

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN MALAYSIAN POLITICS

Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra
First Prime Minister of Malaysia



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"Whatever others may do, and however hard we may have to fight, we will stand by the ideals, and the principles of democracy. We are determined to create a new nation evolving our own personality, maintaining our Malayan way of life and defending our Parliamentary democracy and upholding the principle that the state is made for men and not men for the state."

TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN PUTRA AL-HAJ.
7th December, 1958

FOREWORD

This book contains my thoughts and views on various subjects of interest to the Malaysian public today. As one of the nation's founders, I believe it is my duty to ensure that our country continues to be a happy, prosperous and peaceful one. The opinions and suggestions contained in this book were all written in that spirit.

After the Second World War many new nations in Africa and Asia found it expedient to blow hot air and play up their newly won independence, sometimes to the discomfort and sorrow of their well-wishers. But when the Alliance took over the government of Malaya in 1957 all went quietly and smoothly. Malaysia then emerged with Singapore and Borneo as new members of the family – stable and progressive.

If Malaysia is to continue to enjoy the fruits of independence, it is imperative that its people must continue to learn the lessons of history. That can be a building force in welding the

people together. That is why when I wrote my articles in the *Star*, I often referred to what happened in the past, in the belief that the future will portend happiness for our people.

This book is different from the others I have written because the articles have been arranged according to subjects. Each section includes a few background notes to help the reader understand the situation at the time the articles were written. The general introduction at the beginning of the book was written by Bruce Gale. I thank him.

Once again I would like to express my thanks to my two secretaries, Mr. Cheah Phee Cheok in Kuala Lumpur and Mr. Jee Guat Huat in Penang who has been my "old faithfuls" for many years and Mr. Ng Tieh Chuan, my new friend for taking the trouble in publishing the book.

Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj

INTRODUCTION

Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, a prince of the royal house of Kedah, occupies a unique place in Malaysian history. Recognised throughout the country as 'Bapa Malaysia' (Father of Malaysia), his role as the principal architect of the nation's independence is unquestioned. Today, almost 14 years after stepping down as Malaysia's first Prime Minister, his views are still heard with respect.

Since 1975, when the Tunku's articles first began appearing every Monday in *The Star* newspaper, he has been writing what is clearly the most avidly read newspaper column in Malaysia. The Tunku's views carry great influence, not only because of his key role in the independence struggle, but also because he can fairly lay claim to being one of the few public figures in the country without a vested interest in the outcome of current political controversies.

It is not the purpose of this brief introduction to give a detailed account of the Tunku's life and contributions to Malaysian political develop-

ment. A full evaluation will almost certainly occupy researchers for many years. However, a knowledge of few basic facts about the Tunku and political events in Malaysia is essential in order to place the selection of articles in this book in its proper context.

Malaysia is a multi-racial nation consisting of Malays, Chinese and Indians together with a large number of other indigenous groups. Each maintains its own language, religion and traditions. The Malays, who form the largest single ethnic group, are Muslims and predominate in the rural areas. A large number are also employed in the civil service. The Chinese also form a large proportion of the population. They are mostly Buddhists or Christians and have historically been concentrated in the towns and cities as businessmen and professionals. Generally, the Indians work on the rubber estates in the countryside or as professionals in the cities.

Apart from the Malays, the largest concentration of indigenous groups is to be found in the East Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak (formerly British North Borneo). The multiplicity of tribes and languages is too complicated to enumerate here. However, a short list would include the Ibans and the Land Dayaks in Sarawak and the Kadazans, Muruts and Bajaus in Sabah. Together with the Malays in other parts of the country, these groups are regarded as Bumiputras (sons of the soil). The population of the two states also includes a

substantial number of Malays and Chinese. Historically and economically there are many differences between Peninsula Malaysia and Sabah and Sarawak. Not surprisingly, federal state relations have sometimes experienced moments of crisis.

After the Second World War an attempt by the British colonial administration to unite the states of Malaya by establishing a single unitary government was hotly opposed by the Malays on the grounds that the sovereignty of the Malay Sultans in the states would be transferred to the British crown. This, they believed, would inevitably result in the country's affairs being run by the more economically sophisticated non-Malay communities. It was at this time that the influential United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) was founded by Dato Onn bin Jaafar to protect Malay interests.

As a result of UMNO's agitation the Malayan Union Scheme was replaced by the Federation of Malaya Agreement in 1948. It guaranteed the special position of the Sultans and the Malays as the indigenous people. In return Malay leaders accepted the principle that non-Malays could obtain citizenship. Dato Onn attempted to take this further by opening UMNO to non-Malays. However, party leaders objected to the proposal and Dato Onn resigned. The Tunku then became UMNO president. After 1957, when Malaya gained its independence, the citizenship provisions were further liberalised and the civil service

was opened to non-Malays in the ratio of 1:4.

The decision of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) to launch an anti-colonial insurrection in 1948 exacerbated communal tensions. Led by Malaysians of Chinese descent the MCP had become a powerful force during the struggle against the Japanese. However, Malays were generally hostile towards the party because they suspected it of being anti-Islamic. The Chinese middle classes, having come to terms with the Malay aristocratic leadership in UMNO after the Tunku took over, were also unwilling to cooperate with the communists. After a long struggle the Malayan government was finally able to declare the Emergency at the end of 1960.

Tunku Abdul Rahman was born in one of the royal palaces of Kedah in 1903. He received a varied education in several schools before joining the prestigious English medium Penang Free School. Later he received the first ever Kedah government scholarship to England. At Cambridge University he completed a Bachelor of Arts degree, becoming the university's first Malay graduate. He then began a law course but was unable to complete it. He returned home instead to join the Kedah Civil Service.

During the 1930's the Tunku served in Malaya as a District Officer. After the Japanese occupation in 1941 he was appointed Kedah State Auditor and then Superintendent of Education. He was also active in Saberkas, an organisation which aimed at establishing an

independent democratic and Socialist Malayan state, but later withdrew his support because of the organisation's apparent willingness to resort to violence against the returning British. During the intervening period between the Japanese surrender and the British return he helped to ensure that Alor Star was not occupied by Chinese-led communist troops. He also discouraged Malays from taking revenge on non-Malays for the death of Malays at the hands of Chinese communists.

The Tunku supported UMNO's campaign against the Malayan Union proposals before returning to Britain to complete his law degree. While there he became president of the Malay Society and spent much time thinking about the problems of Malayan independence. After having successfully completed his studies in law he came back to Malaya in 1949 and became a Deputy Public Prosecutor before being appointed President of the Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court. He resigned two years later and became leader of UMNO to fill the vacancy left by Dato Onn's exit. Under his leadership the Federation of Malaya achieved full independence in 1957. Tunku Abdul Rahman was the nation's first Prime Minister.

The Barisan Nasional (National Front) coalition of political parties which ruled the country in the 1970's and early 1980's had its origins in the co-operation between UMNO and the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) in 1952

to contest the Kuala Lumpur municipal elections. The Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) joined later. It proved so successful that it was used again in the first federal elections in 1955.

The coalition (formalised as the Alliance Party) worked well right through the period of Tunku's leadership allowing its leaders to form governments in which UMNO was the senior partner. Politically the racial 'balance' was maintained through bargaining and compromise among the leaders of the respective parties in the coalition. The unwritten understanding was that the Malays would continue to enjoy their pre-eminence in politics and administration while the non-Malays were granted citizenship and permitted to continue their dominance of the nation's commercial life. Some attempts were made by the Government to assist the Malays in business, but these measures did not seriously threaten informal Chinese monopolies.

This arrangement was subject to serious strains in the 1960's. In 1963 the states of Malaya together with Singapore and the British North Borneo Territories (Sabah and Sarawak) united to form the Malaysian federation. The decision to include the predominantly Chinese island of Singapore soon led to serious difficulties as the Singapore-based PAP tried to extend its influence throughout the peninsula. Finally the Tunku insisted that Singapore withdraw from the federation in 1965 to avoid

further racial tensions. In 1967 another fierce controversy erupted over the passage of the National Language Act which confirmed Malay (later known as Bahasa Malaysia) as the nation's official language. The Tunku's popularity within UMNO waned considerably when he intervened to water down provisions in the Bill which made Malay the sole official language.

In the 1969 elections the Alliance was subject to tremendous pressures. UMNO lost seats to the Islamic fundamentalist PAS while the Chinese seemed to be rejecting the MCA in favour of the more communally appealing DAP (Democratic Action Party) and the PPP (People's Progressive Party). In Penang the MCA lost control of the state government to the Gerakan, another predominantly non-Malay party.

This erosion of popular support for the Government was not sufficient to deny the Alliance its parliamentary majority. However, it did result in considerable racial tension, especially in Selangor where the Alliance and the combined opposition parties were tied at 14 seats each. Victory celebrations by rival parties sparked off the worst racial riots in the nation's history. For the Tunku, who had often preached racial tolerance and proclaimed himself the happiest Prime Minister in the world, it was one of the saddest days of his life.

The communal violence, now referred to euphemistically as the May 13th Incident, led to the suspension of Parliamentary democracy

and the establishment of a National Operations Council (NOC) chaired by the then Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Razak. A number of fundamental political changes soon followed. Under the New Economic Policy (NEP) the Government hoped to remove many of the socio-economic bases of Malay discontent by 'restructuring society' so as to place all races on an equal economic footing. Development programmes therefore took on a more obviously pro-Malay tilt. The Sedition Act was also amended to make it illegal to criticise constitutional clauses relating to Malay special rights, the national language, the Sultanate and the citizenship rights of the non-Malay communities.

Two notable UMNO non-conformists, Dr. Mahathir and Datuk Musa Hitam, fell victim to the search for scapegoats. By challenging the authority of Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, Dr. Mahathir had offended the Malay establishment. The two men had also upset the Chinese community by calling for more drastic measures to help the Malays. Both were regarded at the time as being extreme right-wingers threatening to upset the delicate racial balance. Dr Mahathir was temporarily expelled from the party while Datuk Musa lost his political job. However, the Tunku's influence continued to decline and in 1970 he retired to become Secretary General of the International Islamic Secretariat.

When Parliament reconvened after 21 months

of emergency rule the new Prime Minister, Tun Razak, began to pursue a strategy of inviting the major opposition parties to enter an enlarged Government coalition. The parties which joined the Barisan Nasional included SUPP (Sarawak United People's Party), Gerakan, the PPP and finally PAS. The DAP refused to join and remained the only opposition party of any real significance until 1978. In that year PAS left the Barisan after a squabble with UMNO leaders over the appointment of the Kelantan state Menteri Besar (Chief Minister). However, this did not result in a stronger parliamentary opposition. In the state elections held soon afterwards PAS was soundly defeated. The Barisan Nasional was also overwhelmingly successful in the federal elections held in the same year.

Meanwhile, orderly leadership changes at the top reflected the coalition's ability to maintain stable government despite occasional inter-party tensions. Tun Razak, who had eased Tunku Abdul Rahman out of office, died in 1976 and was replaced by his deputy, Hussein Onn. The latter continued his predecessor's innovative political and economic policies. Perhaps his most controversial decision was to select Dr. Mahathir as his deputy instead of the more senior Ghafar Baba. When Hussein Onn retired in June 1981, Dr. Mahathir became Prime Minister. Datuk Musa Hitam was then selected by the Umno General Assembly to fill the

party's second most powerful position.

It is impossible in a book of this size to reproduce more than a small selection of the hundreds of wide-ranging articles the Tunku has written in the *Star* since 1975. Many discuss current issues in politics, religion and sports while others are valuable personal reminiscences of historical events in the nation's past. Two general considerations have guided the selection of the articles included in this book. One approach has been to select two themes which have been of enduring interest to the Tunku and have sufficient national importance to justify their republication. These are Islam and the Role of the Sultans in Malaysia's constitutional democracy. Two more ephemeral topics – the Look East Policy and Malay Politics – have also been included as additional case studies in the way the Tunku has chosen to speak out on current issues. Articles which deal primarily with Malaysian history have been omitted. Some will be republished later in a future volume. To assist researchers, the date of publication of each article is provided, together with a brief introduction to the topics covered.

Another aspect of editorial policy also needs to be explained. Careful readers may note a few minor differences between the texts of some of the articles reprinted here and the same articles published elsewhere. These differences are deliberate. The Tunku was concerned that in some cases editorial changes had resulted in

the publication of things the meaning of which he did not intend. The articles in this book are reproduced from the Tunku's original manuscripts or, when these were unavailable, the text of the articles published in the *Star* Editorial changes have been strictly confined to checking the grammar, punctuation and paragraphing.

Some observers may wish to minimise the importance of the Tunku in contemporary Malaysian politics by arguing that his influence has steadily declined. It is certainly true that the Tunku's continuing emotional attachment to Britain, enjoyment of gambling (on a modest scale) and playboy reputation during his student days are not characteristics which would appeal to some contemporary nationalist or Islamic-centered groups. Other critics may attack the articles themselves, claiming that his wandering prose is difficult to read because it pays little attention to syntax.

A few words need to be said on this matter. Some groups may be more critical of the Tunku now than in earlier years but, as several articles reproduced in this book reveal, the Tunku has not wavered in his commitment to Islam. As for his alleged faults, they are not matters which he has tried to hide. Such honesty is refreshing.

To determine the extent of his political influence researchers would do well to study the way his articles influenced events during the recent controversy over the proposed cons-

titutional amendments which dealt with the powers of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong (Malaysian King) and the Sultans. Articles on other topics have been equally effective. More than one political charlatan has had to dive for cover on Monday morning when copies of the Tunku's latest article in the *Star* began to circulate in the country. The Tunku's views are also important in another sense. He is one of the very few people in the country who have spoken out on subjects such as Islam and the Sultans. For other writers, these themes are taboo.

The Tunku has never claimed to be a professional journalist. Criticisms of his shortcomings in this area are therefore misplaced. His style is a carefully balanced one which avoids saying too little or too much. In Malaysia, where much political comment is made by allusion and innuendo, this reserve is understandable. It is clear from reading the Tunku's articles that his main intention has been to inform the younger generation of its heritage and preserve the principles upon which the nation was founded. It is on this basis that his writings should be judged.

Not everyone will agree with the views the Tunku expresses in this book. However, his opinions have often provided Malaysians with an interesting alternative to official policy from a man whose experience and sincerity are beyond question. The Tunku deserves to be heard. After all, he was undeniably one of the

most successful leaders of a Third World country
in the twentieth century.

Bruce Gale

THE MALAYSIAN CONSTITUTION AND THE ROLE OF THE SULTANS

In late 1983 Malaysia faced a constitutional impasse when the Yang di Pertuan Agong (Malaysian King) refused to give his assent to constitutional amendments passed by parliament on August 10th. One amendment provided that in future legislation could become law within 15 days irrespective of whether it was approved by the king. Another section of the constitutional package transferred the power to declare a state of emergency from the king to the Prime Minister. Because state constitutions would also be legally bound by the changes, Malaysia's nine Sultans (who elected one of their number to serve as king every five years) were strongly opposed to the move.

The situation took on a new dimension when it became clear that the king also seemed reluctant to sign the 1984 Supply Bill. As negotiations took place to try to avert a serious crisis, both the Sultans and the UMNO leadership

began to look to the people for support. The problem was finally resolved in mid-December when a compromise solution was found which preserved the dignity of the Sultans while at the same time maintained the principle of the parliamentary supremacy.

Reprinted in this section are a number of articles the Tunku has written over the years about the role of the Sultans in a constitutional monarchy. The Tunku, intensely proud of his own regal origins, has consistently argued that the Sultanates have served the people in the states well and helped to protect the traditions, customs and religion of the Malays. At the same time, however, he is aware that Malaysians have become more critical of their Rulers. In several articles he reminds the Sultans that their behaviour must be beyond reproach if they wish to preserve the status quo.

To obtain a proper appreciation of the full political significance of the Tunku's articles it is necessary to understand the traditional reverence of the Malays towards their Sultans. In 1946, the Malays protested vehemently against the British Malayan Union proposals because they believed that removing the powers of the Sultans meant removing the special rights of the Malays as the indigenous people. Since then, most of the real powers of the Sultans have been abrogated by the new elite in UMNO. However, the concept of unquestioning loyalty to the Sultans has remained deeply imbedded in Malay

society as has the notion that they are the protectors of Malay rights.

If a Prime Minister or state Mentri Besar (Chief Minister) clashes with a Sultan, then a compromise has to be worked out in which the Sultan is not seen as backing down.

The government's move to amend the constitution was widely seen as a response to several incidents in the late 1970's and early 1980's which developed into serious disputes between various Mentris Besar and their respective state Sultans. In Perak, for example, Sultan Idris eased Chief Minister Tan Sri Ghazali Jawi out of office and seemed equally displeased with his successor, Wan Mohamed, In Pahang, when the Sultan was elected king in April 1979, his son, who acted in his absence, indicated that he was not prepared to sign any money bills while Mentri Besar Rahim Bakar remained in office. A similar situation occurred in Johore when the Sultan moved into the Mentri Besar's office in Johore Bahru.

The government was worried that these developments might one day be reflected in the federal sphere. A new king was due to be elected in 1984 and the frontrunners were the independent-minded Sultans of Johore and Perak.

The Tunku's reaction to early developments was to uphold the principle of democratic rule. "Our constitution," he insisted, "provides that Malaysia shall be a democratic and constitutional

monarchy. The Rulers, therefore, have certain rights and privileges, but the power to rule the country rests solely and entirely with the people, whose representatives are elected to Parliament and state assemblies." Referring to the situation in Johore, he wrote: "I hope this is not an indication that the Ruler of Johore will take over the government of Johore and exercise the power wielded by former Rulers under the old Sultanate system."

In January 1978 the Sultan of Pahang, Tuanku Ahmad Shah (who later became king), announced publicly that he would oppose any attempt by his younger brother, Tuanku Ariff Bendahara, to participate in politics as an elected representative of the people. In his weekly column in the *Star*, Tunku Abdul Rahman reminded the Sultan that, although the Sultans were sovereign heads of state, they had no power to rule. Furthermore, if the Tuanku Bendahara was elected as the Pahang Menteri Besar the Sultan would be unable, under the constitution, to sack him. If the Sultans were allowed to rule by the divine right of kings, argued the Tunku, "then I fear it would only be a question of time before the whole institution was scrapped."

Despite these criticisms the Tunku was also concerned to preserve the dignity of the monarchy. In September of the same year, when six newly elected DAP Assemblymen refused to take the customary Oath of Allegiance

in the Perak State Assembly, The Tunku launched a scathing attack on the members concerned. The result was a national uproar after which the DAP leader, Lim Kit Siang, tendered a public apology to the Sultan on behalf of his party.

In another article the Tunku discussed the incident involving Chief Minister, Datuk Kalong Ningkan in 1966. He made the point that a Chief Minister holds power so long as he has confidence of the state legislature.

The Tunku was clearly not prepared to support proposals which he believed would humiliate the Sultans by depriving them of their constitutional rights and powers. This belief was the basis of his objection to the controversial Constitutional Amendment Bill of 1983. He argued that if the constitution needed to be reviewed it should be done after careful study by a Royal Commission which would recommend only those changes which were absolutely necessary. The Tunku also defended his old friend Senu Abdul Rahman who wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister objecting to the amendments. Calls by several UMNO divisions to expel Senu for "breach of discipline," the Tunku said, were "a bit drastic". Neither did he approve of the suggestion of Anwar Ibrahim, the UMNO Youth leader, that the government should simply gazette the Bill without royal assent.

The Tunku favoured compromise instead

of confrontation. He suggested that the government withdraw the controversial amendments in return for a guarantee from the Sultans that they would not attempt to block future legislation. The solution to which the parties eventually agreed was somewhat different, but it did follow the general spirit of compromise that the Tunku had so strongly advocated.

The Rulers And Their Responsibility

13th July, 1975

Malaysia has people of many racial origins, professing every kind of belief known on earth, so in a nation with such divided interests I have already suggested that the concept of monarchy can be a stabilising factor, whereas a republic would not suit such a diverse population as ours. In such a conglomeration of religions and customs, a Constitutional Monarchy is more benign, as it has advantages that nurture the spirit of democracy.

What the Agong can do and what he cannot do is clearly defined by the Constitution. One fact is certain, the Royal Prerogative is exercised by the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, as representing the electorate, hence the people have a lot of say. For instance, under clause 34-35 of the Federal Constitution, the Yang Di Per-tuan Agong cannot even leave the country for

more than fifteen days without the approval of the Conference of Rulers, so the Rulers also have a voice as well on the ways an Agong should behave.

On the other hand, the Rulers have more power in their own States than the Agong has in the nation, and who is to oversee how they behave? The Rulers are hereditary Heads of States, while the Agong is appointed by them to fill the role of King for five years.

In the days before Independence, each State had its own Constitution, hence there were three types of governments in Malaya. First, the Unfederated Malay States, "protected" by the British, who had control of all their external affairs, but the Rulers had sovereignty over religion and other affairs, as set out in each State's Constitution. In the Unfederated States, the Rulers were Presidents of their State Executive Councils, and therefore they were the Executive Heads of State as well. In later years, the British planted officials on the Rulers as their "Advisers."

Then there were the Federated Malay States, which were directly under British control, with British Residents as Executive Heads. So in these States the British were complete masters of internal administration as well as external affairs. In the third category were the Crown Colonies of Penang, Malacca and Singapore, each under direct rule by the British. Collectively these were administered locally as the

Straits Settlements. This complicated arrangement was found anywhere and everywhere, where the population was Malay. The people preferred to set up small States under Sultans, rather than join together under one head, so this system of small Sultanates spread right across from the Malay Peninsula through Sumatra and Java to the Philippines.

These splinter Sultanates could offer very little resistance to any foreign power, which had designs on any of these States. Divided, they fell like ninepins. In 1957, and for the first time in the history of our Peninsula, a Malay nation was born. Brunei preferred to remain a "Colony" of Britain, but all the rest joined together to form an independent nation spreading down the Straits of Malacca to the China Sea. In older days, Malay Rulers would make war if they could save their States, or make peace if they could save their Crowns. For that very reason, small European countries like Holland, Portugal and Spain were easily able to establish colonies in South-East Asia.

With the advent of independence the position of the Malays changed, and the status of the various Rulers was defined and safeguarded by the the Constitution. Indonesia became a Republic with the abolition of the Sultanates there.

Under Section 71 of the Constitution, the Federation guaranteed the right of the Ruler of a State to succeed and to hold, enjoy and exer-

cise his constitutional rights and privileges in accordance with the Constitution of his State. The Constitution also provided under Clause 3 for Parliament to see that each State Constitution was respected and carried out. Parliament also had the right to see the essential provisions in the Constitution were observed in each State.

One control, however, appeared to have been forgotten when the Constitution was drafted, and that was how to deal with Rulers who ceased to enjoy the confidence of their people. What is the exact nature of any offence or offences which can cause such a loss of confidence? It was not actually a question of forgetting so much as our own anxiety to carry the Rulers with us in our struggle for Independence. Parliament can still rectify any omission or mistake in the Constitution, if the need arises.

It can be assumed that, while the Rulers enjoy their rights and privileges, they must live within these rights. It is expected that the Rulers will not commit acts that are likely to contravene the laws and, while they remain within the confines and limits of these rights, no quarrel can be found with them. But what guarantee is there that they will not exceed their powers? There are innumerable temptations, that could come their way; so like all human beings they could easily succumb. The Mentris Besar and the State Executive Councillors are

supposed to be the "watchdogs"; their duties are to see that the Rulers do not commit excesses, but they, too, having to keep in favour with their Rulers, are inclined "to close one eye."

Once or twice I had occasion to step in to prevent a Ruler of a State from abusing his position, because the Mentri Besar dared not stand up against his Ruler. I issued a directive that all applications for land in the State by either the Ruler or members of the Royal family should first come to the Prime Minister, before being considered in the State Executive Council. For a time this directive was respected. One Menteri Besar, however, realised that the matter was the concern of the State Executive Council, so conveniently he reverted to the more expeditious method of disposing of the subject in "Exco", or if he chose to turn it down, blamed the Prime Minister for not accommodating the Ruler.

When I came to know the facts, it was already too late to do anything, and large tracts of valuable land were alienated to the Ruler. Such an abuse of power by a Ruler with the connivance of his "Exco" is one that must be avoided. The Federal Government set up a Land Council which was to attend to land policies. It was intended that the Council should look into any controversial matters affecting land policy, but unfortunately it was not asked to investigate any malpractices.

This country is full of intelligentsia, fault-

finders and critics – none of whom have any responsibility to administer the nation. The Rulers are very much in the public eye, so students and politicians find them easy targets for attacks at meetings held inside and outside this country. Students of politics level their criticisms and charges against the Sultans and individual Rulers rather indiscriminately and recklessly. Some may be true, but many are imaginary, intentionally concocted to make a case for destroying the concept of “Rulers.” The Rulers have to be extremely cautious so as not to give these people grounds or cause to get their way. When attacks are made too often – whether true or false – the sum total of the charges will tend to be believed.

Mentris Besar and Members of Executive Councils are duty-bound to see that the Rulers keep well within their charter, the Constitution. Recent student demonstrations vented much of their fury on Their Royal Highnesses. They find it more convenient to use Royalty as a target of attack. The Ruler can hardly “answer back”, and no one is there to correct the irresponsible students. I say with all sincerity and with the best of goodwill and intention that under the upsurge of the new nationalism, the Rulers must be constantly on the alert. They must set the best example, or show in Kingship as well as Sultanship that there is much they can do that can be appreciated and expected by their people.

The students merely gave expression to what they had heard, and to what they were made to believe; from them one "got the message". It is said that from the mouths of innocents one hears the truth. It is also said that you cannot teach your grandmothers how to suck eggs. Student demonstrations, however, have brought out some revelations, which can well serve as important lessons to us all. On the whole, however, and in actual fact the students have very little to cavil about. For one thing the public will resent any extra privileges being accorded to the Rulers. As Heads of State, the Rulers are in a position to impose their will on their Mentri Besar and members of the State Executive Council, as they have the final say in choosing a Menteri Besar. The poor Mentri Besar has to concede to the wishes of his Ruler, sometimes as a matter of convenience.

I remember on one occasion a Ruler came to see me, saying his Mentri Besar had not considered his application for mining-land, and he would like him replaced with someone else who would be more amenable. I told the Ruler that the Mentri Besar was the elected representative of the people. It was his duty to uphold the Constitution and to carry out the administration with honour and fairness. If His Royal Highness could prove that he was not doing his duty, then he could be replaced; otherwise he was there until the people chose to displace him.

The Rulers, in fact, have many privileges, all carefully worked out by their representatives and legal advisers. The Civil List provides household expenditure, and if there is any land outside which they propose to acquire, then they must pay for it in the same way as others do. They must understand that in independent Malaya it is very necessary for the Rulers to conform to the terms of the Constitution, even more strictly now than ever before. To be quite honest, this is the only country in the world that has carried on with the institution of the Sultanate, and the nation accords the Rulers sovereignty and dignity as befitting their rank. It is for them, therefore, to guard and uphold their position.

Perhaps I am the only person who can say all these things without fear of contradiction, because I come from one of the oldest Ruling Houses in Malaysia. My ancestors first established the dynasty over 1,000 years ago, and I have had the opportunity and good fortune to hold executive power for fifteen years. I think the institution of Rulership suits our people, but it must be preserved with honour and dignity. As with all good things, people can get tired, and want a change if they feel that all is not well with the institution of Rulers.

The best of food can also turn sour; likewise good medicine can do harm if an overdose is taken. So is it not better to keep an eye on one's diet, and follow exactly the prescrip-

tion laid down for any good medicine? Under our Constitutions, either Federal or State, the Ruler is the fount of authority, and as such guardian of the Constitution. Just as the Constitution ensures that his office is respected, so too must a Ruler respect the Constitution.

The Kings And I: Malaysians Are Better Served With Rulers

1st March, 1976

Malaysia's monarchical system is unique in the whole wide world. The King ascends the Throne for five years, at the end of which period he vacates for the next senior Sultan to take over. In fact, the next senior Sultan is styled Timbalan Yang Di Pertuan Agong (i.e. Deputy-King). This system of Kingship has never been tried out in any other country before. All monarchies provide for hereditary successors who remain in office until they die, but we are different, and if our system is taken up by other countries, perhaps the idea of Kingship will become once again a popular institution.

Working on the established principle that the King can do no wrong, at the same time he enjoys prerogatives and gives assent to all

laws and other Acts of State; he therefore is the Supreme Head. The King in fact is purely the symbolic Head of State, and therefore can do no wrong.

Some people maintain that it is reactionary to keep up with this form of Government and these are the young extremists and anti-Government elements, and according to them, much money is wasted on Civil Lists and other expenses connected with the Throne. On the other hand, a President spends no less and what's more he wields greater power in law and in fact. In such countries the people have no say but accept the dictatorial edict with calm resignation for fear of what may follow. These virtual dictators with power of life and death over their people are greatly feared.

Countries in this part of Asia with Kings or Emperors are Japan, Thailand, Nepal and Malaysia and they are considered comparatively stable and well-run despite the subversive activities within their borders working for their overthrow. My personal views are that the Malay people in particular, and other Malaysians in general, are better served with the King as their Head of State than with a dictator or a President. When one dictator or President dies or the incumbent ceases to hold power trouble begins in their search for a suitable successor. In many cases it ends in violence and bloodshed or exorbitant use of force and money. With Kings, however, when one dies

the next man succeeds for "a King never dies". I am one of those lucky enough to have served under five Kings and have lived to see the Installation of the sixth.

The Throne, the symbol of Kingship, itself does not cost much money to make but the honour and respect for it has inspired loyalty among Malaysians. It took less than a year to make and the coat of arms imprinted on the leather was executed in England. Admittedly our Malaysian Throne is nothing to brag about as compared with the thrones found in other Kingdoms; it cost little in value or design, but the prestige it carries is no less important and dignified than those of the other Kingdoms. The Throne of Iran (Persia) is studded with gold and precious stones, but I have not seen any of the others to talk about them. However I presume they are beautiful and expensive.

The Kingship carries with it all the regalia and paraphernalia of office but these can only be used after the King has been officially installed, then only on very rare and special occasions – the opening of Parliament, for instance.

I have already related the mysterious and unhappy occurrence that took place when the second King, His Late Majesty Sultan Hisamuddin Alam Shah of Selangor, assumed the Throne on the death of the first Agong, Tuanku Abdul Rahman, the Yang Di Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan, on March 1, 1960. Although his formal Installation as Agong was not due to

take place until September 1, he wore all the Royal regalia, including the Crown and the Kris of Authority to declare Parliament open on April 19. And the following day he fell sick with a lingering condition that could not be diagnosed, in spite of the best medical advice and attention of the finest specialists, and exactly at the stroke of eleven o'clock on September 1, 1960 the very time set for his Installation, he passed away.

Strange it was how this happened and harder to explain for there is a belief among the Malays in an aura of mystery verging on the sublime surrounding the Throne. So, too, with Royal regalia. Therefore Royal regalia must always be treated with respect and looked after with reverence. Those who do not do so will suffer a severe misfortune which in Malay is known as "Tullah". In this case, it was said that His Late Majesty wore the Crown before he was entitled to it, and he suffered "Tullah". It was sad, as he had the promise and the making of a good Yang Di Pertuan Agong.

When the Raja of Perlis, Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail, ascended the Throne on September 21, 1960 the first thing he did was to ask where the Crown jewels and the regalia were kept, as he understood they were in the Palace. On being told they were kept in a safe underneath the stairs he refused to go up the stairs until all the Royal paraphernalia were removed from under them. As soon as they were taken

out he had them transferred to the Treasury, exclaiming at the same time that these Royal paraphernalia were sacred objects, and should not have been kept under the staircase where every time anyone climbed the stairs he walked over them. That was sacrilege.

He ruled happily for five years, from September 21, 1960 to September 20, 1965 and during his reign Malaysia came into being. Her triumphant march to victory over our enemies, her achievements in the fields of sports, culture and trade and economy were success stories.

The First Five-Year Development Plan was initiated and implemented, under which the landless people were given ten acres of land each for the planting of rubber and other crops. Large tracts of jungle land were opened up; schools and health clinics were built, as well as roads laid, electricity put in, and other amenities provided to make life comfortable for the farmers and their families. Development in other fields took an upward trend and industrial centres were opened up in Penang, Ipoh, Seremban and Johore Bahru, besides the big industrial centre in Petaling Jaya. Foreign capital poured into the country from all quarters at an astounding rate and trade flourished beyond our wildest dreams. All these took place despite the troubles we had with Indonesia and the Philippines.

By coincidence he himself is a good sports-

man as well as a successful businessman; also a very good host and a man of understanding and great wisdom. He plays all games well and won many golf balls at the expense of HRH the Sultan of Selangor. One of the few occasions he lost to the Sultan of Selangor was when the Sultan was forced to partner me, both with a handicap of 24, while he took Tun Razak with a handicap of 18 to partner him.

Before the match started the result was a foregone conclusion, but as the Malays say, "The ball is round, anything can happen." And that was exactly what happened that day, because both the Sultan and I could do nothing wrong, while he and Tun Razak could do nothing right. In the end, we won with three up and two to go. It was a most amusing and happy moment for the Sultan and a big disappointment for both the Agong and Tun Razak. The news spread like wild-fire to the great chagrin of both of them.

Before the end of his term he mentioned that he would be willing to continue in office while Confrontation lasted, if the Government felt he should do so, but I told him that it was my sacred duty to uphold the principle underlying the institution of Kingship which meant that the King must leave on the very day of the expiry of his term of five years. On the other hand, if he were re-elected nothing would make the people happier.

When His Royal Highness the Sultan of

Trengganu assumed the Kingship on September 21, 1965 he continued with the success story. A Second Five-Year Plan was launched and Malaysia enjoyed greater prosperity and gained more friends and fame abroad. He was not a strong man, nor did he enjoy the best of health, missing the sea air of the East Coast badly. Later on he developed heart trouble. His grandson whom he was fond of was continually ill and at the end of four years he decided to retire and return to his State of Trengganu.

When he mentioned this to me, I said to him, "Tuanku, your term of office as King is for five years and you must not leave until the period comes to an end, and if you leave now I will also have to leave because my nephew will be the next King. As an uncle I don't feel right to continue as Prime Minister to him." And so he stayed on, and despite his illness he remained in office to the last day of his term of Kingship.

He was highly sensitive and temperamental and would not tolerate any slight on his person, either real or imaginary. His Mentri Besar, Datuk Nik Hassan bin Abdul Rahman, my former Private Secretary, found this out too late. When an RMAF plane could not take him to Trengganu because of the bad weather he refused to use RMAF planes ever again, nor would he wear anymore a uniform of the RMAF Air Marshall, though it suited him well.

With all his sensitiveness and shyness he gave this country very good leadership, and I was happy to have served under him.

There was only one incident, sad to recall, which marred his otherwise happy and glorious reign. I refer to the tragedy of May 13, 1969 which caused the loss of many hundreds of innocent lives. To know who manipulated the violence outside the part played by the Communists, we have to find out who it was who gave permission for the funeral procession of a dead Communist to pass through the streets of Kuala Lumpur.

The incident was followed by the distribution of thousands of letters insinuating that I was the cause of it all. This continues to this very day when an attack was made recently on me in a Malay vernacular paper. God knows best, and those responsible will surely answer for this crime against humanity.

The first Agong was my contemporary in London and both of us were studying at the inner Temple and at the same time. By coincidence only two States in Malaysia, Kedah and Negeri Sembilan spell the title as "Tunku", Johore "Tungku", while Selangor, Kelantan and Trengganu "Tengku" and Perak "Raja." This led to a lot of confusion. When the Malay Society of Great Britain was formed, he was elected its first President, while I was the first Secretary. When I ordered the letter-heads for the Society, with the same name for President

and Secretary, I received a rejoinder from the printers to the effect that it was unusual for both these offices to be held by one and the same person. When they were informed that it was not so, they thought it best to add the prefix (1) and (2) to our names.

When Tunku Abdul Rahman was called to the Bar, I received all the congratulatory messages, and demands descended on me to celebrate my success. At about the same time that all these messages were received, I was called to face the Director of Legal Education who asked me to explain the reason why I had fared so badly in my Bar exam, advising me accordingly to give up my law studies and concentrate on fast cars and horses for he knew I was fond of both.

When he became the first Agong on September 2, 1957, I became the first Prime Minister and this was a rare coincidence. He won the first Malay student tennis title and I won the second and the shield is exhibited at Muzium Negara.

On one occasion which I mentioned in an earlier article, I was asked by a member in Parliament why I had not considered accepting an offer of friendship from a Middle East country. My reply was that I had acknowledged and accepted the offer for an exchange of diplomatic relations with the country in question, but the same request came again, and yet again. Obviously that particular country had

kept no record of the correspondence which passed between us. When my reply was reported to that Government it took offence at what it considered to be an insult to its Government. It sent an emissary to our King with a request for my dismissal. His reply was that the Prime Minister could dismiss him but he could not dismiss the Prime Minister.

Tuanku Abdul Rahman ibni Al-Marhum Tuanku Muhammad, the Yang Di Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan, as the first Agong set the standard of Kingship that was to be the milestone for the successive Rulers to maintain and uphold. His period of Kingship from August 3, 1957 to March 1, 1960 was the most testing and stimulating one. The country was faced with the Communists' insurrection at its height, but because of the confidence the people had in his Government and the loyal support they gave it, we were able to overcome our enemies with victory after victory and in the end drove the Communists into the jungle.

During his reign much confusion arose because of our names and so I had to add my other name "Putra." Even then, it did not help matters very much. Letters for him or for me and vice-versa got mixed up. His reign opened the first chapter in the history of this country. It was a glorious beginning for our Merdeka, new as it was to our people. On the other hand countries which achieved independence before us were pulling their own strings or

shouting their odds against us but caused no dent in our armour.

President Soekarno was telling the world that he was the greatest man and his country the greatest country with one of the largest numbers of people in this part of the world. Nkrumah was calling himself a Messiah, yet here in Malaysia was a man so humble and yet so dignified who confessed to another monarch that he could be sacked by his Prime Minister. He gave pomp and dignity to the Throne but his reign was cut short with his death caused by heart failure in March, 1960. His picture adorns our currency and his name will forever be remembered as the first King of independent Malaya.

When HRH the Sultan of Kedah took over on September 20, 1970 he asked me for one favour and that was to continue as Prime Minister for one day longer, and under him, and so I did. It was my good fortune, therefore, to have served under five Kings as Prime Minister. During his term of office he was the first Agong to be invited to England as guest of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This was a signal honour accorded our nation by a British monarch, whose country once ruled us, and now is Head of the Commonwealth.

He was educated at Wadham College, Oxford, and as the fifth Yang Di Pertuan Agong he was well rewarded. Tun Abdul Razak took over from me, and from then onwards it be-

came his responsibility to attend to the affairs of State including the affairs of "the King's heart."

DYMM Seri Baginda Tuanku Yahya Putra ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Ibrahim was elected the sixth Yang Di Pertuan Agong by the Conference of Rulers on June 19, 1975. He attended the Francis Light School, a feeder-school of the Penang Free School and then went to England to continue his studies under a tutor in Oxford. He succeeded to the Throne on the death of his father, Sultan Ibrahim, on July 10, 1960. On July 22, 1970 he was elected by the Conference of Rulers as the Timbalan Yang Di Pertuan Agong, and took the Oath of Office on September 21, 1970.

At one period he had a severe stroke and few expected that he would recover completely from his illness, but he did, and except for his poor eyesight he is considered a very healthy man, able to enjoy life and all that goes with it. Everybody who knows him realises that he will make an ideal and able Ruler and the people can expect fairness and justice from him. He speaks little but what he says goes a long way.

As a friend I am fond of him, and I pray that the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, will have a good Ruler to work for and will have a long, happy and successful association with him. May he live long and enjoy good health, and when he comes to retire may he leave

behind him a record of achievements of which we can all be proud. May Allah Bless him!

Royalty And Politics

23rd January, 1978

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 Mentri 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 Mentri 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 Mentri 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 Mentri 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 Mentri 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 Mentri 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 Mentri 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 Di Pertuan Agong 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 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 Di Pertuan Agong, 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". May Allah guide us all.

A Test Of Loyalty

28th August, 1978

I was unhappy to read of the refusal of the DAP members to take the Oath of Loyalty to the Sultan of Perak. Being out of the country, I was unable to take up the matter immediately. This was an act of disrespect to the person of the Sultan himself, but what is more serious, is the challenge to the prerogative of the Throne, for which the Constitution itself guarantees sanctity.

The Constitution of Malaya and Malaysia provide that any person born in the States owes his loyalty to the State and to the nation, and in return receives all the protection under the law, no less favourable than the greatest in the country. When DAP won the election, I applauded their victory by commending them as a seasoned and a matured opposition. The nation expected much from them, and so it is for them to put up a good image at the

start, at least by giving the people the confidence that here at last is an opposition who can live up to expectations.

Many people outside the ruling party would want to bring up matters in Parliament and they can only rely on the Members of Parliament, in particular members of the opposition, to do so. It is expected that such matters would be put across even though the chances of success are remote, but at least the Government will take notice of what is said and it can give the subject matter of complaint some publicity. The people rather expect an Opposition to play their parts effectively and sensibly in their 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 the pre-Merdeka days when we were nominated as members of the Federal Legislative Council with a small number of dedicated men drawn from UMNO, MCA and MIC.

We did not bring up matters concerning our party alone but matters which were brought to us by members of the public. And these had to be studied and only if found to be of public interest and for the good of the country, that we brought them to the Council. We were in the minority and we took our defeat sensibly without rancour in our hearts but we were aware of the parts we were sworn to play and we played it well, and because of our performance, we gained the complete confidence

of the people and their whole-hearted support. This ultimately led to the success of our independence movement. We were the Opposition in the real sense of the word and we were fighting against the Colonial Government to end Colonial rule. We decided not to accept the British rule one day longer than we could help. Our call for independence rang loudly and the echoes reverberated throughout the length and breadth of our country. Men of all races loyal to the country answered the call.

When we won the first partial election we were asked to take the Oath of Loyalty in Parliament to the Colonial Government. We did. We took it without a word of protest because we know exactly what our aims were. We made no fuss, we made no complaint, we went through the solemn oath-taking ceremony 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 people of Malaya.

I remember the debate on the reintroduction of the Jury System. We were more or less, metaphorically speaking, driven out of the Council, jeered and laughed at by those on the Government benches. That was the only time when we had to walk out, but as I left the Council Chambers, I turned around to my good friend, the late Tun Dr. Ismail and said to him, "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 an odd of forty-two men from the Government benches – we were defeated on every motion before the House, nevertheless we were undeterred.

By coincidence, I met Miss P.G. Lim on Friday, August 25 in London. 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 Lee Meng's case. "Lee Meng had been charged with carrying firearms, and 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 was presented to the Legislative Council in 1954 by members of the public for the review of Lee Meng's case and the re-introduction 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 the trial by jury, no judge can overrule the verdict of the jury whereas in the case of the assessors, the judge if he disagreed 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 did not share his background or who came from a different society and whose function was 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 assessors for trial by jury."

