agent, Che Din Hashim of Dennys and Company advised me against selling the houses.

According to him, there was no prospect of independence, so why gamble away valuable possessions?

"Never mind," I said, "my duty is first to build up UMNO and then to go in for this object, or sink in my attempt."

And so this was how UMNO started to make great headway for the road to independence.

One day I received a telephone message from Datuk Yahaya bin Razak to come to Kuala Lumpur and meet the MCA leaders, as they had proposed to join forces with UMNO to fight the municipal elections in Kuala Lumpur against the powerful IMP led by Datuk Onn.

I immediately left and met Datuk Yahaya and for the first time Ong Yoke Lin, a handsome young man, (now Tun Omar Ong) at the Flying Club, and having heard the proposal I gave them my encouragement.

As it turned out, the Alliance of UMNO and MCA scored a great victory in the first K.L. municipal election in 1952. The Alliance won nine seats out of thirteen contested, followed later by the landslide victories at the state and town council elections throughout Malaya in the same year.

B. The First National Elections

At its general annual meeting in Seberang Prai in 1952, UMNO passed a resolution asking the government to hold a general election for the Federation by no later than 1954. This was followed by another resolution taken at the general annual meeting in Alor Star in 1953. This resolution called upon the government to carry out the wishes of the people for a general election in 1954. It said that the Alliance would withdraw from all the municipal and town councils if this was not carried out.

On 14 August 1953, UMNO held a congress of Malay political parties to get their support. This was followed by the Congress of the Alliance of UMNO-MCA and other parties on 23 August, 1953 calling on all political parties to support national elections for 1954.

In 1953, the then British High Commissioner, Sir Gerald Templer, offered me a seat in his Cabinet. This I politely declined, but instead nominated Dr. Ismail and Col. H.S. Lee,

the Alliance leaders, for places in the Cabinet of the High Commissioner.

This was done to demonstrate that the Alliance was not a party opposed to the government but rather a legitimate party of the people fighting for a cause but at the same time doing so constitutionally.

The main issue that was of concern to UMNO was to get the agreement of the government to hold a general election and this was eventually accepted, though not completely in accordance with our terms.

The Alliance wanted a legislative council of one hundred members, with an elected majority, whilst the government wanted ninety-two members, with eleven representatives nominated from the states and settlements, twenty members representing minorities, as well as two official members (the Secretary of Defence and the Economic Secretary) and eight members nominated by the High Commissioner. There were thus only forty-four members to be elected.

This would give a clear majority to the government. The Alliance rejected this outright and decided to take the matter up with the British government in London.

On 21 April 1954, I left for London with the Secretary-General of the Alliance, Mr. T.H. Tan (now Tan Sri Tahir Tan).

At first, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies refused to meet the Alliance representatives to discuss this issue; but to cut a long story short, after arduous rounds of talks in the chambers of the Houses of Parliament, arranged by Lord Ogmores and Mr. Proctor, Mr. Lyttleton finally decided to meet us.

Tun Abdul Razak, who was on his way back from the United States, joined us. Mr. Lyttleton appeared evasive and it was clear to me that he was not prepared to take a decision and that he was waiting for further advice from the Malayan colonial administration.

I told him I would not continue with the talks but would rather return home and communicate my party's decision to him later.

One thing I could say, my party would not accept any legislature with a minority of elected members.

I quote from T.H. Tan's book of the talks we had in London with the Under-Secretary:

... Tunku Abdul Rahman, as a leader of the delegation, asked whether Mr. Lyt-

tleton wished to discuss matters on the basis of the Federal Elections Committee's Report or whether Mr. Lyttleton considered that chapter closed.

The Tunku explained that if the discussions were to be on the basis of the Federal Elections Committee's Report, then the delegation would be bound by its demand for three-fifths of the federal legislative council to be elected.

On the other hand, if Mr. Lyttleton considered that chapter closed, then the delegation must ask for a fully-elected federal legislative council in accordance with the mandate given to the delegation just before its departure from Malaya.

Mr. Lyttleton chose to discuss matters on the basis of his published proposals.

Tunku Abdul Rahman then explained why the Alliance thought a three-fifths elected element in the federal legislative council was the absolute minimum to ensure satisfactory working of the party system. No single party could expect to win more than, say, 80 per cent of the seats.

As a result, the party returned to power would not have a working majority in a house of ninety-eight, of which fifty-two were appointed. The majority party consequently would not be able to run the government.

Nor would the majority party in such circumstances have the confidence to run the government.

The Tunku told Mr. Lyttleton that only if three-fifths of the members of the council were elected in a house of one hundred members, would there be an adequate number of other members to make debates and division a reality.

Mr. Lyttleton, apparently briefed by the High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, argued that surely the party returned to power could count on some support from the five *ex-officio* members and from some of the nominated members.

Tunku Abdul Rahman explained that this would depend entirely on whether the executive council had decided which way official members should vote.

As for nominated members, their loyalty in the first instance belonged to the interests that nominated them onto the council. If these interests were not affected, voting would depend on the whims and fancies of the appointed members.

In these circumstances, there would be an element of uncertainty of support for the majority party.

Such uncertainty would make for unstable government, which was not the Alliance's idea of a first step towards responsible self-government.

After stating that he alone was in no position to change the proposals already announced, Mr. Lyttleton suggested that the Alliance should make a "go" of it and put those proposals to the test.

After rounds of talk with British Members of Parliament, both Conservative and Labour, I was convinced of their moral support. Sure enough before I left London for home, determined to take drastic action against the decision of the Secretary of State, Mr. Lyttleton, he wrote me a letter and asked me to give its contents serious thought because the difference between the Alliance's demand and his offer for a compromise was a matter of degree which did not affect the principle. So if I could persuade my party to accept the compromise, then we could have

elections immediately.

I returned with T.H. Tan, arriving in Singapore on 23 May 1954, and was received by UMNO members of Singapore and Johore. We were driven back to Johore Bahru in a motorcade. At the UMNO headquarters, more people met me, and I addressed the gathering, tired as I was.

I told them in great detail what I had to go through. That same evening I took the train for Kuala Lumpur and was met by UMNO and MCA leaders on arrival the following morning, 24 May. Then after an UMNO executive council meeting, I picked a few leaders and drove off to Col. H.S. Lee's house where I briefed the MCA fully on my mission in London and the experiences I had gone through, in particular, my talk with members of the British Parliament and finally with Mr. Lyttleton.

My last meeting with Mr. Lyttleton, I regretted to have to tell them, ended unsatisfactorily, as I could not accept his proposal for a compromise, the gist of which had already been communicated to Tun Tan Cheng Lock in advance.

All that the Secretary of State had asked us to do was to accept the White Paper issued by the government with just a little change, which he referred to as a matter of degree.

The meeting agreed completely with my stand on the issue, and with one voice rejected the government White Paper and Mr. Lyttleton's proposal for a quick election. The meeting decided on the next step to take to meet the new challenge.

The Alliance sent an appeal to the government asking for an independent commission to review the Constitution vis-à-vis the election.

Unless this was done the Alliance would withdraw all participation from government bodies, including legislative, municipal, State and town councils.

An action committee was appointed — with me as the chairman and Dr. Ismail, Col. H.S. Lee, Leong Yew Koh as members — to meet General Templer and discuss these matters with him the next day.

The first words of General Templer, after he had read the resolution were "Well, the pistol is out". My impression was that General Templer was sympathetic with the Alliance, for soon after that he retired and Sir Donald MacGillivray, the Deputy High Commissioner, took over his post.

On 10 June 1954 our letter was published widely in all the

papers in the country. The executive committee of UMNO/MCA met on 13 June and decided to boycott all government councils pending the appointment of an independent commission to amend the Constitution to allow for an elected majority.

On 14 June, UMNO directed all its members to withdraw from government bodies. This action was similarly taken by the MCA. A non-cooperation movement had started in earnest and it was expected that other political bodies and the workers sympathetic to the Alliance would follow up by taking action to down tools everywhere.

This caused serious concern to the government. Immediately after on 1 July, I led a demonstration in Johore. We were met by the Sultan of Johore at the *Istana* who agreed to look into the case. Other demonstrations soon followed in other states.

That same evening, I received a telephone message from the Secretary-General of the Alliance, Mr. T.H. Tan, telling me that he had received a call from the High Commissioner himself, who had expressed a wish to see me immediately. I expressed regret that unfortunately, I would not be able to see him as I had already arranged to address an Alliance rally in Mersing. I said, however, I would see him another day.

The next morning, a representative from the High Commissioner came to Johore Bahru and met me and Dr. Ismail at the residence of the British Adviser, Johore. He said that he accepted the original proposal of the Alliance on behalf of the High Commissioner, and that five nominated members would be appointed on the recommendation of and with the approval of the Alliance.

He said that if I agreed with this proposal, the High Commissioner himself would come to Johore to see me that same evening.

Naturally that was what we wanted, and so I accepted, and the High Commissioner's representative left immediately for Kuala Lumpur.

The same evening I received a message asking me to meet the High Commissioner, Sir Donald MacGillivray on board the frigate HMS *Alert* at the Woodlands Naval Base at 10.30 p.m.

Dr. Ismail and Col. H.S. Lee accompanied me. We agreed on the terms for the majority-elected council as requested by the Alliance.

This was a major victory for us. If our proposal had not been

accepted by the High Commissioner, it would have thrown the country into complete turmoil and disorder. The government would have had to do the inevitable, ban the Alliance, declare it an unlawful political party and drive it underground.

This would have meant that all the known Alliance leaders would have been taken into custody and detained. The communists who were fighting with varying degrees of success against the government would have derived greater opportunities to win support, not only from the extremist political parties but from a moderate political party, such as the Alliance.

This truly was a serious situation and the government saw it as such, decided to act quickly and wasted no time in reaching a solution. The news spread like wildfire throughout the country and members of UMNO/MCA expressed their joy in no uncertain terms.

Everywhere shouts of *Merdeka* rent the air. At last I came home and slept soundly for the first time after so many nights of unrest and so many days of ceaseless anxiety.

I had been worried for what was likely to happen to my followers who had become too excited as to be almost beyond control. They were prepared to go to the extreme and even go into the jungle to join the communists. Imagine my relief when the High Commissioner agreed to meet our demands and reached an acceptable compromise.

The Penang Town Council election was held in 1955. The MIC joined the Alliance for the first time and participated with success in the election.

With the MIC in the Alliance party, it could be said that all the communities in this country, Malays, Chinese and Indians, were fully represented. The Ceylonese joined as associate members.

In January 1956, the independence of Malaya was decided upon as the absolute objective of the party. Our success must have impressed the Rulers so much that they decided to side with the Alliance and give it their blessing.

On 1 July 1955, Mr. A.T. Smith, the Supervisor of Elections, announced that a general election would take place on 27 July 1955 with nomination day on 15 June.

The Alliance carried out extensive preparations and set up election committees to prepare and carry out all the work connected with the election immediately. Money had to be collected by all possible means, through donations and fun fairs.

I appealed to the Islamic nations for help, but none came as the oil had not started to flow as yet. But Thailand's General Phow sent me some help — not very much, but it came as a great morale booster.

The leaders of the Alliance prepared a manifesto for the election and it nominated its candidates for the fifty-two seats.

The choice of the candidates presented some problems which had to be settled peacefully, but this was only to be expected. It was finally agreed that UMNO should field thirty-five candidates, the MCA fifteen and the MIC one Indian and one Ceylonese.

The only seat we lost was an UMNO seat. UMNO lost it to Parti Islam. Most of the seats contested by the MCA and MIC were in the Malay constituencies and against Malay candidates but the Alliance won comfortably.

In the manifesto, it was agreed among other things, to have the Malay language as the official language of the country while others could have their own languages and schools. During the election campaign, parties fought it out hammer and tongs with no holds barred.

UMNO youths and women went into battle as the vanguard of the party and fought it out with such courage and determination that they carried the day with glorious victory.

But the way they fought the campaign was a lesson to be remembered for all time — they went through all the hardships with courage and fortitude. I was so impressed that I said the people "truly deserved independence, and nothing will stop me from getting it". The total cost for that national election to UMNO was no more than \$150,000 which included deposits for the candidates and transport expenses.

The Alliance had won a great victory. Malay electors had voted the non-Malays in purely Malay constituencies to victory. They knew what they were doing and they deserve credit for the independence that followed.

The day of the election for me began in Sungei Patani where I had campaigned vigorously prior to "D" Day. I left with T.H. Tan early on the morning of 27 July, and we started making our visits to polling stations by calling at the one at Tikam Batu. In my book *Looking Back*, I have described what transpired at Tikam Batu polling station and how I almost came to blows with the expatriate officer who was in charge there.

It is interesting to mention here that many years after, when I was the prime minister, this officer, whom I had completely forgotten, met me in Kuala Lumpur at a dinner and politely asked me if I remembered him. I told him "unfortunately I cannot".

He said he was the man who tried to drive me out of the polling station at Tikam Batu and now he was working with my government in Sarawak.

I said, "Well, you can be sure I won't drive you out of Sarawak so long as you behave yourself" and we laughed over it.

From Tikam Batu we drove slowly towards Kuala Lumpur stopping at all the main polling stations to meet our candidates and everywhere we went we were greeted by the voters who assured us of our victory.

We arrived in Kuala Lumpur at 11 p.m. and went to the *pa-dang* where we saw a huge crowd assembled to listen to the election results. Then tired, we moved to T.H. Tan's hotel and ordered sandwiches and ate heartily.

When the results came in at about midnight the Alliance was sure of a landslide victory.

I was listening to the radio broadcast in T.H. Tan's bedroom and silently welcomed each announcement as it told of the Alliance success. For the two of us, T.H. and I, knew how hard we had worked for this one great moment, and now it had come.

By morning, the result gave the Alliance the absolute victory — winning fifty-one out of the fifty-two seats contested. What a great victory it was!

It was time for me to pray and I prayed long and devoutly, giving thanks to Almighty God for His Mercy. This success would mean so much for our people and our country. God willing, *Merdeka* was in our grasp.

C. The Merdeka Mission and Independence

On 5 August 1955, I gave a *kenduri* at my house in Johore Bahru, the house which had been my home for nearly two years, and which was rented to me "cheap" by Datuk Ahmad Perang. The *kenduri* was followed by a dinner where prominent members of UMNO and MCA in Johore and Singapore attended in full force.

The then Chief Minister of Singapore, Mr. David Marshall, and a member of his Cabinet, Haji Hamid Jumat (also a member

of UMNO), attended and the prominent personalities on our side were Tun Razak, Dr. Ismail, Datuk Suleiman and Khir Johari.

It was a memorable evening for it marked the end of a hard and hazardous journey towards independence and looking ahead for an exciting future. All those present promised to swim or sink with me until independence was finally achieved.

Datuk Suleiman received one of the greatest tributes on that occasion because he scored the highest number of votes returned for the whole election, and that against Datuk Onn too.

It is worth recounting here that Datuk Onn first challenged me to fight him in Johore Bahru but it was Datuk Suleiman who took up the challenge since he was a Johore man and, according to him, I should return to Kedah and fight the election there and at the same time spend my time campaigning throughout the country as everybody in every constituency would need my presence.

I left on Sunday, 7 August 1955, to take up residence in Kuala Lumpur as the Chief Minister of the country. When I got there, the first thing I did was to call on the High Commissioner, Sir Donald MacGillivray, and presented him with a list of my colleagues with whom I would like to work in the new joint Cabinet.

For sentimental reasons I would like to name them here. They were Tun Razak, Dr. Ismail, Datuk Suleiman, Sardon bin Haji Jubir, Abdul Aziz Ishak, Leong Yew Koh, Col. H.S. Lee, Ong Yoke Lin and V.T. Sambanthan.

In the middle of August we were informed that the new Secretary of State, Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd (now Lord Boyd), would visit Malaya and we were naturally happy to have the opportunity to discuss the many issues with him right here in Malaya rather than having to travel to London.

My colleagues and I met Mr. Lennox-Boyd soon after he arrived and we brought up various matters for his urgent consideration.

(I told the Secretary of State that I would bring up these same matters in the first session of the Legislative Council, and I would like him to take the floor and make his reply if he cared to do so. He accepted this offer.)

On 31 August 1955, the Council met for the first time with an elected majority. The Speaker then suspended the session to allow the Secretary of State to take the floor in the Council.

I was called upon to address the Secretary of State, to which in reply, Mr. Lennox-Boyd said, *inter alia*;

... the Chief Minister did refer to a number of very important matters: questions of internal security together with the immense financial consequences that responsibility for internal security carries with it: to the other financial matters and to the question of the public service.

It is my view that these very great issues ought to be most thoroughly and calmly discussed so that the next stage of constitutional talks can take place in an atmosphere of realism which will only be possible if these vital issues have been firmly and frankly faced ...

Many great problems lie ahead of the members of this Council. Perhaps the greatest is the danger of subversion from within, for we must never forget that the aim of world communism has not changed, even though its tactics may change from time to time, and we may well find subversion an even graver danger, even more difficult to meet than open terrorism itself.

But I have, and so have the British Government, and so have the people of Malaya, confidence in the future of this great country

I must say it was well spoken, and the Secretary of State left no doubt in my mind as to what he intended to convey to me and my colleagues, though he emphasised the fact that the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya Agreement was an agreement between Her Majesty the Queen and their Highnesses the Rulers. Nevertheless, it could be amended to suit the mood of the people.

My impression of him was that he was an affable, kindly, sincere and acute man. One thing he said to me in our early meetings was that the High Commissioner had informed him that I referred to the government as "My government", and this was wrong.

I told him I had to say something to give my people the impression that the election had brought a change of government — from colonial government to the peoples' government, which I and my colleagues represented.

He said "You'd better wait for the appropriate moment to use the words 'My Government'." I said "That suits me, but I do feel the time for a change over to self-government is here now. Psychologically the stigma of colonialism should be removed. However, if the High Commissioner doesn't like it, I will use the words 'The Federation Government'."

On his return to England Mr. Lennox-Boyd immediately wrote me a long letter in which he expressed a wish to see me in London to work out the terms of reference for the appointment of an independent commission.

Having taken office, our next duty was to go straight for

independence. We had asked for independence within four years but there was a large number of UMNO members who felt that four years was a long time and would like to cut it short, if possible, by half. The Youth wing decided that independence must be achieved within two years.

The UMNO general assembly held in Kuala Lumpur in 1955 resolved that independence must be won within two years, and this met with unanimous support.

Armed with this resolution, a delegation made up of the Alliance and Rulers' representatives left for London on the Italian ship *Asia* on 1 January, 1956.

We felt there were still many issues confronting us which had to be settled before the start of the talks in London.

It would be foolish for us to appear at the conference table with the British Government speaking in different languages, when we came from the same country and with the same object in mind — to win independence for our country.

(The Rulers' representatives appreciated this and so on board the *Asia* as I have related so often before, we met every morning and before we reached Karachi, we had cleared up all our points of difference. We then decided to take the plane from Karachi to London. I was to be the leader and the spokesman for the party.)

The party representing the Rulers were Datuk Panglima Bukit Gantang of Perak, Datuk (later Tan Sri) Nik Kamil of Kelantan, Datuk Seth of Johore and Encik Abdul Aziz of Selangor with Encik (now Tan Sri) Kadir Shamsuddin as their secretary.

On the Alliance side we had Col. (now Tun) H.S. Lee, Datuk (the late Tun) Abdul Razak, (the late Tun) Dr. Ismail and myself, with Mr. (now Tan Sri) T.H. Tan as our secretary.

The British Government's representatives consisted of Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd, the Minister of State for Defence, Mr. Hare, the High Commissioner for Malaya, Sir Donald MacGillivray, Mr. David Watherston, the Federation's Chief Secretary, and Mr. Oscar Spencer, the Federation's Minister of Economic Affairs.

The rest of the officials of the British delegation were representatives from the Ministry of Defence, War Office and constitutional experts from the Attorney-General's Department.

The meeting went off well, with Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd in the chair. It was agreed on 2 February that I could announce the date of Merdeka. On 8 February, on my fifty-third birthday, the

agreement for Merdeka was signed and I returned to Malaya.

We arrived in Singapore on 20 February and made our way immediately to Malacca, where a huge crowd awaited us.

Some of them had been waiting from the day before our arrival and I had never seen such a big gathering in my life. I was overwhelmed with emotion as shouts of *Merdeka!* greeted us.

It was with great difficulty that I spoke. I told them that it was no mere coincidence that I had come to Malacca to bring the people the good news of the success of our mission.

It had been in Malacca where I first announced my intention to go to London to demand independence. At the Chinese Assembly Hall where I had first launched the campaign, everybody present greeted my words with exuberance. UMNO members showered me with money in coins and notes from the balcony of the hall to help meet our expenses to London.

(I told them we had advanced rapidly towards our goal and nothing could stop us now. This was due to the great loyalty of UMNO members in particular, and the other partners in general.)

I also told them how all the other countries complimented us on the great victory at the last poll, achieving an almost 100 per cent success. The Alliance had every reason to be proud of our achievement.

Our meeting in London had gone off very smoothly, I told them. I brought up five matters for discussion — amnesty, education, national language, the appointment of an independent commission, and finally, the date of independence, namely 31 August 1957.

Our original intention was to get independence within four years but because of our unity and show of purpose, the British Government had agreed to bring forward the date of independence. Our duty now was to look ahead and to make independence for this country meaningful.

There was great excitement and rejoicing everywhere. I was given a kris as a present from the land of Hang Tuah, which symbolised the first Malay struggle for independence.

Although Hang Tuah lost against the Portuguese, his exploits have been sung in praises through the ages.

The Malays, in particular, realised that for the first time in our humble lives we would be free people in an independent Malaya.

Now at last we were able to hold our heads high and talk in

terms of equality with all the other independent peoples of the world. Over the years we had been humbled and humiliated under foreign rule. We had our own Rulers, but they were only the tools of foreign powers. Now they were to be heads of state in an independent Malaya.

The older people were deeply touched with their newly-earned status and the younger generation were highly exhilarated. The leaders in all their humility gave thanks to Allah for our good fortune.

I then told the crowd that it was more than a coincidence that my great-grandfather was the man who had entered into a treaty with the British government, ceding the first slice of our territory to a colonial power (the island of Penang, and later Province Wellesley).

Now, behold, the Almighty God had given me the privilege and honour to redeem not only Penang and Province Wellesley, but the whole of Malaya, from the British.

(I had good reason to give thanks to Him — the Almighty Allah for His Graciousness.)

We drove in a motorcade through the town amidst the cheers of the people. It was a great day and altogether too exhausting for me. All of us in the London party felt tired after the excitement of the day and the two-day plane journey.

We came back to Kuala Lumpur by car and had a good rest. Then we got together again and started to work on our independence programme.

Committees were formed to prepare our proposals for the new Constitution of Malaya to be submitted to the constitutional commission. Various names were suggested for the independent commission, and we agreed on four of them: Lord Reid of Britain, Sir William McKell of Australia, Mr. Abdul Malik of India and Mr. Abdul Hamid of Pakistan.

As soon as they came to Malaya they started work in earnest and interviewed guilds, associations, political parties and individuals and finally put up a draft for the approval of the Government.

It was, of course, not a perfect constitution and no constitution for that matter could be said to be perfect when first proposed. But we knew we were going to be in power with an overwhelming majority and if any changes appeared necessary we could amend the constitution.

So why waste time haggling over it at that stage? I just told my colleagues to accept everything that was proposed, to say nothing, except of course to put in a few suggested amendments here and there as a matter of form.

Independence came on 31 August, 1957. That morning it rained "cats and dogs". Nevertheless crowds of men, women and children braved the weather and filled the stadium to capacity from early morning.

When the time came for the ceremony to begin the weather miraculously cleared up and beautiful clouds appeared in the sky.

It would be hard for me to describe my feelings. It was altogether a great day, the day which heralded a new chapter in the history of this country. All I could say was to pray silently for the success I had achieved.

(H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester handed over the instrument of independence and I led the shouts of *Merdeka!* seven times to the echoes of thousands of voices in the stadium)

UMNO was a pillar of strength in our early struggle for independence. No one had given us a chance at first, not even the most optimistic Malay patriots of those days, and not even Datuk Onn, who went in for home rule as his ultimate aim and objective.

(One Englishman, the British Resident of Pahang, had even said in his diary, "I will never see the day when either Datuk Onn or Tunku Abdul Rahman will be the prime minister of Malaya.")

Nevertheless UMNO persevered tenaciously and held on to our ideal and finally won it. UMNO had much to be pleased with and thankful for, for the part it played in this country's great historical achievement.

It must go on record that UMNO was the first party to bring about the unity of the Malays under the leadership of Datuk Onn, and UMNO was the first party to bring about the unity of the Malays, Chinese and Indians under my leadership. Through this unity we won independence.

It was UMNO with our partners, the MCA and later the MIC, which laid the foundations for the economic development of this country.

The success story of Malaysia's independence was the work of UMNO and its partners, the MCA and the MIC and the support

it gained from the people of the country.

Tun Abdul Razak, who followed me, provided great incentives and opportunities, greater than we had ever dreamt of, for Malay participation in the business life of this country.

Millions of dollars were lost on numerous projects.

Nevertheless lessons had to be learnt and learnt the hard way, and he persevered.

(Malays began to take a greater interest in business, though many dropped by the wayside. Only time and experience can put these things right.)

Malays must continue to be helped but they must not be pampered. In the meantime, the non-Malays must not be deprived of their right to make the best of their business opportunities, for this country's economy depends very much on them.

(On this rests the well-being of this country and the happiness of the people.)

Two

Kelantan, PAS and Asri

19 December 1977

In September 1977 a political crisis developed in Kelantan which threatened to dismember the Barisan Nasional. The trouble began as an internal problem of PAS when the PAS leader, Datuk Asri, removed Kelantan's Menteri Besar, also a PAS member. This led to rioting and demonstrations against the move in the streets of the state capital, Kota Bharu, the collapse of the PAS regime in Kelantan, the imposition of federal rule and a state of emergency and the departure of PAS from the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition. In this way nineteen years of PAS administration in Kelantan came to an end, to be replaced subsequently by a Barisan Nasional government.

When Tun Abdul Razak as Prime Minister decided to form the Barisan Nasional, a coalition of all political parties, I warned him of the consequences — that sooner or later a quarrel would break out between the parties because of the polarisation of ideologies. PAS, the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party, bases its politics on narrow racial and religious beliefs, while UMNO, which won independence for the country, has broadly-based politics to ensure goodwill and cooperation among all the peoples of this country. But, as it turns out, the split that has taken place in Kelantan is between PAS and PAS in their own stronghold. The Menteri Besar, Datuk Mohamed Nasir, had differences of opinion with the PAS president, Datuk Mohamed Asri, over land policy in the state, and he was strongly supported by the great majority of Kelantan people and some PAS leaders, including the deputy president, Haji Hassan Adli, and a few others.

Despite this, Datuk Asri, as the head of PAS, gave his approval for the Supreme Council to vote out Datuk Mohamed Nasir and to vote in other PAS members to take over power in the state. As a result the Kelantan people, PAS supporters and others rose up in heated protest against this move, followed by unruly conduct

by some of those taking part in the demonstration which endangered the peace.

To prevent the situation worsening the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, invoked Article 150 of the constitution and proclaimed a state of emergency in Kelantan, suspending the State Assembly and the Executive Council but allowing Datuk Mohamed Nasir to carry on as Menteri Besar, without power as such, until the problem was settled.

He also set up an Emergency Committee headed by a civil servant, Tan Sri Hashim Aman, to take over the security and administration of the state.

In a similar crisis in Sarawak in 1966, emergency powers were used to dismiss Datuk Kalong Ningkan and replace him with a new Chief Minister acceptable to the members of the State Legislature, while preparations for elections started immediately.

I suggested in an article at the time that during the period of the emergency, an opinion poll should be held to allow the people to decide whether they wanted the state government to continue with a new Menteri Besar, pending a fresh election, or whether they wanted Datuk Mohamed Nasir to continue as Menteri Besar.

To enlarge on this point, I would say the opinion poll should indicate the wishes of the people of Kelantan as to whom they would prefer to run the government — Datuk Asri's party or Datuk Mohamed Nasir's party. This would not change the political situation, as the state government would still remain a PAS government, whoever ran it.

Another alternative is to have a referendum to find out whether the people of Kelantan want a state election immediately in order to decide as to which party should run the state. This would have given the Federal Government justification for its interference in the present state of affairs in Kelantan.

Unfortunately, this was not done. Instead the Barisan Nasional Council met on 5 December 1977 and decided to request PAS to expel those members who did not vote for the government's bill to declare an emergency in Kelantan. Datuk Asri had no choice but to fight back and meet the consequences, as he himself faced expulsion.

In *The Star* on December 15 he was quoted as saying that the Barisan Nasional Supreme Council's decision (which gave PAS until December 13 to either sack the members who voted against the bill or be automatically expelled from the Barisan) clearly

showed that UMNO had no moral courage.

"The expulsion of PAS from the Barisan was an UMNO resolution. But UMNO lacks the moral courage to carry it through."

According to Datuk Asri, the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, had stated that the original decision to expel PAS was "too harsh. He then changed it so that it looked as if we were being given a reprieve. He changed it suddenly and said we would have to discuss it first."

The mistake was in "ordering the Barisan Whip in Parliament to marshal votes for the Kelantan Emergency Bill without first completely briefing the component parties about the issue," he added.

"PAS was not invited to the December 9 Barisan Supreme Council meeting, where UMNO proposed that PAS be given until December 13 to sack the members who went against the government." (I was told that PAS was not invited because Datuk Asri had rejected the directive to sack his men.)

According to Datuk Asri, "PAS at that time was still a member of the Barisan, and I cannot understand why we were not invited, although the resolution to be discussed was the expulsion of our party. We should have been invited."

(A member of the Barisan Nasional told me that this was done in the exercise of the powers vested in the president of the Barisan Nasional to seek the advice of the other component members of the party as to what possible action should be taken against PAS for not complying with the order of the party.)

The differences among the PAS leaders were serious. This is what I gauge from information and what was said at the rallies. The cause of the trouble in Kelantan, according to the explanation given by Haji Suleiman Palastin in a speech he made at rallies in Tanjung Karang and Kampung Kepayang, Ipoh, was in respect of 350,000 acres of land leased to Timber Mine of Singapore. It was redeemed by the Barisan Nasional Government, which compensated Timber Mine of Singapore with a payment of \$3.6 million. Datuk Asri did not agree with this, as he had given out the lease and, according to him, it should have been honoured. Then there was another piece of land bordering Perak and Kelantan with a total area of 240,000 acres which had been leased to Rik Seng Company. The Barisan government declared this a security area which prevented the company from operating

or making commercial use of the land. This further angered Datuk Asri.

Then again there was the takeover of the Malayan Tobacco's curing stations in Kelantan by the PPP, a company financed by the State Economic Board, of which Datuk Asri is the chairman. He obtained a loan of \$2.6 million for the purpose from the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank. The company went defunct and the bank claimed a refund of this money.

Datuk Mohamed Nasir was asked to give a government guarantee for the extension of the loan for a further period of time, but he refused to oblige. This brought the trouble to a head, and a vote of no confidence was taken against Datuk Nasir.

The Malaysian government obviously supported Datuk Mohamed Nasir, as it considered that dealing in state land to be a misuse of power by the former Menteri Besar. The Federal Government should have acted only to prevent a breach of the peace in the state, for which purpose Article 150 of the Constitution has been invoked and an emergency committee set up. A move should have been made with the people's participation by bringing them more into the picture and giving them a chance to decide.

Instead, the Federal Government has taken high-handed action itself. In this particular instance, when introducing the bill in Parliament it decided to expel any member who dared oppose the bill. In actual fact, members are entitled to vote any way they like to support or to oppose any bill presented in the House. This is how Parliament works. There is no reasonable cause for expelling members who vote against a bill. In the circumstances, the action taken by Barisan Nasional against dissident members of PAS was a bit severe, so it was not surprising that Datuk Asri disagreed. After the bill had been passed, the Federal Government reversed the order in the State Assembly and installed Datuk Nasir, who had been voted out in favour of Datuk Asri's man.

This was hardly a correct thing to do. It should have been left to the people of Kelantan to decide by whatever means available — referendum or opinion poll — and UMNO could then have played its part in support of Datuk Nasir. The inclusion of PAS in the Barisan is not the first time that PAS and UMNO have been together. PAS was part of UMNO in Datuk Onn bin Jaafar's time. PAS was formed in 1954, with the object of giving it the

task and responsibility of handling all religious matters in UMNO.

PAS was then led by Haji Ahmad Fuad. At the PAS convention at Tanah Liat, Bukit Mertajam, it decided to go into politics, and in consequence parted from UMNO. I offered them six seats in the Supreme Alliance Council to keep them in UMNO, at a time when UMNO had sixteen seats, the MCA sixteen and the MIC six.

In the first general election in 1955, PAS won one seat when Haji Ahmad Hussein beat Haji Suleiman Palastin of UMNO in the Krian constituency. In 1959, PAS swept Kelantan and Trengganu, but after ten months the Alliance recaptured Trengganu. In 1969, UMNO recaptured nine seats in Kelantan, and when the Barisan Nasional was formed, PAS was given 22 seats against UMNO's 12 and MCA's one.

As I have already suggested, an opinion poll should be held and the people be allowed to decide whether they want the State Government to continue with the present Menteri Besar as head or whether they want a fresh election. The poll can be taken in towns and *kampungs* with the help of the *penghulus* (*penggawas*) and the police. As soon as the results of the opinion poll/referendum are known, the Federal Government should act to carry out the wishes of the people.

In the meantime the expulsion of the dissident members of PAS should be held in abeyance pending the PAS general assembly. This, in my view is a wise thing to do.

Three

The Tale of the Scarecrow

16 January 1978

I remember a story with a good moral to it and I feel it worth writing down for the benefit of our young people who are on the threshold of the realities of life.

In the country of old England in the days when witchcraft was rife, an old witch lived by herself in a small hut with nothing to do but practise her witchcraft. Her dream was to beget a son, handsome, intelligent and all-loving.

Turning her face to the scarecrow which played a vital role in driving away the birds that came to feed on her grain, she thought to herself: "Wouldn't it be nice if I could but turn this scarecrow into a good son! He has stood in all weathers, rain or shine, to protect my grain from these thieving birds."

So with the words which she used to cite in her rituals and witchery she repeated the magic formula, and then brought out all the old rags she had stored in the hut and dressed up the scarecrow with them. She took out an old iron rod, tied it around the scarecrow's waist, and put an old, plumed hat on the top of the broomstick. Then with a final flourish of her wand, accompanied by the magic words, she wished the scarecrow into a transformation. With a shiver and a groan the scarecrow stood before her, a handsome young man in a plumed hat.

He knelt before the old witch and addressed her as his mother, saying: "What do you wish of me, Mother?"

The mother-witch replied: "Nothing more than for you to be my son in whom I can take great pride. I have led a quiet life, lonely and despised, now I want to show the people who I am.

"Providence has given you to me, and now I want you to go into the world and do the best you can for yourself. I have to teach you how to carry yourself as a man of noble birth; nothing short of that will be good enough for you."

But the son told the mother: "I have not even got a name. I am only made of a broomstick and odds and ends pieced together as a scarecrow to drive away the birds. I have stood in all weathers,

taking in the rain and the sun, the storm and the dust.

"How can I ever hope to be anything more than what I really am, a scarecrow? However well I look, however nice I dress, I have not the makings of a prince or a nobleman that you expect of me.

"All the beautiful garb with which you have adorned me is only superficial. Deep inside me I am nothing but a broomstick, straw and the dirty rags which you put on me. However, I will try to be as you would want me to be."

"Good enough," the old witch answered. "One thing I will tell you: no one will know you for what you are unless you tell them, and no one will believe it because I have made you as perfect a man as there is to be found.

"There is one thing only that you cannot deceive, and that is your reflection in a mirror, which must show you to be what you really are — a scarecrow in rags. So whatever you do, avoid a mirror, or your reflection in water.

"Live the life you want to, but it is only right, my son, that you go into the village and the town and show yourself to the world at your best.

"You are intelligent, and with all your manliness you can even marry, for I have tied a carrot to your middle. So go, my son, and seek your fortune."

When he looked at himself in all the beautiful finery that adorned his body, he felt proud. It was inevitable as with all young men that his fancy turned to love. Turning to his mother, he said: "Surely, you want me to change my garb and not be seen in just this one costume?"

"You will have changes," his mother replied. "Every time you come home you will have plenty of new clothes; that's the smallest of your worries. All you have to do is avoid mirrors."

Now when the young cavalier appeared in the town, he cut an impressive figure and caught the attention of the people as he walked the streets. The girls giggled and made passes at him. Seldom had the people seen a man so well dressed, so well behaved and so handsome.

As time went on, he became the centre of attraction. Gossip had it that he was a man of noble birth who had left his country incognito to seek adventure there. He had nice words for everyone, but always showed a superior and condescending attitude (to hide his broom-and-stick origin).

Despite this, people used to take pride in seeking his acquaintance and to have a few words with him. He was never in want for good topics for conversation, always with egoistic references to himself.

A nobleman, an important and well-known figure, soon heard of the young man and invited him to his house for he had set his heart on having him as his prospective son-in-law. The young man accepted the invitation, but would not come inside the house for fear of seeing a looking-glass.

So whenever he met the important man he would insist on sitting in the garden on a bench, and there they would converse.

The daughter, who used to watch him as he talked to her father, soon fell in love with him. One day she appeared in the garden and was introduced to the cavalier. They got on very well, and in no time they fell in love with each other. Then the broom-and-stick cavalier told his mother he was in a very difficult position as he has fallen deeply in love with the big man's daughter who was so beautiful, and it was clear to him that he would have to marry her.

How could he ever avoid a mirror then, because there were bound to be mirrors in the big man's house — in the bedroom (the bridal chamber) and in the hall? How was he to avoid the danger of being reflected in them?

The old witch thought it over for a moment, and then said: "With all my power, that is one area where I cannot help you. I am helpless. Now I realise I should never have made you so handsome. I should never have adorned you with beautiful clothes and given you all that personality.

"I should have realised that some day, sooner or later, someone was going to take you at face value and give you a position that you could not take on without encountering disaster. I made you all that you could wish to be, not realising that the ultimate end would be misery for you."

The young man went out, but felt depressed in mind. Nevertheless — what's to be must be. So he swaggered his way in the town, and, as he was wont to do, decided to drop in on the girl.

When he reached the house she met him in the garden. He was on the point of telling her who he really was, but because of his extreme love for her the words refused to come out of his mouth. "Whatever will be, will be," he thought to himself.

He followed her, and without realising what was happening he

went inside the house. As they stood in front of a mirror his love saw that what was reflected there was not the handsome young man she knew but a scarecrow of rags and broomstick.

She fell into a dead faint. When he turned around and saw himself in the mirror, he ran out of the house and went straight home. As he went inside he took his hat off, and turning to his mother, the old witch, he said: "I am not what I am and what I want to be. Now I realise I can never aspire to all the dreams I had of myself. I have not the makings of the man I wanted to be."

With that he threw his hat and the broom and stick into the fire.

The old woman felt very sad. She said: "My poor son, I have brought all this misery upon you. As a scarecrow you used to protect my grain from the birds, but as a cavalier, I have brought you only misery."

So it is with many of our young men with less thought of what they are and what they can do: they lose their heads on entering the threshold of life. They can bring a lot of misery on themselves, their families and their friends. A young man once came to me, seeking my help for a big government post. I told him there was a lot to learn before he could assume such a high position, and he would have to prove himself first.

The young man was very insistent, and finally he got the job. But he never made the grade because his feet never quite touched the ground. Very soon he found himself in difficulties, and instead of carrying on with his work, he kept on pestering high officials for better jobs. This did not last long, for very soon he succumbed a victim to his insatiable ambition.

There are many young men entering on a career for the first time in their lives who immediately think of how fast they can reach the top. Instead of thinking what they can do to prove their worth when they enter government service, they just throw their weight around to the annoyance and chagrin of others. This is no way to begin life.

I remember in the colonial days it used to be said of the members of the Malayan Civil Service that they were anything but civil. Though they signed themselves as "Your obedient servant" they were anything but the "obedient servant" they claimed to be.

Today some government servants throw their weight around, too, just as if they were the Lord Almighty. In this way they can

make themselves disliked, bringing discredit to the government they serve. It is well for a young man to remember that he must at all times have his feet deeply planted on the earth. This is what I have always preached and practised.

In my early life as a member of the Kedah Civil Service I worked with the people and sometimes sided with them against the government. I became, with the support I received from the people and by the Grace of Allah the executive head of the government — a prime minister.

I liked a young man I met at a party one evening; he was quite an important man in the civil service. As we were talking he asked whether I remembered him. I said I could not place him. He told me he was an orphan whom I adopted in the name of UMNO when his father died in a detention camp. This young man has good prospects ahead of him because he is not ashamed to admit who he is. A man who knows himself is a man to be trusted and is sure to go a long way and make good in his life.

There are men who hope to get on in life without having to work for it, and some even do so at the expense of others. These human parasites are a danger to society for they cheat, they steal, they sneak and they destroy others in their ambition to gain their objectives.

Some may succeed, but in time they all come to the same unhappy end. The wrong they do to others must catch up with them in one form or another, for God, the High Judge, will pass His judgment in His own way and in His own sweet time.

We find these parasites in politics, in government service, in business and now in sport, because sport has been drawn into politics. I have learnt bitter lessons from my experience, and live to regret my association with them. They prey on others with their wit, artifice and cunning. These people are found also in so-called religious groups. In some cases they assume the role of God himself, for they will sit in judgment on others and condemn them. Some men can be quite heartless. There is to my regret a member of parliament who suspects that some refugees seeking shelter in Malaysia may have guns and dangerous weapons with them. If this honourable member could only understand what a terrible time these refugees have had to go through before reaching Malaysia, he would know that they have no arms with them. Some of them lived in the jungle for months, and took shelter with the Thai Red Cross before they were finally brought

to Malaysia, a privilege only accorded to Muslim refugees. I reiterate that their homes have been taken by the communists, their families and friends murdered. Their mosques have been used as pigsties.

The story of the scarecrow is a story of man's inhumanity to man, his falsehoods and his make-believe to gain his own ends. But this has gone on in the world from time immemorial and there is nothing one can do to stop it. The evil ways of men must go on. But for those on the threshold of life no time is wasted by paying heed to fatherly advice. It is all for their own good. Above all be yourself, do not follow the way of a scarecrow in the garb of a man. That is my advice.

Four

Princes and Politics

23 January 1978

The announcement by Tengku Ariff Bendahara, a younger brother of the Sultan of Pahang, in 1978 as the general elections neared, that he intended to enter politics and allow himself to be considered for appointment to the post of Menteri Besar of the state raised a minor political furor in Pahang. It also raised basic issues as to the role of the Ruler and other members of the royal family of a Malaysian state in the conduct of its affairs.

The Sultan of Pahang has stated publicly his views on the expressed intention of Tengku Ariff Bendahara to participate in politics. Tengku Bendahara appears to be intent on this course of action for, according to him, his place is with the people and he wants to serve them.

To this end, come what may, he is prepared to make sacrifices and face the consequences. The sum total of the situation anent the attitude of both brothers may lead to serious conflict but it would not be between brothers alone; the people also would be deeply involved.

I venture to join in this issue as the Sultan has chosen to discuss the matter in public with the press and to make known his views. It is obvious from what he has said so far that he dislikes the idea because Tengku Ariff is a member of the royal family of Pahang with the title of Tengku Bendahara, and as such he is in the line of succession to the throne.

If it is Tengku Bendahara's intention to take over as actual Menteri Besar, as the choice of the people, then the Sultan claims that he has the right under the state constitution, to oppose the appointment. In other words, he has the last say.

But the object of the constitution is to appoint as Menteri Besar a man who commands the confidence of the State Assembly, and he is chosen from among its members. It is clear, therefore, that the choice of a Menteri Besar lies with the Assembly. The situation could become very serious indeed if,

assuming that Tengku Bendahara did participate in the election, won and was proposed as Menteri Besar of Pahang, the Sultan then refused to accept him. What then would happen if the party insisted on his appointment and refused to accept the Sultan's verdict? I hate to think of what could happen, so something has to be done to save an ugly situation.

The constitution lays down, as the Sultan mentioned, that the Ruler has the power to appoint the Menteri Besar. This is so in the constitution of every monarchical state, but it must be interpreted to work within the framework of the institution of a democratic kingdom or sultanate and not outside of it.

The constitution does not provide that the Ruler can dismiss the Menteri Besar. This shows where the real power lies, and adds to our belief that the party has a stronger say in the matter than the Head of State.

I refer to the recent case of the Sultan of Perak and his former Menteri Besar, Tan Sri Ghazali Jawi. For five years the Sultan had to put up with him, and he made no secret of his feelings for Tan Sri Ghazali. He refused to attend any function where Tan Sri Ghazali was present. The matter got so bad that the Sultan finally decided to sport a beard, and vowed that he would only shave it off after Tan Sri Ghazali had left the office of Menteri Besar.

On the other hand, the Sultan of Pahang has made his views known earlier, so if the party decides to ignore him and nominate the Tengku Bendahara as the Menteri Besar, it will cause a serious showdown between the Ruler and his people. Can the Sultan continue to maintain his stand without fear of creating political repercussions throughout the country? It would be a dangerous move for the ruler of a state to defy his people.

Though Malaysia is a monarchy with a king as head of the nation and sultans as heads of their respective states, the constitution provides for a democratic system. By it must be understood that the people are virtually the rulers.

Although the Yang Dipertuan Agung is appointed for five years, the Sultans, however, are hereditary and they hold office for life, and on their demise are succeeded by their heirs. Incidentally, Malaysia is one of the few countries in the world which still upholds this grand old tradition.

The constitution implies without room for contradiction that though the Sultans are sovereign heads of state they have no

power to rule. The power lies in the hands of the people who through their representatives run the government of the nation and the states.

I recall the statement made by the first Yang Dipertuan Agung, Tuanku Abdul Rahman, when requested by a foreign emissary to sack me from the office of Prime Minister of Malaya.

"Oh, I cannot, for he is appointed by the people and not by me," he replied. "On the other hand, he can sack me."

The foreign emissary was astounded and thought to himself what a cockeyed monarchy this was, where the King could not sack his Prime Minister but the Prime Minister could sack the King.

However, that is the position with our institution of kingship and the sultanates, and this I venture to say satisfies the wishes of the people and ensures the continuation of the monarchy and the sultanates. If this system were to change and the Rulers were given the sovereign right and prerogative to rule by the divine right of kings, then I fear it would only be a question of time before the whole institution was scrapped.

Loyal people have accepted the institution, and, what is more, the Rulers have been given more rights than they had once enjoyed in British colonial days, at least as far as the Sultans of the former Federated Malay States are concerned. It is for the Rulers to reciprocate, to show their appreciation, and to play the role they are expected to, and have played so admirably well since our *Merdeka*.

I do not wish to stress this point any further. My intention is to prevent any rupture between Ruler and people, and between brother and brother. My dream and great ambition is to see the perpetuation of the monarchy, which has brought so much peace and good life to our country.

The Sultan quoted the state constitution, but I humbly and respectfully beg him not to lose sight of the intention of the constitution which in fact underlies the principle of our democracy. I have given my views without prejudice and being its author I felt I would not be doing justice if I were to remain silent in the face of the serious and controversial issues involved.

If the Sultan of Pahang carries out his threat to use his right to reject the people's choice, the consequences will be serious. I had very serious trouble with my late brother, Tuanku Badlishah, the Sultan of Kedah, who was bitterly opposed to my taking part in

politics. But when I succeeded in my objective and Malaya gained her independence, he took great pride in my achievement and we became friends again.

So what happened between my late brother and I might be used as an example to good effect in respect of the differences on the question of politics between the Sultan on the one hand and Tengku Bendahara on the other. I myself would like to see more members of the royal families joining the common herd. The few *tengkus* who have entered politics have done well, and have proved themselves popular with a cross-section of the public, and I don't see why Tengku Bendahara should not make himself as successful a politician as he is a businessman.

Looked at in this light, the Sultan of Pahang may well be proud of his brother one day, and I hope and pray that he will exercise magnanimity and patience in this affair so that good, and good only, will emerge from this little "affair of politics".

Five

The Things I Cherish

30 January 1978

Every time I meet anyone anywhere during these last few months I have been asked the same question, and that is, "Are you well?" It is an expression of interest for my well-being from well-wishers.

My reply has always been, "Thank God, I am fit and well and I am still able to do what I have been used to doing all these years, except of course with less vigour; all told, I am as well as I could wish to be. I therefore thank Allah for His gracious Goodness in granting me good health."

I have friends, though not of my age-group, for those of my age have disappeared "underground". But these younger men are able to keep me company and join me in my little pastimes.

I am fond of things I have done all these years, such as golfing, racing, playing cards and having parties and dinners. Even more important to me are the extramural activities in which I am interested, in particular Muslim welfare work. All my friends have made themselves available whenever I want their company, as I have made myself available whenever they wanted me.

Although I am well past the golfing age, I am still able to play the game, at least on an average of five times a week. It is not expected that I will improve with age for I have never been much good at it, but I enjoy playing it for exercise and for the fun it gives me. I have also encouraged others to take part in the game, for I have built golf courses in my time, in Subang for instance, which has helped people living in the Petaling Jaya area to take up golf. I also built a course in Langkawi, but I regret to say it has not been properly maintained by the Kedah government.

My love for horses began when I was a child. My father owned a very big stable, and in those days of my childhood the only form of transport was by horse-carriage. Naturally I was attached to the animals. It was a great event in those days when Alor Star held its gymkhana every year.

When I was in England, I went in for racing in a big way. That was the reason why I failed to qualify at the Bar when I was left

on my own in London to pursue my studies. Instead of attending law lectures I would be at the races, and when I returned to Malaya I continued with horse-racing, but with a difference. I went for the fun and excitement of it rather than for big betting and trying to get rich.

One day the late "Porky" Donnelly asked me to buy one horse, and I brought in seven people to share with me in the purchase. I named the horse *Tinggi Harapan*. Two of the shareholders were the late Datuk Suleiman and Datuk Lim Chooi Seng. The stake money was never distributed among the shareholders, but was instead left to accumulate to a sum needed to be sufficient to purchase another new horse. The Alliance Stable, under which name the horses raced, was able in the course of time to acquire seven horses which won fairly good stakes.

Next I turned my attention to making racing pay in this country. It was then that I studied the New Zealand off-course system, introducing it here, and also the three and four digit lottery. This has helped to improve racing in Malaysia, and has brought plenty of income to the government. When the Alliance took over the government, the income from racing came to \$4 million a year, but with improvements the income has risen now to nearly \$100 million.

Racing has become a great sport, and the betting on the tote on every racing day is beyond expectation. Today, we have some of the best jockeys in the world taking a busman's holiday by riding in Malaysia during the English and Australian off-seasons.

The other important aspect of my life, one in which I take a great deal of interest, is religious and welfare work. A journalist once asked me, seeing that I am fond of racing, card games and what not, "Isn't it strange that you should take to religion so seriously?"

I answered that oil and water don't mix, and that when the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia asked me to organise Muslim unity I told His Majesty that I was probably not the right person for the job, because I was fond of life and all that went with it. This was frowned upon by religious people.

The answer I got from the King was that I did not have to tell him what I did and the things I liked; he knew all about it. He was not asking me to be the *Imam* of Islam. He knew my capacity, and was convinced that I was the only one who could organise Muslim unity.

So I accepted the King's offer, went to Jeddah and organised the Secretariat of the Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers, and brought Muslim countries closer together working for the common good of one and all in the name of Islam. After that I organised the Islamic Development Bank, which now provides help to all Islamic countries which have projects for development beneficial to their peoples and countries.

My ambition now is to organise in Jeddah a Muslim Religious Centre, which will provide financial and technical help for missionary and welfare work throughout the Islamic world. With this object in my mind, PERKIM, the Islamic welfare body in Malaysia, will be holding a conference in Kuala Lumpur in the immediate future, in which it is expected that all religious heads of Islam will participate. The main item on the agenda will be to discuss the possibility of setting up this Islamic Centre. The Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, has already promised his support, and so have the Secretariat of Islam and *Rabitah*.

As for my own personal life, I have a group of friends, as mentioned earlier, both in Kuala Lumpur and Penang. In Kuala Lumpur they are drawn from business and professional men and some ex-government servants, who have been my constant companions since the time I became Prime Minister, and are even closer to me now since my retirement.

One thing I can say about them is that in the days when I was the chief executive of the government they never asked me for favours, big or small. They gave me companionship and interest in life. They know how to enjoy good food, too, and it is my pleasure to cook for them sometimes.

After my retirement, when I moved to Penang, having decided to make the island my home, I found new friends there. There was no question of their getting any favours from me because I had none to give. These Penang friends of mine also show the same propensities and love for the things I do.

So I have my clique both in Kuala Lumpur and Penang, but in my home town of Kedah all my playmates and friends have disappeared. When I return home sometimes, I feel depressed not to see them around. I miss their laughter, gaiety and the constant companionship they gave ever since I was a young boy. I shall never forget the happy days I spent in their company. There is no one alive there now who is within ten years of my age.

I now come to the members of my family who have been

devoted to me and have made my life as father, grandfather, uncle, grand-uncle and husband a very pleasant one. I have nothing to give them except affection.

Every year my son, Tunku Ahmad Nerang and his wife, Sharifah Nor Aza, give me a party to celebrate my birthday, and they collect together all their cousins, nephews, nieces and my close friends to celebrate the occasion. This year, both my daughter Khatijah and son-in-law, Syed Hussein, returned to join us.

I also have two old faithfuls, Mr. Jee Guan Huat and Mr. Cheah Phee Cheok, who help me with my work, one as secretary in Penang and the other as secretary in Kuala Lumpur. I owe my writing and my books to them. They are the only two people who can read my handwriting — which I myself sometimes can't — and understand my language, for they have worked with me since I first took office as Chief Minister. I owe them a great deal indeed for the success of my column and my books.

Then there are Kalimuthoo, my chauffeur and Samad, my body-guard. Kalimuthoo has been with me since he was seventeen years old, and Samad since 1963.

My wife has been a constant companion to me, and her good point is that she never interferes with my work, but devotes her time to the house, the garden and domestic affairs.

