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COMMITMENT TO CHANGE:
A HISTORY OF MALAYAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY,
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The years immediately following the Second World War marked a time of change for most of the world's political divisions. This was especially true of the various colonial areas, for colonial peoples were awakening to the need for social, political, and economic changes. The colonial rulers, however, although sometimes aware of the need for change, were not so often committed to its being carried out. In many areas they actively resisted it.

In Malaya, commitment to change was a factor in the thinking of both the colonial rulers and the colonials. But for both, the immediate days and weeks following the war saw an attempt to re-establish relationships with but a hazy awareness on the part of both ruler and ruled of the forces and factors which would demand change in the years to come.

The British were the first to give evidence of how their own view of these relationships had changed by proposing fundamental changes in Malaya's governmental structure. For the Malays it was the catalyst of what was to them a particularly maladroit attempt on the part of the British to effect this reorganization of the governmental structure of the country which brought into focus a commitment to change, the seeds of which had been planted before the war, and to an even more impressive extent during the war.

The British were slow to recognize the extent of the forces for change emerging among the Malayans. But looking
at their actions over the twelve-year period prior to Malaya's gaining of independence, it seems apparent that their commitments to change, if compared to those evidenced by other colonial powers—and even the British in some of their other colonies—give evidence of a rapid, almost revolutionary change of thinking.

It was in the period from September 7, 1945 (the date of the return of the British military to Malaya after World War II) to August 31, 1957 (the date on which independence was obtained for Malaya) that the educational policies that were to dominate the post-independent period in Malaya were formulated. And along with the formulation of these policies there arose an accompanying set of educational problems which also carried over into the post-independent period. But what was perhaps most significant: it was in this twelve-year period (1945–1957) that methods were developed whereby these problems could be met, handled, and even made to work for peace and stability within post-independent Malaya.

The research for this writing was carried out primarily in Malaysia itself between November, 1965, and November, 1966.¹ After obtaining an overview of the period from scanning the English language newspaper, Malay Mail, the legislative records, together with pertinent holdings at the various libraries in Kuala Lumpur were utilized. These, together with the

¹ See Appendix for more complete account of research methods and resources.
educational files of the State of Kelantan, Malay vernacular newspapers, translations of Chinese and Tamil newspapers, and interviews with men and women who were involved with events of the period, made up the chief sources for this history.

While it is generally recognized that in presenting a history of a particular period in a given country it is desirable to provide some background information before beginning an account of the events at hand, for a history of Malayan educational policy development, 1945-1957, the requirement is not an easy one to fulfill. This is because there are few sources upon which one may draw for such background materials. Most of the published writings available on Malaya emphasize British colonial political history, and little mention is made in them of educational policy. And because of the emphasis on the British period, what was taking place in the education field in Malaya prior to the coming of the British is even more difficult to determine.

The material included in this history is not intended to detail a complete history of educational events in Malaya (1945-1957). Rather, selected for inclusion were those policies (and their implementations) that helped to elucidate changes in commitments to educational policy. However, because few secondary sources covering this period of Malaya's history are available for reference, it was deemed necessary to include more coverage of materials not so directly related to a history of educational policy (e.g., politics and economics) than might otherwise have been necessary.
ABSTRACT

On August 31, 1957, almost twelve years from the date of the British return to Malaya following the end of World War II, Malaya was granted its independence. This history takes as its central theme the development of educational policy in that twelve-year span of time. During those years, trends in educational policy change roughly coincided with the periods of three major struggles in Malaya.

Educational policy changes in Malaya in the immediate postwar period grew out of an overall plan developed by the British during World War II to centralize and strengthen their political control of Malaya. In a struggle which lasted until 1948, British efforts to introduce this new political policy were successfully opposed by an aroused and coalescing Malay nationalism. At the same time the colonial government's implementation of educational policy changes was hampered not only by that struggle, but by the necessity of rehabilitating a war-ravaged Malaya.

From 1948 to 1953, while British in the colonial government had their attention focused primarily on defeating a terrorist force intent on turning Malaya into a communist nation, western-oriented Malayan leaders increasingly evinced a desire to change the educational policy of Malaya so that it would do more to support the development of a Malayan national consciousness, howbeit within the framework of western educational ideals. Their commitment culminated in the Education
Ordinance of 1952, a law that called for "national schools"—schools wherein children from all races in Malaya would study together, using either Malay or English as the medium of instruction.

From 1953 on, the most vociferous demands for educational policy change originated from those Malayans—Chinese, Malay, and Indian—determined to preserve their individual communal heritages, which they felt were threatened by national schools. Thus, in the third period from 1953 to 1957 when an internal struggle to see which group of Malayans would be in control of Malaya when its independence was achieved took center stage, one group, the Alliance Party leaders, increasingly came to base their political efforts on the discontent engendered by the 1952 Education Ordinance. In so doing, the leaders of this group became publicly committed to changing educational policy so that it would more nearly coincide with the educational demands of the country's three communities. The Alliance won an overwhelming victory in the first Federation election in 1955, and the next year they introduced a new educational policy for Malaya that fulfilled their election commitments.

While many of the educational policies introduced by the Alliance government looked somewhat reactionary when compared to those produced by earlier Malayan leaders, the new government's insistence on including a much greater percentage of Malaya's children in education—in spite of
seeming financial barriers, and in spite of an admitted possible lowering of educational standards--was of almost revolutionary significance.

This is a history, then, of shifting commitments to and the resulting changes in educational policy in a milieu of emerging nationalistic aspirations, interwoven with leadership struggles within those groups endeavoring to gain Malayan independence.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**PREFACE** ................................. ii

**ABSTRACT** ............................... v

**NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY** ........................ xii

**CHAPTER I. MALAYA TO 1945**

- General History to 1819 ................ 1
- General History, 1819-1941 ................. 4
- Malay Education to 1819 .................. 13
- English Education, 1819-1941 ................. 14
- Malay Education, 1819-1941 ................ 18
- Chinese Education, 1819-1941 ................. 24
- Indian Education, 1819-1941 ................. 26
- Colonial Educational Policy, 1941 ............ 28
- World War II, 1941-1945 .................. 29

**CHAPTER II. POSTWAR BRITISH EDUCATIONAL POLICY FOR MALAYA, SEPTEMBER 1945--FEBRUARY 1948**

- British Wartime Political Planning ......... 36
- B.M.A. and MacMichael Treaties ............... 38
- Malay Reactions to the MacMichael Treaties ........ 42
- The Malayan Union ....................... 46
- British Wartime Educational Policy
  Developments .......................... 50
- B.M.A.--Educational Practices ............. 53
- The Cheeseman Policy ...................... 56
- The Rise of Teachers Unions ................ 62
- The Carr-Saunders Committee ............... 64
- Estate Schools ......................... 67

**CHAPTER III. THE COMMUNITIES LIAISON COMMITTEE, FEBRUARY 1948--DECEMBER 1949**

- The Federation of Malaya Agreement ........ 72
- The Emergency ......................... 74
- The M.C.A. ................................ 79
- The Emergency and Education ............... 81
- The Communities Liaison Committee ........ 85
- "Malay and English... Compulsory"
  Debate ................................ 94

**CHAPTER IV. THE CENTRAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

- DECEMBER 1949--AUGUST 1950
- Trouble at the Sultan Idris Training
  College ................................ 105
- The Emergency and Chinese Education ........ 110
- The Draft Development Plan ................ 113
CHAPTER V. THE BARNES REPORT
AUGUST 1950--MAY 1951
General Conditions in Malaya
The Member System.
The I.M.P.
The Barnes Report.
The Barnes Report Recommendations.

CHAPTER VI. THE FENN-WU REPORT AND THE SECOND CENTRAL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REPORT
AUGUST 1950--NOVEMBER 1951
Government Support for Chinese Education
The Fenn-Wu Mission.
The Fenn-Wu Report.
The Fenn-Wu Report Recommendations.
Public Reaction to Barnes and Fenn-Wu
Report.
Second Central Advisory Committee on
Education Report.
Debate on the Second Central Advisory
Committee's Education Report.

CHAPTER VII. THE GOVERNMENT, THE EMERGENCY, AND CHINESE
EDUCATION
NOVEMBER 1951--SEPTEMBER 1952
Death of Gurney.
General Templer.
Formation of the Alliance.
British Views on Independence.
The Government, the Emergency, and
Chinese Education.
Adult Education Associations.

CHAPTER VIII. THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, 1952
OCTOBER 1952--NOVEMBER 1952
Special Legislative Council Committee
Report.
Proposed Education Bill.
Public Reaction.
Debate on the Special Committee Report.
Debate on the Education Bill.
Registration and Licensing of Businesses
Bill.
Education Development Fund Bill.

CHAPTER IX. IMPLEMENTING THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, 1952
NOVEMBER 1952--MARCH 1954
Formation of Party Negara.
Early Government Statements on
Implementation.
## CHAPTER XIV. THE RAZAK REPORT
### AUGUST 1955--MAY 1956
- The Alliance Government: 417
- The Alliance Government and Educational Policy: 420
- 1955 Budget Session: 426
- Public Comments on Educational Policy: 433
- The Razak Report: 435
- Public Reaction: 443
- Debate on the Razak Report: 445

## CHAPTER XV. THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, 1957
### MAY 1956--AUGUST 1957
- The Chinese and the Razak Report: 450
- The Malays and the Razak Report: 455
- "Operation Torch": 462
- The 1956 Budget Session: 465
- The Education Bill, 1957: 472
- Debate on Education Bill, 1957: 479
- Public Reaction: 484

## CHAPTER XVI. CONCLUSION: 488

## APPENDIX: 505

## BIBLIOGRAPHY: 523
NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Malaya: the area under British rule on the Malay Peninsula (excluding Singapore after April 1, 1946)

Malayan: either (1) the people of Malaya or (2) an adjective for all or part of the area known as Malaya

Malay: an ethnic group of Malayo-Polynesian stock

Indian: an ethnic group whose origins were in India or Ceylon

European: Caucasian peoples, although most of these are of British nationality

Tunku (Tengku): inherited Malay title meaning prince or princess

Dato (Dato, Dato') : title conferred by a sultan (not inherited)

Mentri Besar: highest official in the state government (Malay section)

Haji: title for Muslim who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca, usually prefaced by Tuan, an honorific form of address

Ra'ayat: the common people (Malay)

dollar: Malayan dollar unless otherwise noted—approximately equivalent to 33 1/3 ø U.S.

COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

B.M.A. British Military Administration
UMNO United Malays National Organization
M.C.A. Malayan Chinese Association
M.I.C. Malayan Indian Congress
I.M.P. Independence of Malaya Party
P.M.I.P. Pan-Malayan Islamic Party
CHAPTER I

MALAYA TO 1945

GENERAL HISTORY TO 1819.