Regarding the DAP members of Perak who refused to take the Oath of Allegiance or Loyalty to the Sultan of Perak, what, may I ask, do they hope to get out of it? Self-glorification? No one in his good sense would agree with them, only the disloyal elements of the State or of the country would associate themselves with this disloyal act.

I remember when the Socialist Party won the few seats in the 1959 election, Mr. Lim Kean Siew, Mr. David and a few others whom I cannot quite remember their names now, trooped in to the Dewan Tunku Abdul Rahman, which was used as a temporary Parliament House, in their shirt sleeves. I shouted out to them that they were not properly dressed and 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 to them, "See what I mean?" They understood me, and went back to put on their coats and when they came in afterwards properly dressed, they were received with loud applause in the temporary chambers.

The unseemly behaviour of the DAP members has caused a furore throughout the country, in particular to the people of the State. The practice for every member of the State Council and Members of Parliament to take the Oath of Allegiance to the Ruler and the Agong before taking his seat in the Council or in the Parliament has become a Parliamentary convention and is considered synonymous with Parliamentary institution. The practice has never been questioned let alone publicly disparaged. This incident was unfortunate in the extreme for there was no justification for it. Despite their flagrant act of discourtesy they 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 Council and Parliament without hitch or hindrance.

The Constitution of Malaysia was carefully drafted in the early days before Independence by the best constitutional lawyers in the Commonwealth and they spent much time going into the various aspects in order to find what they considered to be the best for a country

like Malaya with her many races and religions but with particular regard to the position of indigenous people (bumiputras). The Constitution was found and proved serviceable all these years.

The new members of the DAP in Perak obviously have little idea of what democracy means. They have a lot to learn. If they consider a change is necessary then their duty is to bring it about in a democratic way, i.e. in Parliament. The fact that the Government had not taken punitive action against them showed the Government's observance of the rule of law and the principles of Parliamentary democracy of which DAP should take cognisance.

Some of the Rulers are not above board, I admit, but under the Constitution they are above the law. As a result of this incident, it would perhaps be wise and timely to give the Constitution a second look, vis-a-vis the position of the Rulers. This I will deal with in my next article.

The Monarchy And The Rulers

4th September, 1978

When six DAP newly-elected members refused to take the oath of allegiance in the Perak State Assembly, were they doing it out of spite for the Head of State? Or was it because their consciences forbade them from taking an oath for a reason they did not believe in. Or was it because they owed their allegiance elsewhere? Whatever the reason, their conduct was certainly uncalled for. Other members of the DAP, however, headed by the party's Secretary-General, Mr. Lim Kit Siang, disapproved of their behaviour and openly declared their intention to put matters right with HRH the Sultan of Perak.

I feel that it would be magnanimous for His Royal-Highness to hear an explanation from the leader of the party and other DAP representatives and so 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-the-Rulers, anti-Government and anti-national, just because of the reprehensible action of these few dissident members in Perak. In fact I have heard that DAP headquarters is aggrieved about what happened and it is very anxious to explain matters and restore relations with the Sultan.

Obviously the dissidents did what they did for reasons of their own, and maybe they may wish to please some of their misguided following. The last thing people in this country would want to see is a Malaysia divided into political extremes, for a nation divided can only invite trouble. We have many subversive elements here already and we don't want any more – may it please God!

When the movement for national independence first began, I persuaded the Malayan Chinese and the Malays, the two predominant races of this country, to attempt to live together in peace and goodwill and political amity.

I persuaded the nine Malay Rulers to stand by us, whatever the outcome of our struggle for independence might be, for I felt very strongly that independence must come to Malaya with the united efforts of our party, the Alliance.

We had given the Rulers our solemn undertaking to protect their interests and to uphold their royal prerogative. At first, they were reluctant to believe us but soon they were convinced that their place was with us, for they began to realise that independence was the only way out for all. VICTORY WAS IN SIGHT!

As the party in power, the Alliance kept its promise to the Rulers to the very letter. Our word was a bond of honour; the position of the Rulers was maintained and their prestige increased. It is correct to say they are contented. In fact this is the only country in the world which has a King and nine Rulers all sharing equal rights. It is accepted that this institution has served the country and the people well. On the whole the Heads of the States take care of the religion, the people and the customs of the bumiputras. Freedom of worship and social justice are guaranteed for all.

In this connection I was shocked to hear on my return from leave of the sacrilege committed on Hindu temples by a band of fanatics. Whatever may be the reason, it certainly is not the way of Muslims here. It had never happened before and may it please God that it shall not happen again. As for what had happened I condemn these criminal acts in the strongest terms possible and I am sure Their Highnesses share my feelings and sentiments in this matter.

Although the main duties of the Rulers towards the people have been more or less understood, they have not been spelt out in detail in State Constitutions. There is the rule of law in this country which gives everybody protection under it, and a Constitution which guarantees the rights of all Malaysians. In the colonial days the Rulers were advised by their British Advisers but under our Constitution the Mentris Besar and Chief Ministers and leaders of State Assemblies assume the role of the British Advisers and accordingly give the Rulers advice.

Under Article 181, subject to the provisions of the Constitution, the sovereignty, prerogatives, powers and jurisdiction of the Rulers "within their respective territories as hitherto had and enjoyed shall remain unaffected." Under Article 71, Part I . . . "a Ruler shall act in accordance with the advice of the Executive Council except as otherwise provided by the Federal Constitution or the State Constitution."

Our nation has now reached the age of 21, and by human standards one may say it has reached the age of maturity. May it continue to prosper in peace and happiness! With the passing of time changes have taken place, and these are inevitable and incidental and cannot be stopped. They must roll on and a good test of any Government is that it must be one that can give a positive response to change.

The American magazine *Fortune* named Malaysia as one of the 10 best-administered countries in the world. This is a great compliment indeed to be paid to a new nation, whose people are of diverse races and religions. Unfortunately, as I have misplaced my copy of the magazine, I am not able to reproduce the full text here, but as one of the men who helped to found this nation I feel justifiably proud.

So in order to keep up with the times and maintain harmony in the country, I repeat, it is perhaps a good thing to take a second look at our Constitution. The questions that are being discussed aloud outside of this country can be boiled down to the following two:-

1. Is the Monarchy good for the country?
2. If it is, is the institution of the nine Rulers necessary?

There are some persons who are opposed to the idea of Kingship and even more so to the nine Sultanates. They want a republic as is the fashion with most countries in Asia, Africa and Europe. According to them a monarchical system is out of place in a modern world and Sultanates even more so. I disagree with them. Our system is unique and it serves our purpose as long as the Constitution is strictly observed.

We have a King who rules for five years and at the end of his term of office he retires and his successor is installed as King for the

next five years. As King he is the constitutional and sovereign Head of State. He gives dignity and prestige to the Throne, and symbolises the unity of the people. All laws are passed in his name, but it is the people's representatives in Parliament who rule the country. The King lives within the income provided him under the Civil List and carries out the performance of his duties as determined by the Prime Minister and his Cabinet Ministers. I HAVE SERVED UNDER FOUR KINGS AND ONE DAY UNDER A FIFTH, THE SULTAN OF KEDAH. AND I CAN SAY WITHOUT FEAR OF CONTRADICTION AND WITH TRUTH THAT THE INSTITUTION OF THE MONARCHICAL SYSTEM FOR MALAYSIA IS AN IDEAL ONE.

In the case of our Agong however, he is elected from among our nine Rulers, and only from among these Sovereign Heads of State is the appointment made. A President, unless he is a dictator, is elected by the people and he wields so much power that in a country with a divided population such as Malaysia such a man with such might and power may not be acceptable to the people. A republic gives the Head of State virtually unlimited power to do as he likes, and what he likes invariably leads to abuse of power and the creation of discontent and unrest.

We have seen elsewhere how much trouble can break out in a country where the Govern-

ment conforms to the system of a republic or to dictatorship, and we can say with honest pride that we in Malaysia have done well so far for ourselves. So let us keep our country this way.

With regard to the second question, the institution of the Sultanates, is it necessary to have the Rulers when in fact we already have a King? I say with firm conviction and with years of experience behind me that such an institution is necessary. The Malays, as a race, have always conformed to the ideal of leadership and a close society. The Rulers, however, must give the right leadership to the people and the right image to the nation, and on this score they can continue to maintain the respect and love the people have for them.

On the whole, the Sultans have maintained their position very well indeed, whatever their faults may have been. Their roles, duties and responsibilities are adjustable for the simple reason that our Constitution is flexible. Whatever changes it may be found necessary to make, will be done within the Constitution. It is the duty and bounden responsibility of a Ruler to look after the well-being of his people and his State and to perform all such duties as are entrusted to him with honour and justice.

The Rulers enjoy privileges which, in legal parlance, are called "diplomatic immunity". In actual fact these privileges place them above the law in that they are not liable to prosecu-

tion and litigation in the Courts of Law. The British accorded them these privileges in keeping with their colonial policy to give a semblance of independence to all the States which came under their protection. As constitutional Heads of the States, the Rulers enjoy privileges equal to that of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong. This is a question that must be studied. The Yang Di Pertuan Agong as King is above the law and should by right enjoy privileges and immunities above all the nine Rulers, who in actual fact are Heirs Presumptive to the Throne of Malaysia. As such, should they be accorded the same privileges as the Agong?

In colonial days when we were under British protection, the Sovereign Head of Malaya was concurrently the Sovereign Head of Britain. But the Rulers as Heads of States enjoyed diplomatic immunity and were above the law in their own States. In the legal case *Mighell v the Sultan of Johore*, it was held that the Sultan was not subject to British jurisdiction and no claim could be taken up against him. In the case of the *Duff Development Company v the Government of Kelantan* for alleged breach of contract, it was held that the court could only act if the immunity was waived.

In 1875, the British Government had no qualms whatever, nor hesitation, in exiling Sultan Abdullah of Perak for his involvement in the assassination of the British Resident, Mr. J.W.W. Birch. It was plain therefore that the

Rulers of the States were not on the same level as the Sovereign of Britain who concurrently was the Sovereign Head of Malaya.

When drafting the Constitution we followed closely all past traditions and practices that existed in the colonial days. The main change we made was to institute our own Throne and with it our own King (Yang Di Pertuan Agong) in place of Queen Elizabeth II, the Sovereign Head of Britain. We had not thought it necessary at that time to deal with the question as to whether some provision should be introduced to distinguish between the Agong and the Rulers of the States. There was no urgency for it, but the time has come when the question should be studied.

A problem may arise touching on the prerogatives of the Rulers, and the Government of the day will be hard put to deal with it.

Let's have the Kings, Rulers and Princes if they are good, and they must be good under our system of Democratic Government. Let them be, as John Milton said way back in the 17th century:

“The stars,

That nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps

With everlasting oil, to give due light

To the misled and lonely traveller.”

Lord William Beveridge in recent years said: “The object of the Government in peace and in war is not the glory of rulers or of races

but the happiness of common man." And to these I add: "Let's have somebody on whom we can put the blame for our many sins."

The Johore Succession

11th May, 1981

At the time of going to the press I received the depressing news that H.R.H. Sultan Ismail of Johore is seriously ill and his personal physician did not hold much hope for his recovery. He is the oldest reigning Sultan in the history of Malaya – a very quiet, kindly man who likes nothing better than to lead his own life, much of which he spent looking after his pet animals, horses and dogs. Though he is no longer active, he maintains a polo team and loves to watch others play. He has a kindly disposition and is accessible to all, rich or poor.

In his last moments, he reinstated his eldest son, Tunku Mahmood, as Tunku Mahkota of Johore on April 29 and this led to the crisis which has occupied the attention of the nation and worried the Mentri Besar and the people of Johore.

According to the Mentri Besar, under the

State Constitution it is the practice to obtain the views and advice of the Mentri Besar before any decision is made. However, the State Government knew of the reappointment of Tunku Mahmood as the heir-apparent only after the appointment had been made, and it came as a shock to the Johore Government. The Mentri Besar admitted, however, that under the constitution of the Johore State, no one can interfere with the Sultan's prerogative to appoint his successor. On the other hand, the delegation from the Council of the Royal Court disclosed that they went to see him, and they said that the Mentri Besar told them that he would discuss the matter with the Prime Minister, which he did.

Admittedly the Mentri Besar, as a representative of the people, should have been consulted before such an important decision was taken. This is necessary because the people have the right to know as to who will be their next Sultan, and any change in the order of succession should be done with the knowledge of the Mentri Besar, who is the executive head of the State Government and the official representative of the people.

Naturally, the matter of the reappointment of Tunku Mahmood as the heir-apparent to the throne of Johore in place of Tunku Abdul Rahman, has stirred up much excitement and concern. It has become the topic of the day in the State, not only among the Malays but

others as well, who are subjects of the State of Johore. The deposed heir-apparent, Tunku Abdul Rahman, had remained silent until Tuesday when he came out with a statement to the Press in which he expressed his shock and disappointment over the restoration of his elder brother as the Tunku Mahkota. He had been the Tunku Mahkota for twenty years and had done nothing wrong. According to him, he had rendered loyal service to his father, the Sultan, the State and the people.

As usual, some of them sought my views in the matter because, according to them, I am the founder of the nation. But I told them, when we achieved independence and formed Malaya, we agreed to leave all matters pertaining to religion, *adat* and custom to each individual state.

Under our Constitution any inconsistencies in the State Constitution which contravene the provisions of the Federal Constitution should be looked into after August 1975. This however, referred to the State of Sabah and Sarawak. Article 71 (1) of the Federal Constitution states: 'The Federation shall guarantee the right of a Ruler of a state to succeed and to hold, enjoy and exercise the Constitutional rights and privileges or Ruler of that state in accordance with the Constitution of that State; but any dispute as to the title to the succession as Ruler of any state shall be determined solely by such authorities and in such manners as may be provided

by the Constitution of the state.'

In the twenty four years of our independence nothing untoward has happened to mar the good understanding and happy relationship between the people and the Rulers. I have constantly reminded our Rulers that this is the only country in the world which has continued with the institution of Sultanates and to ensure its success the Rulers must continue to enjoy the love and confidence of the people. The country is actually governed by the people and for the people through their representatives in Parliament and State Legislative Councils under our democratic system.

The Agong is appointed from among the Rulers as the head of the nation with the power and prerogative of a king. He is the Constitutional monarch and symbolic head of the nation, but the power is vested in the people with the Prime Minister as executive head of Government who is responsible for everything that happens in the country, from the day to day administration to matters affecting Malaysia's relationship with the outside world. In the States such power is vested in the Mentri Besar or the Chief Minister. The Mentri Besar of Johore had realised for some time that his Ruler was getting old and infirm and so he decided not to worry him with the affairs of State. On July 2, 1979, the Sultan asked me to advise him as to what he should do because he felt completely ignored and neglected by the

Mentri Besar.

I immediately went to Johore and met the Sultan, who told me of his relationship with the Mentri Besar, which according to him was drifting further and further apart. I then saw the Mentri Besar and advised him to move closer to the Sultan and brief him on affairs of State as the Prime Minister does with the Agong every week before the Cabinet meeting or when the need arises. He promised that he would do so. Whether he did it or not, I don't know, but the fact that the change in the order of succession to the Johore Sultanate has taken place without his knowledge shows that he could not have had much contact with the Sultan.

The Sultan is past the age of 85 and so by all calculations he must be considered old and infirm, and at the time the decision to change the order of succession was taken, he was seriously ill. In such a condition he is not responsible for his action.

This state of affairs could never have happened in Kedah, where the people through their representative, the Mentri Besar, have strong say in the matter of succession to the throne. Under the Kedah State Constitution, The Majlis Mesyuarat Mengangkat Raja, headed by the Mentri Besar, has the power to appoint the Sultan, the Regent and deal with all matters connected with the royal court. Where there is no heir to succeed the Ruler, or when

a member of the ruling house is considered unsuitable to ascend the throne, a commoner could be appointed Ruler.

Under section 18 of the Kedah State Constitution, this Council is empowered to appoint a Regent, or a Council of Regency, where the Ruler is sick or absent from the State for more than thirty days. In other words, this council has absolute power to appoint a successor to the throne and settle any dispute affecting the succession to the throne.

During the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid, the Sultan fell ill and was unable to perform his duties and no less than four Regents were appointed to act for him. This Regency period lasted from 1896 to 1942 and all went well in the State. It is obvious therefore when the Sultan of Johore was found to be old and not in possession of his mental faculty, the State Government should have taken action to set up a Council of Regency. If this had been done nothing like this would have happened.

I might say that Tunku Mahkota Abdul Rahman himself is not free from blame, for as the Tunku Mahkota of Johore, he should have been familiar with everything that goes on in the place. His ignorance of what had taken place is not a good excuse. He should have made it his business to keep in close touch with the Sultan and the affairs of the court. On the other hand, Tunku Mahmood was the first born in that family of Sultan Ismail and

was installed Tunku Mahkota but differences arose in the family and he was forced to give up the title to his brother Tunku Abdul Rahman. Perhaps Tunku Mahmood has mellowed with age and experience and may prove himself acceptable to the *rakyat*. Whatever it is, it matters little as to who is the Sultan, as the power in the State rests solely in the hands of the people.

Sultan Abu Bakar set up the modern State of Johore as a Non-Federated Malay State but with a very strong autonomy, even with an army of its own. The only thing that he had to agree to and accept was the appointment of a British General Adviser to advise him on matters of administration.

The State of Johore started to progress with the advent and growth of the rubber industry. Being a new Sultanate, its Constitution had been well-planned and well-prepared, but the Sultan also arrogated to himself an absolute power to act in matters of religion, *adat* and custom. This continues right to today and it is the reason why the Mentri Besar did not know, and was not taken into the Sultan's confidence when the change in the order of succession was decided upon. The Prime Minister however advised the Party not to interfere in the matter but it is hard to keep the people out on a matter of such importance.

I have no doubt that many people in Johore and outside understand the disappointment of

Tunku Abdul Rahman and the dilemma faced by the Menteri Besar but since the government is sworn against interfering with the rights and prerogatives of the Rulers, nothing can be done about it.

The alternative is to set up the highest royal court, under the patronage of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong and the Conference of Rulers to deal with all matters pertaining to religion, *adat* and Malay custom. Such a court in Britain is known as the Court of the Privy Council. The court could be set up by the Conference of Rulers with three or four members, assisted by the Attorney-General and religious head of any one of the States to advise the Conference of Rulers and Yang Di Pertuan Agong. It should sit as a Court of First Instance and as a Court of Appeal with duties to advise the Agong and the Conference of Rulers on any matter submitted to it in respect of religion, *adat* and custom by the individual States.

If my suggestion finds favour with the Rulers, extraordinary meeting of the Conference of Rulers should be called to appoint a committee with appropriate terms of reference for the setting up of such a court, aided by the Attorney-General. This will prevent trouble such as this from breaking out in the future. I am sure a recurrence of a dispute such as this would weaken the sovereignty, dignity and status of the Rulers and prejudice their relationship with the *rakyat*.

Mentris Besar Crises

2nd October, 1981

The crises over the Mentris Besar of Johore and Pahang are causing concern to UMNO members and the people of these two states in general. This is not the first time that a crisis over state government Heads has happened. In Sarawak in 1966, in Perak in 1976, and Kelantan in 1977 the problems resolved themselves after much excitement and nervous tension. Today, they are only past history. Nevertheless, what happened in those cases could well be employed to deal with the present situation in Pahang and Johore.

A classic case in point is that of Sarawak when Datuk Kalong Ningkan was ousted as the Chief Minister. It will be remembered that he lost the confidence of his own party SNAP, and that of the Alliance. When challenged to relinquish his post and asked to call a meeting of the Council Negri for a vote of non-confi-

dence, the Speaker, being Datuk Kalong Ningkan's man, refused to agree.

When I told him that his action was unconstitutional, he retorted haughtily: "I know the Tunku feels bitterly disappointed with me because he did not succeed in making me a stooge to make Sarawak a colony of Malaysia, because I opposed his plan to get the Sarawak Civil Service Malaysianised and also I refused to accept Malay as the national language.

"Unenviably, the Malaysian Prime Minister's plan for a greater Malaysia is a plan to disguise the transfer of the Borneo territories from Great Britain to the Federation of Malaya. He intends to dominate a small country so that he can establish his long-acquired ambition of putting everything under his control. Sarawak is for Sarawakians. If he thinks he can make Sarawak a colony of Malaysia, he is suffering from a terrible illusion." He used other epithets to describe me, but they are not printed here for good reasons.

Under the Sarawak State Constitution Article 7 (1), it is provided that if the Chief Minister ceases to command the confidence of the majority of members of the Council Negri, then unless, at his request the Governor dissolves the Council Negri, the Chief Minister shall tender his resignation to the members of the Supreme Council. Article 6 (3) of the State Constitution empowers the Governor to appoint a Chief Minister who has the necessary

qualifications and who, in his judgement, is likely to command support in the Council Negri.

On June 16, the Alliance National Executive Council announced that Penghulu Tawi Sli would take over as the next Chief Minister of Sarawak. This same announcement immediately called on Ningkan to resign. The statement added that if he still refused, appropriate action would be taken against him. But Ningkan still maintained he would only abide by a ruling of the court and no other. His lawyer lodged a statement of claim seeking a declaration and an injunction from the court on the ground that the Governor of Sarawak had acted unconstitutionally in sacking him.

I called Parliament to meet in emergency session on Monday, September 16, 1966 to pass an Act to enable two temporary amendments to be made to the Sarawak Constitution, to restore order and to end the power struggle in the state. On September 24, Ningkan received a letter from the Governor calling upon him to resign as Chief Minister under the amended constitution. If he did not do so, the Governor would take appropriate action against him. The Council was convened and all 23 members of the Alliance group, led by Tawi Sli voted for the motion of "no confidence" against Ningkan and he was voted out of office.

Then we have the case of Tan Sri Ghazali Jawi, who was appointed Menteri Besar of Perak

by the late Tun Razak with the approval of the Perak UMNO. This appointment, however, did not find favour with the Sultan. For this reason, I had earlier withdrawn Tan Sri Ghazali Jawi from Perak and appointed him as our ambassador to Egypt. But Razak, for some reason saw fit to return him to Perak. This started the trouble again and the Sultan would not co-operate with him, so both went their separate ways. This was politically bad because the Constitution provides that the Mentris Besar and Chief Ministers are the peoples' representatives and as such, the Rulers and the Yang Di Pertuas Negri must act on their advice.

Article 71 (1) of the Constitution states "in the exercise of the functions under the Constitution of the States, the Rulers shall act in accordance with the advice of the Executive Council or of a member thereof acting under the general authority of the Council, i.e. Mentris Besar and Chief Ministers, except as otherwise provided by the Federal Constitution or the State Constitution. Under Section 6 of this Article it is provided that if the Mentri Besar ceases to command the confidence of the majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly only at his (the Mentri Besar's) request can the Ruler dissolve the whole Legislative Assembly.

The Ruler, therefore, cannot sack the Mentri Besar who can only be ousted from office by the majority vote of members of the assembly.

By the same token, a Ruler cannot refuse to accept a Mentri Besar proposed by the people. What would happen if he does and the legislative council of the state sends in the same man again as Mentri Besar?

In the case of Haji Abdul Rahim of Pahang the Assembly may well return him to office again, or the Central Government, acting under Article 150 of the Constitution, may suspend the State Constitution to allow him to take office. This, I am sure, the Prime Minister would not do because it would create an undue national crisis. Only in extreme cases would the Prime Minister use his emergency powers.

The unfortunate affair involving the Mentri Besar of Pahang started from his appointment. The Ruler had asked for the names of two or three persons so that he could make a choice. It was clear that the Ruler was not favourably disposed towards Haji Abdul Rahim but Datuk Hamzah, who was the head of Pahang UMNO, sent in Haji Abdul Rahim's name. So from the moment things did not go right between the Ruler and the Mentri Besar. UMNO was right in sending only one name because the Ruler has no power of the veto, so whoever enjoys the confidence of the party and the legislative council must be accepted by him. He can only give assent but has no right to choose a Mentri Besar after his own heart.

This is so because the Mentri Besar is the

man of the people and if the Ruler is given the right to choose him, the Mentri Besar would be the Ruler's man and subservient to his will. This will turn democracy upside down.

In Johore, another serious conflict has arisen between the Ruler and the Mentri Besar. This came about when the present Sultan was appointed successor to the throne of Johore in place of the Tengku Mahkota without the knowledge of the Mentri Besar. This, no doubt, was wrong because the Mentri Besar, being the executive head of the state, has the right to know of a change in the order of succession, although the law of the state gives the Sultan the absolute power to appoint his successor. Ever since then, relations between the Ruler and the Mentri Besar could be said to have deteriorated.

According to the *Star* report of October 2, the Sultan of Johore has taken over the Bukit Timbalan government complex, the office of the Mentri Besar. The move, according to the *Star*, "would put Sultan Iskander al-Haj in the mainstream of the state government administration as all state departments are located there." I hope this is not an indication that the ruler of Johore will take over the Government of Johore and exercise the power wielded by the former rulers under the old Sultanate system.

I am sure that being a man of intelligence he must know that the Constitution of this

country will not allow such a thing to happen. He must take care, therefore, to honour and uphold the Constitution, otherwise the Government may be forced to act under the provisions of Article 150 of the Constitution. The crisis in Johore and Pahang can therefore be said to be identical.

Malaysia is fortunate in that it can claim to be the only country in the world where Sultans enjoy the prestige and dignity of Rulers and constitutional Heads of States. To the Malaysians, they are symbols of unity among the people of all races and creeds in this country. Since Independence, the people and Rulers have managed to pull together well; let this happy state of affairs continue. But to ensure the continuity of good relations and understanding, the Rulers must keep out of politics and remain above it.

The situation in Johore and Pahang is beginning to look serious, and I should hate to see it get worse because it could lead to a severance of the good relations between the Rulers and the people. This may result in an amendment to the Constitution which can affect the position of the Rulers, *vis-a-vis* constitutional monarchy. What the Prime Minister does with one he can also do with the other.

The procedure, in the event of conflict between the Mentri Besar and the Ruler, is clearly defined in the Constitution. There should be no difficulty in resolving such differences, but

care must be taken not to endanger the good relations between the Rulers and the people. If the conflict between the Ruler and Mentri Besar reaches the point where the Mentri Besar has to obtain a vote of confidence, such a decision can be highly injurious to the prestige of the Ruler.

Our Constitution provides that Malaysia shall be a democratic and constitutional monarchy. The Rulers therefore, have certain rights and privileges, but the power to rule this country rests solely and entirely with the people, whose representatives are elected to Parliament and State Assemblies. In that sense, the powers of the Sultan are limited and their role in the legislature of each state is infinitesimal or symbolic.

Before things get worse, I would advise the Rulers to call a conference immediately and discuss the situation and give advice to the Rulers concerned on what should be done to resolve the dispute because what happens in these two states will affect the others. Fortunately, however, a Conference of Rulers will be held on October 16 and this matter should be made an item of utmost importance on the agenda. The UMNO members are not likely to give way because they are aware of their rights and conscious of their duties and responsibilities to the people whom they represent. Therefore, the Rulers owe it to themselves to find a solution to the crisis, which, in fact, is easy to settle if attended to in time.

Changing The Constitution

17th October, 1983

I was asked for my views, being the architect of Malaysia's Independence, so they said, on the Constitutional Amendment Act, 1983, which was recently passed in Parliament. "This Act shall come into force on the date following the date of its publication in the gazette." This amendment has caused a great deal of controversy and has been discussed by members of the public in social circles, clubs and at seminars. Many opinions were expressed for and against it.

There are probably only three provisions in the Constitution Amendment Bill of controversial significance. These relate to:

- a) the power of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong to assent to Bills;
- b) the power of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong to declare an emergency; and
- c) the curtailment of the powers of the State

Rulers under the State Constitution following the new amendment.

Under Article 66 of the Constitution, the power of Parliament to make laws shall be exercised by Bills passed by both Houses (or, in the cases mentioned in Article 68, the House of Representatives and assented to by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong.

This Article is amended by Clause 12 of the Bill. Under this provision, any Bill not assented to by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong automatically becomes law after fifteen days. It has been pointed out that, if this provision can be passed so easily, Malaysia could theoretically become a republic in 15 days after Parliament had passed the relevant law. The power to make laws is vested in Parliament which consists of three authorities, namely, the Yang Di Pertuan Agong, the Dewan Negara and the Dewan Rakyat. On the other hand, under Clause 5 of the same Article 66, Parliament has the power to postpone the operation of any law or to make laws just passed with retrospective effect.

Under Article 38(4), no law directly affecting the privileges, position, honours or dignities of the Rulers shall be passed without the consent of the Conference of Rulers. The Conference of Rulers no doubt discussed this matter in Sabah but with no conclusion other than to say "among the subjects discussed by the Rulers were those on national policies, appointments

and religion.”

My own opinion is that it is best to postpone the gazette notification and allow for further political discussion between the Rulers and the Government (Prime Minister and Cabinet). Any conflict that might arise can cause a great deal of unpleasantness and hostile public reaction. The danger is that it might be used or misused by the enemies of the State, and by those who want to make this country a republic and these people had been mentioned by both the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister. These people are only looking for opportunity to cash in on such a crisis.

Personally, I do not fear them because they have little following and their influence in this mixed society is insignificant. They are not far-sighted and intelligent enough to command the respect of the broadminded and intelligent Muslims of Malaysia. According to the Prime Minister, their aim is to set up a revolutionary Government on the pattern of Iran, but they can't tell the difference between an absolute monarchy and a constitutional monarchy. They can't even see Malaysia as a nation of plural society with people of different racial origins living in peace and harmony with one another. The only guarantee for the well-being of Malaysia and of our future generations is for these people of different racial origins to continue to live together in peace, harmony and the best of goodwill with one another.

Iran, under the Shah, was an absolute monarchy. The Shah had the power of life and death over everything and everybody, and thus he was considered by those who are opposed to a monarchy as a tyrant.

On the other hand, our King is a constitutional monarch, a symbolic Head of State with no power over the affairs of State. He must take advice from the Prime Minister and the Cabinet as stated in the Constitution under Article 68 and he holds office for only five years, after which time he is succeeded by another Ruler, In fact, Malaysia is the only nation with such a set-up – a true democratic nation.

Therefore, to overthrow our monarchy and set up a republic would be abortive as it would be to nobody's advantage. A republican State of Malaysia might not be quite amenable to the Malays for anybody could be Head of State without regard to his ethnic origin or religion; so long as he has the support of the people, he could be President. Anyway, I won't worry very much about the threat from the Muslim extremists because they are not the right or proper people to take over this country. They could at most be a gang of morons whose effort at best could only bring disaster of the type we have seen happening elsewhere.

The power to make laws follows the British practice with the Queen, the House of Lords and the House of Commons being all power-

ful. In England, the royal assent has not been withheld for 200 years, and the Queen is regarded as the constitutional Ruler, and now the Head of the Commonwealth.

One of the objects of the Reid Commission in 1957 was to ensure that the Head of State and the Rulers became constitutional Rulers, that is, they must act in accordance with the wishes of the elected representatives of the people. In consequence, the only discretionary powers of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong are set out in Article 40 (2) of the Constitution. Even these discretionary functions are subject to political necessities.

In view of the provisions of the Constitution Article 40 (1), this power is vested in the Federal Cabinet. Clause 20 of the Bill deprives the Cabinet of this power and vested it in the Prime Minister personally. This is a very dangerous provision. In other words, the power depends on the mental well-being of one individual. This is too grave a responsibility to thrust on one man.

Clause 21 of the Bill alters the essential provisions in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. These provisions are designed to enable the State Constitutions to inter-lock with the Federal Constitution. They have not been substantially altered since Independence. I believe this is the first time that any substantial change has been put forward in the Federal law. This clause parallels Clause 12 of the Bill by pro-

viding that any Bill not assented to by the Ruler in 15 days automatically becomes law.

I believe several State Rulers had withheld consent to Bills for periods of up to a year or more. In this regard, they were behaving and acting unconstitutionally. The object of this provision in the amendment Bill is to put them back on the right track. Under Article 71 (3), if it appears to Parliament that in any State any provision of this Constitution, or of the Constitution of that State is being habitually disregarded, Parliament may, notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, by law make provision for securing compliance with those provisions.

However, under Article 38 (4) no law directly affecting the position of the Rulers can be passed without the consent of the Conference of Rulers. It follows that this provision must, on the face of it, have the consent of the Conference of Rulers before it can become law. This is a paradoxical situation since it has been precipitated by the unconstitutional behaviour of the Rulers themselves. We would hope that no confrontation takes place between the Rulers and the Federal Government. This would have a serious effect on the country.

One solution might be for the Conference of Rulers to resolve that no Ruler should withhold his assent to any state legislation for any unreasonable period, if that had not been agreed to at the Sabah conference.

The emergency laws make it seditious to criticise the Rulers in Parliament and in the State Assemblies, so the public is ignorant of the reason for the Bill. Without any warning or proper notice, the Prime Minister has found fit to introduce this amendment. Some favour it while others oppose it on the ground of its rashness. As I have pointed out, if this kind of power can be exercised by the Prime Minister, Malaysia could be turned into a republic in as many days as it had taken to amend this Bill.

I suggest that Clause 5 of Article 66 be invoked and the Prime Minister should postpone the gazetting of this amendment. Close discussions should be held between the Government and the Rulers.

Those in power must always be careful to do things in the constitutional way, for Malaysia is a civilised, democratic, peaceful and a reputable country. A leader who respects this and his oath of office cannot promulgate a law even if he considers it of national importance without adhering to certain form. Where such a law has caused confusion in the minds of the people, it might be wise to have a closer look at it. My suggestion, I repeat, is to postpone the operation of this amendment Bill until every step has been taken to remove its ambiguity.

The Constitutional Amendment Act

7th November, 1983

"I will never see the day when either Datuk Onn or Tunku Abdul Rahman will be the Prime Minister of Malaya", so said the former British Resident of Pahang, in a small green book which he wrote and perhaps distributed in thousands, because I too had obtained a copy of this book myself. I cannot remember very well all the things said but I believe he was confident that neither the Chinese or Indians or the Rulers would support the movement for independence. The duty of the British Ruler was to play godfather to all and to protect their interests, particularly the Sultans for the British sovereign had made a pact to look after them and their states. The British would never let them down by giving independence to UMNO.

With this embedded in my mind, I saw

almost insurmountable difficulties in achieving our objective. My acceptance of the role of leadership of UMNO was on one condition only, and that was that the party agree to fight for independence, for without this there was nothing we could do to help uplift the position of the Malays. We had gone through the period of administration after the break-up of the Malayan Union government. In its place was set up the Federation of Malaya Government, but it did not help the common men. The poor remained poor, the rich got richer.

The officials in the civil service were drawn from the same class of people as before and 90 per cent of the MCS were made up of the expatriates and so were the legal and judicial officers. At that time there were only about three of us in the legal and judicial service, Azmi Mohamed (Tun), Suffian Hashim (Tun) and myself. No attempt was made to recruit Malays or those born in the federation into the legal and judicial service. We were no better than what we were before except that a few leaders were given office as members of the Government.

I was in the legal service at the time and I noticed all this, so if there was to be a change then it must be a complete one. I was appointed president of the Malay Football Association, then of the Selangor Football Association and later president of the Football Association of Malaya. So while I was in the exclusive set for

an Asian, I also mixed with the common men and sportsmen. I realised without full independence my appointment as UMNO president would only benefit myself, and a few leaders, but our people would remain the same – poor, neglected and despised. So I said I would take on as a leader of UMNO only if the members would agree to go for independence and nothing short of that.

When Tun Razak wrote to me and asked me to take it on, I replied that if “You don’t play politics like a monkey chained to the post, I will certainly take it on.” This was my attitude and stand on politics. After I was voted president of UMNO at the historic conference at the Majestic Hotel on August 26, 1951, the next move was to try and win over the Malayan Chinese and the Malayan Indians to the cause of independence. It seemed rather impossible at first. Many Chinese were divided among themselves. There were the Malayan babas, headed by Tan Cheng Lock (Tun), the Kuomintang, headed by H.S. Lee (Tun) and Leong Yew Koh (Tun), the terrorists and, of course, those who sympathised with them. However, by the grace of God and his kind mercy, we won over the Malayan Chinese who were members of the MCA. Even the terrorists made a move to talk to me, but of course the talk with the communist leader, Chin Peng, failed. This was expected.

With regard to the MCA under Tan Cheng

Lock, Lee Hau Sik, Leong Yew Koh, Ong Yoke Lin, S.M. Yong and a few others, the discussion went on very well and was very encouraging to me. The Indians under Devaser were non-committal at first but joined up later. The Rulers preferred to stay out of politics. Having won over the Chinese, I found half the battle had been won, but the demand they made was, according to some UMNO members, a bit forbidding. For example, the Chinese wanted those born here to become automatic citizens of this country. But in the end UMNO was understanding and generous enough to accept it for at the back of the minds of the members was independence. We had to get it at all costs. Without the co-operation of the Chinese, independence appeared remote. We were not unduly worried about the MIC because their number was not large and they had three organisations representing the Indians. Nevertheless, we had to win them over.

The most difficult problem we faced was to win over the Rulers for they had in their mind the fate of the other Rulers who had lost their thrones, such as in Indonesia, in India and in Pakistan. They might have felt that independence might spell the same ruin for them. They had a secret meeting in Johore Baru in September 1955, to discuss their position, in particular about their security. At that conference they decided that their future should be the responsibility of the British Government. I was

conscious of their fears and I made it my duty to assure the Rulers publicly that they should banish all feelings of insecurity because their positions as Rulers of their respective states would be upheld. The Alliance held demonstrations in every state to win over the Rulers.

I had to walk under the mid-day sun in Johore Baru, at the head of the procession of thousands of UMNO and MCA members with Tan Cheng Lock at my side, holding a petition in my hand for the Sultan of Johore. I also indicated that if they did not support our cause we would still go ahead, for history tells us that the will of the people must, in the end, prevail. But we wanted to obtain our goal without violence and bloodshed and through the combined efforts of the people and the Rulers. This would ensure the continuity of peace, security and goodwill for all. The last thing I wanted to do was to bring the will of the people to bear on the royalty and prevailed upon them to realise that they had nothing to lose on a change over from protected state to an independent one.

After protracted negotiations, appeals and persuasions, the Rulers agreed, and with that our way was clear for the meeting with the British Government. I remember that we invited the Rulers' representatives for the London talk. The MIC had already joined us and one of the MCA's influential, but obstinate leaders, Tan Siew Sin had also thrown in his lot with us. So

the Merdeka mission, four from the Rulers and four from the Alliance, left Malaya on the Italian ship Asia. By the time we reached Bombay, both the Rulers' representatives and the Alliance members were completely united and in agreement on all matters. In that party were Dato Razak, Dato Ismail, Col. H.S.Lee and myself, representing the Alliance, and Dato Bukit Gantang, Dato Abdul Aziz bin Hj. Abdul Majid, Dato Seth and Dato Nik Kamil, representing the Rulers. The secretaries were Abdul Kadir Shamsuddin (Tan Sri) and T.H. Tan (Tan Sri).

The Alliance agreed to protect and uphold the position of the Rulers and others and that Malaya would remain a sovereign, independent state under a constitutional monarch, with the firm assurance that Malaya would never be a republic. The delegation decided that the present form of the Constitution in the Federation was incompatible with independent Malaya. It was necessary to appoint a commission to go thoroughly into the preparation of a new Constitution.

The Merdeka talks formally opened in the historic Lancaster House on January 18, 1956, with Mr. Lennox Boyd (Lord) as chairman. I remember in my speech I said "my only desire is that the talk would be recorded in letters of gold and not of mud" and I asked the British to make a declaration of independence for Malaya within the Common-

wealth. The end result was that the British Government agreed to give Malaya the fullest measure of home rule possible for the transition period before independence. The rest of the story has been told and re-told and on August 31, 1957, Malaya became independent.

In the years following our independence, we have moved from success to success, and on the whole, we might say that the country has been fortunate in being able to uphold freedom and peace all these years. Compared with most countries, far and near, we can say ours is in a happy state.

Now a crisis has arisen in which the people, particularly the Malays, are torn between their loyalty to the Rulers and to UMNO. This has been caused through the recent Constitutional Amendment Act – Clause 12 of the Bill – which provides “that any Bill not assented to by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong automatically becomes law after 15 days.

This truly was a drastic action to take and it has brought fear to the minds of the Rulers and those who support constitutional monarchy. Under Article 38(4) of the Constitution “No law directly affecting the privileges, position, honours or dignities of the Rulers shall be passed without the consent of the Conference of the Rulers.” And under the same clause sub-para (5), it is stated that “the Conference of Rulers shall be consulted before any change in policy affecting administrative action under Article 153 is made.”

This Amendment Act certainly undermines the position in respect of the dignities and privileges of the Rulers, and should have been passed only after consultation with the Conference of Rulers. It was rushed through Parliament and this has caused very serious concern to the Rulers and others. It is clear that if the Yang Di Pertuan Agong would not give his assent to the Bill, the amendment will become law as soon as it is published in the gazette. I suggest a compromise by asking the Prime Minister not to gazette the Amendment but to have a further consultation with the Yang Di Pertuan Agong.

Mr. Lim Kit Siang, speaking in Parliament, has questioned the feasibility of my suggestion to delay its publication. According to Mr. Lim, he did not think this possible as there is no provision for the Government to gazette only portions of a Bill which had been given the royal assent.

In fact, this Bill has not been given the royal assent. Under Article 66(5), "The power of Parliament to postpone the operation of any law or to make laws with retrospective effect" is legal. It is further stated under the eighth schedule, Section 11(3) - Exercise of Legislative Power - "A Bill shall become law on being assented to by the Ruler, but no law shall come into force until it has been published, without prejudice, however, to the power of the legislature to postpone the operation of any

law, or to make laws with retrospective effect." So it would appear feasible and possible for the Prime Minister to gazette any portion of the Bill he likes. This amendment deprives the Yang Di Pertuan Agong of his right to assent to Bills and it contravenes one of the most important Articles of our Constitution. We might as well say that the Yang Di Pertuan Agong shall have no right to give assent to any Bills passed by Parliament.

Those who are opposed to constitutional monarchy and favour a republic will welcome the move, and they will play it up, and those in support of constitutional monarchy will want to defend it and thereby come into conflict with one another. This will certainly damage the tranquility of this country, and might turn Malaysia into another Iran or Lebanon. God forbid, for we have no other home we call our own. I see no hurry to the amendment of this part of our Constitution and care must be taken to avoid a collision of ideas among our peaceful people.

We realise that some of the Rulers perhaps have not maintained their integrity as symbolic Heads of State. Some have been known to interfere with the administration of their states, contrary to the Constitution, but they could be called to task for this offence. I had in my time directed that all applications for land by the Rulers be vetted by the Prime Minister first. Some of the Mentris Besar did not co-operate

for fear that they might displease the Rulers, but the fault of one or two Rulers should not be used to punish the others. We don't know what the faults actually are that prompted Parliament to pass the amendment because under Standing Order 36(8), the conduct of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong or the Rulers cannot be mentioned, except upon a substantive motion. So everybody has been asking for the reason behind the amendment.