For my next birthday I have a special request to make of my friends and relatives and that is — Don't give me any birthday presents because I have enough and I have not been able to use them all, for, year in and year out I have been receiving presents from friends and relatives without a break, and I am sure it must be difficult for them to think of a suitable present for me every time. Now that I have reached three-quarters of a century it will be even more difficult for them to know what to give me, and I don't know what I want for myself.

I am content to accept their affection and their companionship. However, if they are still determined to give a present to me I ask of them to give what they have in mind in cash rather than in kind, for I need the money to add to my collection for a project I have on hand. I have been given a house and a piece of land by Dr. Lim Chong Eu on behalf of the state government of Penang for a Work Centre for cured drug addicts and new converts to Islam. The object of the Work Centre is to give employment to these inmates, because when they come out of the

curative centres they find themselves lost in the world they left behind, and they are not accepted into the society to which they once belonged.

In like manner, those who have given up their own religion to become Muslims, they too, find themselves ostracized and not wanted by their own people and families, so PERKIM has to find employment for them. Therefore this centre is intended to provide work and livelihood for all. The cost of providing a hostel and other amenities will be roughly \$400,000 and I have already collected about \$200,000.

So those of my friends who are thinking of buying a present for me on this birthday can give me instead a cash gift of whatever amount is intended for the present, and no more. Some people say that when one reaches the age of seventy-five, one lives on borrowed time. Therefore my only wish is that with the time I have, God willing, I shall be able to see the fulfilment of my life ambition, and that is to see the coming into being of a World Islamic Missionary Centre which can give new hope to the Muslims living in abject poverty. This Centre would help to spread knowledge of Islam to the world, and also spread goodwill and peace among mankind.

The Middle Path

10 April 1978

The Far Eastern Economic Review of 31 March 1978 came out with a picture of Prime Minister Datuk Hussein Onn stepping across troubled waters over a number of ferocious crocodiles to reach the other bank before the next election. There were Tun Mustapha, Datuk Harun, the Kelantan election and Tunku with his eyes closed. What it was intended to mean, I comprehend, and so will many other people.

According to the author these are the difficulties Datuk Hussein Onn will have to overcome before the next general election. As for myself, I have offered him no resistance, but rather assistance for most of his policies, except of course those which I have already pointed out in my writings from time to time — policies on education, *bumiputra* business participation, and the promotion of harmony among the various races living in this country.

On these issues I feel very strongly that the government must walk with a great deal of caution, and give itself plenty of thought before making any drastic change.

The education policy, for instance, as I have pointed out, must be one that will make the people of this country feel clever and enable them to reach the highest standards possible.

One thing I have found out in my time, and that is Malaysians of all races are keen on acquiring an education, and that they have proved since independence to be equal to the best, if not better than most people in this region of the world. Their services after they have passed out with good degrees are much sought after by universities in Commonwealth countries.

I am a Malay coming from Kedah, a state which has always used Malay as the official language, but English was a qualification for entry into the civil service as we could consider ourselves no less capable than officials of other States in running our government. At the same time we were well ahead of the Federated Malay States and the colonies in our patriotism and

love for our state and Malaya. So when the struggle for independence started it was the people of the states of Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis and Trengganu who took the lead in the movement of freedom for this country.

I still fight to maintain English as a medium of instruction for higher learning and Malay as the language of the nation. (However, the Malay spoken was not the kind of Malay they use now. At least when English words were employed we spelt them in the English way, just as we did with Arabic words. Now I am completely lost with the new spelling.) If this policy can be upheld, it will please me, as I am sure it will lead to ultimate good for our new nation. It will help the Malays to better their prospects in life, otherwise they will remain stagnant, while others obtain higher studies with the money they have. The local newspapers have reported on Mr. Lee Kuan Yew's stand on English. He laid stress on the importance of English as a medium of education. The Singapore Prime Minister said, "English will be the language of the future in modern Singapore, which has become a show-piece for commerce and industry in this region." He stressed the importance of bilingualism in the modern republic's multiracial society and made it clear that the English language of Singapore's former colonial rulers must be the medium of business and officialdom. As part of its overall language policy the Government had decided to turn even the Chinese university into an English-language one.

By being bilingual, it is not clear whether he meant English and Chinese, but in our case we have already decided that Malay shall be the national language and that English should be the medium of instruction in higher studies.

I became very unpopular with certain sections of my people who were hoodwinked into believing that my policy would benefit others more than the Malays. So it was that opposition in UMNO mounted against me, but I stood firm, and to this day I continue to fight for what I believe is right and good for our new nation. If the government can see this good as I see it, and accept it, then the Barisan Nasional will have a smooth passage in the next elections.

On the question of the country's economic policy, this was intended to help the Malays obtain a fair share of business opportunities. I started with a development plan under which the Malays were given land, and so were others, and the government

produced the funds which enabled the plan to be implemented with success. The combined ownership of rubber estates run by smallholders can be said to exceed the acreage of the big estates, and with the price of rubber as it is, the smallholders are reaping profits.

Next followed Tun Razak's economic planning to help the Malays achieve parity with others in the economic life of this country. The plan was presentable and plausible, for Malay participation was fixed. Many took advantage of it, some actually joined in all honesty and sincerity, but many had no business interest other than to get what they could for themselves without having to work or pay for it. Of course Malay participation must be encouraged, but care must be taken to see that such opportunities are given to the right people.

The commerce and trade of this country and other economic developments must continue to progress and prosper, as otherwise the nation will suffer serious setbacks, as we have witnessed in neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia.

As regards the promotion of goodwill and understanding among the people of this country with their different racial origins and diverse religious beliefs, this is a necessity.

At the height of Parti Islam's success in Kelantan I was asked to deviate slightly from our policy of being non-sectional to defend the Alliance platform, but I refused to budge because once we changed to please or to accommodate others, then there could be no knowing what would happen to the party in the future. The party course has been charted; it has been successful in the past, and we must stick to it.

I remember when Datuk Jaafar Onn, the present Prime Minister's father, first started his IMP (the Independence of Malaya Party) to accommodate others, the non-Malays, he had to change it to Party Negara with the intention of winning back the Malays. In the course of the campaign he became more chauvinistic than the other Malay parties themselves.

I also remember that when a Chinese scroll was presented to me, he chose to make a ploy of it, insinuating that I was working for the Chinese. But he did not succeed in convincing the people, and the Alliance won and continued to win election after election.

With Parti Islam's success in 1969 Tun Razak became rather anxious lest the strength shown by that party would make

further dents in UMNO's armour, so he decided to bring them into partnership with UMNO. The plan went well for a time, but now it has broken up. This shows clearly that a party which is non-racial and non-sectional is the only one that can survive in the long run, and still be acceptable to the people.

The characteristics of this country cannot be changed, so why not make the best of what we have, and so far the Barisan has done extremely well. Datuk Hussein Onn is aware of this and he has been firm in all his thoughts.

Many think he is the best Prime Minister we have had so far. One wrote, "Tunku Abdul Rahman was a man of humanity, who forgave easily, but perhaps not too wisely. He was also a man who had great respect for the law without admitting that political solutions cannot be applied to legal problems.

"Tun Razak, on the other hand, was a man who saw a great society built on economic well-being, and assumed that men with full bellies and a decent roof over their heads would live in peace.

"Hussein on the other hand, is tough and reasonable, and is prepared to handle face-to-face the pleasant as well as the most unpleasant things in his job without flinching. People tend to say he is slow. Maybe, but his two-year record, without any elaboration, does make the charge look a little silly."

I agree with his opinion, and as a columnist, which by chance I am today, writing every Monday in *The Star*, I support Datuk Hussein Onn's honest-to-goodness policies and I shall continue to do so.

As for Tun Mustapha, the *Review* appears to have singled him out for criticism for his past life. After his defeat at the polls by Berjaya, I was aggrieved to see a vicious campaign being mounted against him, one that continues unabated today. What he did in former days surely must have been connived at by these very same people who are now in power in Sabah. They cannot avoid the implication of being involved in Tun Mustapha's doings whether they were right or wrong. They spoke about his abuse of power, and they charged him with misusing government funds for his own purposes. He bought aircraft with the concurrence of his cabinet ministers, I presume.

Those in power today have done financially well for themselves, employing the same methods as those used by Tun Mustapha before. It might be hard for them to explain anyway how they come to possess so much wealth now, when they were

just small wage-earners before. If they choose to talk against Tun Mustapha, then perhaps they should lay themselves open for investigation too.

A report of Tun Mustapha's resignation from USNO on medical grounds is disturbing, but how far this is true is hard to say as he is not here. But a whispering campaign has suggested that he would be apprehended on arrival to answer charges — of what? Nobody knows for sure. Personally I would like Tun Mustapha to come back and face his accusers, as this would clear up all these rumours, but after Harun's case he obviously is afraid to return.

But there is a difference, for Datuk Harun stood trial and was found guilty, whereas in Tun Mustapha's case we do not know what it is all about. It is necessary for him to come back and clear the air. Now he has resigned from the leadership of USNO and has banished himself voluntarily from the land of his birth — Sabah — of whose independence within Malaysia he was the architect.

The *Review* has further accused Tun Mustapha of unlawful conversion of non-Muslims to Islam, stating "... his conversion of non-Muslims through proselytisation methods which were a far cry from the persuasive methods enjoined by Islam, were often justified by extremists who have vague notions of the history of conversion by the sword....."

In fact other empires and other religions were built on the sacrifice of millions more of human beings than the so-called expansion of Islam by the sword. However, I am not here to argue on this matter, but to be fair to Tun Mustapha he has done a lot of good for the people of Sabah.

In colonial days the states were divided into regions for the exploitation of Christian missionaries — at least Tun Mustapha has not divided the country for his process of proselytisation.

I was also present in Libya when Tun Mustapha went to ask for funds to assist the Muslim refugees who escaped to Sabah to avoid persecution in the Philippines. There are now 90,000 refugees, and they have to be provided for.

I know how much it costs to look after the refugees because I myself am looking after the Muslims who escaped from Cambodia. It involves hard work, patience and absolute dedication to the cause to care for them. Such a work is not one to be ridiculed, but to be praised, for those who have sacrificed time and money

to alleviate the sufferings of others who have been driven from their homes.

At the next election I don't think Datuk Hussein has much to worry about — at least not the crocodiles. In fact if he continues to run the government on “an honest-to-goodness policy”, fair to all, keeping a clear mind on the education policy, the Barisan will have a smooth passage, and that is as I see it.

Seven

Of Law and Faith

8 May 1978

Current news of interest is talk about enhancing punishment for offences under the *Syariah* law. Parti Islam members in the Kedah State Assembly proposed that the state should pass a law to make offences of *khalwat* and adultery punishable by caning. The Kedah government responded by holding a seminar on this subject of punishment, and the legal draughtsman made it clear that the law-making body was Parliament alone, and none other.

Professor Ahmad Ibrahim, Dean of the University of Malaya's Law Faculty, one of the foremost authorities of Islamic law (in the world, I might add) had this to say when he presented a paper on caning as a sentence in Malaysia at a seminar on the Administration of Islamic Criminal and Faculty Laws:

... the power to impose caning could be obtained by amending the Muslim Court (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965, whereby the *Syariah* Court would be able to try cases which allowed maximum caning of twenty-four strokes on conviction. However, whether the caning should be in public or not would have to be considered.

The main purpose of caning under Islamic Law is not to hurt or injure the convict but to teach him a lesson and to deter others. In other words, to shame him publicly so that he will have to think twice before he repeats the offence.

A Kedah High Court judge, Mr. Justice Datuk Syed Agil Barakhbah, feels that the power given to the *Syariah* Courts is insufficient. He suggested that "a move should be made to urge upon the Federal Government to amend the 1965 Muslim Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act to provide greater powers to *Syariah* Courts." If this move were successful, he said, then not only would *Syariah* Courts have jurisdiction equivalent to Sessions and Magistrates Courts but they could also provide caning as punishment.

My personal opinion is that it would perhaps be too dangerous to give too much power to the religious officers of a *Syariah* Court without first making sure that these officers had the right

legal training and were legally qualified to impose such a severe punishment as twenty-four strokes from the cane — the rate normally is twelve strokes.

Judicial officers, such as presidents of Sessions Courts and magistrates, have an expert and working knowledge of the law and are able, or at least are expected, to use their power and exercise their judgement fairly and judiciously. *Kadis*, on the other hand, do not have the necessary legal training that presidents of Sessions Courts have, so to give them such wide powers is questionable, and in the opinion of many it would not be wise.

The alternative is, if an offence in the *Syariah* Court carries a sentence more severe than that allowable by the *Syariah* Court and outside the jurisdiction of the (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act of 1965, then the case could be transferred to the Sessions Court. Parliament is the only law-making body in this country and it has passed many laws and regulations since Independence in accordance with the demands made on it.

Criminal law is divided into four main categories. These are:-

- (1) Crimes against the state, which carry severe sentences;
- (2) Crimes against society, which carry varying sentences including imprisonment, and even death;
- (3) Crimes against public order and safety;
- (4) *Syariah* laws dealing with religious matters.

In the first category many laws have been passed imposing the death penalty for possession of arms and for acts of treason against the state. Since Independence, innumerable laws and regulations have appeared and disappeared; in other words they were passed to safeguard national security.

In the second category, sentences for crimes against society, e.g., murder, robbery, arson and other acts of violence, have been covered by the Penal Code for many generations past. These laws have been observed and upheld in all Commonwealth countries for a long, long time, and have been found to be satisfactory in our own country.

In the third category, crimes against good order and public safety and well-being, such as motorcar offences, drunkenness and other acts of misbehaviour in public, have also been embodied in many local enactments.

With regard to religious laws for offences as provided in the *Syariah* Court enactment, I have spoken on this subject before and will say no more about it. What appears to have been a

heinous crime a hundred years ago in a closed society may be considered a small offence today — that much everyone agrees.

Some hundred years ago, an accused person might be punished with death for the theft of a shilling — that was in England — but such a sentence would be out of place in the modern world of today.

In Saudi Arabia the punishment for theft is to have a hand of the guilty person cut off after repeated offences. Such a punishment would be considered very severe here, and if introduced here, Muslims and all others would have to take the punishment.

Civilisation and modern living have brought many changes to mankind. One of the main changes is in respect of women in this country — Malay women now enjoy as much freedom as men. We find them in all places of work, in government offices, in the Police and the Armed Forces, in factories, and in shop-houses. In fact I was surprised to see them working in the sun alongside Indian women on the course of the Royal Selangor Golf Club. This one would not have been seen before. But conditions of life have made it absolutely necessary for women to come out into the world and eke out their livelihood, otherwise they would starve. They work side by side with men, shouldering the same burdens of work, and in some cases taking home the same amount of pay. Such is life today, and how different it is to what it was in my young days.

So, to be quite frank, unless chastity belts are introduced and forced on all these women working side by side with men, it is impossible to guarantee that they won't go wrong.

Problems of this nature change with the times and today the world has become, in so far as sex is concerned, absolutely topsy-turvy. I must confess that what is happening in the West is most frightening to those of us living here. In the old days people used to talk of the sins of the East, but what are they compared with what is happening in the West today? In the promiscuous and permissive society of the West this is to be expected, but may it never catch up with us here.

This is one of the tasks that has to be taken up by religious departments and organisations, but, as I have said, punishment itself is no deterrent. Religious work should be carried out among our people so that at least they can be forewarned of the religious consequences. Offences are taking place every day, with people in high places and low society being equally self-indulgent. Will

those in high society be charged with these offences, or will caning be confined only to those in low society?

It is no use pretending that we don't know what is taking place in high society. Many visit night clubs, messes and other places of amusement. We see them driving in cars with those of the opposite sex to lonely spots for quiet moments away from the prying eyes of the public.

In Malay folklore, the mouse-deer, Sang Kancil, said to the crocodile, Sang Buaya, "Why were you creating a helleva din most part of the night, lashing the water with your tail? It kept me awake."

"Well, to be quite honest," said Sang Buaya, "I was having a tête-à-tête with, in fact I was courting Mak Buaya."

"But why all the noise?" asked Sang Kancil.

"Oh, that is to keep others from prying into our affairs," replied Sang Buaya, "and as a warning to others that if they come near us, they will get a bleeding nose."

Under the suggested enhancement of the *Syariah* laws, will people caught in parked cars be dragged away and caned in public? Somebody will soon get a bleeding nose, as meant by Sang Buaya, if they try to make an arrest.

But in a country like Malaysia where only less than half the inhabitants are Muslims, should there be one set of laws for the Muslims and another set for non-Muslims? If such a situation arose, what kind of a country would we have? Under our constitution, it is provided that all men are equal before the law. No man can be treated differently from any other, except the Yang Dipertuan Agung and the Sultans.

There are certain very particular provisions made for Muslims alone, provisions which do not affect or interfere with the position of others. From all this talk about caning one is inclined to believe that Muslims are singled out for punishment in certain offences, but under the present laws the punishment is hardly noticeable. However, if strokes are introduced then a significant change will have been made.

What would the public reaction be then? It might be considered unconstitutional, for as I have said, this country provides the protection of the law for all its citizens, and all men are equal under the law.

The idea of two laws, one resting solely on human authority and the other claiming divine origin, and therefore entitled to

supremacy over mere human law, has a long and chequered history, and still possesses force and vitality in some countries in the twentieth century.

Indeed no Muslim can question the authority of the Quran, and none will do so because what is stated in the Quran is divine law. So long as man-made law does not override divine law, no disrespect is intended. It accepts the authority of the Quran, but merely varies the punishment to meet the needs of men for Allah is All-Knowing, All-Forgiving and Most Merciful.

But the move for an Islamic state has pushed some people to look at everything in the light of Islam: Mr. Justice Hashim says there ought to be no judges' wigs. Of course it was a surprise for me to learn that a judge of the High Court should have taken the lead on his own initiative to dispense with such time-honoured traditional court practices.

In my view these were never intended to make a judge any more than what he is, a judge, but the Bench has always been revered as a high seat of law and justice, and as such reverence and respect must be shown to those who occupy the seat. A wig on the head and a gown worn have been traditional dress for both judge and lawyers when appearing in a court of law.

The use of the term "My Lord" is not intended to venerate, idolize or give divine honour to a judge as an image or representative of Almighty God, but is simply used as a form of address to him as a judge. This form of address has become synonymous with his office, and no one before has found any reason to object to it.

At the time of Independence we decided to adopt the British legal system in its entirety, with all its meaning and trappings. The red gown and wig worn by judges have added much dignity to our courts, and if a change is considered necessary in a judge's wearing apparel or form of address, then it is for the government to decide, and not for a judge to act on his own. The government, for instance, made a decision with regard to the wigs formerly worn in Parliament by the Speaker and the president of the Senate.

The Lord President, Tun Mohamed Suffian, took the issue calmly when he commented that what judges wore was less important than what they did; what was most important was that they should be efficient, impartial and just. But Tan Sri Salleh Abas, the Solicitor-General, made his stand quite clear, and he

was more specific on this point when he said: "Any DPP or LA or any legal officer appearing in court without wearing a wig is considered not properly dressed. I do not think it is proper for any legal officer to act unilaterally by throwing away the tradition which has been observed for so long."

Judges are not the only officials of government who have to don uniform — the Police, the Armed Forces and many other categories of government servants are required to wear uniforms too, and it would be chaotic if all of them decided to choose their own headgear. Even before Independence, when I was Chief Minister, I met representatives of the Police Force who wanted a change of uniform from that under the colonial administration. The Sikhs are the only policemen who are allowed, on religious grounds, to wear turbans.

To the best of my knowledge Muslim law lays no taboo on the form of headgear one is allowed to wear. *Hajis* wear turbans, the Saudi wear their "Aiggal" or "Shuppaf", and the Egyptians and Turks have changed completely to European dress. A further point is that the horse-hair or tail which is used in making wigs can't be *haram*.

There are many women who have lost their hair and have worn wigs to cover their baldness and shame. Have they committed a sin in doing so?

Therefore, speaking generally, I am not on all fours with what Mr. Justice Hashim has done.

Public Rallies and Old Campaigns

26 June 1978

In July 1978 Malaysia underwent its fourth general election since its creation (for Malaya alone it was the sixth). The main feature of this election was the government's ban on all public rallies "for fear of communist interference"; as a result, a new style of campaigning developed.

An election epidemic has taken hold of the country and everyone appears to have caught the disease. Knowing I am one of the survivors and a veteran who has lived through five elections, and now going through a sixth, my friends naturally pose election questions to me, asking "What do you think of this and that?" There are so many things to say that I refuse to say anything very much.

On this particular occasion, however, I have made an exception on the ground that the topic is of national interest and of such importance that it is only right for me to say something, and that is on the subject of political rallies. What is the reason for banning political rallies? they asked. In the past rallies were an interesting feature of a general election. Why ban them now?

All political parties came out in their glory at rallies to make their points, and to explain the party stands and manifestos for what they were worth. Some of the questions put to the speakers were no doubt embarrassing, but answer them they must.

For one month the whole country was turned into a "battleground", with the skies lit up far into the night. The speakers shouted their odds with all the eloquence at their command accompanied with gestures to press home their points. I myself once had to make no less than thirteen speeches in twenty-four hours which meant that I had to be on my feet from early morning to late at night almost every day.

My most harrowing experience was to address a rally in Pulau Tuba (Langkawi) in Haji Ismail's constituency in the late

afternoon, and then to make my way to Perlis. I had an out-board motor which I drove or steered myself, and I had with me Haji Khalid Osman who knew nothing about the sea.

When I finished speaking at 6.30 pm Haji Ismail carried on with his work and left me to find my way to Perlis. Relying on past experience and whatever little knowledge I had, I made for Kuala Perlis. The mouth of the river was normally clogged at low tide, but I set my course towards it. But the rain came down in torrents and I could not see beyond ten feet ahead in the lashing downpour.

I was expected at Kuala Perlis at 8.30 pm, but by 10.00 pm we were still at sea in more than one sense. I was thinking of the people who were waiting to hear me speak at 8.30 pm and of the old Menteri Besar, Tan Sri Sheikh Ahmad, and forgot my own danger.

I was relieved when the rain stopped and I was able to see land. I immediately made for it at full speed, only to find that I was at the mouth of the River Setul which is in Thailand. The fishermen were kind enough to direct me to Kuala Perlis. Then I saw boats with plenty of men and lights all looking for me.

Sheikh Ahmad took hold of me, and immediately whisked me off to the rally ground even before I had had time to wash the salt off my face. I had to address the people for one hour.

After that I was whisked away again to another rally. At one o'clock in the morning I told Sheikh Ahmad I was in no mood for more rallies, but I would like something to eat since I had had nothing in my belly for the last twelve hours.

In the meantime, the Marine Police had mounted a search for me. When I returned to Kuala Lumpur my Cabinet colleagues decided that in future I should not be allowed to go into the open sea without an escort and a seaworthy vessel to carry me. However, that was an experience I shall never forget.

It brings to mind the good political rallies we had in the old days. Sometimes I spent nights in the train or wherever I could find a place to rest my weary body.

On one such journey the late Sultan Yusof of Perak was in the train, and at Tanjong Malim we ran into an exchange of gunfire between the communists and the Police. I went to look for His Royal Highness and found him hiding behind a chair in the lounge.

I was in Kelantan in 1964 to campaign against Parti Islam

which had been in control of the state since 1959. The local head of UMNO then was Tengku Razaleigh, and he had to fight an uphill battle, so it could be said that we were working against great odds fighting a strong party which had the majority support of the *gurus* throughout the state. Our chances of a takeover were slim.

One of the ministers had also come, and I thought he was to help UMNO in the campaign, but I was astounded when he said he had come to attend to his own ministerial work. I realised how heartless he was as we needed the help of every UMNO leader to help fight PAS in Kelantan. Not many years afterwards this same man left the party because he was not satisfied with his new portfolio — but in fact he was never with us and he knew we were aware of it.

Now the Government has decided to do away with political rallies. I presume they must have a very good reason for it because rallies have become a feature of national elections. It is not for me as an outsider to question the government's right, less still criticize it, but I will say this. If the reason is public security, then we had rallies in the first election when we were harassed left and right by terrorist anti-government activities.

Even before the 1955 election Tun Tan Cheng Lock and Tun Leong Yew Koh were injured by hand-grenades at the funeral of an MCA member. Despite that, campaigns went on without any further ado. The Alliance scored the greatest victory with the loss of only one seat.

Then in 1959 we had a serious split within the MCA which threatened peace and security, and the leadership changed hands at the last moment with Tun Tan Siew Sin taking over. Nevertheless, we carried on with the rallies, and again we won an overwhelming victory, without any serious incident.

It was the same with the elections in 1964 when we had our "confrontation" with Soekarno and Macapagal. We had rallies, and it was unthinkable to drop them, whatever the reason might be.

And 1969 was a time when we were faced with a very serious situation, as the Socialist Front walked out and boycotted the election. They subverted the voters with threats and other fears of personal injury if they did not toe the communist line.

I should have postponed the election, but I refused to do so; instead I defied them and went on with it. It led to the 1969

violence with the loss of hundreds of innocent lives.

But even without rallies, the door-to-door campaigning would have brought about that dreadful calamity because the devilish plan of the communists to create trouble had been well-hatched. Even Parti Islam got the Chinese votes in Kedah.

House-to-house campaigns carried out in place of rallies may create less political tension outwardly, but inwardly they are even more dangerous and can be harmful to the party in power.

Political agents, too, can subvert party interests and things can be said which the speaker will not say at public rallies. So there is much to fear in a house-to-house campaign, particularly for the party in power.

The general comment which I picked up from *The Star* is set out below: "The well-oiled Barisan election machinery which went into operation last night is expected to pack too much power and organisation for the Opposition in the war of attrition expected to develop as a result of the public rally ban. The individual parties will organise *ceramahs* in their respective area where their candidates are standing." According to reports from Barisan headquarters, "all state party leaders have also been told to request additional speakers for their campaign".

These *ceramahs* (house-meetings) will be organised in the same style as in the Kelantan state election which was held in March. It would appear, therefore, that the success of the Kelantan election, without public rallies, might have been the reason which prompted the government to ban public rallies at this general election.

The situation, however, is different. In Kelantan if public rallies had been carried out they might have invited violent clashes between the two warring parties — the PAS and Berjasa. Also a state of emergency had been declared in the state.

In this general election, however, the situation is quiet. There is no cause to expect trouble from any quarter, and so the banning of public rallies does not appear justified.

The DAP Secretary-General, Mr. Lim Kit Siang, says, "The banning of public rallies has apparently dimmed the party's hope of achieving its stated aim of capturing twenty parliamentary and fifty state seats in the election. The DAP and other Opposition parties lack the massive machinery and funds that the Barisan has and the public rallies ban will affect us."

According to the newspaper report, "Mosquito Opposition

parties and Independents are expected to be completely swamped in the hustings Instead of holding *ceramahs* their candidates will concentrate on meeting people in public places and try to win them over through individual persuasion."

All these, no doubt, are excuses for the defeat they might suffer. So by banning public rallies the government has unconsciously provided the Opposition parties with an excuse in the event of their defeat. The government is in such a strong position that the result can be in no doubt. So why not show a little compassion and win greater popularity?

Of Oaths and Loyalty

28 August 1978

In August 1978 a political storm arose in Perak when the four DAP members — on technical grounds — refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Sultan on the occasion of the swearing in of the newly-elected State Assembly. In the ensuing uproar throughout the nation, the DAP leader, Encik Lim Kit Siang, tendered a public apology to the Sultan of Perak on behalf of his party.

The refusal of Democratic Action Party members in the Perak State Assembly to take the Oath of Loyalty to the Sultan of Perak after the general elections was not only an act of disrespect to the person of the Sultan himself, but also a challenge to the prerogative of the throne, for which the constitution itself guarantees sanctity.

The constitutions of both Malaya and Malaysia provide that any person born in a state owes his loyalty to that state and also to the nation, and in return receives all protection under the law no less favourable than for the greatest in the country.

When the DAP did well in the elections, I applauded their victories by commending them as a seasoned and mature Opposition. As the nation expected much of them, it was their duty to put up a good image from the start, at least by giving the people a feeling of confidence that here at last was an Opposition that could live up to expectations.

When people outside the ruling party want to bring up matters in Parliament they rely on Members of Parliament, in particular members of the Opposition, to do so. It is expected that such matters will be put across even though the chances of success are remote, but at least the government will take notice of what is said. In this way any complaint gets some publicity.

The people expect the Opposition to play its part effectively and sensibly, both in its own interests and in the interests of the country as a whole. I know the role of the Opposition, for I was in

the Opposition in pre-*Merdeka* days, when I was nominated as a member of the Federal Legislative Council together with a small number of dedicated men drawn from UMNO, the MCA and the MIC.

We did not raise issues concerning our party alone, but also matters which were brought to us by members of the public. These had to be studied, and if found to be of public interest and for the good of the country, then we brought them before the Council. We were in a minority, but we took our defeats sensibly and without rancour in our hearts. We were fully aware of the part we were sworn to play, and we played it well. Because of our performance, we gained the confidence of the people and won their whole-hearted support. Ultimately this led to the success of our movement for independence.

We were the Opposition in the real sense of the word, as we were fighting against the colonial government to end colonial rule. We decided not to accept British rule one day longer than we could help. Our call for independence rang loudly, its echoes reverberating throughout the length and breadth of the land. Men of all races loyal to our country answered the call.

When we won the first partial elections, we were asked to take the Oath of Loyalty in Parliament and we did. We took it without a word of protest because we knew exactly what our aims were. We made no fuss; we did not complain; we went through the solemn oath-taking ceremony as coolly and calmly as if we were the government. I was the proudest of men because I made the first call for *Merdeka*, but silently I prayed for peace and happiness for all the people of Malaya.

I remember a debate on the reintroduction of the jury system. Metaphorically speaking, we were more or less driven out of the Council; certainly we were jeered and laughed at by those on the government benches. That was the only time when we walked out, and as I was leaving the Council chambers, I turned around to my good friend, the late Tun Dr. Ismail, saying, "Let them laugh. We will win one day, and when the victory is won, I will show them what we will do"; and that was exactly what our party did.

Seven men fighting against the odds of forty-one on the government benches — we were defeated on every motion before the House, nevertheless we were undeterred.

By coincidence, when I was in London recently, I met Miss

P.G. Lim, our ambassador in Brussels. She was the one who persuaded me to bring up the introduction of the jury system in the Legislative Council, and this is what she had to say about one case, that of Lee Meng:

Lee Meng had been charged with carrying fire-arms, an offence under the Emergency Regulations punishable with death. The assessors had found her not guilty but the judge decided to convict her, as a result of which a petition by members of the public was presented to the Legislative Council in 1954 for a review of Lee Meng's case and the reintroduction of trial by jury.

Trial by jury for capital offences had existed in the Straits Settlements, but in the Malay States it was trial by assessors which applied. In a trial by jury, no judge can overrule the verdict of the jury, whereas in the case of trial by assessors, the judge, if he disagrees with the verdict of the assessors, can overrule them.

There are two basic principles underlying the system of trial by jury. One is that it is better that nine guilty men go free than that one innocent man should hang. The other is that a man should be tried by people who share and understand his background and presumably his motivations, and who are therefore in a better position to assess the facts than a judge who does not share his background or who comes from a different kind of society, and whose functions are restricted to matters of law only.

The protagonists for the introduction of trial by jury found in Tunku Abdul Rahman a sympathiser, and he agreed to espouse their cause in the Legislative Council.

The rest is history, and Tunku Abdul Rahman was responsible for introducing the Bill which amended the Criminal Procedure Code and substituted, in capital offences, trial by jury for trial by assessors.

With regard to the DAP members who refused to take the Oath of Allegiance or Loyalty to the Sultan of Perak, no one in his good senses would agree with them; only disloyal elements of the state or of the country will associate themselves with a disloyal action such as this.

I remember when the Socialist Party won a few seats in the 1959 elections, Mr. Lim Kean Siew, Mr. V. David, and a few others whose names I cannot quite recall now, trooped into the Dewan Tunku Abdul Rahman, then in use as a temporary Parliament House, in their shirt-sleeves. I shouted that they were not properly dressed, saying if they tried to force their way in they must expect trouble. Immediately Tun Dr. Ismail and a few members of the Alliance blocked their way at the entrance, and I called out, "See what I mean?" They understood and went back to put on their coats. When they came into the House afterwards properly dressed, they were received with loud applause in the temporary chambers.

The unseemly behaviour of the Perak DAP members has

caused a furor throughout the country, in particular among the people of that state. The practice for every member of a State Assembly or of Members of Parliament to take the Oath of Allegiance to a Ruler and the Agung before taking his seat in either a council or in Parliament has become a parliamentary convention which is considered synonymous with parliamentary institutions. The practice has never been questioned, let alone publicly disparaged.

This incident in Perak was unfortunate in the extreme, for there was no justification for it. Despite their flagrant act of discourtesy the offending members are free to take their seats in the State Assembly. They are entitled to enjoy all the amenities and privileges as members of the State Assembly, or Parliament or both without hitch or hindrance.

But the refusal of the DAP members to take the Oath did not gain the approval of the party leadership. The party's Secretary-General, Mr. Lim Kit Siang, disapproved of their behaviour, and openly declared the party's intention to put matters right with HRH the Sultan of Perak. But the Sultan, naturally hurt and angry, said in a statement that he had no desire to meet them. I feel, however, that it would be magnanimous for His Royal Highness to hear an explanation from the leader of the party and other DAP representatives, and in this way get to the bottom of the impasse.

DAP men have been returned to Parliament and to State Assemblies elsewhere in sufficient numbers to form an effective Opposition, and it is not in the interests of the peace and security of this country to brand the Democratic Action Party as being anti-Ruler, anti-government and anti-national, just because of the reprehensible action taken by these few dissident members in Perak.

In fact I have heard that DAP headquarters is aggrieved by what has happened, and is very anxious to explain matters and restore relations with the Sultan. Obviously the dissidents took the action they did for reasons of their own; maybe they wished to please some of their misguided following.

The last thing people in this country want to see is a Malaysia divided into political extremes, for a nation divided against itself can only invite trouble. We have many subversive elements here already, and we don't want any more.

Might is Not Always Right

16 October 1978

Soon after the end of the Pacific War, Tunku returned to England to complete his law studies. Having been called to the Bar in 1949, he came back to Kedah and became a member of the government legal service. But not for long, for in 1952 he took the place of Datuk Onn bin Jaafar as president of UMNO, and in the years which followed was immersed in the great movement to achieve independence for Malaya ...

In 1952, UMNO Headquarters was offered a house that belonged to H.H. the Tunku Mahkota of Johore (now the Sultan). Although it was old and without any modern conveniences, we decided to take it. The house had two storeys. The top one was level with the street, and the ground floor with the *kampung* behind. From the outside the house looked like a one-storey building. It was a spacious house, however, with old Chinese ebony furniture and cane chairs. We had an additional temporary bathroom built together with an antiseptic commode.

These changes were for the better, and a great relief to us. No more morning disturbances from blaring music over radios, no more sharing a house with the landlord or landlady, and above all, no more bugs. In this house we made ourselves comfortable and were able to entertain friends and party members who came to meet us all the time. Now we felt settled and happy in our new surroundings.

After a time we decided to go back to Alor Star for a two week holiday. On our return to Johore Bahru we found our house had been broken into and ransacked, with all the drawers wrenched from their places, and papers and other belongings strewn all over the place. Curiously, however, nothing of value had been stolen, but documents were removed from their places, and those that were not taken were put back in the wrong files.

Obviously, whoever it was who had broken into the house was

looking for subversive or secret documents, of which I had none. All the documents that were taken were party documents with directives to the various divisions and branches. They were not subversive or secret, and actually of no use to the Special Branch: I had always declared that the Alliance would fight for independence constitutionally, and this was the attitude we maintained right through till the very day of independence.

It will be remembered that there were three parties then claiming to fight for the independence of Malaya — the MCP (Malayan Communist Party) under Chin Peng, the MNP (Malay Nationalist Party) under Ibrahim Yaakob and Dr. Burhanuddin, and the Alliance under me and the late Tun Cheng-Lock Tan.

I recall a visit I received from members of the Indonesian Communist Party. One of the UMNO leaders brought them to see me in Kuala Lumpur. He could not say who these people were except that they came from Indonesia and had important business to discuss with me. According to him I had to see them as it was vitally important for the success of our struggle for independence. So I did see them. They did not tell me who they were, nor would they give me their names, except to say that they were Indonesian Malays from Sumatra. They offered to help, assuring us of success. They could supply us with weapons of war and with funds and men. They said they had, together with other fighters, successfully beaten the Dutch and won independence for Indonesia. They had no doubt that they could do the same for Malaya and insisted that I should accept their help.

I told them that I could win independence constitutionally, without having to resort to armed struggle. After my talk with these people I found out that they belonged to the Communist Party of Indonesia. Obviously they had been sent to Kuala Lumpur to win me over to their cause. However, I made myself quite clear — I would fight my own battle in my own way, and that with the help of God and of those who supported my movement I would win independence.

That night as I was returning to Province Wellesley they came again to see me on the train, and demanded my final reply. I said, "Nothing doing. You all can go back." I believe, though I might be mistaken, that they belonged to the Indonesian party "Murba", or more likely the PKI, and they had many of their men and agents in Malaya and Singapore at that time.

One day when I was at the Kuala Lumpur Flying Club, Mr.

Ong Yoke Lin (now Tun Omar) came to see me with Datuk Yahaya. They asked me whether I would agree to the MCA's joining hands with UMNO to fight the first Kuala Lumpur municipal election in February, 1952. I said that it would be a good thing, provided that members of UMNO and the MCA agreed. I asked them if other parties would care to join. They replied in the negative. I went to see Datuk Onn, who had left UMNO to be head of the IMP, to ask him to join us, but he bluntly refused. So then we took part in the election campaign, winning nine seats out of the twelve we contested.

Other elections at municipal and town council levels followed, and we won all the seats in the polls in Johore Bahru, Batu Pahat and Muar, and also all the seats in the state of Perak.

After these victories we had a round-table conference with the MCA. On their side were H.S. Lee (now Tun), the late Tun Leong Yew Koh, Sardon Jubir (now Tun), Ong Yoke Lin, (now Tun Omar), S.M. Yong (now Tan Sri), T.H. Tan (now Tan Sri Tahir) and Too Joon Hing. On our side were the late Tun Dr. Ismail, the late Datuk Suleiman, Encik Bahaman Shamsuddin, Datuk Yahaya and the late Tun Abdul Razak.

We then decided unofficially to form an alliance of the UMNO and the MCA, and the late Tun Cheng-Lock Tan gave us his blessing. Later on, in January 1952, an official meeting in the Chinese Assembly Hall took place to declare the Alliance formed. Unfortunately, the late Tun Cheng-Lock Tan, while on his way to join us, was "kidnapped" and taken elsewhere. In fact he was taken to a meeting of the IMP, of which his son Tan Siew Sin (now Tun) was a member. Tan Siew Sin issued a press statement to the effect that his father would not join the Alliance but would remain with the IMP. However, all's well that ends well. Tan Siew Sin, the "kidnapper", who had spurned the Alliance of UMNO and MCA at first, became one of its redoubtable champions and later MCA president in 1959 when his father died.

The Alliance of UMNO and MCA, with a sailing boat as its party symbol, rode the waves of popular support from victory to victory.

I was busy travelling from town to town, village to village, from one end of the country to another, addressing rallies from morning till night, feeling no strain from my labours because of the victories which numbed all thoughts of tiredness. These were the

greatest moments of my life. Never had I dreamt that victory after victory would roll my way in this manner.

It was around this time that the High Commissioner, General Sir Gerald Templer, called me to his office. He asked me to stop attacking the government. I said it was impossible for me to talk without attacking the government because we were fighting for independence. People would think that I was half-hearted, afraid to denounce colonialism. I told Sir Gerald that the only way to stop me was to put me in detention; and immediately he retorted, "Why should I make a martyr of you?"

Sir Gerald Templer was a straightforward, broadminded and understanding man. He immediately realised that what I had told him was true. During his administration he was sometimes hard, but it must be remembered that he was an Army man and Malaya was fighting a relentless war against communist terrorists, who had not shown any mercy to those who came in their way. They resorted to killing, maiming and destruction of property. To fight against enemies such as these one must also show oneself ruthless, and that was how General Templer fought them. In such a war it was only to be expected that the innocent might suffer along with the guilty.

At least during his time the war against the communists was waged with a measure of success. He also knew that I was fighting a constitutional battle for independence. He knew, too, that I had declared that I must win the war without loss of life or spilling of blood. I had repeated this often enough, but even with that aim I must still have my own battle-cry, and that was to denounce colonialism in any form. Without doing so, it would not be possible for me to win the battle against the government.

After that encounter, General Templer left me alone, and I continued to be a member of the Legislative Council and an unofficial member of his government, while H.S. Lee and Dr. Ismail were serving as official members. After Sir Gerald Templer retired, Sir Donald MacGillivray became High Commissioner. He was of a different calibre as an administrator. A civil servant born and bred, his administration worked on real colonial civil service lines. He was determined at all costs to hold on to Malaya as a "colony". He went all out to support the opposition party led by Datuk Onn. All available government machinery and mass media were used to back his party against the Alliance.

The government geared itself to go all-out to fight the general elections. When the IMP failed, Datuk Onn decided to change his party again and formed Party Negara with the hope of winning back Malay support. Though this action of his was a turn-round from noncommunal to communal policies, Datuk Onn went all-out to attack the Alliance of the Malays and the Chinese, but without much success.

Just a week before, on 5 January 1955, the MIC (Malayan Indian Congress) decided to throw in its lot with the Alliance. The late Mr. K.L. Devaser, the leader of the MIC, invited us for dinner at his house. All the UMNO and MCA leaders were present. There I met for the first time, Mr. V.T. Sambanthan (now the late Tun), a *dhoti*-clad young man, whom Mr. Devaser introduced to me as the new MIC leader. Naturally we welcomed the inclusion of the MIC as it was one representative party of the Indian community; the other, the Federation of Malayan Indians, joined Datuk Onn.

Datuk Yahaya, a founder of the Alliance and chairman of *Majlis*, a paper that was neutral, suddenly turned against us, and left the Alliance. A Singapore magazine, *Qalam*, also went all out to fight us. The only Malay newspaper that continued to be neutral was *Utusan Melayu*. In the meantime, UMNO's own paper, *Suara UMNO*, changed its name to *Suara Merdeka* and charged into the fray with all intensity. The success of *Suara Merdeka* was phenomenal, and the Malays began to boycott both *Majlis* and *Qalam*.

The sales of *Suara Merdeka* shot up to reach an all-time record, and for a while it was sold even on the black-market. We made enough money from the sales of *Suara Merdeka* to buy our own printing machine.

But the maddening question was where to find the money and the wherewithal to win the battle for independence. It must be remembered that the government's machinery was all geared to fight against the Alliance. The only weapon we had was the nation-wide support we were winning from people of all races. As proof, wherever I travelled, thousands of people would turn out, and shouts of *Merdeka* rent the air. I had never seen crowds showing such enthusiasm before. By all reckoning I should have acted big, beating my chest and screaming out challenges against the colonial government for denying us freedom.

Every possible thing was done to cripple our chances for an

early *Merdeka*. I have mentioned before that I had to go out and collect funds for the party, making appeals to all Muslim countries and to wealthy Muslims. I got no response, except from my Thai friends. The rest of the money we received came from supporters who could ill-afford to pay, but they did so in small sums, and these, added together made up a reasonable amount. In the meantime, I had already sold some of my houses in Penang. I even offered one house in Armenian Street to the MCA, but they considered \$15,000 was too much to pay to buy it. I had little else to sell, least of all property that could find ready buyers.

In the midst of this disquietude came news that the Tunku Mahkota of Johore (now the Sultan) had agreed to dispose of his house in Jalan Tebrau to a Chinese buyer. So I was asked to leave at the end of the month, and we had to go house-hunting again. However, it was not long before luck came my way. Datuk Ahmad Perang, a civil servant of Johore (now Tan Sri) asked me to take his house, one which he was renting out to a European Army officer, who would be leaving though only at the end of the following month. So I took a chance and wrote to H.H. Tunku Mahkota, asking for a month's grace, which His Highness was kind enough to grant. That settled our trouble about a home.

In 1953 UMNO decided to introduce a uniform for its *Pemuda* (Youth) members. This consisted of white shirt with red epaulettes, a red tie and a black cap. At their annual general meeting in Malacca the *Pemuda* presented me with this uniform, and I wore it for the first time when inspecting their general parade in full uniform being led by Haji Sardon Jubir (now Tun and the Yang Dipertua Negeri of Pulau Pinang). This parade had one result; the government banned the uniform. In fact the ban produced the opposite effect on UMNO. Instead of breaking their spirit, all UMNO youths began to wear pure white shirts and trousers, and later the MCA Youth also joined in.

The government took this serious step of the ban because, in their view, only those bodies of men who belonged to the government forces were eligible to wear uniforms and no one else. Those who insisted on wearing uniform despite the ban were branded members of unlawful organizations. So if UMNO Youth wore uniform it was faced with possible suppression as an illegal body.

Dr. Ismail and I tried to reason with the government, maintaining that the organization itself was neither subversive nor unlawful, and so there was no reason to ban it just because of the uniform. If the government decided to do so, then it might as well ban the whole UMNO party and drive us underground. But the government decided to ban only the wearing of uniforms.

At the annual general meeting of UMNO on 11 December 1953 in Alor Star, I said: "The strength and activities of our Youth have caused great concern to the government, so much so that they have decided to ban the *Pemuda* uniform. But don't let that worry you. It is not dress that wins battles but rather the spirit and courage of the fighters, and the country depends so much on our Youth for its success in our fight for independence. We can afford to go without uniforms. Go all out for *Merdeka*. If it is the will of Allah, we will win."

Soon afterwards, the government penalized us again when it decided to withdraw our licence to run our third lottery. This led to some heated discussion, in which both Dr. Ismail and I criticized this action as being unduly harsh. We were running the lottery only for the third time because the first two lotteries could hardly have been considered successful. The second one was badly handled by agents, to whom we had entrusted the sale of tickets. Now that we had found out our mistake, we were hoping to make a fair and reasonable profit. The government, however, decided to ban the lottery without giving us prior notice. It was very obvious that the government would stop at nothing to penalize us, because it knew that we were doing too well, and there was no way of stopping us from attaining our objective.

Having refused UMNO permission, the government could not very well allow the MCA to run their lottery, so it was forced to ban the MCA lottery too. But the difference was that the MCA having already made millions, could afford to stop without feeling the effects of the ban. For UMNO, however, the ban was a tragedy. The MCA had to pay a special allowance to Chinese special constables, and without the lottery they were less willing to shoulder the responsibility.

The duties of these special constables were to look after the tin mines and rubber estates, the Special Constabulary having been established for this purpose. Their strength was drawn mainly from Malay youths, whom General Templer had disciplined into a good defence force. When they were first organised they had no

uniforms, no shoes except rubber ones, no weapons, save single-barrel shotguns, yet General Templer realised that these men had potential and trained them on police and military lines. Very soon they were fighting the communists on the same terms as the soldiers and the police.

Chinese youths, however, would not work for a paltry wage, and the government was not willing to make up the deficiency, for they would have to raise the pay of all others as well. By withdrawing the licence, therefore, the government had deprived itself of the MCA's financial support, and it followed that in course of time they lost the hearts and minds of the Chinese generally. On the other hand, the course of events appeared to favour us, judging all angles. The Chinese and the Malays became thoroughly and absolutely united with one purpose in mind — "*Merdeka* at all costs".

At about this time too — it would be 1954 — there was another unpleasant incident which concerned the late Sultan Hishamuddin Alam Shah of Selangor. The British Adviser in Selangor had invited the Sultan to tea at the Lake Club in Kuala Lumpur and this caused an unfavourable reaction among European members. When the newspapers reported this reaction, UMNO threatened to burn the Clubhouse down and police and troops were sent to guard it. Fortunately, nothing serious took place, and General Templer gave club members a severe telling-off, threatening to close the Club down.

When I became Chief Minister I told the Lake Club Committee that it was never my government's intention to take reprisals for what had happened before, but for the future it was their duty and in the interests of good relations among the people living in this country to open their doors to all men and women of social standing who could afford to join.

I have written about the *Pemuda*, so it would not be right for me not to mention the women members of UMNO, the *Kaum Ibu*. It is an accepted fact that Malay women are by nature gentle and shy. They dislike nothing more than coming out into the open, still less taking part in any public activities. Their places had always been in the home, fanning the kitchen fires and mothering their children.

But the spirit of *Merdeka* had caught them, too. They were no less potent than the men and the youths of UMNO were. They took part in all activities of both UMNO and the Alliance, and

they braved all conditions of toil or weather to work in the cause of the Alliance. In all the years that I was president of UMNO, I have mentioned the work of the *Kaum Ibu* in all my speeches. I never ceased to praise them for the spirit and courage they had shown in the cause of independence.

In my time we had Hajjah Zain (now Tan Sri) as the head of the *Kaum Ibu*. Despite her age, she worked unceasingly to build up the women's branch. After her, came a fiery and eloquent speaker, Cik Khatijah Sidek, who was of Indonesian origin. Then there was Datin Fatimah, who retired soon after I did, and she held a Cabinet post for many years. She did her work as a minister extremely well, but her leadership of the *Kaum Ibu* was even more outstanding.

I am more than happy to see that there are many more *Kaum Ibu* coming forward now, women who have shown their potential as leaders in politics. UMNO can rest assured that as time goes by there will be more of the gentle sex willing to play their part in the affairs of our country.

As Napoleon said: "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world". Who knows, perhaps at some future time the prime minister of Malaysia may be a lady? At least I can say for myself that I owe much to my mother for what I have been and for what I am today. I will also say this, that I owe very much of my success as a leader of UMNO to the *Kaum Ibu*.

Eleven

The Hai Hong Episode

20 November 1978

The anchoring of the freighter Hai Hong in the waters of the Straits of Malacca off Klang on 9 November 1978 with 2,500 Vietnamese refugees crammed on board highlighted the appalling problem of 360,000 refugees who had fled their country and landed on the shores of Malaysia and her neighbours. The occupants of the Hai Hong were not allowed to land and had to wait for several months until new homes were found for them in certain Western countries, notably Canada, Germany, and in particular France.

The fate of the 2,500 Vietnamese refugees, crammed into a small freighter, the *Hai Hong*, off Port Klang, refugees who are not allowed to land in Malaysia, has moved us all. Whether they are real refugees in the sense that they have been driven out from their homeland by force, or whether they have chosen of their own accord to avoid the circumstances prevailing in their own country and escape to seek refuge elsewhere, is not the matter at issue.

If such a question was posed before they left their country we might say that we have no place for them here, but this current situation is entirely different. We are confronted with people who are crammed into a small boat with nowhere to go. They have pleaded with us to be allowed to come ashore and stay here for as long as we can endure their presence until some country can accept them.

The conditions they face on board the *Hai Hong* are appalling. A total of 2,500 men, women and children would normally take a ship of the size of the *Queen Elizabeth II* to give them a measure of comfort. But even the *Queen Elizabeth*, (90,000 tons), finds it just as much as she can do to feed and accommodate 1,000 passengers, charging each one the equivalent of M\$1,000 a day for a cabin not large enough "to swing a cat".

Imagine then these 2,500 people living together in a 1,600 ton freighter without even space to sleep or to walk. As to other inconveniences, it is best to leave these to one's imagination. It comes as no surprise, therefore, to find that their plight has evoked international reaction, and also pressure on our government to consider them as refugees and be treated as such, for under the United Nations Charter of Human Rights refugees must be given help and asylum. For these purposes the United Nations has funds available to pay for their maintenance and upkeep.

According to information received from an Indonesian diplomatic source, a Singaporean has been involved in "smuggling" this human cargo of 2,500 Vietnamese. The Indonesian source learned that the man had boldly sailed into the Vietnamese port of Bene Aat Lai and picked up the refugees. If these refugees are the victims of an international crook, then the question is whether should they be punished for the sins of others.

Faced with circumstances which are beyond their control they had no choice but to take the chance and escape, and by whatever means they could. That is the case of these Vietnamese refugees. The culprit is said to be on board, and if action is to be taken against anyone it must be taken against this man, and not against the victims of his plot. One thing is certain — they cannot be repatriated to their own country, for death awaits them there. I hope, therefore, the government will reconsider the decision taken against these Vietnamese refugees.

PERKIM, of which I am the head, has so far looked only after Muslim refugees because we are ill-equipped for such a big task. But we have done as much work as we can, and have done it well. As a result PERKIM was singled out for mention at a conference of the United Nations on Human Rights and the Care of Refugees in October 1977.

I quote the relevant citation at a ceremony to present the Nansen Award, won by the Malaysian Red Crescent Society:-

Tribute is due to several countries that have made outstanding efforts in sharing the burden. Participation on a more universal basis is essential in order to take care of families in quest of permanent homes.

In this particularly difficult field, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society has distinguished itself by setting a striking example. It has been instrumental in helping hundreds of displaced Khmers to resettle in the State of Kelantan in Malaysia. This was a major breakthrough in that for the first time displaced Indo-Chinese could be resettled in the area. In this resettlement operation,

unique in South-East Asia so far, the Society played a determining role and greatly facilitated the task of UNHCR.

The pioneering efforts of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society in conjunction with the Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (The Muslim Welfare Organisation of Malaysia) known as PERKIM, have clearly demonstrated that the humanitarian problems of displaced persons, can, at least to some extent, be solved on a regional basis. The success of the operation and of the role played by the Society is evident from the admission of further Khmers to Malaysia for durable settlement. Through its sustained action, the Society has set a pattern which will, I trust, inspire many other agencies in the ASEAN region.

In a personal letter to me, His Highness the Aga Khan said:

As you know, the Nansen Medal for 1977 has been awarded to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society for the outstanding work it has done in co-operation with your organisation. As was stressed in statements made at the ceremony, the support of PERKIM, especially in helping to settle Khmer displaced persons in Malaysia, constitutes a major contribution to the success of this operation.

In extending to you and to all the members of your agency my most sincere thanks, I have pleasure in enclosing herewith a copy of the award certificate in which PERKIM is explicitly mentioned, as well as a copy of the message of the Secretary-General and of the award statement I delivered on the occasion.

Later the restriction on the admission of refugees into Malaysia was relaxed through the kindness of the Minister of Home Affairs, Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie. On 16 November 1975, he declared in Parliament, "The government regards all refugees from Vietnam as illegal immigrants, or as those who have entered the country illegally. These refugees will be dealt with accordingly." However, on my intervention he agreed to treat all cases on their merits, and the Cambodians involved at that time were allowed to take refuge here, as they had suffered severely. This was a small act of mercy extended to them.