It is important to an understanding of Malayan education to be aware of the physical and demographic factors involved.¹ Malaya is a land some 350 miles long and averaging approximately 150 miles in width. It is bisected for most of its length by a mountain range averaging approximately 4,000 feet in height (the highest peak is 7,186 feet). These mountains lie about one-third of the distance from the west coast, leaving a much larger lowland area to the east than to the west. Almost all of Malaya was at one time covered with tropical jungle, and much of it remains that way today—35 per cent being modified by human use. These jungles are cut by rivers flowing from the main mountain range into the China Sea on the east coast and to the Straits of Malacca or the Indian Ocean on the west. The weather is tropical—hot and humid. Monsoons affect the rainfall pattern on both the east and west coast, but the eastern monsoon is the more pronounced and often leads to flooding along the rivers.

The first people to arrive in Malaya settled along the natural highways provided by these rivers. It is believed that in prehistoric times there were two waves of migrants.

¹ The geographical materials included below are from E.H.G. Dobby, Southeast Asia (London, 1950), Chapters 6, 7, & 8, pp. 87-146.
from the north. The first produced what today are the aborigines of the central highlands and remote lowlands, and the second produced the Malays, who dominated the area when the Europeans arrived on the scene.

The early history of the Malays is obscure.² It is not until around 1400 A.D. that anything like a clear historical picture can be obtained, and even then the story is only relatively well documented for the people of one small segment of what is today western Malaya. This story reveals the founding and developing of a Malay empire centered at Malacca.³

With the advent of the Portuguese in Southeast Asia in 1509 an element much easier to trace was introduced into the area. It is not that much more is known about the Malays themselves until some time after this date, but the role of at least one of the ingredients making up Malaya's history can be followed quite accurately.⁴

In 1641 the Dutch supplanted the Portuguese in Malacca. They were no more successful in expanding their political control in Malaya than the Portuguese had been, limiting themselves as they did to sporadic attempts to control the tin

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⁴ See bibliographical note in Wheatley, p. 236.
In the period between 1500 and 1819 there was an influx of people from various parts of the Indonesian archipelago. The Buginese and the Minangkebaus have become the most well known of these. Both groups were of Malayo-Polynesian stock, and thus both were easily assimilated. The Buginese came to dominate certain of the sultanates (Selangor, Johore, Kedah, and Perak) and the Minangkebaus occupied and controlled what is now the state of Negri Sembilan.

Thai intruders from the north have been a part of Malayan history for centuries. They were able to gain varying degrees of control of the different Malay states. Their control at any one time depended upon the distance of the Malay state from Thailand, the strength of the Thai government of the period, and the political conditions in Malaya. Their proximity to Thailand and their distance from centers of Malay political power meant that the northern Malay states of Petani, Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah, and Perak were the most affected.

The governments of the Malay states in the years from 1400 to 1876 were autocratic. Each state contained a small ruling class and a large group of common people. At the

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6 Winstedt, History, pp. 143-145, 155.

7 Ibid., p. 163, and passim.
head of each state was a sultan, but the title can be misleading if it is not recognized that these men did not have absolute control of their states. The various lesser nobility were often almost autonomous in their own regions.8

Slaves were a common feature of everyday life, being obtained either through capture or in payment of debt.9

Islam had come to be the dominant religious belief of the Malays, but it was superimposed on Hindu, and even Buddhist, practices of the past. And side by side with Islam were the animistic teachings and practices of the bomoh and dukun, men and women who practiced a combination of herb medicine and magical arts, practices which exist even to this day, handed on from one practitioner to the next.10

GENERAL HISTORY, 1819 to 1941.

The British first gained a foothold in Malaya when Sir Francis Light took control of Pulau Penang11 in 1786.

8 J.M. Gullick, Indigenous Political Systems of Western Malaya (London, 1958), p. 44. This is assumed to be relatively more true for the 19th century than for the earlier years.

9 Ibid., pp. 99-105. For example, if a commoner needed money, he might borrow it from his chief. If the debtor at the end of a stipulated time could not pay, he became the slave of the chief (and if he married, so did his family) until the debt was paid off (pp. 99-100).


11 Penang Island.
But British activities did not assume large proportions in Malaya until 1819, when under the prodding of Raffles they acquired Singapore Island, located at the tip of the Malay Peninsula. In both Penang and Singapore the British East India Company tried to keep clear of mainland Malayan political troubles and to concentrate on sea trade and protection of this trade. Increased turmoil inland on the Peninsula caused Settlement authorities, encouraged by local Chinese businessmen, to push for increased intervention. But it was not until the British sensed the threat of Germany's entering where they refused to tread that action was inaugurated.

In 1867 control of the Straits Settlements had passed from the British East India Company to the British government, and in 1874 a treaty was concluded between England and one of the claimants to the sultanate of Perak. This treaty in effect gave the British control of the government of that state. Similar treaties with other regions of Malaya followed, until by 1914 all of Malaya was under the control of the British.

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12 Winstedt, History, p. 222.
15 Ibid., p. 201.
All these treaties followed much the same pattern. In them it was stated that the British were to provide a Resident "... whose advice," in the words of the treaty, "must be asked and acted upon on all questions other than those touching Malay Religion and Custom."  

As time passed and the British wanted more functions "properly" performed by the state governments, they brought in other Britishers to run the various departments: education, finance, agriculture, etc.

In theory, each Malay state maintained its independence until after World War II. But in practice, British "advice" had the effect of law. However, the personalities, both British and Malay, who occupied the top positions in the state governments, plus the geographical location and importance of the state, tended to modify the actual situation in these areas.

In 1895, after four of the nine states were united to form the Federated Malay States (Pahang, Selangor, Negri Sembilan, and Perak), there was a recognizable loss of power by the four state governments to the newly established central government.

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16 Ibid., p. 120.  
17 W.E. Maxwell and W.S. Gibson, Treaties and Engagements Affecting the Malay States and Borneo (London, 1924), pp. 28 ff. (In the Unfederated Malay States the Resident was entitled "British Adviser." Emerson, Malaysia, p. 207.)  
18 Interview with Haji Abdul Mubin Sheppard, October 3, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.  
19 Emerson, Malaysia, p. 139.
Meanwhile, though the treaties with them tended to look the same, relations between the British and the remaining five Unfederated Malay States (Perlis, Perak, Kelantan, Trengganu, and Johore) were not uniform. Even after 1914 when it finally accepted an Adviser, Johore maintained more independence of action than did the others.20 And Kedah, being located so close to Penang, one of the centers of British economic power, tended to lose more of its independence of action than did the others.

The governmental structure that had evolved by 1941 was quite complex. There were, in effect, seven political units which went to make up Malaya, the Crown Colony of the Straits Settlements (Singapore, Malacca, and Penang), the Federated Malay States, and each of the five Unfederated Malay States. Over all these was a British colonial official who was Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner of both the Federated Malay States and the five Unfederated Malay States. In the Straits Settlement there was a Legislative Council comprised of official and unofficial members (nominated by the Governor) where prospective laws were discussed and approval or disapproval recorded. The Council had no authority to introduce legislation, and since there were a majority of official members, such legislation as the colonial power introduced was certain of obtaining

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20 Ibid., p. 201.
The Federated Malay States had a Federal Council whose powers were much the same as the Legislative Council in the Straits Settlements. It too had both official and unofficial members. However, here legislation had to be approved in order to pass, and had to gain the signatures of the four sultans concerned. (This could not legally present a problem, because the Residents of the four states involved were official members of the Federal Council, and their advice had to be accepted by the sultans.)

The unfederated states had each had a State Council. However, these varied in their powers, Johore's being the most influential in making law, Kelantan's and Trengganu's being relatively insignificant.

Politically, most Malays gave their loyalty to the sultans and aristocrats of their own state. Only a few young intellectuals had begun to talk of a "Malaya for the Malays." The Chinese gave most of their attention to


22 Emerson, Malaysia, p. 180.

23 Barnett, p. 57.


political affairs in China, and in this regard they were quite active, having representative organizations for both the Kuomintang and the Communists; and the little Indian political consciousness that existed was centered on India's affairs.\(^\text{26}\) As one source has it: "One vitally important thing to emphasize is that at this time none of the three races owed any allegiance to Malaya as a political unit.\(^\text{27}\)

It seems, too, that while there existed these three racial communities, each with its own particular culture and language, there were few expressions of communalism in prewar Malaya. The Chinese seemed well aware of their Chinese-ness, as were the Indians their Indian-ness. But for both this did not spill over into strong feelings about the other races in Malaya.

It seems less certain that the Malays thought of themselves as Malays. Rather, as with their political self-identification, for most of them their community identification was limited to at most their state, e.g., one was a Kelantanese, not a Malayan.

With the advent of the British into Singapore in 1819 there arrived another group who came to influence affairs in Malaya considerably—the Chinese. The few Chinese already in Malaya (shopkeepers, planters, and interisland

\(^\text{26}\) Ibid., p. 67.
\(^\text{27}\) Silcock and Aziz, p. 279.
shippers) wanted cheap labor for their rapidly expanding businesses--and the combination of pressure of poor times in China and the needs of Chinese businessmen in Malaya resulted in a rapid increase in the number of Chinese immigrants coming to the area.  

In the initial years most Chinese were drawn into the fast-growing economy of Singapore, but even in this period some few went into the west coast states to work in tin mines which were becoming increasingly important there. By mid-century the Chinese had become an important factor in the affairs of the western states of Perak, Selangor, and Negri Sembilan.  

The Chinese who settled in Malaya did not come from the same region of China, and thus did not necessarily speak the same dialect. Most of these immigrants were men, and it was not until the 1920's and 1930's that Chinese women were encouraged to come to Malaya. Because the Chinese thought of themselves as temporary residents in Malaya, only a few of them actually became involved in any way with Malayan

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28 There had been a few Chinese in Malaya since the time of the Malacca Sultanate.


30 Ibid., p. 7.

31 Ibid., pp. 8-9.

32 Silcock and Aziz, pp. 271-278.
oriented political activities. Instead, by 1941 the leading members of the Chinese community had as their main fields of interest commerce (following a pattern found in most of Southeast Asia) and mining. In commerce they did not own the largest firms—these were reserved for the big British companies, with their shipping contacts. Rather, the Chinese were the middlemen: those who bought from and sold to the primary producers.

After 1900 a new product, rubber, began to make an impact on Malaya's economy, and in time outranked tin as principal export. With the advent of the rubber estate a third population group was introduced into the country: South Indians (primarily Tamils). There had been Indian influences in Malaya for centuries, but there had been, so far as is known, no large influx of settlers previous to the twentieth century. Indian traders, seamen, and religious teachers had made up the bulk of the early contacts with Malaya. Now in the 1900's estate owners in Malaya, mostly Europeans, turned to South India for coolie labor. Since the biggest concentrations of rubber estates were in the

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35 R.N. Jackson, Immigrant Labour and the Development of Malaya, 1786-1920 (Kuala Lumpur, 1967), p. 120.
west coast regions, the largest number of South Indians came to be located there. As with the Chinese, these immigrants were almost all men—men, be it added, with little intention of remaining permanently in Malaya. In a majority of cases these men did return to India, but there were some who chose to stay on—those who advanced in the hierarchy of the estate, or who were able to set themselves up as small businessmen. In a few cases some broke completely with their past and became professional men (lawyers and teachers, primarily).