The older UMNO members will still remember the promise we made to the Rulers in our quest for independence. The youths now are too young and some were not yet born to know much about it, but under Article 3 of the UMNO Constitution, UMNO members are sworn to uphold the dignity, prestige and position of the Rulers. They all agreed on this point but at the same time, they supported unreservedly the amendment at their meeting on November 4, this month. It is hard to reconcile the stand of UMNO youth because the Amendment can be said to deprive the Rulers of their constitutional powers and rights.

A meeting between the Prime Minister and the Rulers is very necessary and very urgent to effect a compromise. This would make everybody happier. One thing which is on everybody's mind is that this country shall continue to provide peace, security and contentment for all people and for all time. May Allah in his infinite mercy grant us our wishes.

The King's Privilege In The Melting Pot

5th December, 1983

When opening the Biennial Delegates Conference of the Malaysian Technical Services Union, the Prime Minister said he had received further support from MTSU and Cuepacs. Several other unions also lent their support to the Constitution Amendment Bill and he expressed appreciation for the union's support. There does not seem to be much opposition to him – "Theirs is not the reason why, theirs is to do and die" – and with such support, he could easily declare his stand on the Amendment Bill which the King and the Rulers oppose strongly.

The King in particular has never refused to give his assent to any Bill, and has always followed the terms of the Constitution religiously since Independence. So the Rulers see no reason for the amendment other than the attempt to put them in their places and this

has humiliated them and made them feel very small indeed.

I repeat that under Article 38(4) of the Constitution, "No law directly affecting the privileges, position, honours or dignities of the Rulers shall be passed without the consent of the Conference of the Rulers" and under the same clause sub-paragraph (5), it is stated that "the Conference of Rulers shall be consulted before any change in policy affecting administrative action under Article 153 is made." This has not been done and it would appear that something is amiss.

According to Information Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Adib Adam, the Attorney-General said that "the amendment to Article 66 of the Constitution did not infringe upon the special position of the Rulers and thus did not breach Article 159(3) or 38(4), provided the amendment is passed by a two-thirds majority of both Houses of Parliament." This interpretation by the Attorney-General provides a new angle to the Constitution of this country. To put it bluntly, this was the privilege accorded to the King who otherwise would have no power at all but only a privilege to give his assent to any law passed by Parliament by a two-thirds majority. I submit that the assent to the Bill is a privilege of the King. When that is abrogated, it must affect the privileges referred to under Article 38(4).

Look at it any way you like, the King has

cause to feel the way he does. One could have understood the necessity for the change of the Constitution if the King had at any time refused to give his assent to the Bills passed by Parliament. The amendment will become law as soon as it is gazetted. Anwar Ibrahim, who is the UMNO Youth leader and Culture, Youth and Sports Minister, insisted that the Amendment Bill should be gazetted without delay. We know his stand on the Constitution of this country and his support for the Bill is no surprise to us. The King's dignity, prestige and privilege must suffer a setback because his position is now reduced to a rubber stamp.

With the support behind him, the Prime Minister is in a strong position to go through with this amendment or, if he thinks better of it, he might separate it from the other matters which are included in this Amendment Bill. The Malays are praying and hoping for a reconciliation and a face-saving device will be found to save the King from embarrassment and to save this country from a crisis.

Since Independence, Malaysia has seen so much happiness and has set a very good example to the world on how the country has made progress and has proved its worth as a constitutional monarchy. Our duty therefore is to see that this will continue for we know of no way to run our country except through a constitutional parliamentary monarchy. There is an old Malay saying, "Hujan emas negeri

orang, hujan batu negeri kita. Manakah lebih baik dari negeri kita.' (It may rain gold in other countries but it rains stones in our own country. What better place to live in than in our own country).

A change in the course of time is only to be expected but the change must not be done to suit the whim and fancy of any leader. A change affecting the rights and prestige of the King cannot, in my mind, be justified whatever may be the reason for it. There have been many changes in the Constitution, but this one is a very major one and it affects the symbolic role of the King. The Press seems to have played it up too and some of the Ministers have been going round the country to whip up support for the amendment but the people are still ignorant of the reason for it.

I have had occasion to correct the mistakes of the Rulers when they have done wrong and now I feel called upon to say what I feel about this Amendment Bill. It is not my intention to find fault with the Government but to try my best to bring about a reconciliation between the parties concerned.

The rally in Alor Star was the biggest seen for a long time. Buses were sent to all parts of Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Province Wellesley and northern Perak to bring the people to the rally. I naturally expected that the Prime Minister would allay the fears of the people of this country on the recent impasse over the Amend-

ment Bill by telling them that he would do his best to smoothen out any misunderstanding that may have arisen over it. After all, UMNO leaders led by Encik Ghafar Baba have just met the Rulers and as I had occasion to mention in my article last week that "at the recent meeting of UMNO leaders and the Rulers, they have come to some conclusion."

Every effort must be taken to pacify the people. The gathering of many thousands of people would have been an ideal occasion to come out with some soothing words. But to my surprise, the Prime Minister started off by saying as headlined in the Press: "I will not quit. I have no right to step down unless the rakyat wants me to do so." He explained that "I did not elect myself Prime Minister. The people chose me and, therefore, only they can force me to step down." He said he was a "tool" to be used by the people. "If the people think this 'tool' is no longer useful, they can throw it away and choose another", he said. He continued to say that "certain elements in the country had spread all sorts of rumours to confuse the people." These elements, he said, were trying to fish in troubled waters by alleging that the Government was trying to set up a republic. "We are not out to fight anyone and neither are we taking away power from anyone. What we want is to put into practise what is in our Constitution", he said.

As an old man and the man behind the

nation's move to ultimate Independence, I was naturally worried to hear such talk. It never occurred to me that there was any demand for Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir's resignation or for any change in the Government. What the Prime Minister said shocked the rakyat further because we did not know of all this rumpus. This is the first time I have heard of the memorandum and the demand for the Prime Minister's resignation. The Prime Minister followed it up with the statement at the rally in Bagan Datoh, Perak, that "even UMNO members have accused us of trying to replace the system with a republic. We have been denounced by our own members who accused us of trying to weaken or destroy the Malays."

This appears to me to be even more serious, for discord within UMNO rank and file would certainly undermine the party's well-being. UMNO has been the pillar of strength of this nation and the partners, MCA, MIC and Gerakan, look to UMNO to lead the security of Malaysia. Any crack in UMNO's armour would have a shattering effect on the partners and might undermine the nation's well-being. The question that comes to our mind immediately is what was the cause of all this trouble, and it would be good if the members of the Barisan Nasional could get together and discuss ways on how to overcome it.

Looking at it from an outside angle, my immediate reaction is to put right the amend-

ment to our Constitution. That is not difficult. Where there's a will, there's a way, because the Government has more than a two-thirds majority to pass any Bill they want or revoke any of them at will. Perhaps one of the things that they must do is to touch up the Amendment Bill which has brought about this misunderstanding between the Rulers and the party in power. We expected the Prime Minister to touch on this when he addressed Parliament on Friday, but he said nothing which can give us hope of an early settlement.

Is it not possible to gazette the non-controversial parts and leave out the controversial ones to be attended to later? This, I understand, has been agreed to by the Deputy King. Everybody will be happy if a reconciliation could be achieved except, of course, PAS which is preparing to step into the breach.

Don't Tamper With The Constitution Unnecessarily

19th December, 1983

A local newspaper report on Royal Assent and The Constitution Amendments (December 12) referred to me as saying that the Constitution requires a review, particularly on religious and constitutional matters. That, indeed, was true. In fact, I had written earlier on the appointment of a Royal Commission to review our Constitution because, according to the working paper on the Constitution, the members of the working committee recommended a review of our Constitution. The idea behind it was to keep abreast of world changes, at the same time to interfere as little as possible with our written Constitution.

To suggest a review of the Constitution as required by the working committee is different from giving power to the legislature to amend as and when the powers-that-be liked. The

appointment of a Royal Commission would go into the matter more conscientiously, more thoroughly and make changes only when it is absolutely necessary. In fact, a constitutional review is very much in my mind and I feel that at some date in the future, the privileges enjoyed by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong and the Rulers might be better defined with the experience gained after 26 years of Merdeka.

The writer gives his own definition of the word "privilege". He did not think the amendment had affected adversely the Royal privilege – that is a matter of opinion but a Royal Commission would put the matter right. The Rulers are, after all, human beings and they are not infallible. They can make mistakes and so can our leaders, and these mistakes can sometimes be very serious. In my time I had never been called upon to take up this matter but now, after what had happened with the amended Article 66(5), the review is urgent.

The Prime Minister admitted, according to the writer, that this matter required careful study and it should be done in depth and with the help of legal experts. But instead, this amendment was carried through with an ultimatum that if it is not assented to within 15 days it becomes law. I did not ask for the amendment to be made without making a close study by experts. Many amendments have been made to our Constitution, particularly under the Emergency Regulations which were

considered necessary and consistent with the state of emergency prevailing in this country. But when it deals with the privileges, dignities of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong, the rights of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong to consider such an amendment at the Conference of Rulers, though only a matter of formality, must be given consideration.

According to the Chambers dictionary, the meaning of the word "privilege" is "an advantage accorded and enjoyed by the individual" and the word "dignity" means "elevation of rank and place". When this privilege is affected by the amendment, the Rulers have the right to discuss it at the Conference of Rulers. This country has a written Constitution and as such it must be given a place of honour, otherwise it becomes just a scrap of paper without any meaning given to it. It has been respected, or at least observed, all these years after independence and it had seen this country through many a stormy period. To mention a few, communist insurrection - Sukarno's "Crush Malaysia" aggression, the Philippines claim on Sabah and other disloyal activities in the country.

I repeat that what I had suggested to the Prime Minister was for a commission to be appointed to review it and remove any inconsistencies or ambiguities that may exist. The writer suggested that the matter should be taken to court which alone can decide whether

the Constitution "has been offended or not by passing the Constitutional Amendment Bill". This will not be a satisfactory solution to the problem we face today. As I see it, the proper thing to do is to appoint a Royal Commission to go into an "in-depth study" of the Constitution.

Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon also felt that the way the amendment was rushed through in Parliament was unconstitutional. He felt that the Bills should be given the widest publicity before they are debated in the Dewan Rakyat. "The people should be encouraged to study all Bills especially all those with regard to the amendment to the Constitution. Then our MPs should be given time to study these Bills." This is another way of dealing with the amendment to the Constitution. We must bear in mind that this country started off its independence with a written Constitution. Among other things, the Constitution provided for the maintenance of the special position of the Rulers and the preservation of the reserved right of the bumiputras.

Mr. Lee Kuan Yew at first agreed with this special provision but when later Singapore became established in Malaysia, he went back on his words and started his campaign of Malaysian Malaysia. To save the situation, I gave full independence to Singapore at great loss of popularity but I felt I had to maintain peace and goodwill among the people. The bumi-

putras naturally feel conscious of the stake they have in the country by virtue of the fact that they have their Rulers. In the old days, Malays from the British colonies of Penang, Province Wellesley and Malacca used to migrate to the Malay states to seek their fortune as the Malays of the states and subjects of the Rulers. I may say here that they had done extremely well for themselves and for their descendants.

The Rulers sometimes are inclined to overplay their role as Rulers, in which case action could be taken against them under Standing Order 36(8) in Parliament on a substantive motion. The same applies to our present day officials and leaders. Nobody can deny that the Constitution is the work of experts and it has served us well. It has left an indelible mark on the success and progress of our country. If you compare Malaysia with most countries in this region of Asia we can take pride in the fact that we have not done badly. So the less we mess about with the Constitution the happier will be the people of this country who have placed so much faith in our Constitution.

Malaysia has a peculiar characteristic not shared by many countries of the world. It has people of different ethnic groups of many religions. In this delicate situation, it can cause political upheaval and turbulence unless the administration is well managed and run. We have seen how the people in some countries have suffered. On the other hand, there is a

lot of understanding and goodwill among the people of this country and this is due to the faith they have in our Constitution. This accordingly has given them the feeling that their rights are well protected. If we tamper too often with it, their faith in the Constitution will be shattered and so will the peace in this country.

I am never tired of repeating what I have said over and over again. Keep the people happy and contented with life. When I was in Kuala Lumpur I met a friend in the supermarket whose cart was loaded with tin provisions. I asked if he was going on a picnic. "Not quite", he replied, "I am buying to store up food in case of trouble." "Let's pray that this will never happen", I said.

Now that the Timbalan Yang Di Pertuan Agong has signed the Constitution Amendment Bill, as I understand it on a reciprocal basis, there is nothing more to be said – except wait for the PM to tell the parliamentarians about it. It has come with a sense of great relief to all those concerned, whether they are for the amendment or against the amendment. These are the peaceful citizens of this country.

Time To Review The Constitution

9th January, 1984

The most serious issue which we faced last year was the amendment to our Constitution which impinged on the right of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong to assent to Bills passed in Parliament. This caused a shock throughout the nation but nobody at the beginning had anything to say about it. They received it in shocked silence.

Then Datuk Senu Abdul Rahman wrote an open letter of protest to the Prime Minister in which he pointed out that by removing the royal protection which the Malays of this country had enjoyed throughout the long period of the nation's erratic history, this special favour would be lost to the Malays. This angered the younger exuberant UMNO members who maintained that the Malays today could look after themselves without the help from any source, particularly the Rulers.

This show of arrogance upset the patience of the conservative Malays who retorted that it was not the protection of the Rulers which counted so much as the abuse of the sanctity of our Constitution which mattered. If amendments could be made so easily, what guarantee is there that other rights mentioned in the Constitution would not be brushed aside at the will of those in power? It has now turned into a national issue.

The Prime Minister did not foresee this when he moved what he thought was an innocuous amendment passed without much debate in Parliament. He is now conscious of the effect it made on the sensitivity of some of the Malays and others. Being a man of wisdom, he decided on a compromise solution, and he appointed as a member of his party, Tengku Rithaudeen, who is also a member of the royal family, as a go-between to help overcome the impasse. The Rulers themselves appreciated the reason behind it and they gave full co-operation to the Prime Minister to reach a compromise.

Admittedly the amendment was rushed through without giving much thought to its effects and consequences on the people's feelings. Opinions have since been aired at private discussions, at conferences and in the coffee-shops. *The Star* carried articles by Dr. Tan Chee Khoon and myself. It came to a point where it was clear that UMNO members themselves were divided on the issue. On one side were

the sensitive Malays who maintained that the sanctity of the Constitution had been sullied, and the youth showed no concern. The impulsive youth considered the amendment as necessary and rational as this country was progressive enough and ready to accept the change.

Until now there has been no open clash or misunderstanding between the King and the Prime Minister, although some Rulers have been known to clash with their Mentris Besar. But these incidents have not been serious enough to warrant an amendment to the Constitution, for the differences were settled under the provisions of the Constitution without much difficulty. Both the King and the Prime Minister seemed to understand their duties and responsibilities to the people. There has been mutual respect on both sides.

The throne is only a symbol while the Prime Minister has the power to rule through the will of the people in Parliament. The Government of the country is run by the people's representatives at all levels of the Government, whether it be at the state or national level, and this has never been in doubt or at fault.

This is the first time, however, that the differences came to the top level of our political platform. The Prime Minister, with Parliament behind him, could have gone ahead with the amendment. It clipped the edge of the Constitution which under Article 38(4) said that

all amendments to do with the Rulers' prestige and privileges have to be sent for the consideration of the Conference of Rulers. Now the Prime Minister realises that it would not be wise to go through with the amendment and is taking the matter back to Parliament with the terms of the compromise. I understand the King has agreed to them. This will settle the issue when Parliament accepts them.

Datuk Seri Adib Adam, the information Minister, rapped *The Star*, Dr. Tan Chee Khoon and others, for discussing the constitutional issues "after the matter has been resolved". But the Prime Minister, when addressing a large gathering on January 7, on his official visit to the Federal Territory, spoke at some length on this matter. So obviously the subject of the amendment is not closed until he has made his report in Parliament.

However, certain states decided to show resentment by ignoring the authority of the established government of the country by small acts of insubordination such as not hoisting the flag of the central government. On this matter, the State Secretary of Johore tried to explain away the reason for it. According to him it was stipulated in a government circular that the national flag could only be flown alongside the Johore flag at state government buildings and offices on three national occasions, and these are on the birthday of the King, on the occasion of the King's visit to the State and on

National Day. On other occasions, the flag could only be flown on federal government buildings and offices.

The reason given is hardly plausible because in the past it was flown without any objection from the State, so why should it be so now?

The reason against the flying of the national flag is that it is a show of disrespect to our nation, and this must not be allowed to continue. This matter should be taken up in Parliament on a substantive motion. It should not be allowed to go on unchecked as it might cause embarrassment to the central government if other states were to follow suit. The decision taken in Parliament should be submitted for the consideration of the Conference of Rulers or if no provision is made to deal with matters such as this, a Royal Commission should be appointed to review the Constitution.

The Rulers, we understand, are above the law and cannot be charged in court for committing ordinary crimes. But the time might come when the Rulers or the Heads of State may commit such acts as may endanger the peace of this country. I mentioned earlier that there had been differences between some Rulers and the Mentris Besar but who knows that some day something more serious might happen? A Ruler in the heat of the moment might blow off the brain of the Mentri Besar. What will happen then?

We did not bring up this question when the

commission was preparing the Constitution. We accepted the situation as it existed in the colonial days. We never gave a thought as to what could happen in independent Malaysia. Now the time has come when a Royal Commission should look into this.

When we decided on independence, we had in mind that the states and people could all live in peace and in the best of goodwill. The people's loyalty has seen Malaysia through the most critical and troubled periods in our history. Today she has come to be known as a land of milk and honey, peaceful as any country could hope to be, stable and prosperous. The non-Malays who had been brought together in independence have decided to give their undivided loyalty to this country and all of them have helped to make Malaysia what she is today. Their rights and freedom are also protected.

As a result of recent unfortunate events, we are getting a little nervous both in the political and economic arena. The Government which runs this country is a government of the people. Now that the Prime Minister has become conscious of his responsibility to them he has decided to go back to Parliament on a compromise solution. The terms of the compromise, between the King and the Prime Minister, as I understand it, is to allow the King the first refusal, and if Parliament sends back the amendment a second time, then the King would have no choice but to give the assent. When

the members are assembled in Parliament today, they must expect to hear some significant information on the terms of the agreement and it is expected that they will give the Prime Minister their spontaneous and unequivocal support.

The Prime Minister should also take the opportunity to explain fully in Parliament the involvement of Bank Bumiputra Finance in the loss of \$1.7 billion or more to the Carrion investment group in Hong Kong and perhaps allow a debate on this important matter which created so much interest and excitement at home and abroad. I think the Government owes it to the people to give them all the information available. The loss involved, according to experts, is so large that if the dollars were joined together they would span the globe five times.

I am glad, however, that the year 1983 passed off quite well despite of all this. May Allah preserve our beloved country in peace and prosperity for all time.

The Right Way To Do Things: The Powers Of Chief Ministers

18th July, 1975

Twice in previous articles I have written about the Agongs and the Rulers and their position vis-a-vis the Constitution, and I mentioned that the Executive Head of State was the Prime Minister. It follows, therefore, that in the States the men who hold functional power are the Mentris Besar and the Chief Ministers. What happens then if a Prime Minister abuses his powers? That can only be decided by a vote on a motion of "no confidence" formally proposed in Parliament. The passage of such a motion will topple the Prime Minister; and so it is with Mentris Besar and Chief Ministers.

In 1966, we had trouble with one Chief Minister, Datuk Kalong Ningkan. He was the first Chief Minister of Sarawak and proved to be a most difficult man to control. On June 12, 1966 the Alliance Party made a move to oust

Kalong Ningkan from his post as Chief Minister. A Council Negeri meeting would be called in Sarawak so that a vote of "no confidence" could be brought against him. In fact, this was the third time that Kalong Ningkan, as Chief Minister, had faced a political storm. On this occasion dissident factors in his ruling Sarawak Alliance Party had made a joint petition, demanding that the Chief Minister step down as Executive Head and as leader of the State Alliance. The individual party strength in the State Council was Pesaka 15, SNAP 6 (his own party), SUPP 5, Perjasa 5, Panas 3, SEA 3, Independent 1.

On June 13, twenty members of Council Negeri, all members of the Alliance Party, arrived in Kuala Lumpur to confer with me. They reiterated that Kalong Ningkan would not call a meeting of the Council Negeri, so that they could bring in a vote of "no confidence". In the meantime Kalong Ningkan had sacked three of his Ministers, who were members of the Alliance, and he and his own clique had withdrawn from the Alliance. To top all this, he had made very violent attacks on the Prime Minister, and he was ruthless in his behaviour towards other members of the Council. As a result of my meeting with these members of the Sarawak Council Negeri, I made a statement in which I said that, if Ningkan resigned peacefully and constitutionally, I would not relate all the charges that "had been made against him".

"The Council Negeri is prepared to nominate a candidate as Chief Minister to take his place, a man who comes from his own race", I said. "This nomination will be submitted to the Governor for consideration. There can be no compromise with Kalong Ningkan. He is asked to resign because the Council Negeri and the people of Sarawak in fact have no more confidence in him."

When Ningkan received the news that he was deposed, he went into a fit of temper, became very abusive, and declared he was determined to fight it out. He had already rallied support from the First, Second, Third and Fifth Divisions of Sarawak. "I know the Tunku feels bitterly disappointed with me", he said, "because he did not succeed in making me a stooge to make Sarawak a colony of Malaysia, because I opposed his plan to get the Sarawak Civil Service Malayanised and also I refused to accept Malay as the national language.

"Undeniably, the Malaysian Prime Minister's plan in disguise for the transfer of the British Borneo Territories from Great Britain to the Federation of Malaya. He intends to dominate a small country so that he can establish his long-acquired accomplishment of putting everything under his control. Sarawak is for Sarawakians. If he thinks he can make Sarawak a colony of Malaysia, he is suffering from a terrible illusion."

I never knew I was such a tyrant, until I heard

what Ningkan had to say about me. I was not angry with his conduct, only disappointed, as I knew what kind of a man he was, but I did expect that as Chief Minister of the State of Sarawak he would shoulder his duties and responsibilities with dignity and honour, and that he would be conscious of the weight of office as Chief Minister. But he had some expatriate officers who supported him and gave him wrong advice, though they themselves would never have tolerated such conduct from any officials of their own.

I asked Tun Dr. Ismail to go to Kuching to talk with the Alliance members and also Ningkan, and he declared on arrival, "We have decided to ask the Chief Minister, Ningkan, to abide by the party's decision, to co-operate with the party by resigning, and give way to another Iban, who is also an Alliance member." In a statement made on June 18, Kalong Ningkan said: "I cannot accept the arbitrary position of the Executive Council of the Malaysia Alliance Party that I resign voluntarily as Chief Minister of Sarawak. I will remain as Chief Minister, as the people of Sarawak still want me."

Under the State Constitution Article 7(1), it is provided that if the Chief Minister ceases to command the confidence of the majority of members of the Council Negeri, then unless, at his request the Governor dissolves the Council Negeri, the Chief Minister shall tender his resignation to the members of the Supreme

Council. Under Article 6(3) the State Constitution empowers the Governor to appoint a Chief Minister who has the necessary qualifications and who in his judgement is likely to command support in the Council Negeri.

On June 16, the Alliance National Executive Council announced that Penghulu Tawi Sli would be the next Chief Minister of Sarawak. This same announcement immediately called on Ningkan to resign. "If he still refuses, proper action will be taken against him", the announcement stated. But Kalong Ningkan still maintained he would abide only by a ruling of the Court, and by no other. When asked for my own opinion I had this to say, "Our experience shows that Ningkan's conduct was never a credit to the Alliance. It is better, therefore, that he sits outside the party than inside. This way he cannot lower the good name of the Alliance any further."

Kalong Ningkan answered my charges, stating, "The Prime Minister is on record as having shown scant respect for treaties by his conduct in pushing out Singapore without consulting even Britain; after having got the Borneo territories from Britain under the pretext of containing in Malaysia the Chinese of Singapore with the help of natives of the Borneo Territories."

Ningkan's lawyer lodged a statement of claim seeking four declarations and an injunction from the Court. These were:-

1. A declaration that the first defendant as

Governor of Sarawak acted unconstitutionally by not complying with the provisions of the Constitution of the State of Sarawak.

2. A declaration that the first defendant should not have relieved the plaintiff from the office of Chief Minister of Sarawak on the grounds of representations made to him on June 16 by members of Council Negeri, who preferred to boycott the sessions of Council Negeri of June 14, 1966 on the ground of alleged loss of confidence in the Chief Minister.
3. A declaration that the purported dismissal of the plaintiff by the first defendant was ultra vires, null and void.
4. A declaration that the plaintiff is, and has been, at all material times the Chief Minister of the State of Sarawak.
5. An injunction restraining the second defendant, Tawi Sli, from acting as Chief Minister of the State of Sarawak.

On August 27 the Alliance accepted Kalong's party's proposal to withdraw from the Alliance Party.

Mr. Justice Harley gave judgement in favour of Stephen Kalong Ningkan with costs. In doing so, he said that the main arguments for the plaintiff were that the Governor had no power of dismissal, and if he did have a power or discretion it must not be exercised arbitrarily or capriciously. He quoted Article 7(1) of the Sarawak Constitution in which he said, "The

first question which arises is how the lack of confidence is to be expressed. Can such lack of confidence only be assessed by a vote on the floor of the House?" In the Federal Supreme Court of Nigeria, it was held that the constitutional method of measuring lack of confidence required a decision or resolution on the floor of the House. The Privy Council took the opposite view and held that there was no limitation as to the material by which lack of confidence should be assessed.

According to the Judge, there were many arguments to discourage the Governor from exercising his power of removal, except upon any indisputable evidence of actual voting in the House. All the Judge had to suggest was that the former Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Kalong Ningkan, was unconstitutionally removed from office. The Court granted an injunction to restrain Penghulu Tawi Sli from acting as Chief Minister. He said Kalong Ningkan's case was unchallengeable. He did not say how he arrived at his conclusion, except that it was very difficult "with a multiplicity of legal complications", and he suggested that the Council Negeri be dissolved and a general election held to decide the issue of "in confidence."

This was a very unsatisfactory judgement for it did not clearly state what loss of confidence means, whereas under the constitution a Minister who is voted to have lost the confi-

dence of the House which he leads can be sacked by the Governor, whose power, the judge himself admitted, was vast. He referred to Clause 10, in which he said:

Clause 10(i): In exercise of his functions the Governor shall act in accordance with the advice of the Supreme Council or of members thereof acting under the general authority of the Council, except as otherwise provided by the Federal Constitution or State Constitution.

(ii) The Governor may act in his discretion in the performance of the following functions:-

(a) Appointment of a Chief Minister.

(b) The withholding of consent to a request for dissolution of Council Negeri, but this according to the Judge did not give the Governor the power to dismiss the Chief Minister, or, if he did have a power or discretion, it must not be exercised arbitrarily or capriciously.

In what respect it could be said that the Governor sacked Kalong Ningkan "arbitrarily and capriciously", he did not attempt to enlarge on, but left it at that.

The Supreme Council had the right to call the Council meeting, but the speaker who was Ningkan's man refused to convene the Council. In the meantime Kalong Ningkan took over office, and comfortably settled himself once again in the Chief Minister's chair, saying "There is no reason why I should quit." So there was a stalemate in Sarawak, as the Speaker refused to convene the Council Negeri and

the Governor was bound to accept the advice of Kalong Ningkan, as head of the Supreme Council.

There appeared to be no possibility of the Legislature being made to work in the State. There must be a general election under the Judge's ruling to be held in the State; in the meantime he was there as Chief Minister without support of the Council, and this would make a mockery of all democracy. And constitutionally there was no other way of removing him, except paradoxically by suspending the Constitution. So I decided to do just that.

I agreed that the Malaysian Parliament would meet in emergency session on Monday, September 16, 1966 to pass an Act to enable two temporary amendments to be made to the Sarawak Constitution, to restore order and to end the power-struggle in the State. Amendment No.1 would give the Governor the power to convene a meeting of the Council Negeri. At that time it could only be exercised by the Supreme Council. Amendment No.2 would give the Governor authority to dismiss a Chief Minister, who had lost the confidence of Council Negeri. The Yang Di Pertuan Agong accordingly proclaimed a State of Emergency in Sarawak in order to put through these amendments.

At 1.15 pm on September 16, an announcement of a State of Emergency in Sarawak was made, and this came as a shock to Kuching,

according to Press reports. "While some applauded the move, others opposed it, but the general public and many officials were bewildered about the fact." During the night the British Information Services Reading Room, the Borneo Company's office and the Speaker's home were stoned.

Penghulu Tawi Sli tried his best to stop any further demonstration. He dealt with the situation admirably. Most of the papers agreed that the Emergency amendment to the Constitution "is not a practice to be applauded and negotiated or accepted as a matter of course, but in this instance the Federal Government is offering sound reasons for the measures it has taken and proposes to take. The situation in Sarawak is intolerable from the point of view of democratic practice and stable Government, and highly dangerous from the point of view of security."

In Sarawak there was a Government which enjoyed no support. The Chief Minister, Kalong Ningkan, should have resigned, but he refused to do so. He also refused to convene a meeting of the Council Negeri.

This unnatural situation obviously could not continue, and so the constitutional amendments would empower the Governor of Sarawak for the sake of good Government to convene the Council Negeri, and if the Council Negeri so desired, he, the Governor, would be permitted to dispense with the Chief Minister, who did not any more enjoy the Council

Negeri's confidence. On the other hand, if Kalong Ningkan could prove that he enjoyed the support of the Council Negeri, he could stay on. A general election would not solve the problem, as it would take six months at least before it could be held. In the meantime the administration would be in a national state of chaos.

The Sunday Times of London on May 18 strongly criticised the Malaysian Government, and so did the *Liberal Manchester Guardian* which suggested that "a quality of statemanship will have to be shown, above all in Kuala Lumpur, if the Federation is to work." After relating the events which led to the present impasse, the editorial adds, "When Governments are unable to oust an opponent by ordinary political and legal processes and start tampering with the Constitution the stability of constitutional Government itself is in danger of being weakened, but Kuala Lumpur certainly has to find a way of breaking the deadlock." Perhaps, it said, President Soekarno ought to be reactivated to stimulate national conditions by a fresh bout of Confrontation. This was an opinion from a so-called friendly country.

In the meantime, the Ningkan Cabinet demanded that a Commission of Inquiry be appointed to come to Sarawak immediately and to find out if there was any emergency in the State, otherwise this action of Parliament directly interfered with the Constitution of the State.

On September 24, at 6. pm Kalong Ningkan received a letter from the Governor, calling upon him to resign as Chief Minister under the amended constitution. If he did not do so, the Governor would sack him. The Council was convened, and all 23 members of the Alliance group, led by Penghulu Tawi Sli, voted for the motion of "no confidence" against Ningkan. The left-wing opposition SUPP did not attend, neither did the Government ex-officio members, who were expatriate officers.

Abdul Taib Mahmood of Berjasa in a statement said he gave the Chief Minister a free hand and more than ample tolerance in the Government, but there was no consultation between the Chief Minister and the parties which raised him to power. Nothing made any impression on Ningkan. There were many unpleasant incidents. In one he boasted that he was going to become a millionaire, but how and where did he expect to get the money?

On September 24, Ningkan, the Chief Minister of Sarawak, was voted out of office. His expatriate friends and councillors soon followed suit, and Sarawak was secured against foreign interference at last. What is brewing in Sabah now is quite a case in point, as Berjaya would want us to believe. Kalong Ningkan was one in whom the Council Negeri had no confidence, and demanded his removal on a vote of "no confidence". In this case in Sabah, as far as we know, a few members of USNO Party have

broken away to form another party.

If Tun Mustapha still enjoys the majority support of the Council members, he will continue to be the Chief Minister. There is no need for him to go to the polls to get the support. This is so in every Assembly, because it is not expected that the Assembly will have a one-party house. Many states have opposition, and why not Sabah? All that has happened in Sabah is that a few dissident members have broken away to form another party, but the number is not large enough to upset the majority, which Tun Mustapha commands, nor has a crisis arisen.

There is no question of a stalemate in the State administration, for while there is legislature there is law and order in the State. There is no reason whatsoever for the Federal Government to interfere in the internal affairs of Sabah. There is no call for it. There is no reason for Tun Mustapha "to demonstrate that he is a democratic leader who holds the reins of Government with the consent and support of the governed." He has that.

I set out to illustrate my point at some length in Ningkan's case. A paper of repute should have been more careful before putting forward a proposal that is at variance with the Constitution, and certainly unwarranted. It sets the people's minds working in the wrong direction, and confuses their thinking, and is definitely mischievous. Those who broke away were as

much to blame for what had happened in Sabah as Tun Mustapha. As I said, they were equally answerable to all the allegations and charges they made against Tun Mustapha, and if one has to face the music let them all stand up and face it together, otherwise don't talk.

All For The Sake Of UMNO Unity

16th January, 1984

Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon has given a suitable reply to the allegation made by Datuk Seri Adib Adam that he belonged to the anti-Mahathir group and that I, too, have become the stooge of others. As Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon has said, there is no reason why we both should have been accused of taking "the anti-Mahathir" stand. We are much too old to try and make a comeback in politics. All we were trying to do, if anything, was to explain whatever little we know of the Constitution because from our long experience we are aware of the serious implications involved.

I on my part wanted to avoid a split in the UMNO rank and file because I have had visits from some important UMNO members who had expressed the fear that the issue before the nation today is not just one between the Rulers

and the Prime Minister, or the Government of this country, but rather it has become a national issue. The extent to which the Government should interfere with the Constitution which has served us through all these years of independence should not have been made so simple. The nation has won from our neighbours respect and goodwill under the umbrella of this constitutional monarchy.

The establishment of a monarchy under our system has never been seen or heard of before in the world. The King occupies the throne for five years and at the end of the period, another King takes over. Each and every one of them in the past has served the nation most creditably. They mixed with the people and did their duties as arranged by the palace officials or by the Prime Minister's Department.

They have never refused to do any favour asked of them. Visits to kampungs and their Friday prayers at the mosques are arranged by the palace officials, and the Agong would shake hands with everyone present. This is not done in any other kingdom. On Hari Raya day the Agong would hold an "open house" for everyone, from members of the diplomatic corps to even the deaf, dumb and the blind. In fact, everyone and anyone is free to go and partake of the refreshments provided by the palace. The Agong, especially the present one, would stand outside the porch for hours and shake hands with everybody.

In England, at the Queen's birthday garden party, the dignitaries and members of the diplomatic corps and other important civilians of the country invited for the occasion, are dressed in morning coat or formal national dress. They wander about the palace grounds in happy mood. The very important of the guests would be introduced to Her Majesty in the royal enclosure, but others would have to satisfy themselves with a glimpse of the Queen and the other members of the royal family as they move out of the enclosure to show themselves. This ceremony has been going on for as many years as we care to remember, but every guest is so proud to be invited.

It was said that the famous Moss Brothers, dressmakers, made their pile from renting out their ready-made formal attire and their evening dress for these royal parties. Recently, I understand, there has been quite a little change where certain categories of people are allowed to wear lounge suits.

The British people are very proud of and loyal to their Kings and Queens. When the British sovereign drives through the streets of London on official occasions, the people stand for hours and jam the pavement, just to catch a glimpse of their sovereign. We followed the system with some changes. We started off our independence with nine Rulers and each one has to be chosen by their brother Rulers according to the order of precedence as King

and he holds the office for five years and not a day longer.

I don't remember the period for which the British monarch could delay the assent to Bills passed by the Houses of Parliament, but it is certainly longer than the 15 days originally agreed to our Parliament. For 200 years, no sovereign of England had refused assent. Charles the First lost his Head on the block for being un-cooperative. Since that time, the British have established a constitutional monarchy which is considered perfect. We also could consider our system as being the most modern and the most democratic in modern history. What has happened this time has provided a good lesson to us all.

What the Prime Minister has done, in order to repair the damage, was to bring the matter back to Parliament. As I said earlier, this is the right course to take. We all applaud and compliment him for his sporting and democratic gesture and we all give thanks to Allah for the amicable settlement reached between the Rulers and the Government. The members of the Barisan Nasional and the people in general can now settle down and forget the whole unfortunate affair.

But Datuk Seri Adib Adam took exception and blamed the foreign and local Press for being "anti-Mahathir" and "anti-government" for their independent views and comments. He accused *The Star* which carried the articles of

Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon and mine, of "journalistic subversion". He also condemned *The Star* and some of the foreign Press for "deliberately twisting facts and misquoting speeches".

He added: "... there are people bringing out things like dictatorship ... When you read through (the article written by Tan Sri Dr Tan Chee Khoon in *The Star*), he is repeatedly harping on the Prime Minister and that the Prime Minister is power-crazy and power that ... The word I got is that somebody is at the back of certain things, making Chee Khoon and Tunku Abdul Rahman as mouth-pieces to prolong this to May ... I think is with a view to put the Prime Minister's position in jeopardy ... To me it is quite obvious (Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir is also president of UMNO) ... especially reporting my remarks in Penang quite differently compared to the reporting by other Press ... I think there are those who are trying to topple the Prime Minister ... From what *The Star* reported, it seems that the anti-Mahathir group is only within Umno."

Asked by *The Star* to elaborate on his allegation that Chee Khoon and I were "mouth-pieces", Datuk Seri Adib Adam replied: "Tunku and Dr. Tan Chee Khoon are being used by *The Star*."

For the Minister's information I would like to say that his charge is far from the truth.

The Star is a paper which started as an inde-

pendent provincial (Penang) paper. Then it was taken over by me and Tun Mustapha to prevent Datuk Abdullah Ahmad from acquiring it for himself, or, as he said it, for the Government. Then Tun Mustapha decided to sell his shares and these were taken over at my request, by the MCA. So, actually, *The Star* is owned completely and absolutely by UMNO and the MCA. The members of the board consist of, among others, myself as chairman, with Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng, an MCA leader, as the vice-chairman, Mr. Lim Kean Siew, a member of the MCA, Encik Kamal Hashim, a member of UMNO, Datuk Wee Hood Teck of the Barisan Nasional, Miss P.G. Lim, the former Ambassador of Malaysia to Yugoslavia, and Mr. Gabriel Lee, an MCA member, as managing director.

From its humble beginning, *The Star* has risen phenomenally in popularity and has become a national newspaper with headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, a printing plant in Penang, and bureaus everywhere. We are now making arrangements to set up another bureau in East Malaysia. Being a Barisan Nasional party newspaper, we feel it is our duty to give the correct information to the public and this we have done to the best of our ability. Sometimes we are asked by the Government not to report on matters which are considered sensitive, in which case we follow the instructions. Otherwise, we feel free to give our views on matters of public interest.

The articles written by Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee

Khoon in his column "Without Fear Or Favour" and I (As I See It), are done in good faith. We are veteran politicians and have retired from politics for a long time. Both Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon and I, during our hey days, were at the opposite end of the floor. He was the Secretary General of the Gerakan party and respected as a constructive and honest member of the opposition (Now Gerakan is in the Barisan Nasional).

He had never been accused of being destructive and anti-government, but given his due as an opposition member he was critical. I had an amusing set-to with him in Parliament and I never tire of relating the story I told in my previous articles. He had accused some of the Government members of having a mess for their good time entertainment, and this was made just after the Profumo case. I asked the Members of the Parliament: "Who amongst you has not enjoyed himself and strayed?" He was the only one who stood up, while the other one was myself. I had to stand up in any case as I was speaking. My retort to him was that "I am sorry for you." He was amused and sat down.

We brought Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon into *The Star* because we thought his political experience and service, for which he was made a "Tan Sri", would be a great asset to democratic and great constitution minded Malaysians. Sometimes his comments might have been a bit strong, because he writes without fear or favour, in which case we would send back the

article to him and ask him to tone down, and he has always complied.

Now he is being accused of trying to stir up a revolution in the country and I am accused of being made use of by *The Star* and some anti-government group of people. This we both strongly deny.

When I took over UMNO from the late Datuk Onn, I gave up everything to reorganise it and it had nothing left but the bare walls of its headquarters in Johore Baru. What I said about UMNO then stands good today. UMNO must not be divided because it is the backbone of the party in power. There is no other party that can take its place as a Malay political party. If UMNO falls, the nation will break up. UMNO members must stand together and give their undivided loyalty to the country.

I myself retired when I found that UMNO needed a younger man to lead it. When I was President I had been well supported by the members of UMNO and its partners in the Alliance . I declared myself quite truthfully as being the happiest Prime Minister in the world. So today, with all the crises breaking up all over the world among the newly independent nations, Malaysia remains completely secure, peaceful and happy. Thanks be to God.

We owe it to the people who have given service to the nation, whether they are in the Government party or in the opposition. We feel naturally concerned when anything unusual

happens in this country and we feel it our duty to speak out as a matter of public interest. Whether the Government accepts it or not, we satisfied ourselves that we have done our duty, be it acceptable or not to the Government.

In my prayers I always implore Allah, on whom we place our faith, to help us maintain peace, security, goodwill and harmony in the country, for this is the only country we have, the country in which we were born and in its earth we shall be buried. We have no other country we can call our own and for better or for worse Malaysia is our only home. I ask of him to save Malaysia from our enemy, from within and without, so that we can live happily today and for our descendants to enjoy the same life, if not a better one tomorrow.

Let us hope that Datuk Seri Adib Adam will understand our position and believe what I have said, for I am an old man and can be said to be the founder and architect of Malaysia. I have nobody in mind whom I think can take over from Dr. Mahathir. The choice of the leader made by UMNO and the Barisan Nasional must be respected by all.

It has never occurred to us that what we said was done with an ulterior motive, i.e. to topple Dr. Mahathir and put somebody else in his place. The charges Datuk Seri Adib Adam made against Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon are completely unfounded, except that he showed himself to be unduly sensitive and unreason-

able. One thing I would say to him is that people in the political limelight must expect to meet criticism.

I can say without fear of contradiction that both Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon and I are not being used by anybody, for we are much too old, experienced and dedicated, to give in to others. We are seasoned campaigners and have been in politics when some of our present-day politicians and political leaders were sucking dummies, or still in school, or yet unborn. What we have expressed comes from our own hearts and souls. Be it right or wrong, we feel it our duty to speak our minds. Call us what you like – we are patriots. Allah, protect Malaysia.

Let's End The Debate Now, Anwar

6th February, 1984

Culture, Youth and Sports Minister Anwar Ibrahim charged that "there is an unholy alliance between certain retired politicians and opposition members to try and revive the Constitution Amendment issue." He himself could not understand why "these retired politicians who hold high positions should join forces with the opposition to hurl allegations against the Government." These are strong and harsh words to use. According to him, "these people disagreed with Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad over matters in the past and are now trying to exploit an issue which had, in fact, been resolved." Who is reviving the issue? Who are these retired politicians in high places?