The present case of the *Hai Hong* is just as bad, and we should temper justice with mercy in the name of God, no matter who these people are. One thing is certain — they are no enemies of ours. If the same regime which holds power in their country were to take over this country, God only knows what our fate would be. Certainly it would be worse than the fate of the Cambodian and Vietnamese refugees. They were peaceful peoples until this cruel fate and misfortune caught up with them. Thousands have been killed, tortured and driven from their homes. A few have managed to escape this cruel fate, and those on the *Hai Hong* can be said to be among these few.

It is very hard for human society to turn a deaf ear to their pleas for shelter. Our people suffered discomfort and hardship during the War. We ran short of food and clothing and were sub-

jected to Japanese military atrocities. A few thousand were killed, and a few more thousands were robbed of their belongings and their liberty. But our suffering was only a flea-bite as compared with what these people from Vietnam and Cambodia have had to go through. They too had to endure the Japanese Occupation and also rebellion against the French after the end of the Second World War. Then on independence their country was split into two, with brother fighting brother in a terrible civil war.

On one side were the Russian-backed North Vietnamese called Vietminh, and on the other side the American-backed South Vietnamese. They went for one another hammer and tong. Thousands were killed, property was shattered and happiness blighted. Finally, the Vietminh took over the whole of Vietnam. Then a war of attrition started with killing and murder by those who had not joined the communist regime, or had taken a non-communist Vietminh stand previously. Cambodia suffered no better fate. Thousands fled their country and thousands more died on the way.

In Malaysia, we had one nasty experience which still haunts my memory. When an old freighter loaded with Vietnamese refugees was refused permission to land in West Malaysia, it was directed instead to East Malaysia. On the way and within sight of land a heavy tropical storm broke out and swallowed up the ship with all the refugees on board. This tragedy ended their suffering, but only God knows what they had had to go through before they died — men, women and children.

We must give these refugees shelter, even if it is only for a time, rather than allow them to be tossed about on the high seas. There's plenty of room here — at least they are better than some of our own disloyal elements, people who while living in comfort in this country give no loyalty whatsoever to Malaysia. While these talks are going on and the government is thinking of what to do about the matter, there is no reason why we should not show our sympathy and kindness by making life bearable for these human derelicts, these refugees. For any little act of kindness I am sure these poor souls will be eternally grateful.

As Muslims, God must reward us for any small act of mercy we show to other human beings, even though they are not Muslims. If Muslims did not work on the basis of goodwill and kindness, Islam might not have spread in the way it has today to the four corners of the world. The latest report indicates that France will

accept the refugees. All I can say, these being the only French words I know, "Vive la France!" and "Tres bien, France — merci beaucoup!"

Living in a Troubled World

27 November 1978

Why is there so much trouble in the world today? Whichever way one looks, one faces unrest in countries where it is least expected. There is unrest even in Japan. Airport workers went on strike there, and Japan Air Lines grounded all its internal and international flights. These actions must have affected the Japanese economy very seriously, an economy that can be said to be one of the strongest in the world today. Although the Japanese have had labour troubles, somehow or other they have managed to get over them in the course of time. But while they lasted they must have found the days very trying.

Next we come to one of the world's most turbulent spots — Iran, a land of plenty, where people have the best of everything; one might even call Iran a welfare state, yet it has troubles galore. Somehow the people of Iran, although they have lived in a truly monarchical state for years, have suddenly found fault with the monarchy. Demonstrations, riots and strikes have broken out all over the country. And these very same people once lined the streets of Teheran whenever His Imperial Majesty the Shah made an appearance, calling out for Allah's blessing on him.

I have been present and have witnessed such an acclamation of loyalty to the Shah, one in which men, women and children shouted out their praise. Now they scream "Death to the Shah!" They are keen to have a change of government, be it for better or worse. That is the situation in Iran.

The once-prosperous country of Lebanon still lives under terrorism. Formerly Lebanon was so popular that all the wealthy Arabs from the oil-rich countries of the Middle East poured capital into the country. Big hotels reared their heads, business flourished, and the economy gained strength. Beirut became the commercial centre of the Middle East, with Europeans and Asians flocking there to do business.

Then trouble broke out, a bloody civil war between Muslim and Christian Arabs. Many, many months have gone by, and yet

the war does not seem to end. There is violence in every corner of Beirut. Lives have been lost and property destroyed, for what? When one asks the Arabs in Lebanon what they are fighting for, none appears to be able to give a suitable reply except to say that Christian Arabs are sympathetic to Israel which is at war with the Arabs. How long it will be before the people of Lebanon recover their equilibrium no one can tell. I quote a columnist, T.D. Allman, who writes:

Hotels are empty. The bar of the St. George's Hotel in Beirut, once a national institution of a far greater influence than the Lebanese Army, remains, like the rest of the hotel, a charred, empty shell. Diagonally across the street where air-conditioned elevators once wafted visiting *sheikhs* to penthouse suites with the best view in the Arab world, the Holiday Inn remains a twisted skeleton of burned metal, broken glass and charred concrete.

The taxi-driver on this side of the 'Green Line' dividing Christian Beirut from Muslim Beirut, like the taxi-driver on the other side, carries a .45 revolver under his seat. Even the car is the same, a tattered black Mercedes Benz Up the hill are the ruins of the financial district that once was to petro-dollars what Wall Street is to the world. Today, no one, not even the looters, bothers to go there.

The place, long ago picked clean, is now the preserve of packs of prowling cats and a few patrolling Sudanese who are members of the Arab Deterrent Force.

That is a vivid picture of a modern Pompeii, destroyed by civil war, just as surely as the old one by an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. The difference is very small. Will such a disaster also beset the regime of the Shah of Iran? Let us pray it does not.

Over in Europe, in Italy, there was a lot of communist activity and outbreaks of violence. People have been kidnapped for ransom there in broad daylight, and even an ex-prime minister was killed for no reason other than that his ransom was not paid. The worst place of all was Rome itself. One might have thought the presence of the head of the Roman Catholic Church would bring sanity to the people, but it has not.

One goes further and reads with horror about the tragedy in Guyana. There existed a sect of Christian evangelists under the Rev. Jim Jones, whose creed it was to kill and die for him, and his followers did just as they were told. And this Rev. Jim Jones led them in a ritual of mass suicide that took at least 900 lives.

To us in this country of ours, Malaysia, this occurrence is utterly unthinkable. How such a cult could have been conceived by men of the Christian faith from America is unimaginable — America, one of the most civilized and advanced countries in the world!

One recalls that in days gone by, any man of the Christian religion who committed suicide would not be given a Christian burial. Now all these terrors and troubles are happening in the world. There are other things also taking place in the civilized countries of Europe and the Americas which people in Malaysia are astounded to hear are being done openly. Sexual perversities such as the exchange of wives and other orgies are openly advertised in some magazines.

In independent Africa there is no end to violence, with civil wars and insurrections by discontented elements. Mass killings and revolutions break out everywhere, causing serious concern to the rest of the civilized world, so much so that one hesitates even to read reports of events in Africa. Now we are beginning to hate reading about atrocities of any kind committed by human beings.

Hearing and reading reports of occurrences so unusual and unfamiliar to us makes one wonder whether happenings like these will come our way in course of time. Many unMalaysian customs have been imported — long hair, drug addiction, and other unsavoury habits.

Refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam have brought us tales of the hardships, atrocities, cruelties and barbarism that have taken place in their countries. Every day they wake up expecting something to happen to them. They live in tension and their nerves are shattered, so they will rather face death than remain in such surroundings or in such a state of uncertainty.

They will jump at any offer by a good, well-meaning person, or by a bad and scheming person wanting to make money for himself, any offer to take these refugees to safety elsewhere, paying whatever price is asked just to escape from their miseries. Thousands have braved the sea to get away in small craft to lands beyond, hoping that in fleeing from their countries they will find a little happiness somewhere, among kinder people.

The boats that carry the refugees cannot travel far, they can only go to such neighbouring states as Thailand or Malaysia. To venture beyond these lands would be suicidal. These people are not immigrants in the proper sense of the word — they are refugees or fugitives from tyranny. To deal with such a problem, one must base one's reasoning on human sentiment, and solve it on humanitarian grounds.

The Malaysian government has set up a Task Force. As I see it, this means a grouping of forces and resources, especially of

military units, to accomplish a specific objective. The Army has tents and other equipment available to help provide shelter and accommodation for such people.

A few years ago when Cambodian Muslim refugees first came here, PERKIM had to seek the help of the Army which supplied tents and other amenities until the United Nations and the Red Crescent Society could provide other needs for them. So I have no doubt that the Army can provide what these poor refugees require.

The blame for the loss of more than one hundred lives in the Kuala Trengganu River recently cannot be put on the government, because the fault there rests largely with the refugees themselves. They preferred to take the risk rather than remain on board their ship. But this incident only goes to show how desperate these refugees must have been after being tossed about on the high seas in their small boat. Even hardy sailors could not put up with it, so the risk they took ended in a terrible tragedy.

We in Malaysia cannot escape our responsibility to give whatever aid we can, however temporary it may be. This refugee problem will have to be faced by us from time to time because Malaysia and Thailand are on the escape route, with Indo-China's coastline bordering the South China Sea and the Gulf of Siam. The argument on the Malaysian side is that any help given may well induce more refugees to flee to Malaysia, and then there would be no end to their influx into our country.

That is a problem of which I am well aware, but the temporary shelter I have suggested is to accommodate those who arrive in a camp, and when the time comes arrangements can be made for them to be repatriated to their own country, which cannot refuse to accept them. The United Nations must help to work out the repatriation of these people. What I am opposed to is that they should be allowed to be tossed about on the high seas in small boats and made to suffer agony while we are undecided about what we are to do with them. I know quite well how we are placed. Sometimes it may not be wise to be either too generous or too kind, but here we are confronted with a human problem, one for which we cannot avoid our responsibility as human beings, and it is our duty to save our fellow-men from suffering and misery.

The Merdeka University Issue

4 December 1978

The issue of whether a Chinese-sponsored university (to be known as Merdeka University) should be permitted or not continued to arouse feelings in 1979, although the government had categorically ruled out the proposal the previous year. The question of the percentages of places reserved for bumiputras in Malaysian universities also proved a source of controversy during the year.

Datuk Lee San Choon struck the right note in his address to the MCA General Assembly in Kuala Lumpur when he stated, "We are firmly convinced that the establishment of the Merdeka University will not be in the interests of the Chinese community."

Continuing, he said: "We know there is an urgent problem among our youth who find that their opportunities to pursue tertiary education have been drastically reduced in the last few years. Will the establishment of this University solve our education problem or will it bring a train of other political and social consequences for our community and our nation?"

He called on the Chinese community "to examine its values and to be prepared to change them if necessary in order to progress and help create an integrated and united multiracial society".

The problem the people in Malaysia face is not immediate, but rather long-term and it is one we will have to face.

Can a country with a divided society such as ours survive the impact of differences, prejudices and other failings we have? A divided society such as ours, divided by race, religion and custom has no leg to stand on. We are sitting on a keg of gunpowder. We have survived under our own steam for so long, twenty-one years, and we can thank God for it, for our survival goes to prove that sanity prevails in this country. We have had little trouble because conditions are good and the people are happy. A slight economic reverse may, however, bring about political upheaval

— the explosion of the gunpowder. This we have experienced before. May God forbid that we ever face it again!

Take the hartal of 1966 in Penang. This hartal led to the killing of a few innocent people who had no warning of the outbreak of a political storm, nor of the cause of it. Some women for instance, were out shopping. Some visitors arrived from the mainland and the women were just beaten up or killed by the gangsters and members of secret societies, and nobody knew why. These "visitors" used violence to demonstrate their displeasure against the government over the question of devaluing our currency.

In most other countries devaluation takes place frequently, because the economic situation demands it, and the people have to put up with it, but nothing serious occurs. Here, however, they used it as an excuse to commit violence. Nobody understood why they should have taken it out on these innocent and harmless *kampung* people beyond the fact that they were loyal citizens.

The elements who caused this violence were small in number, and they didn't belong to any responsible or decent group of people. They were just riff-raff who welcomed any opportunity to make trouble. The leaders behind them should have known better than to make use of them for their own political ends.

The primary duty of a leader, particularly in a divided society, must be to create goodwill and amity. In this way leaders can safeguard the interests of the people and the well-being of the country.

In his speech at the MCA annual conference, its president, Datuk Lee San Choon, said: "We are firmly convinced that the establishment of the Merdeka University will not be in the interests of the Chinese community. We have decided this with good reasons and with the long-term interest of the nation at heart." Such is the statement of a responsible leader.

I recall when the national language was first implemented, many Chinese and Indians objected. They considered it repugnant to have to think of themselves as anything but Chinese or Indian, and when the MCA supported the idea of a national language as being Alliance policy based on the agreed constitution, they severely condemned it. However, the UMNO-MCA-MIC Alliance stood its ground and won the day.

When the constitution provides for a national language, it is the duty of all good citizens to contribute their share towards

making it workable, for on this foundation unity must be built. But it took time, however, to put the idea across. There were plenty of hard feelings, and a lot of dissension was stirred up over the language issue, with the result that in the general election of 1969, the Alliance, particularly the MCA, suffered a severe setback. But a principle was at stake and the MCA soon recovered its standing as the leading Chinese political party.

I mentioned in my book, *May 13, Before and After*, what a surprise I had to find that the Chinese who had shown such strong support for UMNO candidates in the past had made an about-turn during the 1969 election. I had the unfortunate experience to see this for myself in my own constituency in Kedah. I found Chinese going to the PMIP booth to collect ballot papers.

Most of the people of Malaysia have never joined anti-government elements, and it is these people who have brought prosperity, peace and goodwill to the country. They have helped to make Malaysia what it is, a land of "milk and honey", a haven of peace in this trouble-spot of Asia. All of them are proud to be associated with the country.

In my early years at school between 1910 and 1920, I found that there were no Chinese schools in the country at all. Any Chinese who wished to take up a course of study in Chinese had to take private tuition, or else learn in the Chinese temples. In those days the Straits-born and Malayan Chinese were in every respect close to the Malays as inhabitants of the country.

The ladies wore sarung and *kebaya*, and in Malacca and Singapore their *lingua franca* was Malay, while in Penang the language spoken was a mixture of Chinese and Malay. There were no problems whatsoever, and there had never been any communal or religious trouble either.

Then came the end of World War I, and the beginning of a new era. A change suddenly appeared, with a new Chinese nationalism sweeping the country and Malayan Chinese ladies discarding sarungs for either the *samfoo* or the *cheongsam*. Chinese schools sprouted like mushrooms. There were large and small ones and they grew in towns and *kampungs*. When I was the District Officer in Kuala Nerang all the Chinese boys used to enter the Malay school, and from there they would go to special classes in the English schools in Alor Star.

One day Mr. De la Towell, the Superintendent of Education, Kedah, came to me in Kuala Nerang and asked me to tell the

Chinese to start their own school, as he was not admitting any more Chinese boys into the Malay school. This was the divide-and-rule policy which gained momentum in the middle thirties, helping to add fuel to Chinese culture and nationalism which got stronger in the pre-war years.

Chinese nationalists consisted mostly of Chinese teachers and their indoctrinated students. They were determined to set up a third state in Malaysia and Singapore. They based their arguments on the fact that Chinese, wherever they might be, are Chinese and within Malaysia and Singapore the number of Chinese could be said to equal the *bumiputras*, the indigenous population of the country. Economically and educationally they considered themselves superior to the *bumiputras* and their skins were lighter. These arguments, of course, held good only in colonial days when each race had to fend for itself, and so each survived as a separate entity.

In independent Malaysia, however, such concepts are bad and can cause much hatred amongst a mixed population. Racially, people may be different, but the object of their loyalty must be Malaysia, the country of their birth. "Be it ever so humble Malaysia is our home." A country divided must inevitably fall. Should that happen here, we would face terrible disaster. Malaysia is an island in the sea of Southeast Asian nationalism. Any move by the Chinese race in this country to create a Third China would immediately arouse antagonism from all quarters. All Southeast Asian countries are afraid of Chinese domination.

The number of human beings in Southeast Asia, roughly 250 million, can easily swamp the numbers of Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore. In fact 70 per cent of the Chinese in Malaysia, those whose families have been here for many generations, will not accept a Third China concept. They much prefer to leave well alone. Their interests lie in the stability and well-being of this country, which their ancestors and they have helped to establish.

When Malaysia was formed (and before that, Malaya) we all pledged to live in peace and the best of goodwill with one another, and for better or for worse to accept Malaysia as our home. We agreed on a constitution, and this gave a certain protection to the indigenous people, which in fact is innocuous enough, and it does not infringe on anyone's rights. The Chinese on the whole have done very well in this country, and its economy and prosperity must continue to depend on Chinese business

acumen and ability.

In trying to help the *bumiputras*, too much emphasis must not be laid on this policy. Too much of a good thing may cause harm to those whom we intend to help. Those who want to create a Third China can only make trouble for others, and they themselves have no vested interest except in what is in their minds. The Singapore Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, is well aware of this. Although the Chinese population forms 80 per cent of the State of Singapore, he would not dream of making Singapore a Chinese state. His government would not accept a Chinese-language university, and for that reason Nanyang University now conducts all its courses in English.

It is admitted, however, that there must be openings for those students from Chinese schools who aim to have a university education. For that reason I lent my name to the establishment of a college to give higher education to Chinese students. This could be converted into a university, and the medium of instruction could be in English, Bahasa Malaysia and even Chinese. This could be worked out, given time, but to pursue the subject of a Chinese university and to make an issue of it to the detriment of the national interest is to court trouble.

Everyone is expected to contribute his little share to make a success of Malaysia. Any move which runs counter to this ideal would be unwise. The government, too, must consider the position of Chinese students who seek admission into our universities. They should be given more places in the universities, and students with good scholastic attainments should not be debarred from entering them. There has been a black cloud of suspicion and fear in the country, and for our own good this should not be allowed to continue. More thought should be given to Malaysia as a whole, and every effort should be made to accommodate her loyal citizens.

Datuk Lee San Choon asks whether "the establishment of the Merdeka University would solve our education problem, or would it bring a train of other political and social consequences for our country and our nation?" My answer to that is that it would answer nothing, insofar as the education problem is concerned. On the other hand it could cause animosity among Malaysians of different racial origins.

The question of providing more room in the universities for non-*bumiputras* must be seriously attended to, and this may help

to ease the minds of all concerned. Another matter to be studied is the question of upgrading the status of the Tunku Abdul Rahman College to that of a university, and to decide on the medium of instruction, which must conform to the national education policy.

When I was Chancellor of the University of Malaya, members of the Court and Council gave particular thought for bright students and gave them places. After I retired, somehow this policy changed rather suddenly, and the number of seats for others was restricted. As a result there was a lot of frustration and discontent, but nothing was done to put matters right. The university authorities were given the power, so to speak, to admit whom they liked and bar whom they disliked.

Then came the demand for a Chinese university with the name of "Merdeka" to find room for secondary school Chinese students. Most Malaysians were shocked, for they realised what it would mean. It would be harmful to Malaysia, whose well-being must depend on the bonds of unity between the races. Setting up a special university for Chinese would split this unity apart. Mr. Lim Kit Siang, the Secretary-General of the Democratic Action Party, decided to move a motion on this subject in Parliament and the government party was tuned up to fight him. On second thoughts, he withdrew the motion temporarily — according to him, under Standing Order 34(1).

The Minister Of Education, Datuk Musa Hitam, however, insisted on giving a reply, again — according to him — in the interests of the nation under Clause 14(2), by which he sought and received the permission of the House to do so. The Minister said it was a matter of national interest that the public should understand the government's views on the Merdeka University. This important and controversial subject has now been shelved for the time being on Datuk Musa Hitam's promise that the government will reduce the sense of frustration and disappointment among non-*bumi-putras*, who are to be given places in the universities. He emphasized that the creation of a truly Malaysian society depended on a change of attitude and thinking among the people. He asked whether people still wanted to maintain their communal identity and be regarded as Chinese rather than as Malaysians of Chinese descent.

He also questioned whether the Malays still wanted to retain their racial identity as Malays rather than be Malaysian Malays in

a country which had a multiracial population. Indeed these are questions which should occupy the minds of all young Malaysians, for as I have often said, a country divided can never stand. It was all right for us to think of ourselves as Malays or Chinese in colonial times when we lived under British protection, but in independent Malaysia where the destiny of our country lies solidly in our own hands we should work for unity among our people in order to see us through the difficult period ahead. How long that will be depends absolutely and entirely on the people themselves.

The education policy is one of the pillars which support our national unity, and that pillar must be strong enough to withstand adverse criticism and other political storms. Although Mr. Lim Kit Siang declared that the withdrawal of his motion was only temporary, I personally hope that it will be permanent. In the meantime, it is the government's duty to set up a commission to investigate the matter of education thoroughly, so that the young people of Malaysia, in whose hands our future well-being rests, will be educated to play the roles expected of them as future leaders of the nation.

One question, however, arises, under parliamentary practice and procedure, and that is whether it was correct or necessary for a reply to be given to a motion when that motion had been withdrawn, even though standing orders allow or provide for it and the Speaker had given permission to do so. If I remember correctly, in the old days where a motion was withdrawn nothing more needed to be said on the subject. But if any statement had to be made, then the Minister would have to bring it up when winding up the debate under his Ministry, and this would have been better.

I remember one occasion when Mr. Lee Kuan Yew brought up an important subject which he proposed to introduce in Parliament, and I had already prepared my reply. He came to see me and mentioned that he would like to withdraw his motion in the morning of the day when it was to be debated. I told him, if that was the case, then I need not have to go to the House, as I had an important matter to attend to.

About 11.00 o'clock when I was in my office I received a message from Parliament to say that Mr. Lee Kuan Yew had started to speak on his motion. I was shocked, because this certainly was not fair, so I rushed to Parliament immediately, and heard him speak on the subject which he had promised

earlier to withdraw. Of course, I had my prepared reply. On the other hand, if he had not brought up his motion I would not have made a statement but would have said what I had to say when winding up the debate.

This would have been a better way to deal with a matter of importance, and this way would not have hurt the feelings of an adversary who was sporting enough to admit his mistake.

Looking Back at 1978

1 January 1979

The year 1978 has passed away quietly enough, and not without excitement. In fact some of its sensitive and explosive events caused government and people serious thought. The year opened with election fever. All parties had anticipated a snap election and were making preparations to fight it out, and their war of words caused great excitement among the people in general.

But outside this excitement there was no untoward incident. At the time nobody knew when the election was going to be held and the government kept silent. Then when it did take place in July, the Barisan Nasional was returned to power with a strong majority, thus ensuring the continuity of government, under the leadership of Datuk Hussein Onn, for the next five years. One thing we noticed, however, was that among the many who took part in the campaign were some members of the academic staff of the University of Technology Malaysia.

Like others they were free to exercise their democratic rights, but as teachers they should help to prepare students to play their roles as future leaders of our country. However, they showed partisanship for a particular party based on religion. It is surprising to me, therefore, that they should have turned against the government in such numbers and with such vehemence. Perhaps the government will appoint a commission to find out the cause. At least one member I know fought the election as a candidate, but did not resign his post before doing so. I was told that after his defeat he went back to his job as lecturer in the post he occupied previous to the election. This is surely irregular.

The most conspicuous occurrence in the election was the defeat of PAS. According to its leader, Datuk Asri, in an interview with *Malaysian Business* (30 November), it was due to intrigues by UMNO and its associates, who had always harboured hatred for PAS. These intrigues were created by UMNO to cause trouble to

PAS, which had held the reins of the state governments in Kelantan since 1959. But earlier he stated: "Never in the history of parliamentary democracy in the present world where a country which practises a federalistic form of government is found an opposition party which has successfully defended its regime in a state for nineteen years, as PAS has proven in Kelantan."

The question is — how was it that in 1978 PAS was not able to defend itself successfully against its proven enemy when for nineteen years it had been able to do so? What was the contributory factor which gave the Opposition victory over PAS in this election?

The blame must be found somewhere on PAS' own doorstep. However, it is not my intention to put Datuk Asri in the dock, but to show that what happened in this last election was incidental, and that it was not unexpected.

The DAP also came back with a large number of members. However, its members in Perak created a furor when they refused to take the oath of allegiance in the Perak State Assembly. The DAP was not only returned to Parliament, but to the state assemblies as well in sufficient numbers to form an effective Opposition. So it is to be hoped they will be able to acquit themselves as a loyal Opposition and win the confidence of the country.

The election on the whole passed off well and amicably. Now Malaysia has settled down for another five years of the same kind of thinking, and we hope the nation will enjoy political peace.

The next serious event to cause some concern to the country was the case of Datuk Harun Idris, the former Menteri Besar of Selangor. It will be remembered that UMNO Youth refused to allow him to attend court to receive judgment. They held him "incommunicado" as prisoner in his own house, and no one was allowed to go in without their permission. But they did ask me to come and join them and to give advice and guidance.

So I went on Friday, February 24, and without hesitation advised the Selangor UMNO Youth Action Committee to uphold the law and not to disregard it, for if they did so, then they would be letting UMNO down. If UMNO members disregarded the constitution and the law, including court orders, then they could not expect anything better from others. I went on to say that I would only associate myself with this case if Datuk Harun made his appearance in court, and it was for them to see that he did so.

They were undecided, and still maintained their stand that Datuk Harun should be pardoned because of the services that he had rendered the country. And they threatened to resist any attempt by the Police to take him from their custody. Everything looked very serious, and the whole country was anxious that the situation would not be allowed to deteriorate. I recalled that in 1969 the trouble then had started from Datuk Harun's official residence of Menteri Besar in Princes Road, and this should certainly not be allowed to recur.

I must say that the Police acted very calmly, patiently and diplomatically, as otherwise there would be no knowing what might have happened. So I was happy when on 2 March Datuk Harun surrendered to the Police, and appealed to his supporters to abide by the law.

The whole affair settled itself without any untoward incident. This credit I must give to Datuk Harun and his supporters. They realised that their duty as citizens of the country was to uphold the law and not to break it and bring about unimaginable trouble in the country. As a result, the whole country was able to breathe a sigh of relief.

The next big issue causing serious concern to the nation at large was the proposal to establish a Merdeka University. This question, whipped up with enthusiasm by certain quarters and meeting with strong opposition from others, caused much worry. The Chinese population was divided into two camps, but the president of the MCA, Datuk Lee San Choon, was brave enough to come out and in an open discussion declare that "the MCA would not support this university".

He called on the Chinese community "to examine its values and to be prepared to change them if necessary in order to progress and help create an integrated and united multiracial society". It was the speech of a leader, well-timed and well-made. Then Mr. Lim Kit Siang, the DAP leader, who had earlier tabled a motion in support of this Merdeka University, decided to withdraw it. So this important controversial subject was, to the relief of the people of Malaysia, shelved *sine die*.

All these serious problems which threatened the well-being and security of our nation have by the Grace of God passed off peacefully. Now if we look back we must give thanks to Almighty God for his benevolence and mercies which have saved this nation of ours from serious trouble. In the meantime, we have seen

happenings outside Malaysia which must have given us food for thought.

Look at the people of Chinese origin who have been driven out of Vietnam, their birthplace, crammed together in small boats and shoved off into the open seas to look for new homes as best they could. But in these days of self-preservation, in which every country in South-East Asia is trying to keep immigrants out for reasons of economy and political survival, where can these new migrants find a home? These poor souls, tossed about on the high seas, were denied entry in every country they went to, and hundreds drowned.

Malaysia, being the closest land to theirs, is always confronted with the problem of whether to give them temporary shelter or to keep them out. When we saw that hundreds were being drowned before our own eyes — men, women and children — we had no choice but to allow them to come in temporarily until such time as other countries could help to accommodate them. The countries which came forward to do so were the United States, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, France, Australia and New Zealand. The United Nations and the Red Crescent have given their full attention to the problem, and are trying to get other countries to accept the refugees on compassionate and humanitarian grounds.

Next we had news of the disaster in Iran with strikes, riots and hostile demonstrations against the government causing the loss of many lives and the destruction of much property. This strife in Iran has brought much misery to the people of that country.

And in Turkey, too, there was open rioting between the Alevi and Sunni sects in Kahmarman Maras, which left 101 dead and 150 injured, and the trouble still goes on. Martial law was introduced to restore calm and order.

In the southern Philippines fighting between the Muslims and the government still continues. Thousands of refugees have found their way to Sabah and are being given asylum by the Sabah government.

There are many things still going on around us which cause us feelings of anxiety, though we must say we are in fact living in a land of peace and plenty. Let us pray to God that He will keep us this way.

The Wisdom of the Old

22 January 1979

There are lots of things happening today to cause loss of sleep for many people, provocation to some and serious concern to most. For instance, Vietnamese aggression in Kampuchea gives rise to fears that it may lead to the invasion of the rest of the Southeast Asian Peninsula. In other words, the "domino" theory propounded by certain authorities is coming true. Anyway, all kinds of speculation are circulating, speculation which helps to aggravate the situation even more.

Then there is the legal wrangle taking place over the Privy Council's judgment in the case of Teh Cheng Poh, in which the Council held that the proclamation of a state of emergency made in 1969 was invalid after a period of time. Parliament passed the Emergency (Essential Powers) Bill 1979 to legalize any irregularity it may have committed in the years when the emergency powers were legally non-existent. Of course it had no other choice but to do what it did. Otherwise it would be subject to endless litigation.

So the Bill, according to the government, "had to be made retrospective because of the serious threat to the security of the nation". So be it.

Coming back to Indo-Chinese affairs, Vietnam and Cambodia are pawns in the power struggle between Russia and China. The other powers are naturally watching events closely. For us, the "game" is much too grandiose — all we can do is sit back and watch. Deep in my heart, however, I don't believe the crisis will worsen.

As for the Emergency Bill, legally it is unsupportable, but factually there are much too many crimes being committed in our country today. Something more than ordinary police powers have to be found to reduce their frequency.

Anyway, I find little comfort in dealing with these topics. So when I was told of an old man who has lived happily for the past 113 years, I wanted to ask about his life. I invited him to my

house one evening, and he came together with his wife.

We were able to laugh and joke as I put question after question to him, and we forgot all about Cambodia, Vietnam and the legal wrangle going on between the government, the lawyers and the members of the Opposition.

He is well, and looks younger than his 113 years. He practises medicine in a *kampung* some miles away from Kuala Lumpur near Taman Tun Dr. Ismail. People from abroad have been to see him for cures for various illnesses and ailments, the main complaint being loss of manhood.

One request made by foreigners is a cure for obesity. He has testimonials from America, Britain and Australia showing appreciation from those who have lost weight and gained "sex appetite" as a result of his treatment. He also massages those who have weak hearts or rheumatism as well as those suffering from other bodily pains. Most of his patrons are rich Chinese.

I asked him how long he had been in Malaysia. He said he came to Selangor in 1898 when he was thirty-two years old. He was born in Sumatra in a small place called Kampar. He was married and had children before he came here. He remembers his age very well. He was born in 1866 on a Friday. He stayed in Malaya, first in Kajang, then Sungai Lalang, Segambut, Sungei Buloh and then Batang Kali.

By 1927, he had opened up his own durian plantation in his present *kampung* in Sungei Penchala, Damansara. He has an acre with about twenty durian trees. His full name is Haji Jukir bin Pengadin. He can't remember quite clearly who was running the state of Selangor then. He does not recall seeing any European around either. However, he clearly recollects that there were many bandits about, robbing and killing people.

I asked him whether he remembered that there had been a civil war between Raja Mahdi and Sultan Abdul Samad. He said he did not know about the war, but he saw almost everyone carrying weapons. I asked him whether he remembered Sultan Abdul Samad as ruler of the state, or any other prominent person. He said he had heard a name something like that, but did not want to become involved in such matters as he was from Sumatra.

I asked whether he remembered Tengku Kudin (Dzia'uddin) of Kedah who came with the Kedah army to claim the throne for Sultan Abdul Samad. He said he did not know what was going on. There were large numbers of people who raided the villages,

robbing the villagers and giving them no peace. There did not seem to be law and order. Those who were strong just took the law into their own hands. It was at the turn of the century that some peace appeared in the state of Selangor.

Then rubber-growing came to the country. "I worked on an estate and got \$2/- a month," he said; that was around 1912.

"Do you remember the day we got *Merdeka*?" I asked. He replied, "Certainly, I do. I came to your house before you visited Indonesia."

He also knew Tun Abdul Razak, who used to see him for treatment and massage because he was not a very strong man. He had bodily pain. He said he used to massage Tun Razak quite often.

I asked him whether he knew who the present Prime Minister was.

"Yes, Datuk Hussein Onn," he said.

"Does he go to you for massage?"

"No," he replied.

I remarked, "I haven't come to you for a massage but perhaps when I am a little bit older, I might."

Then he asked me how many races there were on earth.

"Well there are very many," I replied. "I can't tell you all of them offhand."

Haji Jukir said there were only five — Moslems, Chinese, the White Men, the Indians and the Japanese.

"What is your philosophy of life?" I asked.

"There are three things on the earth that a man must do," he answered. "We must find happiness. We must find good food. And we must find medicine." (He meant good health.) "Without these three things, life is not worth living."

"I have been a *bomoh* all my life," he said. "It just came to me naturally."

I asked him whether there was any medicine a sexually-weak man could take.

"Of course. I have some," he said. "In fact, that is my speciality."

Then he provided a simple prescription, using pineapple, *gula batu* and *gula pasir*. But there is a prayer to Allah that must go with this medicinal compound. In fact, that's the medicine. This compound has to be taken over a period of three months during the rising of the new moon.

He prescribes medicine for high blood pressure, diabetes and all other minor illnesses. He himself, however, has been to the hospital because he had difficulty in urinating; it was beyond his ability to cure himself.

I was told the doctor advised him not to smoke too much, but he told the doctor to mind his own business as no doctor has lived as long as he had.

"I've been married seven times," he said. "My present wife is only forty-one years old, and I have had eight children by her. My youngest is nine years old and is schooling. Altogether I have thirty-five children, five of them male and the rest female."

"All my children by my previous wives are dead," he said. "I have grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. Hundreds of them, so many that I have lost count."

He is a religious man. In his *kampung*, there are many people belonging to the *Darul Arqam* religious movement (a religious sect whose members do not use modern amenities such as radio, TV, chairs or tables). But he does not mix with them except when they come to him for treatment.

He appears to be well in possession of his senses. He speaks clearly, but is virtually stone-deaf. His wife has to shout into his ears to make him hear.

He appeared to be in good spirits and he was loquacious. As he talked he smoked one cigarette after another.

I asked him how many cigarettes he smoked a day.

He replied, "Only forty."

"That's a lot," I said. "I smoke only thirty."

He replied that this was one little pleasure in life which he had been enjoying for the last hundred years. He showed me the brand he smoked, and it was a popular type of cigarette.

Then he gave me a verse to recite.

When I could not take down what he told me, he asked me for my note-paper and wrote it down in Jawi. His writing was clear and legible. He said this verse would do many things for me.

He also spoke about the symbolism represented by a person's hand. He stated that the fingers and the thumb represent a certain order in human life.

Firstly, the thumb stands for those who control; the pointer or index finger for the educator; the middle finger for the brave or the warriors; the next for the rich, and the little finger for the poor.

“But Allah shows preference for the poor,” he said, “because in prayer one starts the counting of his recitation of the greatness of Allah by touching first the small finger.”

Then he put his arm forward and asked me to pinch as hard as I liked and as hard as I could. I gripped his flesh and pinched as hard as I could. He felt no pain. “Harder,” he said, and I replied that I could not grip or pinch any harder.

“See? There is no mark,” he said.

When I released him from my grip there was no mark on his arm, despite the fact that he had rather light-brown-coloured skin which was quite smooth and not very wrinkled.

And I was not alone during this conversation and demonstration. My wife, Puan Sri Aziz and six other persons were present.

Finally I asked him, “To what do you attribute your old age and good health?”

“To Allah in His Infinite Mercy,” he replied.

Are Monarchies Out of Date?

12 February 1979

Are the days of monarchy over?

Ever since the trouble started in Iran a few months ago, this question has been persistently put to me by various people, especially when the crisis there grew worse, and the Shah finally left Iran, leaving the government of the country to the present Prime Minister, Dr. Shahpur Bakhtiar.

It is not an easy question to answer, for people of different nations have their own ways of regarding their system of government, or of how a country should be best administered.

Countries with monarchies can differ from one another. As a result, there are various types of kingdoms. For example, there are absolute monarchies, in which either the king or emir is all powerful, and then there are constitutional parliamentary monarchies, in which the parliamentary system is paramount and the king is a symbolic Head of State.

And again, there can be varying degrees of relationships between parliaments and monarchies in different kingdoms.

In a very general way it can be said that in the United Kingdom, for instance, innate power comes from Parliament, not the throne, whereas in Iran, until recently, the position of the Shah was more powerful than that of Parliament.

Absolute monarchy exists only in a few countries today. Perhaps the thinking of the people in those lands demands that this should be so, or else they accept it with attitudes of respect for tradition, commonly peculiar to a certain race of people, or at the other extreme regard the ruler as the Shadow of God.

The Shah of Iran, whom I know well, is an enlightened man, a ruler with a very pleasant disposition, and a broad-minded man with a far-sighted outlook on life.

It would be asking too much to expect him to know everything that goes on in Iran, or to put every single wrong right.

One of my visits to Iran was very brief, only for two days, and

took place at rather short notice. I was Prime Minister at the time.

On my arrival in Teheran, protocol officers met me at the airport, took me to a hotel, and gave me a list of names of persons on whom I must call, the first of whom was the Prime Minister, Mr. Hoveyda.

Normally, the prime minister of a country will meet the prime minister of another country when he arrives, but in my case, the Prime Minister of Iran never bothered to do so, nor did he send a deputy, or someone of ministerial rank.

As I was a guest of the country, I had to be obliging. My purpose in visiting Iran was to stop over and pay a courtesy call on His Majesty the Shah.

When I finally arrived at the office of the Prime Minister, and had taken a seat, a letter arrived for Mr. Hoveyda. While reading his face changed. Immediately he turned to me, saying, "I must take you to the Shah."

So off we went to the Nasiaviran Palace. The Shah was extremely kind to me, treating me as an old and intimate friend, and receiving me alone, his Prime Minister waiting outside.

After we had been conversing for a while, the Shah turned to me and said, "The Empress wants to speak with you." So I went to her wing of the Palace to pay my respects.

As I was about to leave, the Empress said, "You will be having lunch with the Shah."

"Oh," I replied, "this is certainly a great honour for me, one I do not expect. I only came here to pay my respects to the Shah."

The Empress smiled saying, "Oh, the Shah won't let you go without entertaining you, because he can never forget your kindness to us when we visited your country."

These are the kind of sovereigns they are, for the Shah and his charming consort, Empress Farah, are nice, gentle and majestic.

Whatever anyone else may say, it cannot be denied that the Shah, during his reign, has achieved a very great deal indeed for the people of Iran.

A few years later in 1971, I was in Teheran again, as I had been invited as a guest for the celebration of the 2,500th anniversary of the Iranian monarchy.

At that time, I was living in Jeddah, where I held the post of Secretary-General of the Islamic Secretariat, and on my first official visit to Iran, I was honoured with a First-Class Order of

the Empire.

Again two protocol officers looked after me, gave me their absolute attention, and considered my every comfort. To this day I can never forget the kindness they showed me.

The celebrations included a grand banquet. On that magnificent evening, sovereign Heads of State were assembled in a special ante-room of the Banquet Hall.

Among them was our own monarch, DYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Dipertuan Agung and his consort, the Permaisuri Agung (the present Sultan and Sultanah of Kedah). All the other invited guests were congregating at the Banquet Hall.

When I arrived to attend the banquet by command of the Shah I was taken to the ante-room instead of to the Hall. I was the only person there who was neither a Head of State nor a Prime Minister (as I had already retired and had become Secretary-General).

Naturally, among those in the ante-room was the Prime Minister of Iran, Mr. Hoveyda.

I had no idea when I was expected to leave for the main hall, but it was obvious that I would have to go before the Heads of State left the ante-room.

I was actually taking to Mr. Hoveyda when he just suddenly left me without saying a word. Then, to my surprise, a voice started to call out the names of all the Heads of State, one after another.

I began to get nervous, as I did not know what to do myself, not having been informed earlier. Obviously, I felt I should be with the other guests rather than with the Heads of State.

I remember I did think that the least Mr. Hoveyda could have done was to tell me, and he could have asked me to go with him, but instead, he "sneaked" away quietly, leaving me alone to find my way out as best I could.

With whatever presence of mind I could muster, I managed to "creep" out unobtrusively through a passage into the main hall.

I must say that this was one of the most uncomfortable moments of my life. It was indeed a very great relief to me when I finally found myself in the hall, sitting at a table with the Shah's own brother, together with Princess Anne of England, the Foreign Minister of Iran, and a few dignitaries from overseas.

I describe this episode in my association with the Shah quite deliberately, just to show what a considerate and kind man he is, and also to show what an inconsiderate and narrowminded Prime

Minister he happened to have then.

There might have been other ministers and officials in the Shah's government who were worse than Mr. Hoveyda, and if that was the case, then what could one expect from such government officials?

As I remarked earlier, even though the Shah was a fine man, he could not be expected to know everything that was taking place in Iran, particularly among his ministers and officials, although a few of them whom I knew were extremely pleasant and clever.

One such man was Mr. Zahedi, who had formerly been the Iranian ambassador in London, and later in Washington.

When trouble started in Iran, he was called back to help the Shah. This is one man the Shah never forgot, as his father had helped to install the Shah on the throne, on the abdication of his father, Riza Khan Pahlevi.

The Shah, Muhammed Riza Pahlevi, came to the throne of Iran in 1941, and therefore has been the ruler of Iran for the past thirty-eight years.

The Shah's policy was to modernise the country, and in doing so, he was close to the Western democracies, particularly the United States.

According to reports, this gave rise to bitter resentment from an Eastern power, an immediate neighbour of Iran's.

To adapt a well-known saying, "Hell knows no fury like a power scorned." Obviously, this power has done much to foster trouble within Iran.

There was also another weakness in the Shah's government. Being so bent on modernisation, he had not given much time or attention to the religion of Islam.

The Muslims of Iran are of the Shi'ite sect, but there are also Sunni Muslims who have settled in Iran, and they complained to me bitterly, on my second visit, that there was no place in Teheran where they could congregate for Friday prayers as demanded by the religion.

There was nothing I could do, except to suggest they could plan to build a mosque, and I undertook to get funds from King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, who was then alive. Their plans must have failed, because I heard nothing more from them.

I think it is probably the "lackadaisical" attitude of the government towards religion, together with the strong anti-

communist policy of the Shah, which contributed towards the present series of crises in Iran.

I give thanks to God, however, that the Shah and his family are safely abroad, but what will be the outcome of the current trouble in Iran it is very difficult to say.

Whatever the outcome may be, we pray that clashes between the Army, civilians and religious forces will be avoided.

Can the trouble in Iran affect other monarchies or emirates?

This is hard to predict, for as I have remarked earlier, the condition of the country and the thinking of its people are positive factors that will determine their destinies. What happens in one country does not mean it will necessarily occur in other nations. What is good for one may not be good for others.

The various types of monarchies differ greatly.

In Malaysia, for instance, our constitution is an admirable one. In fact, it is unique, because our king reigns for five years only, and he is elected by his brother-Rulers. In fact, Malaysia is the only country in the world with an elective monarchy.

In reality, the government is run by the people, and the Yang Dipertuan Agung is only a symbolic Head of State. At the end of his term of five years, he gives way to another of the rulers, who is elected to succeed him.

No one can find fault with the Yang Dipertuan Agung. If there is any fault at all in the administration of the country, then it must be for the Prime Minister and his Cabinet to answer. If the Malaysian people should lose faith in the government, then they have to resign en bloc.

That is where the power of the Yang Dipertuan Agung as Head of State comes in, for he will appoint a caretaker government to run the country.

The question follows — Is the institution of the sultanates in Malaysia necessary?

It is, in so far as the incumbent of the Throne comes from one of the royal lines. Otherwise, the king of this country would have to be hereditary, which would not be in keeping with the natural character and the constitution of this nation.

The president of a republic is not in question, as his office is open to all and sundry, and can even be held by a communist.

In Malaysia the Rulers are necessary, but they must be impartial and blameless.

It follows, therefore, that the constitution must provide for

impeachment by his brother-Rulers of any Ruler for any misdeed committed by him, and if found guilty, he should vacate the Throne.

Every matter of importance affecting the nation or the people is openly discussed in town or municipal councils where these exist, in State Assemblies, in Parliament when it meets, and weekly, if not more often, quietly and confidentially in the Cabinet.

So the people run this country of ours in every sense of the word, as is the case in any parliamentary democracy.

I was Chief Minister of Malaya from 1955 until 1957, and then Prime Minister from 1957 to the end of 1970 (with the exception of a period of six months in 1959 when I first retired, my sole object then being to make sure that the Alliance Party was returned in the general election that year).

In 1970 I decided of my own free will to retire permanently, and thus give way to a younger man.

I can say without any fear of contradiction that if I had chosen to stay on to the end of my term, which would have been 1974, I could have done so, but I felt then that with changing times a more natural evolution would be to have a change of policy, one which in turn would require a change of leaders.

I felt that younger men would be better fitted to carry on with the work of the government of Malaysia, for which the foundations had been well and truly laid during the previous fifteen years — first for Malaya and then for Malaysia.

As far as I can see no one can find cause for disenchantment with the type of government we have — no one, that is, except the communist terrorists, because the Malaysian Communist Party leader, Chin Peng, told me in Baling in December 1955:

“As between you and me, we can never co-exist; while you are anti-Communist, I am a Communist.”

By that Chin Peng meant that the only form of government acceptable to him and to the members of his party would be a communist one.

Look at other countries such as the United Kingdom which is very much a parliamentary government with a monarch as Head of State.

All the work of administration is carried out by the elected representatives of the people.

The development of British parliamentary democracy is an

evolution over centuries, with the result that Britain, at the height of its imperial glory, ruled a great part of the world for many years.

Only today in the face of many pressing and critical problems does it seem that Britain is being brought to her knees, and regrettably so by her own workers' unions.

Despite that, they all love their monarch, and the throne of Great Britain will remain for all time.

Next we have Japan, with an emperor who is regarded as sacrosanct, revered almost like a god, but in actual fact modern Japan belongs to its people, and it is administered as a parliamentary democracy.

The Japanese are a most industrious and resilient people, and Japan today is a strong country; economically speaking it is considered one of the most powerful nations in the world.

The prosperous Japanese find no quarrel at all with the Emperor as Head of State of Japan.

Thailand, too, is very much in the same category. There the king is truly loved by his people.

Although the government of Thailand has been changed many times over the years in various *coup d'etats*, these sudden changes have made no difference to the status of the king, who enjoys the respect and devotion of all his people.

The institution of kingship in Thailand is still very popular, and I can't see the day when it will be abolished.

In the Middle East, the Arab countries have their own systems of kingship, and so do the emirates.

In some lands kings have fallen — King Farouk was deposed in Egypt, King Feisal assassinated in Iraq and King Idris of Libya was deposed — and these three countries are now republics.

Other kings and emirs are still strongly enthroned, and their countries are very rich indeed.

By the Grace and Will of God their lands are blessed with such great wealth that the people hardly have to work to keep pace with the growing prosperity.

Millions of dollars come gushing out of the deserts and other uninhabitable places where nothing grows and few things live, but the "black gold" there that is called oil enriches these countries beyond their wildest dreams.

Economically, therefore, the people have no reason to complain. There are of course ambitious men with eyes on the wealth

who may try to make a grab for power through acts of violent revolution.

Having systems of government which differ greatly from our own and those of the Western democracies, but nevertheless systems which the Arab peoples consider suitable for their own countries, it is difficult for any one outside to say whether their systems of monarchy are right or wrong.

Only the Arab peoples in the various lands concerned can judge for themselves, and under the impact of both Western civilisation and communist propaganda, anything can happen.

I think there is no doubt that these countries are adapting themselves to change, and they certainly are giving, or beginning to show signs of giving, their own peoples some say in the administration of their own governments.

If this should continue to be so, then I am sure they will keep their enemies at bay.

What we should always remember is that, provided people are happy with their government, it is not the system or the type of government that matters because monarchies and republics have both shown that their governments can be good for their own people if they are well-run.

Nor does size matter. As one can see small countries like Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, which are all monarchies, are peaceful, happy and prosperous. So are Norway and Sweden which are much larger in area.

Spain, a monarchy for centuries, was a dictatorship under General Franco for many years.

Now it has been returned to the king, and a monarchy has been established in Spain after Franco's long period of dictatorship. King Juan Carlos came to the throne as the King of Spain in 1976.

In view of all the facts and opinions I have given, the question, therefore, of whether a monarchy can survive in this day and age really answers itself, for in the final analysis it depends entirely on the people of each nation concerned.

Varsity Rules and Discipline

12 March 1979

The decision of the government to place university staff on the same footing as other members of the Civil Service, subject to the same general rules and discipline, met with a strong reaction from university staff members. In February 1979 the University of Malaya Academic Staff Association debated as to whether to take strike action over the issue.

The university councils have decided to introduce rules and regulations governing the discipline of their academic staff. This has given rise to differences of opinion between the councils and the academic staff.

It was to be expected that such rules would have to be introduced at some stage sooner or later to discipline staff and students.

This has been a source of worry to those interested in the education of the young men in this country.

A university is important to the nation as an institution of higher learning. Young men who hope to do well for themselves in the society in which they live have to get their training in a university.

It is necessary, therefore, that the staff of our universities be well qualified to give the students the right kind of education, so that when they leave, they are ready to participate in the life of this country.

Many of them will be our future leaders in politics, military affairs and business.

The tax-payer and the government have spent a lot of money to establish these universities since independence, and the tax-payers expect the students they turn out to do credit to them.

In the old days, only a very exclusive set of people with rich parents could find their way into university.

In Singapore, there were Raffles College and the King Edward

VII College of Medicine.

The intake of students was small in number. Everybody wanted to get into the university, and some who could afford it found their way into universities and colleges abroad, in Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

Hundreds clamoured to get in, but for want of places they were denied entry at home.

So the University of Malaya was started in Singapore, then moved to Pantai Valley, Kuala Lumpur, with Professor Oppenheim as Vice-Chancellor, followed by Professor Griffiths, and then Professor Ungku Aziz, the first Malaysian Vice-Chancellor.

I was the Chancellor. I discussed with Professor Oppenheim who was from Oxford, the possibility of running our university on the lines of Oxford and Cambridge.

We realised, however, that the government would not be able to undertake the cost of such a vast development.

All the colleges in Oxford and Cambridge have been run on public support and donations for centuries past, and after years they have become independent bodies.

But I said at least we might try and get our University of Malaya to follow as closely as possible the standards set by Oxford and Cambridge.

Professor Oppenheim observed that it would take a lot of doing, for lack of accommodation made it difficult for students to find places where they could be together.

The students of Oxford and Cambridge have rooms in colleges. They live and eat together. When I was at Cambridge, students were locked in by 10.00 p.m.

After that hour, they had to get permission to go out of their college, and their movements were closely checked by the porter at the gate.

Those who could not find rooms in the colleges were placed in "digs" (rooms), owned or controlled by the colleges, and the landladies had to report on the movements of the students.

I myself lived for three years in "digs", with a bedroom and a sitting room a mile away from the college, and at exactly 10.00 p.m. the windows would be padlocked so that no one could get in or out.

We could, however, pay a fine of two pence for coming in after 10.00 p.m. and four pence after 11.00 p.m. But that was only

allowed once in a while, and if one came back after twelve without a reasonably good excuse, one would have to be "gated".

That meant, at the end of the term, when everybody went away on vacation, the offender had to stay back for a week or two, and be locked in the room as in term time.

This often happened to a large number of students who used to go out to the dance halls, "The Swan" in Bedford, and who by sheer bad luck got lost in the fog, or missed the turn to Cambridge on the way back, and proceeded on to Yorkshire instead.

Students had to be in for dinner in the hall every evening and their attendance was recorded.

Students were not allowed to use cars in the morning, during lecture hours, because the noise of the car would distract those attending lectures.

After dark, all the students had to don cap and gown, and in that garb they were not allowed to smoke. So it was too with all the professors, dons and officials of the universities.

Then there were the policemen, nicknamed "bull-dogs", with the proctors at the head, who could scent undergraduates without a gown, or doing the wrong thing, and they would have their names taken down, be charged and fined.

The staff of the Universities — the fellows, lecturers, the professors — conducted themselves with dignity and in such an exemplary manner that they earned the respect of all the students.

Students were not allowed to mix with the townspeople socially or politically.

I remember an undergraduate, known to me personally, who was keen on politics. Townspeople used to come to his room to discuss politics, and this annoyed his neighbour in the next room.

One day in his absence, the neighbour nailed a fish and a piece of meat under the table. At the end of a day or two, the foul flesh emitted an obnoxious odour, but the undergraduate could not detect from where the smell came, though he looked everywhere for it.

When he sought the aid of the "gyp" (servant), they turned the furniture upside down and found the offending object nailed under the table top.

This, however, did not stop the townspeople from coming when the odour had disappeared. So the next time, the neighbour had

a pail of water ready for them on a wintry evening.

When he heard voices outside below the window, he thought that that must be the voices of the townspeople and the student in question about to come in, and so he threw the pail of water through the window.

But it happened to be the dean and the porters who were there to stop the townspeople coming in. They really got a cold douche and the offender got a punishment he least expected.

This simple, harmless ragging went on from time to time, but it was not objectionable, nor could it be said that students defied university rules and regulations, beyond, as young men full of life and vitality, sometimes getting mischievous.

In all my three years of university life, I never saw any untoward protest or act of discontent against the university authorities by the students, though in later years small incidents occurred.

The universities of Oxford and Cambridge have "clubs", where students are free to discuss politics to their hearts content, and these unions are well conducted, and the universities and the government take note of the views expressed and resolutions passed by the members.

Important personages, foreign and local, have been invited to speak from time to time, and the students have been unruly sometimes at union meetings, but that is the place where they can express their feelings and demonstrate their sentiment.

They hardly ever go outside the union premises to do their politicking.

So it is that Prime Ministers of Britain and the Commonwealth have come from these universities, and proved themselves to be able and capable politicians and statesmen.

They are a credit to the universities from where they came, and this is what we want to see happening in our own universities.