To conclude, Malaya, just prior to World War II, had a population made up of approximately 10 per cent Indians and 45 per cent each of Chinese and Malays. The Malays were rural small holders, the chief rice producers; the Indians were rubber estate workers; and the Chinese were tin miners, urban shopkeepers, and businessmen.

The prewar British colonial government wanted no trouble, and felt that the best way to avoid it was not to rock the economic and ethnic boat. Their policy in all fields was to ensure stability as far as possible, and any changes that were attempted were designed to bring about even greater stability. Independence for Malaya was a part of British policy, but it was to occur at some distant period not yet clearly designated or delimited.

36 Dobby, Southeast Asia, p. 137.
37 Jackson, p. 139.
MALAY EDUCATION TO 1819.

It was within the framework of Islam that anything like formal education was carried out in Malaya in the period prior to the introduction of western ideas. Each village had a religious center, where religious schools were conducted. Here, religious leaders sought to teach Malay boys the Koran, not so much so that it would be understood, but rather so that it could be repeated properly. Each kampong (village) had its own eman, who was responsible for this type of education. Wandering holy teachers, gurus, also added to the religious knowledge of the village lads. 38

There were some few of the more well-to-do or ambitious Malays who had traveled abroad. Many of these people went on the haj, the holy pilgrimage to Mecca. But most of the Malay religious teachers themselves understood little of what they were teaching. 39

Thus, even in these early times the curriculum content of education came to Malaya from abroad and was not an indigenous development.


ENGLISH EDUCATION, 1819 to 1941.

It is important to point out that after the British began to exert an influence in Malaya four separate educational systems came to exist side by side. And each of the four had its own medium of instruction (English, Malay, Chinese, and Indian [Tamil]). A summary of these educational systems follows.

Almost everyone who has set out to comment on the coming of western education in Malaya has started with the Penang Free School. This school was founded in 1816 in the city of Georgetown on Pulau Penang. It was a private but to some degree government-aided English school (at first it included vernacular sections), and it was this type of school that came to dominate the educational scene in Malaya—not in numbers, but in prestige, and in its position of pre-eminence in policy consideration. It was called a "free" school, but like most English schools in Malaya, it was not free. Instead, fees were paid by most of the students attending.  

40 English schools were so-named not because they were schools for the English. Rather, they were designated thus solely because English was their medium of instruction.

An Anglo-Chinese school was established in Malacca as early as 1818\textsuperscript{42} by British missionaries who had been unable to get established in China.\textsuperscript{43}

Raffles, the man who founded Singapore for the British, was a man vitally interested in education. He proposed that a school be set up in Singapore in order to (1) educate the sons of high ranking natives; (2) offer native language instruction to kampong officials and such others as might desire it; and (3) collect the literature and traditions of the country. It was to have departments of science, Chinese, Siamese, and Malay. The building for this school was actually constructed, but Raffles' successor, although he promised to do so, failed to carry through with Raffles' plans and the building came to be inhabited for a time by squatters. In 1837 it was taken over by the Singapore Free School, founded

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in 1834 to teach English to outstanding boys from vernacular schools. This school later assumed the name of Raffles Institution (1863).  

Even after the British had assumed control of all of Malaya in 1914, the development of English schools did not proceed evenly throughout the area. The unfederated states tended to lag far behind the federated states, the rural areas behind the urban areas (and thus the Malay areas behind the Chinese areas) in the number and quality of their English schools.

There were some attempts made after World War I to expand the teaching of English to include more Malays, but those who advocated this course were in complete retreat by 1923, both because of government financial problems and the conviction held by such men as Richard O. Winstedt that English education would interfere with the "agricultural and industrial life" of the Malays.

In the Straits Settlements there was little government support for education until after control of the colony was taken from the East India Company and put under the Colonial Office in 1867.

44 Ibid., pp. 16-20.
46 Report of the Proceedings of an Educational Conference held in Singapore on 17th to 30th August, 1923.
47 Ibid., p. 2. Winstedt was one of the three most influential English civil servants to make an impact on Malay education before World War II (see below, p. 19).
The government itself operated very few English schools. Rather, they were built and run by Christian missionaries. Government grants-in-aid were not begun on a regular basis until 1920. Then schools were paid per capita grants based on the results of an inspection each year.48

Just prior to the Japanese invasion of Malaya in 1941, English schools could be described as follows: The schools were conducted in the medium of English, but were open to members of all races. Students entered at age six-plus and continued for eleven years through Primary I and II and then Standard I through IX.

Some of these English schools offered lower level classes only. For example, government English schools were either primary (Primary I and II and Standard I), middle, or secondary institutions. Missionary schools usually preferred to operate a single school containing all eleven grade levels.

The staffs of these English schools were of three types: the missionaries; teachers trained in state operated normal-teacher-training programs; and "expatriates," English members of the Malayan Education Service with the rank of education officer. The missionaries furnished the backbone of the staffs of government-aided English schools; the normal-trained teachers and the education officers provided the staffs

48 Mason, "Education in Malaya," p. 29.
of government schools. Normal-trained teachers had begun to complain even in the period before World War II that government schools were staffed with two separate services, "and never the twain shall meet." That is, they felt they had almost no chance to achieve the rank of education officer, and without this rank the higher positions in the education service were closed to them.

MALAY EDUCATION, 1819-1941.

Meanwhile, another system of education was developed for the Malays. During the period between 1819 and 1867 this system was initiated and expanded through the work of missionaries, not the East India Company. In fact, these missionaries were not usually from England, for it was official policy not to allow proselytizing—it was thought best not to upset the local people by challenging their customs and beliefs. Thus it was the French Catholics and American Methodists who came to dominate this field.49

After 1867 the government of the Straits Settlements began seriously to attempt to provide education for Malay children. In 1872 the first Inspector of Schools was appointed for the colony,50 and in 1878 a Malay teachers' college was started in Singapore which lasted seventeen

49 Ibid., p. 18; Cheeseman, Education in Malaya, p. 3.
years. After 1888 Malay boys were admitted free to any government English school in the Straits Settlements after they had finished their vernacular school training.

It was only shortly after the British assumed the role of "adviser" to the government of Selangor in 1875 that a government Malay school was set up at Klang.51

In the early years of the twentieth century, the first of three men important in the formation of pre-World War II Malayan educational policy appeared in Malaya. This man, R.J. Wilkinson, encouraged the establishment of a Malay vernacular training college for teachers in 1898 at Taiping. Two years later this college was moved to Malacca. A second college was opened at Batang in Perak in 1913. In 1922 Sultan Idris Training College at Tanjong Malim, Perak, was opened and the other two closed. All of these were for Malay men only.

In 1905 Wilkinson was responsible for the founding of what was to become in 1909 the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar, an English language residential college for Malay boys of "good" family. What Wilkinson had in mind was to offer the possibility of an English public school education, leading to government service, for sons of the Malay traditional elite and at the same time include some Malay boys from lower-class background who could qualify.

Whatever Wilkinson's intentions may have been, the school as it evolved was one in which most of the students were drawn from royal and noble families. A mere handful came from common stock. 52

The second man to leave his mark on pre-World War II Malay education was Richard O. Winstedt. He had been in the country some fourteen years when, after receiving an appointment as Assistant Director of Education (Malay), he was asked to make a survey of educational facilities in the Dutch East Indies with a view to gaining ideas for Malay education. Winstedt came back convinced that Malay vernacular education should contain the kind of curriculum that would prepare its recipients to do the kind of work their environment called for. This, for Malays, was to be basket weaving and other such handicrafts as Winstedt felt would fit the needs of a rural society. Enough reading and writing to become literate were all that was to be offered. This called for three to four years of training, and that was the number of standards offered in most Malay vernacular schools. 53

William Roff, author of a soon-to-be-published book on pre-World War II Malay nationalism, suggests that paradoxically it was the implementation of Winstedt's policy that


53 Cheeseman, Education in Malaya, p. 9; there were no Primary I and II as were found in English schools.
finally led to the development of an "autochthonous intelligentsia" among the Malays; and that it was the headmaster of the newly organized Sultan Idris Training College at Tanjong Malim, O.T. Dussek (the third of those men who strongly influenced Malay education) who was the main force behind this development. Dussek, who, while agreeing with Winstedt in principle, could not rest content with a curriculum that stopped short of literary education. So, while "practical" subjects were taught at Tanjong Malim, Dussek continued upgrading the academic side of the curriculum as well—and this in Malay. Increasingly the utilitarian role of the school shifted to the background in favor of the study, use, and development of the Malay language, literature, and history.  

The situation in 1941 in Malay schools was as follows: Teachers for the Malay schools either came directly from primary schools, having completed five or perhaps six years of Malay vernacular schooling, or they were given an additional three years of training at the Sultan Idris Training College, Tanjong Malim, or the Malay Women's Teacher Training College, Malacca—the latter instituted in 1936.

54 It was to be graduates of this school who formed the grass roots leadership of a political party, UMNO, that came to power when the first federal elections were held in Malaya in 1955 (see below, p. 379). Roff presents the thesis that there were in Malaya by 1941 three groups of Malays, each having nationalistic inclinations. First there were the Arabic-educated, Islamic-centered Malays; then there were the English-educated, urban, government service group; and finally there were the Tanjong Malim--trained Malay teachers ("Origins of Malay Nationalism," pp. 114-115, 163).
The Malay vernacular schools were free, all expenses being met by the various state governments. In most states attendance had come to be "compulsory" for boys, but there was a loophole: If there were no school within a two-mile radius of the child's home he need not attend.\footnote{The Laws of the Federated Malay States, III, 1935, pp. 2439-40. Hereafter cited as \textit{Laws, 1935, III}.} Furthermore, the law was not strictly enforced even when the child lived within the two-mile limit. Enforcement depended considerably on the personality and policy position of the top British administrators in each particular state. Most Malays lived in the rural areas, and this meant that a large percentage of them lived more than two miles from the schools. The result was that considerably less than half of those eligible were in school.\footnote{Total enrolment in Malay schools, 1941: 129,551. (\textit{Annual Report on Education for 1946}, p. 132.) In 1947 there were over a million Malays in the twelve to eighteen age group. (\textit{A Report on the 1947 Census of Population} [London, n.d.], Chart facing p. 54.)}

The law did not suggest that Malays must attend school for very long. The limits were set by age (seven to fourteen). Or, if the child had passed the highest standard of schooling available (usually Standard III or IV, depending on the locality, but sometimes as high as Standard VI), this was enough to give him exemption from further attendance.\footnote{\textit{Laws, 1935, III}, pp. 2439-40.}
If the Malay child wished to continue his academic education beyond primary schooling, he had to do it in "English" schools (with the exception of the Sultan Idris Training College at Tanjong Malim mentioned above). The system provided for this by having what were called "Special Malay Classes" in English schools to which the Malay students transferred after three years in their vernacular school. For one or two years, depending on their abilities, they were taught practically nothing but the English language, and then transferred to Standard III or IV in the English stream of the English school, where they continued their training along with the students who had begun their schooling in English schools. This did not put the Malay children as far behind as it sounds, for Standard III was the fifth year of schooling in English schools, and the Malays had had four or five years of schooling, so they would be about the same age as those who started from the beginning in English-medium schools.