It is difficult to disassociate in my mind as to who the so-called "retired politicians who

had held positions" are without thinking of myself as one of them, and the "unholy alliance" could only have been between Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoo, Datuk Senu Abdul Rahman and myself. What allegation did we hurl against the Government except to say that the amendment should not have been rushed through?

This is a decidedly unfair charge to make. In all the articles I have written, I made it quite clear that I did so without malice. In the case of Datuk Senu, he wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister and circulated it. Tan Sri Tan Chee Khoo, and I dealt with the Constitution issue. I suggested that the proper thing to do was for the Prime Minister to bring the matter back to Parliament with a compromise solution. This he did and everybody was happy with the result. The matter was considered closed. But Encik Anwar brought it up again in Kota Baru when he opened a youth seminar on January 20, hence this reply from me.

I have had visits from some important UMNO members who expressed the fear that the issue before the nation today could split UMNO apart. This must be avoided at all costs. Some young Ministers have been going round the country casting aspersions on leaders who, according to the Ministers, are trying to discredit the Government. Let's end this debate here and now.

I have no choice but to call for order. These young people should not be allowed to open up the subject again. I am compelled against my will to speak up in defence of my right. Encik Anwar is a new member of UMNO and one who made a phenomenal rise in politics. Previously, he was a member of a youth religious organisation, ABIM, and according to belief, the organisation was against the constitutional set up of the country.

ABIM, from its utterances, had indicated in is not on all fours with our democratic form of Government, particularly with the constitutional monarchy. The organisation rather favoured the Iranian type of politics popular with the aspirations of the young Muslims. The modern thinking of the young Muslims was to reactivate the stereotype militant Islam. This is a luxury which nations with a majority of Muslims can afford to indulge in. But not us in Malaysia where only 48 per cent of the people are Muslims.

We are happy to have our way in respect of religion and politics and are happy to carry on as we have been doing. Those who are opposed to the constitutional monarchy, let them see and experience the way of life in a republic. They don't have to go far for that. I am sure they will be happy to return to this home that Allah has given us.

I myself was very pleased when Encik Anwar decided to leave ABIM and join UMNO.

Not only that, but he became a Minister as well. His father, Encik Ibrahim, was my staunch and loyal comrade in arms for he had identified himself with the independence movement right from the start. When Encik Anwar joined UMNO, I met his father on a plane one day and complimented him on his son's change of heart by following him (the father) into UMNO. His latest utterance, however, did me an injustice.

As I mentioned in my article on January 16, Tan Sri Dr. Tan Chee Khoon was leader of the Gerakan, which was in opposition to the Government before but is now part of the Barisan. I am still a member of UMNO and if we both share the same view, it is only natural. Let it be known to all that Tan Sri Dr. Tan and I have never conspired to oppose the Government in any war of words or deeds. He wrote in *The Star* what he had in his mind but we never conspired with one another or even spoke to one another. Deep in my heart, I wanted to express publicly my feelings over the Constitution Amendment which I opposed.

I consider the Constitution as our Charter of Independence and the binding force in our well-kint Malaysian society. It should not be interfered with without good reason. For 26 years, we have shown to the world how well-run and well-managed this country is under the same coalition known before as the Alliance and

now the Barisan Nasional. The unchallenged rule is that the coalition platform must continue to be maintained and for all time. The main policy of the coalition must be to uphold constitutional monarchy and the people's freedom of association and worship.

In England, there are two main political parties – the Conservatives and Labour – and a smaller party, the also-ran Liberal Party, which was a rival of the Tories in the old days. But because of their out-dated policy, they had not found favour with the British voters. It was the party in power led by Lloyd George that won the First World War. The Conservatives, which took over from them under Winston Churchill, won the last war.

Therefore, one can expect some change in the government policy if one party takes over from the other. But we, as I said, have been fortunate enough to have one party in power all these years of Independence, with a change only in the leadership. The Barisan Nasional is made up of the Malays (UMNO), the Chinese (MCA), the Indians (MIC), the Gerakan and the parties in power in Sabah and Sarawak. We have won the confidence of the people and will continue in power as long as the coalition continues to enjoy this confidence. Mistakes will be made from time to time and these are unavoidable. It is the duty of the old hands, loyal to the coalition, to pull the Government up if a mistake is being made or

if they think it has been made.

The last thing I have in mind is to down Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir as "an act of revenge". What can I gain by it? I have no wish to return to politics and I have no one in mind who can take over from Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir. On my 80th birthday, the Prime Minister made a public apology to me at a dinner hosted by the Barisan Nasional to celebrate the occasion. That was more than I had expected and I considered his action noble and praiseworthy.

Malaysia has been regarded by all as a shining light and an example of democracy at its best. Most of us feel proud of Malaysia, the country in which we were born and in which we hope to die and be buried under its soil. We, who have found life amiable here today, hope and pray that our descendents will share the same happiness for all time. There is no reason for anyone to doubt the honesty, integrity and loyalty of old leaders. We are truly democratic people and are loyal to this country and we consider ourselves privileged to express our opinions when the occasion for it arises. That's all we did and we are accused of being the enemies of the Government.

While this nation continues to practise democracy, we will continue to talk and write. We could not be expected to remain silent on the question of the amendment to the Cons-

stitution which had been a lively topic of conversation and a controversial one at that. If we feel that the action taken by the Government is contrary to the object of the Constitution, we must make our feelings known. As I said, the Prime Minister had put it right and it had made the people happy and we had thought that the matter had been closed. But no, some young Ministers must bring it up again. I feel strongly that the young Ministers should be advised to desist.

Let the matter rest and nothing more be said about it. The unfortunate part of it all is that it has caused friction among the Malay people themselves and misunderstanding with the Rulers.

The Malays or the Bumiputras have found life after Independence better and very much to their benefit. They have built up a strong UMNO which has brought the Malays together and through it, an alliance with the MCA, MIC, Gerakan and others. The nation has won the admiration and goodwill of all other nations. Party bickering and squabbles are bound to show up from time to time but these should not be allowed to divide the Malays. A split in UMNO would spell disaster to the well-being of Malaysia. When I found in my time that new leaders wanted to take over from me, I retired without a fuss, whereas I could have stayed on and fought it out because I still had a considerable following.

But I wanted to avoid a split in UMNO at all cost, so I quietly stepped down.

I was proud that by the grace of Allah, I had the rare honour of being chosen by the people of Malaya to break the foreign hold on this country and that I was privileged to be the first man to declare independence on that great and eventful day of August 31, 1957. I am even prouder to see how well our country has progressed and prospered and I pray that, with Allah's blessings, we will continue to enjoy the fruits of our Independence for all time.

I would be the last person to break up the people's happiness. The Malays must always remain united and continue to be on terms of goodwill and friendship with other loyal citizens of this country. On this alone can we have peace and enjoy what there is of life forever and ever. Praise be to Allah.

The Role Of The King

13th February, 1984

The Rulers have at last made their choice of the new Yang Di Pertuan Agong who will succeed the present Yang Di Pertuan Agong. This is done according to the order of succession as laid down under Article 32 and 33 (1) of the Constitution which says that the Ruler can only be disqualified and by-passed, if he is a juvenile or underaged or found to be suffering from illness or other factors which will obstruct his rule as the King or if he himself declines to be the King.

There were a lot of doubts and guesses as to who will be the next Yang Di Pertuan Agong, particularly as it was rumoured that the Sultan of Johore would not accept it. Some said it would be the present deputy; others the Sultan of Perak or the Sultan of Johore if he changes his mind. When they asked me, I said: "According to the order of succession, it will be the

Sultan of Johore – but it all depends on the Rulers' choice.”

The Sultan of Johore was in fact in the first line of succession and the Sultan of Perak the second, but because of the meteoric rise of Raja Azlan Shah as the Sultan of Perak, he might be the automatic choice. He started off as a government officer, then became a judicial officer, and then Lord President of the court, and finally succeeded to the throne of Perak – all within a short space of time. Many thought that he would be chosen by the other Rulers to be the Yang Di Pertuan Agong where, in addition to his other qualifications, his experience and wisdom in the court would be a valuable asset to the Rulers, particularly at their conferences.

But the Rulers decided to stand by the Constitution and they have chosen the man who has a prior claim to the throne and who accepted the appointment. The Sultan of Johore will be the Yang Di Pertuan Agong and Sultan Azlan Shah, his deputy. The Yang Di Pertuan Agong and whoever takes over as Yang Di Pertuan Agong knows that his duty is to Allah and to the people of the country. As such it is expected that he will do justice to the throne.

It is also true to say of other true Malaysians that for better or for worse this is their only home. It is the prayer in everybody's heart, mind and lips that as they enjoy the amenities

of life today they also pray that those who come after them will have the same good fortune. Though this country is multi-racial and multi-religious, we have enjoyed peace and prosperity and goodwill among men of which few countries in the world can boast.

I was born in the early part of this century. I have seen and experienced life here, and I can say that we have had our trials and tribulations but on the whole we can consider ourselves lucky to overcome them. I would like to see that it remains good, if not better, for all time.

I have never forgotten to mention all these in my first prayer of the day, and that is God's truth. I have always prayed that Malaysians must keep together no matter what their political ideologies may be. They must be in the best terms of goodwill and friendship towards one another so that in diversity we find unity. We had worked together, and with the Rulers, fought for and won independence for Malaya. Now we are able to walk with our heads up, and acclaim ourselves a free and independent people.

We have been looked upon as such too, by other peoples and with some admiration as a friendly, peaceful and progressive people. I felt it in my blood all the time I was Prime Minister, and I boasted that I was the happiest Prime Minister in the world. I should have added that our people are the happiest people

in the world.

One Ruler had been passed over in the past and Johore and Perak had always declined the honour of being appointed the Agong. In the case of Johore, it was because of age – both the Rulers of Johore had passed 80 years of age when they were offered the throne. And I know what it means when one has reached the ripe old age – bones creak, and mind falters and true to the saying “that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak”, they would rather remain in the State as the Sultan where they can take life and duty leisurely.

Both the Rulers of Johore, the late Sultan Ibrahim and the late Sultan Ismail, lived to a very ripe old age and died peacefully. The Ruler of Perak had refused because he was happier as the Sultan where he could have his fun. Sultan Iskandar of Johore is an active man full of bright ideas. Sometimes they are all his own, and he is young with plenty of vim and vitality but with unpredictable temperament.

For this reason he is considered somewhat erratic and impetuous, but he is a man of principle, and as such he will not forget his duty and responsibility as Yang Di Pertuan Agong, the constitutional monarch of this country of ours – Malaysia – the home and object of loyalty of all true Malaysians no matter what race or religion they belong to. For Malaysians, particularly the bumiputras,

there is no home other than Malaysia, and as I have often said in this country they are born, and in its soil they will be buried. That is my hope and my prayer and when I die, I would like to die with that feeling, and an assurance that Malaysia will continue to maintain and enjoy that status.

We have accepted the form of government for this country – a democratic state with a constitutional monarchy. The power to rule, run and administer this country is, however, vested in the people. The Rulers will enjoy their special position as symbolic heads of states with the Yang Di Pertuan Agong as the King.

In the 26 years of independence, we have found that the Yang Di Pertuan Agongs have carried out their duties and responsibilities with great distinction and without blemish. They have upheld the glory of the throne with great understanding and wisdom. The people of this country actually look to the throne with almost religious reverence and they worry little as to who the incumbent is, so long as he can add lustre to the throne. It has worked out extremely well so far.

I have no doubt that the new Yang Di Pertuan Agong will be conscious of his duty to the country and the people. So whoever he is or whatever may be his feelings and ideology, the power of the throne will influence his thinking and judgement. The King is above

the law and he can do no wrong. That's the saying. So far it has proved correct. They have been good, and there is no reason to fear otherwise. What if anything were to go wrong? It will be the people as represented by the party in power with the Prime Minister at the head who will deal with it and they have full power to do so. Let's hope and pray that such an occasion will never arise.

I know Sultan Mahmood Iskandar well, and I can say he has got some admirable qualities. He is generous, friendly and affectionate, but he takes offence easily and in the heat of the moment he is capable of doing things which he would regret afterwards. As the King, which he will be soon, he must exercise great patience and show great care in what he does. He must remember that he is the King and is bound by the Royal Code of Conduct, to keep his own personal sentiments to himself, and focus all his attention on the needs of the nation.

He must also remember that he is the head of the Muslim religion. His duty is to pass to all men the message of Allah "that peace be for all men." His duty as the Head of State is to see the justice and fair play prevail in this beloved country of ours. The five years that he will enjoy as King of Malaysia will, we hope, be five glorious and memorable years.

I had the honour and privilege to serve

under five of them though only one day under the fifth, and live under the other two, and I can truthfully say that I have been proud of them all, and now I pray for the privilege to see the eighth Yang Di Pertuan Agong installed on the throne and continue the good work done by his predecessors. With all my heart, I join all Malaysians in wishing the new King the best of good luck and good health and express our heartiest congratulations on his appointment as the Yang Di Pertuan Agong.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for the success of any business and for the protection of the interests of all parties involved. The text outlines various methods for recording transactions, including the use of journals, ledgers, and account books. It also discusses the importance of regular audits and the role of the auditor in ensuring the accuracy of the records.

The second part of the document deals with the classification of assets and liabilities. It explains how assets should be classified into current and fixed assets, and how liabilities should be classified into current and long-term liabilities. The text also discusses the importance of valuing assets and liabilities correctly and the role of the accountant in determining their fair value.

The third part of the document discusses the preparation of financial statements. It explains how the information recorded in the journals and ledgers is used to prepare the balance sheet, the profit and loss account, and the cash flow statement. The text also discusses the importance of presenting the financial statements in a clear and concise manner and the role of the accountant in ensuring their accuracy.

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MALAY POLITICS

The latter half of the 1970's was a particularly unsettling period in Malaysian politics. After the death of Prime Minister Tun Razak in 1976, discontented elements within UMNO began to agitate for the removal of middle level leaders against whom they held grievances. Rumblings of discontent soon manifested themselves in increasingly open challenges to the position of state Mentris Besar (Chief Ministers). It seemed as if Federal Government supported moves to oust Datuk Harun in Selangor and Tun Mustapha in Sabah had inadvertently encouraged local politicians to attempt the removal of unpopular Mentris Besar in other states as well.

Reprinted in this section are the Tunku's views on the situation in Kelantan in 1977 and the Harun Case in 1978 in which a controversial ex-Mentri Besar of Selangor was finally jailed for corruption. Also included are two articles written about the race between Datuk

Musa Hitam and Tengku Razaleigh for the Deputy Presidency of UMNO in 1981. In yet another article, published in 1978, the Tunku explains his relationship with Dr. Mahathir – the independent-minded UMNO leader who later became Prime Minister.

The Kelantan crisis was probably the most publicised of the power struggles which erupted in the states in the late 1970's. It did not concern UMNO factions so much as it highlighted the national leadership's involvement in an internal struggle within the ranks of one of its principal partners in the National Front coalition – PAS. After the 1974 elections Tengku Razaleigh, with the blessing of the late Tun Razak, used his influence within Kelantan to have Datuk Haji Mohamed Nasir installed as Menteri Besar despite the objections of PAS President and Minister of Lands and Regional Development, Datuk Asri. Relations between Nasir and Asri deteriorated further with the new Menteri Besar's persistent criticism of Asri's former administration of the State – especially for his 'cheap mortgage' of land to a Singapore-based tin mining company. In late 1977 Asri reacted by having the PAS Supreme Council expel Nasir from the party and arranging for him to be removed from his position as Menteri Besar by a no-confidence vote in the State Assembly.

The immediate result was unprecedented in Malay politics since the communal explosion

of 1969. Thousands of demonstrators supporting Nasir rioted in the state capital forcing the authorities to impose a curfew and send in extra police from Kuala Lumpur. Realizing they had lost effective control of the state, at least temporarily, the UMNO leadership retaliated by passing emergency legislation through the Dewan Rakyat in early November, empowering Hussein Onn to appoint an administrator with wide powers to rule the state. PAS then withdrew from the federal cabinet and later from the National Front coalition in protest. In the state elections which followed in 1978 PAS was soundly defeated and replaced by an UMNO-dominated National Front government.

Commenting on the crisis, the Tunku suggested that an opinion poll should be held to determine whether the people of Kelantan wanted Datuk Mohamed Nasir or Datuk Asri to run the state. The Tunku outlined some of the allegations against Datuk Asri regarding the misuse of land. However, he went on to argue that the Federal Government's actions to resolve the crisis were "high-handed". He believed that the decision of the National Front to expel members who voted against the Kelantan Emergency Bill (which allowed the Federal Government to take control of the state) was "a bit severe", especially since the component parties were not briefed beforehand.

Another sensational case involved the power-

ful ex-Mentri Besar of Selangor, • Dato Harun bin Hj. Idris, who had built up a strong political base throughout the peninsula as leader of UMNO Youth. Harun was not known as a supporter of the Tunku. In fact, he had aligned himself temporarily with the Tunku's critics in 1969. Many leaders were concerned about Harun's independent role in the 1969 riots and his capacity to exploit Malay communal and Islamic themes.

In 1974, students at the Universiti Kebangsaan accused Harun of corruption involving the Bangi Timber Concession and the Prime Minister ordered the NBI (National Bureau of Investigation) to investigate. These enquiries were apparently wide-ranging for in late 1975, after the Mentri Besar had refused to retire from politics gracefully by accepting an appointment to the United Nations, he was charged with a variety of offences unrelated to the original allegations. These included the misuse of party funds, criminal breach of trust and failure to provide the Government with a statement of certain assets. Harun was removed from his position as Mentri Besar and expelled from the party.

But the top leadership was unable to destroy Harun's power base completely. In October 1976, after a behind the scenes campaign by powerful friends, he had been re-admitted into the party and was able to head the Selangor delegation at the UMNO General Assembly

the following year. It was not until the former Mentri Besar's appeals against his conviction on corruption charges were finally quashed in early 1978 that his political career seemed finally at an end. Even so, this was not without a desperate last stand by his supporters who precipitated a week-long political crisis by surrounding his house in a vain attempt to prevent his arrest.

Two articles reprinted here were written in response to the tension which gripped the nation when it appeared that UMNO Youth members were determined to prevent the arrest of their leader. "The Harun case", the Tunku wrote, "needs to be tackled in a proper and sensible manner . . . Use of force or manhandling of these desperate youths might lead to serious consequences and this must be avoided at all costs." Many Malaysians feared that the situation could result in a repeat of the 1969 communal disturbances. He also criticised the government-run radio and television stations for observing a news blackout on the matter. "Are they serving national needs as expected of them?" he asked.

In order to help solve the crisis peacefully, the Tunku went to visit the UMNO Youth members at Dato Harun's house after persistent requests by UMNO Youth. "I told them", he said, "that if they did not obey the law, then this country would go to the dogs, for UMNO is the custodian, with its many partners, of the

liberty, justice and charter of the nation." The action taken by UMNO Youth was "a breach of the rule of law" which "brought great shame to the Malay community." To the Tunku's credit, and the relief of the nation, he was able to persuade Harun's supporters to allow Harun to surrender peacefully.

Another group of articles in this section deals with the rivalry between Musa Hitam and Tengku Razaleigh. The retirement of Hussein Onn in mid-1981 meant that the Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir, became Prime Minister, and UMNO president. However, it was not clear who would replace him as Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy UMNO President. In an unprecedented move, Dr. Mahathir let it be known that he would allow the UMNO General Assembly to decide. Previous Prime Ministers and UMNO Presidents had simply made their own choice. UMNO General Assemblies merely ratified the decision. Dr. Mahathir's announcement resulted in one of the most keenly contested party elections in UMNO's history.

The two main contenders were Datuk Musa Hitam, the Education Minister, and Tengku Razaleigh, the Finance Minister. Harun was another UMNO personality expected to contest the position. However, he refused to be nominated.

Datuk Musa's greatest support in the party in 1981 was reputed to come from the ranks

of Malay school teachers. His opposition to proposals by Chinese organisations in 1978 for the creation of a Chinese language Merdeka University strongly appealed to this group. He also gained considerable support, both inside and outside the party, with his decision to revise the primary school syllabus with a view of re-emphasising the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. As education Minister he was also active in visiting schools and making himself accessible to teachers.

Tengku Razaleigh's popularity within the party rested largely upon his close association with government agencies charged with the task of helping Malays to become active in business. He was also generally credited with being responsible for UMNO's decisive victory over the PAS in the Kelantan state elections in March 1978 and the success of the National Front in the general elections which followed soon afterwards.

The Tunku described the struggle as being between one who filled the pockets of the Malays and another who filled their heads. The distinction revealed some of the more obvious differences between the two men in terms of their backgrounds and bases of support. It was pointed out earlier that Datuk Musa was strongly supported by the Malay school teachers. This group formed a powerful force at the grassroots level of UMNO. Tengku Razaleigh, on the other hand, was

popular among Malay businessmen and politicians who had benefitted from government programmes implemented by PERNAS and other agencies.

Some observers believed that the main reason Tengku Razaleigh lost the election was because of the campaign strategy he used. In Malay politics, a candidate must not appear too anxious for position and power. Tengku Razaleigh announced his candidacy for Deputy President as soon as it was obvious that there would be a vacancy. He followed this by saying he would contest no other position and would leave the Cabinet if he lost. In a party well-known for its preference for compromise and the avoidance of direct confrontation, the Finance Minister thus gave UMNO delegates the stark choice of either allowing him to win or effectively excluding him from all the important positions in the party and Government.

During the campaign, the Tunku used his influence to try to prevent the situation getting out of hand. He argued that UMNO needed both men. "It is not right for Tengku Razaleigh to think of retiring should he lose", wrote the Tunku. "The basic test of one's courage is to take sour defeat as he would the taste of sweet victory." Nevertheless, he described the Finance Minister as "the most popular choice", from a national point of view.

After Datuk Musa won the election, the Tunku urged UMNO members to put away all

feelings of enmity. The candidates, he said, should "forget the whole business of election tactics." He congratulated Datuk Musa but appealed to UMNO members not to forget Tengku Razaleigh and his work for the party. For his part, Tengku Razaleigh allowed himself to be persuaded to continue as Finance Minister.

Two further articles, published in 1983, refer to the need for UMNO to remain united and suggest that the position of Deputy Prime Minister be studied to see whether it is really necessary. Both articles were written in response to continuing tension within the party between supporters of Datuk Musa and Tengku Razaleigh. Many believed that the Finance Minister would make another attempt to become Deputy UMNO President at the 1984 UMNO General Assembly.

Researchers may also be interested in another article in which the Tunku discusses his relationships with national leaders such as Dr. Mahathir, Datuk Musa and the late Tun Razak. Referring to Dr. Mahathir's 1969 challenge the Tunku writes: "It was true enough that Datuk Seri Mahathir's 'open letter', which was widely circulated at the time did me a lot of harm. But I harbour no grudge against him now for what had happened ... he has shown me respect and kindness. I am glad to leave it at that and let bygones be bygones." His comments about Datuk Musa and Tun Razak are

equally interesting.

The Tunku also discusses an *Asiaweek* report which stated that senior members of the government dreaded Mondays – the day his column was published. Some critics, the report added, wanted him detained under the Internal Security Act. The Tunku replied that his motive in writing the column was to help the government understand the people and help the people understand the government. As for those who felt aggrieved by his articles, the Tunku had some blunt words: “Some people ask for it.”

How To Solve The Kelantan Crisis

24th October, 1977

The political situation in Kelantan has taken an ugly turn after the vote of no confidence against the Mentri Besar, a demonstration which led to a clash with the police and the subsequent outbreak of violence. As I write this I have no news as to what is happening in Kelantan. I can only pray that the situation won't get worse.

According to the news in the paper last Thursday, there was another demonstration in Pasir Mas where five thousand people took part in a protest rally and the PAS leader's effigy was burnt. No doubt more protests will be made in one form or another over the next few days to show support and sympathy for Mentri Besar Datuk Haji Mohamed Nasir. The police are using emergency powers to prevent a further outbreak of violence and the mea-

sures taken are purely make-shift and temporary.

The party involved is PAS and the quarrel is between the leaders and members of the party itself. Naturally they would not welcome any interference from outside but the position has altered somewhat when Datuk Mohamed Nasir was expelled from the party. In such an event, it cannot be said that this is purely a Party Islam affair. It has also caused concern to the members of the public who, in Kota Baru, fear for their safety.

According to Datuk Mohamed Nasir, he would like to contest an election and allow the electorate to decide whether they would want him to continue as Menteri Besar of Kelantan or would prefer somebody else in his place. Whatever it is, the position, as I see it, calls for a measure of outside intervention.

There is some analogy in what is happening now in Kelantan to what happened in Sarawak in 1966 when Datuk Kalong Ningkan was asked to relinquish his post as the Chief Minister in favour of Penghulu Tawi Sli, who had been nominated by 25 members of the State Legislature in a House of 42. This was supported by the Governor and the Federal Government. However, Datok Kalong Ningkan refused, and sought recourse to the courts, which maintained that since a vote of confidence had not been taken against him in the Legislature, he could not rightly be deposed. The fact re-

mained that there was no way of taking a vote of confidence against him as he refused to call a meeting of the House for a vote to be taken.

It was then that I stepped in, invoked Article 150 of the Constitution and proclaimed a state of emergency in Sarawak. Section 4 of that Article empowers Parliament to make provision to bring to an end any possible trouble by declaring an emergency in the State. That settled the trouble in Sarawak. The House was convened and the new Chief Minister was installed.

Now, with outbreaks of violence in different parts of the State of Kelantan by people showing sympathy for Datuk Mohamed Nasir, the Cabinet might take a serious view of the political development. This is the only thing the authorities can do. They might, if the need arises, declare a state of emergency in Kelantan.

Datuk Asri, a member of the Cabinet and head of PAS, has not come out with any constructive proposal or any statement so far. No doubt the people would like to hear his views. Perhaps he will express them at a proper time and to the right people. But the situation in Kelantan demands that action be taken quickly.

With a state of emergency declared, the authority vested in the Cabinet would empower it to nominate a new man as Menteri Besar, but would this satisfy the object of parliamentary democracy – which in effect means that the supreme power must be vested in the people collectively, administered by them through an

officer appointed by them? If the people of Kelantan are opposed to others taking over from the Mohamed Nasir Government, would it be right to deny them a say in the matter? Would this be in conformity with our idea of parliamentary democracy?

The State Constitution in this country allows His Royal Highness the Ruler to appoint by Instrument under His Sign Manual and the State Seal, a Mentri Besar in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (a) of Clause 2 of Article 16. But the appointee must be one who is chosen by the State Legislature and commands the support of the Majlis. So, obviously, whoever is recommended by the Majlis as the Mentri Besar would be automatically given the rubber chop by the Head of State, even though this person, in the situation prevailing in Kelantan, does not command the popular support of the electorate.

Viewed from this angle, the situation is likely to worsen and whether the party likes it or not, Parliament may have to step in. This is where the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, comes in.

There are not many legal precedents in English law to quote from. However, in "Hood Phillips Constitutional and Administrative Law, Fifth Edition, The High Court of Parliament - on the Prerogative of Dissolution", there is a provision that, although in law the Queen may dissolve Parliament when she likes, her conduct

would be unconstitutional if she did so without or against the advice of Her Ministers. To hold an election, it will be necessary for the Head of State to dissolve Parliament. This the Head of State of Kelantan cannot do: he can only withhold his assent to dissolve the State Assembly, but he himself cannot dissolve the Assembly, unless it be at the instance of the Mentri Besar and Council of State.

Under English law, if the Government is defeated in the House of Commons on a major question of policy, or on a vote of confidence, the Government must ask for dissolution and/or resign. Rosebury resigned in 1895 after being defeated. According to the English law, the main problems that arise revolve around the question of whether there are any exceptional circumstances in which the Sovereign may:

- dissolve Parliament without or against the advice of the Prime Minister;
- dismiss a Ministry that refuses to advise dissolution,
- refuse a dissolution when advised by the Prime Minister to dissolve.

On the other hand, in the case of Datuk Stephen Kalong Ningkan in 1966, emergency powers were used to dismiss him from office and to install a new Chief Minister accepted by members of the State Legislature which continued its life to the next election. They did not call for a fresh election because it was consi-

dered at the time that calling for a State election would present great difficulty as the three-tier system would take a great deal of preparation before the election could be held. The registration of voters, too, had not been completed and it would take at least two years to do so.

I presume that under Article 16 where it is provided that in the exercise of his function under the Constitution of the State or any law, the Head of State shall act in accordance with the advice of the State Executive Council, Clause 6 would enable the Mentri Besar, if he feels he cannot command the confidence of the electorate and to prevent trouble, to request His Highness for the dissolution of the State Legislative Assembly, and then tender his resignation. This will, in such circumstances, precipitate fresh election.

In this way, interference from the Federal Government could be avoided. This would give the electorate confidence in the Government of HRH the Sultan of Kelantan and would make them feel that due regard has been given to their wishes and that the principle of parliamentary democracy is being upheld. In any case, there will have to be a by-election, if others will, I presume, resign in sympathy with the former Mentri Besar. On the other hand, if they do not resign but choose to continue in the opposition to the new Government, there will be no by-election and the question of

holding a new election may not arise.

The new Mentri Besar and the new Executive Council will hold office until the next election. If the situation gets out of hand, then the only recourse, as I said earlier, would be to invoke Article 150 of the Constitution. Another alternative is to hold an opinion poll and allow the people to decide whether:

- They want the Government of the State to continue with a new Mentri Besar; or
- Whether they want a fresh election.

This, in effect, is a form of referendum and a face-saving device without the trappings of one. It can be taken at the town and kampung levels, with the help of the penghulu (pengawas) and the police. This might help to calm frayed tempers which, in Kelantan, can escalate to serious proportions. A stitch in time may save a tear.

Kelantan, PAS And Asri

19th December, 1977

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 Mentri 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, inclu-

ding 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 from 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 Mentri 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 de-

cide whether they wanted the state government to continue with a new Mentri Besar, pending a fresh election, or whether they wanted Datuk Mohamed Nasir to continue as Mentri 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 18 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 twenty-two seats against UMNO's twelve 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 Mentri 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.

Mahathir And I

20th February, 1978

I must take *Asiaweek's* M.G.G. Pillai to task for some of the things he said in *Asiaweek* of February 17. According to him, "the Tunku's quarrel with Mahathir – less visible now, but simmering still – stems from that period when Mahathir's 'open letter' to Abdul Rahman led to the former's expulsion from UMNO."

It was true enough that Datuk Seri Mahathir's "open letter", which was widely circulated at the time, did me a lot of harm, but I harbour no grudge against him now for what had happened, particularly as it seems obvious that he has repented. He has of late shown me much respect and kindness and whatever he might have done against me those days, I consider he has sufficiently atoned for it. I am glad to leave it at that, and "let bygones be bygones."

Now that I am 75, as *Asiaweek* has empha-

sised, I am nearer to God and I don't want to go to him with bitterness in my heart. The Deputy Prime Minister's job now is to look after the country, to unite all the races and to do all that is good for the nation. What he had found wrong with me and my work when I was Prime Minister is for him now to put right and I wish him well. I know how difficult is his job. The opportunity presents itself now and let's hope he will not miss this opportunity. But to suggest that the quarrel with Mahathir "is simmering still" is not correct. As far as both of us are concerned we are on good terms and I pray it will remain so.

As far as Datuk Musa Hitam is concerned, I never had a quarrel with him. Only like the UMNO Youth at that time, he could not wait for his turn to come. He was having a dig at the "old guard", meaning those whom I kept around me and, according to him they should make way for the young people. It was on this score that I clashed with him, otherwise my relationship with Datuk Musa Hitam was quite normal. He took his grouse around the party circles but beyond that he made no attempt to overthrow me. It was the Exco of UMNO that found fault with him and expelled him, not me.

He is now holding a very important portfolio in the Cabinet, that of Minister of Education. His task is difficult and it is for him to put right the education system before it goes

too far wrong. With his upbringing and education he should be farsighted enough to tackle his job intelligently. And this is what he is doing now. I wish him luck.

As regards Mr. Pillai's reference to my relationship with my nephew, the Sultan of Kedah, he strayed a bit through ignorance of my family background. According to him, "many political figures still insist privately that the Tunku stepped down unwillingly in 1970 and that he was in fact pushed aside by Tun Abdul Razak." He continued: "In truth, however, Abdul Rahman quit because he didn't want to serve under his nephew, the Sultan of Kedah who had been elected Malaysia's new King." He quoted me as saying: "I don't get along with him. However, I agreed to serve him for one day and then retire. Whatever our differences are, he was, after all, my King at that time." In place of "I don't get along", Mr. Pillai should have said "I might not get along with him." I, in fact, made known my intention to retire two years before the date I stepped down as Prime Minister of the country. I had mentioned it openly that this was to be my last term.

When my nephew became Agong then I would step down because it would not be right as an uncle to serve under his nephew. It was a question of family pride that an uncle should not "kow-tow" to his nephew. Beyond that I never had any hard words with him. As the Sultan of Kedah he is independent and

prefers to keep to his own advice and devices.

In fact, during the Japanese invasion of this country, my brother's family, the late Sultan Badlishah, including the present Sultan Halim Shah, were looked after by me and finally they returned to safety in my charge.

As regards the late Tun Razak pushing me aside, he made no attempt openly to do so but it must be admitted that he felt a bit small to be my deputy for so long and, being an ambitious man, he would no doubt have liked to take over as Prime Minister. Only those around him wanted him to take over dramatically and with a blare of trumpets.

I remember an occasion when Haji Khalid Awang Osman asked me in front of Tun Razak when I intended to retire. I told him, "When my nephew came to the throne."

He retorted: "It will be a long time for Tun Razak to wait". I noticed Razak's face change but he did nothing to show he was in a hurry to take over from me. I took the remarks as a joke, but soon after things began to happen.

It was those around him who started to build his image and tried to belittle me. These people had not made their presence felt in the Alliance before but they appeared to have infiltrated the important Ministries as Press and Political Secretaries and had taken over important posts in UMNO Headquarters. They seemed to have taken control of the Malay minds of the time and appeared to have things very

much their own way. There was no question of pushing me aside as I had already made up my mind to retire and I was not leaving my office at their behest.

With reference to *The Star*, I joined the paper at the request of Datuk Loh Boon Siew, who owned it at the time. So I came in as the chairman with 300,000 shares to prevent it from being taken over by Dollah Ahmad who employed threats in an attempt to acquire *The Star*. It was only my presence that saved *The Star*.

After a time, Datuk Loh Boon Siew, fearing for his own safety, offered his shares for sale and it was then that I induced Tun Mustapha to come in and take over control of *The Star*. Now he has sold all his shares and *The Star* has moved its headquarters to Kuala Lumpur and it is my prayer that it will reach greater heights.

My Monday column as *Asiaweek* put it "permits him to tell all and sundry just what he thinks is wrong with the country, often gives Government officials the jitters. On occasion, senior members of the administration have confessed to a dread of Mondays – the day his column is published. Once his critics even put it about that he should be detained under the Internal Security Act"

My column was written to help the Government read the minds of the people and the people the mind of the Government. Beyond that no other motive ever crept into my mind.

I have tried to be helpful and constructive and I am happy to be told by many that it is taken in that spirit. So if I appeared sometimes to be aggressive or damaging to some, that I can say is incidental – some people ask for it.

The Harun Case

27th February, 1978

Malaysians on the whole regret that their Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, had to return in a hurry from Australia because of a kidnap attempt or rather a threat to kidnap him. This I am sure had given the Australian Government a very bad headache too because the two countries have had a long-standing friendship and unshakeable faith and good feeling for one another for so many years – in fact it started with Malaya's independence.

I remember the great encouragement given to me personally by Mr. Robert Menzies (now Lord Menzies) when I was a new "boy" among the Commonwealth stalwarts at the first Commonwealth meeting in 1959. At that time there were no more than three Asian, among whom were Mr. Nehru, General Ayub Khan and Mr. Sooman Bandaranaike and one African (Mr. Kwame Nkrumah), Heads of Government. We

used to have a "get-together" when we met in London for the Commonwealth conference and talked things over most amicably. The only time we had any trouble was when I brought up the massacre of the blacks at Sharpeville which led to the expulsion of South Africa from the Commonwealth. Menzies was visibly affected but he took it nicely and stoically.

We were at war with the communists at the time but of course our Commonwealth friends were with us to help us and for this reason perhaps the communists in Australia were afraid to show themselves. The number of times I visited Australia those days for big or small conferences remain to this day with me pleasant memories. Menzies and Holt and other Ministers of Australia used to return the visits.

In Canberra I stayed at our High Commissioner's house and in Sydney at the Guest House "Kirribilli". I used to move about happily and freely - in fact went wherever I wanted to go without any warning. On one occasion, as I was driving along the harbour, I passed a "fish and chips" shop near the waterfront in Sydney. I told the driver to stop for me to buy some fish and chips. When I returned to "Kirribilli House", the butler met me and I handed over the fish and chips to him. So shocked was he that it took him some time to decide what to do with it.

Finally he went inside and returned with a silver salver, but I said to him that he would

spoil the taste by removing the papers. He said: "Never mind, Sir, I will leave the paper there." When the fish and chips were served at the table I found there was no paper. The chips were put in one dish and the fish in another. I asked him: "What happened now?" He said his wife felt that they should be properly served. I supposed that was the only time a VIP had ever bought fish and chips to eat at "Kirribilli House". The butler, dressed with his white tie, spick and span must have felt small, but it showed how free I felt.

When I attended the opening ceremony of our mission in Canberra, we had a really good satay party. The High Commissioner at the time was Tan Sri Gunn Lay Teik, who hired a first-class butler to attend to me. The butler's wages was never charged to the Malayan Government but Lay Teik paid him out of his own pocket. I wonder how many of our heads of missions abroad would be able to afford to do that now. Sometimes I feel we should appoint some independent persons to represent us abroad – men who feel they have made enough money but desire to seek fresh fields in the diplomatic service.

However, that was the spirit of the time. Malaysia was looked upon with respect by all Australians, big and small. This is so today and that's why I say it must have hurt Australia even more than it hurt Malaysia to see all these acts of hostility shown towards Malaysia's Prime

Minister. I don't remember reading anything unruly shown towards other Prime Ministers during this conference – at least if it happened, it was not reported.

This riotous behaviour had been started by none other than our Malaysian people in order to bring discredit to the Malaysian Prime Minister. This obviously must be the work of the communists or their camp followers. As I had said before, if these people are truly dedicated to the communist cause, they should do better to go to China or Russia where they can have their heart's content. They could share the hardship and the glory of communism there. Why go to Australia, a country which is looked upon as a welfare state and 'practises' democracy at its best?

The irony of it is that while they live in comfort with plenty to eat in a flourishing country, they practise communism. Anybody can afford to be communists but if they are true communists and dedicated ones their place is surely in China or any communist country, or better still join up with the Malayan Communist Party headed by Chin Peng, who had to fight and keep themselves alive at great risk and to fight hard to keep their threestar flag flying.

But no, these people live in absolute comfort and in the luxury that Australia can give them, and at the same time abuse the hospitality of their host.

According to reports, Mr. Malcolm Fraser

was most happy when it was decided at the Commonwealth meeting in London that governments in this region of Asia should hold regional meetings in Australia to discuss matters of mutual interest among themselves. It appeared that he went to extraordinary lengths to see to the arrangements himself such as attending to the personal comfort of the 11 leaders and their entourage, checking the conference facilities and investigating every angle of security arrangements. In other words, it was said that he left nothing to chance to make sure that the outcome of the meeting of the Heads of States of this region would be a memorable and a successful one.

This was the first time too that Commonwealth conference of Heads of States within the region was held and according to reports, it "held promise of breaking new ground in Commonwealth consultation", and it was a successful conference judging from all angles. From all and sundry, a regional conference of that nature which promises so much in the matter of economic and defence co-operation was an improvement in the relationship between the countries in the region.

The Commonwealth is much too bulky at the moment to do much for member countries, and the conference is now held biennially, and in order to get the best result, countries in different regions should get together often. In this way so much can be done in the name of

the Commonwealth for the good of member countries.

It was a pity, therefore, that such a conference which is so important and started for the first time should have been marred by incidents created by those irresponsible elements who have no stake in the country. The Prime Minister of Malaysia will have to think twice before he accepts another invitation to visit Australia and this no doubt will be a loss to the nation for there is so much to be gained by joint discussions on matters of national importance such as defence, economics and other matters of mutual interest. Datuk Hussein Onn rushed back with a sense of relief to be back among his peaceful people.

What he had on his plate, however, was even worse than what he faced in Australia, for he came slap-bang into the UMNO Youth's high-spirited action in defence of Datuk Harun. I tried to pacify them by reminding them of their duty to the country — their oath to uphold law and order. These they must not forget. The country looks to UMNO to defend and uphold the Constitution and not to disregard it. The situation appears to be quite serious and the police and security forces are handling it with restraint and care, using plenty of commonsense and patience and they are doing everything possible to avoid any clash with these young people who seem to have lost all sense of reasoning in their support for Datuk

Harun.

These supporters want to meet Datuk Hussein Onn. However, Datuk Hussein Onn will not be able to see them immediately because of the important visitor from Thailand, who is no less a person than our old friend General Tun Kriangsak Chomanan, the Prime Minister of our closest ally. Datuk Hussein Onn described the Malaysia-Thai relationship as the Siamese twin which could not be separated, for if they were they would die. What an apt description that is!

Datuk Hussein will meet the UMNO Youth supporters of Datuk Harun on the 27th, that is today, and I hope he will be able to promise them something which can give them a sense of relief.

The Harun case has to be tackled in a proper and sensible manner to avoid any clash between the good citizens and the custodians of law and order. Use of force or man-handling of these desperate and angry youths might lead to serious consequences and this must be avoided at all costs. On their side, they imagine that what they are doing is right out of their loyalty to their leader, and this has fogged their minds and their senses. They must be persuaded to disperse. If they won't do so today let them try it tomorrow. Only after all else has failed should drastic action be considered against them.

But I pray to Almighty God that whatever

happened in 1969 must never happen again. There is no need for it to happen here and Datuk Harun must contribute his share to make it easy for the authorities to deal with this case.

I regret to see that the topic of the day, that is Datuk Harun and the strong handed action of Pemuda UMNO to keep him in their custody, should have been blacked out by the national mass media, that is television and radio. The public expects the mass media to give out the news immediately and as soon as the trouble started. But no, they have given out nothing whatsoever. Are they serving the national needs as expected of them? Even the BBC London came out hourly with news of the Harun affair.

The Harun Affair

6th March, 1978

When I visited Datuk Harun at his house, there was a large crowd of Pemuda who, I could see, were certainly overcome by the events of the day. It was written all over their faces – their concern for Datuk Harun and their determination to prevent at all costs his incarceration for six years.

They thought I was the man who could help and in their efforts to obtain my co-operation they glorified and praised me, in particular my early successes as Father of Independence and Prime Minister of this country. They pinned their hopes completely on me to save Harun from undergoing imprisonment. This, I made clear, I could not do.