Many years have since passed, in fact it is fifty-five years since I was at Cambridge and naturally some changes and developments have taken place.

But they are not changes that have made much difference to the universities, for both Oxford and Cambridge uphold their traditions religiously.

They have the greatest respect for discipline and the welfare of the students.

In my time, every ten students or so had a tutor to look after

them so they could not escape attention. With the nineteen colleges in Cambridge in those days, there were less than 6,000 students. Now there are more, double the number in fact, but the way of life in Cambridge and Oxford still continues.

Amongst the things said by the staff side in the current dispute here are that :

“Scholars in Malaysia and other Third World countries must not emulate the examples of other universities, but base their standards on their own perspectives peculiar to their own surroundings.

“Scholars in Malaysian universities should undertake research into our own cultural and religious traditions.

“The universities should contribute to the tradition of open rational discourse on all national issues.

“Their commitment to the community should be expressed by their direct participation in the wider forum of debate and discussion in the community.”

This all sounds very good, in fact it looks like a second parliament instead of a university.

These are among the other things that have been suggested as counter proposals to the rules on discipline proposed by the university council.

On the other hand, the councils have set down so many rules and regulations that they cover almost every aspect of university life. They are in fact general orders such as all government servants have to subscribe to when joining the service.

I like in particular that paragraph which says : “That a staff member shall not do anything to assist, encourage or incite, or do anything which could be construed as assisting, encouraging or inciting, any student or group of students to contravene any provision of the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971, or the constitutions of the universities or University of Malaya (Discipline of Students) Rules 1975, etc....”

And also that part which says that “a staff member in category A shall maintain a reserve in political matters and in particular he may not stand as candidate in any election to the *Dewan Rakyat* or to the State Legislative Assembly, or engage in canvassing in support of a candidate or candidates in any election or act as election agent or polling agent, etc., etc. But with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor he may engage in political activities.”

There are always two ways of looking at things, but the scale must inevitably weigh in favour of those authorities which established the universities and which pay out money to run and maintain them.

However, being universities, they must follow the pattern set by other famous and well recognised institutions of higher education.

As our University of Malaya was started by an Oxford man who laid its foundations, the pattern is based on Oxford University.

But other colleges, like the Muslim College, probably based theirs on Cairo University, and therefore in so far as the Muslim College is concerned, it can follow the pattern set by that university.

Datuk Musa Hitam agreed to act as mediator between the associations and the university councils. He said: "My duty as Education Minister is to see that people are not deprived of a university education. Whether they decide to take industrial action or not is their business. I have no say in that and it is not my business."

Therefore, the differences between the university councils and staff associations appear irreconcilable. They have decided to take the matter to the Industrial Court.

But the university councils, being employers, as I said earlier, can tip the scale in their own favour, and so where do we go from there?

To be fair to all sides and in particular to the students, the aid of a third party must be sought.

The third party I refer to here is for His Majesty the Yang Dipertuan Agung to appoint a Royal Commission consisting of at least five members drawn from experts from well-established universities of the Commonwealth, to study our universities and to propose policies, rules and regulations connected with them.

At it is, the position is like that of the blind leading the blind.

A blind man was undecided as to how to cross the bridge when he came to it. Whilst he stopped to think about it, he was accidentally knocked down by someone from behind.

In a temper he shouted, "Why don't you look where you are going?" And the other man shouted in reply, "Why do you stand in my way?"

Both then realised that they were blind.

The second man offered to take the other across the bridge as

he knew his way by habit, and so hand in hand they walked across the bridge, not knowing that a plank of the bridge had been washed away earlier by the current.

They both fell into the stream, but fortunately for them, they were helped out by a third man who was nearby.

He said to them, "It would have been easier for both of you to call for help before crossing, than to try and do it by yourselves."

So I suggest it would be better to ask for help from outside — the appointment of a Royal Commission made up of experts who can give advice as to how best to shape the course of our university education.

Don't talk about the Third World when we have not put things right in our own little world as yet. The so-called Third World itself is still in the process of development, and we are ahead of many of Third World countries. So let's progress forwards and not backwards.

Controversy over a New Town

16 April 1979

There has been much talk of late over the golf course which is supposed to be built at Bukit Jambul, near the township of Bandar Bayan Baru.

This, obviously, is due to the UMNO Jelutong branch, which maintains that it would be a waste of money to invest on a prestigious project such as a golf course, which caters for those who can afford to play, and would not serve the interests of the common man.

They may be right in their thinking, but they are wrong in their conclusions.

After independence, we mapped out a crash programme for Malaysia's development.

What we had in mind was to make Malaysia a happy, peaceful and blessed country. We intended to create a contented society of people of different races with different religious beliefs, and with different outlooks in life.

In diversity we hoped to achieve unity among the various races, and so it was that we ordered mosques and places of worship and religious institutions to be built, or subsidized, by the government throughout the country.

Playing fields and recreation grounds were opened up, and stadiums were built in all the states, as large as the one in Kuala Lumpur and as small as the one in Perlis.

Regardless of size and cost, they were told to go ahead with construction everywhere, so that the young could go for healthy recreation instead of loafing around street corners.

In the same way, we ordered golf courses to be built in all the states where there were none, and to subsidize the improvement of existing ones.

For instance, in Penang, where there was only a nine-hole course, I asked the Club to extend it to eighteen holes, and promised them a government subsidy if they could not raise

the funds.

We asked the state governments throughout the country to organise housing estates for the poor, middle-class and rich, and propounded a policy of providing the people with "food instead of bullets, clothing instead of uniforms and houses instead of barracks".

We revived old traditions, culture and the arts and even brought experts from communist China to do the carvings on ivories which we had exhibited outside this country.

We believed that through sports, culture, social and welfare activities one could build a happy society.

With this policy we won the hearts and minds of the people, and with it, we were able to vanquish our enemy who had been waging a political and shooting war against us for the previous ten years.

We went into our work of building a happy society wholeheartedly. We did not follow the ways of some newly-independent countries of the time, whose leaders were bellowing their might and strength, and calling on the god of war to help crush us.

Among these leaders was President Soekarno who, for no rhyme or reason, embarked on a policy of crushing Malaysia instead of attending to the needs of the Indonesian people.

Then there was Nkrumah in Africa who called himself the Messiah, extolling his greatness and demanding to be worshipped by his people.

Then there have been so many other leaders, the last of whom we hope will be Idi Amin, whose ultimate act of arrogance was to be carried in a sedan chair on the shoulders of ten Englishmen through the streets of Kampala. Now he has disappeared into oblivion.

They all go the same way, these so-called great men.

In Malaysia, we attended to our business. We carried on with our work of developing the country for the good of our society, and by the grace of God our enemies dropped out one by one, and we have lived on in comparative peace and contentment.

One of the great ambitions of the Penang state government, according to its chief executive, Dr. Lim Chong Eu, is to make Penang a big tourist centre.

He has his reasons for believing that Penang can draw tourists from all over the world. The number of tourists who have come here have found Penang to be an ideal holiday resort, a cheap

place with good sandy beaches, a lovely panorama of hills, and above all, friendly people.

The shops have all the goods and clothes they need, and the stalls have all the food within reach of their pockets.

Of course we have snatch thieves and crooks, as elsewhere, and it is hard to escape these human parasites. Police have made raids into their lairs and have tried to curb their activities, but they are still about. On the whole, it can be said that Penang is a nice place to live or spend a holiday in.

Dr. Lim Chong Eu and his colleagues in the government aim high in trying to make Penang better known to the world — in course of time, according to him, to rival the West Indies and Hawaii, where the cost of living, some visitors say, is forbidding.

But before Penang can be put on the tourist map as a class "A" holiday resort, there are so many things that need to be done. It is for the Penang people to understand the aims of the state government and to extend a helping hand in order to make its achievement possible.

Many opportunities were lost in the early days of our independence when it was suggested that Penang should have a causeway linking the island to the mainland.

The government of the time refused to agree, because according to them, the income from the ferry services was too big to throw away in favour of a causeway. Yet, if we had started then it would have proved a boon today.

It was suggested then that Penang should become one of our main industrial centres. Again, this was turned down because of the special tax concession which Penang enjoyed and, for so many years it was neither one thing nor the other.

The island became just a week-end resort for those who came for a change of air. Now the Penang government has decided on a change, and this time it must be a substantial one. Big hotels have sprung up along the seaside, and more hotels are being built.

Some developers are complaining that their applications have not been dealt with as expeditiously as they should have been, and the delay had caused them severe financial strain.

One thing I can say is that the causeway project has now been approved and it is hoped before the end of the century the project will materialise.

According to Dr. Lim Chong Eu, the area required for the golf

course is 130 acres in Bukit Jambul, Bandar Bayan Baru.

In that locality there is a big Malay settlement, which the local cooperative society bought from Brown Estate, totalling 1,003 acres, out of which 254.63 acres were sold to the state government to pay off the society's liabilities.

Now this area forms part of the overall Bayan Baru-Bukit Jambul development project.

This was originally paid from a loan for \$2.1 million obtained from the Penang government, but after a time the cooperative society was unable to honour the loan, and the central government had to step in and gave them help amounting to \$2,156,000.

According to reports, not all the land has been taken up, and therefore land is still available for housing purposes.

In so far as the Malays are concerned, any objection to the golf course would not be on the grounds of deprivation of opportunity. In fact, investigation shows that none of them have any complaints to make. Many of those living in Sungei Ara, in fact, are expected to get employment when the new golf course is opened, and are looking forward to it.

There is objection on the grounds that land will be required to settle people of all races, so that they can learn to live together and in course of time understand one another.

There is plenty of land available for such a purpose within that area, and according to Dr. Lim Chong Eu, it can be made available at any time the people want it.

The Penang state government has also built cheap houses in the town and outside of it, and will continue to build cheap houses for the poor and the not-so-poor.

The only objection raised is against the building of the golf course.

As I have said, the development of this country was motivated by the desire to make people happy, to cater for the needs and wishes and the whims and fancies of all types of people.

Recreation grounds are good for young people who can kick the ball and run about. Tennis and badminton courts are good for those who can handle the racket, and volley ball good for those young, fit, tall and hardy youths.

There should, at the same time, be recreation for the not-so-hardy people, who like to walk and swing their clubs, and poke fun at one another, and retire after the game to have a drink and

chit-chat in the club.

It will help people like me too, with one foot on the land and the other in the grave, to take a little exercise. One should not begrudge others their little fun.

It would be different, of course, if in building the golf course, government money is utilised which could be better used for other good purposes, but in this case, I was told by Dr. Lim Chong Eu, no government money would be used.

It is planned to raise money through the sale of shares as a business venture, and to charge members a fee to join the club.

The present golf course built around the race track is overcrowded, and on racing days it is closed to members. So there is a need for an extra golf course for Penang.

I think if UMNO members understand the position, they won't object. This should have been made clear to them earlier, as well as to the others who have joined issue with the organisers over the new golf course.

According to the Penang Development Corporation, the government had acquired 700 acres of land in the Sungai Kluang/Sungei Nibong area for industrial development.

In addition, the area adjacent to the Snake Temple, totalling 80 acres, and the Bukit Jambul area of 501 acres, have also been acquired.

All these acquisitions are intended for the development of a new centre in the Bayan Lepas area, for a new town called Bandar Bayan Baru.

According to the P.D.C., the planning for development is in accordance with the state government's declared policy "to carry out rural industrialization and rural urbanization, extension and diversification of our agro-horticultural base, concomitant with urban renewal in Penang".

The new township of Bandar Bayan Baru will cover an approximate area of 3,200 acres with a projected population of roughly 200,000 people.

The number of housing units is 30,500, while the commercial space is about four million square feet.

In addition, there will be schools, government offices, hospitals, police stations, post offices, religious institutions and other social, civil and recreational amenities.

There will also be the golf course, which is the target of attack. According to the authorities this attack is unjustified.

The Bukit Jambul project should be regarded in its correct perspective as being one of the many programmes within the overall concept of developing Bayan Baru.

There will be a mixed and balanced development of housing. In other words, there is no need to worry about houses for the poor or the rich, and those who wish to live in a mixed society.

On the question of the golf course, as I have said earlier, apart from national development it is to provide recreation along with other sports.

Malaysia had been one of the countries which has given the leadership to Asian countries in football, and has held the world badminton championships for many years.

In addition, it has organised the Southeast Asian golf tournaments, and has been the home for the Asian circuit.

Let us not quarrel over the question of putting up an eighteen holiday golf course at Bukit Jambul. Let us all contribute our share towards making Malaysia a happy country.

Nineteen

On Labour Day

30 April 1979

With Labour Day approaching and a big celebration afoot, an old man's mind goes back to bygone days.

Compare the labour force today with what it was yesterday, or yesteryear, when boatloads of labourers were shipped like cattle to Malaya to work in rubber plantations.

They were known by the derogatory term of "coolies" and were distributed to all estates throughout the country, which had agents in India and here.

I only know enough to write about it now, because I was once District Officer in Sungei Patani and Kulim, the largest rubber areas in Kedah.

The coolie lines, as they were then known (which today are called labour lines), were pretty well controlled. For those people who came from India, they were comfortable enough.

As they (the workers) got themselves acclimatized, and familiar with the local way of life and surroundings, they gradually took their place as members of the local community, but on the estates they had to conform to certain codes of conduct promulgated by the management of the estates, some of which appear obnoxious today.

For instance, when the workers came across their European masters as they rode on their bicycles, they had to dismount. When they talked to their masters they had to fold their arms and keep their legs together, and stop chewing betelnut.

At the end of a tiresome day's work, they would congregate at the toddy shops, as English workers would collect in the pubs, and drink themselves stupid sometimes.

This was where I came in, because they would appear in my court charged with assault and unruly behaviour almost immediately after.

Their British masters would take all this as part of the way of life of these humble people, and took no notice of their goings on, so

long as the work was done; but for us Asians it was humble pie we had to eat and we swallowed it quietly.

Labour officers looked after the affairs of the workers, so any complaints would be attended to by these officials, whose boss was known as the Protector of Labour.

For this reason, Malay tappers would not work on British-owned estates, and the Chinese were employed on a contract basis.

In this connection, I would like to recount an incident which took place in Dublin Estate before the War, where there was trouble with the contract labourers who objected to their terms of employment as being contrary to the contract agreement.

Then, as often happened, when there was trouble, the cause of which was put down as communist-inspired, I was called on the scene as District Officer and as a result of my intervention, the trouble was settled.

I had every reason to thank my lucky stars for the role I played. When the War broke out, and the British were evacuated, these gangs joined up with the mine workers, whom I had also helped at one time or another.

These people took possession of the arms discarded by the British forces and marched towards Kulim.

When they arrived at Sungei Cob estate, which belonged to a Hylam *towkay* called Tan Chin Lam, a community leader, they were stopped, and were asked where they were going with their arms.

They said they were proceeding to rob Kulim.

All the *towkay* said was "Are you not ashamed of the Tunku?" Without much ado, they turned back.

This was one incident that I can never forget and by a stroke of good fortune not one town or village in the district of Kulim was looted, while everywhere else throughout the length and breadth of Malaya looters held sway.

Such was life in the estates in those pre-war days, and the conditions which the working class had to bear.

Those cases that came to the magistrate's court were ones not dealt with by the manager or assistant managers.

There must have been many more cases which did not come out into the open, such as family squabbles, and other troubles which broke out from time to time after drinking hours.

Those days are gone, and they are best forgotten. Only people

of my age group remember them.

Labourers today have their unions to fight for them, and they can take up their case to the highest authority in the country, and they have good leaders appointed by themselves to lead them.

All unions are recognised by the government today, and May 1 is Labour Day.

Originally, Labour Day was intended to mark the victory of labour over the capitalists. It was a great day for all concerned and marked the progress in the working conditions of the workers.

This day is celebrated throughout the world. In many countries the workers hold demonstrations, displaying banners and placards which should extol the achievements of the labour movement.

That would be good, but the shouting and the slogans displayed in the procession often show very strong leanings towards communism. There are shouts and slogans decrying capitalism, such as "Down with capitalism! Up with the workers and communism!"

I once watched one of these processions as it crossed my path, and while I was in the car, a fellow broke ranks and came up to me, and said, "You capitalist, go home!"

I replied, "You proceed with your procession; when you have passed, I'll go home."

The workers in Malaysia fought to get May Day recognised as their official day but this was not agreed to by the colonial government, and all functions and celebrations connected with that day had to be celebrated indoors.

Nevertheless, this has not deterred the unions from celebrating the day as their Labour Day since 1961.

On this day, they declare their faith in the struggle to assert their rights.

Mr. William Green and Mr. Philip Murray, representatives of the American labour movement, praised the free labour movement in Malaya, and declared their confidence in it.

In 1953, the Malayan labour unions again demanded that the government recognise May Day, and declare it a public holiday, but without success.

In UMNO's publication *Merdeka*, published on May 18 1958, I gave my reasons.

I said that subversive elements were using the unions for their

own ends, and so for this reason, May Day was not allowed to be celebrated outdoors and officially recognised.

We were winning the war against the communists, I said, and so they must be kept out of the unions. In reality, May Day is the communists' day, but the workers have made it their day too.

On 21 May 1972, at the UMNO Workers Assembly, held at the Youth Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Tun Dr. Ismail announced that "the Cabinet has agreed to recognise May Day as the official Labour Day, and to declare that day a public holiday".

This was the outcome of the discussions between Tun Dr. Ismail and the MTUC leaders.

Tun Dr. Ismail's declaration was hailed as a big victory for the labour unions, and so today, the workers celebrate May 1 as Labour Day, in which they are free to indulge in all labour activities and to display their joy openly.

I can say from experience that the labour unions in Malaysia have been very sober and responsible organisations, dedicated to the task of looking after the welfare of the workers in this country.

They have done their job admirably well.

Of course, there have been unions which have broken out on strike on their own from time to time, to show their resentment against employers, but on the whole all these differences have been smoothed out amicably, and it was for this reason that there has been very little industrial unrest in this country.

As a result of that, foreign capital continues to pour into this country and industries for the production of manufactured goods for the world market continue to increase.

The labour force is well occupied and the relations between employer and employees on the whole have been exceedingly good.

The unions have good leaders, whom I have the good fortune to know. There are people like Dr. P.P. Narayanan, Encik V. David, Encik Zaidi, Encik Narendran and a few others, who have been closely connected with the trade union movement in this country.

If the unions continue to have such leaders, one can expect them to be in safe hands.

On the other hand there are some leaders who have not yet made much impact on the public, but their turn will come.

The trade unions in Malaysia have enjoyed the confidence of the government, and though they have had, as is only to be

expected, minor differences, all these are incidental.

However, recently, there was trouble with the workers employed by the Malaysian Airline System (MAS) which turned out to be very serious.

It has cost MAS much loss, and much inconvenience to members of the public served by MAS.

At first, the unionists worked to rule, then they went on strike over a demand for more pay. Then the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) declared their support for the MAS workers, and decided to boycott MAS international flights.

The government had to take action against the strikers under the Internal Security Act (ISA), as MAS is the national airline, and flies in the service of the nation.

It was the first time in recent years that the government has been confronted with serious labour trouble, but this one did not have the support of the bigger unions at home, who tried to persuade the airline employees to come to terms with the government.

But Mr. Donald Uren, the Asian representative of the ITF, encouraged the AEU to go ahead with their anti-government action.

As a result, he was arrested along with some of the members of the AEU. After some time in detention, he regretted his action and apologized for his mistakes. He confessed that he had misused his position by inciting members of the AEU to go against the law, and to fight the government.

After he had expressed his sorrow, he was released.

Now the International Transport Workers Federation has agreed to lift the boycott, and according to reports, MAS will resume its international flights again. We all here must express our relief and joy, and entertain the hope that such unfortunate events will not recur.

My only regret, however, is that foreign labour organisations should have openly shown their sympathy for the strikers, and refused to service our aircraft.

This could lead to bad relations between the governments concerned, which have been on the best terms of friendship.

If the Malaysian government had taken retaliatory action against aircraft belonging to these countries, the consequences would have been very bad.

The trouble was purely domestic in character, and by right the

foreign unions had no business to interfere. But as it turned out, the AEU is affiliated with the International Transport Workers Federation, and Donald Uren is its Asian representative.

Surely this foreign control of our unions is not consistent with our status as an independent country. It compromises our sovereignty and makes our unions their tools.

The government, on the other hand, has thought fit to counter this with legislation and introduce rules and regulations to deal with acts of subversion. But these laws are obnoxious to the people of this country.

Surely we have a right to say that no unions in this country should be affiliated to any other foreign body, and this should be the case, particularly so when it concerns our national air transport service, MAS. But let us preserve the basic rights of our labour unions.

Twenty

Lessons to be Learned from May the Thirteenth

14 May 1979

On 13 May 1969, immediately following the general election of that year, serious racial riots broke out in Kuala Lumpur, during the course of which several hundred people lost their lives. As a result of this "May the Thirteenth Incident" constitutional government was temporarily suspended. When normal government was restored some eighteen months later, various measures had been taken to overcome the political problems which had given rise to the riots and to prevent their recurrence.

The date of the Thirteenth of May brings my mind back to the tragic events of 1969 when outbreak of violence caused untold harm to innocent people and brought shame to the country.

Malaysia in general had been free from all kinds of trouble up to that day. Malaysians lived in a state of euphoria and there was no reason why our happy way of life should not have continued that way for all time.

Little did anybody expect that a bomb of woes would explode in our midst on 13 May 1969 in Kuala Lumpur with violence unprecedented in the peaceful development of our new nation after independence.

It surprised the world, but above all it shocked us all at home. Many people were killed and many were not heard of any more. But the most painful tragedy was that it should have happened at all.

Elections had come and gone since 1955 without any trouble at all. Then all of a sudden in the midst of the 1969 election the Opposition decided to boycott the campaign. I should have had the election postponed, but I had too much respect for the constitution, and decided to go through with it.

As the results of the elections came over the air, the Gerakan

and DAP scored sweeping successes in Selangor, Perak and Penang.

It was not a surprise in Penang because at that time it was the stronghold of the extremists whose success mostly had to do with the erosion of the island's free port status.

In Trengganu, Pahang, Johore, Malacca, Negeri Sembilan, Kedah and Perlis the Alliance had clear majorities.

In the elections for Parliament, the Alliance emerged with a resounding majority, more than double the seats of the combined Opposition, winning 76 seats as against 37 captured by four of the seven Opposition parties: the DAP won 13 seats, PMIP 12, Gerakan 8, PPP 4 and UMCO and an independent one each.

Many causes led to the Thirteenth of May violence, though the country had entered the threshold of nationhood twelve years earlier.

One of the questions which has been settled on the day of independence was that Malay should be the National Language, but there were some with a long history of British colonial influence who were not prepared to concede readily.

In addition, the communist terrorists cashed in with the Chinese language issue.

In the election the Opposition intensified their campaign by using personal threats and distributing pamphlets urging a boycott.

It was obvious that they were trying to create incidents from which they could take off successfully into more venomous excesses.

On April 24, in the Jelutong area of Penang, an UMNO worker was killed by a group of communist youths.

Ten days later, on May 4 in the early hours of the morning, three police constables on their rounds came across a group of young communists in Kepong. They were painting signs on the road with red paint.

When the police challenged them they attacked the police by hurling firewood, iron spikes and iron balls and retreated into an old market area nearby.

When the police caught up with them again they put up such a fight that the constables found it necessary to open fire in self-defence. As a result, one of the trouble makers was injured and finally died in hospital.

Then came the funeral procession which created high anti-

government feeling. It was, in fact, a communist demonstration with the funeral as an excuse, and it was the most hostile in nature ever seen held in Kuala Lumpur.

The demonstration lasted all day and the procession traversed eight miles with thousands of people taking part, and thousands more still were on the five-foot way and at the roadside to cheer them on.

Three people, in fact, had approached the police for permission to hold the procession, a Chinese man and woman, and a Malay man. The Chinese were committee members of the Kepong branch of the Labour Party while the Malay was the president of the University of Malaya Students Union.

The procession was led by 500 motor cyclists waiting in front of the Mara building. When it arrived in front of UMNO headquarters, the procession stopped and a violent verbal attack was made against the government and UMNO.

In short, according to the police: "The behaviour of the funeral crowd was most provocative and if the Police had not exercised tolerance and patience, there would certainly have been an outbreak of violence that day. Their number was no less than 10,000 strong. Thousands would have been killed if we had not exercised tolerance and patience. They were well organised."

They actually asked for the procession to be held on May 10, the day of the election. That would have been impossible and so the police allowed them to hold it a day earlier.

The question is: Why allow them at all? No one was able to give a reply.

Then came the victory procession which was held on an extensive scale.

But what was worse were acts of rowdiness and hooliganism and utter defiance of police authority and the law.

The victory procession went through unauthorised routes, jamming traffic everywhere, shouting slogans and curses, telling the Malays to go back to the *kampung*.

Two lorry-loads of drunks turned into Kampong Baru and other Malay areas to provoke and jibe at the Malays, in what was virtually an UMNO stronghold.

The nuisance caused to the public by the procession was admitted by the Gerakan youth leader, who made on May 13 an open apology in the press for his party supporters having caused such inconvenience.

UMNO also decided to hold a victory parade and UMNO Youth were asked to collect inside the compound of the house of their leader, who was at that time the Menteri Besar of Selangor, in Jalan Raja Muda.

The Menteri Besar was asked to address the gathering. Unfortunately, the crowd got out of hand and nobody was able to control them. They rushed out of the compound and started to run amok even before the Menteri Besar had had time to address them.

I returned from Alor Star on that fateful day, Tuesday, May 13 and that same afternoon before the start of the trouble, the leaders of the MCA and afterwards those of the MIC met me and told me that it was best that they gave up the leadership of their parties as they could no longer represent the Chinese and Indian communities.

It was obvious the Chinese has given their support to other parties and had lost confidence in the MCA leadership.

My reply to the MCA leaders was that they had given loyal service to the country and to the Alliance party and the last thing I would do would be to give them up at this most critical moment of our history. Come what may I would stick by them. I expressed the same thoughts to the MIC leaders.

Then Tun Razak came to see me to brief me on the situation about 6.30 p.m. According to him it had become extremely critical.

Before he could finish his story a phone call came from the Menteri Besar for him. He then told me that incidents had taken place at the UMNO rally in Jalan Raja Muda.

That same evening I went on radio and television to express my sorrow over what had taken place and declared a state of emergency in Kuala Lumpur.

I told the nation that I would not hesitate to declare a state of emergency throughout the length and breadth of the country if need be.

"It is my duty to safeguard life and property and to maintain peace at any cost in the country."

Uncomplimentary letters were circulated, putting me up to hatred and contempt. Every evening phone calls were made to my house, the caller giving the names of my close friends, but when I got to the phone, the voice on the other end would ask me to step down.

This went on every night.

When I finally refused to answer the phone, the caller would ask my servant "to tell that boss of yours to get out of the Residency and give a better man a chance to run the country".

Many years afterwards, on my return from Jeddah "this caller" identified himself to me and apologised most profusely for his "sins and mistakes".

He was instigated and provoked to do so for reasons which he related to me. Only now he realised his mistake and he thanked God he had gone no further than to insult me on the phone.

May 13 comes round every year and passes off peacefully, and I give thanks to God that what happened on that fateful day has not happened again. Pray God it will never happen again. It has left a scar on the fair name of this country, but the wound has long healed and is not likely to open up again.

When one looks at what has taken place in neighbouring countries after independence, the people of Malaysia can thank God that what happened on 13 May 1969 was a comparatively minor incident.

In Indonesia when the communists broke out in violent revolt, killing and shooting army generals and others in the streets, it was more serious by far. Peace was restored only after President Suharto took over the government with his loyal army officers and men and established a military regime which continues to this day.

In Cambodia hundreds of thousands of people were killed in a violent civil war, first between communists and Prince Sihanouk's regime and then between the pro-Vietnamese Kampuchean rebels and the communists.

Vietnam had a long drawn-out war between the North and the South, followed by the takeover by the North of the South. Even now the country is restless.

In Thailand on 14 October 1973 student riots overthrew the government of Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn and caused untold trouble to that normally peaceful country.

In 1972 the government of President Marcos declared a state of emergency in the Philippines, where the civil war between the Muslim Filipinos and the government continues to rage.

When one compares all these happenings one must not despair but give thanks to God that nothing more serious has happened in Malaysia.

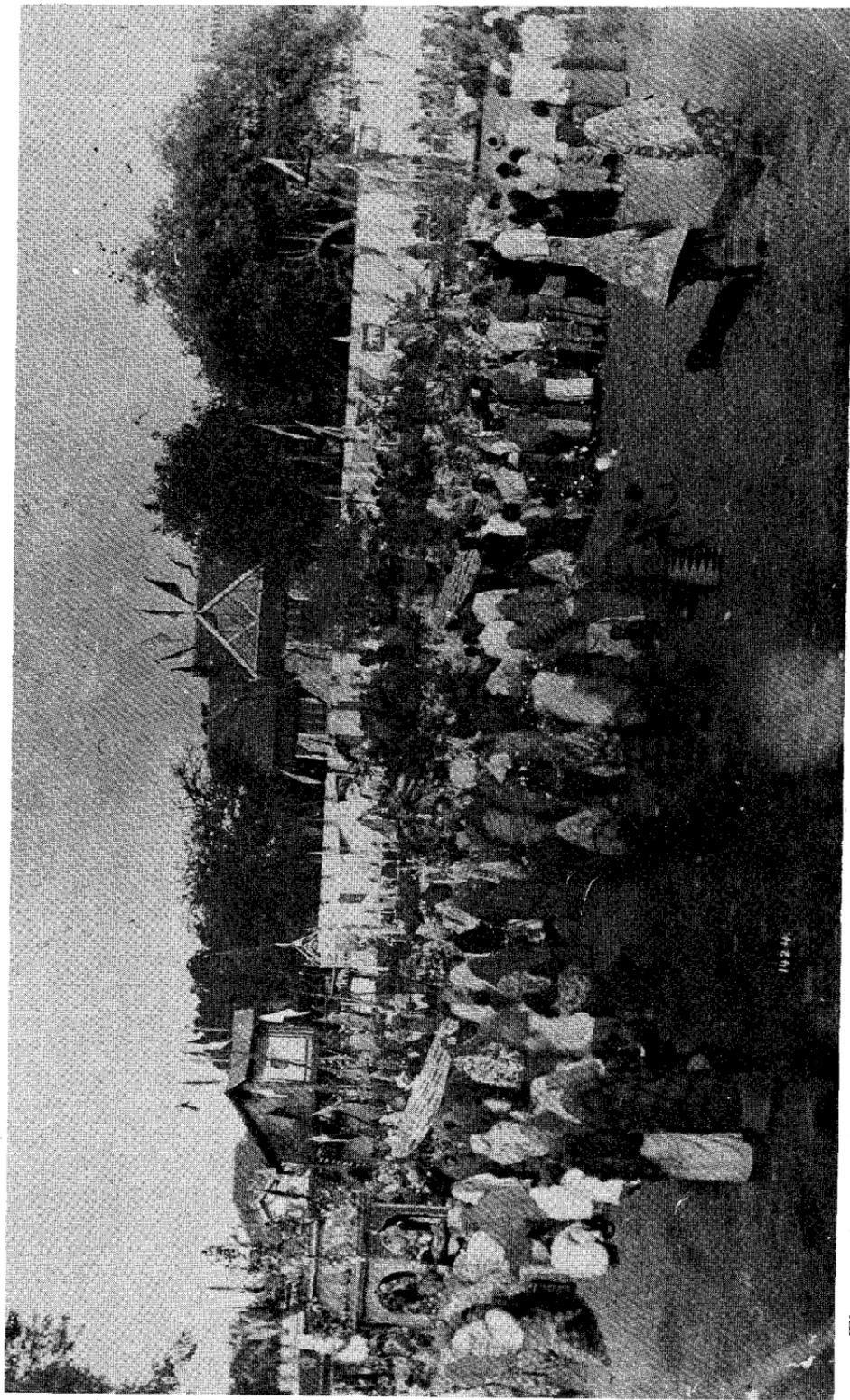
What took place was a lesson to us all, to be more tolerant with one another, to learn to live with one another.

America has shown how it can achieve greatness with its multiracial population, so have the Belgians and the Swiss. So can we if we all decide to make Malaysia our home.

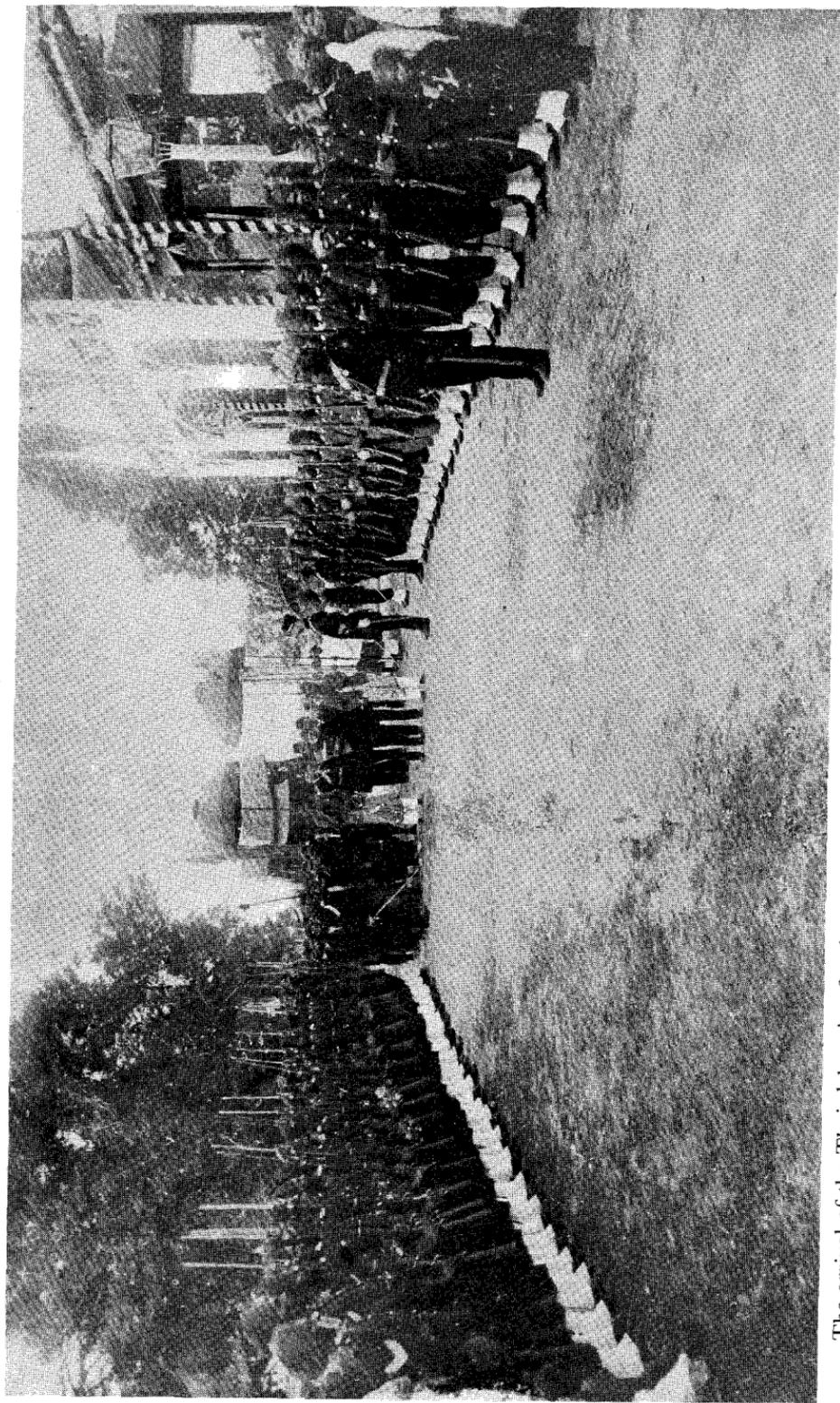
Many immigrant races in this country are off-shoots of very big nations with over-flowing populations. They must, as they overflow into another land, learn to live with the inhabitants of that land.

Chinese of old in Malaya used to speak, dress and eat as Malays except that they ate pork. There had never been any problem of racial differences or beliefs. These differences were brought about after the War with the influx of new immigrants with new ideas.

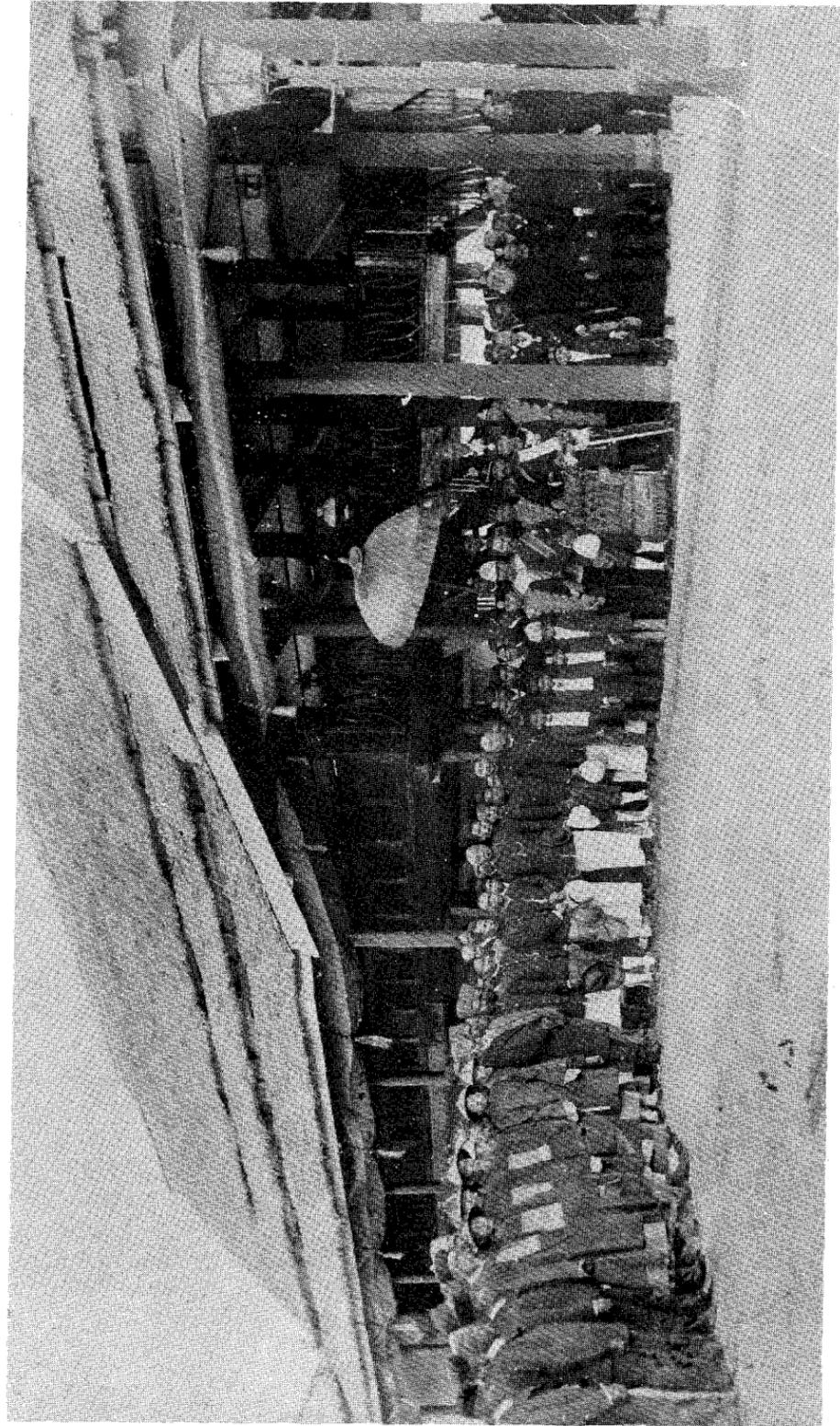
We must try and live in peace with one another and with a spirit of give and take we can make Malaysia a haven of peace, a land of hope and glory.



The crowd gathered outside the Kota Lama, Alor Star, to welcome Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah home from Thailand.



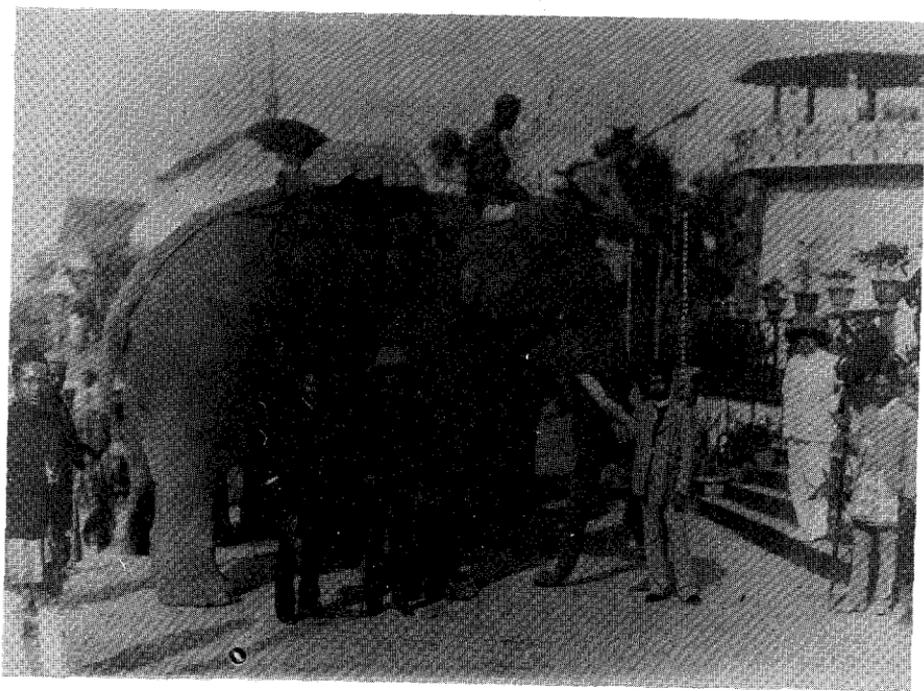
The arrival of the Thai delegation for the ceremonial transfer of Thai sovereignty over Perlis and Setul to Kedah in May 1897.



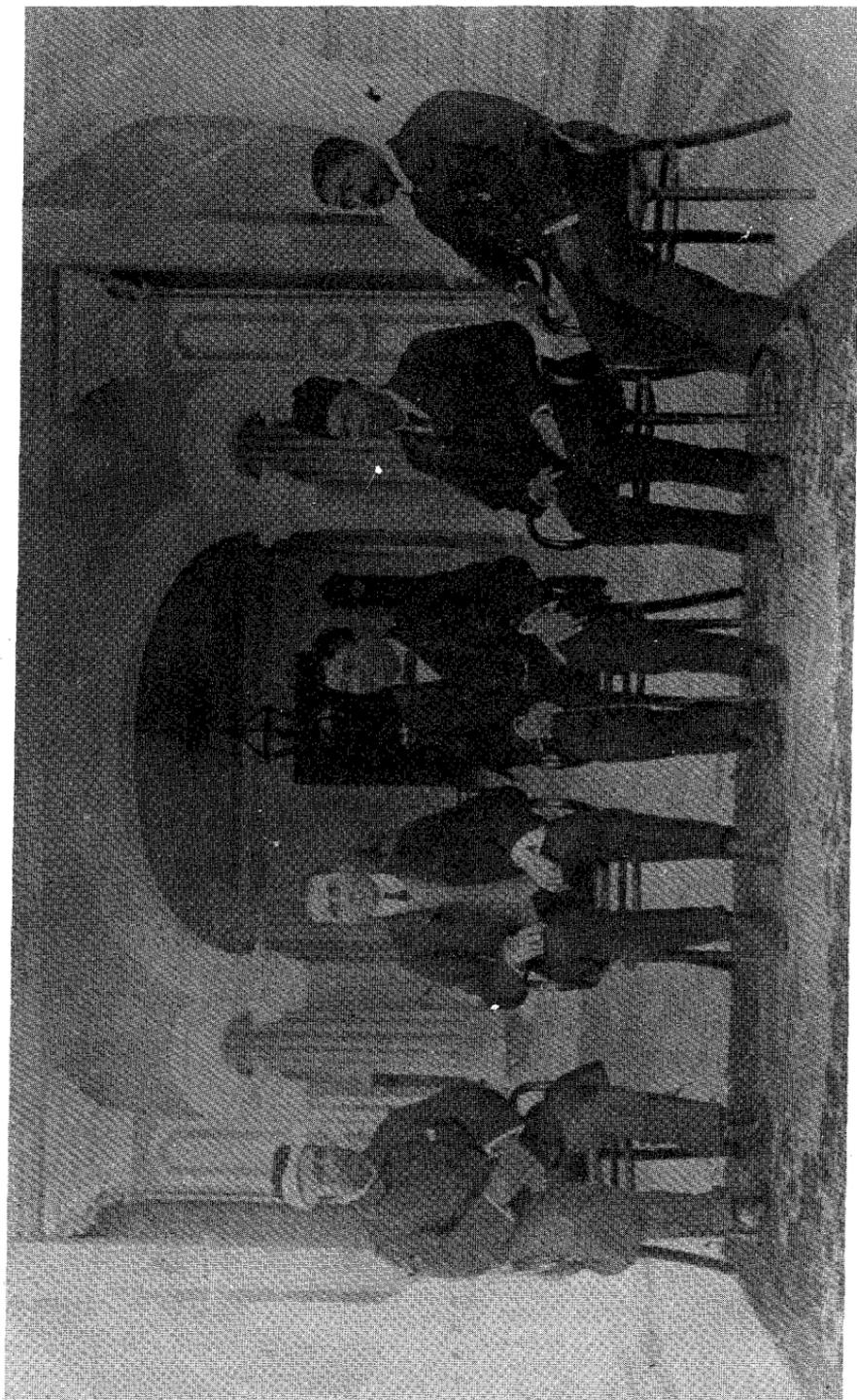
Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah of Kedah (right) together with the Representative of King Chulalongkorn Rama V of Thailand (left) in front of the Old Balai Besar, Alor Star, during the royal Thai Representative's visit to Kedah in 1897.



Pekan Melayu, Alor Star, showing people celebrating the return of Perlis and Setul to Kedah.



The royal elephant, the favourite of Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah, which he used for his visits to various districts in Kedah.



Tunku Abdul Aziz, the Regent of Kedah (center) with Mr. C.J. Williamson, the Thai Financial Advisor (second from left) flanked by Tuan Haji Ahmad, Chief Justice of Kedah (second from right), Encik Mohd. Ariffin, State Secretary (right), and Tuan Haji Syed Abdullah Almahdali (left).



Tunku Ibrahim, Regent of Kedah (1909 to 1934), eldest brother of the Tunku.



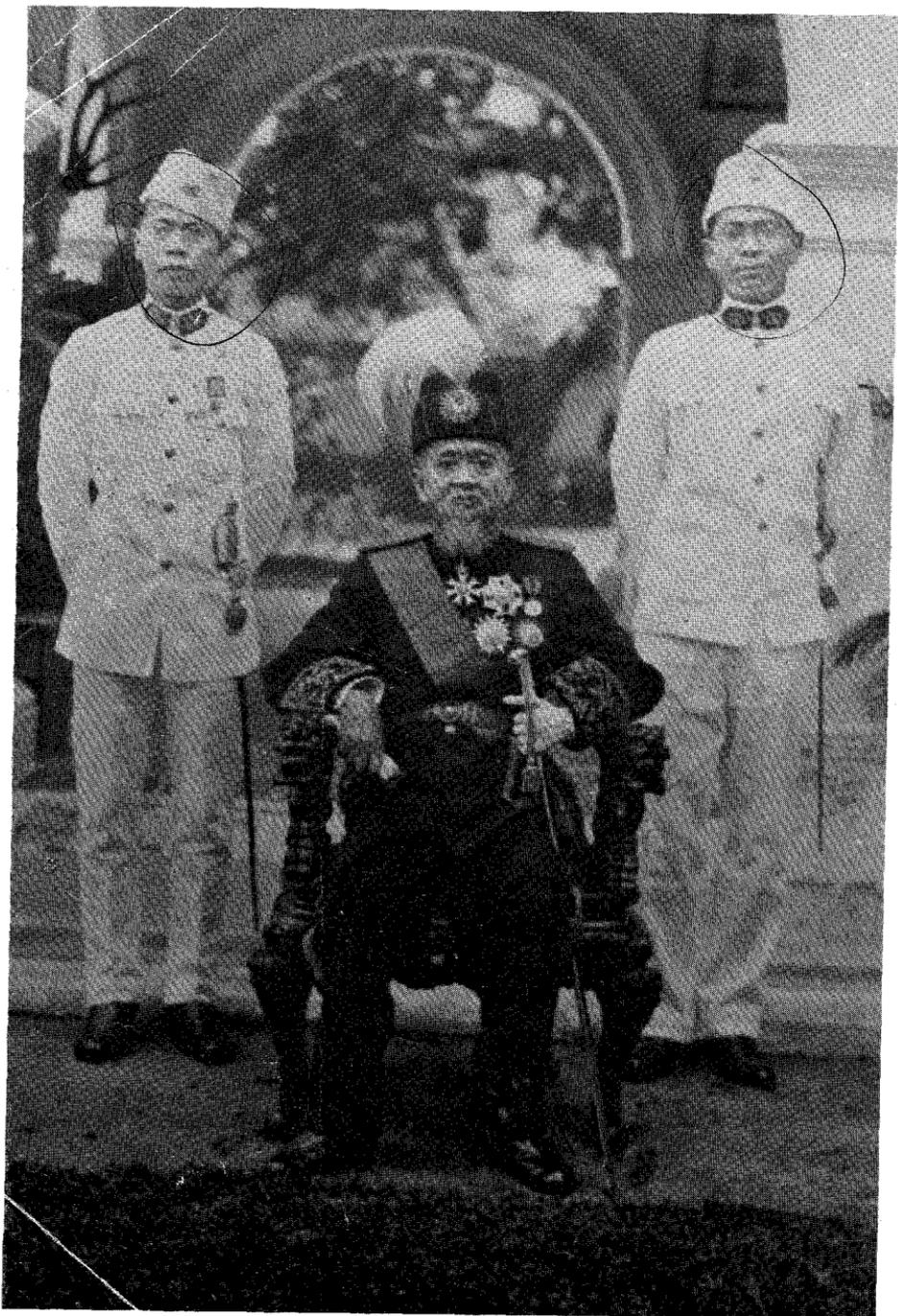
Tunku Ya'kob, uncle to Sultan Abdul Hamid.



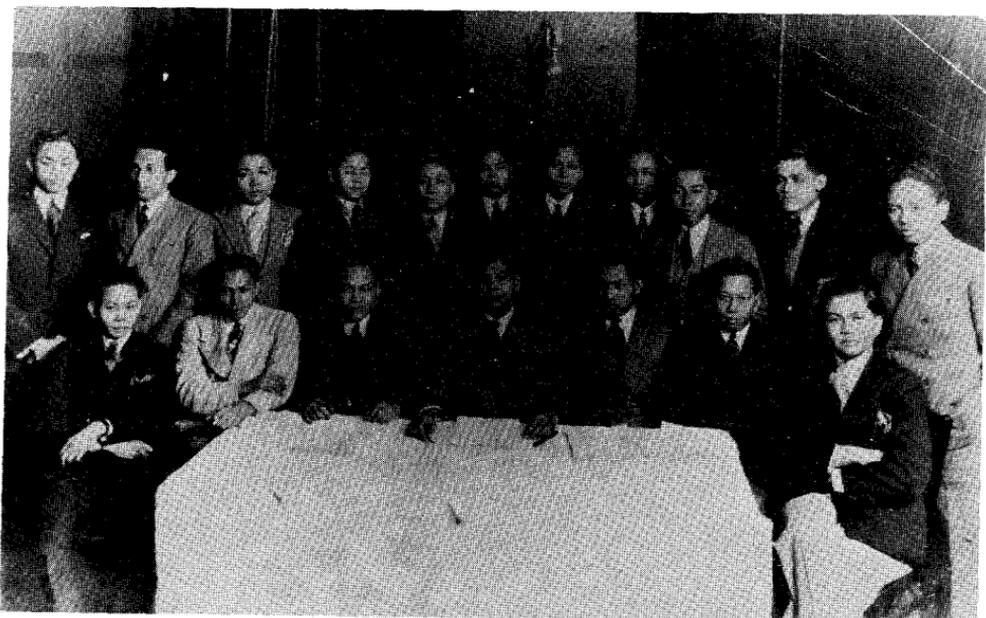
Tunku Yusuf, brother of the Tunku.



Tunku Mahmood, Regent of Kedah (1934 to 1936),
brother of the Tunku.



Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah with sons Tunku Mohamad Jiwa (left) and Tunku Abdul Rahman (right) on His Highness' 72nd birthday in 1934.



The Tunku (center) as President of the Malay Society with committee members in Britain in 1924.



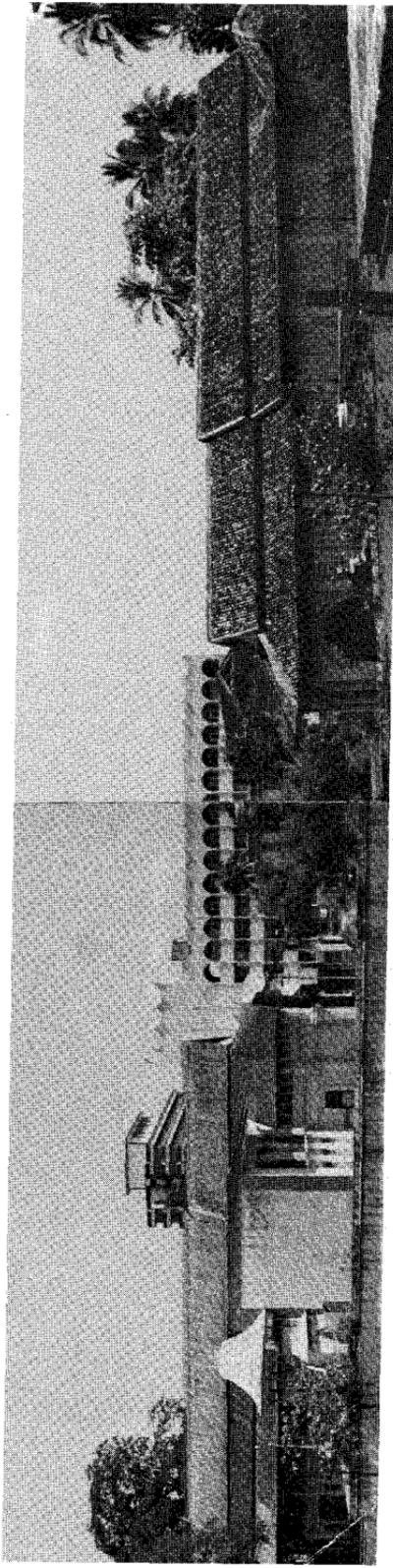
The dinner given by Kedah students in London to celebrate the birthday of the Sultan of Kedah in 1928. The Tunku is seated left, nearest to the camera.