Although primary education was free for the Malays, it was seldom that a Malay student gained as much as six years of primary education. And it was a rare Malay who went on to the secondary schools, let alone the university.58

58 Figures provided by the Kelantan Annual Report on Malay Schools, 1946, were as follows (for 1947): There were 58 such schools. Two went to Standard VI, seven to Standard V, and "about" ten up to Standard IV. "The policy... was to give an education to the children in rural areas up to Standard III only." (p. 1). Kelantan had no English schools until 1935. (Annual Report of the Education Department, Kelantan, 1935, pp. 12, 13.)
CHINESE EDUCATION, 1819 to 1941.

The third educational system was operated by the Chinese, who have long been noted for their interest in education. As some of the Chinese immigrants gained positions of wealth, they began to be able to cater to the desire to educate their children. They set up private Chinese schools modeled on the schools of China, both in curriculum and in politics, and in these prewar days the political concerns of most of Malaya's Chinese schools were centered on China's struggles. 59

Classes taught in early Malayan Chinese schools covered such subjects as language, ethics, classics, history, geography, and arithmetic. Confucianism, with its emphasis on loyalty to one's ancestors was also included. 60 (An English account of these schools is somewhat less favorable, speaking of teachers whose main forte was fortune telling and divining.) 61

Kuo Yu (colloquial Mandarin) had been introduced in a few schools in China even before 1911, but it did not gain a real foothold there until the 1920's. 62 This pattern was

60 Ibid.
61 Annual Report on Education for 1932, p. 14. The truth would seem to lie somewhere between the two views. Even as late as 1949 a very few Chinese schools were still using the pre-1920 Chinese traditional education. (Annual Report on Education for 1949, p. 57.)
reflected in Chinese schools in Malaya. 63

Malayan Chinese education was designed to prepare the child to enter the world of business. This is not to say that politics and matters concerning politics were left out of the educational curriculum of the Chinese. But it is to say that the emphasis was definitely on preparing for a business life and not for government civil service.

In 1920 the first education law was passed in the Federated Malay States that specifically affected Chinese schools--the Schools Registration Enactment. 64 It stated that all Chinese schools must register with the government. Many of these schools closed rather than obey this new law, for the Chinese were fearful that it would mean that they would have to give up their schools' close educational bonds with China if they complied. 65

In the mid-1920's the first government grants-in-aid were offered to Malayan Chinese schools. The schools which accepted aid were required to prepare their Chinese students for future education in English schools by including the teaching of English of a certain standard. 66 Almost all

63 Mason, "Education in Malaya," p. 33.
65 Cheeseman, p. 11.
66 Lee, p. 118.
Chinese schools refused this aid for the same reason they resisted the Schools Registration Enactment: fear of government control.

Over 90 per cent of the schools were managed by local Chinese management committees, the exceptions being a few run by individuals for private profit, by missionaries, or by the government (two as of 1941), but there were few locally operated training centers for Chinese teachers. Most of the teachers of Chinese schools were recruited from China.

By 1941 the Chinese had set up a wide network of primary schools, most of which taught in the medium of Chinese (Kuo Yu). Few graduates of these primary schools went on to obtain a secondary education in a Chinese-medium secondary school, and there were not more than fifteen of these secondary schools in existence when the war began in Malaya.

A fourth education system existed in Malaya in pre-World War II years for the Indians and was developed in part because of pressures originating in India, and in part because

67 There were two small (total enrolment approximately 550 in 1946) primary co-educational schools located in Kuala Lumpur. Both were free. (Annual Report on Education for 1946, p. 27.) They are usually only mentioned in passing, if they are mentioned at all, in reports on education in Malaya.

68 Annual Report on Education for 1946, p. 76.

69 Ibid., p. 135.
of the recognition by estate owners of the need for furnishing some education for the children of Indian coolies. The British colonial government passed a law in 1912 requiring the estate owners themselves to provide schools, buildings, and staff for the children of their labor forces. This law was administered, however, not by the Education Departments in each state, but by Labour Departments.

As in the case of Malay and English educational policy implementation, the effects of this law were quite uneven. Some estate owners recognized the need for educating their laborers. Others felt it was at least a waste of money, and perhaps even dangerous to the continued effectiveness of their labor force.

The government gave a small per capita grant for the support of these schools. They were to provide a four-year course. The curriculum had a rural bias similar to that of Malay schools. Buildings were often of the most flimsy construction, with little thought to sanitation or to providing the proper equipment for learning.

A few Indian schools were operated by the government, by associations, or by private individuals. In some cases these may have gone as high as Standard VII. However, most Indian parents who desired that their children be educated beyond a fourth year sent them to an English school.  

70 Cheeseman, Education in Malaya, p. 12; Mason, "Education in Malaya," p. 3.
COLONIAL EDUCATIONAL POLICY, 1941.

While the attitude towards women in education was to be of special concern in the post-World War II period, in the prewar period Malayan women of all races were pretty much excluded from the educational process. The Malays were not too anxious to have their women educated because of Islamic ideas on the role of women in society; the Tamils and the Chinese because of attitudes which stressed the importance of the male being educated before one invested in the female. It has been said of British educational policy in Malaya up to World War II that it was to train the Malays to keep their place in the economic structure of the colony:

There will always be a large number of Malay children with no aptitude for languages or literary pursuits, whose mental and moral development will depend mainly on the discipline of the village school with the opportunity it provides for studying the 'three R's', benefiting by physical and manual training, and acquiring such rudiments of simple agriculture as will fit them for the free life of that country-side, where the happiness and economic interests of their race have lain for centuries. 71

Roff comments:

The same paternalism and protectionism which prompted the nurture of the traditional ruling class also required (as did the need to maintain rice production for the population as a whole) that the Malay peasants should as far as possible be left in undisturbed enjoyment of his customary way of life. 72

Events of the time indicate that whether or not this was the overt aim of British prewar educational policy for Malays, the result was such that it might as well have been.

The Chinese were to be allowed to go their own way as long as their educational activities did not disturb the government of Malaya. Indian education was designed to provide the children with only enough education to keep estate owners' consciences clear and the Government of India satisfied. And the primary aim of English schools was to make their pupils bilingual, speaking both English and their own mother tongue, as a preparation for minor government posts. 73

The English colonial government of Malaya's policy towards education in the period before World War II could perhaps best be summed up by the expression: "Don't rock the boat." 74

WORLD WAR II, 1941 to 1945.

The Japanese landed in Kelantan in early December of 1941. By the end of January, 1942, they had taken Singapore. The effect of this rapid take-over of Malaya was shattering. Seeing the English rounded up and removed to detention camps was a revelation to people who had been for so long used to

73 Cheeseman, Education in Malaya, p. 6.

74 See Emerson, Malaya, pp. 516-517, for further comments along these lines.
believing that Europeans were an all-powerful group. It is well to remember that for a number of years prior to World War II, everything had come from above via these Europeans: law, educational policy, financial policy—money itself. And when the source of all this power was removed, and removed forcefully and ignominiously, it made a tremendous impact on those who had previously been the recipients of actions based on this power. But there was more. The Chinese businessmen and traders who had previously come in contact most frequently with the kampong Malays were likewise buffeted about by the conqueror.

It has been alleged that the Japanese were particularly harsh on the Chinese in Malaya, and one reason suggested for this action was that it grew out of attitudes developed during the two nations' long war in China. Perhaps this was part of the reason, but there was more to it than this. In general it could be said that the Chinese were the urban dwellers of Malaya, while the Malays and the Indians were the rural workers; and since urban centers were the areas most easily controlled by an invading army, the Chinese naturally had much more contact with the Japanese, and were much more apt to run afoul of them than were the Malays and Indians.

Business fell off rapidly when the Japanese took over Malaya because the means of transporting Malayan goods to overseas markets were no longer available. The Japanese did not have the ability to transport Malaya's rubber and
tin, and, even if they had been able to, they would have had little to bring in, in exchange. This economic development had its greatest impact on the Chinese businessmen of Malaya. 75

In contrast to the Europeans and the Chinese, the Malays and Indians were seldom abused. Rather, first the Indians and then, near the end of the war, the Malays were encouraged to exert themselves and develop their national inclinations: the Indians vis a vis India, and the Malays in their own areas.

From the first the Malays were put into most of the important government positions open to those not Japanese, and all of the existing Malay state government institutions centering around the sultans were encouraged to exert more influence among the Malays. 76

The Indians were encouraged to identify themselves with their homeland. This encouragement led to the formation of an army of liberation, which actually moved into Burma and did some fighting. 77

At first there was little guerrilla activity in Malaya. But as the war progressed this situation changed, and by the


77 Winstedt, History, p. 49.
end of the war there was a well-organized guerrilla force in the country, made up mostly of Chinese. This force was predominantly communist-led. That these guerrilla forces were communist controlled was known to the Allies, but the need for information plus a hope that they would be useful in the anticipated invasion had led the Allies to support them.\textsuperscript{78}

There were two factors that make it difficult to speak about an educational policy in Malaya during World War II. One was that there were actually two occupying forces in Malaya during the latter half of the war. In late 1943 the four northern states were ceded to Thailand by Japan, and Thai educational policies were different from those of the Japanese. For example, the Thais were much more lenient towards Chinese education and allowed some Chinese schools to reopen.\textsuperscript{79} The other factor was that each Malay state had its own governor. In Perak, for example, in the early years of the occupation, the Japanese governor was a civilian whose rule was quite benign.\textsuperscript{80}

Although the educational policy of the Japanese during the war period is not clear, certain aspects of it are


\textsuperscript{79} Annual Report on Education for 1946, p. 15; Annual Report for the Malayan Union for 1945, April-December, p. 50.

\textsuperscript{80} Interview with ex-Malay Government official, November 9, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
definite enough. They were opposed to English education, and it was officially discouraged throughout most of the war. However, it is evident that English education did continue, either surreptitiously or because the authorities winked at its existence, in certain areas of the country. And in late August of 1945, after the war was over but before the British returned, the Japanese allowed the re-introduction of English teaching in some areas of Malaya. 81

Chinese education was also banned, but like English education it was surreptitiously carried on, even in those areas which were most thoroughly controlled and where this law was most harshly enforced, as in Singapore. 82

While the effect of the occupation on Malay education was, in the latter phases of the war, quite retrogressive, in the first years of the occupation, attendance in some Malay schools actually increased, and there was no attempt by the Japanese to disrupt these educational streams. As the war went on, however, teachers could not afford to teach, parents were not able to clothe and feed children properly, transportation broke down, and education materials and buildings were in increasingly short supply. In the cities buildings were often occupied by the Japanese military.