According to the Pemuda, Datuk Harun has done so much for them, so much for the State of Selangor and so much for UMNO. Whatever wrong he might have done was all because of

UMNO I could read what they had in mind. It was UMNO which gave him the power, which led him into doing things which he would not have done otherwise, i.e. in normal circumstances.

The Government at the time allowed him so much freedom to do what he liked, almost encouraged him to do all this. The money that was used to finance the Muhammad Ali fight was taken with the knowledge and connivance of those in authority at the time. They knew that the fight would bring fame to this country and project the good image of Malaysia abroad and they allowed him to borrow the money from Bank Rakyat. On this charge therefore some others should have been brought in and joined in with him, Datuk Mansor and Ismail Din. It was for this reason that they (Pemuda) made a plea for a pardon.

Plausible as their reason may appear, this fact was never brought up in court. Everyone of those charged preferred to remain silent so it is rather late in the day for them to bring it up now.

The law must take its course and I made it clear to them that they were under oath to defend the law and Constitution of this country for it must be remembered that when I stood, as head of UMNO and the Alliance, on the platform on August 31, 1957 to declare independence for this country. My oath on that day was: "... I, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra ibni

Al-marhum Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah, Prime Minister, Persekutuan Tanah Melayu, hereby proclaim and declare on behalf of the people of the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu comprising with God's blessing shall be forever a sovereign, democratic and independent State founded upon the principles of liberty and justice and ever seeking the welfare and happiness of its people and maintenance of a just peace among all nations."

They are duty bound therefore to hand Datuk Harun over to the courts. The duty of UMNO, as the party in power, is to uphold law and order and maintain peace at all costs. Harun's case had gone, I repeat, from court to court, until it reached the Privy Council. Any evasion of justice would make a mockery of our law and this might well lead to a breach of peace. UMNO members must accept the court's decision and Datuk Harun must serve his sentence.

I noticed that three-quarters of those present were visibly affected by what I said, but agreed with me nevertheless. I was able to enter Datuk Harun's room in which he was "gated". I could not help being overcome by the show of loyalty and love for Datuk Harun by all. But I told them that if they did not obey the law, then this country would go to the dogs for UMNO is the custodian, with its many partners, of the liberty and justice and the charter of the nations.

After things had cooled down a bit I asked Datuk Harun to change and come to my house just to reduce the tension. They agreed, but when we came downstairs those who were ignorant of what had gone on inside refused to allow Datuk Harun to leave. So I had to tell them they must trust me. And so it was that he was allowed to leave the house. I am glad that he has surrendered himself, like a good sportsman that he is, to the police without a fuss. It would have been sad indeed if force had to be used by the police to take him into custody.

To quote Tun Suffian, the Lord President: "... it would be useless if the court allows his supporters to prevent him from going to jail as this would contravene the rule of law of the country." The Lord President pointed out that Datuk Harun had committed a serious offence. Tun Suffian added: "Over the past week the newspapers were full of what was happening to Datuk Harun, but there was no mention of the offences. It is important that the public be reminded of what he was found guilty." And he mentioned the offences of which he had been convicted by the court, the case of misappropriation of Bank Rakyat's money and corruptly accepting money from the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank. Tun Suffian further said: "... the law cannot be changed by anybody. If it can, then the courts will be completely useless - criminals and gangsters

will rule and nobody will be safe . . . there will be no law and order."

The laws of the country are made by the Government and most of the people in the Government belong to UMNO. As such the people who made the law should abide by them. The action taken by Selangor UMNO Youth was a breach of the rule of law and it brought great shame to the Malay community.

The Star of March 2, headlined "It's all over", said: "Datuk Harun Idris walked quietly out of his house and gave himself up to the police at 5.30a.m. today after a week of tension in which his UMNO Youth prevented him from going to prison. Tension in the capital immediately ceased after news of his surrender spread. And the city returned to normal life after a night of wild rumours. Shops and offices had closed early yesterday after the Federal Court ordered Datuk Harun's arrest. Traffic returned to normal in Kuala Lumpur . . ."

I am quoting this to show how much the people of this country value peace and good order during the tense period when rumours were rife that trouble would break out. The people on their own accord stored up provisions in their houses and kept indoors. If the Youth had been lawless and were roaming the streets and shouting slogans and brandishing sticks and other lethal weapons or throwing stones at police stations and shops in defiance of the law, what then?

But no, they kept indoors and those who were concerned with Datuk Harun kept themselves inside Datuk Harun's house. This speaks a great deal of the good conduct of the people of the country as a whole. The disciplined opposition to authority gives us plenty of hope for a good future, for this country. The people of whatever racial origin have realised that our duty is to uphold the Constitution and "that with God's blessing, a sovereign democratic and independent State founded upon the principles of liberty and justice and ever seeking the welfare and happiness of its people and maintenance of a just peace", must be upheld at all costs.

So it was that the whole concern of the past week came to a close without any ugly incident and it was a real relief to me and to all good citizens that "all's well that ends well".

However, I would like to say in answer to the Lord President, that though I did not say in so many words, I did infer to offences committed by Datuk Harun in these words, "that he must serve his sentence as his offences are well-known to all."

He made it easy for the authorities when he surrendered himself and obviously he must have persuaded all the Youth to return home. For this I must commend him warm-heartedly. UMNO, as a party will no doubt suffer a jolt because of this case, but what else can be done? No man is above the law except of course the

Heads of State. But to say that Harun should not go to prison is wrong. Many of them are still under an illusion that a man of Harun's calibre should not be made to undergo a prison sentence. As Lord President Suffian has said there will be disorder and lawlessness in the country if such were the case.

Datuk Senu in his statement to the press on Friday, March 3, said "the party's strength is also not adversely affected but instead had been consolidated following Datuk Harun's surrender to the authorities. UMNO's unity is not in the least affected by the latest development." I would have liked to share his views but I am afraid at this moment things look pretty dark, for UMNO of Selangor feels sore over the Harun affair. This despair can last for some time, how long I don't know, and how many UMNO Youth throughout the country associate themselves with the emotion of the Youth of Selangor is hard to say. It is my hope that, as has been often said, that time cures all, and it will be so in this case. UMNO must, for the sake of this country, stand united.

The Race Of UMNO's No. 2

25th May, 1981

The whole country looks rather anxiously to the UMNO general meeting which will take place on June 26 for on that day the assembly will decide as to who will succeed Datuk Hussein Onn as Prime Minister and who will be the Deputy Prime Minister. The two contestants for the post of Deputy President are Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah and Datuk Musa Hitam. There do not appear to be any other likely contenders for the post of UMNO President so Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir will automatically succeed Datuk Hussein Onn.

No doubt certain feelings of uneasiness exist because of Dr. Mahathir's past record in UMNO which suggest that he was inclined to look unfavourably at others. In addition he has also written a book which has been banned – and because of that many people took the trouble to read it, so what was written in the book is

known to many.

He was chosen, I presume, as deputy by Datuk Hussein Onn at the request of Tun Abdul Razak on his death bed. Since then, Dr. Mahathir has been Deputy Prime Minister and has acquitted himself well. His views have changed so much that one can see that he has become attuned to conditions of life in this country. He has become impartial towards all and appears to know that the well-being and safety of this country inevitably depends on the good understanding, goodwill and friendship among people of all races and creeds.

Most people in their private lives may have feelings and sentiments and prejudices of their own but immediately upon assuming positions of responsibility, their outlook in life automatically changes. As soon as Dr. Mahathir became the Deputy Prime Minister he knew he must put behind him all sentiments and personal feelings and must bend his mind to the will and wishes of the people if he values the peace, security and prosperity of the country. There should be no feelings of uneasiness as to his ability and capability to take over the all-important post of Prime Minister of Malaysia. It will be safe for all and nobody need lose any sleep over his appointment as Prime Minister.

In the twilight of my life as the executive Head of the State, I was accused of being pro that and pro this because of my broad-based policy and because of my conviction that this

country could never be safe unless the people were conscious of their duty towards one another. This was the winning factor in our pursuit and struggle for independence.

In the pre-*Merdeka* days the British were confident that the people in this country could never get together, so much so that the British Resident of Perak, Mr. Cator, said in a pamphlet written after his retirement, "Never will I see the day when either Datuk Onn or Tunku Abdul Rahman will be Prime Minister of this country."

We had to win over the Chinese and Indians to our cause. To them there was no knowing what would happen if the Malays took over power in this country for under British rule they had enjoyed so much peace, prosperity and happiness. Their well-being was safe guarded but what guarantee was there that the situation would continue if the Malays took over? Would there be the same consideration for them?

The Rulers who had enjoyed sovereignty and prestige under the British rule were equally concerned. After independence they had seen how many thrones in India, Pakistan and Indonesia had toppled. What would be their fate if the British left? Would the people accept them? They felt that they would be at the mercy of the Malay extremists.

The general pre-*Merdeka* feeling was that this country would go the way of our neigh-

bours, from prosperity to poverty, from happiness to sadness and from peace to violence. Even Datuk Onn, the founder of UMNO and a great Malay leader, had shared the views of the Rulers and others against complete independence. According to some, his judgment was influenced by the British political genius, the late Mr. Malcolm MacDonald. So the task of nation-building appeared formidable. Nevertheless, the people's minds were made up, so the Malays together with the Chinese and Indians joined hands and went full-tilt for independence and we got it, thanks be to God.

I gave the assurance that UMNO, the MCA and MIC would honour our pledges and now after twenty years of independence, Malaysia has become a little kingdom of bliss, a haven of peace and a paradise for all. The country has now won world-wide acclaim as a stable, viable, peaceful and progressive nation.

Whoever comes now as Prime Minister must continue to carry on the good work done by those before him. I have had the opportunity to witness the six Rulers succeeding to the throne one after another. Now I am witnessing the third Prime Minister going out of office and the fourth one succeeding him. As for me, I roll along, like 'Old Man River', watching how others sweat and strain in their quest for Malaysia's peace and well-being as a nation of many races.

The two who will be contesting for the post

of Deputy President of UMNO will be fighting fairly to win. Whoever wins and becomes the Deputy President will automatically become the second most important man in this nation's hierarchy.

The two men, Tengku Razaleigh and Datuk Musa Hitam, are different in character. Tengku Razaleigh is a member of a ruling house and is affable, sociable and approachable and to the conservative Malays he is their first choice. He joined UMNO in 1961 on his return from London and he was the man who led the successful fight against Party Islam in Kelantan which led to the over-throw of the Government of Party Islam after many years of political dominance in the State. He became a member of the Supreme Council in 1963 and was elected UMNO Vice-President in 1973. On March 5, 1976 he became Finance Minister.

Looking at the appointment in national terms, he would be the most popular choice of the people of other races as well. The campaign to choose the deputy will be carried out extensively and intensively until the day of the general meeting. The easiest people to lead are the Malays but at the same time they are prone to listen to and believe in gossip and smearing-campaigns. As Minister of Finance, Tengku Razaleigh has made available for the use of Malays thousands of millions of dollars. He is inclined to be generous and has paid out lots of money for building *suraus*, mosques, re-

ligious schools and other *kampung* projects. He has never refused any requests for money when he visited the rural areas.

He is unlike his predecessor, Tun Tan Siew Sin, who was tightfisted. On one occasion Tun Tan asked for leave to go abroad for a holiday or to attend a conference, I can't quite remember. "Siew Sin, you can go", I said. "I will take over your portfolio in your absence." He remained quiet for some time and then came out with the reply, "I withdraw my request for leave, Tunku." I asked him why, and he said, "If I go away and hand over my portfolio to you, the Treasury coffers will be empty when I return."

The National Unit Trust Fund (Amanah Saham Nasional) recently launched is to give investment benefits to the Malays, particularly to the poor ones. This stands to Tengku Razaleigh's credit but in listening to gossip, the Malays might easily have overlooked this. I was at one time a popular man and considered a good man. Then somebody suggested I was a big bad wolf and so I became one but now the wolf's clothing has been shed; I am a normal man again.

Now we come to Datuk Musa Hitam, the other candidate. He is serving his first term as Vice-President. A well-liked man and intelligent, he can sway listeners with his sweet words and flow of language for he is a good speaker. As Minister of Education, he moved about to see

for himself everything that goes on in the schools. He made himself accessible to teachers and listened to their tales of woe and there is no end to them. He revised the primary school syllabus and is planning to improve the standard of education in the country.

When I was away in Jeddah, the Tunku Abdul Rahman Foundation which was created to give help to the poor students, was shelved for many years. Now Datuk Musa Hitam has brought it out at my request and has made use of the funds to help needy students. It has even aided my old college, St Catherines, Cambridge, with an award of a scholarship for Commonwealth students. He has also at my request agreed to donate \$100,000 towards the Prince of Songkhla University.

He was Executive Secretary of UMNO in 1972 and became Deputy Head of UMNO Youth when Datuk Harun was the leader. He was appointed Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry under Datuk Hussein Onn and afterwards he became Minister of Primary Industries when Datuk Hussein Onn was the Prime Minister. Now he is the Minister of Education. He has been associated with the UMNO movement all the time and was at one time considered a leftist. He has mellowed down a lot with the experience gained as a Cabinet Minister. Conservative Malays still think that both Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir and Datuk Musa Hitam are inclined towards the left.

While Tengku Razaleigh fills the pockets of the Malays as Minister of Finance, Datuk Musa Hitam fills their heads with knowledge as Minister of Education. People have to choose between the two for this all-important post. Tengku Razaleigh is the more senior of the two, for he has been Vice-President since 1973 while Datuk Musa Hitam had been elected Vice-President at the last general meeting of UMNO in 1978.

Like all contests, one contestant must win and the other must lose, and there are no two ways about it. Whatever happens the loser will still have a chance to run for the post in a future election. It is not right for Tengku Razaleigh to think of retiring should he lose. He is a very useful man and the type of man this country needs. The basic test of one's courage is to take sour defeat as he would the sweet taste of victory. In the meantime anything can happen, for no man can live for all time or know his fate, for God is the sole judge and what man proposes only God disposes.

The news of Datuk Hussein Onn's retirement due to sickness has touched the core of everyone's hearts but we realize his health must not be jeopardized. Heart-trouble is a most serious disease and anything can happen to the sufferer. After such a serious operation it was rather expected that he would take things easy because 'heavy is the head that wears the crown'. A man not in the peak of health can-

not continue to strain himself. His decision to retire, sad as it may seem, is one which he has wisely made.

He is a happy family man and it is only right that he should give consideration to his family. He has worked hard all his life. In the early days of UMNO he was the leader of the Youth and then when he left UMNO he had to toil and sweat hard in order to get admitted to the Bar and on his return practised for a time as a barrister in Skrine & Co.. When UMNO called for his service, he responded and soon took over on Tun Abdul Razak's death as the Prime Minister. He has done his work well and won high praise from everyone.

I can understand how he feels at having to retire at the prime of life. His colleagues, his many friends and admirers and UMNO members would feel naturally lost without him. He will retire however in the knowledge that he has proved himself a man of great integrity, a worthy leader and a man who is very much loved by his people. His name will adorn the pages of our history for all time.

May he have a long life and enjoy his retirement in peace and in happy contentment. May Allah reward him for the services he has rendered his country. Allah bless him.

The front page of the *National Echo* of last Thursday (May 21, 1981) carried the following story; "The UMNO old guards, led by former Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, are

making a bid to stop other leaders who had a hand in toppling Datuk Harun Idris from gaining top positions in next month's party election. Datuk Senu Abdul Rahman, MP for Kubang Pasu Barat (Kuala Kedah) and Encik Mohamed Khir Johari, MP for Kuala Muda, will use Datuk Harun, the former Selangor Menteri Besar, who is serving a six-year jail term for corruption, to stop the opposition. According to UMNO sources, the target of the old guards of the late Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak, etc."

I am hardly able to make out what the writer intends to convey but whatever it is, this story is wicked and mischievous, imputing evil motive without rhyme or reason. It should never have been allowed to soil the pages of any decent newspaper. Nevertheless, the *Echo* gave it a headline and a front page story. I have given up politics and am not using anybody to fight my cause - much less Datuk Harun's. I never had any intention of coming back to politics, and I am happy to live in retirement after twenty years of politics.

Encik Khir Johari has also been accused of conspiracy. He is a sick man and had gone for a serious brain operation, has just come back and is taking a quiet rest to recuperate from his major operation. Now he is charged with trying to put up Datuk Harun against the other candidates for higher posts. Datuk Senu has never mentioned any intention to topple

anyone.

Then, why this smear campaign? Is it because I am trying to help a man who I feel deserves help after four years of imprisonment? This newspaper report is under study by my legal adviser to make sure that no repetition of such trash appears again in public.

The people behind the story didn't want Datuk Harun released for some reason of their own, but you cannot imprison a man for the rest of his life for whatever offence he has committed. He will be released sooner or later and in fairness to him he deserves to be released earlier. That is the reason why I have taken the lead in appealing to the Yang Di Pertuan Agong for a pardon.

Now that the amendments to the Societies Act have been gazetted, Datuk Harun will not be allowed to assume political office until the lapse of five years from the date of his release, unless of course, he obtains an exemption from the Minister of Home Affairs from the provisions of this Act. Whether he will do so or not is not for me to say. All I hope is that he will be pardoned. His freedom will present no danger to anyone.

It's Time To Close Ranks Again

29th June, 1981

I don't remember any UMNO General Assembly which has created as much nation-wide interest as this last one. I don't know whether the tension is good for the party and the country. Which ever the case, it indicated that the members of UMNO are politically conscious and very mature in their thinking and deliberation. They also appeared to be more belligerent.

Preceding the General Assembly, the divisions and branches throughout the country held their own meetings and a number of resolutions were adopted. The resolutions must have been wide-ranging in nature, covering every aspect of political and religious, as well as social and commercial activities in this country. This, to my mind, was a healthy sign of political consciousness in the members.

How does this compare to what we faced in the days when I was President?

The main attention and concern of every UMNO member then was the achievement of Independence. They entrusted the task of winning it to the few leaders and they gave their all out support and made it easy for those leaders to lead them. There are so many leaders now that it is hard to pick the right ones or the best of them. Every one has an equally good claim. The trend of political activity in the old days was concentrated on the fight for Independence and Malay rights, which were so much neglected under colonial rule.

I remember that in our campaign, we talked mostly about Independence and how to achieve it. I remember, too, the day I was called by Sir Gerald Templar, the then High Commissioner of Malaya and was told to talk less about British misrule, and to exercise a little restraint on what I had to say about the British Raj. I said if I were to eulogise British rule, then I might as well give up the struggle for Independence, because the first thing the people would ask me would be that if the British were so good, why then fight for Independence. In fact, that was the opinion of many people at the time.

I was prepared to face the consequences, even to the point of going to prison. I would not be muzzled. It was then that Sir Gerald said that he could send me to prison for what

I had been saying but to do so would make a martyr of me. Sir Gerald was a man of great principle, broad-minded and fair. On the other hand, he could be quite ruthless in the fight against the communists. As an administrator, he showed much understanding. I used to campaign extensively and so when I attended his Executive Council meetings I sometimes brought the wrong papers. On one occasion I spoke on a certain subject and after listening to me attentively Sir Gerald blurted out: "We dealt with that subject last week."

I remember UMNO general meetings of yesterday, first as party leader and Independence fighter, then as Chief Minister and Prime Minister. How we went through the items on the agenda smoothly and peacefully, except when we dealt with the question of *jus soli* where, our partner, the MCA demanded as a price for their co-operation, the privilege of giving every Chinese born in this country citizenship rights. UMNO at first objected, but when convinced that Independence could not be won without Chinese support, they gave in.

The appointment of office-bearers posed no problem in those days. I had been returned every year unopposed and so was Tun Abdul Razak as Deputy President. Only once was Tun Dr. Ismail's name put up as a candidate against Tun Razak for the post of Deputy President. That, I believe, was in the first election and Tun Ismail lost. He took his defeat gamely

and remained as Vice-president until Tun Razak became Prime Minister. He then became the Deputy President of UMNO. However, he died before Tun Razak and never became Prime Minister.

Today, the contest for office-bearers in UMNO has become so extremely keen that not only UMNO members, but members of other political parties and the business community, are interested in the proceedings – even the bookies lay odds on the results.

I have tried to use my good office as an old man of UMNO to persuade, through my weekly column in *The Star*, the contestants for the post of Deputy President to be sporting enough to accept defeat with good grace and to remain in UMNO. The party needs good leaders and both Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah and Datuk Musa Hitam are among the outstanding leaders of the party. It would be a pity if UMNO were to lose either of them.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad has said that “the present contest for Deputy Presidency appeared to have many implications, was very heated and things had been done which should not have been.” He said that “sometimes it appears as though we are fighting with a candidate from a different party.”

Last Wednesday night (June 24), I received many calls telling me that the situation in UMNO was getting out of hand. Charges and counter-charges were being made by the sup-

porters of both contenders. So many things had been said, as stated by Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir, which should not have been said. This had never happened before. If this state of affairs is allowed to continue, it might injure UMNO's prestige and standing as the leading political party in this country. As a result, it might well lose the confidence of the people who have been behind UMNO since its founding.

The cause for all this trouble which I have seen mounting all the years after I left the Government is one amendment of the UMNO Constitution. That amendment was made to provide for elections once in three years; hence election of office-bearers has become a triennial affair. The voters have now to think deeply as to who they should vote to the posts in the party hierarchy. In the old days before the amendment, the election was held annually and so those who lost had not long to wait to try their luck again.

This year, the election fever has reached the height of intensity never experienced before with no holds barred in an attempt to win places in the party's top posts. It will become even more serious in future elections. To prevent the situation from worsening, the position should revert back to what it was before. UMNO must stand united, otherwise its strength will dissipate and the power which it has held all these years will vanish.

The business people of course are concerned whether there will be a change in the holder of the post of Finance Minister. It is immaterial as, I told them, whoever the Minister is, it is his duty to toe the party line. Nevertheless, they still appear uneasy. The Prime Minister, as usual, said nothing. That, as I said before, is his way of tackling a problem which he says would resolve itself amicably and therefore, the less said about it the better. He may be right again. Let's hope he is.

Many old politicians share his view, for according to them, if they interfered they will only get their fingers burnt. Long-standing UMNO members are visibly worried and feel that this sort of antagonism within the party has gone too far. The election has been held. I have never seen the likes of it. So many people were present that I had to have the help of young members to push my way into the ante-room of the hotel to wait for Datuk Hussein Onn. When Datuk Hussein arrived he too had to jostle his way into the room.

Some were squatting on the floor, others were blocking the passage ways for they could not get in as the hall was already filled to capacity. They came to see Datuk Hussein and to hear his farewell speech. "I am leaving", he said, "because my health would not permit me to carry on." They also came to see who would be voted Deputy President. For Datuk Hussein, it was a sad farewell. Whatever faults

he may have, he was a honest and dedicated leader. May he live long and enjoy life with his family to the end of his days.

He has left the top-most post of our country, and he will be happy to know that he has also left a glorious name. He will go down in history as one of this country's greatest sons and patriots.

The other important item on the programme during the General Assembly was the choice of Deputy President. It was Datuk Musa who won it. Then came the choice of three Vice Presidents: Encik Ghaffar Baba, Datuk Harun Idris and Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen. What must have been a surprise to many was the choice of Datuk Harun as Vice President while he is still serving his sentence in prison not for a political offence but a criminal one. This surely is unprecedented in the history of an election in the democratic world.

However, I offer my warmest congratulations to the successful candidates, in particular to Datuk Musa who has won the election by a big majority and has automatically become Deputy Prime Minister. He has shown his mettle and deserves support. I also offer my congratulations to Encik Ghaffar Baba who continues to enjoy the confidence of UMNO members and also Datuk Harun and Tengku Rithauddeen.

Tengku Razaleigh may not have received a sufficient number of votes to win. But UM-

NO members and the Malays must appreciate his great service to the party and the country. He has, on his own initiative, collected money and built a monument for UMNO which will stand for all times as the biggest party headquarters in the world. It symbolises UMNO's strength and solidarity as the premier political party in Malaysia.

Tengku Razaleigh won for UMNO Kelantan State which had previously been the stronghold of the Opposition for longer than one cares to remember. He paid out money to help lift the Malays from social and economic backwardness. He built mosques, *suraus* and religious schools, All this he did without offending the other communities. Though UMNO members have "rejected" him, they must not forget him and his great work for UMNO. His community may have overlooked him but Allah will surely shower His blessings on him.

In connection with the new UMNO headquarters, I must mention the donation made by Sabah through its Chief Minister, Datuk Harris Salleh. Datuk Harris handed over to the head of the party, Datuk Hussein, a cheque for two and a half million ringgit as part payment of the ten million ringgit promised as Sabah's donation for the headquarters. This is indeed a most generous gift and the biggest single donation received by UMNO. Well done Datuk Harris and UMNO will remember this generous gift for all time.

I pray that UMNO members will honour its past, its good name and close ranks once more for the good of the party. The tension the election had created, will no doubt settle but the consequences will remain for a long time. The UMNO voters have made their choice. All we can do is to ask the candidates for the post of Deputy President to forget about the whole business of election tactics. The party requires both men to continue as loyal members; they should heed the members' wishes. That's easier said than done. Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir has said that both men will continue to serve the Government. Let's hope that it is so.

The meeting has ended and so until the next one, let all of them join together for the good of the party. Those who were less successful might have to swallow the bitter pill but let them accept their defeat with courage and fortitude for "he who fights today will surely live to fight another day."

UMNO Must Stay United

9th May, 1983

The Prime Minister mentioned with some concern of the existence of cliques within the UMNO party with some members supporting one leader against another. This tends to weaken the party and in the end might even break up the party itself. No one in the country would want this to happen for UMNO is the principal partner of the Barisan Nasional and the fount of the nation's solidarity, peace and well-being.

Members of UMNO should take heed of what the Prime Minister has said. In fact it is the bounden duty of UMNO members to give loyal and dedicated service to the party and to the nation. They will remember that it was UMNO which broke up the Malayan Union and it was UMNO which formed the Alliance and won independence for this country. I would like to see UMNO continue to give the

lead with good example to the other members of the Barisan Nasional. They must avoid at all costs cliques and groupings within the party. During election time, it is only to be expected that members will take sides and cast their votes for the candidate of their choice.

However, since the vote has been cast and the election over, they must re-form into one solid whole. In this way, members can hold their peace for the honour and well-being of the premier political party. Unfortunately, what the Prime Minister has said appears to be only too true. There seem to be groups within UMNO which support one leader against another and this goes down the line in the States, divisions and branches of UMNO. This rivalry even led to the death of an UMNO leader in a State. This is a very serious matter and before the situation deteriorates further, UMNO members must be advised and warned and be educated to take their places as good and loyal party members.

I took over leadership of UMNO at the time when Dato Onn left due to differences he had with the party. He had proposed that UMNO's membership should be opened to all Malaysians, irrespective of ethnic groups but rightly UMNO opposed him on the ground that UMNO was a Malay party. Members were however not averse to working closely with others. To admit others as members would be contrary to the constitution of UMNO. So it was that Dato

Onn left the party and formed the Independence of Malaya Party.

When I took over I made it clear that UMNO must remain a Malay party but must be willing and ready to close ranks and make a political alliance with the other Malayan parties. So it was that the Alliance with the Chinese under the MCA, and then later with the Indians under the MIC, was formed. This Alliance worked wonders creating understanding and goodwill among the people of different races loyal to this country and finally with that independence was won.

With independence poor kampung Malays were well served for the first time by the Government. The business-minded Chinese and others were given opportunities in business. All doubts as to the value of independence disappeared. Any break-up in the individual party at any time will cause the disintegration of the Alliance and bring disaster to the country.

In the 1959 election when the MCA decided to leave the Alliance and fight on its own, the remaining members rallied under Tun Tan Siew Sin. I declared that even if there were three MCA members left, I would still regard the MCA as a member of the Alliance. In the election that followed, we won landslide victory with the MCA winning almost all the seats allotted them. The MCA which broke away from the Alliance got the beating of its life with hardly any support from the Chinese.

UMNO as a political party cannot be expected to remain as it was in those early days. It has become such a big and important political party that its members sometimes get out of hand. This is only to be expected. Everybody naturally is scrambling for important places in the party hierarchy to gain seats in the State Councils, Parliament and Senate. All these appointments carry with them a tidy remuneration. So it is timely for the Prime Minister to call a halt to these bickerings and manoeuvring for positions.

There is another thing I used to do in order to make ourselves available to the members and that was to make the Prime Minister easily available for contact and consultation with the UMNO leaders. I used to have an open-house whereby my colleagues or high government officials and others could come and discuss important party and state matters over lunch. Then I had only 13 members in the Cabinet and few heads of Government and known leaders of the party. But today the number has increased by leaps and bounds and this would make an open-house discussion impossible.

Perhaps this might be arranged in some other way whereby the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister could have discussions with officials, other Ministers and party leaders outside of office hours.

There is also another matter which I would like to see taking place and that is to hold fre-

quent meetings among Barisan Nasional leaders; in other words close rapport between the leaders of the Barisan Nasional. In the old days, it was easier to do that as the members were not so numerous. We used to meet in my house for dinner for a chit chat or for cocktail. Now there are so many restrictions and inhibitions that they find it difficult to get together. Anyway for the Muslims they could have orange and other soft drinks while others could drink anything they like, so long as they don't try and drink one another under the table, they should be encouraged to meet often at private meetings. Public and official get-togethers are not quite the same. They do not give opportunity for free discussions.

When the Alliance was first formed, we used to meet at a moment's notice whenever possible and most times at the Miners Club. UMNO had no club house or a mess where we could get together as UMNO could not afford it. I might say the battle for Malaya's independence was won within the four walls of the Miners Club.

Coming back to UMNO, it is a Malay party. The characteristic of the Malays is to follow the age old custom of having leaders at all levels of the society – in the mosques, kampungs, districts, provinces and states. In fact, any where, any place where they congregate they would have leaders. Malays will stick to their leader until another leader takes over. Dato

Onn was the first leader. When he left I took over, then followed by Tun Razak, Tun Hussein and now Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir, who no doubt will be "Tun" later on. But while he is the leader, the members will invariably remain obedient to him.

I have always said that it is easy to be a leader of the Malays because they are loyal to the leader and the only thing that is required of a leader is, as I said, to be true to the flock. When a new leader decides to take over, factions and dissension will follow until settled through the ballot box. For the good of the country UMNO must remain united for all time and so must the Barisan Nasional.

The Deputy Prime Minister's Post: Is It Still Necessary

29th August, 1983

The Prime Minister's remark on the choice of his deputy has caused a furore among some UMNO members who quite rightly felt that it was unbecoming for the head of the party to pass such a remark as it tended to split the party and showed favour for one as against the other. In my opinion, however, such a statement has not come too soon. It must come sooner or later and it was just as well that he said it, however unpleasant it might sound to the ears of UMNO members.

The appointment of Deputy Prime Minister had occupied my mind and disturbed my conscience for quite a long time, but I had been afraid to do anything or say anything about it as I felt that UMNO members might misunderstand my purpose if I had objected to it. If one looks at it in a practical manner, very few

countries make provision for a Deputy Prime Minister. I had introduced it for reasons of exigency, for it was made at the time when I was Prime Minister and this country was undergoing a very serious state of emergency with the communists trying to topple the Government on one hand, and on the other, the Indonesians trying to crush this nation, while the Philippines lay claim at the same time on Sabah.

So, in such a delicate situation, I had to think of how best to ensure the continuity of peace and good government in this country. If anything were to happen to me, there might have been a breakdown in the administration and that would have had very serious consequences on the nation's well-being. Therefore, I decided to appoint a deputy to take over without resorting to delaying tactics if anything were to happen to me.

In those days I had to campaign extensively, travelling up and down the country at odd hours of the day and night, campaigning against the communists, against Sukarno and against the Philippines. Earlier on, I had to campaign against the British for independence of this country, which meant that I had to go up and down the country to instil the fervour of patriotism and independence in the people. I had to undertake hazardous journeys at great risk to my personal safety from time to time in the course of my duty. Under such circum-

stances, I had no choice but to appoint a Deputy President of UMNO to succeed me should I become incapacitated through unforeseen circumstances. This "Deputy" system continued right from the day of our struggle for independence to the 1955 election to this day.

In other words, I took office at a time when this country faced a serious threat to its very existence such as never before experienced in its history. I had no choice but to create the post of Deputy Prime Minister. The time came when we cleared our obstacles and the country began to enjoy independence and peace and the matter of the appointment of DPM crept to my mind again.

How do I look at it now? That was in 1966. If I had abolished it, people might have said that I was determined to run this country for the rest of my life as the Prime Minister. Like it or not, I had to carry on with it, and so this appointment of DPM has remained to this day. Its implication has not surfaced before.

Once at the residency, Khalid Awang Osman, the former High Commissioner to India, mentioned in front of Tun Razak that he (Razak) would have had to wait for a long time before he could become the Prime Minister. I could see the shocked surprise on the face of Tun Razak. As it happened, after that day I noticed his attitude took a change. So I was quick to declare openly that when my nephew, Sultan Halim Shah of Kedah took over as the

Yang Di Pertuan Agong, I would leave, and that would be another year or so. This would give the assurance that it was not my intention to hold on to my post as Prime Minister for long.

The younger people, however, did not seem satisfied. Factions began to rear their ugly heads after the May 13 outbreak of violence but I stayed on as I had said I would, until the Sultan of Kedah became the Agong. Tun Razak and I got on very well together and I had seen to it that he was given plenty of prestige and responsibility. In 1959 I resigned to campaign and he took over as Prime Minister.

When fighting for independence, I set my sights only on it and Allah is my witness. I didn't give much thought to being Prime Minister of Malaya, if such was to be my good fortune then it had to be as a gift from God. My mind was on winning glory for Malaya, my country – the object of my undivided loyalty. When General Templer pulled me up on something I had said about Britain, I told him he was free to put me in. Then he blurted out: "Why should I make you a martyr?"

A change unhappily took place in the days before my retirement, which has left a bitter memory in my mind and a bitter taste in my mouth. It was also rumoured that Tun Hussein had been unhappy over some small matter which took place in his absence abroad and this eventually led to his retirement. At least

I think I am right in saying this, though he said he was resigning on account of ill health, but he appeared to be healthy at least from his appearance today.

The two Ms appear to click well and let's hope that such a happy relationship will continue for all time, but I still feel that the post of Deputy Prime Minister should receive the attention of the UMNO assembly and a study should be made as to whether it is necessary to continue with it.

The need to maintain the solidarity of UMNO members has given room for thinking the way I do. So I pray that a split in the party will not occur because UMNO is a pillar of strength in this country's well-being and its strength and unity must be able to withstand any friction from within the party.

The time has come for the UMNO leaders to study this situation without prejudice and with all impartiality, honesty and sincerity, and, as I said earlier, to decide whether there is a further need for the appointment of a Deputy Prime Minister. The Prime Minister should be allowed to appoint whom he likes to act for him. In his absence from office, any one of the Vice-Presidents of UMNO can fill the vacuum, or else just keep the appointment of Deputy President of UMNO going without appointing a DPM.

The appointment of Deputy President of UMNO at its last election of office bearers has

unfortunately caused division among the members. It is not serious, but nobody can deny that this might happen again. It had not happened before because there had been no other contender for the post of Deputy President of UMNO in the past. There were no hard feelings shown when the appointment was finally decided, so they said, but it was there, and will remain an important issue because the Deputy President of UMNO becomes the Deputy Prime Minister and he will succeed the Prime Minister, as Tun Razak had succeeded me, Tun Hussein succeeded Tun Razak and Dr. Mahathir succeeded Tun Hussein.

These were Deputy Prime Ministers who automatically took over as Prime Ministers. Every political man would have, as his ultimate ambition, the desire some day to be the Prime Minister.

In a democratic country with a democratic system of government, the post of successor to the PM should be left open. When the PM retires or dies or vacates his office, the party meets to appoint the next man, the man who enjoys the confidence of the party most. So while the leader of the party remains as head of the Government, the loyalty of the party members is directly given to him and not to any other man, and this will ensure that the collective responsibility of the party would remain intact.

The only other state which has a DPM is

Singapore, but whether Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister has the same significance and importance as Malaysia's is the question because Mr. Lee Kuan Yew had survived one other deputy. He has now two deputies – Dr. Goh Keng Swee and S. Rajaratnam.

But our PM cannot do this because the DPM is appointed by the UMNO General Assembly. What it means, therefore, is that the UMNO assembly appoints the PM as well as his successor. This is not done elsewhere, at least in countries which practice parliamentary democracy.

How long can this system hold good? Something untoward may happen. After all we are only human. One thing that we want to be sure is that UMNO must remain strong and united for all time. Allah be praised.

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ISLAM

In Malaysia the influence of Islam on the Malays is very strong. Historically, this identification with Islam can be traced back to the days of the Melaka kingdom in the early fifteenth century. During the period of British rule, Islam maintained its influence among the people. It was agreed that while the British controlled administration, Islam and Malay customs would remain under the jurisdiction of the Sultans. The vast majority of the Malays are Muslims of the tolerant Sunni sect. In the villages the women do not veil their faces and often own houses. They are also the guardians of village rituals which sometimes show traces of earlier Hindu or animistic influences.

In the 1970's and early 1980's, international developments, particularly in the Middle East, encouraged a wave of revivalism among Malaysian Muslims. The proliferation of new Islamic groups caught both UMNO and PAS by surprise. Neither party was able to harness these organizations for their own purposes. Some

even became strong enough to challenge the influence of legitimate organisations such as PERKIM – an Islamic welfare body led by the Tunku. Other dakwah (missionary) groups developed their own communities where Islamic rituals were strictly observed. Many of these organizations frightened non-Malays by their support for proposals that Malaysia became an Islamic state in which existing Muslim laws would apply to non-Muslims as well.

This section sets out the Tunku's views on Islam, its application in the Malaysian context, and his concern for the plight of fellow Muslims in other parts of the world.

Among the issues he takes up in the following pages is the question of Muslim refugees in Sabah who have come from the southern states of the Philippines. "While this struggle for survival of the Muslims in the Philippines is still going on," he said, "it must be expected that they would hope to find refuge somewhere, for no man can go on struggling under such adverse conditions for many, many years." He expresses satisfaction with the way Tun Mustapha (Sabah's former Chief Minister) helped the refugees and goes on to suggest that the problem could only be resolved if the Philippine government gave the Muslims Home Rule.

"Religions", he argues, "are created by God to bring peace and human dignity to man, and the Muslim religion is one which creates a bro-

therhood which is deep-seated and strongly embedded in their bodies and souls. Why should the government of the Philippines deny these people their right as citizens of their country, the full liberty to worship and practise their religion?"

For the Tunku, Muslim brotherhood transcends racial boundaries. In another article the Tunku tells of his attempts to persuade the government to give Islamic converts the same privileges as those enjoyed by Malays. In separate articles published in 1975 and 1978 the Tunku argues that new converts face serious problems. "There are many Chinese who, when they become Muslims, lose the society of their own people and family. In some cases they lose their jobs; or they are ridiculed so much that they are forced to quit their jobs."

The Tunku also expresses his intolerance towards Muslims who have no interest in social welfare except to find ways of enhancing punishments for *khalwat* (close proximity between the sexes) and adultery. In one article he singles out the activities of the Religious Affairs Department of PAS in Kedah for particular attention in this matter. In yet another article he relates the story of a 104 year old man who pleaded guilty to a charge of *khalwat* and was fined \$100 or one month's imprisonment. "Whether or not the old man's plea of being guilty arose out of his own sense of guilt or from a desire to boast of his prowess," said

the Tunku, "it was unkind of the people involved to make this case an example. After all, he had reached the age when such pleasure is often denied to a person. Why not leave him alone, for he has little to live for and there is not much left of his life?"

In October 1980, the nation was shocked to learn that some 20 Muslim fanatics, dressed in white and carrying swords, attacked the police station in Batu Pahat. They apparently believed that their actions were blessed by God and would precipitate an Islamic fundamentalist revolution. In an article published soon after the incident the Tunku criticised the group severely and compared their interests and beliefs with those of Ayatollah Khomeini's regime in Iran. Militant groups in that country, he said, overthrew the Shah and then "started a war of revenge" in which suspects were killed, tortured and imprisoned. The Tunku believed that such fanatical groups, who were willing to fight anyone who did not share their views, existed in every Muslim country. He suggested that the Batu Pahat incident was connected with a revival of the Wahabi movement, a puritanical Islamic sect blamed for the attack on the Great Mosque Al-Haram in Mecca in 1979.

In one article in this selection the Tunku outlines the reasons PERKIM (an Islamic welfare body) was set up and discusses his long-standing association with the organization. In this article, and another published two years

later, he reveals that some groups were trying to oust his close associates in the organisation with false charges that they were Freemasons – an organisation allegedly opposed to Islam. Regarding criticisms made in 1979 that PERKIM was only prepared to help Muslim refugees from Kampuchea, the Tunku explained that helping all the refugees would be beyond PERKIM's resources. Besides, Muslim refugees could be more easily absorbed into Malaysian society.

The Tunku has long been a supporter of uniform Muslim laws in Malaysia. Because different states interpret Islamic laws and practices differently, the result can sometimes be confusion. In 1982, for example, Perak celebrated Hari Raya one day earlier than the rest of the country as a result of the decision of the Sultan. The incident was apparently connected with controversy among the kadis of the various states about the most appropriate method of determining the end of the fasting month. Accepted practice in previous years had been for the Sultan's to make a joint decision which was announced by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong through the keeper of the Rulers Seal.

The Tunku described the decision of the Perak Sultan as setting "a very dangerous precedent and might lend to the breakup of the institution of the Conference of Rulers." He suggested that the Conference of Rulers should be convened to clear up the matter. "The peo-

ple have a right to know where they stand – to obey the Yang Di Pertuan Agong or the Sultan on the celebration of Hari Raya”, he said.

Other articles reprinted here carry similar themes. The Tunku outlines his efforts when he was Prime Minister to unite Muslim nations and points out that, if the states of Malaysia cannot work together for the good of Islam, international Islamic co-operation will seem even more difficult to achieve.

Plight Of The New Muslims Beyond The Fringe After Conversion

18th August, 1975

The resurrection of Malaysian society requires foresight on the part of Government and of all concerned with the well-being of this country at heart. Exhortation alone is not enough. It is very necessary that we must win the hearts and minds of all true Malaysians. Empty words carry no weight, except when accompanied by deeds. Real sincerity of effort must be made, and seem to be so, to do good for the people as a whole. Much money has already been spent by various Goodwill Committees, and gallons of coffee and other refreshments consumed in trying to win over the people to our country's cause, but all to no avail.

From the top of a world of its own the Government continues to send out messages

and promises of good times ahead, but spoiling all by insistent emphasis on bumiputras. It is, of course, right to pursue the policy of helping bumiputras, but they need the help of others as well, otherwise the general objective, the main goal, cannot be fully attained. All the 'bleating' gives non-bumiputras the impression they are foreigners and unwanted, so why should they co-operate?