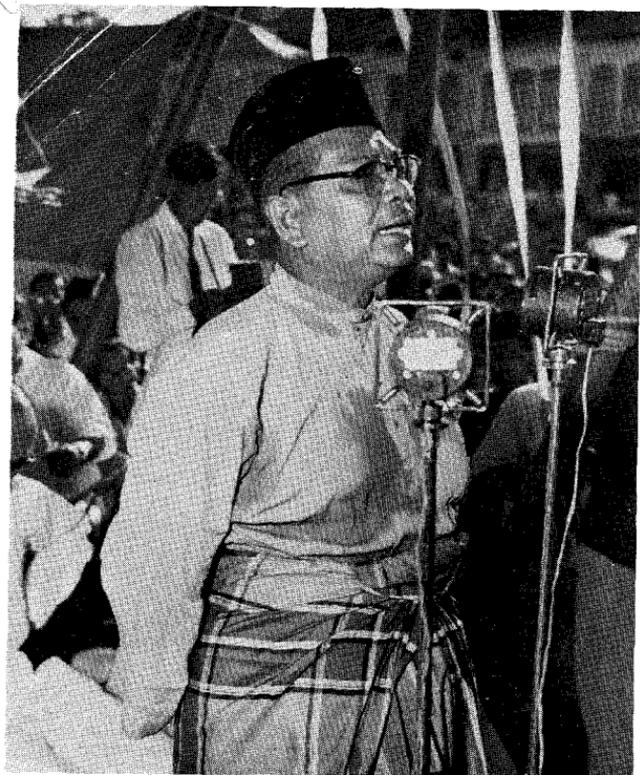
Wedding Hall of the Kota Lama.



Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah wearing the Order of Chula which carries the title of "Chao Phraya Saiburi".



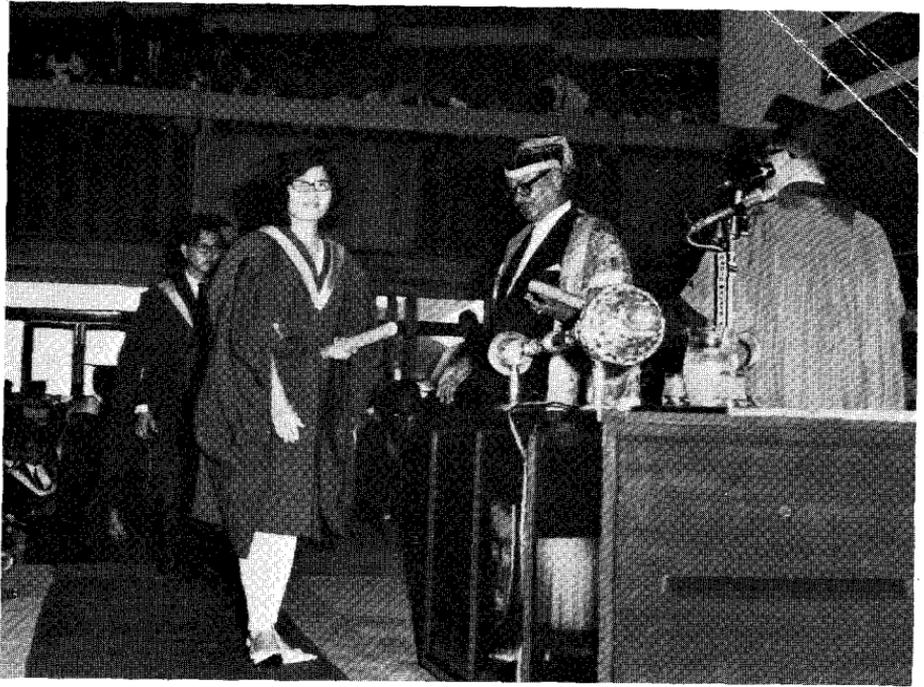
The palace at Kota Lama with the Balai Besar (Audience Hall) and the Rumah Belembing (Wedding Hall) in the background.



The Tunku
campaigning in the
1955 elections.



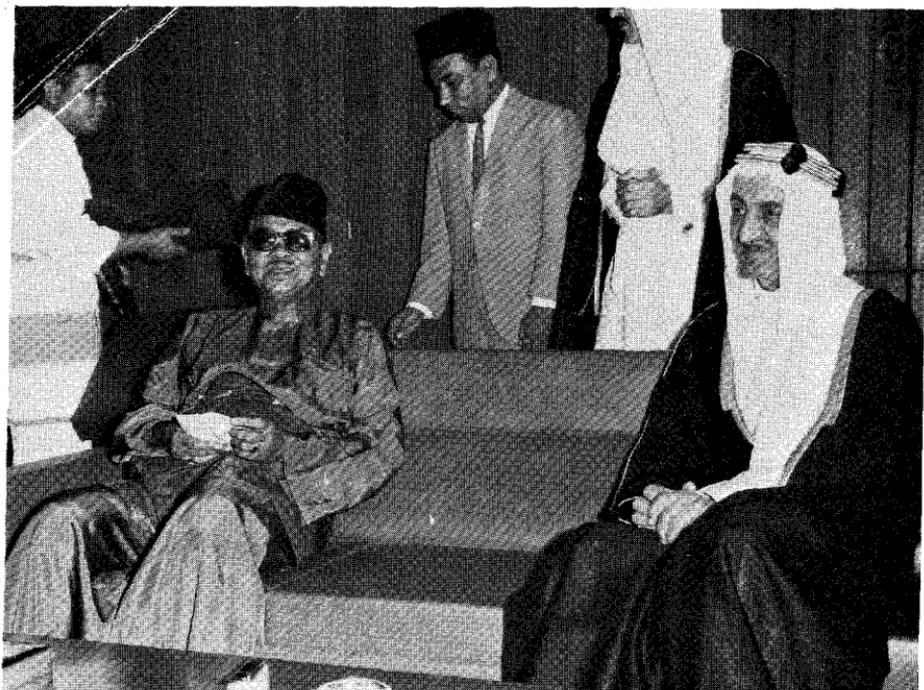
The Tunku addresses Parliament.



The Tunku as Chancellor of the University of Malaya.



A relaxed moment with world Islamic leaders at the Islamic Secretariat in 1969.



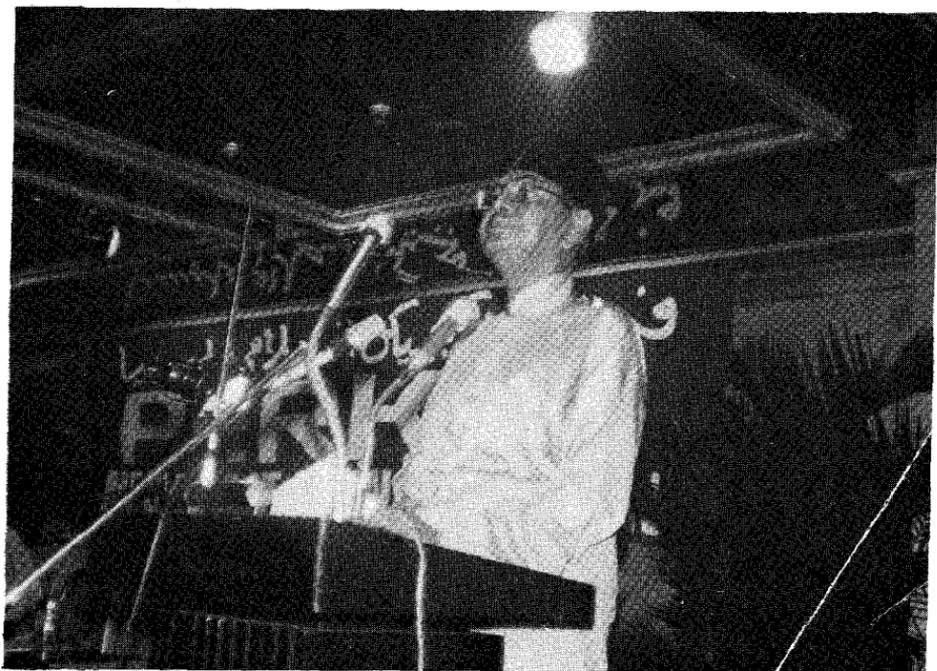
The Tunku with King Faisal of Saudi Arabia on the occasion of his Majesty's visit to Malaysia in 1969.



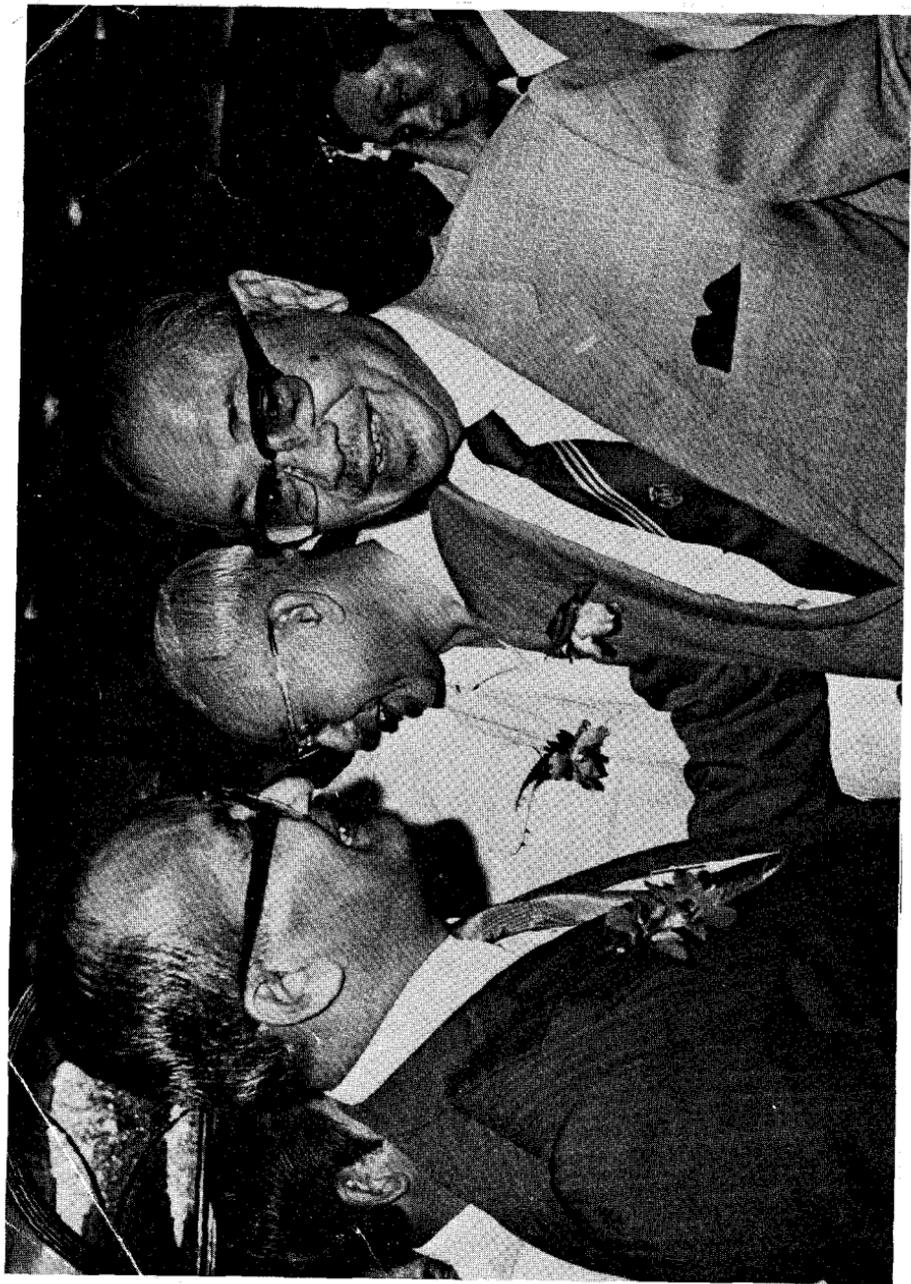
The Tunku's First Cabinet after Merdeka, 1957.



Kampung Lindungan Sultan (The kampung which sheltered the Sultan).



The Tunku addressing members at the PERKIM AGM.



A candid shot of the Tunku and Tun Hussein taken when the latter was Prime Minister.

The Muslim Dilemma

18 June 1979

I have been asked by the organising committee of the Ministry of Wakaf and Islamic Affairs on behalf of the Kingdom of Jordan to attend a seminar on *Isra'* and *Mi'raj*.

Four others have also been invited. They are Encik Ismail Haji Ibrahim, Professor Syed Najib Alatas, Syed Yusof Zawawi and Datuk Ahmad Nordin.

The occasion is obviously of great importance to the Muslim world.

The topics for discussion and the papers to be read will no doubt deal at length with the subject of the 1,400 years of Islam, and of the Ascension of the Holy Prophet to Heaven.

Many experts on religion can give a discourse on this topic of vital importance to Islam with authority, and it will be a treat for us all who are assembled there to listen to them.

There is nothing that I could add to it, for my activities have been associated mainly with the political aspects of Islam. On this subject I might be able to talk with some knowledge.

I was the first Secretary-General of the *Mutamar al-Islam* (Conference of Foreign Ministers), and it was I who prepared the groundwork for the establishment of the Islamic Development Bank.

Since Islam came into the world, it has spread to the four corners of the world and embraces people of all kinds, of all shades and colours, white, black, brown and yellow, each with a different outlook in life, culture, habits and customs.

One thing binds them together and that is their faith in the one and only God and in his Messenger, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, *s.a.w.* Peace be on Him.

Every year thousands flock to Mecca to do the pilgrimage which is ordained by Islam as a duty.

In this holy city, we are able to rub shoulders with one another, and get to know one another, and to understand fully what

Islam means.

At the end of the pilgrimage, they return to their homes. Every year this pilgrimage continues with unabated enthusiasm.

Since the birth of the Prophet, many millions of Muslims have gone to the Holy City, but beyond that, they have done nothing more than to call themselves *haji*.

One of the pillars of Islam is the brotherhood of the Islamic faith. All Muslims believe in it and feel proud of it, but few practise it.

Then the trouble over Palestine occurred, and the Arabs were driven out of their own country by the Jews who took over Palestine after the ending of the British regime.

After the 1967 war, Jerusalem was lost to the Arabs as well.

Ever since the Turks, under Saladin, captured Jerusalem from the Christians, it had been in the hands of the Muslims. Its loss has been a bitter pill for the Muslims to swallow.

The Muslims were further humiliated when on 21 August 1968 an Australian, Michael Rohan, a religious fanatic, set fire to the Al-Aqsa mosque.

This set off a tidal wave of anger against the Jews, as it was said they had been behind it in order to use the site for the extension of their own temple.

They decided therefore to call a meeting of Muslim heads of state in Rabat, Morocco, in September 1969, to decide on what action to take.

This meeting issued a declaration urging the major powers to work towards a speedy withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territory, and give full support to the Palestinians in their struggle for national liberation.

The conference also called for the meeting of the foreign ministers of Muslim countries in 1970, to organise a permanent Islamic secretariat.

An organisation for Muslim unity was formed, and it was decided, as a first step, to set up its headquarters in Jeddah, with me as the first Secretary-General.

At the time, I was still the Prime Minister of Malaysia, and so I undertook the work of Secretary-General of the Islamic Secretariat, concurrently as Prime Minister.

In September 1970, after my retirement from the premiership of Malaysia, I devoted all my time to the task of organising the Muslim Secretariat, one of the purposes of which, as stated in the

charter of the conference of foreign ministers, was "to fight for the liberation of Jerusalem".

How important Jerusalem is to the Muslims can only be assessed by the words of the Holy Prophet: "There are only three mosques to which you should journey — the sacred mosque (in Mecca) my mosque (the Prophet's mosque in Medina) and the mosque of Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem."

The Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib also declared that "Jerusalem is the centre of the universe, and the closest point on earth to Heaven".

Abu Hurayrah said, "To die in Jerusalem is as good as dying in Heaven".

The earliest Muslim conquest of Jerusalem took place in the year 638 (Hijrah). The Muslims established peace in the city, and since that time, and for all the years it was under Muslim rule, the Muslims honoured every religion and gave people of the three faiths their freedom to worship in their own holy places without interference.

It started with Umar ibn Al Khatab, who could have used the church as a mosque, but instead, he prayed outside the church in the open when he entered the city as its liberator, and the spot on which he prayed became the site of Umar's mosque.

Jerusalem, until the Jews took over, was used by the followers of three religions — the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims, as their Holy City.

For the Muslims the loss of Jerusalem has been a serious blow and one hard to bear. Calls are made from time to time to regain the city.

The Muslims, however, have considered the Arab-Israel war purely an Arab affair, as they have never been brought into the picture.

When the decision was taken to liberate Palestine none of the Muslim countries, other than the Arab states, were consulted.

It was only after the burning of the Al-Aqsa mosque that they were invited to a conference and they were taken into confidence for the first time.

To make things worse, at the first conference, dissension arose as the result of the expulsion of India from the conference, after she had been admitted a member.

Much time was wasted in discussing the pros and cons of India's right to be a member.

The first day was lost, and Jerusalem's case was forgotten. After the Indian affair was settled, it left some bitterness in the minds of the delegates and the countries they represented.

The problem of Jerusalem was hawked around the Muslim world, but outside the Arab world, the other Muslim countries did not fully appreciate what was required of the United Nations, and at all the conferences called for "a speedy withdrawal of Israel from occupied territory and national liberation".

These are empty phrases, and Jerusalem remains still deeply enslaved as a Jewish possession.

Right through the ages the history of Islam has been a history of political pitfalls.

Islam has never been able to consolidate its advantage.

As we reached a point of success, then something happened which undid all the work that had been done, and we slid downwards.

When Islam took over Spain, and the Muslims were on the point of entering France, trouble broke out among the Muslim generals, and this brought about a setback, which has blackened the history of Islam.

The whole of Spain was lost, and in the years following, the Muslim lands on the Mediterranean coast became the colonies of the Christian countries.

After the last war, a strange phenomenon, in fact, a miracle, occurred, whereby barren deserts bloomed forth with wealth hitherto unknown and undreamt of in the Middle East.

Poor countries in Arabia, Africa, on the Mediterranean coast and the Persian Gulf suddenly found themselves rich.

This I say was truly the work of God, whose benevolence must be appreciated. Muslims must use the new found wealth for good purposes.

We must relive the glory we once enjoyed in the time of the great caliphs of Baghdad and the Ottoman Empire.

The world powers today do not depend on arms and other weapons of war.

Their power and superiority over others lies in the fullness of their coffers. It is money that counts, and the Muslim countries in the Middle East and the African coast have all this wealth to use in the cause of Islam.

Much of this money is being wasted on extravagant spending in foreign investment, squabbles and internecine wars.

Not much thought has been given to the rehabilitation of Islam and the building of Islamic power.

His Majesty the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia realised this and spoke out his mind many times.

He aimed to do so much for Islam, but how to go about it was his insurmountable problem.

He did not have the men experienced enough in this line of business. Nevertheless, he felt it must be done.

So it was that the kings of Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Jordan made a start by forming *Mutamar al-Islam* (the Secretariat of Conference of Muslim Foreign Ministers).

It took three years before this *Mutamar* was properly organised and all the Muslim countries joined in, but it has not made much impression on the world, because financial contributions were slow in coming.

Some Muslim nations are more interested in the Arab League, which according to them, is the focal point for Muslim unity.

In the three years I spent in Jeddah, it was hard work and sometimes most frustrating. Nevertheless, I persevered, and retired to help with the organisation of the Islamic Development Bank, which I felt could give aid to the poorer Muslim countries and Muslim people, and make the unity of Islam more realistic and meaningful.

These are the organisations — the *Mutamar* and the Islamic Development Bank — which, developed on the right lines, could bring about the Islamic revival and regain lost glory.

With unity Muslims can be expected to speak with one voice, and fight as one force.

But what chance is there now for Muslim unity, when all the Arab world has turned against Egypt?

The answer lies with the Arabs themselves.

Have we given ourselves time to think of Egypt's side of the story?

Might it not be that Egypt felt that she had borne the brunt of the fighting since the war with Israel started in 1948, and she now needed an interval in order to take stock of the situation?

The Egyptians have been fighting for roughly the last thirty-one years which, by any standard of warfare, could be said to be a long time, and in modern history is only equalled by the case of Vietnam.

The painful succession of reverses with great losses in men,

money and materials, has brought disaster, not only to Egypt, but despair to Muslim people throughout the world.

In other words, the result of the struggle has been for Egyptians a national calamity, and has brought their country to the brink of bankruptcy.

Admittedly, money has been subscribed by all the wealthy Arab countries, but all this has gone towards the purchase of weapons of war, and other expenses connected with war preparations.

The Egyptians have therefore come to a point when they must save themselves. So peace with Israel is essential.

The whole of Egypt was behind President Sadat when he took the decision.

I too had the opportunity to see him in 1978, and heard what he had to tell me about this.

Muslim countries in general showed some understanding for him, as well as sympathy.

On the other hand, the Arab countries were understandably disappointed and bitterly angry with the Egyptians because according to them, Egypt had accepted the responsibility — in fact had agreed to champion the cause of the Palestinian Arabs, and agreed to fight the Israel Jews to the bitter end.

As far as Egypt was concerned, they had reached the “bitter end”, and this therefore led them to the peace table.

When Egypt refused to go on with the struggle, the Arab countries decided to break off friendly relations with Egypt, and further more, they imposed economic and political sanctions on Egypt.

This other Muslim countries did not expect, and considered the measures against Egypt as too harsh.

All this has brought about a break-up of Arab unity.

I personally feel, and so do the people of my country, that we must espouse the cause of the Palestinian Arabs, and intensify our effort to carry on with the fight in the economic and political arenas to the bitter end, and all Muslims should join in.

We feel, however, that we should use restraint in any action we have in mind against a member of our own family.

“Don’t burn the mosquito net,” says a famous Malay proverb, “because of our anger against the mosquitoes, as this might burn down the whole house itself.”

In other words, if we intend to prosecute the war against Israel

with any hope of success, then we must continue to be united.

There is grave danger too, that the situation might easily get out of hand, and we might find ourselves at loggerheads with one another, while our enemy can sit back and watch us to his heart's delight.

The Arabs are proud of their great traditions and heritage. Every Arab country is proud to identify itself with its Arab origins, and so it follows that they must preserve their unity in order to face the challenges of the enemy of Islam.

Let them all remain together, and let them be united in the name of Allah and for the good of Islam.

The whole of the Muslim world looks to the Arab countries for guidance and moral leadership.

The way of a leader is to think, and give good and wise leadership and guidance.

No explosive or impulsive action can be justified which does not take into account the harm it might cause to member countries, and to the Islamic world.

My own country is deeply concerned over the rift.

We feel a stitch in time can save nine, and so I feel very strongly that a conference of executive Heads of State should be called immediately to look into the matter, and bring immediate peace in the name of Allah to the Arab world.

Islam as a whole faces serious challenges on many fronts.

I have written at length on the Middle East, but have not mentioned anything about other fronts, the most serious of which are the ones faced by the countries of Southeast Asia.

In the Philippines, the Muslims have been driven from their homes and forced to take up arms against the Christian government in order to preserve their lives and identity.

Their struggle has been difficult and severe, and it has gone on since the Philippines became independent, and they have carried on with their struggle until today.

They receive some help from Islamic countries, but it has not been easy for contact to be made with these fighters who are using the vast jungle of the southern Philippines as their base of operations.

How long this war will go on is difficult to say, but the Muslims are determined to fight on until the government of the Philippines recognises their rights, and they are allowed to enjoy the freedom and amenities they are entitled to as citizens of

the Philippines.

Then, in Malaysia itself, there is the influx of thousands of refugees from Vietnam who have come here to seek asylum, as they have been driven out from their own country.

This has become a very grave problem, as Malaysia cannot take any more and has been forced to keep them out.

Much to my sorrow one senior minister of the government even suggested drastic and inhuman measures to be taken against these refugees. There are many thousands in the country now.

Among the refugees are the Cambodian Muslims, who were driven out because they refused to give up their religion, and the tale which they have to tell is one of extreme cruelties which strike terror in the hearts of men.

Mosques have been used as pigsties, and those who protested have been put to death.

So these people managed to escape and reach Thailand, and the first batch were taken care of by my organisation, PERKIM.

Some more are waiting to be taken in and are waiting on the Thai and Cambodian frontiers, but because of the problem of Vietnamese refugees, my organisation has not obtained clearance from the government to bring these people in.

For one thing, I must say, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees has given us assistance, and according to them will continue to do so.

There is of course, trouble in Iran since the overthrow of the Shah.

When peace will be restored in that unhappy country is difficult to say.

All that we can do is to pray to Allah that it will come soon, and so too, with African countries, in particular, Uganda.

With the fall of Idi Amin, the country is in absolute tumult.

All told the challenges facing Muslims are severe, and with trouble now prevailing between the Arab countries and Egypt, the challenges facing Islamic countries elsewhere are very serious indeed.

Let us take this opportunity on this blessed day of *Miraj* to invoke Allah's Mercy and Blessings on His humble servants, and to pray for the restoration of peace among us.

Twenty-two

A Man's Best Years

6 August 1979

I was asked as to what I consider the best age in a man, now that I am 77 years old, and to give my views, knowledge and experience which would be of value to youth.

Admittedly, the best age is a carefree age and that is the time when a person has no responsibility and is without a care in the world. That is the time when he takes life as it comes, and when all worries and responsibilities are shouldered by the parents.

I would divide those ages as between five and ten, ten and sixteen, and sixteen and thirty. At the age of five to ten, the children are happy as larks, fit and strong, jumping and running in the open, revelling in the sun, the shade and enjoying the fresh air.

In my days, school life started for many boys at seven to eight years' old, while for some in their teens. Many more shunned school. The only schools which existed in Kedah were in the big towns, and those who lived in the country had no schooling; instead they played or sometimes helped their parents with odd jobs. Some attended religious lessons.

Life was easy then. It didn't take much to feed the family as most people had their *kampung* and their *padi* lands with plenty of fish and rice.

During the planting season the sounds of flutes made of *padi* stalks filled the air and could be heard for miles, and during the harvesting season kites of all shapes and sizes took to the sky.

When dusk set in there was nothing left to do but to retire indoors. There was no cinema to go to, no television so see and no radio to listen to. There was no electric light to brighten up the homes.

I remember how electricity came to Kedah late in 1916 and that was only in Alor Star. In big houses and the palaces of the royal family where there were many people, evenings used to be spent collecting around a story-teller, that is someone who had any story to tell, or when none was available, children would

play about inside the house singing and laughing until it was time to go to bed, and that was early compared with children's bed-time now.

At the break of dawn, the children would wake up with the cackling of the hen, the crowing of the cock and the quacking of the ducks. They all got up gallivanting merrily, jumping and running until time came for food. They played and played till the end of the day. How nice that was.

Then came the second phase, that is between ten and fifteen and this is a very important and interesting age. It is the time when one starts to think and take notice of everything that happens, the present and the future.

This is the age when children sit up to take notice of the true meaning of life. One begins to work out little plans in one's mind about what to make of life and so one shows more interest in one's lessons.

When I was twelve, there were cinemas and other shows but we were not allowed to go except once a week. We received moral training besides the normal lessons, games and other extra-curricular activities, like the cadet corps or scouting.

These were all western pastimes introduced to this country and they were taken up so enthusiastically by the boys. The boys also took to soccer like fish to water, and athletic meetings used to draw thousands of people to the padang of the Penang Sports Club. In fact it was quite different from what it is now.

I remember when the Penang Free School used to compete in the inter-school sports with St. Xaviers and the Anglo-Chinese School. There was a great show of rivalry between the Free School and St. Xaviers; both schools were situated close together and the enthusiasm became too over-powering and the rival supporters would fight each other after school hours until St. Xaviers decided to change their times.

All that is gone now, but in those days soccer and athletics built up strong Alma Mater loyalty among the boys and invariably led to fights after the games. Some boys who were good in sports were less accomplished in their studies, but they were happy and unconcerned. There were jobs waiting for them when they left school.

The girls in Kedah had no schools to go to. Most of the members of the royal family and daughters of civil servants were given private tuition at home as it was considered improper to

allow them to go out and be seen about in public.

Religious and Malay lessons and all such education as would fit them to be good wives, mothers and cooks were given. So most of the girls when they grew up knew how to look after their husbands and homes.

Girls of those bygone days were less domineering and possessive, compared to those of today. So long as their husbands went home to roost, that was all that mattered. That made life happy and agreeable for both.

In some cases when they felt they were too old for their husbands, they agreed to their husbands taking second or even third wives. Sometimes they were kind enough even to find the wives for their husbands.

Nowadays, nobody appears to have more than one wife or openly declare that he has more than one wife, except one man whom I know of, who was a member of the civil service, who has three wives.

According to this man, one wife is to look after the house, such as tidying up, the other the washing and the third the kitchen, and all take turns to keep him company at night and so he says, they were all very happy.

That I can vouch for, because when he was invited to banquets he would bring along his three wives until we had to ask him to bring only one at a time. This he reluctantly agreed to.

The original owner of the Istana Negara, a rich Chinese *towkay* in Kuala Lumpur had ten wives, so the house was as spacious as a palace. His children were all brought up well and given good education.

In Penang too, there was one millionaire in the old days who had eight wives and he would summon his wives by pressing a button in the room and he was nicknamed "the *towkay* with press-button wives".

But this was nothing to beat the old king of Thailand who, when asked how many wives he had, replied "God only knows".

Some would say those were the happy days and I have no doubt that most men are agreed that those were the days for men. Unfortunately I was not of marriageable age then.

One thing I do know and that is old age creeps up quickly on those who mis-spend their youth on women and useless pastimes. The vitality and joy of being young is invaluable and it must be preserved as long as possible.

I left for England at the age of sixteen to begin a new life away from home. This in fact was considered an adventure in those days as there were few Malaysians abroad. But being young and keen to learn, I embarked on board the good ship *Rhesus*, full of hope and dreams for a good future.

Within two years I entered St. Catherine's Cambridge, and under the close supervision of the tutors and my college authorities I managed to graduate in law and history.

I must say that university life for a young man was good fun, full of activities which could bring out the best in a man.

I used to take part in sports and games but in those days the prejudice against colonial people, especially coloured people, was very high and so in all the team games, there was little chance of colonial students getting a "blue".

Ranjit never got his blue cricket until he had been selected to play for England; it was the same with Duleep Singh, and Saravanamuthu (brother of the old man in *The Echo*) who was in St. Catherine's with me used to chalk up big scores in cricket but never received his "blue" because he was never selected to play for England.

So I went in for fast cars as well, and at the Earls Court Motor Show I bought the first Riley super-sports with aluminium body and red wings and careered around the university precincts to the annoyance of the university authorities, until the law prohibiting undergraduates from using cars at certain hours of the day was passed.

When in 1961 I received my honorary degree of Doctor of Law, this incident was mentioned in the Latin citation by the orator to the amusement of all present, when translated into English.

I was useful at soccer, but I had no chance to play or even try out for the university team. So I might as well make a nuisance of myself and be noticed. That was the spirit, exuberance and arrogance of youth, but it was done in a clean and open-hearted manner and hurt nobody except the university authorities.

My tutor, the Dean of St. Catherine's was visibly annoyed but could not think of what to do with me, except to send me down for six months for being late for my final exam.

At the Lord Mayor's banquet for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in 1968, after I had replied to the Lord Mayor's toast, the Lady Mayoress, Lady Gilbert Samuel Inglefield, who was the daughter of that same dean of St. Catherine's turned to me

and said, "If my father had been alive, he would have been so proud of you."

I smiled and said, "Thank you." Then I said (to myself) "But he could not have believed that it was the same man."

I enjoyed my youth and can say I lived a full life. I was fond of the good things that come with youth, I enjoyed good health and was in high spirits always.

When I left Cambridge and came to London to take up Law in the Inner Temple which I had joined just to get away from Cambridge for dinners during term time, I had to make a serious effort to get through my law. But there was much too much temptation in London and with nobody to look after me I gave vent to my pleasures and ended up a cropper.

It was twenty-five years later that I returned to qualify as a fully-fledged barrister and by a stroke of good fortune the Temple honoured me by making me one of the Benchers.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself as a young man and made the best of my youth. I was asked if I had to re-live my life, would I change from what I had been before?

If I could get that pleasure and experience all the joys of life and end up with all my ambitions fulfilled, why should I change? But I might have tried to get through the Bar earlier.

The life of young people began to change with the influences from abroad which began to infiltrate into the country. The Chinese culture affected the Straits-born Chinese, the *nyonyas* and *babas*, quite a lot and brought a change in their way of life.

Chinese schools began to grow like mushrooms, whereas previously, there had been no Chinese schools at all. With that, there came about a big change in the people of this country.

Racial consciousness began to rear its ugly head and cast a strange spell on the once happy, care-free Straits-born Chinese. Many were carried away with the new turn in the Chinese thinking.

The rise of Chinese nationalism took hold of the Malayan Chinese — first the Kuomintang, and then smeared with Red paint. Nobody would have believed Malaya had a chance of getting independence.

I was asked my views about the changes that have taken place in Malaya and the world at large, as affecting the behaviour of young men. Changes are inevitable. No power on earth can stop them. It happens to human beings and so it must happen with

the world.

When one is born and one grows up from infancy to manhood, one's attire changes, one's habits and attitude to life change, one's voice changes and one's mind changes and so it must be with the world. The world of yesterday and the world of today are not the same.

I never would have believed that Malay girls today would be wearing jeans and blouses, showing the contours of their figures in public, but they do so now unashamedly. Old people frown at them and religious people condemn them, but nobody can stop them.

The best one can do is to put up with them and advise them on the proper apparel to put on, and the types of dress to wear at the right time and place; but to frown and condemn them would be to drive them round the bend.

If the influence of the West could be stopped, then the job of looking after our young people would be less difficult. But we cannot stop it, no more than we can stop the rising of the tide.

Today we have radio, television, the cinemas and western literature flooding our country, and it is not possible to stop our young people from listening to the radio, or watching television or reading books.

I was asked how would I control or correct them. I can only talk for myself. As a young man, I would not listen to any word of advice unless such advice was sensible, and intelligible, less still would I accept condemnation from any source.

I enjoyed life, but at the same time I was a responsible man and always conscious of my duty to others. When I took to praying five times a day during the period of the Japanese Occupation, I found relief and acquired great confidence in myself with strong faith in God.

It is true to say that human behaviour changes with the movement of the heavenly bodies, like the sun and the moon. A prayer in the morning, when one wakes up gives one a chance to look at the day past and at the day ahead.

As the sun reaches its peak at midday one's mind is inclined to change again and one sits down in prayer. Then as the sun is about to decline in the late afternoon, again the mind changes and at prayers one is given time to think.

Then as dusk falls after sunset, again the mind begins to change and again one has the opportunity at prayer to think and

decide for himself what he must do and then as evening falls and with the last prayer, one can take stock of what has happened during the day and can give thanks to Allah for His small mercies.

I believe religion taken with moderation and wisdom can be a very good controlling factor in one's behaviour and life. In other words use it as a guide but not as a law unto itself and we can be sure that God will protect us against all evils.

Western civilisation, with all its temptations, is to be blamed for the sins of our youth. In the permissive society that has come with it, the youth of today have lost their sense of balance.

Many of our young men have gone to extremes by taking drugs and taking to crime as extortionists and robbers, and carry on their nefarious activities which only cut short and destroy their young lives.

I have taken care of drug addicts, and I know how hard their life is. The most we can do is to attend to them and offer whatever little help and relief we can, but in most cases not long after they are cured they return to the centre for the second or the third and sometimes for the tenth time.

Malaysia is a country with many young people and it offers them all opportunities with its strong and viable economy. That's not good enough for some who look to easy money; they go in for crime, sometimes with violence.

As we progress and advance in prosperity, we breed more of these people. Sports are galore in this country but they are not interested in this, and so what can we do about them?

Some people have suggested that we should conscript them into the army, but the danger is that they may, after a period of military service, come out better trained in the use of firearms which they could turn against peaceful society with disastrous consequences.

We can only pray for the best, for to be young is so wonderful and we can only be young but once, so make the best of it, I say.

Twenty-three

Pre-War Days

13 August 1979

This refers to the period from the days when the Tunku went to England to continue his education up till the eve of the Second World War, which started in Europe in 1939.

As a man so fond of life and one who has given himself to all the pleasures that it has to offer, how was it that I was able to settle down? The truth is that I have always had a sense of responsibility, a warm attachment for my fellowmen, my country and religion.

These hidden qualities began to surface as I grew older and so I became quite serious when I had to undertake a task and had a job to do.

My colleagues can vouch for the truth of what I did when I first took up the office of president of UMNO. I moved around the country living a nomadic life, spending most nights on the train, in rest houses and cheap hotels, campaigning for the revival of UMNO.

There was nothing much left of UMNO at the time except the name and the reputation of being the predominant Malay party. But what's in a name, when there is nothing to go with it? Sooner or later the party was bound to disintegrate into nothing unless it could show its strength and potential. All its well-known leaders were gone and the confidence of its members was wavering.

So with grim determination and with a will to do or die, I set out to revive UMNO with a few loyal friends, and travelled extensively throughout the country without care for my safety or comfort.

As a result of this supreme effort, UMNO was reborn and became once again a lively proposition, full of vim and vigour, with honest, sincere and loyal followers from every part and corner of the country, sworn to serve the cause of the party.

This I relate to show how a man addicted to pleasure could

change when the need arose. If it could happen to me it could happen to other young people as well. With this spirit we can make men and heroes of our youths and this I would like to see happening to our young men.

I was a failure as a law student in the late twenties and so I decided to give up my studies and come home. I realised if I had remained in London in the gay roaring twenties, it would have been hard for me to change.

I had to give myself some respite from all temptations, and perhaps with time and change of environment I might regain my confidence. But to persevere with my law studies when every night I was at the dog track and every day at the horse track and every evening out, I could not see for the life of me how I could get through my law.

On New Year's Day 1931, I embarked on the French liner *Chenonceaux* and was seated at the same table in the dining room with two others, the late Eugene Chen, a famous foreign minister of China under Dr. Sun Yat Sen and also for a time under General Chiang Kai-shek, and his beautiful and charming wife, Madame Georgette Chen.

Our table proved to be very popular and everyone wanted to join us. First there was an American author, then there was an Indian businessman and there were others who asked to sit with us.

The attraction no doubt was Madame Georgette Chen. The journey was very long — if I remember rightly, it was six weeks from Marseilles to Singapore — but it was the most enjoyable and rewarding six weeks I have ever had on board a ship.

The late Mr. Eugene Chen, about whom I had heard quite a lot in my university days, was a terror to the European powers because he was outspoken as the Foreign Minister of China and most critical of the power-mad European nations. He knew no Chinese as he was born in the West Indies, but he used to wield his pen with good effect and as the saying goes "the pen is mightier than the sword".

It was very true in his case. He was a very quiet and reserved man and said nothing very much, but what he had to say penetrated deep into my heart and became food for my political thought. I considered him a master politician, a statesman of no mean quality, a redoubtable patriot of China at a time when that country was beset with so many hungry wolves at her doorstep,

foremost among which was Japan.

Eugene and I became great friends and kept in contact with one another until he died, but from the moment I knew him I became conscious of my duty to my country and developed an urge to free my people from colonial rule. Here the sense of responsibility and patriotism began to beat and throb inside me.

A little later in the early thirties — if I remember right — there was an attempt to break down the customs barriers between the states of Malaya and to form a Malayan Customs Union.

I wrote a strong letter of protest from England which appeared in the press here, arguing that such an act would compromise the sovereignty of the non-Federated Malay States which by treaty Britain was honour-bound to respect.

On my return to Kedah in February 1931, I was taken on as a cadet in the Kedah Civil Service. I was offered a salary of \$110 a month, but I refused this because all the expatriate officers with university degrees were taken on at \$300 a month.

Finally, I won my case, but with the condition that because of my failure to get through the Bar I was only to be given a triennial increment. In fact I was not joining the legal service, but the civil service, so this condition was irrelevant.

The reason for it went back to my criticism of British policy regarding Customs Union. If I had not accepted the offer, then I would have had to pay back the scholarship money which I received all those years I was in England.

As a young cadet, I was posted to work in the districts as an assistant district officer of Kulim. I enjoyed my work and the extramural activities which I carried on and also the close proximity to Penang where I used to go for weekends to enjoy myself. Next I went to Sungei Patani as an A.D.O. Before long I was sent to Kuala Nerang, a malaria-infested district, as district officer and it was here that my wife died of malaria, through the negligence of a well-meaning European lady doctor who attended her.

Then the girl whom I used to know in England decided to come to Malaysia and join me. This created a problem for me because of the royal edict which forbade interracial marriages without the permission of the State Council. This would not be given without a good cause.

However, she arrived and refused to return and agreed to take care of my two children. So I married her secretly in Singapore.

The other difficulty was my job in Kuala Nerang where it was impossible for a European girl to live and so I had to provide a home for her in Penang.

In the meantime, I insisted on the government carrying out antimalarial work as otherwise I would take action against the government for the death of my wife. This they willingly did and as soon as the initial work started, I went to Langkawi on transfer, and with that I obtained permission officially to marry the English girl.

For her it was a lonely life, but for me it was an exciting new venture. We were removed from civilization, with the mail coming in only once a week from the mainland.

In fact there were no roads, except a sandy path from the government sanatorium to the town, and an earth road from the town to the Sungei Raya estate, a British-owned estate four miles away.

There was one hospital with one doctor in charge of both medical and health services. He and his charming wife made up the company on that small, desolate island.

The rest were all small-time government officers, but we were a happy family.

Despite all the shortcomings, I enjoyed my two years there and with the help of the people and Chinese businessmen, bridle paths were built running through all parts of the island.

In 1935, the then British Adviser, Mr. S.W. Jones, visited Langkawi and was impressed with the development that had been carried out through the efforts of the people and without any aid from the government.

Before he left to return to Alor Star, he complimented me and said I deserved a better job than that of a district officer on a remote island. Soon after I received my posting orders to go to Sungei Patani as D.O. It was a Class II appointment and as a Class IV officer I was given the acting allowance, but my increment still remained a triennial one.

Nevertheless, it was a welcome change for my wife as Sungei Patani was a bigger town with a large European community.

In Sungei Patani, the most exciting event that took place was the visit to Penang of Mr. Nehru, leader of the Indian Independence Movement. A grand^{*} reception was prepared for him, but there was no Malay on the reception committee, as he was looked upon as a rebel.

I was approached by Mrs. Oon who asked if I would care to be on the committee. I said that I certainly would be honoured to welcome a great man and so I joined the committee. His visit was only for four days but everywhere he went thousands went to hear him speak.

It no doubt worried the government very much, in particular the government of Kedah, a British protected state, to find one of its own officers taking an active part in all these rallies.

I knew I would be blackballed and another bad record would be chalked up against me, but I did not care. I was a young man full of the spirit and arrogance of youth and if they did not like it, they could sack me.

I have always maintained there is always something better that one can do in life, and where there is a will there is a way. It was Mr. Nehru, a great leader held in high esteem throughout Asia, who in fact first made me realise about the future — with the fact that in spite of leading a divided India, he still had high hopes for independence. So why couldn't Malaya be the same? In India there was division among the Hindus because of the caste system and class distinction, division between Hindus and Muslims and those of other religions and differences between northern and southern India.

There were in fact racial differences and there were tribal differences, too, and there were 500 million people with so many languages. Yet Nehru's fight for independence was gaining momentum and approaching its goal in 1931. So what were we afraid of after all?

The only differences we had in Malaysia were between three races, Malays, Indians and Chinese. But beyond that the situation was not insurmountable, provided there was a will on all sides to make a home in this country. As for language, everybody could converse in Malay or English.

Life in Sungei Patani was enjoyable enough but at the same time it was costly. There was a big European community; they were earning big money as estate managers. Even an assistant manager of an estate received more pay than a Malay district officer and so to keep up appearances, firstly as the son of the Sultan and secondly as District Officer, I had to supplement my income by selling one property after another.

With all my good work and record of achievement, the government never relented or relaxed on the penalty imposed on

me, i.e. the triennial increment. I naturally felt sore and rebellious.

I had a head-on clash over the question of the transport monopoly, which was introduced by the commissioner of police with the approval of the government.

Under this policy, all taxi drivers-cum-owners were asked to give up their taxis and form a company. There was no provision that the owners would be taken on as drivers. They were promised shares in the company which they would receive as dividends were declared.

This was decidedly unfair to the poor taxi drivers and so I took up their cause against the government and openly addressed a public rally in support of the taxi drivers. I expected to be sacked, but instead they transferred me to Kulim where the transport system was already in operation.

I had a great attachment for Kulim and my appointment as District Officer there was still a Class II appointment, so it made no difference to me. My salary remained the same, a Class IV officer, with an increment once in every three years and the acting allowance of a Class II officer.

The social life in Kulim was more warm and congenial. I remember the days when I first went there as an A.D.O. and what a close and friendly society we had there, unlike Sungei Patani where the town was newly opened up with the growth of the rubber industry and everybody was a new settler.

Kulim was an old town with a population born and bred there for generations, and it gained its prosperity those days from the tin industry. In fact it was one of the few districts in Kedah with tin mines.

When the "tong" warfare broke out in Larut, Perak, the trouble spread to Kulim with a lot of skirmishes between the rival gangs, which got the whole of the Kedah police busy trying to maintain peace.

It went on nevertheless for quite a long time and in the evenings the shops and houses were closed with no people walking the streets. The Sultan commandeered the *penghulus* and the *panglimas* and the services of the *kampung* people so that finally an end was put to the trouble and the district returned to normalcy.

In the old days, Kulim was a popular district for government officers. Once sent there, few cared to return to their old homes.

In this way Kulim became a district with a permanent friendly population, making it a nice place to work and live in.

Now it has found a new prosperity with the growth of the rubber industry in addition to tin and this has brought a sizeable European community to the district.

I welcomed my transfer to Kulim and at the same time I realised that my standing and relationship with the government was not of the best. In fact with the Secretary to the Government, Haji Shariff and the British Adviser, J.D. Hall, in complete control, I found myself completely out of favour.

I had always done what I thought was right and for the good of the people. The government of the day was autocratic and put its own interests and those of the big rubber estates, mostly foreign-owned, first and foremost.

All the roads led to these big estates and where there were no European-owned estates there were no roads. I was very critical of this lopsided policy.

When I tried to introduce new items in the budget to provide for the people, they were turned down as unnecessary and wasteful expenditure.

One memorable incident that happened when I got to Kulim was the attack the Sungei Patani taxi owners, who had lost their cars, made on the new bus operators from Sungei Patani in Kulim. The most embarrassing situation was created for me as I had to sit in judgment over them as they were arraigned before me.

They offered no defence except to say they were willing to accept whatever judgment I cared to impose on them. I told them that as District Officer, Sungei Patani, I championed their cause against the injustice of the transport monopoly, but that as a magistrate my duty was to uphold the law, and much as I disliked it I had to pass judgment on them for the assault and battery they had committed on the bus operators.

They accepted my judgment and were sent to prison. This was the saddest moment of my life, which I remember with regret to this day.

I was getting to dislike the government of Haji Shariff and J.D. Hall as being inconsiderate and unhelpful to the people. I cared little whether they liked me or not but I worked well with the people and they made my life happy.

In the meantime, I was due for six months' leave to be spent

abroad and so I thought this would be my opportunity to do a bit of work for my Bar examination. So I sent my wife ahead and I joined her later.

While holidaying in Britain, I took my examination in tort and contract. This was when I first met Tun Sardon, the present Yang di Pertua, Pulau Pinang.

According to him, he too was taking the same examination, so we worked together for a time, but when the results came out, he must have skipped the examination for I could not find his name on the pass list.

Then there was a lot of talk about an impending war. According to all reports and calculations Hitler was preparing to overrun the whole of Europe and the world and to impose his master race plan on all people who were not of Aryan stock.

I could imagine what that meant because in 1936 when I was in Sungei Patani, I took a round-trip with my wife to Japan on the German liner *Scharnhorst*. It was a nice boat with good food and wonderful service, but the atmosphere was unfriendly with the power-intoxicated Nazi passengers.

There were others, a Jewish millionaire and his beautiful wife, and the Chinese Minister of Education, a Mr. King, who were friendly with us. Mr. King got off the ship at Hong Kong and many Australian tourists got on board and helped to liven up the non-Nazi company.

I used to patronize the gift and souvenir shop a great deal and bought a lot of films and other gadgets and sent them to the shop for developing and printing.

One day the man in charge accused me of stealing his fountain pen. I have never been so angry in my life as when I was called a thief by this German Nazi, and if not for my wife, who pulled me away, I would have hit him.

But what would have happened to me with all the Nazis on board? When we arrived in Shanghai, we were met by some Chinese officials who told us that they had been asked by Mr. King who was in Peking to receive and entertain me in Shanghai.

That cheered me up a bit, for here was truly a noble act of kindness — what a change it was from the Nazi boorishness we found on board.

The voyage from Shanghai to Japan was uneventful and I never went near the gift shop again — “discretion being the better part of valour”. I was happy to be back in Malaya.

Coming back to my stay in England, I was apprehensive of the impending war which was likely to break out any time, so I decided to return home, leaving behind my wife, Violet, to follow me later.

But no sooner had I reached home than war broke out. Hitler attacked Poland, Britain and France declared war on Germany. But I had arrived safely.

My wife would not join me, and that was the end of our marriage.

Twenty-four

The War Years

13 August 1979

From December 1941 till September 1945 Kedah and the rest of Malaya lay under the heel of the Japanese. For the Tunku these were times of tribulation and challenge, but which he managed to survive and to help others to survive as well.

The dreadful war gave Hitler victory after victory. The Nazis marched across Europe as fast as their machines could take them. However much the British tried to dress up the stories of their successful defence, it soon became apparent that there was nothing to stop Hitler from taking over the continent. But for Britain itself, the sea and the British navy and air force kept the Nazis out.

Luckily for the world, instead of pursuing his victories in Europe, Hitler decided to attack Russia while fascist Mussolini decided to join in the war and share the spoils. This boosted Hitler's success.

Malaya was making plans for the defence of the country, and Singapore, according to the British, was an impregnable fortress.

In Malaya every state had to participate in the defence preparations which consisted of the construction of pill boxes, trenches, air raid shelters and the establishment of a civil defence organization consisting of the ambulance brigade, fire-fighters, wardens and emergency units, etc.

I was appointed the deputy head of the civil defence organization in South Kedah. My duty was to organise the A.R.P. and to coordinate the functions of all the other civil defence units.

We were given lessons in the fundamentals of civil defence such as exercises in fighting fires caused by incendiary bombs and dealing with bomb casualties and other war victims. It all appeared sound on paper but I doubted our effectiveness in time of actual bombing.

I made my men drill like soldiers and disciplined them, which of course was not quite in keeping with official instructions. I

built evacuation camps on the outskirts of Kulim and near the jungle fringes so that in the event of air raids women and children could be evacuated at once, and the A.R.P. were drilled to carry out an orderly evacuation.

On 8 December 1941, the Japanese made an attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbour. The war was brought nearer home when Singapore was bombed. People became jittery and the civil defence activities increased in momentum.

Funds were also collected to help in the prosecution of the war and in this, I must say, Kulim did extremely well. We held a fun-fair and collected many thousands of dollars. For the first time I put on a show which I called *Mahsuri*.*

It was a plot conceived and created by me based on the life of Mahsuri, although not factually accurate. It proved a great attraction and drew crowds nightly at the fair.

On the same day that Pearl Harbour was bombed, the Japanese started to land in Malaya on the east coast and on the coast of Thailand further to the north. Then shocking news came over the radio one evening which stunned everybody.

The two British battleships, *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* had been sunk off the east coast of Malaya. All hopes of defending Malaya were gone.

People from the north started to flee their home towns and the government decided to leave Alor Star. Haji Shariff and other high government officials came to Kulim and the British government asked that my father, the Sultan, be evacuated with the Regent, Tunku Badlishah and his family, to Singapore.

This, I decided at once, could not be allowed to happen. The story of how I succeeded in "kidnapping" my father, the Sultan, at Kepala Batas in Province Wellesley, on his way to Penang, is told elsewhere **. Suffice it to say here that the Sultan was safely brought to Kulim, and then to the village of Kampung Sidim nearby.

*Mahsuri is the tale of the Langkawi maiden who was wrongly accused of having had an illicit love affair and was sentenced to death. In revenge for her wrongful execution, Mahsuri uttered a curse on the island which was to last for seven generations. When I was District Officer on Langkawi, I sought out Mahsuri's grave, found it, and before I left, built a tomb for her which has become a great attraction for tourists today.

** i.e., See the following chapter.

The following day my father was joined by my brother, the Regent, who decided to leave Penang where he had been taken by the British. I was very relieved to have them with me and to be able to find a safe place for them under the hill of Kampung Sidim.

I had already prepared an evacuation camp there and the *kampung* people would take turns to guard them. As soon as they arrived I took them there.

Syed Omar was the state treasurer of Kedah and he brought all the government money from Alor Star and deposited it in the vault of the Kulim treasury. My great worry was whether the safe was strong enough to withstand any serious robbery by a big and powerful gang of robbers.

We then heard stories of the Japanese taking over Alor Star from the people who came to Kulim after having been earlier evacuated with the British.

Things began to get really serious. Luckily for me, the Volunteer Force was demobilised, and I took them over and formed a riot squad with Ramdan Din as my lieutenant.

I ordered the civil defence personnel to hide their uniforms but to remain on duty and at their posts in their civilian clothes. So everybody was at his post and the whole of Kulim district was orderly and no violence of any kind or looting took place.