With this economic worsening, school attendance dropped dramatically. Lack of food and medicine caused ill health; lack of clothing meant that the children went about naked; and overall poverty meant that parents needed their children to work on the land. These factors, plus the apathy brought on by the general conditions of the occupation, all played their part in keeping attendance down. Enrolment remained nearly the same as at the outbreak of the war, but attendance, which in the early war years was in the 80 per cents dropped just above the 50 per cent mark by 1945. 83

One educational policy of the Japanese which was applied everywhere in Malaya as long as the Japanese were in control of an area was that which required the teaching of the Japanese language in all schools. Besides its inclusion in the curriculum of Malay and Indian schools, special schools were set up (often using English and Chinese school buildings) to teach exclusively in the medium of the Japanese language. However, in the Malay schools, in the rural areas in particular, the Japanese were not able to enforce their policy of requiring Japanese to be taught, if for no other reason than that there just were not enough

qualified teachers. 84

The war came to a rather abrupt end as far as the people of Malaya were concerned. Newspapers published in Malaya maintained up to the end that the Japanese were winning or were about to win important victories. 85 The Japanese were not militarily driven out of Malaya as they had driven out the English. (The British had made preparations for invading Malaya in the fall of 1945, but the war ended before they could carry out their plans.)

The war made a tremendous impact on Malaya, 86 for the status quo so jealously guarded by the British had been shattered. Once his shell was broken, Humpty Dumpty could not be put back together again.

84 Annual Report on Education for 1946, p. 4; Kelantan Education Files No. 100 of 1944, p. 2; also No. 88 of 1945.
85 See various reports in Malai Sinpo (Japanese version of Malay Mail), July and August, 1945.
BRITAIN'S WARTIME POLITICAL PLANNING.

Britain's postwar policy for Malaya actually began to be formulated as early as 1942. In the latter part of that year the government of Great Britain decided that immediately after retaking Malaya it would set up a military administration having six aims: (a) to re-establish law and order as quickly as possible; (2) to insure the safety of the occupying forces of the military administration; (3) to set up a unified control; (4) to restore lines of communication as quickly as possible; (5) to reorganize rapidly human and material resources; and (6) to direct those efforts towards further prosecution of the war elsewhere in Asia.¹

In early 1943, in consultation with the Colonial Office, the British government decided to set up a small Malayan Civil Affairs Planning Unit (six-man), headed by Major General H.R. Hone, at that time Chief Civil Affairs Officer, Middle East Command, and a veteran of twenty years' service in the Colonial Service.² The Malayan Planning Unit came into being on July 5, 1943.³

² Ibid.
³ Ibid., p. 2.
The work of this Planning Unit that became best known was its proposal for the postwar political structure of Malaya, for out of it came the Malayan Union scheme—a scheme which envisaged two political divisions for the States of Malaya and the Straits Settlements. Singapore would constitute one division, and the nine Malay states, together with the Settlements of Malacca and Penang, would make up the other. The latter division would be known as the Malayan Union. To the British, the most important aspect of the new Union was that it would transfer most of the governmental functions of the nine states and two settlements to a central government located at Kuala Lumpur. They claimed that the increased complexity of the operation of a modern government demanded this streamlining.

The Malayan Union scheme also called for radical changes in matters relating to citizenship. Before the war almost the only citizens of the nine Malay states had been the Malays themselves. Now, as was stated by the British: "The constitutional policy of His Majesty's Government to promote Malayan Union and a measure of common citizenship had been designed to afford to men and women, whose real loyalty was towards Malaya, irrespective of race, opportunity to reap the reward of their loyalty by qualifying

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4 Ibid., p. 7.

for the public and administrative services in the Union."\(^6\)

The man assumed to have been mainly responsible for the inception of the ideas of the Malayan Union scheme was Sir Edward Gent.\(^7\) Gent had been a member of the Colonial Office staff in London since 1920, and during most of the war was Assistant Under-Secretary of State in the Colonial Office, and it was in this capacity that he represented the Colonial Office in the Malayan Planning Unit.\(^8\) He had never had experience administering a colony, and, apart from one brief visit to Malaya in 1932, had never been to the country.\(^9\)

**THE B.M.A. AND THE MACMICHAEL TREATIES.**

The British returned to Malaya on September 5, 1945.\(^10\) Their wartime planning for this event had envisaged a protracted period of fighting and a gradual regaining of territory,\(^11\) but instead they were faced with a different set of problems resulting from the complete capitulation of the Japanese. For one thing, there was a three-week period

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\(^9\) *Straits Echo* and *Times of Malaya*, July 6, 1948.


between the official surrender of the Japanese and the arrival in Malaya of the first British forces.\textsuperscript{12} And even after their initial landings, these British forces took time to re-establish control over all the country. They first occupied the urban centers of Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, and Penang. Then they gradually moved into the \textit{ulus} (rural up-river regions of Malaya). Their delay in re-establishing control had significant results.\textsuperscript{13}

During the war there had existed in Malaya a resistance group, comprised almost entirely of Chinese, calling themselves the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Union (the military arm of which was entitled the Malaya Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army--M.P.A.J.A.).\textsuperscript{14} Most of this group's leaders had strong commitments either to the Kuomintang or, as was most often the case, to the Communist Chinese (90 per cent).\textsuperscript{15} During the political vacuum which existed in the country immediately after the surrender of the Japanese, the guerrilla forces began to take actions to fulfill their goal of making Malaya a communist country controlled by themselves.\textsuperscript{16} They also proceeded to exact what they considered

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 29.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 30-31.
  \item \textsuperscript{15} \textit{Report on the B.M.A.}, p. 40.
\end{itemize}
to be justice against people who they felt had collaborated with the Japanese—and, more especially, against people who they felt had in any way worked against the guerrilla force, e.g., the Malay and Sikh members of the wartime police force. 17 In the predominantly Malay states, attempted reprisals by guerrilla groups were not very successful. 18 But in certain sections of Negri Sembilan, Johore, Selangor, Perak and Pahang, they were able to exact a harsh penalty from those they felt deserved it. 19

Thus, coupled with an awakened nationalism among the better educated Malays, fostered by the Japanese occupation, there was a growing communal antagonism between the Malays and the Chinese, fostered by the wartime and postwar activities of the communist-led Chinese guerrillas. And perhaps the worst feature of this developing communal antagonism was its extent. Rumors spread throughout Malaya of rivers filled with the blood and bodies of butchered Malays. And to this day the Malays claim that official government figures for the numbers of Malay casualties were far below the actual figures. 20

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17 Report on the B.M.A., p. 40. It must be noted that there are some sources that maintain this was the major activity of the M.P.A.J.A. throughout the war. (Silcock and Aziz, pp. 294-295.)
18 Interview with Tunku Abdul Rahman.
20 Interviews with various Malays.
Because the British Military Administration could not at once gain control of all Malaya, these actions of the Communists continued into 1946.\textsuperscript{21} The Malays in turn attacked Chinese, and, to make matters worse, the Chinese they attacked were usually not those who were in any way connected with Chinese attacks on Malays.\textsuperscript{22}

Communist-inspired strikes also occurred as early as October, 1945.\textsuperscript{23} In January of 1946 the communist-dominated unions attempted a general strike in the large urban areas, but this did not succeed in its purpose of intimidating the British into accepting union demands.\textsuperscript{24}

The British Military Administration meanwhile began to carry out the policy directives formulated in London during the war. The plan for a Malayan Union that had emerged from the wartime deliberations was incorporated in a set of treaties and entrusted to Sir Harold MacMichael, who was to obtain the necessary signatures from the Malay sultans. The treaties gave over most of the political power of each state to a central government located at Kuala Lumpur. The sultans would retain their titles and their incomes, but little else.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Report on the B.M.A.}, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 40.
\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 38.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{25} Winstedt, \textit{History}, pp. 255-256.
MacMichael got "his" treaties signed with practically no difficulty.26 Between October 20 and December 21 all nine sultans had signed.27 However, not long afterward some of the sultans issued statements claiming that MacMichael had coerced them into signing by threatening them with possible replacement if they did not.28 And it was true that MacMichael had been empowered to investigate and decide on the right of the sultans to remain on their thrones. Sultans were replaced in three cases, for it was claimed by the British that the sultans concerned had been placed on their thrones by the Japanese in contravention of established practices of the past—and, what was worse (as far as the British were concerned) one of them was supposed to have collaborated with the Japanese.29

MALAY REACTIONS TO THE MACMICHAEL TREATIES.

Whatever the case, it was not the sultans but the Malay people that finally got the treaties withdrawn.

26 They were afterwards spoken of as the "MacMichael Treaties," but as is noted above, he had had nothing to do with their formulation.


28 Winstedt, History, p. 255.

Almost as soon as the news began to circulate in Malaya that a new constitution was under consideration, small groups of educated Malays in various parts of Malaya met to study such proposals as might appear.\textsuperscript{30}

Since it was the leaders of this upsurge in Malay concern for the proposed treaties who were to play such an important role in later educational policy formation, it seems desirable to outline the formation and structure of their power base.

As early as December 28, 1945, one week after the last sultan had signed a treaty, the \textit{Malay Mail} carried a long article on the subject of the proposed Malayan Union.\textsuperscript{31} It was headlined: "Tranquil Malay Mind Perturbed by Colonial Secretary," and included three letters from Malays, two of which contained views firmly opposed to the proposed Malayan Union scheme.

On February 28, MacMichael's report on his mission was published in Malaya. In it he claimed that when the treaties were signed, the rulers were honestly convinced

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{30} Silcock and Aziz, p. 302.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} December 28, 1945. The two most outstanding English language newspapers of the period 1945-1957 were the \textit{Straits Times}, published in Singapore, and the \textit{Malay Mail}, with its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. During the period 1945-1957 the \textit{Straits Times} gradually came to cover more of the Malayan scene and be less Singapore-centered. Whereas, from the start the Malay Mail focused its coverage on Malayan events, and more particularly on the capital, Kuala Lumpur, and southwest Malaya: Perak, Selangor, and Negri Sembilan. Thus the \textit{Malay Mail} proved to be the most useful of the English-medium newspapers for the study of the development of educational policy in Malaya.
\end{itemize}
that the proposed Union was wise and just.\textsuperscript{32} And it does seem likely that opposition to the treaties voiced by some Malays had more to do with convincing the sultans that "coercion" had been used by MacMichael than anything Mac-Michael himself had done.

The next day a meeting of Malayans was held in Kuala Lumpur.\textsuperscript{33} The call for this meeting had been issued by Mohammad\textsuperscript{34} Yunus Hamidi, Editor of the Kuala Lumpur Malay newspaper, Majlis, through his newspaper's editorial columns some weeks previously.\textsuperscript{35}

Malay associations from all over Malaya, some new, some carry-overs from prewar days, sent representatives to the meeting. On the second day a resolution was passed forming the United Malays National Organization, generally referred to as UMNO. Elected as president was Dato Onn bin Ja'afar.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., February 2, 1946.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., March 1, 1946.

\textsuperscript{34} Mohammed is a very common name for Malays, but they have no agreed way of spelling it in Rumi (romanized script).

\textsuperscript{35} Interviews with Mohammad Yunus Hamidi, Nov. 1, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur. See also Mohammad Yunus Hamidi, Sejarah Pergerakan Politik Melayu Semenanjong (A History of Political Development in the Malayan Peninsula) (Kuala Lumpur, [1961]). Majlis was a Kuala Lumpur based newspaper. Its editorials throughout the period 1945-1957 tended to be critical of any policy that was not strongly Malay.