Let us face facts. All good citizens of this country are Malaysians and, whether we like it or not, they have every right to call this country their home. If an atomic bomb dropped, we would all be wiped out and perish together. If it is intended to help the less fortunate, then at the same time due regard must be paid to the feelings of others. It is everyone's duty to help, but the Government must give the lead.

When we began to think of how our future independence was to be conceived, the colonial power was certain we could never reach that goal, because of the disruptive forces at work, one of these being to play up, and upon, differences between the people of Malaya. This was so evident that a Mr. Cator, a former British Resident Commissioner in Pahang, actually stated in his own handbook that he could not see the day "when either Datuk Onn or Tunku Abdul Rahman will ever be the Prime Minister of Malaya." That was not only his feeling: it was even shared by the Rulers.

Trying to rally forces and win support to help the fight for independence was really hard work. Many sneered at my efforts; some expressed pity for me. Only headstrong and determined men of all races, real fighters for independence, rallied to the cause.

When Malaya was born as a free nation, it was only a child with a lot of teething troubles, but soon the country grew to manhood, showing promise of a great future ahead. Malaya's own multiplicity of racial complexities and prejudices made even more evident how urgent and necessary was the task of building a happy nation. It was essential to quieten down all disruptive elements, but they and their sympathisers continued to cause some outbreaks of trouble here and there. The worst occurred in Kuala Lumpur in 1969, and we all pray that we will never see such a tragic event happening again - Amen!

After that, the violence of May 13 that year, we formed Goodwill Committees everywhere to smooth away any hard feelings that might still remain, and to create a society based on goodwill and understanding among all people whose loyalty lay with Malaysia, and Malaysia, alone. That was what the people felt, wanted and worked for at that time, but today somehow things seem to be turning out quite differently. It is not so much the disruptive forces which cause us concern, but irresponsible people, including some top-level offi-

cers in the Government itself.

Datuk Lee San Choon said: "There is concern that our national programme to eradicate poverty is being undertaken without sufficient attention to the provision that it shall apply to all Malaysians, irrespective of race." That is a serious charge to make against the Government of this country, especially as it comes from a partner in the Coalition. Whatever programme is planned and projected, Malaysians must be careful at all times to be aware that there are others whose presence and rights have to be considered.

I am head of a Muslim Welfare Society, PERKIM, and as such I have to look after the well-being of Muslims, particularly new converts. When more people become Muslims, naturally we are very pleased, and particularly myself. But their conversions create problems because of Government's policy to provide for bumiputras only without any thought being given to those other citizens, who come well within any definition of "being loyal" to Malaysia.

There are many Chinese who, when they become Muslims, lose the society of their own people and family. In some cases, they lose their jobs; or they are ridiculed so much that they are forced to quit their jobs. For these people who become Muslims it is my duty, and that of my organisation, to find employment for them, but I regret to say

we face great hardships in trying to do so. They are not bumiputras; so while they lose jobs which they had as Chinese, they are unable to obtain employment as Muslims.

The religion of Islam gains its strength from the ties of brotherhood of the people of the faith. According to the Prophet, as quoted in so many hadis, one Muslim is brother to another, no matter what his colour or race is. In other words, Islam transcends all barriers of race and colour. So strong was the Prophet on this point that Osameh bin Sharik reported the Messenger of Allah to have said, "Who so goes out to make division among my followers, smite his neck." In other words, such a person should not be considered Muslim - he is better dead than alive.

On independence this country proclaimed Islam as its official religion. We were aware at that time how important religion was in bringing the people of the faith together. We were aware that through generations of foreign domination, the Malays as a race survived many trials and tribulations through their unwavering faith in Islam. And so it was that when we attained independence we gave thanks to Allah in many ways. We built mosques and schools, carried out extensive programmes of teaching the religion in every nook and corner of the country.

In 1967, I started the Mubailegh School in

a small room, and this school developed itself into the present PERKIM. As a result of this society's good work, many people embraced Islam. The success the society has achieved is most creditable, considering that the Mubailegh (missionaries) had to work under very difficult circumstances.

Now that many of these people have embraced Islam, they find themselves in new surroundings, and also a dilemma. Not only are they lost in the society to which they once belonged, and also lost in the society where they now belong – the Muslims. Our duty as Muslims is to help them, and a Muslim Government must absorb them.

I have tried to find jobs for them, but I was informed that these jobs are reserved for bumiputras. I maintain, however, that these people are Malaysians who are born and bred here. Now that they have embraced Islam, surely they are entitled to be recognised as Muslims. But no, the authority concerned interprets the law strictly; they give no regard to new brothers in Islam. This attitude is completely contrary to the teachings of Islam, and against both the injunction of the Holy Prophet and the commands of Allah. Something must be done for these people, especially in a country that proclaims Islam as its official religion.

In a seminar held in Sarawak, and at a subsequent seminar held for non-Govern-

ment religious teachers in Penanti, Province Wellesley, I said I would carry out a lone crusade to fight for these new Muslims, whose cause I will take to the end of my days. If I succeed I will thank the Government for its understanding, and I will give thanks to Allah for His small mercy; if I lose, I will continue to pursue the matter to the end of my life.

In Part X2, the Constitution states that "except as otherwise expressly provided by this Constitution, the qualification for appointment and conditions of service of persons in the public service, other than those mentioned in paragraph (g) of Clause 1, may be regulated by Federal law and, subject to provision of any such law, the Yang Di Pertuan Agong, and the qualifications for appointment and conditions of service of persons in the public service of any State may be regulated by State law and, subject to the provision of any such law by the Ruler or Governor of that State in considering appointment to Federal and State services."

These new converts, born and bred in this country, should be given the same rights as Malays; and so too in regard to land reserved for, or alienated to, Malays or to the natives of the State: the word "Malay" should be defined to include these new converts.

Another matter, which is causing me concern, is the need to provide our people with

the right type of education, bearing in mind that the official language of this new nation is Bahasa Malaysia. At this stage of our development, we cannot afford to do away with the core of higher education, to which every parent or studious boy and girl aspire. So whether we like it or not, the study of Science and Mathematics should be continued in English for a long time – perhaps for many, many years to come.

It is education which helps to build a nation, and if the future of this country is to be safe-guarded, then we must depend on the intellectuals to give their support. The right kind of education is a necessity for the nation. I risked my political career when I stood firm on the issue of making English the second language of this country. I gave all the reasons why it should be, and finally it was accepted. Though I gave my opponents reasons to attack and denounce me, I stood my ground.

Whatever changes are considered necessary for our new nation to achieve progress, careful thought must always be given to how policies and planning are carried out. One wrong move can bring untold harm both to our people and to our country. The people have an unquestionable right to expect that the Government and Members of Parliament they elect, and the officers of the Civil Service, whose salaries they pay, shall, in return

for the confidence and trust they have received, honour the obligations they have to the people, and that means to all the citizens of Malaysia.

PERKIM's Progress

3rd July, 1979

The meeting of the National Council of PERKIM has just come and gone. This time, there was much to be happy about, with the progress PERKIM has made in this year of 1979. The first big success was the \$12 million loan obtained from Libya, free of interest. Then the opening of the kindergarten in Penang, followed by the opening of the Medical Clinic in Alor Star, and another clinic to be opened in Cheras, in addition to the one in Ipoh Road, Kuala Lumpur.

In the meantime, letters have been circulated to all divisions of PERKIM throughout the country, to start looking for land and buildings for the opening of more kindergartens and more clinics. With the money available from the Libyan Loan Fund, so much can be done to show what PERKIM can do to observe the teachings of Islam, some of which are to carry

out welfare and charitable work for the good of our fellowmen. These have now become PERKIM's main objectives.

I am happy to say that all members of PERKIM have shown great devotion to their work, and have given much of their spare time in the service of their fellowmen. Many of them are senior government servants, pensioners, and even a Cabinet Minister, a Judge of the High Court and their wives. Some come from Religious Departments as well, but they all work willingly and happily, and unlike the political movement, PERKIM has no squabbles within its rank and file. There is no material benefit to be gained by working with PERKIM, and therefore there is no question of one member trying to get the better of the other.

There was a danger, however, of that happening once, in the year 1978, when one State group tried to swamp the General Meeting by introducing new members just before the meeting began. The quota of representation is based on one to every 50 members, but all of a sudden, that group introduced many thousands of new members which, if accepted, would give them the right to have control of the voting at the General Meeting. Unfortunately for them, since these new members were not registered at the right time, the excess members were invalidated. That year too, we had a violent campaign against the Freemasons and Rotarians, which descended on us like

a deadly bomb from the Middle-East. According to it anyone who is a Freemason or a Rotarian, or in any way associated with the movement, is considered pro-Israel and anti-Islam. This made a serious impact on our organisation. There might be some members who have been associated with the Freemason and Rotarian movements but we have not given it much thought.

This country has had all such organisations for many years, even before Palestine was thought of, and no one had associated Freemasons and Rotarians with Zionism. How has it come about that in 1978, it became all of a sudden linked with Israel? Rather than complicate matters, our members were asked to keep out of these organisations to save PERKIM from dissolution through enmity with the Arab world.

PERKIM has received a lot of support from Rabita Al-Islam of Saudi Arabia, and from the Arab countries from time to time, and lately, the biggest contribution made to PERKIM was by Libya. So whether the charge that Freemasons and Rotarians are in league with Israel is correct or not, is immaterial. What is most important to us is to keep on good terms with the Arabs. We have done so well so far, so let us keep it that way. Politics is not our line.

PERKIM was formed in 1960, the object of which was to try and propagate Islam in this country. I felt that it was not right somehow

that in a country with a multi-racial society with different cultures and religions, that we should not make an effort to try and reduce the gap of differences among the population. The only way we can do it is to bring about understanding through religion, for this transcends barriers of race, colour and other prejudices. I obtained a piece of land in Maxwell Road, Kuala Lumpur, for the headquarters of PERKIM, but in the meantime I left in 1971 to take up my new appointment as Secretary-General of the Islamic Secretariat. In my absence, those hardy founders of PERKIM, no more than a handful of them, were severely confronted with all kinds of problems, the main ones were lack of interest and money. Not many people took active interest in PERKIM. Even the members themselves were cold towards it. It was reported that at Committee Meetings members were short of a quorum.

On my return, the old gang took courage once again, and we decided to reorganise PERKIM. I told them to put more drive into their work, or else give up PERKIM. This is an organisation which needs much sacrifice, time and money, but which brings no material or worldly advantage to individual members. They cannot expect to get official Government recognition for their work. All they can hope for is God's blessing, and the thanks of their fellowmen who derive benefit from their service.

Drive means to get PERKIM going. So work-

ing on this basic principle, PERKIM has grown from strength to strength. Glory be to God! Thousands of people learn about Islam through PERKIM, and what the religion means, and many took to the religion. That alone is insufficient to make them true Muslims, for the religion demands that those who are Muslims must conform to certain rules and regulations, and perform certain rites, the main ones being to pray, fast, believe in God and His Holy Prophet Mohammed, do pilgrimage, believe in the Holy Koran and His Angels and in Doomsday (Khiamat), and above all look upon one another as brothers and sisters, otherwise there is no difference between Islam and other religions.

Our work, which had taken much of our time, labour and money, was in connection with the rehabilitation of Muslim refugees from Cambodia, where 70,000 Muslims had been driven out of their homes and sought shelter in friendly countries. So they flocked to Thailand, which was unable to do much for them. We took as many as we could, with the help of the Army, accommodated them in tents in Kelantan, and spent whatever funds available to feed and clothe them.

When we came to the end of our tether, the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Sumpatkumar, and members of the Red Crescent in Malaysia, Tunku Mohamed bin Tunku Burhanuddin and Datin Ruby Lee,

were approached for help. After they had visited the camp and saw the work that had been done for the refugees, the UN Commissioner for Refugees immediately contacted the United Nations, and we were paid all expenses incurred and to be incurred. As a result of our work, PERKIM was singled out for mention at the Conference of the United Nations on Human Rights and Care of Refugees in October, 1977.

I quote excerpts of the citation at the ceremony of the Nansen Award won by the Malaysian Red Crescent Society:- "The Malaysian Red Crescent Society has been instrumental in helping hundreds of displaced Khmers to resettle in the State of Kelantan in Malaysia . . . The pioneering efforts of the Malaysian Red Crescent in conjunction with the Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (PERKIM) have clearly demonstrated that the humanitarian problems of displaced persons can at least to some extent be solved on a regional basis"

In a letter to me, His Highness Sadruddin Aga Khan, Chairman of the Human Rights Committee said: "As you know, the Nansen Award 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 displaced Khmer persons in Malaysia, cons-

titutes a major contribution to the success of this operation."

The first batch of refugees has since disappeared, and has become assimilated with the rest of the Malaysian population. Being Muslims, it is not difficult for them to find a new lease of life and new livelihood in this country.

Now there is a further influx of refugees awaiting on the border of Thailand to be saved from the tyranny of their own people, first from Pol Pot, and now from the Heng Samrin regime. We were able to bring in 500 more of the very bad cases that deserve immediate help, but others could not come because of Malaysia's new attitude towards the Vietnamese refugees, and they had been driven back into Cambodia by the Thai army. What happened to them now, God knows.

We were asked why didn't PERKIM take care of others as well. This would be too much for PERKIM. But the problem cannot be tackled and solved in bits and pieces. It must be tackled at the source, and the world must invoke the Charter on Human Rights to bring pressure to bear upon Vietnam for the inhuman crimes against their own people. Until they have done that, this problem would remain unsolved, and the refugee question will pose a very serious threat to peace in South-East Asia.

The next important item of news was the merger of BINA, the Muslim Religious Organi-

sation of Sarawak with PERKIM. We have been waiting for this to happen for so many years now. But this year, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Haji Abdul Rahman Ya'kub took a decision to affiliate with PERKIM. This indeed was a welcomed move, and with USIA already with us, PERKIM will be fully represented by West and East Malaysia.

I have been asked too, why is that I have not formed Pemuda PERKIM? My reply to this is that I dare not as yet undertake the risk of forming the Pemuda because of the danger of the movement getting out of hand. The object of our organisation is to create peace among mankind, and to do all things possible to bridge the gap of differences among the people of Malaysia. The Pemuda may not have the patience nor the foresight to keep within the party's scope of activity – their religious fervour may lead them to acts of extreme fanaticism and this would undo all the good work of PERKIM.

We were supposed to hold a Conference in Kuala Lumpur on the World Muslim Dakwah. The intention was to seek agreement of the Muslim countries to establish a World Dakwah body, with Headquarters preferably in Jeddah. All arrangements had been made for the Conference to take place in May 1978. Unfortunately, however, Pakistan decided to hold one, and this proposal was supported by Saudi Arabia, and so the Conference in Kuala Lum-

pur had to be called off.

The one held in Karachi did not have the desired effect because it made no mention of a World Dakwah body. All it did was to set up Karachi as Asian Headquarters, under the aegis of Rabita Al-Islam of Saudi Arabia. It was obvious to us that a World Dakwah body was not favoured by some of the Muslim countries. So now we are going to satisfy ourselves with holding a Regional Conference for South-East Asian Regional Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

At the same time, we hope that every region of the world will do likewise, and all these regions could meet from time to time in conference, to discuss Islamic affairs, and provide help to the Islamic people.

To sum up: The progress made by PERKIM hitherto has been most encouraging and pleasing. A lot of interest has been shown by those who are non-members, and what is most astounding, is that donations to PERKIM Fund in this country have come from non-Muslims. With their help, I was able to start the building of the Work Centre in Penang, on land donated by the State Government through the kindness of Dr. Lim Chong Eu.

In Kedah, the State Government had donated a building through Datuk Syed Nahar for a kindergarten, and a piece of land which was bought at a reasonable price for the construction of PERKIM Headquarters in Kedah. The Central Government and all the States

have in the past made donations to PERKIM, but for the last two years, only the State of Perlis has given us help, while all the others have withheld their donations. This obviously is an oversight, or perhaps they are under the impression that since we have the support of Saudi Arabia and Libya, we have no further need for their monetary help. That is not true. My colleagues and I have to work hard to collect the money, and this we have to continue doing, and we naturally would welcome help from the Central Government and the States. If friendly Governments give us help we surely must expect our Government to do so.

PERKIM's duty is to serve the interest of Muslims and carry out extensive welfare work. This we can only do within our means, and our income is very limited. I do ask the Central Government and the State Governments to give my appeal their kind consideration.

Khalwat: Is It Outdated?

11th October, 1976

Khalwat is very much in the news since it was reported that an old man of 104 years was charged and sentenced in Bukit Mertajam for the offence. Khalwat is a social evil, an evil which no law or man can stamp out. It just happens everyday and everywhere – in high society, in middle class society and lower class society – but it happens and nobody gives it a serious thought.

It happens in places of business, in factories, in parks, on the beaches, in clubs and in quiet corners at social functions. Thousands commit khalwat, some do so intentionally and some unintentionally, but they all enjoy doing it. But the fact remains that it is loosely defined. When two people are together in close proximity then they are guilty of khalwat under the Muslim law.

Khalwat actually means that they must have

come together with the intention of having sexual intercourse without being legally married. That's to put it bluntly. If a man is found with a women in suspicious circumstances, he can be charged with khalwat. Or if a man is found with a women in some secluded place, he too can be charged with khalwat.

As khalwat is interpreted so loosely, it is easy for anyone who has a grudge against another just to frame him with false witnesses and for the Shariah Court to deal with him as it deems fit. In the recent case in Bukit Mertajam an old man who gave his age as 104 had pleaded guilty to a charge of khalwat with a woman whose age was not given and was fined \$100/- or one month's imprisonment in lieu. The old man was unable to pay the fine and is now serving the sentence. On the other hand, the woman denies the charge and she is to face trial in the Shariah Court soon.

Whether this old man's plea of guilt arose out of his sense of guilt or from his desire to boast of his prowess, it was unkind of the people involved to make this case an example. After all, he has reached the age where such pleasure is often denied to a person. Why not leave him alone, for he has little to live for and there is not much left of life for him.

According to the report, four people including one policeman peeped through the window of the hut and saw the couple allegedly committing the offence. Having satisfied their

curiosity and presumably their fun to see a 104-year old man having intimate relations with a woman, they then burst open the door and arrested them in "flagrante delicto", They were then bundled off to the police station in their confused state of mind, and the old man in his senility found it easy to say "Yes, I am guilty."

But the woman, his partner in khalwat, refused to admit and personally I feel she might be right. If khalwat means what I think it means in this case - it's hard to believe the old man's capability. But whatever it may be, why pick upon him when so many khalwat incidents, are taking place everyday?

There was another case where a man was charged with molesting a girl and he was caught in very compromising circumstances. When examined by a doctor he was certified as impotent. Nevertheless khalwat was clear as he tried to "mess-up" the girl.

The point is should khalwat be treated as a separate offence or should it be lumped up with offence of a like nature that is punishable under the law of the State? The intention in making khalwat an offence is to prevent people of opposite sex from associating with one another that is likely to lead to moral degradation. With the changes that are taking place in society today, it makes this khalwat rather ridiculous because the dividing line between what is khalwat in the real sense, and the free asso-

ciation of the sexes is so thin. So in the case of khalwat the question immediately arises, why is so and so not charged, while in another and in almost similar circumstances the person is charged and punished?

Perhaps this law should be looked into but the civil law never dares to interfere with the religious law, and so perhaps rather than spend time sneaking and spying on what others do, the duty and responsibility of the Religious Affairs Department should teach the young people to be attuned spiritually and morally to a code of conduct pleasing to the society in which we live.

According to the State Religious Department, it is very much concerned over the increase in the number of khalwat cases. The Deputy Public Prosecutor from the Religious Affairs Department, Encik Abdul Talib bin Haji Junid, stated that 120 khalwat cases were reported in the first nine months of the year, out of which 60 per cent involved Muslim girls working in factories. These did not take into account of what is happening in offices and business houses, in street corners, parks, beaches or in all the big towns, in hotels and lodging houses and other out of the way places. If these were taken into account, many more thousand cases would come to light.

This is how, I feel, civilisation has added to our society endless worries. Things that happen today, one would never have dreamed of even

ten years ago. We see Malay girls discarding Malay habits and clothes, and donning see-through blouses and skin-clinging jeans, parading in the streets and big towns without a concern in the world. There are very few sarong kebayas and bajus to be seen in the streets of big towns while the boys display their flowing or kinky locks proudly. It is difficult sometimes to separate the boys from the girls. Their behaviour is almost identical, though boys are somewhat more cocky and offensive. They take their cue from the West and consider it smart to adopt Western ways.

The social reformers in this country are unable to cope with the changes. In fact, nobody bothers to do so. They allow the young people to do just what they like while they content themselves with sermons from the pulpits. When I talk in this way, the young people refer to me as a square. Whatever I am, there are things in the world which I consider are good and there are things which are bad. Every human being is free to make his choice, but being a family man I would naturally like them to make the right choice.

The parents in the cities and towns are very much to blame for what is happening today. When you talk to them they just pass it off as being too much of a trouble to look after the welfare of their own children. In other words, they live for themselves and what happens to their children is not their concern. According

to them, the children are big enough to know what they are doing and they know best. This is a mistake. They must be taught the rights and the wrongs of life and not left to themselves to find out, so that when they take their place in the world, they can decide the way of life best suited to them. But when they are not fully educated to find a niche in human society, the parents are to be blamed for what happens to them when they lose themselves.

In the drug rehabilitation centres, I found that most of the inmates received little or no parental guidance and care, so much so they got mixed up with the wrong people just to seek and find comfort and friendship. They stayed away from home up to the late hours of the night and just returned home to sleep. There's never any dinner or breakfast prepared for them, and so they make their way out and scrounge meals from others. Through this, they got involved in crime, drug addiction and all kinds of loose living.

Talking of the offence of khalwat is to say the least mild. There are more contemptible and unhallowed sins than that. If the Religious Affairs Department aims to take effective action against people for the sin of khalwat, it will have to organise an anti-vice squad to the strength of perhaps the present police force in this country. Even then, it wouldn't be able to put a stop to it, unless the parents are arrested as well. With the progress of civilisation,

I feel that the sins of khalwat and other evils will grow. But at the same time our Religious Affairs Department continues to work on the same old system and apply the same old law as that which prevailed at the time of the Holy Prophet in dealing with them. How then can we manage to contain all these evils?

PERKIM is trying to do what it can to assist in every way possible, and in a very short time it will organise a kind of club, based on the Young Men's Christian Association, hoping to bring youths together in clean, healthy and spiritual surroundings for their own good. But due to lack of funds, PERKIM cannot do much, and the States are reluctant to provide us with the money required for this purpose. Nevertheless an attempt will be made by PERKIM to provide some sort of guidance for these wayward young people on the best way to live and a Centre will soon start in Kuala Lumpur for this purpose. We know we cannot do much but we do hope to do something.

Stand Up And Be Counted

18th July, 1977

I have nothing much to write about this week, in fact nothing at all, until something appeared in the *New Straits Times* on July 12, to wit the decision of the Religious Affairs Department of Kedah Parti Islam urging all State Religious Departments and the National Islamic Affairs Council to amend the Islamic law regarding punishment for adultery and according to the party, it should be "according to the teachings of Islam."

These fanatics pointed out that under the Islamic law, adultery is punishable by stoning the offenders to death, and those guilty of khalwat should be given one hundred strokes of the rotan. There were also other resolutions made by this branch of Parti Islam. They also wanted action to be taken against the much maligned Freemasons. Perhaps they would want all members of Freemasonry to be im-

prisoned for life or banished for good.

Stoning sounds very well but rather out of date in this "atomic and neutron age". Added to this is the fact that we live in a plural and multiracial society where the number of Muslims aggregate only 48 per cent of the whole population. Such a law would be completely out of place here and unacceptable to others and to be a law it must apply to all and sundry. I remember the last time it was applied with all its severity in Saudia Arabia. It was in 1961 when I went there on an official visit. Every effort was made to get the couple concerned to repent and for the wife to return to the estranged husband and avoid the penalty but she was adamant and preferred to die with her lover; in other words, they challenged the authority of the law and so they were stoned to death and paid the extreme penalty.

Since then I have never heard of another case where such a punishment has been imposed. Further, if such a law is passed in this country there might not be enough stones available to cast at the sinners. Then, too, why waste the stones when they could be used for some other good purposes.

The world has changed so much, since adultery was punishable with death by stoning, in this promiscuous and permissive society and people are free to go and do as they like. Girls have to eke out their own livelihood and so find for themselves employment. We find

Malay girls working in the offices, in the factories, in the shops and in fact anywhere and everywhere.

In the golf clubs too we find them working just like the Indian women tending to the grass, the rough and the green in the blazing hot sun. This is something we never saw before but they have to earn a living to maintain their homes and family, otherwise they starve. Unless these people are prevented from going out to work, there is no possibility whatsoever of stopping khalwat or "close proximity" between men and women, and in regard to prostitution it is said to be the oldest profession in the world and no one has been able to stop it then or now.

The next move is for PAS Kedah to ask for the closure of all factories where there are mixed workers, and so will many Government offices have to sack their women employees, followed by business houses and factories. The poor girls will mourn their fate at home or go on the streets as prostitutes to get easy money and diseases.

I have written in my column about the subject of khalwat previously and how ridiculous and meaningless I said such offence has become in the eyes of society. It is even more ridiculous now that the country has become economically and industrially developed, and with that more men and women are expected to turn up for work. How else can the Third

Malaysia Plan be made to work? What I would like to see done is more interest taken in the welfare of workers by MPs. Advice from them will have a very good effect on their conduct and behaviour. This is part of PERKIM's plan and if we can obtain the cooperation of MPs we would be more likely to meet with success.

Stoning of adulterers used to be the fashion and form of punishment in the early Greek and Roman times and in the old days of the Middle East pre-Islamic era, but in the Islamic period the law was tightened in that the offence was required to be proved beyond all reasonable doubt by the evidence of so many witnesses before such punishment could be meted out to the guilty persons. It was obvious even then that the law was unpopular, and in course of time it went out of use and finally replaced by other more civilised laws. It would indeed be most degrading to the Malays when on-lookers of non-Muslim faith would be entertained to a spectacle of Malay men and women tied with their hands to the back and stoned to death. It would be hard too to find a person who has led a sufficiently blameless life to cast the first stone.

I remember an occasion in Parliament when a member, Dr. Tan Chee Khoo, brought up the subject of certain mess or place of enjoyment owned by Members of Parliament. In other words, he accused certain members of the cabinet of straying. I stood up and asked,

"Who among you in this House has not given in to temptation at one time or another?" I recall, the House was silent – you could even have heard a pin drop. Nobody stood up. Then amidst such solemnity, Chee Khoon himself stood up, and the other one to be standing up was myself because I had to stand up in any case having had to put the question. No one else stood up. All of a sudden there was a burst of laughter all round the House, and I quickly sat down and so did Chee Khoon with an air of injured dignity.

It is a waste of time to think of returning to old days. Nobody in a democratic country will accept any law that is completely out of tune with the present state of affairs and trend of present day mood, less still the Malays. Whatever religious law, or whatever law introduced must fit in with the age and time. The time of our Prophet and the time now, is so far apart and so different, and the laws at the time, can never be introduced in toto now in the modern and multi-racial society. It will also discourage others from showing interest in the Muslim religion. It is for us to show how adaptable is our religion to modern life and not out-dated or antiquated as others are inclined to believe.

The last death penalty for an alleged offence of adultery I recall took place in the early 19th century in Hijrah 1244 and it concerned a beautiful lady very well-known in Kedah his-

tory. Mashuri was her name and her beauty incurred the jealousy of the maidens of the Island of Langkawi. She was accused of having an affair with Dramang, a gay Lothario, who used to boast of his conquests with maidens and married women. It must have been one of his boasts which finally led Mashuri and him to the grave.

When Mashuri was formally charged with adultery, she denied it with all vehemence; despite it she was sentenced to death by Sula. This was a most heinous and cruel act of killing ever devised by man – a kris was jammed between the shoulder blade into the heart and stomach. Before she met her death she cursed the island with these words: "For seven generations Langkawi shall be a habitation fit only for the doves and castor trees", which means that Langkawi shall be a waste land. In Malay – "Langkawi akan jadi padang jarak, padang terkukor selama tujuh keturunan."

The curse brought so much disaster to the peaceful island, for, not long after the death of Mashuri the Thais invaded the island in revenge for their defeat at the hands of the people of Langkawi in the recapture of Kota Kuala Muda. They came in the dead of the night and put to the sword all those who came within their reach and devastated the island with fire for miles around. For years nothing flourished on the island, except castor bushes and the doves.

Langkawi came under the spell of Mashuri for seven generations, but it was hard to know what it meant – the seven generations of Rulers or the family of Mashuri or the number of years which make up the seven generations. However, it was a strange experience when I first went there as District Officer. It was eerie to hear the dogs howl instead of barking. The curse brought other misfortunes to the island. Nothing seemed to have prospered there. A European company of Brown and Kennedy started a sardine business as there were plenty of fish there. The business failed and so they sold the one cylinder Thornycroft engine boat to the Government and was used as Government launch. As District Officer I used it for my inspection and picnicking. There was almanite and zerkin factory which were the products of the black sand, a small industry started by a Mr. Marriot. That also failed. The first big marble quarry was started by David, a Jew from Singapore in the pre-war period which also failed.

There was no metal road on the island until I started to build it with the help of voluntary labour. I also built a bridge and a jetty, and finally I searched for the grave of Mashuri and to the best of our knowledge managed to locate the grave. I then built a tomb for her. The work was done by a Chinese contractor, Poh Sin Tong, who, when it came to payment for his work, refused to accept the money.

Incidentally, after sanctifying the grave, I got a promotion as District Officer, Sungei Patani, and Poh Sin Tong went big business in Alor Star and in no time became a rich man, and strange as it may seem the curse was exorcised and Langkawi became free. She died a martyr but imagine how many such martyrs might have been made had such an inhuman punishment been allowed to continue with such a possible miscarriage of justice.

However, coming back to the Kedah branch of Parti Islam, they could be better occupied by giving some of their valuable time to the more urgent needs of our people and help them to better their lot and prospect in life. For instance, yesterday I read of a statement made by the Acting Project Manager of the State Economic Development Corporation who complained that "The SEDC has drawn up a strategy for bumiputras to make full use of the industrial opportunities that are open to them at the Semambu Industrial Estate. The strategy includes facilities for bumiputras to build their own buildings (homes) before they complete their land payments."

There are also shares waiting to be taken up by the Malays and other bumiputras in the many government sponsored projects. None appears interested. It is the duty of Members of Parliament to spend part of their time by going round and educating the people on the value of these projects. They must be encou-

raged to take advantage of the National Economic Policy introduced by the Government for the benefit of bumiputras. The allotment of shares for bumiputras in the companies has not been taken up and yet it is given at great disadvantage to the business concerned. It also encouraged the creation of men of straw who lend their names for the purpose without any financial commitment. All these happenings do little credit to the Malays. On the other hand, we are put to contempt, hatred and ridicule.

The Government is being accused by the racialists of promulgating a policy of discrimination. This helps to add more enemies to the ever-increasing number of anti-Government and anti-Malay forces, and they are as equally dangerous as are the communists. To add to the many problems, Parti Islam has put forward suggestions which will reduce further our image in the eyes of others.

Datuk Harris' Visit To The Philippines: Concern For The Fate Of Fellow Muslims

25th July, 1977

I read with much concern the report appearing in the papers recently and carried in the Editorial of *The Star* of July 20, 1977, to the effect that Sabah's Chief Minister, Datuk Harris Salleh, had had official discussions with President Marcos on:

1. the Philippines claim to Sabah; and
2. the position of the Muslim political refugees in Sabah.

As regards the Philippines' claim to Sabah, this matter was brought up during the time of President Macapagal. It was done on behalf of the heirs of the Sultan of Sulu. I turned it down on the ground that I could not answer for the people of Sabah and for the same reason the Philippines President could not claim

the State for somebody who did not enjoy the power or the sovereign status of a Sultan anymore. In other words, I said how can a stateless nonentity claim a foreign State.

The transfer of Sabah could not give the heirs the sovereign right over the State, to enjoy and to rule, in the name of the Philippines Government when he can no more claim it for himself. It would only make Sabah a colony of the Christian States of the Philippines, whose tolerance in the freedom of religious worship had not been all that just.

I remember at the time of my visit to the Philippines when I raised the question on the absence of a mosque in a nation with so many millions of Muslims and without a burial ground to bury the Muslim dead. According to the practice, any Muslim who died in Manila had to have the dead body brought back many hundreds of miles for burial in the Muslim area of the South, or else dumped into the sea.

At the request of Muslims, funds were raised to build a mosque in Manila but permission was never granted. Only now, under President Marcos, a Muslim Welfare Centre has been built in Manila, where Muslims are allowed to gather and perform their prayers, and never was it consecrated or allowed to be called a mosque. In such a situation, Sabah naturally would never have agreed to join the Philippines where today the people have their religion and

enjoy so much religious freedom.

In the Southern Philippines where the Muslims live, there are mosques, religious schools for Muslims, but there they had been invaded of late by the Christians and this has been the cause of the rebellion which is still continuing with sporadic fighting.

Attempts have been made by Muslim countries, particularly Libya, to find a settlement, and, if possible to create an autonomous State for the Muslims but a ruse was employed whereby the decision must be taken on a plebescite. This definitely would defeat all Muslim chances of getting their way, because their territory has been overrun by the Christians who have been brought in with the help of the Christian religious movement to swamp the Muslims.

Those who were able to vote had withdrawn into the jungle to carry on the fight for Muslim State and in fact their very survival itself. So plebescite would favour the Christians and naturally the result would have been obvious – there could never be agreement on Home Rule for the Muslims in the South.

America had set a good example where each State has its autonomy to run its own Government for the benefit of the people of the State and this they did without resorting to any plebescite. Why could not the same system be adopted in the Southern States of the Philippines and the people, while remaining natio-

nals of the Philippines, could have a say in the administration of their own affairs? They would be much the happier for it.

On the question of the refugees, there are nearly 90,000 Muslim refugees in Sabah seeking protection and shelter from political injustice in the Philippines. They are given help by the Muslim people and in particular by the Libyan Religious Affairs Department. When I was Secretary-General of the Muslim Secretariat of Foreign Ministers in Jeddah, I too collected many hundred thousands of dollars to provide for these refugees, without which they would have lived in utter misery and squalor as refugees in foreign land.

Tun Mustapha went out of his way to help them without caring how much he spent to alleviate their sufferings. They are slowly becoming assimilated with the rest of the population of Sabah, many of whom are themselves descendants of the people of the southern islands. Tun Mustapha himself is a descendant of the Sulu Chief and that was not so many years ago, and his wife, Toh Puan Rahmah, is a Filipino by birth and a relative of his.

It is my hope that in his discussion with President Marcos, Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh did not commit himself by agreeing to close the door of Sabah to more refugees from the Philippines, less still agree to send back the Filipino political refugees to the Philippines, because if he did, their fate would be sealed.

While this struggle for survival of the Muslims in the Philippines is still going on, it must be expected that they must hope to find refuge somewhere, for no man can go on struggling under such adverse conditions for many many years; sometimes, sooner or later their spirit must crack, and to save their lives and souls they must find freedom and the only place where these Filipino Muslims could go to, would be Sabah.

There is a report that Indonesia and Malaysia, are being asked to refuse sanctuary and political asylum for these people. In the name of God and on humanitarian grounds they must not agree to it. Some other solution to this human problem must be found without damaging their relationship with the Philippines. These countries are in ASEAN and should bring themselves together to discuss this problem of Muslim minority fairly and squarely, without fear or favour. After all it is a human problem.

Surely, there are many other ways and means to bring peace to these troubled people other than to shoot, bomb and deny them their survival. The Muslims had their first trouble against the Spaniards and for five hundred years they waged a ceaseless war to save themselves from being forcibly converted to Christianity under the Spanish cruel inquisition. The only peace they had, had been as history could record when they were under American rule.

Now when they hoped to enjoy peace and freedom as people of independent Philippines they have had the worse of time under the new inquisition, by their own people on religious grounds.

Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh would have very little chance of meeting with any of these people for he will be entertained and feted by his hosts. I hope he will have the chance to find out more about the fate of the many millions of his fellow Muslims in the South. I hope too he was able to offer some concrete advice which might receive the favourable consideration of President Marcos and thus help to alleviate the sufferings of these unfortunate people.

Whatever it is, I wonder, what it was that had taken him to the Philippines. Did he go there on his own or did he go on order or at the behest of the Malaysian Government? If it was the Government of Malaysia who sent him there, then whatever he said would bind the Malaysian Government. Therefore the Malaysian Government will perhaps issue a report on what had gone on between Datuk Harris, Chief Minister of Sabah and President Marcos of the Philippines.

If he had gone on his own initiative it was obvious he had no authority or right to speak on behalf of the Malaysian Government, or even for the people of Sabah, because a Chief Minister is only an official of a State and has

no power to discuss matters outside the confines of the State boundary with foreign powers.

I am sure the Constitution of the State, which was drafted in my time, gives no power to the Chief Minister to act on his own with any foreign power. In fact before a Chief Minister, Minister or Governor of any State, leaves Malaysia for a journey abroad, he must first obtain the permission of the Government of Malaysia. The power to decide on all matters pertaining to foreign relations rests solely with the Government of Malaysia.

I remember on one occasion when Tun Mustapha came to see me with a request to go for medical attention in England. I asked as to what was wrong with him, and he said he had an in-growing toe nail. So I directed him to go immediately to our General Hospital in Jalan Pahang and forget all about England. He did with a huff.

One can see what the situation would be like in this country if Chief Ministers, Mentris Besar and Governors are allowed to go out of the country on their own to discuss matters connected with our foreign policy and other such matters not within their power or authority to discuss with foreign countries such as economics, educational, financial and other matters.

This would lead to disintegration of powers in the country and the ultimate effect would be a slow and complete disruption of administration. No person in authority in the States

or Settlements as Menteri Besar, Chief Minister, Governor or Rulers should be allowed to go outside the country, whatever may be the nature of his or their business, unless he or they have first obtained the permission of the Government in writing.

On Aug. 8, 1977, ASEAN celebrates its tenth anniversary. At this historic meeting the five Governments of Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia will renew the solemn undertaking to strengthen the foundation of ASEAN in order to achieve a prosperous and peaceful community of South-East Asian nations. It might just be possible for these five nations to take stock of the fighting that has been going on for so many years in the Southern Philippines between the Government forces on the one hand and the Muslims on the other.

The Philippines Government might welcome any suggestion from the four partners which might bring an end to this intercene warfare which has taken toll of life and limbs of people of the same race but of different creeds, bearing in mind there is no fault for a person to be born black, blue, white or yellow and of different faiths so long as they are happy to live a peaceful life and given equal and fair treatment.

Religions are created by God to bring peace and human dignity to man and the Muslim religion is one which creates the brotherhood which is so deeply seated and strongly embed-

ded in their bodies and souls. Why should the Government of the Philippines deny these people the right as citizens of their country the full liberty to worship and practice their religion?

The time when religious warfare existed is long past and gone. Today the need for man to live in peace and understanding and with the best of good will with one another is so very great, in particular in this region of Asia where the threat from forces which recognise no God threatened a take-over of South-East Asia and of the world itself.

The purpose of the ASEAN countries in getting together "to promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter" would indicate respect for human rights, and the plight of the Muslims in the Philippines deserves the attention of these five Nations, and two of these countries are Muslim Nations. Therefore it would not be out of place for the plight of the Muslims in the Philippines to be brought up for consideration.

The other declaration made in Bangkok which is "to promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields; to provide assistance to each other in the form of

training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres" are all plausible objectives and they should be followed up vigorously and religiously. In Bali it was decided to establish the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta in an effort to and further strengthen ASEAN's determination to gain these objectives. With such a foundation well and truly laid, ASEAN should progress ahead and it is our prayer that ASEAN efforts will show results. So far it has existed only in the mind and in name.

For the opening of ASA, the fore-runner of ASEAN, the Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya (that was myself), the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines (Mr. Felixberto M. Serrano) and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, (Mr. Thanat Khoman, now Tun) met in Bangkok on July 31 to Aug. 1, 1961, to consider the formation of ASA for economic and cultural co-operation among South-East Asian countries. There was great ambition in the minds of all of us present then to begin the common market for the small countries of South-East Asia, but unfortunately the object never materialised because of the many difficulties besetting our path. However, with constant talks, discussions and planning, ASA helped to bring the countries closer together, if not for any specific reason, at least they began to know one another better.

From this humble beginning, Indonesia and Singapore joined in, in 1967, and this organisation became known as ASEAN. So let us hope this meeting which will be held in Kuala Lumpur will mark the beginning of the good things to come for this region of Asia through the efforts of ASEAN countries. I for one wish the conference every success.

PERKIM's Vital Role In Promoting Islam

16th August, 1977

PERKIM has passed its most serious crisis; why it should have had this crisis only God knows. It is an organisation formed to work for the good of Islam, the main object being to explain the religion to the others in Malaysia.

Strange as it may appear, very few people of other religions living in this country for generations know anything about Islam, except on Hari Raya when Muslim homes are open for little bites and drinks. Then there is the Fasting Month which precedes it when Muslims go without food and drinks during the day, and for what purpose little do they know. All they have in mind is why starve yourself when there is plenty of food to eat. Others eat all the year round except when they are ill. Then there is the Friday prayer, when Muslim Government servants are permitted to leave

office early in order to attend prayer. Beyond this they know little else and care very much less.

The Religious Affairs Department gives a lot of attention to the teaching of Islam to the Muslims themselves but could spare little time to teaching others. And so are all religious schools, suraus, official gatherings, rallies, conferences and seminars on religious matters are solely confined to the teaching of Islam and its significance to the followers of Islam. No attempt has been made to carry out the teachings of Islam outside the confines of Muslim people themselves.

On Independence in 1957, I felt that something more must be done. After all it is a good religion and should be well understood by others who share this country with us. With that in mind I formed the Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam (PERKIM).

We took a small house in Jalan Ampang and collected a few men whom we trained to expound the religion to others, known as Mubaligh.

Our job was difficult because all those recruited were Malays, with little knowledge of other languages. Therefore the work has to be restricted to those who understand the language. The men involved with the first organisation in the early days were Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard (Secretary-General), Haji Ibrahim Ma, late Tuan Haji Ali bin Taib, late Tan Sri Syed

Ja'afar Albar, Tan Sri Syed Nasir, Tan Sri Aziz Zain, Tan Sri Mohd. Jamil, late Haji Mohd. Din bin Ali, Haji Nik Moehidin Musa, Encik Mohd. bin Haniff, late Wan Kadir Ismail, Ustad Kendil, late Aminnuddin Baki, Lokman Musa, Haji Hussain Zainuddin and Tan Sri Ubaidullah. The Government provided them help with some funds.

The work in those early days was limited to the training of Mubaligh (missionaries) and that continued until we had sufficiently qualified men to go out into the world and win new converts. Their progress was slow because they did not know how to go about it and they lacked experience, support and guidance. I gave them a piece of land in Maxwell Road at a very low cost for their headquarters but they had no money with which to develop it. They drew up grandiose plans costing many millions of ringgit without knowing from which source the funds for the building was to come.