Any offender, even those who rode their bicycles without lamps were taken into custody. Those who disregarded or defied the law were arrested.

Before the British evacuation, they had destroyed the electric plant and left Kulim in utter darkness. I gave orders for the evacuation of all women and children to the respective camps.

Luckily we did that, for as the Japanese soldiers arrived a few days later, they started to break into shops and houses to loot or to look for women.

It was also lucky in a sense that I had billeted with me a Japanese lieutenant, Nakamia, an officer in *Fujiwara Kikan* or Intelligence Unit.

All night long, soldiers arrived and began to beat and pound at my door and had it not been for him, God knows what would have happened to us.

A few days later I received a messenger from Perak who came from Raja Shahar Shah with a letter telling me that my brother-in-law, Raja Aman Shah, had been held a prisoner of

war by the Japanese, and that perhaps I might be able to persuade the Japanese military authorities to release him.

He was a civilian and a volunteer and not a military officer. But we had to act quickly. So without wasting any time I set out for Singapore with Ramdan Din, armed with a letter from the Japanese Governor of Kedah and wearing an armlet with the chop of *Fujiwara Kikan*, to look for him.

In Singapore we sought the help of many people who, however, failed to give us any information as to the whereabouts of Raja Aman Shah. All we found out was that Raja Lope who did not surrender with Raja Aman Shah had gone back to Perak.

Finally, I obtained permission to visit Changi prison and was shown a list of prisoners but there were no Malay officers on it, so I presumed that he must have been released and gone back while I was on the journey to Singapore. In the end, we found out that he had been killed along with the rest of the Malay Volunteer officers who had been held prisoners by the Japanese.

I came back, and on the way turned off to Jelebu where my sister and her children were staying with Dato Jelebu. On the journey, I picked up a person who asked for a lift, but when I dropped him at Jelebu town I took a look at him and found his eyes and fingers had all gone and part of his face had rotted.

I realised that I had picked up a leper in the worst stage of the disease. I have never forgotten this, for it shocked me to the core. We had to use petrol to clean the inside of the car for fear that the disease might infect others, as I was taking back the children and my sister.

I brought them back with Ramdan Din, driving the car most of the way and arrived in Kulim safely after a long and tedious journey. After a rest I was called to the Kulim hospital to take the statement of a dying patient who was a Muslim Punjabi.

The story he had to tell me related to one of the most cruel and brutal killings I have ever heard of.

It appeared that he and forty others, taken into police custody for small offences, had been called out at midnight by the Japanese soldiers who were members of the garrison stationed in Kulim.

They were taken to a rubber estate where a few big communal graves had been dug and all were bayoneted into the holes by the soldiers. As they fell inside, they were further bayoneted from the top.

This patient had several bayonet stabs which passed through his body without killing him. The victims, presumed dead, were then covered with earth, but he crept out under cover of darkness and miraculously escaped and was brought to the hospital by some kind people who found him on the roadside.

His presence had been kept a secret by the doctors and hospital staff. Having taken his statement, I told them that if this leaked out it would not only be this man who would be killed but all the hospital staff as well, so for their own good it would be better for them to keep their mouths shut.

I immediately went to the police station and ordered everybody found locked up to be released and gave orders to the police and members of the riot squad not to take in any people into custody, whatever might have been their offence. The Japanese garrison was already there and it was their duty now to keep law and order.

One piece of bad luck follows another, as the saying goes, and this was very true in Kulim at the time. For the next day my interpreter rushed to see me and told me he had received a report from the garrison that they were going to take in my two A.D.O.s, Haji Mohamed Isa Din and Abu Bakar Suleiman.

These two people, on hearing about it, came rushing to my house the same evening, white as paper, and told me that they were going to make a getaway that same night.

It appeared that they were accused of hiding a Bren gun and this was a capital offence. But I told them to keep calm and that I would take the blame because the Bren gun in question was with me. So I told them to trust in God and place themselves in my care.

Early next morning, I took the gun and with the two men, walked up to the garrison headquarters and asked to see the commander.

Abu Bakar, who is now a Datuk, can vouch for the truth of this story. To say that we were frightened was hardly the correct expression. Nevertheless there was no way of escaping and so the only thing to do was to face it.

When the commander heard my story, he smiled, and that was a real relief. He said "Now, all right," and offered us orange crush. He took the gun and told us to go back.

I never felt so happy in my life. That, I prayed and hoped, would be the end of all my worries and troubles, for I had had too

many of them these last few days, without proper food or proper sleep, having had to go to Singapore and back, then on my return to be confronted with these unhappy occurrences.

As a result of these incidents, there appeared to be a better understanding between the Japanese garrison commander and his officers on the one hand and we and our government officials on the other. By now the Japanese had taken us sufficiently into their confidence to discuss local affairs with us, as a result of which the atmosphere became more calm and the people less disturbed. We and the business people frequently threw parties for them.

I found out that this commander was a priest before he joined the army, and his name was Tomiaka, with the rank of captain. He made available the service of a soldier to teach Japanese to me and my brother-in-law, Syed Sheh.

This was a great help to me, but try as I would, I made no progress with the language except to know how to say "thank you", "please", "eat" and "drink" and to know that Kulim is pronounced in Japanese as "Kurimu". However, relations improved and it brought peace of mind to the people.

Hardly had we got to know one another when the garrison had to move on to the Philippines to defend that country. I was told the Americans were hitting back and had won a major naval victory near Guam.

The Japanese moved all their available troops to the Pacific area. Another garrison took over, whose numbers were fewer and less aggressive. But there were other parasites and camp followers, most of whom, I understood, came from the Japanese colony of Taiwan. They cashed in on the Chinese business community of Kulim.

On one occasion one of these men, who was a master villain, beat up one of my peace corps men who had apprehended some illicit samsu sellers — obviously his men. Having beaten up my official, he then tied him with a rope round his neck and dragged him towards the garrison.

Luckily for this victim, I was at the window at the time and I rushed down, to the road and asked, "What's happening?" I told the villain to release him and went up with this Taiwanese to the garrison commander and explained to him that the man they had taken was one of my peace corps men, who had arrested a person carrying illicit samsu.

But I could not speak Japanese and the Taiwanese made excuses and got away.

But at the end of the war, when the communists took over Kulim, he met his end and was put to death in a very cruel manner by them for his crimes. And so were others who collaborated with him. That was poetic justice.

Another nasty experience I had concerned the silver valuables taken from European homes. All this silverware I sent in six lorry-loads to the government in Alor Star, and I thought I was to be commended for my good work. Nobody else had sent them anything, as every district was looted when the British left, except Kulim.

When I arrived I was called before one of the Japanese officials — a terror of a man called Hanger. He glared at me and shouted that a few knives were missing. About that, I said, I did not know because I had packed them up and sent them to Alor Star.

"You must have stolen them," he shouted at me. I was taken aback, as this was the second time I had been called thief, first by a Nazi and now by this Japanese.

It took me some time before I replied, because if I had lost my temper and hit him, I would have had my head chopped off. "Mr. Hanger," I said, "it is I who prepared the inventory and if I had wanted to keep the knives I would not have entered them in the list."

"You don't talk!" he shouted, "You must replace the knives!"

"That I can do, but they will be my own and they would not be the same as the ones you had which were silver-handled," I replied. However, I had to send my knives to make up for the missing ones.

This silverware and other valuable objects were worth many thousands of dollars and I never received a word of thanks. When the British returned, some estate manager asked me about the silver. I could afford to be cheeky with the British, and I told them to go to the Japanese and get them. They couldn't expect me to have held on to those valuables in my safekeeping for them all those years!

The Japanese decided that rubber did not pay and ordered rubber trees to be cut down. So some very good estates, particularly Victoria Estate, were to be turned into cotton fields, and others into rice fields.

But I became rather unpopular with the Japanese when I could

not supply the labourers they wanted. At the same time I disagreed with the project, as Kulim was a wet area and not suitable for growing cotton and was too hilly for rice cultivation.

I was given twelve hours' notice to get out.

I felt relieved because as D.O. (*kuncho*, they called it), the job was a thankless one. I had to be on duty twenty-four hours a day and be on hand all the time to entertain big and small men who passed through Kulim on their way to Taiping and the South. Sometimes we had to be on the roadside for hours waiting for a general with a yellow flag to come by.

The Japanese officer administering government in Kedah at the time was a kind-hearted man and used to make frequent visits to Kulim. I always had to be on hand to meet him.

One day I was late, without any good excuse, and his ADC told me off thoroughly. I was lucky to get away with just that, and not a slap on the face which was the fashion of the day.

Back in Alor Star I was made Superintendent of Education and Kedah was officially ceded to Thailand, but the Japanese were virtually in control. My house was taken over by the Japanese and I stayed in a small house next to a coffee-shop and a Chinese sauce factory.

I met with some good fortune. One day Che Din Hashim from Penang decided to dispose of his shares in the Alor Star amusement park, originally owned by Shaw brothers, and this I might say, after some months brought me an unexpected windfall.

I used to collect dividends, once in three months, then once a month, then once in two weeks and then once every week. With this money I was able to live comfortably.

Che Din never forgave himself for the mistake he made. It was about this time that stragglers from the Siamese Death Railway started to come into Alor Star and they were a sorry sight and in a sorry plight with sores all over their bodies and dressed in rags.

So Senu (now Datuk), Mohamed Jamil (Tan Sri) and Khir Johari, Aziz Zain (Tan Sri), Syed Agil (Datuk Sri), Wan Ahmad and a few others whose names escape my memory, volunteered to help me.

We got a house from *Zakat* and *Fitrah* funds (i.e., from the Religious Department) where we accommodated these people and collected money to maintain them.

The whole household was soon infected with sores. It was a distressing sight with everybody scratching at their sores but with

medical care and attention, we got the situation controlled and everyone recovered after some time.

We looked after these people until the British came when the War ended. The government of Kedah gave the credit to someone else who had never seen the place or knew anything about it, still less taken any interest in our work.

So this gentleman, (whose name I will not mention), came to see me to ask about the home and all the particulars about the people who had been living there. I took him round the place.

After that, he came along with some British officers and walked through the camp, telling these officers about the people and how much had been done for them. In this way he got all the credit.

But we got our real thanks from these wretched victims when they were taken back to their homes by B.M.A. officials.

Twenty-five

The Admiral's Sword and Force 136

3 September 1979

"I have fought many a good fight, I have cut down many a worthy opponent, I have won many a battle but alas, I have now to part with my trusted weapon — my good sword handed down from my father and my father's father and his ancestors for years past."

This must have been passing in the mind of the Japanese Rear-Admiral as he was escorted to the British Commander to surrender his sword at Sungei Patani. But before he reached the spot where the British were waiting and ready to receive the sword, the Admiral collapsed in a dead faint.

A couple of British military policemen carried him to the ambulance and on the way to the hospital they realised that the sword had not been surrendered, and after a brief consultation they decided to keep it as a souvenir.

So they wrapped the sword up in a newspaper and hid it under the seat of the ambulance. When they reached the hospital the Admiral was carried inside on a stretcher accompanied by the military police, and when they returned to the ambulance they removed the sword to their own military jeep and kept it in their custody.

What was even more curious was that those high British military officials who had gathered for the sword-receiving ceremony forgot all about the Admiral's sword.

By coincidence — or was it fate? — I became the lucky recipient of the honour for services rendered, when everybody had forgotten me! It happened this way:

When the time came for them to be transferred, the military policemen became panicky for they realised that it was too late to surrender the sword to the military authorities and it was too risky to keep without being found out.

This was the story they told Encik Murad, the Sungei Patani Prisons Officer (now Tan Sri Murad, retired), whose friendship they had cultivated and it was they who had asked Encik Murad if

he knew of somebody who had a good Malay kris and who would want to exchange it for this sword.

Encik Murad brought them to me one night, and this was the story they repeated to me as to how they came into possession of the sword. They brought out the sword, wrapped in newspaper and I saw what an old and valuable weapon it must have been. But it was not as long as the usual military samurai sword. This, it appeared, was a naval sword.

Nevertheless, it was as sharp and as lethal as any a weapon I have set my eyes on. The Admiral must have come from an old naval family.

I told them that I had no kris but if they gave me sufficient time I'd look around for one. So the next day I went to my brother, Tunku Yaacob's house, as I knew he had a few kris all kept in a glass case.

I picked up the best one and when the soldiers came to my house I handed it to them and they were most pleased. Soon afterwards Tunku Yaacob found out about his missing property and was told that I had been to the house.

He came to me and said that the kris I had taken was his most treasured possession. I expressed regret but I had no chance to see him before I had given it away to the British military policemen. He told me that if I could return him that particular kris he would give me another, an equally good one.

I had to do a bit of hunting for the military policemen but finally found them just before they left to go on transfer and told them my story. They were sporting enough to accept the one I handed to them in exchange for the one I gave them earlier. So "All's well that ends well". The sword is now in the Penang Museum among my other treasured possessions, as a museum piece.

Before the Japanese surrender was announced, I received a message that my two nephews, Tunku Osman and Tunku Yusof Kassim, had parachuted into the jungle. They were in Kuala Nerang district where formerly I had been a District Officer.

I immediately made my way with two friends to Kuala Nerang and we met in the house of the Officer-in-Charge of the Police District, Encik Abdul Rahman Hashim, who was later to become the Inspector-General of Police, and who was assassinated in Kuala Lumpur.

That was the first time I had seen a bottle of whisky (which

they produced) after so long a period. We had a good dinner and met three European officers and other members of Force 136.

Col. Hasler was in charge of the Force and I told him about my very good friend, the District Officer, Baling, who had been taken away by Chinese guerillas in Baling and asked his help to get this man, Syed Abu Bakar, released. (Many years later Syed Bakar's son, Syed Hussein, became my son-in-law.)

Col. Hasler asked for more Malays to join his Force as he had barely one hundred men under his command. I promised to do what I could and so after dinner at Abdul Rahman's house, I returned and started to recruit good and keen-spirited young men and sent them immediately in four lorryloads to join Force 136 (Malay) in Kuala Nerang.

Col. Hasler kept his promise and went to the Baling jungle and finally found Syed Bakar with the Penghulu of Baling all tied up. He managed to get Syed Bakar released but the unfortunate *penghulu* was later killed by the guerillas.

I went to tell Col. Hasler after this that Communist troops had already taken their position twelve miles from Alor Star at Pokok Sena and were preparing to enter the town. This had to be stopped as it might incite violence in Alor Star if they entered.

A British major was kind enough to offer to go and see the Japanese garrison commander and I sent as a guide Syed Monsor who had been staying with me. The Major managed to get the Japanese to stop the advancing Communists from entering Alor Star.

So there was no incident of any kind in Alor Star, except for the few which had taken place earlier. I have already related in *Looking Back* how some Chinese had locked up the local policemen who were later released by my men.

Then a day was set for the leading Kedah government officials to receive the officers of Force 136 through our intermediary. So Senu, Khir Johari and I, together with a few others, went in a car to meet the British officers at the junction of Jalan Day and Jalan Langgar and we brought them to the Balai Besar to meet the Sultan, Tuanku Badlishah, and Tuan Haji Mohd. Sharif, the State Secretary, and other government officials.

We waited in front of the Balai Besar with our friends while crowds of people gathered on the *padang* in front to look at the British faces which they had not seen for many years.

When they came down from the Balai Besar they went straight

off to Kuala Nerang without as much as nodding to us. They must have been told that we were naughty boys. After that we saw no more of them.

When the Japanese officially surrendered, the communist forces came in and established their headquarters in Jalan Raja. They did not misbehave or do anything untoward but rather tried to go all out to win over the people.

However, outside Alor Star in the districts of Kulim, Sungei Patani and Yen, they forced the District Officers to take to the platform and denounce British imperialism.

They also asked the people to support the communist aim of setting up an independent Malayan State, which according to them, would give everybody freedom and equality. They made many promises of good times to come if they succeeded in taking over the government. In other words, " 'Come into my parlour,' said the spider to the fly".

All this while, that is, before the arrival of the British, there was no more government in Kedah, but before it collapsed I was appointed the head of the Civil Defence Force for North Kedah.

This put me in a serious predicament, for to refuse would be to expose the people to a serious danger of racial violence, as there were communists who might start trouble.

Like it or not, I accepted the heavy responsibility of maintaining peace.

There was no time to prepare any form of defence; there were no transport facilities to carry me out of the town to other districts except on bicycle, and so I concentrated all my attention and efforts on Alor Star. All the other towns had been taken over by the communist guerrillas.

I managed to muster sufficient support from among young officers and young Malays who rallied to my call to save Alor Star and prevent bloodshed.

Among the leading men were the same people who had helped me look after the destitutes and stragglers from the Siamese Death Railway. In other words, Senu, Khir Johari, Aziz Zain, Syed Agil, Wan Ahmad, Jamil and a few others.

There was also one Haji Hussein Mat Dol, a religious teacher from Simpang Empat, who responded to my call for help. He later became President of Persatuan Melayu Kedah. In fact the young hopefuls made a scapegoat of him and he disappeared into oblivion soon after.

These people and other followers were prepared to risk their lives in order to save the town from the communists. When the British Military Administration took over the State, other officials came out from hiding and began to show themselves in all their former glory.

However, let it be; but the people who had served the state in the critical and dangerous time were young men and when the state returned to normalcy, they were forgotten.

The first British officer who took over as head of the administration during the B.M.A. in Kedah was a Colonel Sommerville. He used to be Conservator of Forests, Kedah, stationed in Sungei Patani at the time when I was the District Officer.

But he and I fell out because I rejected a case which he had brought against some squatters for cutting down trees in the forest reserve. He didn't forget this "slight" and so when he came as head of the B.M.A. he tried to get his own back on me.

I used to refer to him as "the Boer". By a stroke of good luck for me, he was succeeded by a very much nicer man, a Mr. E.V.G. Day, who used to be British Adviser, Perlis. Sommerville was relegated to a less important post.

That ended Sommerville's arrogance. Incidentally, after his retirement he really became a Boer, for he finally went to live in South Africa.

When the war ended, I was still Superintendent of Education but there was a military officer, a Colonel Whitworth, who took over as Adviser of Education. In actual fact he took complete control of the Education Department and I was just given a table at the corner of the room with no work to do except to look at the staff and teachers who were formerly under me, daily passing before me to enter the Adviser's room.

Some had the kindness and courtesy to remember me and the difficult days we went through together and wished me "good morning", but many just ignored me.

Well, I said to myself — this is the way of life — one day we are remembered and another day we are forgotten. So I contented myself by looking at them as they passed by and thinking to myself — know men for what they are!

Twenty-six

The MCA Imbroglia

10 September 1979

In September 1979 the Annual General Assembly of the MCA was enlivened by an open struggle for the presidency of the party between the incumbent, Datuk Lee San Choon, and his deputy, Michael Chen. The occasion gave rise to no small amount of fierce invective and dire predictions that the party would become irrevocably split. In the event, Datuk Lee won handsomely and the general unity of the MCA remained undisturbed.

The MCA leadership issue has been discussed very widely when, in fact, such a matter should not have been made public until after it had been settled one way or the other at their General Assembly.

The election of officials, particularly that of the president, is a very delicate matter and one which can split the party wide apart unless it is carefully and constitutionally handled.

For this reason the UMNO General Assembly decides by ballot, without giving any indication who the voters are. Until the votes are counted, no one knows who will be returned.

This is also provided for, no doubt, in the MCA constitution.

The two parties, UMNO and the MCA, have existed as partners for all these years and their leaders have been responsible for ensuring that the democratic government of this country adheres strictly to the constitution. The people expect these parties to stick to their guns, no matter what odds they face.

That was my experience as the leader of UMNO from 1952 and as leader of the Alliance for almost as long.

I was lucky enough to be returned unopposed as UMNO president all that time. When the late Tun Cheng-Lock Tan was appointed alternate leader of the Alliance, he, too, refused to accept the honour but left it to me to continue for all time as leader of the Alliance.

Hence I enjoyed a confidence and support which has rarely

been the lot of any leader.

There have been disagreements between members of UMNO itself on many issues, as well as disagreements between UMNO and the MCA.

Although this happened from time to time, it was never serious except in 1959 when Tun Cheng-Lock Tan was succeeded by Dr. Lim Chong Eu as the MCA president.

There was open conflict between UMNO and the MCA under Dr. Lim's leadership over the distribution of parliamentary seats.

The new MCA then elected (Tun) Tan Siew Sin as their new leader and the MCA members gave him their full support.

The Alliance won more than a two-thirds majority in the election under the new MCA leadership. Their new chief (Tun) Tan Siew Sin could not speak even a word of Chinese.

This showed that the people wanted a stable government so that they could live in peace and harmony and do business — which is what they are most interested in — business, and not all that much politics.

No particular community can exist alone without the help and cooperation of the others, for Malaysia is a multiracial nation. The same is also the case with other multiracial countries such as Belgium, Switzerland and Canada, for example.

There has been this attitude of live and let live all these years.

The MCA as a Chinese party has enjoyed on the whole the confidence of the Chinese community, not because the Chinese think that the MCA is a dynamic Chinese political party, or that the MCA can take over control of the administration of the country.

All that they have looked for in the MCA is that it is the only party that enjoys the confidence of the Malay people. I have said at different times that even if there were only five MCA members left, I would still support the MCA.

It was for this particular reason and not for any other that the MCA must continue to lead the Chinese community as it has done in the past.

It has done so much for the Chinese without creating suspicion or distrust among the other partners.

In the present circumstances in this country, it is inevitable that the political parties that can give service must represent their respective communities, the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians.

This is the position in all the other countries that I have just

mentioned.

So, too, is Malaysia, and this prosperity is due to the good understanding existing between the races and their desire to serve Malaysia and the communities they represent.

The MCA's task is no doubt difficult because there are some diehard Chinese who refuse to be anything else but Chinese and who do not feel inclined to give their loyalty to any other country but China.

World conditions have changed so much that they will soon realise that in the end the best country to live in is this one, Malaysia. They have got to think of the future and that of their descendants.

It is in their interest that those who come after them be provided for, with a home assured in which to live in comfort, instead of all the uncertainties faced by people living in the communist-run countries of Southeast Asia.

The MCA must be preserved to foster good relations between the races in this country. With this object in mind it must uphold its good image as the premier Chinese political party of the country.

The party on the whole has the support of professional men, businessmen, intellectuals and the Chinese masses. It has a fair proportion of representation in the Cabinet, in Parliament, in state, city and municipal councils and on various government commissions and committees.

This gives the MCA the standing which commands respect, not only with the Chinese people, but with the others as well.

There has been great excitement over the election of the MCA officials because of the standing of the party. It is understandable, therefore, that some of the members have become unduly excited over the election.

But I feel that they don't have to go so far as to undermine the party by issuing statements which can be considered *sub judice* — in other words that prejudice the issue such as seen in some of the utterances published in the press.

Threats of resignation if such and such a person is elected to head the MCA are common and made by leaders in positions of responsibility. All these prejudicial statements will only disturb the electoral machinery and undermine the party constitution.

I have not taken up this matter earlier because the muddy water has been churned up and, whatever I might have said,

would not have helped to improve the situation.

Now that the election is over, I can talk perhaps more freely as an old friend of the party and what I say might be accepted in the right spirit, a reminder to the MCA leaders to be less callous and more responsible.

MCA affairs are not personal to the leading members only, they belong to the party and the party belongs to the Chinese people.

So the leaders must think well before they do or say anything, for anything said or done can harm the party's good image and standing.

The other partner, UMNO, elects its officers once in every three years but members do respect the constitution and on the whole they have kept clean *vis-à-vis* the party constitution.

They send in their nominations for officer-bearers and the whole thing is decided by secret ballot.

When one's nominee fails to get the required number of votes, they bear in silence their disappointment but no one ever voices it openly, much less make any statement that is likely to hurt the successful candidate.

Article 23 of the constitution of the MCA reads:

"The President, Deputy President and four Vice-Presidents other than the two Vice-Presidents who are the National Chairmen of the Youth and Wanita sections, shall be elected from among ordinary members of the General Assembly by the General Assembly and unless sooner removed, shall hold office until the next election of party officials in the General Assembly but shall be eligible for re-election."

The constitution says clearly, and I reiterate, that the General Assembly shall elect office-bearers on the vote of members at the General Assembly.

Let the matter be decided at the General Assembly and not aired in public before the Assembly takes place.

This is not a new thing with the MCA. It has happened every time new officials were brought in at the expense of old ones, and the chain reaction is a break-up in the friendship between the leaders, causing a loss to the party.

Some of the dedicated old members have been with the party for a considerable length of time.

It seems a pity, because whatever is the choice of the Assembly as provided for in the constitution, the members must respect it.

In this way the party can continue not only to exist but to gain strength with maturity.

The man who took over the party leadership in 1952 and who retired from active politics in 1970 has watched the development and progress of UMNO and also that of its partners, the MCA and the MIC, with satisfaction, and that man is me.

I must say that on the whole I have been happy with the way the party's business has been conducted and even more so with the way the government has been administered and the progress made as years succeed years.

This is like an elixir of life for me in my declining years. I have taken to writing on issues or current events and sometimes lapse into the past. This is done to keep our interest in the nation alive and the new generation informed of what has gone on before.

It is not often that it is the lot of a party leader to live and see his ambition taking shape before his eyes. I am fortunate to be a witness to all this.

I have so much confidence in this country and in the ability of our people to co-exist for the common good. The parties entrusted with the administration are those parties with good and sensible leaders.

I have confidence that this nation will continue to provide all the happiness for the many races that have decided to make a home of this country.

The MCA election will show very little change; in fact those who will be elected to lead the party will be the people who have been associated with the party for as many years as one cares to remember. For instance the president is still Datuk Lee San Choon.

Datuk Lee San Choon was literally an MCA baby. The first politics he understood were MCA politics. I knew him as a chubby-faced young man, keen and dedicated to the cause of the MCA, and he became assistant secretary to Tan Sri T.H. Tan. He knows the MCA from A to Z and has led the party as president since 1975. He has been re-elected and I offer him my heartiest congratulations.

For those who lost in the race for the leadership of the MCA, let bygones be bygones. Datuk Chen is also a dedicated member of the MCA. I remember him as a man about whom I spoke in his campaign when he first stood as MCA candidate and won a seat. He has been deputy president since 1977.

All these men are not strangers to the Barisan. They started off with the Alliance and have been the political bulwark in all the Alliance's successes, now it is the same with the Barisan. They must continue to serve the MCA and the Barisan needs the support of men such as these.

I offer my heartiest congratulations to the new president and office-bearers. For those who have not been successful, I wish them better luck next time. They have all given their time in the past to the task of party-and nation-building. If they don't win this time, let's hope they will succeed next time.

But the MCA must go on for the good of this country.

Twenty-seven

The Future of the Sport of Kings

17 September 1979

The Penang races are off. This must be a great disappointment to the many thousands of racegoers, who count among them rich and poor, old and young, men and women, heavy gamblers and those who like a mild flutter on the horses they fancy.

Above all are the small men who invest a few cents on the four-digit and three-digit and hope to make fortunes.

For this purpose, they consult *bomohs* and mediums and dig up the skulls of suicides to get the numbers. What else they go in for to get the numbers is beyond imagination.

Some get the numbers. Those who don't try again. But the main thing is the fun they get in chasing the numbers. The only sure winners are the turf clubs and the government.

Thousands of these people visit the race course, where races are held on Saturdays and Sundays and also the other courses where the turf clubs operate off-course betting.

The foreigners who watch the crowds from the windows of their hotels in Kuala Lumpur, often wonder what there is to see. There are so many people milling around the race course with hundreds of cars about, but no horses running.

Malaysia has come a long way in horse racing since independence. So has Singapore.

I remember when this country first achieved independence, the income from racing amounted to \$4 million and the government of the time was quite happy about it.

After independence, things changed.

After my visit to New Zealand I decided to introduce off-course betting and then discount betting to combat the bookies.

We could have introduced licences for the bookies, but after a close study of the matter, we came to the conclusion that nobody would apply for a licence when the parasites were about, plying their nefarious trade openly.

Despite this, the government derives a good income from

racing. From the Penang Turf Club alone, the tax payable to the government is roughly over a million dollars.

The total revenue obtained by the government from betting on the tote, and the three and four digits exceeds \$100 million a year.

The owners are the people who keep racing going in this country and they are the ones who pay out. I remember when I was first asked to join a syndicate (*kongsit*) with a few friends to maintain a horse, it cost about \$300 a month. Today it costs no less than \$800 a month, and unless an owner can be sure that his horse wins twice a year, he will be the loser.

There are many owners who can make up for this by owning good horses and by placing substantial bets on their certainties.

Many, however, go in for the fun of owning a horse and the fun of seeing it win. Such owners stand to lose with every increase in the cost of owning a horse.

Every demand made by the stable boys has to be met by the owners, not the trainers or the turf clubs.

Many millions of dollars worth of good thoroughbreds are in training in Malaysia and Singapore and they come from Australia, New Zealand, England and Ireland.

In order to maintain the standard of racing, new blood is imported into the country annually.

Malaysian and Singapore trainers visit the yearling sales in England, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand to make purchases for their owners.

Some Malaysian and Singapore race horses have proved themselves too good for this country and have won glory abroad. Amongst such horses were "Jumbo Jet" and "Amusement Park", and a horse owned by Tan Sri Runme Shaw won a premier sprint race in England.

Our own stud farm run by the Tote Board has produced some decent racehorses, progeny of famous sires and dams from abroad.

The capital outlay on racing is very high and owners bear the cost.

But no one makes money from racing except the government, the turf clubs and the employees who are assured of their salaries.

There are of course the parasites who feed on dirty gambling and they go round beating up the jockeys and others who have not been too cooperative.

But these people just work for easy money, and when racing is good they breed and multiply.

The men who keep racing going and maintain their high standard are the owners and the syndicates who own horses.

The honest punters and the small men who frequent the turf clubs enjoy racing and make it the good sport it is today.

Industrial action which tends to disrupt racing in Malaysia should be discouraged.

Every effort must be made to bring the matter to an amicable settlement with a give-and-take attitude on both sides.

The owners, too, must be given a better deal and the Owners' Association should be made a party to any negotiation for the settlement of any dispute between the unions and the turf clubs.

Racing on Saturdays and Sundays provides some relaxation for those who like a flutter and excitement. Race courses are crowded on race days, which are always Saturday and Sunday. Racing, unlike other forms of business, operates only on these two days.

Certain countries, like Britain, France, America, Australia and New Zealand have racing every day, in various parts of the country, but not on Sunday.

I was surprised to learn that New Zealand, a country with a population of three million people, rakes in a racing revenue of about £ 30 million a year. It is impossible to assess what revenue is obtained by the other governments such as those of Australia, England, France and America.

But in Hong Kong, the takings for one racing day are something like HK\$14 million to HK\$20 million and the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club pays for many welfare projects and the maintenance of other charitable institutions.

We would like to see racing continue in Malaysia on an even keel. It is only natural that the turf clubs must attend to this for the government to get the revenue as part of its national income.

It also gives employment to many thousands of people and also part-time job for office workers.

When racing is forcibly suspended rightly or wrongly, for reasons which cannot be avoided, then all these sources of income are lost to these beneficiaries.

So, racing must go on.

Twenty-eight

Islam: The Tasks Ahead

1 October 1979

One thing which Malaysians can be justly proud of is the religious tolerance and understanding which prevails in this country.

The national revenue has been used to build mosques and temples and other places of worship for the people of all religions. In particular, much money has been spent for the development of the Islamic religion itself without opposition or a murmur of discontent from any source.

I would like to record here, too, an event of outstanding world significance which took place here in 1969 for the first time in the history of the Islamic movement — a conference of all the Muslim countries which was held in Malaysia, the purpose of which was to discuss and settle the many problems that appeared to cause irritation to Muslims.

There was no way of tackling the problems except to invite all official religious Muslim leaders to a conference and decide on them.

It took us many years to get an agreement after delegations were sent to all these countries to convince them of the need for such a conference. Finally, on 21 April 1969, the conference was held in Kuala Lumpur for seven days.

This conference discussed many subjects of importance to Muslims and many resolutions were passed and decisions arrived at. The most important among them were as follows :-

1. The call for the observance of the omnipotence of God as obligatory and that it should be carried out with wisdom and in conformity with the teachings of Islam.

According to these, Muslims are required to cooperate closely with one another in order to create a national Islamic identity.

For this purpose there should be an international body whose responsibility and duty is to carry out Islamic missionary work at an international level.

It should have a close relationship with local missionary bodies

in order to achieve uniformity and understanding.

2. The affirmation that the aim of Muslims should be directed towards a correct interpretation of the principles of Islam and to uphold the dignity of the religion.

In this way, Muslim leaders could give practical service to people of the Islamic religion and help to save the younger people from going astray in this world of make-believe, with all its artificialities.

3. The proposal to set up a foundation for the training of local missionaries who should master the language of the Quran and understand it in local and modern languages and could arrange syllabuses for schools suitable for the ability of children and in keeping with the principles of Islam.

4. The resolution that religious life be linked up with social life and actual conditions in solving the existing problems faced by Muslims.

The conference asked Muslims to take into account the serious situation faced by the Muslim communities in Jerusalem and the other occupied territories.

5. The call to establish Islamic libraries for children and youth as widely as possible.

6. The call to encourage the learning of the Arabic of the Quran and to give Arabic its proper place in conferences and missionary activities.

7. The call to give attention to the higher level of competitive religious research in universities and higher places of learning in order to achieve an objective outlook on the universality and status of Islam.

8. The call to revise modern books on Islam and for the consequent exchange of such publications in all Islamic countries in order to provide mutual benefit for all Muslims.

9. The call for greater efforts to give *imams* training in current matters, in order to give them a better idea as to how to prepare and deliver their sermons.

10. The call for an interchange of news and information among Muslim countries and for this purpose, the setting up of a centre for its dissemination.

11. The call for the establishment of an organisation for the cultural exchange of professors and students among Islamic universities and religious institutions. Kuala Lumpur was proposed as the site for such a centre to carry out research and

Islamic studies.

12. The call for all Muslims to donate portions of the *zakat* for *Jihad* (holy war) for the following purposes:

(a) Recovery of the Al Aqsa Mosque and the land taken over by the enemy;

(b) Aid for those suffering as a result of enemy action, and

(c) The strengthening of *Damstul Islam* and the implementation of the principles of close cooperation between Muslims for the good of the religion.

In the matter of taxes, the conference resolved that those imposed by a Government should not be regarded as substitutes for *zakat*, provided due regard was given to the ability of Muslims to pay their dues. This was one of the important decisions taken. It means that if a man is made to pay income tax or other dues and these payments constitute a big drain on his income, he cannot be forced to pay *zakat*. The conference also decided with respect to the transplanting of eyes, that in case of urgent need and necessity, where the life of the recipient depended on the transplanting of the organ and its operation was of reasonable urgency, the operation was permissible. However, permission had first to be obtained from the donor before the transplanting was carried out, or in the case of the donor being already dead, that of his heirs.

It was also stipulated that there must be no commercialisation of this human organ.

On the matter of determining the date for commencing the Fast and the *Hari Raya*, it was agreed that the governments of Muslim countries should each set up a body of experts to determine the dates of the commencement of the months of *Ramadan* and *Syawal* and that these bodies should liaise with one another.

The conference also decided that a special body consisting of religious scholars and scientists nominated by the participating governments be set up to work out a uniform Muslim calendar.

I have set out as fully as I can, and as best I can, the decisions taken at the conference.

The main thing of course concerns the sighting of the moon for the beginning and ending of the fasting month, the *Hari Raya* celebrations and the need to work out a uniform Muslim lunar calendar.

The conference has agreed on how this can be done, but

unfortunately there has been no follow-up and each country still works on its own without making any effort to consult the others.

The result is utter confusion and chaos.

Muslim countries within the region celebrate the festival on different days. What is worse, this upsets the calendar itself.

And so it was that PERKIM at its last general meeting called upon our government to make a really serious effort to obtain coordination in this matter on which all Muslim countries have agreed at the Islamic Conference held in Kuala Lumpur in April, 1969.

That was the first conference ever held in which all Muslim governments were represented.

It is a pity to allow all the important decisions taken then to lapse for want of coordination.

For this reason I have set out at length, the main items considered and agreed to at the conference in the hope that it will catch the attention of heads of states, who are the defenders of the religion in their own countries, and in Malaysia the Conference of Rulers, which determines the dates of the fasting month and the *Raya*.

Twenty-nine

Time for a Re-Think on Sighting the Moon

8 October 1979

A few important points emerged from the Islamic Foreign Ministers' Conference of 21 April 1969, which are relevant to the questions raised by PERKIM at its annual general meeting.

These points are of vital importance to the Muslim world and there should have been a follow-up, but there was none.

I will deal with the most important ones as they are of lively interest to us all.

The uncertainties of the new moon, the sighting of which will begin the fasting month and the celebration of the *Hari Raya*, concern all Muslims.

As is well known, Islam in general follows a lunar calendar especially so in determining many of its religious festivals such as the month of fasting, the *Hari Raya*, the month of the *Haj* and so on.

On this basis, therefore, the Muslim months do not correspond with the months of the Gregorian calendar, but by registering an annual decline of about eleven days in the Gregorian solar year, the Muslim months keep on moving through all the months and seasons of the Gregorian year.

But the question that looms large nowadays is not so much the wisdom of this lunar system but the mode of determining the dates of its calendar.

The prescriptions of the *Syariah* law based on the clear evidence of the *Hadith* require Muslims to see (*ru'ya*) the moon, both for the commencement of the Fast as well as for its termination.

The same *Hadith* also lays down in two different versions that in the event of poor visibility, the observer may do one of two things — either resort to astronomical calculations or fast through the month of *Ramadan* for thirty days.

These versions of the *Hadith* are reported by well-known authorities like Imam al-Bukhari and Muslim.

As Muslims, we are, of course, bound to accept the authenticity and the wisdom behind these profound utterances of the Prophet Muhammad.

But some pertinent questions on which one would like to have some guidance, are:

Whether "seeing the moon (*ru'ya*)" in this context means "seeing with the naked eye" or "seeing with the aid of scientific instruments"; one would also like to know the extent to which the provisions for astronomical calculations could be extended to determining the dates of the months well in advance.

Under modern conditions, with the advance of science, the new moon can be calculated years ahead and every calendar can be drawn up to tell to the very second the appearance of the new moon.

The day of the commencement of the Fast and the day of the celebration of the *Hari Raya* are important events in the life of all Muslims.

And so, every year, millions of Muslims wait anxiously for the announcement of the day.

Cakes are prepared ahead of the day of the festival, and these can last for a long time.

But there are many housewives who prepare perishables, which, unless consumed within a short time, would turn bad. This is the type of food which is most enjoyed by visitors and guests.

However, this happens every year and so no one bothers to complain, but bears in silence his misfortune. We are asked to fast up to the last day and as good Muslims we do so, but something must be done, such as the appointment of experts at least within the region, to study these problems in depth and offer some workable solutions within the limits of the *Syariah* law.

I am, of course, not suggesting that the time factor involved for the preparation of food items or their wastage be made the main criterion for reviewing the present procedures and determining the dates.

Cakes and savouries are incidental to the main object of the *Hari Raya*, as laid down in the Quran, which is: to say *takbir* to Allah for His guidance as a measure of our gratitude to Him (*Al-Quran*, 2:185).

The main justification, as I see it, is the need to promote a measure of regional unity and cooperation in these matters.

The Islamic Conference of 1969 decided that the matter could be determined and the proper way to do so would be to set up a body of experts "which shall consult one another on the commencement of the months of *Ramadan* and *Syawal*".

Muslims have been explicitly urged in the Quran to solve all their problems through consultation (*Al-Quran*, 42:38).

The Prophet, too, has set splendid examples of this tradition in his own life, and likewise the first Caliphs followed the precedents set by the Prophet in the matter of consultation.

This has not been done and no consultation has taken place between the governments, where as it is so easy in these modern times to do so. On a matter of such importance it should have been done.

Experts could be made to contact one another by phone and other means of communication so widely used today by businessmen.

At least reasonable understanding between countries in the same region, such as Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia could be reached by the governments of Asian nations.

As it was, Indonesia started their *Hari Raya* this year one day ahead of us and so did Singapore. This would make the month of *Syawal* one day different between these countries.

A Religious Council was set up on religious matters among the states of Malaysia.

Even then, it did not receive 100 per cent support from the states, as the Sultans felt that they would lose their authority as heads of religion in their respective states.

The object is to serve God and the religion and to achieve uniformity. If it had been the intention of the federal government to undermine the Sultans' prerogative, all the government had to do was to amend the constitution. Clearly then, it was never the intention of the government to interfere with matters over which the Sultans have authority.

All that was intended was to get them to work together for the good of Islam and in the name of Allah, for Allah commands us in the Quran (*Al-Quran*, 5:2):

Help you one another towards righteousness and pious duty: Help not one another towards sin and transgression.

The disparities in the use of the lunar calendar within the

Muslim world can lead to serious consequences. Many Muslim countries that use the Muslim calendar as the official one can face serious confusion because of the differences in the calendar.

Let us assume that it was decided to call for an urgent meeting of leaders on the 10th *Syawal* in Saudi Arabia. In Malaysia, this would be the 12th and in Indonesia the 11th.

Something has to be done about this, if it is to be a workable proposition, for with progressive thinking many Muslims of this country are beginning to look to Islamic experts to prove the relevance of Islam to the present world.

PERKIM was right to bring up this matter and it will continue to do so unless and until something more constructive is done about it.

Another decision is that religious life should be linked with social life. In solving many prevailing social problems, factual conditions should be taken into account. The world in which we live today has undergone many drastic changes since the world of yesterday.

Then people living in one country were cut off from those living in another. Today it takes only a few hours to reach a country 2,000 miles away.

It is nothing for a man living in Penang, for instance, to accept an invitation to a function in Kuala Lumpur. In fact it is a normal practice now to travel miles to attend to business and give no thought to distance.

These are modern conditions of life brought about by modern civilisation and advance of science and technology. Are we Muslims justified in denying ourselves the right to keep abreast of time where it does not conflict with the principles of Islam?

Some would have us believe that it was wrong to adapt ourselves to modern civilisation — hence some *dakwah* preachers suggest that we should give up this world for the next.

I am not well versed with the complexity of the religion and it was for this reason that I took the trouble to call a Conference of Religious Leaders whose decisions on all religious matters may serve as a guide.

Religious life and social life must have an important place in our faith, otherwise Muslims will find it hard to live in this world.

The Conference also agreed on the setting up of a body of experts to deal with the higher level of competitive religious research in universities and higher places of learning in order to

achieve an objective outlook on the universality and status of Islam.

This is very important indeed, and showed the progressive thoughts of these religious leaders.

The Islamic Secretariat in those days when I was the Secretary-General established such a department. Unfortunately not much is heard of the work it has undertaken, which should have been implemented and in operation today.

The meeting which has been planned by PERKIM for this region of Asia must take all these matters up, and if the Malaysian delegation would be kind enough to bring them up at the Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers at its next meeting, it will receive the attention of the right people at the right place.

Muslims can then expect results.

Thirty

Of Raya and Khalwat

15 October 1979

I am so glad that Datuk Haji Mohamed Nasir has agreed to take up the question of the Muslim lunar calendar, particularly in respect of the sighting of the moon for the start of the fasting month and the celebration of *Hari Raya*.

At least he agreed there should be complete understanding on the observance of the Fast and the *Raya* by the Muslims in the neighbouring countries of Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia.

He told a Malay daily that he agrees with what I said in my article in *The Star*. In fact, we understand that two experts on religious affairs have been sent to Turkey to make a study of this particular subject.

With this assurance, it is expected that something useful will come out of it.

One thing, however, I am sure of, and that is when the conference of PERKIM is held in Kuala Lumpur in January next year, backed by Rabitah of Saudi Arabia, much time will be spent deliberating this religious matter.

This will be the second time that such a discussion will have taken place and what will come out of it will provide food for thought for religious leaders. It is hoped some action will follow later.

PERKIM will invite Datuk Nasir or his representative to the conference.

He, in fact is still the president of Kelantan PERKIM and when he was Menteri Besar he did much work for PERKIM.

The present headquarters of PERKIM in Kelantan took shape because of his help.

When the first batch of Cambodian refugees arrived, he extended all the aid possible to make PERKIM's work light.

At the time it was so difficult to know how to go about looking after refugees and it was PERKIM's responsibility alone to

provide accommodation and food for them.

The Kelantan government under Datuk Mohamed Nasir gave unstinted service to PERKIM at the time.

Since Datuk Nasir has given the assurance that he will make every effort to regularise the date for the observance of the fasting and the *Raya* by appointing a committee of experts to make a study of it, I sincerely believe that he will carry out his promise.

Another interesting matter, in connection with sex in the eyes of Islam, is the question of *khalwat*.

There has been quite a lot of publicity given to this as a result of the statement made by a *kadi*, who proposed that Malay couples checking into hotels should be asked whether they are husband and wife before being given rooms.

According to a hotel source, this cannot be done because it is against regulations to pry into the privacy of anyone checking into a hotel.

Malay couples don't go by the married name of Mr. and Mrs., Monsieur and Madame, but they have and are proud to use their own individual names, and to ask whether they are married will certainly give offence.

However, it would be prudent for the hotel management to question a Malay and non-Malay couple checking in, on the grounds that they are forced by the law to do so, and to find out whether they are legally man and wife.

All the receptionist has to say is: "I am sorry, sir, I have been asked by the authorities to examine your identity. I know how embarrassing it is for you to answer this delicate question. But what can I do? I am only an employee of the hotel and my duty is to do what I am told. If you have to be angry, please be so with the Religious Department, and not with me."

Some time back religious officials raided a hotel at a hill resort and found a Malay woman in "close proximity" with a non-Malay, but there was nothing they could do about it, because one was a Muslim and the other a non-Muslim.

The suggestion now is to mete out equal punishment to a non-Muslim found in "close proximity" with a Muslim.

I do not encourage *khalwat*, but I think there should be a limit on the application of the *khalwat* law — it should apply to Muslims only.

The responsibility of catching those committing *khalwat* lies solely on the shoulders of the Religious Department.

I must say that, with present conditions of life in this country that job must be hard. Nevertheless, it is a job they alone must do.

There are so many cases of *khalwat* today — perhaps every hour of the day and on every day of the month and year.

Girls who go out to work in factories, offices and business houses have to seek a living.

How is it possible then to stop *khalwat*, which means close proximity?

And to stop them from working would be to deprive them of their livelihood.

Some, of course, suggest enhanced punishment such as stoning the culprits or whipping them, but this of course would not hold good under the law of today and I would not recommend it.

Khalwat is definitely wrong but sometimes conditions of life make it impossible to prevent.

Even a husband and wife can be guilty of *khalwat*.

I remember when I was in Japan some years back, I read a report of indecent behaviour involving a Japanese couple which was brought before a magistrate.

It appeared they were found in the Royal Park of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo in very close proximity.

The man explained that it was not performed in public as he was doing it in a bush, and as it was to his own wife, what was wrong with that?

In actual fact, this man shared a room with another couple and they took turns to live in the room. It so happened that on that particular night the other couple had the use of the room and so he had to stay outside with his wife.

The romantic air of the imperial garden was too overpowering for him, and when nature called he answered the call.

What right, therefore, had the police to pry into what he did to his own wife?

Their explanation won the sympathy of the magistrate but it was his duty to punish people for committing indecent acts in public.

So he and his wife were given one day's imprisonment, but when the court rose they were discharged, after being warned not to repeat the act.

The law of sexual offences today has been enlarged to include rape against one's own wife.

It was reported recently that a man in America was charged with raping his estranged wife, and was found guilty.

Khalwat was a serious offence in the old days when Muslim women kept to themselves and it was easier to detect offenders, but today with women enjoying greater freedom, it is difficult to keep track of what they do in their spare time.

I remember being told the story of certain religious officials who went to investigate the showing of a pornographic film.

They burst into the little room where the show was in progress and they enjoyed what they saw so much that they stayed on and completely forgot what they had gone there to do — that is, to arrest those people inside the room.

I am sure this will not happen in the case of *khalwat* investigators, for they have so far proved themselves above reproach, as has been proved by the many offenders they have produced in the *Syariah* Court, and who have been found guilty and punished accordingly.

They must continue to do their job as best they can, and I wish them luck.

Thirty-one

Manners Maketh Man

22 October 1979

I was having a dinner at a small restaurant with two friends the other night. The atmosphere was warm and friendly and the food was excellent.

In the restaurant were many young people who also enjoyed their food and drink and were merry with the lively exuberance of youth, their voices raised loud in conversation.

My friend turned to me and said perhaps I was a "square", as they say in modern parlance for old-fashioned people who do not fit in with modern thinking and who can't adapt themselves to change.

But in our younger days we did not behave as young people do today. We talked in moderate tones and behaved in a quiet manner in public places. We showed plenty of respect for age and rank.

Look at young people today, the way they strut about and the way they eat and drink, throwing all good manners to the wind.

Alas, we can never go back to old times. We have to make some allowance for changing time — Western culture, which has invaded the East, has swept us all off our feet. We cannot expect to escape its impact on our society, particularly in respect of the younger generation.

Everything children read in school nowadays is occidentally-orientated and most of what they see on television and in films comes from the West.

Despite our independence and our new life, we have never been able to combat the upsurge of Western culture.

It is much too over-powering and we have to live with it. I admit we old people would like to see the right blending of the two worlds, for the world has shrunk so much that we have become close neighbours and we must learn to live with one another.

Kipling's theory that West is West and East is East and the

twain shall never meet, holds good no more today.

Old Kipling would never have dreamt that men would reach the moon nor had he thought of the atomic bomb and other lethal weapons that can wipe mankind off the face of the earth.

It is necessary now for men to work together to keep the world going. All men, black and white, brown and yellow, must learn to live in the best of goodwill for the sake of world peace.

In a country like Malaysia with its multiracial population there is all the reason why people of different racial origins should make every effort to understand and respect one another and to look to Malaysia as our home and the sole object of our loyalty.

Many of the rich send their sons at an early age abroad to study, never giving them a chance to learn about life here or even to get to know their parents really well, much less the country in which they were born.

After spending a few years abroad they come back and they have become very Westernised. What can we expect of them except what we ourselves have made of them?

They have not become Malaysians following the Malay or Chinese tradition and custom, but Malaysians of a sort, with a Western style of life.

The Chinese and Indians are easily carried away by the currents of world change and they easily accept the Western way of life, even Western beliefs.

But the Malays, with a strong religious and traditional background, have not completely lost their bearings — they may for a time, but very soon they return to the old ways.

My friend asked me to say something about this, because for him there is so much Chinese literature which deals with ancient customs and traditions which he thinks are good for the Chinese people, particularly the young bloods who should be reminded of the correct behaviour towards their parents and elders and their duty to society.

So I told him that if he could produce those books I could pick out the good points and portray them for the benefit of all people.

The words of the old Chinese sages were wise and it will be good for young people, irrespective of race and creed, to learn them.

Malay culture and tradition are also good and Malays as a race pay a lot of attention to them. The blending of these cultures

might help to create a cultured Malaysian society.

I was surprised to find that very few members of the Civil Service know how to use the correct term or form of address when talking to a person of rank, like members of royalty and other people of high rank.

On a previous occasion I have written about how a secretary in one of our embassies used the words "*tuan*" and "*saya*" when speaking to a sultan instead of "*Tuanku*" and "*patik*".

It appears to be quite common for most of them when talking to royalty to use the same words as they would when talking to ordinary people.

It is only too apparent that these people care not how they talk or what the correct words to use are.

This is particularly so in respect of Malays who lived under direct British rule. When one comes to think of it they cannot be blamed — they had no proper education, no place in the states in which they were born or grew up.

When the top few were skimmed off they had no place in their local society. Independence has changed all this and Malays must make every effort to educate themselves, polish their conduct and keep abreast with national progress.

When I retired from service and vacated my seat in Parliament, I received a letter from the Chief Secretary requesting me to return the railway tickets given to me as an MP. The letter read: — "*Minta tuan hantar balik tiket*"

I handed back the tickets and told this high official. "I may have given up my post as Prime Minister and as Member of Parliament, but I have not given up my title *Yang Teramat Mulia* and *Tunku*. At least I am entitled to be addressed as *Tunku*, so address me properly the next time you write to me".

He agreed to do so, with profound apologies.

However in late 1974 the Malaysian Airline System extended to me VIP treatment with two complimentary air tickets to travel anywhere by MAS within Peninsular Malaysia (including Singapore) — in recognition of my past services, so the chairman, Raja Tan Sri Mohar, said. That bucked me up considerably.

The education our young people receive in schools is much to be blamed for poor manners because the correct etiquette and words used in conversation or writing should have been taught in the classroom.

Now that Malay is the official language of this country, it is

even more important to give it serious thought. A review appears necessary.

Proper curriculum and the right type of book should be used, not those that omit any mention of the architect of independence.

In the old days people were particular about the correct use of words, but our new system follows Indonesia's blindly and forgets what is ours, and how good ours is.

On the question of table manners, I would like to stress that when eating, one is not expected to talk when one's mouth is full of food.

Nor should one clang the plate with the fork and spoon, nor make noise when taking soup, and above all, one should keep the mouth closed when munching food.

Table manners, too, must be correct, if we are to be accepted in society.

I remember one day how Mariam, my adopted daughter, was having dinner with a high-ranking member of the Malaysian Diplomatic Service. This gentleman was lapping his food and making ugly noises, with his mouth open as he ate.

"*Pak Haji*," she said, "if my father had been here, he would have told you off." The diplomat was taken aback but said that he was already too old to learn. But that was hardly an excuse for an ambassador of His Majesty's Government. Such people should be taught a few essential points on good table manners.

When a Malay delegation from Malacca visited China in the days of the Ming dynasty, they were entertained by the Emperor. The custom of the period was that you could not put your head up to look at the Emperor; at all times one had to keep one's head down. The delegation were told about this custom before they attended the dinner.

They requested, however, that one of the dishes they would like to eat was *kangkong* uncut. So at the table when eating the uncut *kangkong*, they naturally had to lift their faces up to let the *kangkong* down, into their mouths.

That was how they saw the Emperor. They were excused for breaking the rule; which they had done politely. The Emperor was very impressed. He said that the people from Malacca were shrewd and intelligent people.

The Thais are very proud of their manners. The language for royalty differs from that in ordinary use and it is difficult to know

how to use it unless one is a real student of the Thai language.

Though I can understand and speak Thai a bit, I would never dream of speaking Thai to a member of the royal family, much less to the King.