Although Onn had become the acknowledged leader of the Malays, all was not smooth for him. His attacks on the treaties seemed to some Malays to verge on being attacks on the sultans who had signed the treaties in the first place. The Malay nobility questioned the idea of a commoner (Onn) becoming the leader of the Malays. Actually, Onn sprang from a long line of successful government servants of the Sultan of Johore. Both his father and his grandfather had held the post of Mentri Besar, and after the war Onn himself was given the post for the second time.

Some of the other Malays did not like their positions of leadership in their local Malay organizations being made subordinate to Onn's. Yet, although there were Malays who opposed him, Onn developed a tremendous following among most of the Malay community, including many of its emerging leaders.

UMNO's main aim, which was announced to the world (literally, for a copy was sent to the United Nations), was to abrogate the MacMichael Treaties by convincing the British that the treaties were null and void because they

37. Chief Minister in the Sultan's government.

38 He had held it for a period in the early thirties, but had gotten into difficulties with his sultan and ended by being banished from the sultanate for a time. (Interviews with Hussein, Oct. 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; former Legislative Council Member, November 9, 1966, Kuala Lumpur, and Ven. Dr. D.D. Chelliah, Sept. 29, 1966, Singapore.)
violated earlier treaties with the sultans. However, what seemed to cause most alarm was that these treaties called for increased citizenship opportunities for the Chinese and Indians of Malaya. This matter of citizenship rights for the Chinese was to be a constant source of disagreement between the Malays and the Chinese throughout the 1946-1957 period.

THE MALAYAN UNION.

On April 1, 1946, the B.M.A. handed over control of Malaya to the officers of the newly formulated but yet to be finalized Malayan Union. The top administrative position of this new government carried with it the title of Governor General, and the man who assumed this office on April 1 was Sir Edward Gent. Not present at the installation ceremony in Kuala Lumpur were the nine Malay rulers, who gave as their reason for not attending that they did not want to prejudice their case against the Malayan Union by appearing in any way to sanction it.

As was mentioned above, Sir Edward Gent had been one of the chief architects of the Malayan Union while working with the wartime planning commission under Major Hone, but

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39 Malay Mail, March 5, 1946.
41 Malay Mail, April 1, 1946.
42 Ibid.
this was little known—and to most people it must have come as something of a surprise to learn of his appointment. Perhaps Gent was a little surprised himself, for as was mentioned above, he had not held a position of this type before.\footnote{It has been suggested that this is how he came to be appointed to the post: Sir Arthur Fredrick Richards, Baron Milverton, retired Governor of Nigeria, and in the Malayan Civil Service in the 1920's, was the first one offered the job, but he turned it down because he opposed the Malayan Union scheme. The government then turned to Gent and in effect said: You designed it; you run it. (Interview with Haji Abdul Mubin Sheppard, Oct. 3, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)}

Gent seems in retrospect to have been a poor choice. Apparently the Colonial Office was not yet aware of the potential problems in Malaya, and evidence of this is found in the fact that they introduced a scheme for Malaya that took no account of the changing attitudes of Malays that had developed as a result of their wartime and immediate postwar experiences. One source suggests that when the British made their plans for postwar Malaya they assumed a gradual military takeover of Malaya—an action that would be aided by Chinese guerrillas, and one that would find the more prominent Malay leaders working for the Japanese and thus in some degree guilty of collaboration—and decided that they had little to worry about from the Malay section of the population.\footnote{Silcock and Aziz, p. 300.} One suspects that there is at least
a certain element of truth to this. However, it seems likely that even had the British known in advance just how they were to regain control of Malaya they still would have opted for the Malayan Union scheme, just because it did tidy up the governmental structure so nicely. And, after all, before the war Malaya had been one of the most stable of the British colonies.

It was noticeable as early as July, 1946, that Malay opposition to the Malayan Union was going to produce results.\(^{45}\) Partly this was because it was not until late 1946 that there was any clear attempt by the Chinese to do something about supporting the Malayan Union, and even then only a few showed any real concern for protecting their community's much increased rights and privileges as outlined under the new scheme.\(^{46}\) But by then it was too late--for the British, acting under the pressures exerted from retired British civil servants\(^ {47}\) as well as the Malays, had committed themselves to a revision of the Malayan Union scheme.\(^ {48}\)

In late December a new plan which called for a

\(^{45}\) Malay Mail, July 8, 1946, with dateline London, July 4.


\(^{47}\) Malay Mail, March 6 and 7, 1946.

\(^{48}\) Ibid., February 17, 19, 21, 1947; May 19, 1947; October 20, 1947.
Federation of Malaya was released by the British. This new plan met with ready acceptance from the Malays, for it did away with most of the citizenship provisions of the Union as well as returning to the states some of their executive powers. And, what was perhaps most pleasing to the average Malay: the sultans were to retain their prewar positions and prerogatives as nominal heads of their states. This plan was put into effect as the Federation of Malaya Agreement on February 1, 1948.

Looking back on the event, it seems clear that the British had designed a scheme (the Malayan Union) for Malaya which they felt would aid in establishing an efficient, stable government. Instead, it furnished the catalyst that both further solidified Malay communalism and further strengthened Malay nationalism. If nationalism had been all there was to the Malay awakening, there would have been little need for British worry, for the aims of most of these early nationalists were moderate. But when increased Malay communalism became evident, apparently as a reaction to the Malayan Union, the British retreated—not only because they recognized the possibilities of racial unrest, but because of their long-held belief that it was their job to protect the Malays. The trouble was that in

49 Ibid., December 24, 1946.

50 Winstedt, History, p. 257. See below, p. 72 and passim for discussion of how this affected education.
retreating before Malay communal interests the British were to find that this in effect encouraged the development of Chinese communalistic demands concerning affairs in Malaya.

**BRITISH WARTIME EDUCATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS.**

Formation of educational policy for postwar Malaya was also begun before the war was over. The wartime Civil Planning Unit had concerned itself with many aspects of postwar Malaya that were designed to be used as policy guides by the B.M.A. This was felt to be necessary, since decisions and actions taken by the B.M.A. would tend to be binding on future Malayan civilian governments. The Planning Unit produced a large number of policy directives which were later bound and labeled *Long Term Policy Directives for Malaya.*

Altogether there were eighteen subjects covered by these directives, including (not necessarily in this order) policy for Finance, Social Welfare, Labour, Tin, Rubber, Transport, and Education.

The wartime-developed educational policy for postwar Malaya included recommendations for some pronounced departures from educational policies that had been in

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51 Long Term Policy Directives for Malaya as Approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Department of Publicity and Printing, B.M.A., [August 20, 1945]). Hereafter cited as Long Term Policy Directives.
force before the war. Some of these changes were designed so that the educational administrative structure would fit in with the proposed political innovations. Thus, educational administration was to be unified under one Department of Education, and the purpose of educational policy was to be "directed toward developing in the Malayan Union..." a sense of common citizenship and of partnership within the British Commonwealth.52

And out of this desire to support a Malayan Union which would be made up of people having a sense of common citizenship came the recommended correlative educational policy of encouraging a common language "which in the circumstances can only be English."53 Equal educational facilities should be provided for all races. "While the medium of instruction in the primary schools should if possible be in the child's vernacular, English should be taught as a second language...[and] future establishment of separate schools for different communities should, as far as possible, be avoided."54

Government secondary schools should use only the medium of English for instruction, but "the study of the literature and culture of the principal vernaculars" should be

52 Ibid., p. 10.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
encouraged.\textsuperscript{55} The re-establishment of teacher training institutions should be carried out as soon as possible, and additional facilities developed for the training of Chinese and Indian vernacular school teachers.\textsuperscript{56} These teachers should be trained to teach Kuo Yu, Malay and Indian languages at the secondary level so that students could become qualified as soon as possible to take their own language as one of their Cambridge School Certificate subjects.\textsuperscript{57}

Certain of the educational policies developed during the war sounded almost the same as those followed in the prewar period. For example, it was recommended that education in rural areas should continue to have an agricultural bias,\textquotedblright \ldots and handicrafts were to be taught in all such schools.\textsuperscript{58} This stress on agricultural education for rural areas was included again in Section 11 of the policy directive on agriculture.

In general, though, the educational policy directive

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., pp. 10, 11.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., p. 11. The Cambridge School Certificate was obtained by passing a prescribed number of subjects in the Schools Certificate Examination (set and graded in England but taken by Malayan students in Malaya). A student could obtain one of three levels of the School Certificate, depending on how well he did: Grade I, II, or III--Grade I being the highest. The nearest equivalent to the certificate in the United States would be a high school diploma.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., p. 11.
points up again the extent to which the British were prepared to change Malaya's prewar patterns, for if implemented, this policy would have done away with the special position of the Malays (of receiving free primary education) and would have greatly enhanced the position of English education.

However, these wartime policy directives were not made public, and the public statements of the B.M.A. on education were carefully noncommittal—their actions also following in the same mold.

B.M.A. EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES.

Some schools were reopened almost as soon as the B.M.A. was established.⁵⁹ But the war left many problems to overcome before even this seemingly simple step could be carried out effectively throughout Malaya.⁶⁰ Shortages of books and disrepair of equipment and buildings (when they were not actually destroyed or the British army was not using the buildings to house its own operational forces), all affected heavy hardships on the re-emerging educational system. And to add to these problems there was

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⁵⁹ Straits Times, September 21, 1945; Radio address by R.F. Gunn in Malay Mail, October 3, 1945. A few had opened even before the British returned (see above, p.

⁶⁰ Memorandum: Review of Position of the Department of Education as of 30 June, 1946 (Council Paper No. 33 of 1946); Radio address of Gunn.
a shortage of both administrative staff and teachers. The British were not yet able to provide men for the administrative posts in the educational field, since most of the men who would have been qualified were either in the military forces or just released from Japanese prisons and not yet ready to reassume their old positions. There was a teacher shortage because the faculties of the various school systems had been hard-hit during the war. Many had had to find other jobs, either because the Japanese had closed their schools, or because there had been too much economic hardship connected with continuing to work as teachers. And, like administrators, the best-trained teachers, i.e., the British, had been removed to concentration camps, and these teachers, if they had survived, needed time to recuperate.

Also, the wartime policy of discouraging English education (carried out by the Japanese) resulted in the build-up of a backlog of students who wished an English education, and this meant added pressure on an already overloaded educational system. In addition, there was an increase in demand for Chinese education, for most Chinese schools also had not been allowed to operate during the war.61

Although no separate administration had been planned for education in Malaya immediately after the war because

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61 Ibid.
the British thought that it would not be possible to do much with education, one of the members of the Civil Affairs Headquarters staff, R.F. Gunn (an ex-member of the Malayan Education Service) was given charge of education. 62

The initial action taken by Gunn was to see that the English-medium schools were reopened. This was primarily because it was in the cities that the British were able to gain enough control to carry out educational operations effectively, and it was in the cities that most of the English schools were located. (Chinese schools were also to be found in the cities, but these had not been the responsibility of the government and were not to be for some time to come.) At the same time, Gunn encouraged the Chinese to put their schools back into operation. The Tamil estate schools, because estates were not yet back in operation, and the Malay rural schools, because they were too remote, were left until later. 63

The debates of the B.M.A. Advisory Council (Selangor) reveal some of the feelings towards educational policy held by Malayan leaders during the B.M.A. period. 64 For example, Chinese members indicated that they were most anxious for free

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62 Report of the B.M.A., p. 82; Malay Mail, October 3, 1945. Malayan Civil List, 1940 (Singapore, 1940), states that R.F. Gunn first entered Malayan educational service in 1922 and got as high as Inspector of Schools in Negri Sembilan (p. 347).