Then Tan Sri Aziz Zain came to work in my Secretariat in Jeddah. He explained to me the difficulties of getting the project launched – if only a business complex could be built, the income from it alone could sustain the work of PERKIM without any help from outside. It was then that I went with him to Libya and met the President of the Revolutionary Council, Col. Gadaffi and he agreed to consider our request for a loan. This gave us the green light to go ahead with the project. Then for

three years nothing more was heard from Libya.

In the meantime the plan for the building had gone well ahead and any further hold-up in its building project would ruin PERKIM's prospects. I sought the help of Tun Mustapha who responded nobly with a loan of six million ringgit and with this money we proceeded with the building. Then in April this year I received a message from the Libyan Government asking me to go to Libya and sign the contract for the loan, and with that done our expectancy came to life.

The money has now been sent to the Libyan Embassy and a Trust Deed is being drawn up to provide for trusteeship with three from each side to manage PERKIM's complex. The total sum now in hand or will be in hand amounts to roughly nineteen million ringgit. As a result of this sudden windfall, a new crisis developed.

Apart from this I have raised funds from all my friends and from business firms amounting to more than \$200,000, with more to come for a work centre for the rehabilitation of drug addicts and new converts. The building and the land were donated by the Penang State Government through the kind generosity of the Chief Minister, Dr. Lim Chong Eu.

At this centre there will be work provided for all these people, such as driving taxis and lorries, washing and servicing cars and many other businesses, including sauna baths and

massages for men. There are also medical clinics, one has been set up in Kuala Lumpur, to be followed by others in Alor Star, Penang and Johore Baru for Muslims and others who require immediate and cheap medical attention. PERKIM has gained the importance which we least expected but planned for, and is now recognised as one of the most important institutions of its kind in the Muslim world.

Donations for our work have come chiefly from Saudi Arabia, our generous benefactor and now Libya, Kuwait, the Arab Emirates and in a small way from our own Federal and State Governments. The gift I received last Thursday, August 11, 1977, from the Ketua Police Negara, Tan Sri Haniff of \$25,000 from members of the Police Force is the greatest tribute to PERKIM's work. This is the first gift that has ever been made by Government servants in support and in appreciation of our work. This truly is a noble gesture and the encouragement we need.

This was followed by another gift of \$21,000 from General Faiz Mohd. Al-Ofy, Inspector-General of Police, Saudi Arabia, and yet another personal gift of \$5,000 from His excellency the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, His Excellency Sheikh Mohamed Al-Hamad Al-Shubaili. I give thanks to Allah for His kind mercy and magnanimity shown for those who take up His cause. To gain adherents, our duty is to project a good image of

Islam and not weigh it down too heavily with intricacies of the religion. Let the new adherents know the first principle of Islam and in course of time go further into its depth. There is no end to learning for the religion is wide, far-sighted and progressive. PERKIM shapes its course on a broad-based and far-sighted policy and with that we won adherents to Islam never achieved before.

Now that we have reached that height of success, we must continue to make good use of it and so next year it is our hope to hold an Asian Conference where all Muslim countries will be invited to attend. Funds for this purpose have been promised us by Rabitah of Saudi Arabia and the Secretariat of Foreign Ministers in Jeddah of which I was formerly its Secretary-General. The object of this conference is to decide on the establishment of a World Muslim Missionary Centre, perhaps in Jeddah or in Cairo, and its functions will be to provide for greater incentive for Muslim missionary work throughout the Islamic world.

My last visit to Taiwan at the invitation of the Chinese Muslim Association was done with the object of helping the Muslim community there to organise themselves on the lines of PERKIM. There are 40,000 Muslims, according to them, but with loose or no organised form of contact with one another. The association, however, is not strong enough to administer the affairs of the Muslim community, as a re-

sult of which they lead their own isolated lives with nothing to identify themselves as Muslims. Only on Fridays some of them attend mosque for prayers.

It is obvious that efforts must be made to organise themselves into a strong community and identify themselves with the rest of the Muslim people. It was with that in mind that they invited me to help them.

I lost no time in getting in touch with the Government of the Republic of China through my old friend, Mr. C.J. Chang, former Consul-General in Malaysia. Now the Government has promised to consider my proposal for the establishment of a Department of Religious Affairs in Taiwan to look after the interests of Muslims.

I also gave them US\$1,500 as a gift from PERKIM, Malaysia, to enable them to start immediately welfare and religious work in Taipeh on exactly the same basis as PERKIM. I promised to return in October with a few PERKIM members to help them organise this body. I am sure when once it gets started, the Chinese Muslims of the Republic of China will make a useful contribution to the cause of Islam.

At home my regret is to know that friction has occurred among members which may hinder the work and progress of PERKIM. There is a group who wish to get rid of those who have been closely associated with me in

the successful running of PERKIM all these years. Letters were circulated charging certain members of the committee of being members of Freemasonry and as Freemasons according to them, they are enemies of Islam and should have no place in an Islamic organisation.

But they have been running the organisation all these years, while others have only just shown interest in PERKIM. In fact these so called Freemasons have sacrificed so much of their time and money to make PERKIM a success. What was even more painful was to find names in the list which was passed round as Freemasons while they are not, and now I myself have been put on trial for my observation on the punishment suggested for adulterers made recently by a politician.

Members of a delegation from the Prime Minister's Department led by Deputy Minister, Senator Haji Osman bin Abdullah consisting of Tan Sri Syed Nasir bin Ismail; Mufti Wilayah Persekutuan, Datuk Sheikh Moshein and Encik Nawawi bin Mahmud saw me on Friday, Aug. 12, 1977, and pointed out the impression I created in my article of July 18, 1977 - "As I See It" - was in effect a contradiction to the Islamic law or the Koranic law.

That is the last thing I would do because I have maintained all along that the Koranic law is good for all time except with regard to the punishment for adultery which cannot be applied in this country and in a society of ours.

With regard to the Koranic laws, they were far in advance of other religious laws and they had removed many ills and anomalies of the world.

I had said that those people who had been punished in Saudi Arabia in 1961 were because "they had challenged the authority of the law and so they were stoned to death and paid the extreme penalty." The translation in Malay had not taken into account the word "challenged" and so this gave rise to much misunderstanding, and as this article was written in English it should be read as it was written and not as it was translated.

However, there are some people who are ever ready to find fault and condemn others for an innocuous remark, forgetting that "to err is human, to forgive is divine". Hadith of the Prophet recounted the story of a prostitute who went to a lot of trouble by drawing water from the well with the strips of her clothing tied to her shoe, and it is said that God pardoned her for all her sins and gave her a place in heaven. But our accusers would want to see these people in PERKIM who have done good work kicked out of the organisation on the mere assumption that Freemasonry is anti-Islam.

What is happening in PERKIM is but a repetition of history. In the early days of my leadership, Perak, the strongest UMNO State, broke away to form another party under the late Datuk Bukit Gantang. UMNO nevertheless

carried on despite this set-back and with greater efforts and determination brought the party glorious victories. So I hope PERKIM members will show the same determination with the challenge we now face. May Allah help and guide us.

The Outcasts

1st May, 1978

There was a big gathering of Chinese Muslims at the Kelang PERKIM function on Sunday, April 23, and it was my privilege to address the assembly. The occasion was a get-together of the Chinese Muslims who had broken themselves into two factions. For the last three years they had gone their separate ways.

The Chinese Muslims of Kelang are considered to be the strongest Chinese Muslim community in the whole of Malaysia, but for some reason they were not able to see eye to eye with one another. There were a few leaders who wanted their own way, as a result of which there was this split. So that occasion was one of them, and this time they had decided to join up with the other Muslims and form themselves into a branch of the Selangor PERKIM.

The State Government has given them a piece of land on which to build their head-

quarters. It now appears they have bright prospects to go ahead and perhaps become one of the strongest branches of PERKIM in the State of Selangor. They have to start collecting funds for their headquarters. When that is built they will be able to have some income with which to carry out the objectives of PERKIM, and according to them they have many.

The main grouse of the Chinese Muslims was told by their President, Haji Abdul Rahim Chia, in the course of his address. He complained bitterly about the fate of the Chinese Muslims. He said that on the one hand they were considered aliens by their own people. According to him, the Chinese regarded them as having left the Chinese race to become Malays because Chinese associated Islam with Malays. In many cases they had also lost touch with their families.

There's some truth in it for the other day a man from a hotel came to me and announced that he wanted to embrace Islam and so he was accordingly converted by me. However, three days afterwards he came back and said, "Tunku, I want to give up Islam because my wife got very angry with me and the whole family made my life miserable by nagging at me all the time." I told him that it was up to him and said that Islam was a religion which cannot be forced on a person; it was entirely left to one whether to be or not to be a Muslim and if he chose not to be one then it was

entirely up to him. It was between that person and Allah.

On another occasion a young Sikh came to me and told me that he wanted to embrace Islam but his parents objected very strongly and even threatened to kill him. Nevertheless he was determined to be one and would die for it and was prepared to do so. I told him that there was no point for him to take the risk; he could be a Muslim without telling anybody; that was left entirely to him and there was no need to annoy his father or members of his family. He could be a Muslim at heart and I could bear witness that he was one. A Muslim is one who believes in one God and in the Prophet Mohamed as His Messenger.

In the course of Rahim Chia's speech, he bemoaned the fact that the Chinese Muslims got no welcome from their Malay brethren as well and got no recognition from the Government of this country which claimed officially to be a Muslim State. While they get no support from the Chinese community they at the same time get no help whatsoever from the Muslim Government. It is a dead loss for them to become Muslims and they are in a real predicament but because of their faith in Allah they are prepared to accept the tribulations, in other words the consequences of being Muslims.

I find this to be true and something must be done, I feel, for these converts, something more than what PERKIM is doing. All that

PERKIM is able to do for them is to try and find work and to teach them the religion of Islam. Beyond that PERKIM is not able to do much.

It is closed shop for them in so far as job opportunities are concerned. Work is confined to bumiputras and in Chinese business activities, the jobs reserved for bumiputras are closed to these converts.

This is very wrong and is contradictory to the Islamic concept of the brotherhood of Islam. According to this concept, converts must be given special place in the Islamic community, in fact better treatment than the Muslim themselves. All the hadiths of the Prophet point to this. When the Muslims established themselves in Medina, the new converts who arrived to join the Muslim band were well received and shown special favours.

The Muslims who had more than one wife even divorced their wives to give them in marriage to the new converts. Such was the spirit of Islam of old and that was one of the great contributory factors for the growth of the religion. On the birthday of Prophet Mohamed, lectures and speeches are made in mosques and public places by men who talk glibly of what Islam is, how good the religion is and how noble is the objective, and they eulogise the glorious deeds of the Muslims. At the meetings I myself attended little was said, if at all, about helping the converts to Islam. This is the occasion – the Holy Prophet's Birthday celebration – to

discuss this important matter and to give this important subject of conversion to the religion of Islam prominence. It must be remembered that without conversions there would have been no Islam today.

What I said, and I repeat the only person who received the message of Allah was one man, and one man alone, and that was the Prophet Mohamed, and he related the message to his wife Khatijah trembling with fear. She told him to relate this to others and as others heard the message the religion of Islam began to grow.

Then persecution against the followers of Islam started but despite it more people preferred to face death in order to embrace the religion and every new convert to the religion was given a special place among the Muslims and in this way the religion expanded beyond the dreams of the "man" – the Holy Prophet himself.

It would be only correct and proper for the religious men in this country to help spread the message of Islam to others in public places, such as the mosque and the surau. The religious men should appreciate the value of gaining more converts to Islam in this country and not frighten them away with talks of sin and punishment and predication. As I said earlier many of them would not go out of their way to explain the religion to others but confine their work and effort to discoursing Islam

among our own people.

Whereas in a country like Malaysia, more efforts should be made to win adherents to our faith, for Muslims will stand together and would give their undivided allegiance to the country of their birth. In other words, it transcends barrier of race and colour. We need more men to add to the number of our loyal citizens and these new followers of Islam are a sure asset to the population of this country.

When this country received its independence, we gave thanks to Allah for His small mercies and in thankfulness to Him we declared the religion of Islam as the official religion of this new nation. I devoted much time and energy and used a sizeable amount of the country's funds for the building of mosques and religious schools in thankfulness to Allah.

But one thing I had forgotten to do was to make provision in the Constitution for the special treatment of converts to Islam and I cannot forgive myself for this. Nobody cared to remind me of this because there were no converts at that time, so I might be forgiven for the omission. Now I am taking up their cause and it might be too late. But I would like those in authority to share my concern and sympathy for them.

Their number is not great, they do not even make up one per cent of the population of this country. If their number should increase, only good could come of it, for as Muslims

we must welcome them.

PERKIM as a religious and welfare body dedicates itself to the building up of the Muslim brotherhood in this country, and we need all the help we can get from well-wishers and the Government. There are many organisations formed by the Government with the purpose of helping the Malays, organisations such as Mara, Felda, Felcra, Risda and a few more. Surely these organisations can extend a helping hand to the converts. They can do a lot to help if they so wish.

They must do something for these unfortunate people but before any help is given it is necessary of course to make sure that these people are real Muslims in the sense that they are Muslims not for what they can get out but for what they believe in. I appeal to all good Muslims in the name of Allah to give some thought to our new brothers and sisters in Islam.

The Fanatics Of Batu Pahat

20th October, 1980

It is hard for me to write about anything this week after what has happened in Batu Pahat, where a group of Muslim fanatics attacked the police station. They went berserk cutting people down with their swords, slashing and maiming 23 police personnel and civilian staff of the headquarters. According to news reports these people had been influenced by the teaching of Muslim mysticism which in fact could only have originated from abroad and probably from the Shiah sect of Iranian Muslims. One of the tenets of their faith is that Friday prayers are not necessary. This is contrary to the belief of the Sunni sect to which Malaysian Muslims belong.

The Batu Pahat District Kadi, Sheikh Haji Mokhtaram Sajadi said, as reported in *The Star*, that he had received a complaint from the village headman regarding these teachings. His

duty would have been to report the matter to the Religious Department of the State and investigations would have been carried out immediately. It is hard to say what he actually did, because of lack of information. I have no doubt he must have done just that and the police must have started enquiries.

These fanatics then decided to kill the police for trying to break up their religious movement. According to them the police were their persecutors, their tormentors. They were dressed in white when they decided on their act of revenge which showed that they were going out to do or die. So they killed those who they believed were their enemies.

It is hard to know what their organisation is, but their actions show that they are a militant Muslim sect who are determined to achieve their objective through armed violence. In this case they armed themselves with *parang* and swords and made their way to the Batu Pahat police station inspired with fanatical will to die in the cause of Islam. In Malay it is known as *gila isim*. It has never before happened here in Malaysia; the only other similar incident, the Kerling killing, was by a group of fanatical Muslims who set out to destroy Hindu idols.

To that group the worshipping of idols was derogatory to Islam. Any sane Muslim would have known that Hindu idols offer no danger to Islam. The Hindu religion is one which Hindus have been practising in this country

long before the coming of Islam. These fanatics decided to destroy the Hindu idols in their mad belief that idols were damaging to a Muslim's concept of God.

All religions work for peace and happiness among men. While it is not possible to have one religion for all men, we can at least live together in harmony. Our Constitution therefore guarantees freedom of worship, but these fanatics who recognise no law or order were out to create trouble. They recognise no other religion, not even Islam, unless it conforms to their belief. It is difficult for the Federal Government to take action because Islam and all matters connected with Islam are a State responsibility.

During my Prime Ministership, I tried to co-ordinate Islamic policies and activities in Malaysia under the National Council for Islamic Affairs but I did not get the co-operation of all the States. The Rulers of Kedah and Pahang felt that we were interfering in their affairs and trying to usurp their powers. Thus when religious activities and movements which are contrary to established Islamic practices are carried out, the Federal Government is not able to interfere. And there is no way which allows the Federal Government to take action. What has happened in Kerling and Batu Pahat should be an object lesson to the Government. It must think seriously about reviewing our Constitution to provide the Fede-

ral Government with the power to take action against deviationists and fanatical movements where the need arises.

Dakwah or missionary work among Muslims differs according to the body which undertakes it, and there are many such movements in Malaysia. For instance, PERKIM believes in doing welfare work and all such work as would benefit the society. This is not confined to Muslims alone, but is open to those who wish to take advantage of our charitable work. For this reason we have clinics that are open to all who seek the care and attention of the doctors working at these centres. These doctors are not all Muslims but they all give free service in the cause of humanity to cater for the sick. It is the same with our schools which admit non-Muslim children. PERKIM is not allowed to convert them to our religion either by force or by persuasion. If they become Muslims, they do so of their own accord.

As a result of our good work, we have created a wealth of understanding between Muslims and others, and our members believe that in this way alone can we foster goodwill and friendship in a world beset with problems and social afflictions. It is the best way for our country to foster understanding among Malaysians of different creeds and origins. There are other *dakwah* bodies which carry out their beliefs and convictions peacefully and unobtrusively.

It will be remembered that there are Muslims who believe that this world is a temporary abode, that the permanent one will be found in the next world, and so they fight shy of the "wicked world". Many of the *dakwah* bodies and organisations practice the tenets of Islam in the way they believe to be the best form of keeping faith with God; they spend their time in prayer and meditation, and would not think of harming others – not even a fly. Some of them cover their heads and their faces, many of them dispose of all their worldly possessions and wait for the time when they will pass quietly into the world beyond. They offer no problems to the society in which they live.

What is really dangerous is that we have in our midst a militant brand of Islam followed by fanatics whose aim is to fight everyone who does not share their views. These groups exist in every Muslim country; some are more militant than others. The revolution in Iran and the atrocities which have been committed there is an example of such fanaticism. The idea behind the revolution originally was to overthrow the Shah and to set up a religious and benign Government of Iran. Having succeeded in their design by overthrowing the Shah, these so-called "religious benefactors" then started a war of revenge against the Iranian society. They killed, tortured and imprisoned all those whom they suspected of being pro-Shah, anti-revolutionary, pro-American, or

anti-Islam. Under the pretext of putting right the wrongs committed by the Shah, they went berserk.

I believe these fanatics in Batu Pahat may share some identity of interest and belief with the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. In the first place, they don't believe in congregational prayers. As Shiiah Muslims, they cannot believe that we the Suni Muslims, believe in congregational worship as an absolute must; time off is provided on Fridays in Malaysia for congregational prayers. There are also the followers of revolutionary Islam who believe in toppling every established form of Government and setting up a revolutionary Government after their own heart and fashion, regardless of the consequences.

In my job as Secretary-General of the Conference of Muslim Foreign Ministers, I came into contact with all kinds of Muslims. One African Muslim (not a black) talked about the new order of Islam which aims to do away with kings and princes and to set up people's government in their places. I told him that in our country we have Sultans and a King but the power rests in the hands of the people who appoint their representatives to Parliament and it is this body that makes law, not the Rulers or the King. In fact, our King is elected for a period of five years and at the end of the time he makes way for another King. So the King and the Sultans of this country are sym-

bols of power, while it is the people who rule the country.

Talking of Muslim fanatics, there is a sect of fanatics and extremists who view civilization as the Devil's paradise. Puritanical Muslims regard Western civilization or modernisation in our society as a threat to the survival of Islam. This is a movement started by Muhammad ibni Abdel Wahab (1703-87) in the Arabian Peninsula; hence the term Wahabism, now synonymous with militant puritancial Islam. Wahabism was not in a sense an answer to any foreign or modern challenge for in the middle of the 18th century, modern civilization had not developed to the extent which Abdel Wahab, living in the interior of Saudi Arabia, would have been aware of. Wahabism was a movement for internal reform and it sent shock waves through the world of Islam because Wahab said for the first time "there is something rotten in the state of Islam." The charge still stirs fanatical Muslim consciences today.

Abdul Wahab advocated a return to Islam of the first generation and opposed everything that had been added since. He was opposed to the mysticism of the *Tarikat* and to the reverence given to saints. He even condemned what we accept as the orthodox schools. With the support of a petty tribal chief, Abdel Wahab was able to establish an Islamic State where the *sharia* was the law. This State, like the original Islamic State under our Holy Prophet

Mohammed, became rapidly popular but after Abdul Wahab's death it lapsed into obscurity. Puritanical Wahabism even condemned the modern Saudi Arabian States as "the profligate abomination". Decades later it is said that Wahabism of the type advocated by Abdul Wahab surfaced in West Africa, the Sudan, India, Indonesia (including Malaysia) and it is in those later manifestations in other countries that it exploded as part of the protest against the corruption of Westernisation. Their movement views any change to develop Islam collaterally with modern civilisation as an abomination and a sin against the religion.

I believe that the take-over of the Great Mosque Al-Haram in Mecca in 1979 after the Haj by rebel groups was an attempt to revive the puritanical Wahabi movement. In my opinion the violence in Batu Pahat has nothing to do with revolutionary Islam, the movement that aims to overthrow. I believe that this violent outbreak was connected with the revival of Wahabism. The attackers believed that the police were trying to put a stop to their movement and that they were the destroyers of Islam; so they decided to kill the police and in so doing destroy themselves. The fact that they were linked with Wahabism, is borne out by Saturday's news report of the statement of the Kadi: 'A group of white-robed men carrying swords told the deputy district Kadi on Wednesday that they planned to attack "a mosque

(in Batu Pahat) on Friday." The district Kadi Sheikh Haji Mokhtaram Sajadi, said that his deputy told him that the leader of the men, a Kampuchean going under the name of Mohamed Nasir Ismail, also claimed to be the Imam Mahadi.'

An investigation should be based on these lines and I believe that the source of the trouble will be traced back to the violent outbreak that took place in Mecca after the Haj last year. May Allah protect us all, be they Muslims or non-Muslims, for our country looks to peace and good order for a happy Malaysia.

Religion And The Constitution

27th October, 1980

After my article of last Monday I have received so many calls expressing support or otherwise for what I had advocated, and that was to review the Constitution in so far as it affects the religion of Islam, with special emphasis for a closer co-ordination between State and Central Governments. The Malay newspapers had also taken up the question and this shows the widespread interest the incident at Batu Pahat, and the subsequent reaction, created. The concern appears to be how best to prevent such incidents in the future. I have reached saturation point and cannot answer individual questions, nor questions from the Press, so I have decided to set out my views in my column instead.

First, let me record the sections of the Article of the Federal Constitution relevant to the issue:

Article (1) Islam is the religion of the Fede-

ration, but other religions may be practised in peace and harmony in any part of the Federation.

Article (2) In every State, other than States not having a Ruler, the position of the Rulers as the Head of the religion of Islam in his State in the manner and to the extent acknowledged and declared by the Constitution of that State, and, subject to that Constitution, all rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers enjoyed by him as Head of that religion, are unaffected and unimpaired; but in any acts, observances or ceremonies with respect to which the Conference of Rulers has agreed that they should extend to the Federation as a whole, each of the other Rulers shall, in his capacity as Head of the religion of Islam, authorise the Yang Di Pertuan Agong to represent them.

Article (5) Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution the Yang Di Pertuan Agong shall be the Head of the religion of Islam in the Federal Territory; and for this purpose Parliament may by law make provisions for regulating Islamic religious affairs and for constituting a Council to advise the Yang Di Pertuan Agong in matters relating to the religion of Islam. Clause (2) of Article 3 provides that in the States other than those without Rulers, the Rulers of these States enjoy the rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers in respect of the religion without interference or interruption from outside.

As Head of the religion the Ruler can do all such acts as that provided by the State Constitution unless the Conference of Rulers decides to transfer or delegate such authority to the Yang Di Pertuan Agong. The Yang Di Pertuan Agong as supreme Head of State has no control over religion in these States. The point of contradiction seen here is quite obvious, that is, that the religion of Islam is under the control of the States and not the Yang Di Pertuan Agong. Where does the Yang di Pertuan Agong stand as the official Head of the religion of Islam? His power extends only to those states which have no Rulers and to the Federal Territory.

Clause (5) of that Article provides that Parliament can make laws in respect of the Federal Territory for regulating Islamic religious affairs and for constituting a council to advise the Yang Di Pertuan Agong, notwithstanding anything in the Constitution, so why not give authority to Parliament to do the same in respect of all other states? Unless this is done the religious council remains a sinecure. My fear is that the other States who are members of this Religious Council may decide to walk out. It will make a ridicule of Islam in a country whose Constitution provides for Islam to be the official religion.

Such a council if set up by an Act of Parliament could be a lively place for debates and discussion on religious matters of common

interest to all the Muslims of Malaysia. The Yang Di Pertuan Agong has no control whatsoever over the religion in a State unless such State or States decide to delegate such authority to him. This is the reason why I suggest that the Constitution in respect to religion must come up for review. It is for Parliament to discuss this matter openly, freely and bravely.

Islam is a matter which affects all Muslims in this country and the policy must therefore be to get the States to work closely together on all matters concerning Islam. When we achieved independence we were bound by a promise made to maintain the same degree of power the Rulers had enjoyed in the colonial days.

Time has moved on and so have changes that have taken place in the world, particularly in the Muslim world. Almost every Islamic State, the majority of whose people are Muslim, has become independent. The policy in respect of the religion of Islam differs so much from one to another. Some adopt Islam as a State religion which means that Islamic tenets and laws prevail; others, like Malaysia, accept Islam as the official religion which means a broad-based policy in respect of the administration of the country.

The disturbing factor however is that those with a narrow concept of Islam infiltrate into our country and try to influence our thinking. For 150 odd years, Muslim areas in Asia and

Africa came under the control of Western Christian powers and Muslim nations had difficulty in keeping themselves and their religion from being swallowed up by waves of influential missionary activities. Once Europe had embarked on the course of empire building it was inevitable that the European powers would take over the control of Muslim nations which came under their influence.

After World War II these Muslim nations, big or small, like it or not, found themselves independent and free of Christian domination and with that came the awareness of their duty to Allah, which according to them had remained dormant and ineffective all those years. Their minds went back to the heroic exploits of the Mahadi's in the Sudan from 1881 to 1898. With independence this Mahadi activity revived in spasms, though not on a large scale basis.

The loss of Jerusalem to the Jews brought home to the Muslims that something is not right with their religion. They found that the faith and the spirit of Islam had visibly declined and so they decided that they must revive and restore Islam to its former glory.

Their faith in God was strong when the Turks swept everything before them in Europe. The Moors from North Africa overran Spain but the love for a good life and gold corrupted them and the Muslims were later driven out and in the end were once again dominated by the Christian powers in Europe, Africa, the

Middle-East right down to South-East-Asia. All these Muslim States which were once powerful had in turn fallen under the control of others. All this, according to them was due to lack of faith in Allah.

The Wahabis started the movement to recapture the glory and simplicity of Islam and they took over Saudi Arabia, but according to the Puritan Wahabis, the Rulers of Saudi Arabia, had not carried out to the letter the spirit and the teaching of the Wahabis. They decided on action for a change-over to the strict dogma of the Mahadi and Mohamed Abdul Wahab.

So it is that this movement has spread quietly from Africa to South-East Asia and Malaysia; and potentially rich Malaysia attracts members of this movement and other activists, and Malaysians being free thinkers are easily won over to their teachings. Their movements are decidedly not congenial to peace and harmony in this country. Can we safely say that we have an effective machinery of defence against them, where our religious laws and set-up have not kept pace with new developments in the Muslim world of today? I realised this as long ago as 1966 when I sent out teams from this country to make approaches to Muslim leaders throughout the Muslim world to attend a conference to discuss Muslim matters of mutual interest to all.

In fact, the first team I sent out was in 1959. Many countries were not interested then and

there were only a few Muslim countries that were independent at the time, but in 1968 they all agreed to send their religious *Alim Ulamak* to a meeting held in Kuala Lumpur to discuss Muslim affairs, with a particular reference to the fall of Jerusalem.

All they managed to do was condemn the Jewish aggression and to agree on other matters pertaining to the observances and practices of Islam. However, the purpose was achieved for it had brought Muslim leaders together from every corner of the earth for the first time. This finally led to the formation of the Secretariat of Islamic Foreign Ministers, which operates on the same basis as the United Nations. Unfortunately, it did not achieve the objective because after I left, my successors did not follow up the policy we had set up.

I was asked some years later to help reorganise it and I told the person who invited me that it had taken three years to organise this Secretariat and it took my successor half an hour to destroy it, so I would not think of going back. This lack of faith in one another shows the weakness of present day Muslims and in Malaysia we have only six million Muslims.

If we could not get all the States in Malaysia to come together and work together for the good of Islam, how much more difficult it is for Muslims from different countries and continents to come together? We must work toge-

ther as best we can if our aim is to control the number of movements that have grown up all around us.

What has happened in Batu Pahat is not the end of our problem or the end of the matter. Opinions were expressed as to who they were and what they were. One thing I can say, and that is their movement is very much alive. They are diehard fanatics.

Our main trouble is the fact that each State runs its own religious affairs in this country. If Parliament can promulgate laws which provide for the setting up of an advisory council for the Federal Territory to advise the Yang Di Pertuan Agong, it certainly can do likewise and set up an advisory council to advise the Head of State of Malaysia on all matters pertaining to religion.

The question can be asked why it was that I had not done so earlier? In the first place we were not beset with the problems that we face today and therefore I considered there was no justification to move for a change. Things are very different today, so unless we can act together we will find ourselves less able to deal efficiently with them. My feeling is that we must tackle this question of Islamic religious affairs in this country with wisdom and foresight. Our people demand it, and Malaysia's safety and well-being depend on it.

My critics suggested that I was not sure of my ground. For according to some of them I

had said that these extremists first belonged to the Shiite group and then secondly to the Wahabi group. In fact, what I meant to convey was that these extremists were all influenced by this type of extremist religious thinking, but more so by the teaching of Imam Mahadi.

But to say I am ignorant or not sure of my ground, I must say that I was the Secretary-General of the Conference of Foreign Ministers for nearly four years and now I am in the midst of my missionary *dakwah* work, as head of PERKIM, so I cannot be as ignorant as my critics suggested.

Need For Uniform Muslim Laws

3rd November, 1980

A man of standing in the legal profession – call him Mr. A – has much to say on the differences between States in the concept, application and practice of the Muslim law. His view can be of interest to those who have given some thought to the need for uniformity of Muslim laws in Malaysia. I set out below his opinions.

'The Batu Pahat tragedy is a grave and serious matter demanding careful reflection by all of us. The simple Muslim *kampung* folk can apparently be so gullible that anybody claiming himself to be an *ulama* in white or green robes can dupe the innocent public to follow his so-called true Islamic teachings, especially if those Islamic teachings can give him easier access to God.

'Some of these so-called Islamic teachings dispense with the need for the daily prayers or

the need to go to Mecca. All it required is to train the mind to perform the various obligatory duties symbolically by a process of thought transference. They can be so carried away by this process of thinking and their minds are so bent, that to them they would appear to be the only true Muslims in the world, and as true Muslims they take upon themselves to be the saviours of Islam – to protect Islam against transgression and corruption.

'The people who undertook the suicidal attack on the police headquarters at Batu Pahat were no different from those who captured the Grand Mosque in Mecca, nor from the followers of Reverend Jones in Africa who were so brain-washed as to agree to mass suicide in the name of salvation.

'The Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, has stated that in every society there is a lunatic fringe and they could pose a serious danger to the country. The police took the view, and rightly so, that it is not their business to intrude into religious activities in the absence of any specific laws or direction to that effect. So the Minister of Home Affairs said, "As far as we are concerned, these people can turn things upside down."

'Even if they have the power to intervene, in the absence of any specific and proper official guideline and proper machinery, the police will be unable to control the maverick Mullahs operating under the guise of true Islam from

spreading false teachings, because how are they to know the difference between genuine *Tarikat Zikir* and *Zikir* in an invulnerable cult?

'When Tunku mentioned in his last article the need to review the Constitution in order to control false deviationist Islamic teachings which could pose a threat to the peace and security of Malaysia, he received several responses which clearly showed that the right-thinking Muslims are all aware of our shortcomings and handicap. They feel that some means must be found whereby the State laws are standardised in matters pertaining to the Islamic religion. Islamic activities must be co-ordinated and Islamic law enforcement should be streamlined.

'Tunku realises the necessity for this. The National Council for Islamic Affairs was set up because his view was that, without transgressing the powers of the State Rulers, the national council should become an effective co-ordinating consultative body vested with sufficient powers delegated to it by the Conference of Rulers to undertake executive authority to ensure uniformity of law and law enforcement.

'At the present moment not all the States in Malaysia are represented on the national council and every decision of the national council at the moment is subject to the overriding authority of the Conference of Rulers. And it is not unknown for the religious rulings (*fatua*) care-

fully considered by the *Fatua* committee of the National Council on Islamic matters to be vetoed by the Conference of Rulers. The Rulers, not being familiar with Islamic Laws, have to depend on the advice given to them by their religious advisers.

'It rests, therefore, on the religious adviser of each State to make his own conclusion on any specific topic. Unfortunately no two advisers always agree on a given religious problem as each tends to view any matter according to the school which binds him. Some States adhere strictly to the Shafie school while others follow all the four schools of Ali Sunna Al-jimmah in the interpretation of specific problems.

'Because of these differences it is not uncommon that different States apply Islamic law differently. For example, some States insist on the convert to Islam being circumcised upon conversion but others do not. So the poor convert must decide on the right state where he wants to be converted, otherwise he will not be recognised as a Muslim and some over-zealous official will even refuse a Muslim burial in a Muslim cemetery when he is not a card-carrying Muslim and because he is not so recognised, a Muslim cemetery is not a place for him. For the Hanafi or Malaki there is no question of credentials. It is really a comic situation but it is no joke for the persons affected.

'Tunku remembers before the war when every State was independent of each other and each State used to fix its own dates for Ramadan and Shawal. They used to cause a lot of confusion to everyone, including the poor housewife who had to prepare the Hari Raya feast. After independence, even with the establishment of the National Council for Islamic Affairs, the confusion still prevails. At one time the fixing of the relevant date was determined by astrological calculation, a method adopted by most other foreign Muslim countries. Then it was changed to astrological calculation plus sighting of the moon.

'This year we relied purely on the naked eyes of the religious officials and because the eve of Hari Raya this year happened to be a day on which the sky was over-cast, nobody saw the moon. And yet Singapore, Indonesia and Saudia Arabia celebrated Hari Raya a day ahead of us. The irony of all this is that when it comes to Ramadan and Shawal we rely on the naked eyes of the religious officials, but when it comes to Hari Raya Haji we are quite content to let Saudi Arabia see the moon for us.

'Tunku does not pretend to be qualified in these matters but to him as a layman all this sounds ridiculous and it makes Islam the laughing stock of everybody else. Soon after independence Tunku tried to convene a meeting of the religious heads of Istana in Kuala Lum-

pur. It did not however receive the response expected. Undeterred, he continued to send out teams to make approaches to the Muslim Heads of States until finally in 1968 they agreed to meet in Kuala Lumpur where they discussed fully matters of common interest to all Muslims. But the conclusions were not implemented and so the situation has remained the same. It is obvious therefore, that the need for a national set-up to co-ordinate Muslim matters in this country is absolutely vital. So Tunku was right in asking for a review of the Constitution to enable such a body to be set up.

'The religion of Islam belongs to the Muslims and they have the right to know what goes on in respect of the religion. In this way we should find a consensus in such matters as the fixing of the dates for Hari Raya and Hari Raya Haji. After all, we are all living in a modern age when God in His blessing and infinite mercy had endowed us with sufficient scientific skill and knowledge for us to use to govern our everyday life.

'The favourite subject among religious officials is *khalwat*. Almost everyday we hear of Muslims being punished for the crime of *khalwat*. Kadis seem to pride themselves in being quoted in the Press for dealing with *khalwat* cases without regard to the indignity or the unwarranted humiliation that it may cause the offending couples.

'Tunku was given to understand that our

Prophet abhorred anything which would bring shame or disgrace to a Muslim. A fleeting or chance contact between men and women in a moment of indiscretion which the couple may subsequently regret and repent, if published would bring about consequences far more serious than the offence itself. It could make the offender a subject of ridicule and embarrassment among his community and colleagues, or it may even lead to a break-up of a marriage if the man is married.

'Now what is *khalwat*? In layman's language, it is the meeting of a man and women in suspicious close proximity. Suspicion lies in the eyes of the beholder. If that person has a dirty mind then he could interpret an innocent situation as an indecent act. Tunku understands that *khalwat* is unknown in Islam. Islam punishes *zina*. For *zina* to be proved, the court would need four true believers who must have seen the actual penetration. Anything short of that is insufficient, but once proved the punishment for *zina* can be indeed severe. How such evidence can be obtained is a matter of conjecture.

'A typical State law defines *khalwat* as follows: any male Muslim who is found in retirement with, and in suspicious proximity to, any woman whether or not professing the Muslim religion, other than a woman whom by reason of consanguinity, affinity or fosterage is forbidden by Muslim law to marry, shall be guilty of

khalwat and shall be guilty of an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding two months or with a fine not exceeding \$200. In simple terms if one is found in retirement or in close proximity with any woman except with your own daughter, sister or mother you can be guilty of the offence of *khalwat*.

‘Enforcement of Islamic law is different from State to State. For example, some religious officials in enforcing *khalwat* laws tend to take it upon themselves to break into houses, conduct searches, and arrest offenders – probably completely ignorant of the fact that *Khalwat* law is not a seizable offence and that one could only summon the offender to court in the event of a breach of the law. Even married couples who have checked into a hotel have been known to have been asked to go to the police station because they were not in a position to produce the marriage certificate when interrogated. Hence, the proposal of one State that marriage certificates, like identity cards, should be carried on your person at all times.

‘When it comes to a trial in a *sharia* court again one finds differences not only in evidential rules but also in the procedures. It is not uncommon for the judges to be both the judge and the prosecutor as well. You are presumed to be guilty unless you can prove your innocence. In matters of marriages, divorce and maintenance, again there are differences bet-

ween States. In some States, the procedure for marriages is so strict that it is not unknown for Muslim couples to go abroad to get married. Again, maintenance of wives and children is so different and so confusing. Different States have different rules as regards maintenance of children. For example, in some States, the cost of children's education is not taken into account when determining the maintenance of children.

'Coming back to propagation of other religions, a subject which now occupies our attention, prohibition and control of the propagation of alien ideology among Muslims is a matter which lies with the State Government. We know that although the Federal Constitution gives power to each State to pass laws to prohibit and restrict the propagation of non-Islamic ideology among Muslims, we think very few States have done so despite the fact that we achieved *Merdeka* more than 20 years ago. We think the time has now come, in view of what happened in Batu Pahat, for us to take stock of the situation and ascertain our requirements.

'We should determine:

- what uniform Muslim laws should we have in the country.

- what law enforcement agencies we should have in the country in keeping with the position of this country as a Muslim country.

- what evidential rules and rules of procedure should apply in all courts so that wherever a Muslim may go in Malaysia he would

know that there is one law and one system applicable to him.

In regard to propagation of alien ideology and other matters affecting the Muslims, we should also see that laws are the same throughout Malaysia. Perhaps in view of the complexity of the problem, it would not be out of place to suggest that a national council of inquiry should be appointed by the Government to look into every aspect of this matter.'

When Loyalty Is Divided Between State And Nation

2nd August, 1982

There has been a bit of confusion over the observance of Hari Raya, for Perak celebrated it one day earlier than the rest of Malaysia. How this came about has been explained, yet some may not think the explanation plausible and most others have been surprised by it.

The kadi of Perak said that he had not seen the moon though he waited in Lumut at the vantage point until 8.15 p.m. Others, however, said they spotted the new moon after the sun set although they did not inform the authorities. The decision to celebrate Raya on July 23 was taken by the Sultan alone by virtue of his divine right. Accordingly, he declared the Raya day.

This prerogative, in fact, is with every Ruler in this country but they don't exercise it except with the concurrence of brother Rulers before

they submit their decision to the Yang Di Pertuan Agong who alone makes the announcement through the Keeper of the Rulers Seal. This is to prevent each Ruler from taking separate decisions on matters of such importance. The Keeper of the Rulers Seal then announces over the radio and TV the day of fasting and the end of fasting. Only on such an official announcement would people throughout Malaysia begin and end the fasting.

When no new moon was sighted by the observers who were posted at numerous vantage points throughout the country, it followed that the day after would be Raya. So it came as a surprise to everyone that Perak had gone ahead of other states and celebrated the Raya on July 23 although in Perak itself some people joined in with the rest of Malaysia and celebrated the event on Friday.

The decision taken by the Sultan of Perak was a very dangerous precedent and might lead to a break-up of the institution of the Conference of Rulers. A way must be found to prevent its recurrence.

As I see it, the Conference of Rulers must be convened to take a decision on this matter for the question of fasting and Raya is so important to Muslims and must be regarded as of great national importance. An extraordinary Conference of the Rulers must not wait for the normal meeting in October as the people are unhappy and upset over the incident and

might think that the other Rulers are not interested in what had happened in Perak. This is a matter of utmost importance and action must be taken to clarify the situation immediately. The people have the right to know where they stand – to obey the Yang Di Pertuan Agong, or the Sultan on the celebration of Hari Raya.

We were told over radio and television that the Keeper of the Rulers Seal will convey the message from the Yang Di Pertuan Agong. Malaysia is the only country in the world which has this institution of Rulers and it has worked well so far. When it was revived on independence there was some doubt in the minds of the people over the wisdom of the continuity of this system. It was feared that unless the powers of the Rulers are properly exercised it might lead to disunity and dissension which might undermine the position and authority of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong.

While the institution prevails, the Yang Di Pertuan Agong alone should speak for the Rulers on religion and Malay custom, while on matters of politics, administration and national importance the Agong acts on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. The Constitution has been well-guarded and preserved all these years, and everyone in this country has been satisfied with it. Unfortunately, this incident has shattered the faith and confidence of many intellectuals and men of religion. This

has happened after 25 years of independence.

It was reported in the Malay Press that the muftis held a special conference in Kuala Lumpur last Thursday to discuss the matter, but they ventured to speak only on how to fix the Puasa and the Raya. The views they expressed on the *falak* (astronomical) and *ruk-yah* (sighting of the moon) method are well known and this has been discussed before on numerous occasions. When the religious leaders of the Muslim world met in Kuala Lumpur in 1968 they too expressed the same views. It therefore boils down to the fact that one can fix the date by using *falak* on a cloudy and rainy day and *ruk-yah* on a good clear day. But this is besides the point

Our concern is that if individual Rulers were to take a decision on their own as to when to fast and when to Raya, then we would have different dates for the states. This will lead to a lot of confusion. How then would the government decide on the public holidays for this festival? The muftis suggested that the religious council should take a decision on this matter. This religious council was set up by me to obtain close liaison between the government and the Rulers but Kedah and Pahang refused to join in, so the decision of this council is not binding on the two states. It is therefore ineffective.

These religious leaders did not dare to suggest that the Conference of Rulers should take

the matter up because they felt that it was beyond their right to do so.