The Thais are naturally polite and gentle people and great sticklers for good manners.

The Japanese are also very great sticklers for custom and tradition. They have advanced in the world as fast as any European race has. They dress in beautiful suits with collar and tie to go to the office, which is always well furnished with leather furniture and everything modern.

But immediately they return home, they discard all their European clothes, don their *kimono* and squat on the floor and live the life of old Japan.

For this reason they are very much respected by European and Americans alike, who have to take off their shoes as they enter a Japanese home. It is normally bare of furniture and ornaments and has only mats as has been the custom all these years.

The Chinese have become very modern. Today we have mass marriages for umpteen couples. This would have been scorned at in the days gone by. The young people all dress up in the most modern manner, are married and go off on their honeymoon.

So my Chinese friend asked me what I could do to give them advice on how one should live in a country like Malaysia.

There is much to be learnt from the West whose culture is still of a very high standard. Unfortunately our young men are attracted to the standard set by the movies and television.

There is nothing very much that I can do but a lot can be done by the schools. Parents at home are too busy doing business and making money to attend to the correct upbringing of their children. A commission should be set up to study the content of our school education.

One father told me he went to see his son in England and saw a big change in the boy. While he was pleased with his success academically, he was not happy with the way he behaved.

"Who is to blame?" I asked. He had no reply. Many boys and girls, on their return, find difficulty adapting themselves to our way of life.

The difficulties are enormous for the government and for parents. Progress brings in its train all these changes and I am afraid, whether we like it or not, we have to put up with it.

We still have scions of aristocracy among leaders of our country today. Datuk Hussein Onn, for instance, comes from a family of *menteris besar* and his father, Datuk Onn Jaafar, would have been the Prime Minister if he hadn't left UMNO — but history repeats itself, as the saying goes, so his son has become the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Datuk Hussein pays great attention to Malay *adat* and custom. He does not say this in so many words but shows it by his conduct and behaviour in private and in public.

One *Hari Raya* day I missed his open house and I rang up to ask if I could call on him the next day. He would not hear of it but instead insisted on coming to *Raya* with me first.

Next year I dropped in on him unannounced and took him by surprise. I said: "You are the Prime Minister and I owe it to you to come and pay my official respects to you", and we both laughed over it, as we are both strong adherents of custom — *adat resam*.

The Malays, however, stretch the point a little too far when the proverb says: "*Biar mati anak, jangan mati adat*" (Let your child die but not our customs). To this I would say, "*Kasih adat bagaimana kasih anak*" (Love your custom as you would your child).

Time for One More University

29 October 1979

The education policy of any country should reflect the composition and characteristics of the country and its people. This would augur well for a nation with people of diverse racial origins and religions as we have here.

Malaysia, unfortunately, has been subjected to colonial rule. As a result we have become a divided people, made so by our colonial masters under a policy of divide and rule. The education policy was therefore lopsided with the "haves" having the best of everything and the "have-nots" receiving nothing but the crumbs.

It is hard to believe that during British rule less than \$80 million was spent on education compared with what is being spent today — nearly \$2,000 million.

The system of enrolment of the student population then was so glaringly one-sided that it gave the ordinary Malay student very little chance to better his educational prospects.

The most he obtained was an English School Certificate, but by and large he only possessed a vernacular Malay education. The University and the Medical College in Singapore gave places to those qualified and able to afford the education.

On Independence, only nine per cent of the students in the University of Malaya were Malays and this nine per cent was mainly in the Arts stream.

Malaya itself had not even one institution of higher learning to boast of. In other words, the Malays were only educated to take on jobs in government service as small-time officers and peons.

There was only a handful of Malays in the Civil Service, while the big jobs were reserved for expatriate officers.

The Chinese and Indians were able to provide careers in the professions or in the businesses which they owned for their graduates. The Malays owned no businesses at all; they were the neglected people of the country, their only homeland. Those living in the *kampung* could not read at home except with the aid

of flickering paraffin lamps. Electricity and water were not provided for them in the areas where they lived; these amenities were found only in the urban areas.

This was the position when we obtained independence. It was obvious that a lot had to be done for the Malays, the underdogs. Places had to be found for them and concessions had to be made for their admission into the universities.

New universities had to be built after Independence in order to meet the demand of the Malays and others who had never had the opportunity to go for higher education, but who had the urge to go for it in a big way.

There was no quota set in my time for others; this only happened after my retirement. All my nominees in the University Council had to quit, so to speak, and a new policy was introduced.

This is the cause for the present discontent among the other races.

In the years after Independence, the lot of the Malay students greatly improved. The proportion of Malay students in the universities now exceeds that of others.

As shown in a recent report, there were a total of 3,069 Malays in the 1978/1979 session for all the universities as a whole, or 66.4 per cent of the total student intake, while non-*bumiputras* numbered 1,551 or 33.6 per cent. For the 1979/80 session *bumiputras* comprised 64.3 per cent or 3,384 while the non-*bumiputras* made up 35.7 per cent or 1,881.

The number of Malay students in the universities more than reflects the composition of the educated class in the country, and it is right that the government should now give some thought to the rights of the others.

After all, they are taxpayers and citizens of Malaysia too and they make the biggest contribution towards the country's wealth and revenue which pays for all these institutions of learning.

In fact they have made a major contribution in the successful story of Malaysia's development. The Malay student has now been well taken care of.

We therefore can well understand the feelings of the non-Malays when their children cannot find places in the universities, despite the fact that the results then obtained in the School Certificate examinations show such amazing standards of success.

As citizens of this country they are entitled to be considered for

admission into the universities in a higher proportion than hitherto granted them.

The places for *bumiputras* should be maintained — with that I entirely agree, but not to the detriment of others, for to treat other citizens as foreigners is wrong in principle.

It is all very well for foreign countries, such as Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and other Commonwealth nations to do so because Malaysian students are rightly considered foreign students in these countries.

They cannot be looked upon as such in the country of their birth.

The government can say we have to keep a reasonable number of places for *bumiputras* because of the disadvantages they face and the need for them to be given a higher proportion of places in the universities.

Nobody would begrudge this, but there are also brilliant students among the other races who also lack the opportunities for higher education and the government owes it to them to give them consideration.

There are no doubt many problems, problems that were created through generations of foreign rule. These problems would never have arisen had the Chinese schools not been built in such large numbers and Chinese politics had not taken hold of the minds and thinking of the students.

This has brought about a fear of the Chinese and created a divided nation.

But in an independent Malaysia, the matter has to be looked into. The object of establishing, through our system of education, a Malaysian identity must be studied with the object of implementing the right policy.

Something is being done now — for instance, the teaching of Bahasa Malaysia in Chinese and Tamil schools — and this has done much to remind the students of their surroundings.

The world situation has changed so much, and the situation around us in particular is fraught with danger. We cannot do what some other countries are doing, but we can make the best of what we have, bearing in mind the peace of our country and happiness of the people. In diversity we can still achieve unity.

A nation like ours is built on very shaky foundations. We have to strengthen these foundations if we mean to live in peace for all time.

There must be give and take on all sides. Singapore had to force its education policy through without wasting much time. Those diehard racists who refused to conform to the official policy were thrown into detention. Now I understand many Chinese schools are teaching English, the official language of the state, in a big way.

Datuk Musa Hitam, the Minister of Education, has promised to provide more places for non-*bumiputra* students in our universities.

This is a first step towards solving a home-made problem. Datuk Musa's promise has brought relief to many and it is obvious from the figures shown that the number of non-*bumiputra* students in the universities has increased.

But the demand has still been made for more places and he has again agreed to look into it and promised to make room for more non-*bumiputra* students.

No doubt this will help to meet the immediate need of the students but taking a long-term view, I would suggest that another university would be the answer.

First I would suggest that steps be taken to appoint a Royal Commission to look into the existing situation carefully and to make proper recommendations; secondly, that steps be taken to study the role of a new additional university.

The proposal by the Chinese guilds and associations to build a university for Chinese students is highly dangerous and should be rejected outright, as this would split the country even wider and divide the people even more openly.

Under our law, no university or higher educational institution with the status of university can be established except in accordance with the provisions of Article 5 of the University Colleges Act, 1971.

Therefore such a university for the Chinese, to be taught in the Chinese language, could not be allowed.

On the other hand, one following the line of other universities now established in Malaysia, with English and Malay as the languages of instruction, could be set up.

The Chinese guilds and associations, with government subsidy or aid, could build one which should not be confined only to Chinese students but open to others in fair proportion.

Malaysia has made outstanding progress in its development and has acquired prosperity which has put her well above the

status of a developing country.

It always follows that as a nation progresses, the demand for higher education among its people increases. What is good for us today will be good no more in the next decade.

We have therefore to look ahead and make some room for students in the universities, as what we have today will not be sufficient to meet the future needs of the non-Malays and Malays themselves. The government should encourage the building of new universities which conform to our education policy.

Malaysian students educated in universities abroad numbered 31,500 in 1975, while the students at home numbered 31,529 — only 29 more than those overseas. This is unusual, and an indication that we need a new university.

When I went for my university education in England in 1923 there were not very many universities. Now the number in that country has increased three-fold and some of the universities that are now mentioned to me had never been heard of before. Nevertheless, that is the position.

Time moves on and the people's demand for places likewise increases. The government cannot just ignore this demand.

“A stitch in time may save nine.”

Thirty-three

The Lesson of Kampuchea

5 November 1979

The swift Vietnamese invasion and takeover of Kampuchea in January 1979 did not succeed in eradicating all the supporters of the Pol Pot regime who still resisted in jungle and mountain fastnesses. All this boded ill for the rest of Southeast Asia, especially Thailand, which now faced the problem of containing the heavy influx of refugees and others over the Kampuchean border. In terms of humanity the plight of the Kampuchean refugees added yet another chapter to the tragedy of Indochina.

The Thai Prime Minister, Tun Kriangsak Chamanand, is exceedingly worried over the worsening situation along the Thai-Kampuchean border area. This we can well understand because the situation appears serious enough to warrant prompt action.

Thousands of Kampuchean refugees fleeing for their lives and seeking shelter in Thai territory have been the cause for border incidents reported recently.

It was said, for instance, that a Thai marine has been killed and seven injured in Trat province in a clash between Thai and "foreign" forces. This led to a series of other incidents which caused concern to Thailand's close allies, Malaysia and Indonesia.

During the past two days, * no less than 80,000 Kampucheans have crossed the border. According to a Thai report there were at least 20,000 Vietnamese troops in the area facing Aranyaprathet, one of the main crossing points from Kampuchea into Thailand.

The report further stated that Vietnamese troops were equipped with tanks, artillery and other heavy machines of war. In other words they were prepared for action.

Tun Kriangsak has called for a United Nations fact-finding team "to monitor the real situation on the Kampuchean border".

*This article originally appeared in *The Star* on 5.11.79.

This is an urgent request and should be placed on the agenda of the United Nations as a matter of extreme urgency.

The situation is so tense that the United Nations should not delay in setting up observation posts in these areas and other vital centres.

The reason appears to be plain. Any more serious incidents could spark off active hostilities between these two countries. Incidents could be created by any party or from any source which wanted to cause trouble, or provide themselves with an excuse for aggression against Thailand.

It could be started off by members of the ousted Pol Pot regime fleeing from the Vietnam-backed Heng Samrin administration or by Vietnam itself.

Whatever it is, the Asean countries and Malaysia for one are pledged to support Thailand. America has already declared support for Thailand, while China has declared for non-intervention, and Russia has said nothing so far. The danger posed to this part of Asia appears threatening enough to warrant immediate action by the United Nations.

A resolution calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops in Kampuchea and appealing for an end to outside interference in its affairs will be tabled in the United Nations General Assembly.

The five Asean members drafted the text and have asked for the support of all peace-loving nations to get it through the Assembly.

On the other hand, Vietnam, Angola, Granada, Laos and Nicaragua have also tabled a resolution calling on all states "to refrain from any activity which could be detrimental to the exercise of the Kampuchean people's right to self-determination and to their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and which would constitute interference in their internal affairs".

This obviously requires prompt action by the United Nations to prevent a worsening of the situation in Kampuchea. Charges and countercharges can only lead to more misunderstanding. What we fear is war with all its dreadful, horrifying and terrifying consequences. We don't want this to happen to this region of Asia where we are enjoying so much peace, prosperity and happiness.

Nowhere else in the world have the people shown as much love for peace as we do. War would destroy all this happiness and in its place, hell in all its fury would break loose.

Vietnam has had no peace since the outbreak of World War II

and so killing is in their blood and in their hearts.

The same thing is happening in communist-controlled Kampuchea. Nothing would be more disastrous than to have this region turned into a battlefield.

It is not a question of who wins or loses.

The question is why begin a war when there is no necessity for it.

The help that we need from the big powers is not arms to fight the war, but help to stop the war from breaking out.

Look at what is happening in Kampuchea, Vietnam and Laos today. Though there was little I knew of these countries before, I had this to say of them: "How happy the people were, what nice people they were and how kind they were."

What is happening now? What has war done to them; the angels have become the devils incarnate, killing and destroying everything before them.

Can we imagine a country like Kampuchea, with a population of over eight and a half million with no less than two million people killed, massacred and tortured?

And more are dying of hunger and disease. The same is happening in war-torn Vietnam where thousands are fleeing from the land of their birth.

The number of people who have suffered under communist rule has not been established. What then if the trouble which besets these people were to spread out to this and other countries within this region?

Only God knows how much the people would suffer. There would be killing and plenty of it. Even those who don't look alike would be killed on sight.

Every effort, therefore, must be made to prevent war from spreading and spilling over into our area.

This brings me back to the Malayan Communist Party's struggle for power here. With all the stories of communist atrocities which have shocked the whole world being committed around us, who among us would want the Malayan Communist Party to take over control of this country?

Their senseless and purposeless insurrection and struggle has gone on long enough. It is time for them to rethink and return to sanity and give up the struggle.

I wish I could have another talk with Chin Peng (with the blessings of our government of course). I can't bear to see our

young soldiers being blown apart by booby-traps and getting their limbs torn off and being blinded for life.

This is happening almost every day and for what purpose?

It is clear to all that nothing will come out of the MCP's attempt to win the battle for Malaysia. It is all over now.

Malaysia is doing well as a democratic country and is enjoying peace and stability. No one with any sense would like to see her go the way of Vietnam and Kampuchea. God forbid!

So why continue the struggle? I believe in bathing in clear, clean water and in avoiding dirty water. So it is with politics — clean politics is my line.

In the meantime, reports continue to pour in of the starvation and disease which have taken a toll of lives in refugee camps on the Thai side of the border.

Those who have escaped into Thai territory are said to be suffering from malnutrition, malaria, dysentery and other diseases.

According to this information, those children with wrinkled faces and protruding ribs and distended bellies are too weak to live and they die despite care, at the rate of thirty a day. All these sights are too sad to see.

PERKIM has taken care of some of the Muslim refugees. These were the lucky ones.

But there are also orphans among them who have lost their parents during their flight for safety and we cannot help feeling sad at their plight.

When asked where their parents had gone, some of them would burst out crying and say that they lost them in their journey across the border.

These children have been given Malay lessons and as soon as they know enough of the language they will be sent to school. The adults too are being taught Malay and when ready will be sent to work in factories where they have been promised jobs.

Those who have passed out from the camps have settled down very well in this country and many of them are carrying on business on their own and doing quite well. In the Batu Pahat incident on 10 October 1980, it was alleged that a Kampuchean named Mohamed Nasir was the leader of the religious fanatical movement. He together with another Kampuchean, Lassim Chay Bonge and other local men made the attack on the Batu Pahat Police Station. On the whole, however, the many thousands of

Kampuchians who sought shelter in this country have behaved themselves very well.

But there are millions of Kampuchians who are suffering extreme hardship which has no parallel in modern history.

I would like to think that the trouble which they face will not go beyond the border area. But one must expect the worst to happen with the news that is flashed across the border daily. I am glad that the Asean countries are having joint exercises in preparation for any eventuality, but this alone is not enough.

A joint command should be set up now so that in case of war they will be ready to take up positions for the defence of democracy.

As an immediate step, what the Thai Prime Minister has asked for from the United Nations should be supported wholeheartedly by all the peace-loving nations of the world, and the U.N. should take steps without any delay to send a team of observers to the affected areas.

Thirty-four

The Ayatollah and the American Hostages

19 November 1979

On 4 November 1979 Iranian students seized control of the United States embassy in Teheran, turning over fifty US diplomatic officials into hostages. Despite repeated appeals by world leaders, the Iranian authorities refused to release the hostages until the Shah of Iran (who was receiving medical treatment in the USA at the time) was made to return to Iran to face trial. Six months later the American hostages were still being held by their Iranian captors.

The attack on the American Embassy in Teheran is one of the most shocking episodes ever recorded in the history of diplomacy or in the history of international relations between nations.

Diplomatic immunity is guaranteed by every host country to which a diplomat is accredited. Every inch of the ground is considered protected territory and the members of the diplomatic service have complete and absolute freedom to use it as and how they like.

In the two World Wars, safe conduct was accorded to all diplomats, their families and staff. It goes without saying therefore that the precincts of the diplomatic residence and office are immune from outside interference.

I cannot recall any incident of this nature where students or unruly elements of a host country have taken possession of an embassy without being denounced and without stricture from the government of the host country.

This obviously must have been the case in respect of Iran, for the Prime Minister, Mr. Mehdi Bazargan, and his Cabinet resigned, although they did not give their reasons for doing so in so many words. But we all appreciate the reason for the resignations.

The Head of State did not share their views. This, unfortunately, has been the rule rather than the exception in Iran today. Every time the appointed government authorises an act or issues a prohibition, the Revolutionary Council, backed by its president, Ayatollah Khomeini, overrules them.

Two Cabinets have already resigned in despair.

The Head of State, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, implies by his behaviour and conduct that he approves of what is being done by the students in holding the hostages to ransom and by threatening to kill them if their demands for the surrender of the former Shah of Iran are not met.

He has even refused to allow the American representatives to meet him and discuss the unfortunate affair with him.

According to press reports Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has turned down all appeals for the hostages to be released and instead has attacked President Carter as an enemy of mankind. He told the papal envoy in Iran, Monsignor Annibala Bugnini, that if Jesus Christ were alive today, he would impeach Carter.

According to the students they are determined to kill the hostages unless the Shah is returned to Iran to stand trial. In the meantime, some of the students have decided to go on a fast.

This situation has become very critical and indeed if the threat is carried out it might change the whole system and course of international relations.

But that is a small matter compared with what the outcome would be.

Would America just sit back and do nothing when murder is committed in cold blood on their nationals? The other nations which have diplomatic relations with Iran may have to give the presence of their diplomats in that country second thought.

For if there is no security for their diplomats, officials and staff, and if they are left to the tender mercy of unruly elements, then why take the risk of having expensive embassies in Iran?

Mr. Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt, expressed himself in no uncertain terms as to what he thought of the Ayatollah Khomeini, and I have no doubt that many others share his views.

He might now close down his embassy and recall his officials before the Egyptians become the next hostages to share the misfortune of the Americans, because according to reports, Egypt has offered asylum to the Shah.

The Muslim countries must somewhat feel embarrassed by

what is happening. The Holy Quran, the Holy Book of Allah and the Sayings of the Prophet enjoin upon Muslims to respect the authority of the government and to show goodwill to neighbours friendly to us, be they Muslim or non-Muslim.

Ayatollah Khomeini is the head of the Shia sect, a Muslim nevertheless, and is duty-bound to observe what is enjoined upon him by the religion.

Why he has behaved in this manner is beyond my understanding. Can he be afraid of the unruly mobs that have taken control of Iran today? If a leader is afraid of his men, then he should not be where he is.

A country cannot have millions of leaders to rule it. Either the people must follow the leader they have chosen, or give him up.

The leader in Iran is Ayatollah Khomeini and if the people will not accept his advice, he must tell them, "I am quitting. Find someone else." He cannot stay on in power and allow all these atrocities to continue.

It is a shame to think that Iran, one of the progressive Muslim countries, has, literally speaking, gone to the dogs.

How can these students expect America, which has offered sanctuary to the Shah for the duration of his medical treatment, to surrender him bodily to them who then, no doubt, would tear him to bits?

That is what happened to Saidena Hamzah in the Battle of Uhud.

The Iranian students appear capable of doing all this from the way they behave. They have lost all sense and idea of human dignity and have become the very devils, thirsty for blood and hungry for flesh.

The Americans would not surrender the Shah to them. If they did, then the world would turn against them and they would never live to forget it. America is the greatest power today, and one thing that American people cannot do is to bring themselves to the level of these mad students and be spineless enough to give in to their demands.

If I were at the Islamic Secretariat as Secretary-General, I would not have hesitated to call a meeting of all Islamic nations and demand that they must all jointly register their protest to the Iranian government and demand the release of the hostages.

I am saddened by the fact that no move has been made and no action has been taken so far by the Islamic Secretariat to call for

such an action.

As a consequence, it has showed itself to be weak and impotent and is doing little good as an international Muslim political body.

I am also saddened by the fact that only one leader among the Muslim leaders has dared come out with a statement touching on this unfortunate affair. In fact President Sadat has been brave enough to condemn Khomeini.

I am even more saddened to think of Ayatollah Khomeini, who dons the robe of a Muslim religious leader and yet shows no virtue as such.

There have been too many acts of violence committed in Iran. Thousands have been sent to the grave for the support they gave, or are alleged to have given, to their former ruler the Shah.

As a man of religion, surely these killings must have been revolting and offensive to Khomeini's religious senses.

"Ayatollah" — a spokesman of Allah — that's what his title indicates. What a contradiction, for Allah is the Most Merciful, the Most Forgiving and the Most Benevolent, the Most Compassionate. Does He approve of all these killings done by the man who assumes the role of His spokesman? For that's what an Ayatollah is, according to the Shiah.

When the Holy Prophet returned to Mecca in triumph, the first thing he did was to pardon all his enemies.

Today Ayatollah Khomeini denounces President Carter as Satan for allowing the Shah to be treated in an American hospital. President Carter may have the same opinion of Ayatollah Khomeini — and judging from what is happening in Iran, he may not be far wrong.

I remember the occasion when the Alliance won the first election in Malaya, with the loss of one seat.

One of my colleagues, who is knocking about somewhere today, came to me and told me to sack a certain government official, who, according to him, had gone out of his way to fight for the Opposition.

I told him "that would be the last thing I would do". In our hour of triumph our duty was to kneel down in prayer and give thanks to Allah for His kind mercy and not choose the time to mete out punishment to our opponents.

I made my broadcast on the same day to that effect. It was well received and the effect proved most rewarding, for all government servants gave their unstinting service to the party admini-

stration headed by me.

I was not a religious head, but a simple God-fearing man.

In the case of Ayatollah Khomeini, he has suffered nothing that I have heard of, for he was living in comfort in France. Admittedly those who rebelled against the Shah died or suffered severe punishment. These they expected, and their sacrifices have brought them the victory and the reward they sought — the Shah's government has fallen and the Shah has left the country.

The rebels have taken over the government. The Shah himself is suffering from an incurable cancerous tumour — is not that punishment enough?

So why not concentrate on the work of rehabilitation of Iran, rather than carry on with the war against their own people and against those whom they suspect of being in sympathy with the Shah?

They have much to do to put right their country, which has suffered such severe damage caused by the civil war.

American reaction has been moderate. All they have done is cut off all Iranian oil shipments to the United States and to deport all Iranian students who are in the United States illegally, cut off all supplies to Iran and frozen all Iranian financial assets in the U.S.A.

The new thinking of Iran should be based on a fair compromise to the effect that the Shah should not be allowed to stay in America and that he should leave as soon as he is able to do so.

To lay down terms any more demanding than this would be excessive.

On the other hand, Iran could nominate a few countries to mediate and discuss terms for a peaceful settlement of this unfortunate affair. It is in her interest to come to terms with the world as no country today can live alone, and Iran must survive.

Thirty-five

On Kedah, Perlis and Setul

3 December 1979

At the turn of the century when the Tunku was born (1903), his home-state of Kedah had fallen under Thai suzerainty, and as part of Thai policy the two provinces of Perlis and Setul were detached from the rest of the sultanate and made into separate principalities of their own. In 1909 a treaty was signed in Bangkok between Thailand and Britain, by which Thai suzerainty over Kedah (along with three other northern Malay states) was handed over to the British. The ruler and people of Kedah were never consulted about these changes ...

Old photographs evoke memories. One of them in my collection is of the ceremonial parade held in Alor Star on 15 Zul Kaedah 1313 Hijrah (May 1897), when Perlis, then part of Kedah but taken over by Thailand, was handed back to Kedah together with Setul. This brought the Thai envoy, a close relative of mine, with a royal message from the king of Thailand to Alor Star. The envoy was received with full honours at a ceremonial parade under the command of the Chief Police Officer, who at that time was an Irishman called Mitchell. The Inspector-General of Police was Encik Ismail.

This was not the first visit by Thai royalty to Alor Star. King Rama V (Chulalongkorn) of Thailand himself visited Alor Star in the month of Rabil Awal, 1291 (April 1874).

It was on his way back after a trip to Bengal, India, that he stayed in Kedah for six days. After this he returned to Bangkok by way of Singgora (Songkhla) by horse-drawn carriage, accompanied by Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah as far as Singgora with a large entourage.

After a few days in Singgora, he sailed by boat to Bangkok accompanied by the Sultan's uncles, Tunku Yacob and Tunku Jusoh, while the Sultan himself and the rest who accompanied the King to Singgora returned to Alor Star.

King Chulalongkorn had a great liking for the Sultan, and in

the royal chronicles of Kedah it is mentioned that the Sultan would be invited to Bangkok almost every year and sometimes twice a year.

The story is told of how on one occasion the King took a liking for a certain young lady and wanted her for his wife.

But she, knowing that the King had already many wives, declined the honour. He then sent a picture of the Sultan of Kedah and claimed that he wanted her for the Kedah ruler who was still in his teens.

This time the young lady accepted, but instead the King took her for himself.

It was also said that the King used to cruise down the river of an evening when in a romantic mood, and would stop at whichever house on the way where one of his wives was staying which caught his fancy, and spend his time there.

On one occasion there was a medicine man who, it was said, possessed a miraculous gift of providing sexual revitalization, and he was commanded to appear before the King.

The King then asked the medicine man, "How many wives can I visit in one night if I take your medicine?"

"Your Majesty," he replied, "You can visit at least three wives."

"What!" said the King. "I now visit five wives in one night and your medicine reduces my capacity to three? Be gone! That's enough of you and your miraculous powers! I am better off without your help!"

The King bestowed upon my father the highest awards of his kingdom, the Chao Praya Saiburi and the Order of Chula on his last visit to Thailand on 3 Rabil Awal 1313 (August 24, 1895).

This Order carried with it a golden chain, a robe and a big star.

As for Perlis and Setul, I recount the fact that the treaty between Kedah and Britain, by which Penang and part of Province Wellesley were transferred to the English East India Company, was signed on the understanding that the Company would help Kedah should the state be attacked by her Thai neighbour, Nakhon Si Thammarat (Ligor).

Unfortunately, as is well-known, when the attack eventually took place, the English East India Company sent no help at all and the Thais of Ligor took over the state.

But not for very long, as it was handed back to Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin in 1842.

Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Halim Shah had previously fled to Malacca and then come to Penang. On his return to Kedah he did not live very long, but before he died he appointed his cousin, Syed Hussein Jamalullail as Raja of Perlis, Tunku Bisnu as Raja of Setul, and Tunku Anom Paduka Raja Memeangon, as Raja of Kubang Pasu (Jitra).

These were provinces with *rajahs* as administrative heads.

What happened to Perlis and Setul between the Thai invasion and the return of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Halim Shah to Kedah is not difficult to say.

They suffered the same fate as Kedah, as they were then part of Kedah.

Although Perlis was returned to Kedah in 1897 (Hijrah 1314), in 1907 another treaty was made between Thailand and Perlis by which Perlis borrowed \$230,000 with interest at the rate of six per cent per annum. In this way Perlis had obviously become an autonomous province of Thailand.

It was recorded, however, that on Hijrah 17.7.1259 (1843) Sultan Zainal Rashid of Kedah visited Bangkok accompanied by Syed Hussein, the Raja of Kayang (Perlis), Tunku Anom, the Raja of Kubang Pasu, and Tunku Mohamed Akib, the Raja of Setul.

It was agreed that the "golden flowers" which Kedah had been sending triennially should continue and that Perlis and Setul and Kubang Pasu should also each send the "flowers"; but the Sultan of Kedah was acknowledged as the ruler of the three states.

However, at some date before the end of the nineteenth century Perlis and Setul became separated from Kedah, only to be returned in 1313 (1897).

In the intervening period when it was known that diplomatic negotiations were in progress between the British and Thai governments for the cession of the northern Malay States to Britain, activities were afoot in Setul to make itself independent of Kedah.

Tunku Mohamed Akib's trusted secretary, Kudin, with the help of a Thai minister, ousted Tunku Mohamed Akib who had succeeded his father, and Kudin set himself up as the Raja of Setul.

The story was told to me by Che Awang Jaffar who was working in Setul at the time of how he and Tunku Mohamed Akib and two other members of the delegation went to Bangkok to lodge

their protest over Kudin's takeover.

Instead of staying in a house or hotel, they chose to live in a house-boat on the river, surrounded by beautiful Thai girls.

They made appointments with the Foreign Minister but came away without having seen him at all.

According to Che Awang Jaffar, all the members of the delegation were opium addicts and every night the bevy of beauties would fill the opium pipes and entertain them.

The next day they never woke up. This went on for the next two or three days, until the Thai Foreign Minister refused to see them.

Having made that long journey to Bangkok they came away a dejected lot without having accomplished any objective, according to Che Awang, except for smoking good opium prepared by some beautiful girls.

Coming to my own personal experiences, I remember the amount of wailing and crying when Kedah was transferred to the British by Thailand in 1909, for what we considered was the loss of our independence.

The big house was empty when all the *orang utang* (the equivalent of slaves) had to leave. Instead of the large amount of rice that had to be cooked in *kawah*, open-mouthed utensils, only two gantangs and a little more were cooked for the household.

I remember in these independent days we had no electric light and no piped water. Early in the evening servants were occupied in cleaning the glass lamp chimneys, in preparing the wicks and lighting the lamps and fixing them in their hangers in different parts of the palace, and we could see and hear mosquitoes buzzing all over the place.

The dreadful thing then was that there was plenty of malaria which no one seemed to take seriously but accepted as a matter of course.

During the rainy season most parts of Alor Star were under water while in the dry season we had severe drought. This brought the dreaded disease, cholera, which took toll of many lives.

When the British took over Kedah, the provinces of Setul, Phuket and Trang were left to the Thais, and Perlis was given a new status as a separate state. Kedah, or what was left to it, became the state it is today.

The first British Adviser to Kedah was Sir George Maxwell and he threw his weight about a bit, to the annoyance of the royal family, but admittedly the administration improved and good progress was made, and the state began to prosper.

Thirty-six

Loyalty Village: How a Kampung Stood by its Ruler in Love and Respect

17 December 1979

I have been invited to unveil a plaque which records the memorable occasion when the late Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah of Kedah escaped from British custody and took shelter in Kampung Sidim.

The *kampung* people looked after him for six days. They have never tired talking about it themselves ever since and have handed the story down to their descendants.

Finally, they decided to change the name of Kampung Sidim to Kampung Lindungan Raja and I had the monument built for them.

Many years ago the people put up a temporary board which gave an account of the event but with the passage of time, and wear and tear, the words faded.

So we decided on something more solid to replace it. The new inscription is done on black marble standing on a concrete base with the story carved in gold letters. It can now weather storms and the passage of time for perhaps a hundred years without fear of damage.

By curious coincidence the man who carved the characters on the marble died as soon as the work was completed. For nearly a year now I have been trying to put it up.

Finally, I got an architect, Mr. Hooi Seng Tuck, a friend of mine, to do the design. He refused to accept any payment for his work — and the builder, Mr. Ong Hoo Seng, who took a lot of trouble to build it at some cost to himself — also refused to charge anything in payment.

According to him it was an honour to be asked to construct it as it commemorates an event of such great historical significance.

In fact, he is extremely happy to be associated with its erection. It stands now as an epitaph to the memory of the great bond of love between the late Ruler and his subjects.

Datuk Seri Syed Nahar had this to say in his speech to the people who were gathered in such great numbers for the unveiling of the plaque by me:

In this progressive world, people care little about the past but what happened here in this *kampung* is a historical event which bears remembrance for all time.

In this *kampung* there is such love, respect and loyalty between the Ruler and the *rakyat* that has no parallel elsewhere — and it makes history.

Here, the people were prepared to give their lives to protect the Ruler.

It was on December 14, 1941, thirty-eight years ago, when Tunku kidnapped his late father and brought him to this *kampung*, for, according to him, the Ruler must remain with his people.

The Ruler was only brought back to Alor Star when General Yamashita asked for his return and guaranteed his safety.

However, the Ruler left an everlasting bond of love, respect and loyalty between the *rakyat* and the Ruler. Tunku carries that memory in his heart for all time.

When the British returned to this country, Tunku faced many trials and tribulations because of the incident of that day, but he endured it all calmly and stoically. I believe the events of that day in December have played an important part in his political life and led eventually to the independence of this country.

The same loyalty and love for the leader as that shown by the people of Kampung Sidim nearly forty years ago made the independence of this country possible.

Prosperity, peace and happiness of the people have been due to the loyalty of the people to their leaders and this spirit of love and loyalty must continue in the future if we are to enjoy peace in this country.

The District Officer, Wan Said, emphasised the same theme of the love and loyalty of the people and, as District Officer, he felt very proud of this memorial stone which stands for all time as a symbolic tribute of the people's love for their ruler.

As the Japanese advanced, there was no government, no law and order. There were violent incidents everywhere in the state and in the Peninsula but not here in Kulim, because the people accepted the authority of their Sultan.

The concept of kingship cannot be eradicated from the minds of the people here. Any other form of government could easily turn this country into another Kampuchea or Vietnam.

This was how it all began:

When war broke out, and the Japanese began their successful attack on the colonies of Britain and France, the fall of Malaya appeared likely.

Then came the news of the sinking of the British warships, *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*. Everybody in Malaya expected a Japanese victory at any time.

One night I had a dream — and a vivid one at that. I dreamt of my father calling out to me for help. It appeared to me in my dream that I was staying in my Mother's *Istana*.

I heard my father's voice calling, "*Putra, Putra, tolong aku*" (My son! My son! Help me!) coming from the back of his bedroom. I ran to his room but found that the voice came from a tree in the yard beneath the house. I rushed out in time to catch him as he fell from the tree.

The next day I went to Alor Star and told the story to my brother-in-law, Syed Omar Shahabuddin, who was then Assistant State Secretary.

He, however, told me that he had heard nothing about my father and to the best of his knowledge the old man was in good health and he could not see any cause for alarm. I then returned to Kulim, but not fully convinced that everything was quite all right.

One week later, I was at the headquarters of the A.R.P. (Auxiliary Reserve Police) when I received a telephone call from Syed Omar at 8.00 p.m. telling me that he had highly secret and reliable information to the effect that the British were taking my father away to Singapore, together with the Regent, Tunku Badlishah.

I said they could not do that because the Sultan was too old and could not stand the long journey by road.

In any case, I said, he must stay with his people, otherwise it would cause terrible panic and eventual upheaval in the state.

But he said it was an order and they had to carry it out.

I then returned home and started to think fast as to how best to prevent my father from going, and decided on snatching him from British hands on his way to Penang.

At the crack of dawn I went to the A.R.P. Headquarters and took Syed Bakar with me, and gave orders to the A.D.O. to tell Haji Mohamed bin Md. Ali to follow up with a few more men to Kepala Batas, Province Wellesley.

I then went away and took my position in a small *atap* shop, which was then empty.

I did not have long to wait before I saw a police truck heading the convoy with a number of armed policemen in it driving towards Penang.

Two minutes afterwards I saw another police truck, and two minutes later was the yellow Rolls Royce which I recognised as

that of my father's.

I then rushed into the middle of the road wearing a crash helmet, and waving a pistol I called on the car to stop.

When it stopped I got in and told the driver to turn towards Kulim. My brother, Tunku Yahaya, was the Police A.D.C. and he questioned my authority.

I told him there was no time to explain but to go immediately to Kulim. As the Sultan arrived, I ordered my riot squad to stand guard outside to prevent anybody from coming in.

I gave orders to my A.R.P. wardens to prepare for the evacuation of all the town people to the camp which I had prepared for them up in the hill behind the town, as the Japanese were now approaching.

Meanwhile, the British officials were evacuating the states.

Around 10 o'clock in the morning I received a telephone message from Tunku Badlishah, the Regent, who asked me to deliver the Sultan to Penang, failing which I would face arrest.

I said I would not deliver the Sultan and was prepared to face the consequences.

It was then that the Japanese planes were seen flying overhead, obviously heading for Province Wellesley and Penang and we could hear bombing soon after.

So I decided to take my father to Kampung Sidim.

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon, I received another call from Penang. I thought it was to ask me for the second time to send my father to Penang, but instead it was a telephone call from the Regent saying that he and his family were going to join me in Kulim.

I told him how happy I was that he had changed his mind and that I would look after him and his family. As soon as they arrived, they were sent to join my father in Kampung Sidim.

The loyalty of the people of Kampung Sidim is something I will never forget as long as I live, and I want the members of my family to remember this for all time.

I will never forget this occasion, and this memorial stands today as a tribute to the people's loyalty, courage and devotion to their Ruler, the late Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah.

This *kampung* is rightly called *Lindungan Raja*. May Allah give it and those people who live there *perlindungan* (protection) and His Blessings.

Soon after the return of the Sultan to Alor Star, I was asked by

the Japanese military authorities to make a broadcast to the rest of Malaya, which I did.

I was to say that the Sultan had returned safely to Alor Star, and that there was no reason for panic. I was also to call upon all the other Malay Rulers to remain in their respective states as the Japanese did not intend to interfere with their rights and sovereignty as Rulers, and to call on the people in general not to leave their homes but to remain where they were, that Kedah had quickly returned to normalcy and it was expected that if the people remained calm and stayed put, everything would be all right with them and the state in which they lived.

Tunku Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Sulaiman was staying with me and he also made a broadcast to the people of Selangor.

As a result the Japanese gave him special passes and a car to return to the state and during the time of the Japanese Occupation he held the position of Raja Muda of Selangor.

As for me, I remained the same and eventually I was transferred back to Alor Star because I refused to cooperate with the Japanese in their drive for voluntary labourers.

However, my father died soon after and Tunku Badlishah was installed as Sultan of Kedah.

Soon afterwards Kedah was transferred to Thailand but only in name. Thailand sent a few officials for appearance's sake rather than for an actual takeover.

When I asked them why they did not use their currency, they said: "Why should we take the bone and give you the meat?", for in actual fact the Japanese still ran the state, though a Thai governor replaced the Japanese one.

We thank Allah that we had enough to eat and that those who lived within the pale of law and order escaped the Japanese atrocities.

When the Occupation came to an end, we were overjoyed and we are happy to be alive to remember those extremely hard times and to be able to tell the story.

Thirty-seven

Iran, Islam and the World

24 December 1979

The Shah of Iran has now left America and intends to settle in Panama for the rest of his life. His picture in the papers shows him extremely haggard and pulled down, hardly the man whom we used to know in the days before the exile.

He used to be resplendent in his star-studded uniform and sash, and displayed magnificence without equal.

No one can believe that this is the same man now living the life of the hunted and at the same time suffering the agony of slow death, stricken with cancer.

He has lost his throne and his property in Iran, but according to the charges against him billions were stored away in America and Switzerland. What the amount is no one knows, but Iranian students are demanding the return of US\$5½ billion which they alleged he had "stolen from Iran".

This is a domestic matter in which the outside world is not involved and not interested. It concerns the political situation in Iran.

The students are demanding his flesh and blood and are putting pressure on the United States to surrender the Shah to them. The United States would not be so base and treacherous as to accede to such a request.

Now Panama, which has no diplomatic relations with Iran, has given the Shah sanctuary. The U.S.A. cannot now deliver the Shah to the students and in fairness to all concerned the students should be content to leave it at that. But they are not.

The Shah has now been deprived of everything which was once his in Iran. Yet, whatever one may say about his rule, he made Iran a developed and prosperous state which made a great contribution to peace and progress in the Middle East.

There are two faults which could be attributed to the Shah. He was an absolute ruler and a monarch who owned all that he surveyed. But no one can deny that he gave Iran national

stability.

The other fault, according to his enemies, was his friendship with America, which kept Iran away from the communist group. He was also disposed towards friendship with Israel.

I was pretty close to the Shah myself. The fault I found in him was that he was blind and deaf to the political changes developing in Iran — the young and religious-minded people of Iran, who like all the other people of the world, are agreed that absolute monarchy has no place in Iran.

He collected around him men who had no contact with the masses and so they knew little of what went on in the country or the feelings and aspirations of the people. Thus there grew up a mist of misunderstanding between the ruler and the ruled.

I remember sending a letter to the Shah giving the reasons as to why I proposed to hold the Islamic conference of foreign ministers in Benghazi in 1973, because the Shah has objected to it.

This letter never reached him and when I wrote to the Prime Minister, Amir Abbas Hoveyda, he never passed on the message to the Shah.

I remember, too, in Saudi Arabia, the ambassador was the Shah's man, and he had a number two who was Hoveyda's man. Every time the ambassador visited me at the Islamic Secretariat, the other man was present.

I thought it was rather strange at the time that the two must always be present at all the talks we had, whereas with other Muslim countries only the ambassador was present, or alternatively his representative would come in his place.

Now that the Shah has been overthrown and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has taken over the government of Iran, all the worries and problems should have come to an end.

Why then the persistent demands for the pound of flesh? Why not let bygones be bygones and leave the Shah alone?

The new government should settle down and give serious thought to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Iran, for the country has been severely damaged as a result of the disorders. The people of Iran are now faced with even more serious problems, with the students dictating terms to the new rulers.

It is hard for a man who has given his time to religion to know much about administration. The Ayatollah's obvious interest has been the religion of Islam as practised by the Shiah, and his

training and education have been based on religion.

The Shiah people can be very extreme in their observance of Islam. Every year in the month of Muharam they atone for the sins which their forefathers committed by torturing themselves unnecessarily.

How does one expect a man with little knowledge of the world and of all its problems to solve and settle a problem that has gone completely out of hand?

The question now is: Who is running the government of Iran? If it is the mob and the students, Allah help Iran!

No country run by a mob can ever hope to succeed or be in a position to put things in order. There will be trouble and problems which will make administration of the country difficult.

Militant Islam is very much in the news today and what happened in Iran has caught the attention of the world, mainly because political upheavals have occurred where men of religion have taken over power in the country.

The essential nature of Islam is peace and goodwill. Unfortunately, where religious leaders have taken over, a state of anarchy prevails.

They introduce reforms to conform with the position of a Muslim state. But then they revert to forms of punishment imposed over a thousand years ago, such as stoning adulterers to death, and cutting off hands for larceny.

They condemn the corrupting influence of the West, pointing at America as the chief culprit. Yet everyone is agreed that without American films (for the cinema and television) and music, life would be very dull and there would be a danger of people resorting to harmful, illicit vices. At present we can see things on the surface and we can exercise a certain amount of control over how people behave.

There is no way of telling what would happen if pleasure-seekers were driven underground; so whether one likes it or not we should not cut out western civilisation from our world.

However, this accounts for the present bitterness against the United States, but how long will this feeling last? One thing we know is that western influence will continue to dominate and influence human lives and culture everywhere. Most things we consume and use for our comfort and convenience come from the West.

For our part, PERKIM at least is doing its bit in trying to bring

sanity to the people. We try to explain Islam and all its best points to non-Muslims in the country, and we have succeeded in winning over converts by telling them the facts about Islam.

We carry on with our work of helping those who are in need of help. This is one of the biggest attributes of Islam — helping those in distress.

Now we are holding an Islamic conference for Southeast Asia and the Pacific to set up a council for this area. The work that will be carried out in this area will be to explain the Islamic religion to the people in this part of the world and to help the Muslim minorities in this region.

We hope our efforts will bring in adherents to the cause of Islam and if we achieve the success we have in view, then other regions of the world will follow suit. And all these regions will work together in the cause of Islam to bring peace and goodwill to mankind.

But while unrest and religious fanaticism are escalating, our task is made more difficult.

The religion of Islam can be a strong armour of defence against evil. Study it, follow it, uphold it with tender care and good conscience.

But it certainly is no help to us if we use it to make war on the West, particularly against America, just because we feel that America is responsible for all the ills we suffer in our Muslim world.

Muslims have all the wealth and the facilities to improve their lot, provided they leave others alone and concentrate on themselves.

There are many organisations which have been formed to provide help for the Muslim people. There is, for instance, the Islamic Secretariat which caters for the unity of the Muslim nations; there is the Islamic Development Bank, which can provide all the financial help for the development of developed and under-developed countries.

There are also other Muslim groupings which can help to boost the morale of Islam.

Unfortunately, however, all these organisations formed for our good are hardly being used to advantage. They tend to give more time and attention to the non-aligned Afro-Asian grouping, and the Arab League.

Muslims should occupy their time and attention in trying to

better their position and not in using it to engage in petty quarrels and making trouble.

God has given us the wealth and the wherewithal. We should give thanks to Him and make the best of what He has given us.

Thirty-eight

The Role of Women in Islam

21 January 1980

The *Dakwah* Conference for Southeast Asia and the Pacific organised by PERKIM, has ended and I am happy to say that it has been voted a success.

The organising committee was headed by Datuk Amar Haji Taib Mahmud, ably assisted by Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Zain, the Vice-President of PERKIM, Datuk Ahmad Nordin, the Secretary-General, Encik Shamsuddin, the executive secretary, and by the staff of PERKIM.

The government also made available the services of Encik Muhammad Khatib bin Abdul Hamid of Wisma Putra, and also other officials.

The main worry, however, was how to meet the expenses, because the cost exceeded two-fold the amount earmarked for the conference.

What was intended to be a regional conference turned out to be a world Muslim *dakwah* conference because *Rabitah Al-Alam Al-Islami*, which reserves the right, at our expense, to invite their own guests and delegates, brought in almost everybody from the Middle East, from South Asia and even some countries in faraway Africa and Europe.

It was great assembly of Muslims who have given service to Islam and it was nice to think that they had taken the trouble to come all the way to honour us with their presence and help to make this conference an unqualified success.

However, the cost of bringing them into this country and accommodating them in first-class hotels posed a real knotty problem for PERKIM.

In the heat of the moment, and at the height of the excitement, few gave any thought to the question of funds to meet the cost, except a few of us who had to find the money.

Tun Omar Ong Yoke Lin was the treasurer and he expressed his concern and scratched his bald patch, obviously not for my

benefit alone.

It reached the ears of the kindly Saudi Arabian diplomat, Muhammad Al-Hamad Al-Shubaili, who immediately appealed to his government for help. His request was promptly answered and a gift of US\$500,000 was made to PERKIM, the equivalent of roughly M\$1.2 million.

The message was relayed to us during the dinner by the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn. To say that I was happy is a very mild statement, so with the permission of the Prime Minister, I immediately asked Datuk Taib Mahmud to announce the good news to the guests and I went up to Mr. Shubaili, the Saudi Arabian ambassador, and openly embraced him in true Arab style to give expression to my gratitude.

We now have no worry as we can meet the expenses of the conference and other expenses, with something left over for our welfare work, in particular, the care of the refugees in Kelantan for which PERKIM has had to pay more than \$200,000 of its own money to meet the costs of looking after them.

The conference resolved itself into working committees, which were called "the four commissions".

This was explained by the chairman of the Organising Committee, Datuk Amar Taib Mahmud, at the end of the conference, but it was not well understood by the people of this country, in particular, the commission dealing with the place of women in the Muslim world.

The first commission was under the chairmanship of Tan Sri Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Rahman Yakub, which discussed the role of the mosque, education and the media in the field of *dakwah* and training of *du'aat* (Islamic missionaries).

The second commission was under the chairmanship of Dr. Mohd. Natsir of Indonesia. It discussed the problems and the challenges facing *dakwah* work and *dakwah* activity among Muslim minorities.

Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Zain chaired the third commission which discussed the development and coordination of *dakwah* work among existing institutions and organisations.

The fourth commission, under the chairmanship of Dr. Nik Safiah, and this is the subject under review, was on Islam in a Changing World, its implications for women, their education and other challenges confronting them.

This commission was exclusively for women and they met at a

separate place. In the mornings, the women delegates were allowed to attend the meetings of the various commissions held for men, just to get an idea and to learn what was being discussed by the men.

When the conference concluded, the women of PERKIM under the leadership of Datin Laila Taib held their own meeting to form their own movement, to appoint their own officials and to elect a committee to draft their constitution.

I had the honour of declaring open their conference on 15 January.

In my opening address I stressed the fact that no movement in the world would be complete without the participation of women.

Women played a vital role in the movement for independence of Malaya and if Islam is going to make any real impression in this progressive world, the women of Islam must join in and play their part.

If we go back to the time of our Prophet, we will realise the role women played in those days.

The Prophet himself was much influenced by his first wife, Khatijah, who more or less forced him to carry out his mission in the name of Allah.

All the women of Islam in those days took an active part in the movement of the propagation of Islam. It was only in later years that women were relegated to the back room.

But for we people of Southeast Asia, and Malaysia in particular, the women have taken their places as nation builders and they must help us to give meaning to Islam.

Before independence, women used to be in the background but since independence things have changed.

So let them come out now and play their part in the religious movement as well, under the banner of PERKIM or any other organisation they care to choose.

I set up the Women's Department in the Islamic Secretariat, but my successor did not approve of it and dissolved it, but some day I hope our Muslim brothers in the Middle East will see the role of women in this changing world of Islam as no less important than that of men.

Islam, according to our belief, has laid the basis for the unification of humanity, which no other religion has ever done, for a brotherhood of Man which knows no bounds of colour,

race, country, language or even rank — a unity of the human race beyond which human conception cannot go.

It not only recognises the equality of the civil and political rights of men, but also of women.

According to *Maulana Muhammad Ali*, one of the great authorities on the religion of Islam, the present practice of purdah in the Muslim world raises the question as to whether women may go to the mosque, and if I may add, the question of whether the women have a place in society.

These questions did not exist at the time of the Holy Prophet and according to the *Hadith*, women took part freely in all religious activities including services in the mosque and so, too, in other social activities.

There is a *Hadith* which tells us that on a certain night the Holy Prophet was very late in coming out to read the night prayer, and the people had already assembled in the mosque. He came only on hearing that the women and the children were falling asleep (*Al-Bukhari 9:22*).

Aishah, the Prophet's second wife, tells us that women used to be present at the morning prayers which were said at an hour so early that they returned to their houses while it was still dark.

Even with children to suckle, they would go to the mosque and when the Prophet heard a baby crying he would stop his prayer (*Al-Bukhari 10:65*).

All these *Hadiths* afford evidence of the fact that women used to attend the mosque and say their prayers without the least restriction.

"Do not forbid the handmaids of Allah from going to the mosque of Allah," the Holy Prophet said (*Al-Bukhari 11:12*).

There was an express injunction that on the occasion of the *Id* festival, women should go out to the place where prayers were said, even women in the state of menstruation were present, though they would not join the prayers (*Al-Bukhari 13:15,20*).

So the practice of women participating in religious activities and festival rites was carried out in the most prominent and open manner at the time of our Holy Prophet.

Within the mosque they were not separated from the men by any screen, but formed themselves into a line behind the men (*Al-Bukhari 10:164*) and they were covered decently with an overgarment.

They did not wear a veil.

On the occasion of the great gathering of the pilgrimage, women are expressly forbidden to wear veils (*Al-Bukhari 25:23*).

The practice at all the mosques was for women to leave the mosque ahead of the men immediately after prayers.

It was only later that the practice grew up of erecting a wooden barrier in the mosque to form a separate place for women, and so the practice of *purdah* grew up with it.

And today many a Muslim country still carries out the system of separating the women from the men in all social and religious activities.

Perhaps it is because it is considered that men's temperament differs from that of women. Men, according to this conception, are made of stronger material than women and can stand mental strain and face hardship better than women.

As a result of this belief, the practice began to grow up of women being slowly excluded from active participation in our social and religious movements.

Times have changed.

There are women now who have become prime ministers of nations, not small, but big ones, and they have done their work and discharged their duties and responsibilities as efficiently as men.

We Muslims cannot be blind to what is happening around us, so we must react accordingly and give thought to the rightful place of women in our society.

Malaysia, for one, has responded and women have shown since independence how well they can shoulder their responsibilities. Our religion and the nature of our multiracial society need their help.

In politics we have women ministers, Members of Parliament, members of the Senate, State Assemblies and Councils throughout the country and they have proved themselves able and capable of playing their roles admirably well.

PERKIM is essentially a religious body, but our work extends not only to the dissemination of Islam but also to welfare work among the less fortunate and among new converts.

We need the help of the women and so with this idea in my mind I have encouraged the formation of the division of Wanita who will take their place alongside the men.

Orthodox Muslims may not agree with my views. But they can't deny that what I have quoted from the *Hadiths* of Al-Saluh

Al-Bukhari, who is acknowledged as a great authority on the sayings and practices of our Holy Prophet Muhammad *s. a. w.*

Therefore, if they are orthodox, they must accept the authority of Al-Bukhari.

Religious extremists perhaps have other ideas which they will propound for the benefit of their movement.

However, whatever it may be, the fact remains that Islam is a good, sensible and progressive religion.

Not only does Islam claim to be the religion which believes in all the Prophets of God; it also contains a simple profession of faith and a recognition of the One God who alone must be worshipped and of whom Muhammad is the Prophet.

The birth of Islam has revolutionised the world and changed the destinies of nations.

It is an all-inclusive religion which contains within itself religions which went before it.

One of its most striking characteristics is that it requires its followers to believe in the brotherhood of people of one faith.

The religion of Islam cannot be treated as a dogma, which a man must accept if he will escape everlasting damnation, but as a science based on the universal experience of humanity.

There is not a single doctrine of Islam which does not form the basis of action for the development of Man to higher and yet higher stages of life.

Above all Man's future is not confined to the next world; his primary concern is rather with this life on earth.

So it is with this in mind that I feel life in this world would not be complete without all God's creatures being given a part to play.

And so women must participate in all our activities.

No man can truthfully stand up and say that what he is and the good that is in him was not due, to some extent, to the care and attention he received from his mother in his childhood days.