63 Malay Mail, October 3, 1945.

64 In January of 1946 the B.M.A. reintroduced the State Council in Selangor, but renamed it the Advisory Council.
education to be provided. However, the government's position was also made clear here, when Gunn stated that as long as the B.M.A. was in control of Malaya, there would be no more than a holding action as far as educational policy was concerned—no innovations.

And, in general, right after the war most Malayans offered no objections to this holding action for educational policy. If they took time to think of education at all, their concern was primarily with getting their children into school again, and to a lesser extent, with such practical matters as payment of school fees. The problems of everyday living—how to get enough food and clothing, protection from "bandits," and getting on with the cleanup necessitated by four years of war were such that there was little time left to give consideration to educational policy matters.

THE CHEESEMAN POLICY.

Coming into office at almost the same time (May 26, 1946) as Gent was the first postwar Director of Education, Harold Ambrose Robinson Cheeseman. He took over from A.W. Frisby, who had since its inception held the post of

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66 Ibid., p. 33.
67 Ibid., p. 31. Malay Mail, November 6 and 7, December 3, 1945.
68 Interview with Lee, October 25, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
Acting Director of Education. Frisby had assumed this position on December 2, 1945, and continued until Cheeseman arrived. Cheeseman had been in the Malayan Education Service for a good many years, first arriving in Penang in 1907. He had held many jobs in the education departments of the various states and was one of those unfortunate Englishmen who did not escape the rapid advances of the Japanese in 1941. He was imprisoned in Chengi Prison on Singapore Island for most of the war period.

Cheeseman's education activities in the prewar period had been popular among those with whom he came in contact. Indians, Malays, Englishmen, and Chinese—all were equally impressed with his understanding and skill as a teacher. Those who remember him characterize him as a friendly, sincere, but not overly-imaginative person—a hard worker who was thorough and honest. In December, 1948, Cheeseman retired amid a chorus of tributes to him as a man, a teacher, and a scout leader. Those who were there to remember these farewell gestures state that the spontaneity and enthusiasm

69 Report on the B.M.A., p. 82; Council Paper No. 33 of 1946. Gunn was acting in a military capacity and thus did not have the title of Director of Education. He apparently ceased to act in educational matters when the civilian Education Department came into being in December, 1945, but the author found no record of this.

70 Cheeseman, Education in Malaya, p. 1.

of these good-byes clearly showed the love and respect engendered by this man.\textsuperscript{72}

It was during Cheeseman's tenure as Director of Education that Malaya's first public educational policy paper of the postwar period was introduced. The policy was contained in Council Paper No. 53 of 1946, which was laid on the table in the Malayan Union Advisory Council (the Malayan Union equivalent of the prewar Federal Council of the Federated Malay States) on December 10, 1946.\textsuperscript{73} Debate on the paper did not take place until March 10, 1947.\textsuperscript{74}

It was a brief statement—nothing like the statements and studies on educational policy that were to bloom in the 1950's. The Cheeseman policy\textsuperscript{75} contained three key points: (1) that there should be free primary education for all children in their mother tongue; (2) that English should be taught to all primary students so that after six years of schooling those who proved to have appropriate mental abilities could proceed to secondary education, where English would be the medium of instruction; and (3) that equal educational

\textsuperscript{72} See Straits Times of November 27, December 9, 10, 12, 1948.


\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., pp. B 29-35.

\textsuperscript{75} Most reports on education took the name of the man most associated in the public's mind with the report; and although Cheeseman could not move the acceptance of this policy paper in the Advisory Council—the Director of Education had not yet been made an official member—he was invited to speak on the subject in the Council during the debate.
opportunities should be provided for girls. 76

The policy paper also announced that a Central Advisory Committee on Education should be set up to advise the government on educational policy implementation. The members would, as far as possible, be chosen by the government to represent "the chief educational agencies and influences in Malaya, as well as including representatives of the administration and of the Advisory Council." 77

Much of this Cheeseman policy echoed the policies outlined for Malaya by the wartime planning group. There were two differences: free primary education in the language of the home, 78 and a stated concern for women's education. Cheeseman was probably responsible for this emphasis placed on women's education, for that had been, and was to continue to be until his retirement, one of his primary interests. 79

76 Annual Report on Education for 1946, pp. 139-140.

77 Ibid., p. 140. It might be well to note here that there is a similarity between the term "Advisory Council" (the government council set up to work with the British on administering the colony) and the "Central Advisory Committee on Education," which was to be set up by the government to make recommendations on educational policy implementation. Actually the Central Advisory Committee on Education was not appointed until September of 1948 (see below, p. 94).

78 However, this was by no means a new proposal, having appeared off and on in the prewar period. And, as it stood, its main effect would be to give the Chinese free vernacular education, since the government already provided free vernacular education for Malays and Indians.

79 See reprint of broadcast by Cheeseman upon his retirement from the Education Department in 1948, Education in Malaya, p. 3.
The policy, and the debate on the policy which followed, included many themes which were to be included in educational policy papers throughout the period until independence: i.e., type of teacher training, free and compulsory education, medium of instruction, extent of government financing, fees parents should pay, how fast change should be introduced, and who should be admitted to which type of institution.  

This last point was brought out during the debate when the Chinese members of the Council voiced strongly their belief that parents should have the right to choose whichever language medium they desired for their children's free education. This was a reaction to the policy statement that education was only to be free in the language of the children's home. The Chinese representatives wanted everyone to have the opportunity to send his children free to English-medium schools instead of just to the primary school using the medium of the home. They made the point that as far as the Chinese were concerned, Kuo Yu (Mandarin), while it was the medium of instruction in the Chinese schools, was not the language of the home. Rather, there were several Chinese dialects spoken in Malaya, and few were even closely related to Kuo Yu.

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81 Dr. Ong Chong Keng, Dr. Tan Cheng Leng, Mr. Tan Eng Chye.
82 *Ibid.*, pp. B 33, B 35. This point of view was held by some English-educated Chinese, but not by Chinese with a Chinese education. This same idea was to be included in future
The Chief Secretary of the Malayan Union, A.T. Newboult, answered that while he appreciated the points presented by the Chinese, yet the government did not have the means to supply the present demands for English education and therefore could not at the present time consider an all-embracing action such as had been suggested by the Chinese representatives.

The parts of the policy that included the greatest commitments to change were those that called for English language classes for all, and for a free vernacular education that would now include the Chinese. Having each child taught in the language of his home was not new. This had been the basic system of vernacular education in the years before the war. But to have the government completely support Chinese vernacular education—that was new indeed.

The Cheeseman policy was approved by the Advisory Council on March 10, 1947, and this approval gave to the public the first open sign that the British were prepared to commit themselves to changes in educational policy in Malaya. But it also showed clearly that British commitment at this time was more toward setting up long-term goals than in introducing arguments on educational policy for Chinese education, but the Chinese would then maintain that the idea was invalid. (E.g., see below, p. 316.)

One of the higher positions in the British colonial administrative system, ranking right below the top colonial official in a colony. In this case, he ranked second to the Governor General, Gent.

immediate innovations. "The policy which is contained in this Council Paper involves a long-term programme and it will not be possible to bring it into effect by a stroke of the pen; it will have to be done gradually." 85

THE RISE OF TEACHERS' UNIONS.

Meanwhile, as the Malayan Union period drew to a close, more interest in educational matters was beginning to be shown by the Malayans. For example, the year 1947 saw the rise of teachers' unions for English school teachers. 86 There had been teachers in Malaya who had agitated for greater rights for locally trained teachers even before the war. They wanted equality of opportunity between English school teachers trained in Malaya and those brought in from England—the so-called expatriates. 87

The impetus behind this formation of unions was furnished by John Alfred Brazier, who was the Trade Union Adviser of the governments of Singapore and the Malayan Union (later the Federation of Malaya) from 1946 to 1955. He had come to Malaya as Industrial Relations Adviser in the B.M.A. Before the war he had been active in the National Union of Railroad

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85 Ibid., p. B 29 (Chief Secretary)

86 Teachers' associations had existed in Malaya previously, but their main concern had been with professional matters. (The Educator, July, 1966 [Official Organ of the National Union of Teachers, States of Malaya].)

87 Interview with Chelliah, September 29, 1966, Singapore; Malay Mail, September 6, 1947.
Men (England) and the Labour Party. He was assisted by the leaders of the already formed Teachers Union of Singapore, particularly P.V. Sarma.

The teachers' attempts to organize unions reached a peak of activity in August and September of 1947, and it was at this time that most of the west coast states saw their teachers found state unions. Interestingly enough, although it was a British civil servant who was encouraging these unions, there were indications that the Education Department officials were something less than enthusiastic about their formation.

The concern of the teachers for greater equality of opportunity found champions among the unofficial members of the Advisory Council. Dr. Ong Chong Keng was the leading spokesman for the idea that there should not be two services.

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89 Sarma was later (January 1951) detained as a Communist, having by that time become president of both the Singapore Teachers Union and the Malayan Teachers Union (the latter a federation of the nine separate state and settlement teachers unions. (The Educator, July 1966.) Sarma was released in 1952 on condition that he leave the country. In 1966 he was reported in Peking as the chief representative of the Malayan National Liberation League, a communist organization (Straits Times, January 15, 1966).

90 Negri Sembilan, August 21, 1947; Selangor, August 25, 1947; Penang, August 26, 1947; Malacca, October 3, 1947.

91 Malay Mail, August 23, September 6 and 13, 1947.

92 Referring here to the British staffed Malayan Education Service as one service and the rest of the Malayan teachers of government schools as the second service. (See above, p. 17.)
but one unified service. He went further and suggested that the qualifications to become an "Education Officer" (the title assigned to those in the Malayan Education Service) be lowered so that "locals" would have the legal qualifications to receive such appointments. He mentioned that they already had all the actual qualifications they needed for the job.\textsuperscript{93}

The government response sounded a note that was to echo from the British colonial government until it gave over control of the educational policy to the Malayans in 1955. The Chief Secretary, A.T. Newboult, asked: "Are we going to reduce our standards on unification of the services, or are we going to unify our services and maintain the existing standards to which this country has been accustomed for so long? That is a matter of policy, but it is not a matter which we can answer easily and at a moment's notice."\textsuperscript{94} For the British, educational standards and financial considerations were to be the two major barriers to educational expansion and innovation.

THE CARR-SAUNDERS COMMITTEE.