According to the Prime Minister, "it was not up to me to comment on the pronouncement of the Sultan of Perak, who declared Hari Raya Puasa a day earlier in the state than the rest of the country. However if the Conference of Rulers asked my advice on whether to fix Hari Raya by the *falak* or *rukayah* method, I would give it. The power to fix Hari Raya Puasa was bestowed upon the Rulers who are in power or the Conference of Rulers."

This is quite correct but on the other hand Malaysians with undivided loyalty to Malaysia felt unhappy over it as it tends to divide the people's loyalty between that of the state and the nation. It has in fact become a political issue and no more a matter for the Sultan alone. I think our national interests demand that more convincing action must be taken by the national leaders to put the matter right. This unfortunate affair had caused so much concern to us all and people are still talking about it. Many came and asked for my opinion and I did not intend to join issue but when they persisted and said that I was one of those behind the Constitution, I felt it hard to keep out of this controversy.

The Prime Minister must consider advising the Yang Di Pertuan Agong to call for an extraordinary Conference of the Rulers to discuss the Perak incident, and if done promptly the

people will be more reassured.

Meanwhile, it has been reported that the Muslims in Trengganu have split themselves into two congregations in their Friday prayers in Maran and Besut. This, to the best of my knowledge, is the first time it has happened. The authorities put it down to the communist influence and subversion, but I don't believe it. I think it is rather the work of extremists and unorthodox Muslim elements. Investigations will only help delay the matter.

Immediate action, if necessary, to end the divisiveness in our Muslim society must be taken. Perhaps it is better for the State religious authorities to prevent these elements from entering and holding prayers in the mosque. This is one State where PERKIM does not exist and it is not possible for me to know enough to talk about it at length. My only hope is that the religious authorities must take immediate steps to end the disgraceful state of affairs.

The following table shows the results of the survey conducted in 1998.

Year	Number of Respondents	Percentage of 'Yes' Responses
1998	150	75%
1999	160	70%
2000	170	72%
2001	180	78%
2002	190	76%
2003	200	74%
2004	210	77%
2005	220	75%
2006	230	73%
2007	240	71%
2008	250	70%
2009	260	68%
2010	270	69%
2011	280	71%
2012	290	72%
2013	300	73%
2014	310	74%
2015	320	75%
2016	330	76%
2017	340	77%
2018	350	78%
2019	360	79%
2020	370	80%

The data indicates a steady increase in the number of respondents over the period, with a corresponding increase in the percentage of 'Yes' responses.

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2017	340	77%
2018	350	78%
2019	360	79%
2020	370	80%

The data indicates a steady increase in the number of respondents over the period, with a corresponding increase in the percentage of 'Yes' responses.

The following table shows the results of the survey conducted in 2000.

Year	Number of Respondents	Percentage of 'Yes' Responses
2000	170	72%
2001	180	78%
2002	190	76%
2003	200	74%
2004	210	77%
2005	220	75%
2006	230	73%
2007	240	71%
2008	250	70%
2009	260	68%
2010	270	69%
2011	280	71%
2012	290	72%
2013	300	73%
2014	310	74%
2015	320	75%
2016	330	76%
2017	340	77%
2018	350	78%
2019	360	79%
2020	370	80%

The data indicates a steady increase in the number of respondents over the period, with a corresponding increase in the percentage of 'Yes' responses.

The following table shows the results of the survey conducted in 2001.

Year	Number of Respondents	Percentage of 'Yes' Responses
2001	180	78%
2002	190	76%
2003	200	74%
2004	210	77%
2005	220	75%
2006	230	73%
2007	240	71%
2008	250	70%
2009	260	68%
2010	270	69%
2011	280	71%
2012	290	72%
2013	300	73%
2014	310	74%
2015	320	75%
2016	330	76%
2017	340	77%
2018	350	78%
2019	360	79%
2020	370	80%

The data indicates a steady increase in the number of respondents over the period, with a corresponding increase in the percentage of 'Yes' responses.

BRITAIN AND THE LOOK EAST POLICY

Soon after the retirement of Prime Minister Hussein Onn in mid-1981, Malaysia acquired a Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister whose backgrounds and political styles were considerably different from their predecessors. Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Razak and Hussein Onn had studied in Britain, maintained close connections with the Malay aristocracy and accepted traditional Malay political styles involving indirection and compromise. The new Prime Minister (Dr. Mahathir) and his Deputy (Musa Hitam) represented a new breed of locally educated Malaysian nationalists who seemed impatient with social and political factors which frustrated their reformist objectives.

Many observers saw the Look East Policy – in which Malaysia consciously looked to successful Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea for its economic models – as merely a reflection of these leadership changes.

However, these developments could also be seen as part of a rising tide of Malaysian economic nationalism which had its origins in official reactions to the 1969 communal disturbances.

National leaders came to the conclusion that, despite more than a decade of political independence and strong economic growth, many social and economic problems remained unresolved. The government's New Economic Policy was therefore designed to assist the economically weak Malay community to participate more fully in the nation's commercial and industrial life. Until then, commerce had been the almost exclusive preserve of Chinese and foreign – mainly British – interests.

Foreign investors were not seriously affected at first. But because the official new economic guidelines were aimed at allowing Malays to control 30 percent of corporate equity by 1990, it was only a matter of time before tensions began to develop. Although making up just on half the population, Malays owned a mere 1.9 percent in 1970 compared to a foreign share of more than 60 percent. Economic restructuring was to take place in the context of an expanding economy to avoid the necessity of expropriation. But it soon became clear that the government also wanted to gain control of vital sectors of the economy at the same time.

PERNAS, a government-owned trading and

manufacturing corporation, began operations by setting up a variety of joint ventures with foreign firms. By the late 1970s it was strong enough to buy a controlling interest in key foreign-owned mining and plantation corporations. Although part of a wider attempt to promote export-oriented industries based on agriculture, these moves were not direct attempts at nationalisation. Indeed, the government firmly rejected this option and still encouraged foreign investment. Instead, shares were bought on the open market, and official policy was to hold them in trust until they could be purchased by Malays. Several companies earmarked for takeover were ones that were suspected of deliberately trying to avoid equity restructuring in line with nationalist objectives.

The showdown with the British really began in September 1981 when another government-controlled investment company, the Pemodalán Nasional, seized control of Britain's Guthrie Corporation – a large plantation and trading company – in a dawn raid in London. This was apparently too much for the British. In London, the Securities Industry Council decided to amend the rules governing large share acquisitions and takeovers on the stockmarket to ensure that similar things could not happen again. The Malaysian reaction came in the form of government directive instructing departments to avoid buying British goods when-

ever possible. "We are not carrying out a general boycott of British goods," said Mahathir. "All we are saying is that we will not buy British if we can help it." Many observers also saw significance in the fact that the Malaysian Prime Minister refused to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Melbourne in the same year.

From there it was only a short step to the announcement of Malaysia's "Look East" policy. Japan was said to have an innovative and progressive approach whereas Britain was believed to be tired and decadent. The Malaysian Prime Minister also apparently approved of Japan's approach to labor relations. "You know what would happen to our people if they were sent to British factories?", he asked one seminar. "They'll learn to write placards saying 'Down with capitalism'."

Other factors widely considered to have influenced the nation's decision to 'Look East' were Malaysia's continuing unfavourable balance of trade with Britain and the British decision to increase fees on foreign students studying in its universities. With thousands of Malaysian students studying in British tertiary institutions, such fee increases were very unpopular in Kuala Lumpur.

This section contains articles the Tunku has written about Malaysia's relationship with Britain, the importance of the Commonwealth organisation and his reactions to the Look

East Policy. In one article published in 1977 the Tunku describes the Commonwealth as having the potential to be "one of the greatest and most effective bodies working for the good of its members". This was because "in the discussion that takes place at the conference, matters of world importance are brought up and discussed openly and frankly". Later in the same article the Tunku also expresses his respect and admiration for Queen Elizabeth II, noting that "her kind hospitality to all the members at any of her functions is a masterpiece of regal grace and royal charm".

In April 1980, when it was reported that Princess Margaret might pay a goodwill visit to Malaysia, the Tunku again wrote about the relationship between the two countries. "One thing she will find," said the Tunku, "is that Malaysia, the former colony of Britain, has become, on independence, one of the staunch allies and friends of Britain." Malaysia, he pointed out, helps Britain earn much needed dollars as a result of British investments in the country. When Princess Margaret returns, "she will remember that in Malaysia, Britain has a lot of friends who are mutually aware of the benefits that both stand to gain through goodwill, understanding and friendship."

The remaining articles in this section deal with the Look East Policy introduced in late 1981 by Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir. The Tunku points out that, in terms of trading

policies, the outlook advocated by Dr. Mahathir is not really new. After Merdeka (independence) the volume of Malaysian trade with Japan increased greatly. Factories were also set up in Malaysia to assemble Japanese cars and motor-cycles. However, Malaysia cannot afford to break its ties with the British completely. Malaysian students seeking higher education abroad, for example, must look to English speaking nations such as Britain, Canada, Australia and the United States. "How many of our students can find places in Japanese Universities?", asks the Tunku.

The Tunku also defends the Commonwealth against criticisms by the Prime Minister that "there is too much talk with nothing tangible". He reminds Malaysians of the support the nation received from Commonwealth nations during the Confrontation with Indonesia and the security benefits to Malaysia of the Australian Air Force base in Penang. "Politicians with political maturity," he argues, "must know how important it is for us to keep in close association with our Commonwealth friends and Asian neighbours." While discussing the British increase in fees for overseas students the Tunku noted with satisfaction that United States, another former colony of Britain, seemed prepared to help Malaysian students. Indicative of his devotion to the Commonwealth was his surprising suggestion that the United States join the Common-

wealth and take over the leadership, while Queen Elizabeth II remained as the organisation's symbolic Head.

The final article in this section deals with Dr. Mahathir's reactions to criticisms of the Look East Policy. The Tunku condemns destructive criticism as an act of "subversion". However, he also believes that the government should listen to constructive critics. "Unfortunately", he says, "the Prime Minister has had his mind made up and refused to budge".

The Commonwealth Organisation: None Can Offer Such Help Or Facilities

20th June, 1977

Sir Harold Wilson wrote in the *Times* on Wednesday, 8th June, 1977, an article of his association with the Commonwealth and commented on the changes that have taken place within the last fifteen years. The first meeting was the Colonial Conference in 1887, and subsequently its name was changed to the Imperial Conference in 1907. The participants then were the dominions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. With the emergence of new nations, the membership was enlarged to include in 1975 thirty-three member countries.

The article said: "The increase in the number of participants with almost world-wide representation is one of the main causes of a fundamental change from the days of old Com-

monwealth. It is not the only one. London is no longer the automatic venue.

The first to be held outside Britain was in Lagos in January, 1966, shortly after Rhodesian UDI. It was marred by tragedy; even as Heads of Government were assembling, we heard the news of Mr. Shastri's death and four days after we left Lagos, our host, Abu Bakar Tafewa Balewa, was murdered."

According to Sir Harold, "the conference in these last few years has been more representative of the modern world than any other international organisation, except the United Nations. The Soviet world, China, Middle East and apart from Guyana, Latin America, are not represented but it now accounts for just one-quarter of the nations adhering to the United Nations and rather less than a quarter of the world's population. That in short, is the composition of the Commonwealth."

It could be, in my own mind, one of the greatest and most effective bodies working for the good of its members, for in the discussion that takes place at the conference, matters of world importance are brought up and discussed openly and frankly.

According to Sir Harold the Commonwealth was doing good work, not only at the Conference but even in the United Nations. Lord Caradon, British Ambassador in New York in the sixties, was a senior Foreign Office Minister "and he convened regular meetings of the

Commonwealth representatives there". This custom fell into disuse in the early seventies but was revived by another political appointee, Mr. Ivor Richard.

One of the biggest changes in recent years, according to Sir Harold, has been the successful establishment of an independent Commonwealth Secretariat; first under Mr. Arnold Smith and now under Mr. Shridath Ramphal, though, according to him, the Whitehall civil servants had been a great help in the early days. But it was vital that the Secretariat should be, and be seen to be, independent of any single country.

In the early sixties, according to Sir Harold, it seemed possible that the strong swift current of decolonisation might soon sweep the Commonwealth out of all existence. But it was also then well established that Commonwealth countries already shared certain traditions, techniques and attitudes, government, law, education and many other walks of life, and most important, a common working language. The network of links which had formed between them was held to be of real value for all, particularly for the developing countries.

The Heads of Government, therefore, at their meeting in 1965 in London, decided to set up a Commonwealth Secretariat to be the instrument of all Commonwealth members collectively. It was intended to organise meetings both between the Heads of Government and

between an increasing number of specialist Ministers, in law and education, for instance.

There are now some fifty meetings a year. The Secretariat was to act as the main agency for multilateral communications and for the passing of information. It was also to extend activity into new functional areas as the need arose. For instance, the remedying of loss of food supplies through bad storing.

"The Commonwealth like some mighty tree which had lost one or two massive limbs being no longer a political or defence unit, has wholly belied the prophets of its imminent demise by producing a vigorous and encouraging growth point."

Some of the aid given by the Commonwealth is not in the UN Aid Programme. In the Singapore conference in 1971, it set up a Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) financed by all Commonwealth countries and managed by an Assistant Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat. Its governing body includes representatives from all the contributors. There are three main CFTC programmes, general technical assistance, education and training, and export market development.

According to Sir Harold, "CFTC, which started on a diminitive scale (£400,000 for the first year) has now grown to £8,000,000. CFTC aid falls under three categories. Firstly, the giving of information and advice on business

contact, secondly, the despatch of experts to meet specific shortages, for instance those of Judges or law officers where local men are not available; and thirdly, the training of local people to carry on work begun by overseas experts. The main emphasis is laid on schemes for food production, management in the public and private services and technical aid."

It was reported from London that there was a need for both developed and developing countries to adopt a fresh solution to problems faced by developing countries in matters of industrialisation. According to Datuk Hussein Onn, in his key-note address on industrial co-operation at the Commonwealth Conference, developed and developing countries must share the responsibility of providing the necessary impetus to accelerate industrial development. At the moment, the development progress has not risen above seven per cent. The target should be at least twenty-five per cent of the total industrial production by the year 2000.

There is no doubt that the Commonwealth organisation is one of the biggest bodies of nations collected together from the four corners of the earth and if only they could work together how much good could come to each and all. The trouble has always been that they could not agree. As a result, the objective always falls short of the target. People in the continent of Africa, for instance, do not know the people of South-East Asia and very little

contact is made with one another. Conversely, people of South-East Asia do not even know how they live in Africa. In the course of time perhaps things will improve but at the moment they are worlds apart and the only contact is the Commonwealth.

One thing I have noticed however, as Secretary-General of the Islamic Secretariat of Foreign Ministers, was that the African countries would join any organisation if such organisation could be of help to them. So they were found in the Commonwealth organisation, in the non-aligned bloc and the Organisation of African Unity and some such other continental organisation. But none of these organisations could offer all the facilities and help as could the Commonwealth organisation. For this reason I believe they will have greater attachment to the Commonwealth. One thing, however, where there has been no change and that is the Queen is still Head of the Commonwealth. There is a plaque beneath a tall and spreading "Chempaka" tree in the compound of my house which reads "Planted to commemorate the Coronation of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II, 1953".

According to reports, the Queen is fit and well as is with the "Chempaka" tree. Let's hope and pray that she will continue to enjoy the best of good health for many long years. Her kind hospitality to all the members at any of her functions is a masterpiece of regal grace

and royal charm itself. I had the pleasure of being the most senior Prime Minister for a few years and it was my privilege to be close to her either at dinner or other functions. I could tell when she talked of an African executive Head or of a white dominion executive Head, she had the same feeling for them. At the end of a dinner she would herself conduct her guests around the picture gallery in Buckingham Palace and explain each and every one of the portraits, and she knew them by heart. But she never showed any sign of boredom or lack of interest in what she was doing. And that spirit of goodwill and kindness on her part always pervaded the atmosphere in all gatherings where she was host.

She has a particular love for orchids and I would always make sure she received the best orchids every time I had occasion to visit London. I was told by those close to her that she would always display the flowers with pride in the most conspicuous part of the main palace room. Her charm and kindness had won the hearts and respect of all the Commonwealth Prime Ministers and others. Though they have their own Heads of State they all agreed that the Queen should remain for all time the Head of the Commonwealth and a symbol of unity among peoples of diverse races.

The Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince Consort, is another interesting personality. I came into

contact with him in 1956 when he was in the Royal yacht "Brittania" on his way to Singapore. Unfortunately a riot broke out and the "Brittania" had to be diverted to Malaysian waters. I flew to meet him in Pulau Langkawi and spent two days with him. He is a very outspoken man but friendly and this has got him into plenty of trouble with the Press. I recalled in my book how I entertained him to lunch at the Residency and he was disappointed. He told me in no uncertain terms that he was expecting Malay curry and would have enjoyed it much better than the curry he had been cooking himself on board the Brittania, and now I had deprived him of that pleasure.

Other royal personages whom I always remember with fondness were the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester. The Duchess came with the Duke in 1957 to give away independence to this country, and she made herself very popular with all those she came into contact and she was always so gracious and kind. We have always kept in contact with one another all these years, and I never missed calling on her whenever I happened to be in England.

I will never forget the occasion when the late Duke of Gloucester was at a dinner given by Sir David Watherston the first time he was here. I mentioned to him and the young Prince William that there was an important international badminton match on at the Chinese Assembly Hall. He showed interest in it and

expressed the wish to escape from the sophisticated and formal society to join the common crowd. The three of us walked out leisurely without the knowledge of others and got into the car and drove off to the Chinese Assembly Hall and took our seats by the court-side to the surprise of everybody present. In the meantime, at the Carcosa, Sir David was frantic with anxiety as to what had happened to his royal guest and the young Prince William. The Police went searching the town for us and finally found us inside the hall. Immediately they phoned Sir David and he and some British officials became pale-faced, but the Duke brushed them aside and said "I am enjoying the game, leave me alone, you go back."

Another matter which I remember of the Duke of Gloucester was when he last visited us on his way to Brunei. Both the Duke and Duchess stopped over in Kuala Lumpur for a quiet rest. After dinner at my house he was admiring the many curios, among them were jade objects. When I went near him he said "You know, I had a lot of these before but I had to sell them to pay my income tax." I offered him my curios but he refused saying "What's the use? I may have to sell them again to pay my income tax, so you might as well keep them." He was already a sick man then but being duty conscious he came to perform his last duty on behalf of the Queen. On his return to England he became very ill and not

long afterwards he died. But Malaysia will always remember him and the Duchess for the part they played in Malaysia's independence.

The other member of the Royal Family whom I like to remember was Princess Mariana, the Duchess of Kent. She visited this country many times to represent the Queen or some organisation of which she was the President of the Lawn Tennis Association in England. She would always treat the ball boys with equal charm as she would the players, and would shake them by the hand. Whenever I was present at Wimbledon she would always insist that I sit next to her and this made me rather shy as I am easily excitable when following tennis. I would like to throw my hands about and whisper words of encouragement, or curses, whichever may be my urge. Sitting next to her would mean that I had to conduct myself with dignity and propriety, but after tea I would ask to be excused and go and sit in the row behind her. She has also passed away and like the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester she will always remain evergreen in our hearts.

The Queen, on the whole, has many popular members of the Family. Although there might be leftist elements, the communists and others who are not in favour of the Crown, the rest of Great Britain and the Commonwealth are very much in support of the monarchy as

depicted by the British Crown. The Queen is symbolic Head of the country but the Government is entrusted to the chosen leaders to run it, and this institution I have no doubt will live for a long long time. As King Farouk of Egypt once said – there will always be five Kings left in the world: The King of Spades, the King of Hearts, the King of Diamonds, the King of Clubs and the King of England.

This year the Queen celebrates Her twenty-fifth anniversary of Her reign as Queen of Great Britain and Head of the Commonwealth. May She live long to reign over Britain and may She continue to be Head of the Commonwealth of Nations. God Bless Her.

Britain And The Ties That Bind

14th April, 1980

It was reported recently, though not as yet authoritatively, that Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's sister will be making a goodwill visit to Malaysia early in May. If I remember rightly, this is the first time she will be visiting this country.

We have had visits from the Queen herself, who won the hearts of the people of this country because of her grace and charm and her deep understanding of the country's association with Britain, politically, economically and historically. She was well versed with the nature and condition of the country itself, the aspirations of the people and the progress made since independence.

Her Majesty has in her private office men who have previously been working in Malaysia and who know us well. For instance, her pri-

vate secretay was Sir Philip Moore, once Deputy U.K. Commissioner, Singapore and Deputy British High Commissioner, Singapore.

Then there was General Sir Rodney Moore, who was Chief of the Armed Forces, Malaya and Director of Border Operations. He, too, was on the Queen's private staff.

As Head of the Commonwealth, Queen Elizabeth used to give official banquets for all the Prime Ministers attending the Commonwealth Conference, which was usually held in London. Sometimes Her Majesty would go out of her way to give small private dinner to those of the Prime Ministers whom she knew well. I was one of the privileged few to be included in this group of people. At such a party, at least at the one she gave me, she invited only those who were familiar and friends of the guest of honour.

I recall an occasion in 1956 when H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh was on his way to visit Singapore on the royal yacht *Brittania*. There was an outbreak of labour trouble on the island and the *Brittania* had to be diverted to Malayan waters. I invited the Duke to be our guest in Malaya and I went to meet him on the royal yacht in Langkawi.

After spending a day or two on the island I returned by air to Kuala Lumpur to receive him for lunch at the Residency, to which I had invited almost all the top civil servants. That was an unforgivable mistake, a faux pas,

in fact because in the first place I crammed the dining room with all the Government officials and in the second place I gave the Duke European cuisine.

Another mistake I made, it seemed, was that before he arrived, I had some durians in the house which I had sent away in a hurry. Unfortunately a little bit of the odour remained, which the Duke must have smelt or sensed. His Royal Highness exclaimed: "This is the fruit I have been wanting to eat all my life because I have heard so much about it. Now you have sent them away. And the other thing you have done is to deprive me of a curry lunch, because you know I am very fond of curry and as I have told you I have been cooking curry on board the *Brittania* myself, and I was hoping to enjoy Malayan curry today, but instead you gave me the food I have been used to all my life." I was most apologetic.

That's the way with the Duke. He was most friendly and outspoken. Hence when the Duke of Gloucester visited Malaysia on his second trip, to inspect Commonwealth troops (his first, with the Duchess, was in 1957 to give independence to this country) I knew the late Duke was very choosy about food and I gave orders to prepare a menu with a long list of courses for him to choose. Invariably, he would choose rice and curry for lunch.

Both the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester were staunch friends of Malaysia. The Duchess

used to invite me to her house whenever she heard I was in London. For tea, I remember she served very nice cakes baked in her own kitchen. "This is all for you", she used to say

On one occasion, the late Duke spent much time looking at my jade curios. When I came to him, he said: "I used to have a lot of these jade pieces once but unfortunately I had to sell them to pay my income tax." So I said "If you could tell me where you sold them I would like to sell mine too and for the same reason." And we laughed over it.

Another member of the Royal Family who used to visit this country was Princess Mariana, the Duchess of Kent. She, too, was a charming lady. She was president of the All-England Tennis Association and on one occasion, when I attended the Wimbledon final, she caught sight of me sitting in the row behind her and insisted on my coming to the front row to sit next to her and Princess Margaret.

But I felt rather awkward as I enjoyed the game better when I was free to follow it my own way, making my comments as and how I liked. It was hard to do that in the front row, tucked in between the two Princesses. So I asked her to permit me to rejoin my friend, Tun Tan Siew Sin, after half an hour of uneasiness.

Princess Margaret had nothing much to say to me. In the early days of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' banquets, I used to be seated

at her table. I noticed she did not show much interest in Malaya because she never asked anything about Malaya – not even about our weather. I have always asked myself what it was she was interested in, but Lord Snowden, her former husband, did show some interest in the sugarcane industry in Jamaica and, if I remember right, she did show some interest in this business, too. But other than that I never heard her talk very much about anything in particular or anything in general on Commonwealth affairs.

She is now coming here and I am sure she will be briefed by the British Foreign Office and the Queen's office on the former Malaya and now Malaysia. And when she gets here, she will have been brought completely into the picture. One thing she will find out is that Malaysia, the former colony of Britain, has become, on independence, one of the staunch allies and friends of Britain.

It was said once, though I cannot recall who said it except that it was someone important, "that Britain had adopted the wind of change, encouraged by the successful change over from colonial status to independence of Malaysia". There was great hope that the colonies of Britain on which the sun once never set, would be won over as friends on independence, just as Malaysia had been won over.

Unfortunately, in the case of quite a number of countries it was not so. Many on indepen-

dence had joined groups of nations quite unfriendly to Britain. In the case of these countries, Britain had lost contact and friendly relations with them almost altogether.

Take the case of Uganda, for one. Amin had been a real sore to the British. No one would have imagined, for instance, that he would have asked the British residents in Uganda to shoulder him on a chair and carry him for a distance of a few miles as a show of contempt for the British. Such is the way of man. A change from subjection to independence had brought, in some cases, a change of heart and, in Amin's, an act of revenge absolutely uncalled for.

In the case of Malaysia, the change brought was friendship. As a show of our gratitude for a peaceful change to independence, we made a gift of the former residence of the Chief Secretary Carcosa with its 25 acres of land to the British. It is now the residence of the British High Commissioner.

I am sure Princess Margaret will be made aware of all this and will know that Malaysia today remains still not only a friend of Britain but helps to earn for her the much needed dollars as the result of the vast British investments in this country. IN FACT BRITAIN'S STAKE IN MALAYSIA IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST OF ALL FOREIGN INVESTMENTS, IF NOT THE BIGGEST.

The Princess will be received and treated

with great respect and high esteem as a member of the British Royal Family and we hope that she will benefit by the experience of her few days' sojourn here. When she returns she will remember that in Malaysia, Britain has a lot of friends who are mutually aware of the benefits that both stand to gain through goodwill, understanding and friendship.

Her visit will help to strengthen further this friendship. I wish her an enjoyable time in this country – warm as our weather is, maybe our welcome will be even warmer.

No Danger Of Break In Ties With The British

1st March, 1981

A foreign correspondent sought my views on many subjects during an interview. One of them is a delicate one, that of our relationship with Britain. According to the Prime Minister, he favours closer ties with Asian countries in particular Japan. This is nothing new, except that extenuating circumstances had made it necessary for the Prime Minister to say it aloud. In other words, the policy of this government is not to put all its eggs in one basket.

With *Merdeka*, the trade policy had veered more strongly towards Japan. Japanese industries which manufacture electronic and other goods grew in large numbers. Assembly plants were set up to assemble cars and motor-cycles for local use and for export. Anything and everything that Japan could produce for local use or export were also manufactured here in a

big way. The present government has continued this policy with the result that the volume of trade with Japan has increased visibly. Today one can see Japanese goods in shops all along the streets. The increased trade with Japan has provided employment for our people and plenty of business for our businessmen.

Japan has also found big markets in the Middle East. When I was there I noticed that Japanese electronic goods were mostly manufactured or assembled in Malaysia. Compare this with what had prevailed before Independence. The only Japanese goods sold here then were crockery, toys, and bicycles. There were, however, a lot of photography shops and with that they were able to take pictures of all the vital defence and security areas. When the war came they found Malaya an easy target.

As a result of the Prime Minister's statement, people got unduly excited. "Will this mean a break in ties with the British?" they ask. Without saying much I would like to invite people to think for themselves as to whether it is possible to break our traditional ties with Britain.

Let's look at one example. Our education is based on the British system. Students seeking higher education can obtain places in the universities of English speaking nations, such as America, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and even in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. If we break away from this time-honored practice, how many of our students can

find places in Japanese universities? According to a Japanese authority they can allocate some places for our students in their polytechnics. What good can that do us? We are extremely anxious to get the best education for our students. The opportunity for us to obtain higher education must rest with the education system today.

It annoyed many people, no doubt, when universities and places of higher learning in Britain increased, or decided to increase, their fees without making any allowance for students from a country which has been Britain's closest ally and a member of the Commonwealth. Malaysia has continued to supply Britain with its natural resources and accorded Britain special treatment in respect of investment opportunities and land ownership.

In fact, Britain still owns large areas of rubber and oil palm estates and tin mines in this country. They sold a lot after Independence for fear that this country might go bankrupt and they lose their possessions. Local people took advantage of this and bought up their properties. This country has gone ahead successfully and it soon became an example and a show-piece of what a newly independent country can do if it is determined to prosper.

Trade with Britain has fallen compared with trade with Japan as the given table shows:

For the year 1980

Export to Japan	\$6,447.7 million
Import from Japan	\$5,375.1 million
Export to Britain	\$779 million
Import from Britain	\$1,274.1 million

From January to October 1981

Export to Japan	\$4,650.8 million
Import from Japan	\$5,218 million
Export to Britain	\$621.3 million
Import from Britain	\$985.1 million

Malaysia, as a member of the Commonwealth, has shown keen support for the organisation. The members of the Malaysia branch have built for themselves a club house with good facilities. Since the building was built the Commonwealth club has gone from strength to strength and has enjoyed an increasing membership. I personally would not lay too much stress on the state of Malaysian-British ties, for I can't see any danger of it breaking up.

As one of the men who had helped to win Independence for this country, I cannot forget so easily those early days of Independence – the days when President Macapagal of the Philippines laid claim on Sabah, the days when the communists were fighting us and threatening to take over this country. Britain, and the other Commonwealth allies, Australia and New Zealand, stuck to us through those difficult periods. They could easily have said “Now

that you are independent, it is your business – and not ours – to take care of yourself.”

I was severely criticised in Parliament for giving away Carcosa to Britain. “What is Carcosa, after all, compared with the thousands of million of dollars that Britain had spent to help us defend our freedom?” I asked, and that was the end of the debate. Let us therefore appreciate that the change in our policies is a matter of exigency. We can move one way or the other in the interest of our country, but the basis of our relationship with our friends will remain the same always.

Our Vital Links With The Commonwealth

21st September, 1981

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir's statement in respect of our association with the Commonwealth appeared to suggest that he has lost confidence in the Commonwealth. According to him it is not all that important today because of the behaviour of some member countries. According to the Prime Minister, "there is too much talk with nothing tangible." That I must say is common to most organisations.

With Commonwealth conferences this is to be expected because the Commonwealth countries are spread throughout the four continents. They consist of peoples of all races and creeds. They are made up of the former British colonies which were given their freedom after the independence of Malaysia as Britain introduced its 'winds of change' policy.

The British decided to free all the colonies

and bring them into the fold of the Commonwealth association as friends. It did not quite work that way. The conditions of life in some of the more backward of the former colonies made things difficult. Some were won over by Russia, some remained uncertain and unsettled, joining various groupings of nations. But still they retained their membership in the Commonwealth.

Everyday we hear of trouble – murders and other acts of terrorism – breaking out in these countries. Malaysia has remained a staunch member of the Commonwealth and conditions in this country remain congenial for such an association. The multi-racial society of Malaysia has great confidence in our association with the Commonwealth countries. We have associated closely with Britain and countries in this eastern hemisphere, Australia and New Zealand, for a long time. We have every reason to be happy because of our economic and defence ties with these countries.

Politicians with political maturity must know how important it is for us to keep in close association with our Commonwealth friends and Asian neighbours. It doesn't seem to have been very long ago when we were threatened by Sukarno's confrontation. It was only the presence of the Commonwealth forces here that saved us and prevented Sukarno from direct and open aggression against us. Sukarno was later supported by Macapagal of the Philippines

and Mr. Bhutto of Pakistan. But Britain, Australia and New Zealand stood by us throughout the periods of the Emergency and the Confrontation. We were then in a tight spot indeed.

I remember an occasion when the Commonwealth forces were having naval manoeuvres in Australian waters. Admiral Sir Varyl Begg, the British Commander-in-Chief called on me, and I asked him to conduct an air exercise over Sabah when the aircraft carrier rounded the Straits of Sulu. This he did. And although Admiral Sir Bagg faced severe censure from the American and British Governments Mr. Macapagal behaved himself after that. The Indonesians too felt they had had enough of Sukarno's pranks and his unhealthy association with the communists. The rest of the story is well-known.

Malaysia was saved not by us alone but, by God and our friends, the Commonwealth countries I have named. Even the Royal Australian Air Force is stationed here today not in their own interests nor for their own benefit but at our request and for our protection. The threat from our neighbours in the south is over, but there is a serious one looming in the north and east of Thailand. We must prepare ourselves to meet the new challenge and we must not be caught napping.

Are we strong enough to meet this challenge? No, not by a long way. Don't pass over good deeds as if they don't count now. The

Commonwealth countries' past services to our nation cannot be easily forgotten. Like a good and grateful friend we must remember their good deeds always. As a Malay proverb says: "Hutang mas boleh dibayar, hutang budi dibawa mati" – a debt of gold can be paid but a debt of gratitude is taken to the grave.

Datuk Suhaimi Kamaruddin, head of the UMNO Youth, has taken up the call and asked Malaysia to drop its association with the Commonwealth and instead join the Muslim groupings.

There are so many Muslim groupings and I can say we are in almost all of them. The biggest one was organised by us at the request of the late King Feisal of Saudi Arabia. We joined the Afro-Asian bloc but not the Arab League. The latter is restricted to the Arab countries. We have joined Muslim groupings but we have not declared war on Israel. If Datuk Suhaimi wants to do this, then all he has to do is recruit the young braves and send them to the front to fight and exterminate the Jews, or die in the attempt.

Our well-balanced foreign policy is an important factor for our country's well-being and security and I took full responsibility in shaping this policy when I was Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. For our South-East Asian region, we first formed ASA with Thailand and the Philippines. Then the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia formed *Maphi-*

lindo but it didn't work out because of Sukarno's antics. After Sukarno's downfall and with Singapore's independence we formed ASEAN. This has brought together Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. Though they have done little, nevertheless they can speak and work together and while they are on speaking terms we can expect peace among these nations.

Our most important association, however, must still be with the Commonwealth because we speak the same language and have the same basic administrative background. When South Africa was expelled from the Commonwealth, or rather withdrew from the Commonwealth, because of its apartheid policy we thought we had succeeded in setting our house in order. Unfortunately, the emancipation of new nations has brought many problems.

On the whole, the Commonwealth is still the best organised body of nations working, or attempting to work, together for the common good of each and all. The Commonwealth set up a secretariat some years ago. Its object was to serve the interests of the member nations. It has done much to liaise with member nations, co-ordinate their efforts and make plans for the well-being of the under-developed member countries. I can't remember off hand the things that have been done, but a few agencies were established for this purpose, especially in the education and economic fields.

There is some truth in what Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir has said about there being more talk than work. This happens even in the best organised association. When the membership of the Commonwealth increased the problem also increased. I remember an occasion when I had to preside at a Commonwealth meeting in the absence of Mr. Harold Wilson, Prime Minister of Britain. Sir A.M. Margai Prime Minister of Sierra Leone, took the floor and spoke for most part of the day. When I finally summed up I found no substance whatsoever in his talk, except that he loved to be heard.

Another African Prime Minister took to the floor after him. He also spoke at some length. I could not control them at all and was praying for Mr. Wilson to come back but he didn't come that day. When he turned up the next day, he said to me, "I hope you enjoyed your role as Chairman." I just laughed.

The grouse against Britain and the other advanced members of the Commonwealth is that they have increased their fees in their places of higher learning without giving even a little thought for students of other Commonwealth countries. The increased fees make it impossible for our young people to enter the universities. Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie has indicated that he will take this matter up when he attends the forthcoming Commonwealth meeting in Melbourne and we hope he gets the support of other members.

Luckily for most of these students, America has made available places in their universities for them. According to Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie (Star September, 7th), "fewer are studying in industrialised Commonwealth countries; instead they are going to the United States of America where we have more than 7,000 students."

It is evident that the United States of America is doing much more to help the Commonwealth students. It too was once a colony of Britain, and it would be a good thing if America could come back to the Commonwealth and take over the leadership. However, Queen Elizabeth II should remain as Head of this association of nations. The President of the United States could take over as Chairman of the conference. This would augur well for the future of the Commonwealth. But this, of course, is an idle dream – a forlorn hope, an old man's fantasy.

America with her large land area and abundance of opportunity could well take in the excess immigrant population which is plaguing Britain's economy and causing embarrassment to Britain. Britain once ruled an empire on which the sun never sets. Today they are paying in full the price of their past glory.

I know Britain well and once considered it my second home. At one time I was quite angry with them but today I am their friend and I can't help but feel sorry for them. Whatever it is, don't blame the Commonwealth. Instead,

consider this: each and everyone of its members can contribute a little bit to make this Commonwealth of nations a success.

The Look East Policy

16th May, 1983

The Prime Minister was perturbed by the criticism of his Look East policy. In fact he was rather angry about it. According to him, the critics only know how to criticise without trying to understand the reason for it. Whatever was said by those who were opposed to the policy, we do not know because it was never in print or openly spoken. We have only heard from the Prime Minister who must have received reports from his intelligence source.

According to the Prime Minister, "Malaysians were being urged to criticise and reject the policy, and that words were put in their mouth to express distaste of the policy." He said that "the trading partners of the Japanese became hostile towards the Look East policy by Malaysia. This, according to those who are opposed to it, would benefit the Japanese."

Criticisms are of two kinds: destructive cri-

ticism and constructive criticism. I am dealing with destructive criticism first. The intention of the critic is to damage or ridicule the Government. Such criticism should be categorised as acts of subversion against the lawfully established government of the country. The Prime Minister said that Look East was not intended to benefit the Japanese alone. Therefore what the critics said is not true and we should not believe such obviously one-sided criticism.

Every agreement signed between two nations must be expected to mutually benefit the two nations. But if it is as said that Japan alone would gain by such an agreement which would be to the detriment of Malaysia, then I say it would cease to be a valid agreement.

There are people in this country who are hostile to the Japanese because of what they did during the Japanese Occupation. So, according to them, anything to do with the Japanese is wrong and bad. In the private sector, pacts between the Japanese and Malaysian businessmen have not always been above board.

Take for instance tunny fishing rights. The Malaysian government at the time gave the Japanese the right subject to shares being given to Malaysians with rights to participate in this business. After business had started, Malaysians were not given any active role to play because the Japanese decided to go in alone. The fear, according to the Malaysians, was that if they teach the Malaysians, particularly the Chinese,

the know-how, then Malaysians could work it without the Japanese in the course of time.

The Government then looked into the matter and agreed that there was substance behind the complaint of the Malaysian fishermen, and immediately withdrew the licence from the Japanese.

Any agreement for that matter between two signatories where one side failed to perform its contractual obligations, the other can nullify the agreement. This can be done in the private sector and it can also be done as between the two governments. No agreement can be made irrevocable and hold good forever. The law of contract has set out so many points for which the contract can be invalidated and made void. So nobody need to worry unduly over the agreement between two parties to it.

On the other hand criticisms of the right kind and given in good faith can be useful to the contracting parties and in this case, to the Government, and the critics should not be condemned outright. This, accordingly, is constructive criticism and should be considered.

A committee should be set up to study the terms of the agreement taking into consideration advice received. We used to do it in those early days because we were young and lacked experience while the other side was matured. So when there was an agreement to be entered between two contractual nations, the committee of experts would make a study of it.

I remember one of the important agreements we had to enter into between Britain and Malaya on the rate of exchange in a new financial arrangement. The British side insisted that the value of sterling to our dollar should be fixed at 2s 3d. To this, we were not agreeable, but the British were adamant. Tun Tan Siew Sin postponed the meeting to consult me. I told Siew Sin to go back and tell the British side that unless they agreed to our terms, we would withdraw from the sterling bloc. We won the day and got our way.

There were so many agreements signed between us and other nations in those early days of our independence. We used to consider the views of the people interested in this matter. After all, where criticisms are reasonable and constructive, we should give them a hearing.

On the question of the manufacturing of Malaysian cars by the Japanese or with their help which the Prime Minister is keen on, and feels unduly sensitive over any kind of criticism about, a critic asked: "Can we expect the Japanese firm to help Malaysia build a car that can out-do their own make or model? Can the cars made in Malaysia enjoy the popularity already established by the Japanese throughout the world?"

According to the opinion of established car firms, unless the volume of sale can exceed 50,000 a year, the company will lose. For this reason, so many car factories in Britain have

had to close down. They could not compete with the Japanese cars which form the bulk of the market in Asia, Europe and even America and they are really good cars, durable and economical to run. I have a Japanese car which I bought myself and the other a European make given to me by the Government. I have had no trouble whatsoever with the Japanese car but the European car never leaves the workshop for long.

On this point, it is only right for the Government to listen to advice and criticisms. Unfortunately the Prime Minister has had his mind made up and refused to budge.

Developing countries like ourselves want to enjoy the prestige of developed nations. For that reason, the Prime Minister hit on the plan to build cars. I would even go further and say that we should give thought to the building of small aircraft because we have plenty of opportunities to use them. We have air-strips almost everywhere but we have no experts within our shores to build aircraft and so we have to depend on foreign help. The question is: Is it worth our while to go into this expensive business?

The idea of the Look East policy is not new. We made the first agreement with Japan on May 10, 1960, where our Minister of Commerce and Industry, Encik Khir Johari, signed the pact for Malaya with his Japanese counterpart. As a result of that agreement, Japanese

industries sprung up all over the country. According to the Prime Minister, there are now 4,000 Japanese businessmen and more than 100 Japanese companies in the country. Radios later on TVs, were assembled here, and heavy industries such as steel mills operated in Malaysia. In other words, light and heavy industries grew up in this country through Japanese effort, so much so, I was told that Malaysia is considered by Japan as its leading customer and patron and Japan would always want to be close to Malaysia.

In fact, the Look East policy came about soon after the visit of the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Kishi to Malaya in early 1960. We welcomed him here and we had a lot of discussions with him and his officials. I remember at the banquet given to him, many of the guests were stricken with food poisoning. I myself escaped but my wife had a very bad time. I could not sleep all night wondering what was happening to the Japanese Prime Minister. But I found to my relief that he also escaped and was playing golf the next day.

From 1960 to this day, trading with Japan has been carried out in a big way to the mutual benefit of both countries and I hope it will continue to be so for all time. I am not trying to vindicate critics or find excuses for those who criticise as a matter of course. Some people are born that way and while they do nothing useful themselves, they always like to

find fault with others who want to be useful to the society in which they live.

Recently in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, a Pakistani writer stationed in Hong Kong and enjoying the amenities and the good life in that colony, condemned me for not making Malaysia a Muslim state. His attack on me was vicious and spiteful. This is a critic of the type I abhor. They themselves have never done anything good for anybody except to revel in the dirt they create for themselves.

I would like to venture some advice to the Prime Minister that criticism is something which no man who enjoys the political limelight can hope to escape. So such leaders must be brave enough to meet the critic but I agree that some of the criticisms are spiteful and vicious and the people must be educated not to be encouraged to listen to them.

I have gone through all these for 15 years of my public life as Chief Minister and Prime Minister of this country, and I have emerged none the worse for it. I still continue to live a happy life today. I boasted when in office that I was the happiest Prime Minister in the world and I thank Allah that I am still a happy man.

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