I told the *Kaum Ibu* that I did not become the founder of this nation on the spur of the moment, but that it was my mother who prepared me early in life for the role I was to play in the years that followed.

I remember her words: "You are a prince and as such you must help your people and you cannot help your people unless you know how to love them; only then can they love you and be truly your people." She encouraged me to go abroad at an early age so

that I could get the knowledge to be of use to myself and my country.

My experience is something which I would like to share with my fellow-men, and it is therefore my strong conviction that women must be given a proper place in the life of our society.

“The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world” (W.R. Wallace).

The Alor Star Demo

4 February 1980

On 22 January 1980 ten thousand padi farmers gathered in front of the government offices in Alor Star, the state capital of Kedah, to demand a higher price for rice and to protest against the coupon system introduced by the National Rice Board as part of the rice subsidy. Some violence broke out and damage was done to government buildings before riot police brought matters under control. According to subsequent police reports, investigations showed that the demonstration had been fomented by certain extremist elements, some of whom made confessions.

Many views and opinions have been expressed on the show of strength by the *padi* farmers over the price of *padi* in Alor Star.

To sum up, it is said that the demonstration was instigated by dissident groups belonging to different schools of political thought, and non-conforming religious sects or the extreme *dakwah* movement.

These people would naturally want to discredit the government in power, so as to provide an opening for the success of their movement.

Even in my time we had to meet problems of this nature. In most cases we were able to acquit ourselves creditably, though in certain instances trouble broke out before we were prepared to meet it.

The violent outbreak in Penang over the question of the devaluation of our currency, for instance, took the government by surprise.

An Opposition party (the Labour Party) declared a hartal on 19 November 1967, and youths took to street violence.

Inevitably innocent people became the target of attack and many lives were lost.

As quickly as this trouble broke out, peace was restored. For one, the people in general gave them no support.

In 1969, the Opposition decided to boycott the elections. The

Labour Party obviously wanted to follow the line taken by the Barisan Sosialis of Singapore, which had refused to cooperate with the Singapore government, so they boycotted the 1969 elections.

They tried in vain to unite the Opposition forces against the Alliance but failed to get support.

The elections were held as scheduled, but there was plenty of trouble during the campaign, and after the results became known the riot known as the Thirteenth of May Incident erupted which caused the loss of so many lives.

The Alliance government is still in power today but under another name, the Barisan Nasional.

Whatever may be said against the government, Malaysia has been described by observers as the most progressive, well-developed and happiest country in this part of the world.

That is saying a great deal for a country constituted as it is of people of so many races, of so many religions, of so many habits and customs, characteristics, and of so many likes and dislikes.

This government has been able to function all these years so smoothly, so well and has been able to withstand so many stormy problems.

Malaysia has been mentioned as an example of democracy in action.

Our constitution provides for the well-being of all people, of all religions in this country. Its form and content were openly debated up and down the land at all levels of society, and by groups and individuals who freely put forward their views, with the final result that a common understanding was reached on the special rights of the Malays, the National Language and on the liberty of the subject, irrespective of race or religion.

The national constitution was drawn up and accepted as a charter of our independence and as the guarantee of the inalienable rights and freedom of those who live in this country.

There was, however, one limit to our tolerance as a free people, and that was the Malayan Communist Party, which refused to accept the constitution and our own chosen way of life.

The insurrection started by them caused untold havoc in lives and property, drained our country's finances and hindered our economic progress. However, as for all else, this country is free and democratic and the people are happy.

Their representatives are elected to Parliament and the state

assemblies once every five years.

These are the coveted places to which young politicians aspire for political power.

But some of these aspiring young politicians have found that the Barisan Nasional is too well-established and enjoys such popular support that power can never be wrested from it by fair means.

These politically ambitious men have tried and have failed, and so they have gone in for a change of tactics in local politics, at least as far as their political campaigning is concerned.

They have gone out of their way to discredit the government.

This repeats what was done by the Opposition parties once before, and which resulted in the violence of November 1967 and May 1969.

These unscrupulous politicians are prepared to use simple folk — *padi* planters and farmers, smallholders and rubber workers — not associated with responsible unions, as their army of fighters.

These ordinary folk, not knowing what it's all about, will come out in large numbers if there is a chance of getting more money from the government.

In the Alor Star demonstration, the Kedah *padi*-planter associations were not even informed of the proposal to hold the demonstration.

The extremists wanted to do a Khomeini stunt as in Iran and perhaps hoped to take as hostages the Menteri Besar and a few other leaders.

They did not realise, in the first place, that this country is run by the people, for the people, under its democratic constitution and the King and the Rulers have no power other than to lend their names to Acts of Parliament and of the state assemblies and Acts under the *syariah* laws.

Would the people allow a few hot-heads to take over power and run the country as Khomeini has done in Iran?

Half the population of this country are not Muslims, and the Muslims themselves are broadminded; so the extremists might just as well forget it.

Independence has brought meaning to the people. They have never had it so good and they have never been better served and better looked after than they are under the Barisan Nasional.

No farmer anywhere else in the world can compare notes with what is being done for those in this country.

On Independence, irrigation schemes were implemented at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars to provide water supply to the *padi* lands.

New strains of *padi* were introduced. Fertilisers were subsidised to ensure good crops. Land was given out to the landless, and money too was given out to see that they made the best use of the lands.

Roads and bridges were built to provide easy communication and other comforts of life to the farmers.

I remember before Independence there was only one road from Alor Star to Kuala Perlis.

Now bridges, canals and roads span the two states of Kedah and Perlis for hundreds of miles.

The old people in these areas know what changes have taken place and how much thought and planning have been devoted to the schemes for the well-being of the *kampung* folks.

In addition their children have been given opportunities for higher education in technical colleges and universities. Many of them have made good in government service, the teaching profession and in business.

What has happened in Alor Star was both unexpected and uncalled for.

No state has done so much for its *padi* people.

So much money has been spent on the welfare of the *padi* planters, fishermen and the working class community as a whole.

Millions of dollars have been voted for their benefit.

Surely they must see for themselves what has been done and what is being done for them. Surely they cannot be blind or unaware of the benefits they have derived from all the development carried out on their account.

According to the government, the implementation of the Muda irrigation scheme has brought the farmers great benefit.

It has bettered their standard of living within a period of ten years to a level undreamt of by them.

The government has spent \$235 million and improved the fertility of the land three-fold. No less than 23,700 acres of *padi* land have benefited under the scheme.

In other words, the government has invested \$994 per acre of *padi* land within the Muda area. This includes the supply of short-term *padi* varieties of high quality strains, such as "Mahsuri", "Bahagia" and "Seri Malaysia", with double croppings.

The average yield has increased, and the average income of the farmers has correspondingly increased from \$1,092 per family per year to \$2,654 per family today.

In addition, the government has constructed seventeen milling and drying complexes and the Lembaga Padi Negara has spent \$5 million to improve the existing facilities for the milling of rice.

The establishment of Bank Pertanian has made it possible for farmers to obtain loans at low interest. In any case, the government is prepared to assist farmers at all times.

I have with me a copy of a memorandum sent by the farmers' associations in the Muda area, representing 22,000 farmers and their families, which have opposed the demonstration in Alor Star on January 23.

According to the farmers, they had nothing to do with it, and those who did regretted that they had been drawn into it without knowing what it was all about; they were merely told that they were assembled to ask for an increase in the price of *padi* and the abolition of the coupon system.

According to the farmers, they had no complaints to make.

In fact, their efforts in forming the farmers' associations had brought them rewards and they maintained that they would at all times cooperate with the government. At the same time, they would continue to fight for the rights of the farming community.

So as to ensure that the price of *padi* does not drop below the level fixed by the government (under the LPN Act of 1971), that it is acceptable to the *padi* planters, and that at the same time it gives a reasonable price for consumers, a two dollars subsidy is being paid by the government in coupon form over and above the agreed price. The money represented by the coupons is then invested in all the financial institutions run by the government, presumably for the benefit of the planters.

In fact it saves the government from having to pay out large sums of money.

The object is plausible enough for those who understand it and who have sufficient income to meet their daily needs, but the farming community are poor people who live from hand to mouth.

Paper transactions mean little to them. They expect to get immediate benefits and to be paid in cash.

The coupon system gives them no immediate monetary gain.

At the same time, it provides opportunities for anti-government elements and middlemen to exploit the situation to the detriment of the government, and this is what actually happened.

In other words, the idea is good but its application was misconceived.

I understand that those *padi* planters who sell *padi* to the LPN represent only 19 per cent of all the farmers while the others who sell directly to the brokers and the millers only benefit indirectly, since those who sell to the LPN get two dollars more for their *padi*.

So they should get a little more too, even though it may not be as much as two dollars.

Whether they get it or not is another matter, but when dealing with a certain class of people, it has to be done in the language best understood by them.

The language they understand best is money in dollars and cents, or hard cash on the presentation of the coupon.

The complicated system of issuing the coupon and investing it on behalf of the planters goes beyond their understanding.

I feel this system should be reviewed.

Nevertheless, there was no good reason for the dissidents to hold their demonstration, when they knew they would have access to the government which has done so much for the planters and is ever ready to do more for them.

Another regrettable thing is that they should have held it during H.R.H. the Sultan's birthday celebrations.

Whatever their grouses may have been, they should not have disrespected the Sultan, who is not like the Shah of Iran but is in fact a symbolic head of state.

Forty

Bangsawan

15 March 1980

The Malay stage show, combining drama, comedy and operetta known as *bangsawan*, was popular entertainment in bygone days.

It came to lose its popularity only after the advent of talkies on the cinema screen, and it went out completely with the inroads of television in the home. Now it just remains a memory to those who still love it, but at the height of its popularity *bangsawan* drew big crowds wherever it was performed.

Bangsawan shows never stayed in one particular place for long but toured the country from north to south and from east to west. Some scored great successes, while others did not, mainly due to the fact that they lost their prima donnas and actresses through desertion or marriage.

Sometimes they became the target of vengeance of jealous husbands and the *bangsawan* in such circumstances had to make a hasty retreat.

Bangsawan first came to this country from India and was performed by the Penang Malays, mostly of Indian origin, and it was known as *Indera Saba*.

After a time when they became more Malay-minded, the Penang Malays no longer liked the name of *Indera Saba*, but did not know what other name to use in its place.

So they went to Tunku Kudin, (the uncle of Sultan Abdul Hamid of Kedah, my great-uncle) who was living in Penang and asked him to give it a name.

He had never seen it himself. "Tell me what the show is about," he said, so the producers had to describe what the *bangsawan* was. They sang a few songs for him and acted a few scenes, and did some clowning which pleased him very much.

And so he said, "I name it *bangsawan*", which denotes a person of high rank — "bangsa" means class or rank, and, "wan" high, is a person of high class.

Wan was also an Indian term given to a Malay of Indian origin

who enjoyed a position of respect among this community.

Obviously, it denoted someone of rank, taken from the Malay. *Syeds* of Arabic descent in Singapore in particular are often called *wan*.

One may ask why Tunku Kudin called this show *bangsawan*. I have to go back to history to give the reason.

Before he retired to Penang, Tunku Kudin was the Raja Muda of Kedah, and he married Raja Arfah, the daughter of Sultan Abdul Samad of Selangor.

In 1872, Raja Mahadi rebelled against Sultan Abdul Samad. Tunku Kudin took an army from Kedah to help fight Raja Mahadi, and vanquished him.

He then set himself up as the viceroy of Selangor and it was he who helped open the mining villages around Kuala Lumpur.

Finally, he concluded a treaty with the British for the cession of the state of Selangor to Britain as a protectorate. As a result he earned a reasonable pension and decided to return to Kedah.

Sultan Ahmad Al Mukaram Shah, however, was angry with him for getting himself mixed up in the civil war of another state and for ceding the state of Selangor to the British.

He was deprived of the title of Raja Muda and refused entry into Kedah.

On the death of Sultan Ahmad, Tunku Abdul Hamid was proclaimed the Sultan of Kedah, but Tunku Kudin claimed the throne for his son-in-law, Tunku Kassim, the elder half-brother of Sultan Abdul Hamid. But because of his senility and addiction to opium, the people of Kedah and in particular, Wan Mohamed Saman, Menteri Besar, and Tunku Yacob, the Raja Muda, decided to stand firm by Sultan Abdul Hamid, who had been named heir to the throne by Sultan Ahmad.

Now Tunku Kudin, and his other brother, Tunku Yusof, who had joined him, swore that if Tunku Kassim failed to become the Sultan, he would shave off half his moustache, for he took pride in his handlebar moustache.

So, true to his word, Tunku Kudin shaved off half his moustache and also decided to remain in Penang. He kept his word right to the day of his death and was buried with half a moustache.

Tunku Kudin was naturally embittered with Wan Mat Saman and always disliked people who had the rank of *wan* as being perfidious and hypocritical.

Wan Mat Samad was Perdana Mentri of Kedah, a maternal uncle of Sultan Abdul Hamid and the person who built the Wan Mat Saman canal to irrigate the land for twenty miles from Semeling to Alor Star. Tunku Kudin decided to call this Penang form of stage entertainment *bangsawan* just to humiliate Wan Mat Saman.

Penang had also introduced another famous entertainment called *boria* which was put on once a year during the month of *Muharam* (the Muslim New Year).

It always fell on the tenth of the month *Muharam*. The *boria* also originated from India.

The tenth of *Muharam* was remembered by the members of the Shiah sect as the day when they committed a very heinous and unforgivable crime against Islam.

Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet, was invited by the Persians to become the Caliph of Persia. He and his entourage were set upon on their way to Iran at a place called Karabella, and killed by the army of Yazid.

His son, however, was saved by his nurse and escaped while all the rest were massacred. It was the son of Hussein who afterwards became the Caliph of Persia and the head of Muslims of the Shiah sect.

So every year that day is remembered as a day of penance and during that time the followers of the Shiah sect torture themselves.

This idea came to Penang brought by the Indians and it proved to be popular.

But instead of torturing themselves, those involved started to beat up members of the different *boria* parties.

When the Chinese started their *tong* warfare, which began in Larut, they put up red and white flags to denote the opposing *tongs*. The *tong* warfare spread to Penang and the Malays decided to put up red and white flags as well, just to denote opposing *boria* camps.

As a young boy in school, I used to stay up till morning to watch the *boria*. It was a great show and the *pantuns* were good, mostly consisting of praises for the people from whom they expected financial reward.

Boria was never performed or became popular outside this island. It was different with *bangsawan*, which toured the country right down to Singapore. In the end the best *bangsawan* shows came from Singapore and in time Penang lost its impor-

tance as the home of the *bangsawan*.

Boria is performed by groups of young people, or men some of whom are dressed up as women and they sing in chorus. It begins with a verse by the star singer which is then taken up by the group in chorus.

They perform for a few minutes in clubs or rich men's houses, lit up to receive them.

The *boria* virtually came to an end with the rise of Malay political consciousness under UMNO leadership, and now it is only performed as a form of entertainment at social gatherings and on TV programmes.

Coming back to *bangsawan*, the stories depicted on the stage were taken from the Arabian nights, Shakespeare or even invented by the performers themselves.

The players never stuck to the original version, and less still to the letter of Shakespeare. One particular student, after seeing the Malay version of *Othello*, went home and cried himself to sleep.

According to him, "I have studied Shakespeare's *Othello* line by line and word for word and I thought it would improve my understanding of the story but what I saw in the *bangsawan* portraying *Othello* had no bearing on Shakespeare's *Othello*.

"In fact, the show made a mockery of the work of art so assiduously followed by students of Shakespeare. I saw other stories performed by *bangsawan* also based on Shakespeare.

"They were all the same, torn to bits and pieces by the actors who had never heard of Shakespeare. They changed the version to please themselves or as they thought to please the audience."

As for the costumes the actors and actresses wore for the shows — sometimes they wore a mixture of Arabic and Malay costume as their own costumes had been lost or the performers had become too fat.

Nevertheless, good *bangsawan* shows drew large crowds. And in between scenes there were musical sketches, songs and dances and these also proved very popular.

Above all, the *bangsawan* shows had to have their comedians who put on odd dresses, painted their faces, and mostly talked in Penang dialect in contrast to the musical and classical language of the *bangsawan* itself.

There is another entertainment which in fact is more than just entertainment, and that is a celebration peculiar to the Malays of Malacca called *Mandi Safar*.

It used to be celebrated in a big way on the eve of the first Wednesday of the second Muslim month *Safar* to mark the occasion of the recovery of the Holy Prophet Muhammad from serious calamity.

This was the day when Muslims would go and wash away their bad luck in the river and make a picnic of the occasion. They also went to the sea where they swam all day.

The day before, in Malacca, they would make their way in decorated bullock carts or floats drawn by bullocks towards Tanjong Kling.

They would sing and dance all night in groups. People from all over the states of Malaya travelled to Malacca to join them.

When I was staying in Kuala Lumpur I used to join them too, and enjoyed myself thoroughly. But times have changed all this — at least UMNO has changed it and has branded this form of entertainment as irreligious.

Other parts of the country still have *Mandi Safar*, or picnics, and one can see large groups of young people in Tasek Perdana (Lake Gardens) on the Wednesday of *Safar* having their little picnic, but there is no more music and singing as there used to be in Malacca in pre-*Merdeka* days.

It is now RTM's policy to produce *Hari Ini Dalam Sejarah* every night to inform people of what happened on that particular day in the past. This programme has evinced popular interest.

Judging from opinions expressed, everyone likes to see *Hari Ini Dalam Sejarah*. It would not be a bad idea to put on *bangsawan* shows for a few minutes about twice a week.

It would revive memories of the past for old people and it would give the younger generation a picture of the type of entertainment we had in those years.

It would also teach the young Malay etiquette, customs, good manners and the correct form of address for use to people of rank and age.

I have often said, and repeat, that even those in the Civil Service today do not know how to use the correct form of words when addressing the Sultan.

Some such programmes might help them.

Anyway, it would be of interest to see *bangsawan* sketches revived on the television screen.

I now come to the famous *ronggeng* introduced by the Portuguese in Malacca. This dance must be kept up as it has

become a popular part of Malay culture.

New tunes and dances can be added to it from time to time to bring it up to date and ensure its continued popularity with the young and the not so young.

In my young days "no *ronggeng*, no party" was the order of the day. So much was it the essence of a party that no club would think of holding a club function without the *ronggeng*.

The poor *ronggeng* girls would be kept dancing till the early hours of the morning. But today hardly anybody takes to the floor.

Perhaps, with Hamzah Dolmat's band, its popularity could be revived on TV. After all, such items form part of our national heritage and we must make it our duty to keep them alive and going.

A Time to Care: A Time to Give

7 April 1980

On 5 April 1980, the regional representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Ali Mohamed, gave me \$250,000 as a reimbursement of the expenses borne by PERKIM over the last one year for the care of the Kampuchean refugees.

PERKIM has been spending its own money on the refugees at the rate of \$1.50 a person per day for food alone, and it could be said, perhaps without fear of contradiction, that PERKIM runs the best refugee camp in this part of the world.

Families occupy one house each and these houses are nicely arranged within the compound. Added to it is a conference hall, a Red Crescent clinic and all other conveniences.

We have had many batches of refugees since early 1977. The last batch numbered 550 persons.

They were kept in the camp for a few months to get acclimatised and became familiar with local customs and language. After this period, they were resettled elsewhere and given jobs.

Being Muslims, they quickly assimilate into Malaysian society. The Malays show extreme kindness and friendship to them and as a result, they have never sought further help from PERKIM. In fact, to be quite honest, we know very little about their whereabouts and their activities.

On one occasion I was sitting in my car in Alor Star when a man, whom I thought was a Malay, approached me and spoke to me in fluent Malay but with a trace of an accent.

I could not make out who he was — he must have sensed my predicament because he quickly asked me, "Don't you remember me, I was among the first batch of refugees from Kampuchea. I now live in a *kampung* in Langgar and have done quite well for myself, selling brooms and other household utensils."

Many of the young men have gone abroad to further their studies, mostly in Cairo in the Al-Azhar University and other

religious institutions in Saudi Arabia.

They are given scholarships by these two governments. We have also orphans adopted by PERKIM and at the moment, six of them are placed in an orphanage. They are quickly learning to live with the rest of the orphans here and are as happy as our local boys.

Some of the tales they have to tell are hard to believe. Nevertheless it has happened and in this civilised world, too.

One orphan said he just ran and ran without knowing where to go after he had seen his parents being slaughtered by the communists. Some refugees took care of him — then he found himself here with these other refugees.

At one time these Kampuchean refugees posed a problem for PERKIM in Kelantan because young Kampucheans were found courting the local young damsels. This incurred the jealousy of the young locals of Kota Bharu who said that they did not like their women to mix with foreigners.

The young Kampucheans retorted that they were Muslims and not foreigners and that they spoke better Malay than the Kelantan people who mispronounced most Malay words they used.

The camp has now about ten old people left. They are too sick or infirm to work, so PERKIM still looks after them, and this we will do for all time.

We started to take in these refugees when trouble first started in Kampuchea in 1977 and we used our own funds to care for them in those early days.

Then the United Nations compensated us for all our expenses, and on top of that made mention of the good work done by PERKIM and the Malaysian Red Crescent in the United Nations on Human Rights and Care of Refugees in October 1977.

The Star helped to collect over \$1 million to help the Kampuchean refugees and very soon it may have to do so again, as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees is very much in need of money.

In the meantime, PERKIM has received appeals from refugees in Thailand or on the Thai-Kampuchean border. They have asked to be saved from their present plight and to be allowed to come to Malaysia.

They have reason to be worried — in the first place, if they return to Kampuchea they would suffer the fate of those who

have returned, i.e., they would be killed in cold blood or incarcerated in disease-infested areas and die.

According to newspaper reports, Thailand's open door has swung shut. Those Kampuchean refugees who have crossed the Thai border have been turned back.

The Thai authorities are thinking about what to do with those who have already entered Thailand.

The refugee population on the Thai border has reached 760,000, according to a report compiled by a newly-formed Thai refugee office called "Task Force 80".

The Task Force Commander, Col. Kitti Putthiport, said that there was a clandestine movement of refugees on the Thai border and that quite a number of them have been escorted back to Kampuchea.

The Khao I Dang camp already holds 112,000 who have been there for a long time and are not likely to return to Kampuchea. They have been cared for by the United Nations.

The problem is with regard to 600,000 odd people whose plight is so serious that help on humanitarian grounds must be given to them.

Among these refugees there are something like 20,000 to 30,000 Muslims and they can never return to Kampuchea as they would not be allowed to follow their religion, and those who did would be put to death.

This is not a concocted story, as we have evidence to prove that that is the case with those who returned.

PERKIM, being a welfare organisation, is duty bound to save lives and to provide relief for distressed Muslim people. We have rooms available in our camp at Pengkalan Chepa, Kelantan, for 3,000 people, a tight squeeze no doubt, but we can take them all the same. We have appealed to our government to allow us to bring them here.

It is hoped that at the meeting of the Muslim Foreign Ministers to be held in Islamabad this month, Muslim countries will be made aware of the terrible plight of their fellow Muslim brothers in Kampuchea, and they must help.

Today Malaysia is the only Muslim country which has been providing relief for these refugees, and our government is the only Muslim one that has given shelter to the Muslim refugees.

It would be a good idea for Malaysia to take along one or two representatives of these refugees to plead their case before the

Muslim nations. In fact we have one doctor who is practising here and another former member of the Kampuchean Parliament who could accompany the delegation to Islamabad.

We cannot blame the Thai government for trying to push the refugees back to Kampuchea, because their number has caused serious economic, population, food as well as political problems for them.

There is no knowing when and how all this is going to end, but one thing that is urgent is the need to take care of the refugees and provide for their well-being.

If our government will allow PERKIM to give assistance to these people, we are prepared to look after another 3,000 of them.

Those who have come here before have posed no security problems for this country and being Muslims, they have become one of us, even before the passing of one decade.

An Australian housewife, Mrs. Bates, who recently returned with two of her friends from the Kampuchean border, and who has just been discharged from the RAAF hospital in Butterworth where she underwent an operation for a cancerous growth, had this to say:

"The sufferings which I saw in the camps were so horrendous that no words can describe them. It was like a journey to hell."

That, in short, is the plight of these unfortunate human wrecks, victims of human injustice. We who value life and all that it stands for must surely feel for these people.

PERKIM can only help the Muslims because our capacity and resources are limited, but if other organisations can share PERKIM's sentiments so much can be done to help relieve the sufferings of these people.

According to Mrs. Bates, "Some were lying on their beds motionless, looking neither dead nor alive. Others just sat staring into space with unseeing eyes."

This indeed is a pathetic story and as human beings we cannot turn our backs on them.

I hope our delegates attending the conference of Muslim Foreign Ministers in Islamabad will succeed in convincing the other Muslim nations of the need to join us and give help to these unfortunate people.

Forty-two

The Right to a Good Education

21 April 1980

Datuk Musa Hitam, the Minister of Education, held a second fund-raising dinner for the Tunku Abdul Rahman Foundation at the Hilton on 16 April 1980 with great success, for it netted more than \$250,000 for the fund.

According to Datuk Musa, the foundation was started in a small way in 1966 by Encik Melan Abdullah and some friends under the chairmanship of the then Minister of Education, Encik Mohamed Khir Johari.

In 1969, the fund had only about \$680,000, out of which \$480,000 was put in fixed deposit at the bank, earning an interest of 4½ per cent annually. The balance of \$200,000 was loaned out to scholars. This has since been written off.

Before May 1969, Encik Khir approached Mr. Lim Sun Hoe, a lawyer, who has now found his mark as a share-broker with great success, and asked him to find ways and means to make more money for the fund.

Mr. Lim agreed to help and withdrew the money from the bank to invest it in shares for a better return and also because the dividends derived from them were exempt from income tax.

As a result of this, the fund began to swell and now it stands at about \$6.2 million. At one time it was lying idle, and was in suspension for some time.

When I returned from Jeddah, where I had been Islamic Secretary-General, I spoke to Cik Saleha binti Ali about the foundation. She promised to take this matter up with the then Minister of Education, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, who revived interest in it.

When Datuk Musa became Education Minister and took over the chairmanship of the foundation, he reactivated the fund and gave it the importance due to it.

In fact, it is said that his aim was to make the scholarship as important as the Queen's Scholarship of the old colonial days.

Encik Zulkifli Hashim, the secretary of the Foundation was given a definite job of work to do, and he set to it with all his heart.

The fund now shows signs not only of revival, but of reaching the level the Minister had in mind. He gave it international importance by going to Cambridge and making an offer to St. Catherine's College of an award of a scholarship, nominated by the college.

Sir Peter Swinnerton Dyer, the Master of St. Catherine's and now the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge (the Chancellor is the Queen) was happy to receive the scholarship and, in his letter to the Minister, he said:

"The Tunku is one of the most respected former members of this college and has, for a considerable time, been an honorary fellow.

"I am, of course, too young to have known him when he was at St. Catherine's. We are very grateful to the foundation for their offer of a Tunku Abdul Rahman scholarship and are delighted to accept the offer."

I explained that evening at the dinner why the offer was made to St. Catherine's — I was more grateful to this college than the college itself was to me for the award of the scholarship, because St. Catherine's was the only one in the year 1922 to accept me.

After the First World War, all the colleges were full with returned servicemen seeking admission into Cambridge and St. Catherine's was no exception.

But the college agreed to accept me for the October 1922 term, provided I matriculated and I got through the "little go".

Other colleges could only give me a place "in two or three years' time" but I had no intention of waiting for so long as I was anxious to get down to the business of studying or to join the Bar.

Again, as I explained that evening, I was guilty of "a serious crime" when I forgot the date of my final examination in June 1925.

I got rather mixed up and it was not until I was told by a friend that I realised my mistake.

I rushed to the hall to find that I was half an hour too late, and one paper had already been dealt with.

For this I was severely dealt with and sent down from Cambridge, but St. Catherine's was kind enough to give me another chance. With that I graduated in June.

In 1960, I was conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Law by Cambridge and at the same time St. Catherine's also honoured me with a fellowship of the college.

So, I naturally would like to show my gratitude and appreciation to the college by recommending to the chairman of the foundation this scholarship for St. Catherine's College, and another scholarship for a Malaysian who enters St. Catherine's for a Ph.D. course.

Another amusing episode of my university life was cited at the investiture ceremony when the citation said that I was fond of high living and high-powered cars. The car in question was one with red mud-guards and aluminium body which caused the university to introduce traffic regulations including the prohibition of the use of motor cars during lecture hours.

Those were the days when life was grand.

I was asked if I would live differently if I had to live my life again. One can always be wise after the event, but if I had my choice I would say no, because I have in the course of my ups and downs both as student and as government official, been able to gain experience which has given me the edge over many others as politicians and administrators.

As a result of my experiences as a civil servant, the first thing I did when I became Prime Minister was to open the Malayan Civil Service to state officers who had reached a certain scale of pay in their service.

The qualification for admission into the civil service then was a university degree, at a starting pay of \$300 per month.

For the eighteen years I did in the Kedah Civil Service I received only six increments, when I should have got eighteen.

And when I finally passed the Bar in 1948 they gave me no job at all in the state. In fact, I was employed only as a cadet in the Legal Adviser's Office. It was not until I left the state to take up an appointment in Kuala Lumpur that I felt myself a free man.

Coming back to the Foundation, the winners are given cash awards and gold medals minted with my picture on one side and the foundation's emblem on the other, with the sphinx and the torch.

This is a wise move because these successful students will value these gifts even more, as they will serve for all time as a reminder of their successful achievements as students.

It is only hoped that with wise investment and the readiness

and willingness of people to give donations in big and small sums this Foundation can continue to help our bright young students with opportunities to better their education.

The Foundation will also give scholarships to poor boys and girls who otherwise could not afford to go to school at all.

The standard of education must be kept high. Only with education can young men appreciate the true value of life and give their undivided loyalty to the country of their birth. This helps to ensure goodwill and peace among the people.

For this reason, I am always cautious about any attempt to change our education policy and system.

While I appreciate that a nation like Malaysia must have a national language of its own for official use and also to serve as a unifying factor, the language for higher education must, in the main, remain English. Once that standard drops, then the rot begins to set in and trouble will start.

We cannot follow other countries blindly because what is good for us may be poison for another. No two countries are alike.

Malaysia, in particular, is in a special position because of the nature and composition of its population. The constitution guarantees that each race in this country is free to pursue its own education, provided that it conforms with national policy.

It was on this understanding that all races agreed to support Malaya's independence. After independence we gave prominence to this country, with Malay as our national language and Islam as the official religion.

On this basis, Malaya — and then Malaysia — has moved steadily forward and has won peace and prosperity at home and fame abroad.

Many people who can afford it — Malays and non-Malays alike — have sent their children abroad to make sure that they are not adversely affected by any change in the education policy in this country.

This shows that they are concerned with what is likely to happen with our education.

Datuk Musa Hitam is well aware of his duties and responsibilities in this respect.

He does not want to be intimidated into changing the policy and he is a brave man in expressing his views on the language issue openly and frankly.

Educated people and those of intelligence will know what is

good and what is the correct line to take.

There are insufficient text books in *Bahasa* and to improve our knowledge and attain a high level of education, we have to, for a long time, depend on English for our reading materials.

Independence has come to stay — at least that is our hope and prayer. So why the hurry to change our mode of life when it has served us so well so far?

The Tunku Abdul Rahman Foundation, by making awards to brilliant students, is obviously pursuing this aim of getting the best possible education for our students.

I always say that to eat half-cooked rice is a danger to the health, and a person with bad health will not have a healthy body and a healthy mind.

Half-educated people therefore will be more of a risk to the nation's security than to its well-being and peace.

Forty-three

Let's Keep the Party Going

19 May 1980

UMNO reached its thirty-fourth year of age and political maturity on 11 May 1980 and the occasion passed off quietly without any publicity or fuss. In fact, I myself had forgotten all about May the Eleventh and what was in my mind were the events of May the Thirteenth, 1969. I did not give myself any thought to UMNO.

It was only after my round of golf with Datuk Senu that he reminded me of it.

"Why don't you write something about it, Tunku?"

UMNO has had its ups and downs in its thirty-three years of active political life. Many changes have taken place at all levels in its leadership but as a party it remains to this day the political bulwark in democratic Malaysia.

Nobody can forget the part it has played in the political field for the emancipation and independence of the country; all from the top to the bottom, in other words, from the leaders to the rank and file, must be proud of the party's achievements.

Thirty-three years is a long time for a party to remain in power.

Even in an ordinary lifespan, a man would be considered approaching middle-age with those years and most men would be passing their prime.

Political parties, on the other hand, are made up of different people spread throughout the length and breadth of the country, with different temperaments and characters. For the party to keep together and maintain its strength all these years is no mean achievement.

As its second president, I am proud of my association with UMNO.

In my quiet moments, my mind goes back to the days when I first came into contact with the party. I never dreamt that I would one day be called upon to take over the leadership.

There was only one man of stature in UMNO at the time, and

he was Datuk Onn. I was not in his circle of chosen favourites.

No Malay at the time would give anybody else a thought and it was the ambition of every leader to get himself as near to Datuk Onn as possible, at least to be able to boast that he enjoyed the confidence of the great man.

When I was the patron of *Seberkas*, my colleagues in the party and also those in Persatuan Melayu Kedah were rushing to be at the beck and call of Datuk Onn. So in this scramble for position I was trampled underfoot.

At the time I was very hurt and of course angry, but looking at it now objectively I have every reason to be grateful for what happened to me then. It was destined for me to give up politics and return in 1946 to finish my law in England where I had left off in 1930.

I originally took up law for the purpose of getting out of Cambridge to have a little break in London, where I could have a bit of fun when attending my bar dinners.

When I got through and became a barrister in 1948 at the age of 45, I returned home and was made chairman of UMNO Kedah. Again the scramble and jockeying for position occurred. So bad was it that I was not even informed of Datuk Onn's visit to Kedah. I therefore decided to resign as chairman in 1949.

I snatched at the offer of the post of Deputy Public Prosecutor made to me by the then Attorney-General, Mr. Foster Sutton (who later became the Chief Justice of Malaya), and came to live in Kuala Lumpur.

I did not move among the politicians but rather among the sportsmen who made me first president of the Malay Football Association, Malaya, then president of the Football Association Selangor, and finally the president of the Football Association of Malaya.

Datuk Onn made his decision to leave UMNO. I took over from him and resigned from my government post as President of the Sessions Court, Kuala Lumpur, on 25 August 1951. One can imagine how I felt, having had to go through the trials and tribulations I experienced earlier in UMNO.

Could this happen to me again? It did happen again when some members of UMNO decided to replace me with a new leader soon after the violent disorder of 13 May 1969. It did show signs of its recurrence at first, with half of the members of UMNO Exco working for Datuk Onn against me. So on Hari Raya Haji

1951 at the Pudu mosque I decided to condemn these people, whom I branded traitors, and decided at once that they must go.

UMNO acquired a new lease of life and with its new found strength and in partnership with the MCA and MIC we swept the pools at all levels, i.e. the town councils, municipal councils, state councils and finally in the national election with the loss of only one seat. *Merdeka* rang in the air and *Merdeka* we went for and got in 1957.

UMNO has brought into its fold all the other political parties, the oldest being the MCA and MIC, as the Alliance. Under Tun Razak, Gerakan, PAS and other state parties were brought in to form the Barisan Nasional. This marked a step forward in political maturity and progress, so said the UMNO leaders, but they had to break with Party Islam, which fought the Barisan in the last election tooth and nail.

There is now dissension among some Gerakan state branches who are not satisfied with their share in the party hierarchy. Nevertheless it is hoped that Barisan will remain intact and whatever may be the reason, it should be adjusted.

According to Dr. Goh Cheng Teik, the state Gerakan wants the party to review its position in the Barisan Nasional. A resolution adopted at the party's state delegates conference in Penang asked the Gerakan's parent body to discuss the matter at its national general assembly in Kuala Lumpur later this month.

The delegates were unhappy with the Gerakan's present position in the Barisan Nasional. The number of delegates who were dissatisfied was large enough for the resolution to be carried.

The Barisan Nasional must remain together for the party's own good, and it's up to UMNO, the senior partner, to give the lead. It is important to keep the party together because the country and the people depend so much on it. Nobody is actually perfect, nor everybody happy with his lot, but on the whole, Malaysia is doing well and I have said often enough we should be contented with our lot. This is due to the party which runs the government. All the component members of Barisan look to UMNO to keep them together and UMNO must not fail to give the leadership.

If anything happens to UMNO the nation will suffer. That much UMNO members must remember.

That's why when the crisis arose in the Selangor state government everybody was very concerned, though UMNO Selangor is no more important than UMNO in other states. When the

Menteri Besar decided to retire, his first duty should have been to inform the leader who is the Prime Minister himself. But in this case an announcement of his intention to do so was made without the knowledge of the Prime Minister and this is a departure from the time-honoured practice.

Many old members, like myself, are naturally worried as it is a serious breach of party discipline. This has never happened before. There has been trouble in Perak, in Sarawak, in Sabah and in Kelantan, but all these were settled by the Prime Minister. In this case the Menteri Besar made the announcement himself without going through the usual channels.

I am glad that the matter has resolved itself with the announcement by the Menteri Besar that he had made a mistake; he apologised for it and has accepted the Prime Minister's advice to stay on.

A problem no doubt still exists in Selangor but it can be smoothed out satisfactorily if all observe party discipline.

A committee has been set up to review UMNO's constitution. I understood that in 1974 the assembly dealt with a few amendments in respect of the constitution itself.

It is expected there will be more amendments to be introduced at the assembly to be held later this year on administration and party discipline, and the tightening of the party's laws and regulations.

The question of the position of the Menteri Besar has arisen many times, and this has been ill-defined in our state constitutions. UMNO should take action to deal with this matter more precisely so that when any question arises in respect of the Menteri Besar it can be settled quickly.

In conclusion I would like to place on record a few pre-*Merdeka* items of interest for the information of our young members and these are :-

The UMNO flag was designed and approved at the general assembly held in Ipoh on 29 and 30 June 1946. The meeting was opened by His Highness the Sultan of Perak. It was hoisted and displayed for the first time at the Francis Light School Penang at 10 a.m. on 27 July 1946 by His Highness Tuanku Badlishah, Sultan of Kedah.

The Rulers had a conference on 24 July 1946 with the leaders of UMNO and put up a draft of the Federal Constitution and this draft was submitted to Sir Edward Gent at the Conference of

Rulers and British High Commissioner on 24 and 25 July 1946 at Government House, Kuala Lumpur.

On 25 July 1946 a committee consisting of twelve representatives was appointed to review the draft constitution.

This draft was passed to the committee for approval and after long deliberations the committee affixed their signatures on 18 November 1946.

The UMNO General Meeting in Kedah on 10, 11 and 12 January 1947 approved in principle the draft constitution prepared by the Working Committee. On 1 February 1947 it was approved by the Conference of Rulers and the High Commissioner, which resulted in the official Federation of Malaya.

Three names had been suggested for the country, namely Malayan Federal Union, Malayan Federation and Federation of Malaya and the one officially accepted was the Federation of Malaya.

In fact it was the name proposed by UMNO. The Malay name is Persekutuan Tanah Melayu.

UMNO's biggest achievement of course was the complete elimination of the British government's proposal for the setting up of the Malayan Union. This was an accomplishment the credit for which goes to Datuk Onn and UMNO at the time.

These are some of the things which UMNO did to pave the way to independence. The flag and coat of arms remain to this day with slight alterations but the constitution has completely changed.

Under the leadership of Datuk Onn UMNO did not aspire for the ideal of independence. It was my good fortune to pursue the issue and to fight with all my power and with the strength of UMNO, MCA and MIC behind me and by the Will of Allah and His infinite mercy we won it and on 31 August 1957 Malaya became independent.

UMNO has had thirty-three years of proud record and to the members I say — keep the party going.

Appendices

A

Text of Address by the Hon'ble the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YTM Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, KOM, CH at the Presentation Ceremony on Receiving the Freedom of the City of London, at Guildhall, London, on Tuesday, 18 June 1968:-

My Lord Mayor, Your Excellencies, My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen:

May I express my very warm thanks to the Chamberlain for his eloquent address and for the generous remarks he has made about my country and myself. As I listened I recalled vividly the day when I received the Resolution of the Court of Common Council of the City of London offering to confer on me the honour of becoming a Freeman of this City. That was indeed a proud moment for me to learn that I had been found worthy to receive one of the rarest distinctions in the world, a privilege that has fallen to the lot of very few men or women.

My Lord Mayor, may I say from the depth of my heart how grateful indeed I am to you and to the Court of Common Council for this gracious tribute to me, and through me, to the nation and people of Malaysia. This is a tribute I will always treasure with pride, especially as it comes from the City of London, which has given me so much happiness both as a pleasure-loving young man and the rest-seeking old man I am now.

I may say that I have spent the best part of my life here and have enjoyed every moment of it. Like many students from abroad I came to England first when I was sixteen, seeking higher education to equip me for a future career. After obtaining a degree at Cambridge I came up to London full of hopes and expectations that I would qualify as a barrister, but the tempo and temptations were too great.

Today, London is spoken of as the "swinging city"; those were the days of the Roaring Twenties, and London a metropolis of fun and frolic, a maze in which I got lost, giving so much of my time to the sheer pleasure of living that as a student of law I was advised to give up all hope of ever becoming a barrister. In short I came a cropper.

Twenty-five years later I returned to London in middle age to finish what I had started so early, and finally at last was called to the Bar. With that success, so late in life, my political career can be said to have really begun.

Ten eventful years in Malaya passed by, until in 1956 I came back

once more to London as a political leader with a delegation from Malaya to negotiate for the independence of my country, and we achieved and proclaimed our freedom as a nation in the following year. My greatest ambition was fulfilled; independence won peacefully in friendly discussions and without rancour. This achievement was due to the long, close and amicable association and mutual understanding that have always marked relations between Britain and Malaya. In our freedom we inherited and enhanced many years of British tutelage; having worked together our two peoples have always been friends. Perhaps I can say that we are one of the non-white dominions that have stood by Britain through thick and thin, and likewise Britain has stood by us.

That confidence and trust we shared was proven very early from 1948 onwards when we fought together to crush communist insurrection in Malaya for nine years before independence, and again when we faced Indonesian aggression for three years from 1963 to 1965. With our independence and newly won freedom the peaceful and loyal citizens of Malaya joined me with all their hearts and strength to fight the enemy that had been terrorising and killing our people, destroying property and bringing chaos to our country, a struggle which was to last three years more. Finally, the combined efforts of our people and our staunch British and Commonwealth allies completely subdued the enemy, driving them out of our country towards the border of Thailand, where ever since the few hundreds left have remained.

With the internal state of emergency ended, Malaya was able to turn its whole attention to more urgent and essential problems, the development of our young nation in peace and progress, beginning life anew free from fear and persecution.

We launched and have continued to maintain a vast programme of development, both rural and urban. Capital investment flowed in from Britain and elsewhere. New towns, villages and industries sprang up, bringing not only prosperity to our people but also increasing the prestige of and establishing a good name for Malaya as a successful democracy.

Our success was not only a source of great pride to us as a young nation but also to British administrators and businessmen alike who had helped guide us through difficult times, leading naturally and inevitably to the wider concept of Malaysia, a new nation formed by the merger with Malaya of other British territories — Singapore, Sarawak and British North Borneo (now known as Sabah). This experiment in wider federation unfortunately did not endure for after two years we had to part company with Singapore, but Sabah and Sarawak have remained staunch and loyal members of the federation.

Malaysians, least of all myself, are not a people given to self-aggrandisement. I do not have to say it, as so many others have done so

already, noting with admiration that Malaysia today is a shining star in the troubled world of Southeast Asia. God willing it will remain so, for I can assure you that the peoples of Malaysia are united in an unequivocal desire to maintain the integrity and sovereignty of our new nation.

A new factor has now emerged, affecting both Southeast Asia and some of the member nations of the Commonwealth, and that is Britain's decision to withdraw her Armed Forces from the region. Just before I arrived in London a few days ago I am happy to say that we have concluded successfully five-day talks with our friends — Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. In these discussions in Kuala Lumpur we have worked out a plan for the defence of our region of the world and I can safely say that the British withdrawal will not leave a vacuum in our security.

We in Malaysia will continue to devote all our energies and efforts to ambitious developments which we have been and are carrying out and on which we have spent and plan to spend many millions of dollars. This confidence of ours in our future stability and prosperity, combined with the new agreement on regional defence, should be sufficient encouragement to businessmen throughout the world to invest their capital securely in Malaysia.

We are living in a world of change, and nations, large or small, interdependent as they are, must adapt themselves to the changing world. Britain is withdrawing herself from her extensive commitments in defence overseas, and is closing ranks to achieve her own economic security and finding new ways of achieving and sustaining prosperity. I have always maintained that the British people can be trusted, as history has proved many times, to overcome and emerge from any difficulties with success. How Britain will do it, she knows best. We in Malaysia will watch developments with whole-hearted interest, because our two nations and people are so closely linked; for instance when Britain devalued Sterling last year, Malaysia was adversely affected, losing some 250 million dollars of our reserves deposited in London. So if Britain succeeds in her economic endeavours, then her success will also mean success for us.

I said just now we are living in a world of change, and I can only wish that simple statement could suffice, but change can be for either better or worse, and it is a sorry comment on our times that the world is beset with troubles everywhere, both internally within nations and also internationally. Science and technology, with a rapidity of development that is quite astounding, are creating new conditions of life and in doing so creating new demands and new problems; in fact a new world is emerging. With complex and infallible weapons of destruction, the world is even creating the capacity to destroy itself. However, all nations now realise that if nuclear buttons are ever pressed it will mean the end

of mankind. The prospect is so terrifying that I do not believe that there is any immediate danger to world peace.

However, I do feel that threats to peace come more from trouble on a small scale breaking out here and there among small nations which have either mismanaged their independence or misused their new-found power. The danger in Southeast Asia lies in the trouble being fermented by outside force too, a force which aims to dominate the potentially rich region of Asia. Two great blocs are inevitably drawn into the arena — one is to save democracy as against the will and determination of the other to destroy it. That is what is happening in Vietnam today. How the war there will end no one can say. The civil war has ceased to be a conflict of ideologies between the Vietnamese themselves, and has become a struggle between two great powers. I can hope and pray, as all peace-loving people should do, that these two power blocs will endeavour to seek a solution in order to bring an end to this war, or else the Vietnamese themselves will get tired of fighting and call it a day and agree to divide their area of control.

We in Malaysia intend to keep our minds set on the task of peaceful development, making friends with all in the hope that we will be allowed to live our own way of life in peace and happiness. This is what we wish for ourselves and this is what we wish for all men everywhere. I for one pin my faith in God, with a prayer in my heart for His Mercy, and the common sense of man to respect the right of one another. I intend to do all in my power to work for peace in harmony and goodwill with all.

My Lord Mayor, as a Freeman of this great City I now have more cause than ever to regard London as my second home. To be honoured this morning in this ancient Guildhall, hallowed by tradition and custom, fills my heart with joy to know that this City which has given me so much in my life should ask me to join the ranks of its Freemen. In doing so you honour my country and my people, without whom I would be just another man. With deep sincerity I thank you.

B

Speech by YTM Tunku Abdul Rahman Al-Haj at the Guildhall, London, in reply to the Lord Mayor of London on behalf of the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth at the State Banquet given to them by the City of London on 13 January 1969:-

My Lord Mayor, Prime Minister, Your Excellencies,
My Lords, Aldermen, Sheriffs, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed an honour and a privilege for me to reply on behalf of my friends and colleagues, the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth, and to thank you, My Lord Mayor and Members of the Corporation of the City of London for the warmth of your welcome and the cordial spirit of hospitality and goodwill showered on us this evening.

I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers because, by way of being the prime minister longest in office, I am also the oldest in age. Therefore it gives me a personal pleasure to accept the honour, and only seven months ago it was here in this Guildhall that I received the distinction of being considered "A man of good name and fame" and presented with the Freedom of the City of London. The honour of being entertained by the Lord Mayor in this glittering ceremony amidst the splendour of ancient and historical Guildhall enriched by customs and traditions of the City of London is indeed a tribute which the Commonwealth Prime Ministers appreciate and acknowledge most gratefully.

The Guildhall is hallowed by centuries of tradition but I doubt very much whether the guardians of the City, Gog and Magog, have ever before seen so many prime ministers from every corner of the earth gathered together within these walls.

When I first joined the ranks there were only nine prime ministers and presidents in the Commonwealth and now there are twenty-eight, although all are not here tonight. A meeting of prime ministers gives me a chance to renew my friendship with old colleagues, the opportunity and pleasure of meeting new ones and a chance to have a holiday in London — my second home.

Unlike Gog and Magog, prime ministers come and prime ministers go; some go the quick way, some the hard way, some the normal way. And it did happen to one head of government, after an official visit abroad he found that his entry into his own country was barred to him, but I am confident this will not happen to anyone of us attending this Commonwealth Conference.

Unquestionably, it is the highest of tributes for any man or woman to be chosen by their people to be prime minister; whatever honours and privileges may accrue to a prime minister, these are far-outweighed by the onus and cares of office. His term, in fact his whole career, depends always on the wishes of the people and sometimes their whims and fancies.

Being a prime minister, therefore, is by no means an easy life, but one of unending responsibility, demanding constant care and unrelenting attention. In fact, he must be something of an acrobat — with his ear to the ground, his fingers on the pulse, his eye to the future, and ready in political crisis to walk and balance on the tight rope between victory and defeat.

So, when Commonwealth prime ministers come together, as we do in London, all of us, irrespective of personality, share a mutual awareness of both the distinctions and burden of office. With this unique link of fraternal understanding it is not surprising that when we get together we should speak our minds openly, freely and sometimes noisily so that our people can hear us. And the press report such headlines as — “PREMIERS FACE THREE WAY SPLIT”, “DO NOT BLAME ME FOR ENOCH”, “COLOUR CLASH, PROTEST OVER ‘JUICY’ STORIES”, “WILSON’S FEARLESS DEFENCE”.

There is always something to talk about, to differ about, or even to quarrel about. Such conferences demand great patience, great feats of endurance and above all a sense of humour. Each prime minister has his own style in tackling a subject, some go right to the point, while others seem to take hours, travelling a devious route to clinch an argument.

I was amused watching Mr. Wilson, beset by difficulties at the last Commonwealth Conference, being under attack from all quarters, puffing away at his pipe, blowing smoke rings, patiently enduring what must have been to him “all hell let loose” and saying to himself “God help me!”

These conferences are like the English climate. There are bouts of fine weather, changing from stormy to foggy with nobody having the foggiest idea as to how the day is going to turn out in the end.

When you come to think of it, the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference is a motley collection of leaders. They represent in themselves some one thousand million people of all races, creeds and colours.

Politically, their very diversity is founded of past history, a common purpose to get together after independence and a mutual desire to work together to achieve the best results from joint endeavours. And above all to seek shelter under a common roof in a strange new world we found ourselves after years of colonial rule in a spirit of comradeship and understanding.

The Commonwealth has its good points and has to its credit some

splendid achievements. An excellent example is the Colombo Plan — the forerunner of so many similar international bodies working for the common good of the underdeveloped and developing countries; in short for the good of mankind. And so in the Colombo Plan the Commonwealth has indeed built an organisation that is an example to the world.

There is also another strong tie which makes the association of countries in the Commonwealth not only natural but also very necessary. In this world of rapid changes and crises, the forces of economics impinge on all we do, much more so than ever before in the past. This strong tie is simply money. With the exception of Canada, all these countries of the Commonwealth belong to the Sterling Area. I think it is important to emphasise the bond of Sterling at this juncture, and what place can be more appropriate than here, in the very heart of the business world — the City of London.

The past fourteen months have seen three major world monetary crises — Sterling devaluation in November 1967, the gold crisis of March 1968 and the third arising recently through speculation on possible devaluation of the French franc and upward revaluation of the Deutsche mark. To put it mildly, it is therefore only too clear that the world's monetary situation gives us cause for concern and apprehension, more reason why the Commonwealth members should put their heads together and work together to maintain the strength of Sterling for our common good.

The sense of comradeship that brings us together in the Commonwealth must always have deep meaning and broad strength. This is not easy to achieve without assertive leadership and shared loyalty. It had been expected that Britain, the founder of the Commonwealth, would provide this leadership, but unfortunately the British Government thinks otherwise today and instead of carrying on with her protective role, she is withdrawing from her commitments to her Commonwealth friends.

I must honestly say that this attitude of "fend for yourself" has brought about a feeling of emptiness and insecurity in the hearts of those who had looked with confidence to Britain for help and protection during their early years of independence. Without effective leadership in the Commonwealth it follows that there can be no real feeling of togetherness and common loyalty to a cause. The Commonwealth must be given a meaning and must not be regarded merely as a forum to take it out on good old Britain for having bossed it over us once upon a time. The members owe upon themselves to serve it and to make it work. Its future success depends upon this mutual effort. Only in the way can the Commonwealth be a unifying and living force in the affairs of the world working not only for the mutual benefit of its members, but also for the well-being of mankind.

May I now ask all Prime Ministers and Presidents of the Commonwealth present here and all other distinguished guests to rise and drink with me a toast to the goodwill and good fortune of *THE LORD MAYOR AND CORPORATION OF LONDON*.

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Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, D.M.N., K.O.M., C.H., has had a distinguished career as a lawyer, statesman, diplomat and Prime Minister.

The Tunku was born on 8th February 1903 and is a prince of the royal house of Kedah. He was educated at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge and graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in law and history. He was called to the Bar from the Inner Temple in 1948. In 1949 he became a Deputy Public Prosecutor and President of the Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court. He resigned when called by the UMNO members to lead the Party. Under his leadership the Federation of Malaya achieved Home Rule in 1955 and in 1957 complete Independence. He became Malaya's first Chief Minister and subsequently first Prime Minister. He resigned in September, 1970 and soon afterwards became Secretary-General of the Islamic Secretariat in Jeddah.

Many honours have been bestowed on him but the ones he treasures most are the D.M.N. (Darjah Utama Seri Mahkota Negara) and C.H. (Companion of Honour to the Queen), Hon. LLD (Cantab), Hon. LLD (Oxford) and Bencher of the Inner Temple.

The Tunku's style is eminently readable and to the point and he deals with prominent events and personages in a frank and forth-right fashion. The views which the Tunku expresses here stem from his deep interest in all affairs Malaysian in the broadest sense. There is much here that will interest Malaysians and all who have the welfare of Malaysia at heart.



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