The 1947-1948 period was also the time in which the long prewar interest and planning for a local Malayan university


\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., pp. B 297-298.
gained impetus. The idea of a committee to study the possibilities for higher education in Malaya had been put forward in the Long Term Policy Directives section on education. 95

In March 1947 it was announced that the British government had appointed a committee on university education in Malaya. 96 The chairman, Alexander Carr-Saunders, and his committee 97 came and saw and proposed far faster and more extensive changes than most had expected.

A debate raged before, during, and after the Carr-Saunders committee made its swing through Malaya and Singapore collecting testimony. 98 The Chinese expressed concern that the new institution would prejudice their position in higher education by placing too great an emphasis on the Malay language as the medium of instruction at the university level. 99 Members of the Indian community expressed their concern over the language to be used for Indian Studies, the struggle here being between Indians who wanted Hindi, the national language of India, and Indians who wanted Tamil, the language of the

95 P. 11.

96 Malay Mail, March 21, 1947.

97 Leonard Barnes (from England); Tuan Haji Mohammed Eusoff, officer in Malayan Civil Service; Sir Ivor Jennings (from England); Sir Han Hoe Lim, Member of Singapore Advisory Council; Professor G.W. Pickering (from England); Professor W.J. Pugh (from England); W.S. Morgan (Secretary)(from England).

98 March 27—May 1, 1947.

99 Malay Mail, May 6, 1947.
majority of Indians in Malaya. 100

But it was the spokesmen of the Malay community who made the most noise concerning the new university. The main point of those in opposition (primarily Malay vernacular newspaper editors) was that as long as primary education for the Malays was inadequately supported by the government it was too soon to spend large sums of money on higher education. Furthermore, this higher education would not cater to Malay needs, for most Malays were not even reaching secondary level education yet. 101 Meanwhile, Dato Onn and his followers in UMNO supported the university. They suggested that university training would help prepare Malays for self-government. 102 These views provide an example of the dichotomy which existed between Malays who had received a western education and Malays whose education was primarily Malay in background.

Throughout the period, support for improving the position of Malay women increased. 103 Cheeseman's voice came to be supported by women who had broken the age-old pattern set

100 Ibid., January 6 and 17, 1948.
101 Malay Mail, April 9 and 13, 1947.
103 Warta Negara, June 4, 1946. This newspaper was published in Penang. It was the most restrained of the Malay language newspapers of the period. Often its editorials appeared to support the more western-oriented Malay positions in policy-making struggles.
out for Malayan women.\(^{104}\) For the Malay women this breakthrough seemed to coincide with the struggle of the Malays to have the MacMichael Treaties abrogated, for the women were very active in this endeavor.\(^{105}\) Supporters of improved opportunities for women's education found a cause for cheer when the English-medium Malay Women's College in Kuala Lumpur for training Malay girls was opened on November 1, 1947. This was the woman's counterpart to the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar.\(^{106}\)

**ESTATE SCHOOLS.**

In the 1946-1948 period the central Education Department gave increasing attention to the problem of improving estate education. In 1946 the Department of Education announced that as of January 1, 1947, it would assume responsibility for the salaries and running expenses of "all"\(^{107}\) estate Indian schools. Also, the government would provide the initial books, furniture, and other necessary equipment for these schools. The estate would be expected to provide and maintain the school buildings, their sites, and quarters for the teachers. "Teachers in estate schools will be selected for appointment by the

\(^{104}\) Ibid.

\(^{105}\) Hidop Melayu (Long Live Malaya): A Brief Review of Activities of the Malay National Movement (Ipoh, Malaysia, [n.d.]), pp. 18-22; Malay Mail, March 4, 1946. It is not clear just why this phenomenon should occur at this time.

\(^{106}\) Malay Mail, October 9 and 26, 1947. It was planned to be opened in 1941, but the Japanese invasion thwarted this.

\(^{107}\) Their italics.
Department of Education and will be subject to transfer, promotion and dismissal as the Department of Education may require. The wishes of the Estate Managers in these matters will, however, always receive consideration, e.g. if they have any suitable qualified nominee for appointment who has special links with an estate."  

Nevertheless, after pointing out that teachers were not to be employed for other regular work on the estates, the statement continued: "The estate schools are to remain schools belonging to the estates. They will still be government grant-in-aid schools, but the basis of the grant will be different. In a letter to all states from the Department of Education, Kuala Lumpur, dated December 20, 1946, it was re-emphasized that estate schools would not become government schools, nor would teachers become government servants.  

These early activities in Indian vernacular education were to provide the basis for many a future debate in the Legislative Council on the role of the estate in education--especially debates concerning how much the estates should be taxed to support education.  

109 Ibid.  
110 Ibid.  
111 See below, p. 257.
One of the last acts performed by the outgoing Malayan Union government was the imposition of an income tax. This was done over the opposition of all but two of the seventeen unofficial members of the Advisory Council. The two were labor representatives. The teachers' unions had supported the tax measure, while planters, mining and business associations had been bitter in their opposition. However, this project was basically Edward Gent's and he proceeded to push it through. This subject too was often to be included in future debates on education.

The periods of the B.M.A. and its successor, the Malayan Union, were ones in which the British indicated a willingness to commit themselves to long-term educational goals which were at some variance with the goals they had supported in Malaya prior to World War II. It was a time in which, because the concern of most Malayans was for recovery from the debilitating effects of the war, what public attention was focused on educational policy originated almost entirely either from western-oriented Malayans or from editorial writers of the vernacular press.

It was also a period in which the Chinese failed to grasp the opportunity placed in their way of gaining greater

113 Malay Mail, November 20 and December 12, 1947.
114 Interview with Dato Dr. Abdul Aziz bin Haji Abdul Majid, November 5, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
political parity within the Malayan community, through their failure to support the introduction of the Malayan Union, and its concomitant opportunities for citizenship, with anything like the same vigor that the Malay community opposed it. Indeed, this period saw the formation of a political assertiveness on the part of the Malay sector of the population that was to carry them through to leadership of an independent Malaya in ten short years.

In the B.M.A. Report, issued in 1946, it was maintained that "the most striking aspect of the situation which was developing [Malay opposition to the Malayan Union], and in the long run perhaps the most significant, was the growing awareness among Malays, insofar as they themselves were concerned, of the merit of unity of action,"\(^{115}\) in contrast with the lack of apparent concern shown by the Chinese and Indians.\(^{116}\)

Wang Gungwu, a highly respected Malayan Chinese historian and frequent commentator on nationalism in Malaya has added this thought: "But perhaps equally important [to the boost this affair gave the Malays] were the hopes raised by the Union in the minds of the non-Malay communities." It is his contention that both Indian and Chinese nationalists who before had focused their efforts on causes in their respective homelands now began to see openings for their aspirations in

\(^{115}\) P. 63.

\(^{116}\) P. 64.
Malayan politics. And, further, that "... for the partially westernized leaders of both communities, the short period of the Union was like a door to full political participation which was for a fleeting moment opened and shut again." 117

Previous to the war the British had been able to act with considerable impunity in Malayan affairs. Now they were discovering a new Malaya, one in which their actions, taken to produce stability and efficiency, were subject to a three-fold scrutiny and reaction from Malayans: that of the nationalists, that of the communalists, and that of the communists. Educational policy development for the remainder of the period to 1957 was to reflect the interaction of these forces.

The Federation of Malaya Agreement.

As of February 1, 1948, the Federation of Malaya Agreement of 1948\(^1\) provided the legal framework for the political structure of Malaya. The key governmental change was the decentralization of executive power, whereby certain powers were transferred from the central government to the state and settlement governments.

The new agreement also provided that (1) a common citizenship for the Federation was to be established; (2) the office of Governor of the Malayan Union was to become High Commissioner of the Federation; (3) the Malayan Union Advisory Council was to become the Federal Legislative Council.\(^2\) The Council consisted of the High Commissioner as President, the Chief Secretary, the Attorney General, and the Financial Secretary, the president of each State Council of the Malay states, one representative of each of the Settlement Councils, eleven other official members, and fifty unofficial members (appointed by the High Commissioner.).\(^3\)

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\(^1\) The Federation of Malaya Agreement, 1948 (Kuala Lumpur: reprinted 1956).

\(^2\) Hickling, p. 11.

\(^3\) Ibid.
The portion of the Federation of Malaya Agreement that included education among its many items was the Second Schedule, entitled, "Matters with respect to which the Federal Legislature has power to make laws: and extent to which executive authority over such matters shall be conferred on the States and Settlements."\(^4\)

Each item listed in this schedule was followed by two columns. Column (1) listed those matters on which the Federal Legislature could make laws, and Column (2) spelled out the extent of the executive authority that was to be exercised by the States and Settlements concerning the matters described in Column (1). Item 79 covered education.

In Column (1) it stated that the federal government could make laws affecting "Primary, secondary and trade school education to the extent of ensuring a common policy and a common system of administration; higher education, technical education and training of teachers, except State and Settlement scholarships and State and Settlement educational endowments relating to such matters; registration of schools; Federal educational institutions; Malay translation bureau."

And under Column (2) it said that the states could exercise executive authority over "Primary, secondary and trade school education excluding measures designed to ensure a common policy and a common system of administration."\(^5\)

\(^4\) The Federation of Malaya Agreement, p. 63.

\(^5\) Ibid., p. 68.
There was concern among the British educationalists that this decentralization of control of education would set education back considerably. They felt that there would no longer be a common educational policy followed. This fear was not realized. The only noticeable effect seemed to be that after this time whenever an embarrassing question was asked in the Legislative Council the federal government would answer by stating that this was a matter for the States and Settlements.

THE EMERGENCY.

The advent of the Federation of Malaya was a mark of victory for the Malay community. They had united; they had opposed; they had won. Having emerged from this struggle they never looked back.

By contrast, most of the leaders of the Chinese community had not appeared to care greatly one way or the other what the political facts of Malaya were to be—as long as they were left alone to tend their businesses.

However, in mid-1948 a group of Chinese moved to the fore in Malayan affairs who had since mid-1946 been relatively quiet—the Communists. In January of 1948 an announcement appeared in Malaya that there was to be a meeting of Asian youth leaders

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7 See, for example, Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Federation of Malaya, 1950-1951, pp. 609-610.
in India in early 1948. This meeting was duly held in February and March of 1948 in Calcutta, and out of it flowed rebellion, riot, and attempted coups d'etat in most of Southeast Asia's political subdivisions. The Madiun Rebellion in Indonesia, Huk activities in the Philippines, and perhaps even an attempted coup in Siam were all a part of the same general pattern that saw the Communist Chinese in Malaya institute terrorist activities that came to be euphemistically called "the Emergency."

The full story of this thirteen-year struggle has not yet been written. Out of what has been written, it appears that some of the wartime anti-Japanese guerrilla forces (predominantly Chinese and communist-led) in Malaya had planned even in those wartime days for the period when there would be a physical struggle for control of Malaya. Immediately

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8 Malay Mail, January 4, 1948.
10 Malay Mail, October 7 and 28, 1948.
11 Winstedt, History, p. 251.
12 Elements of it still linger on in remote pockets in the northwest of Malaysia and south Thailand jungle, but it was declared officially ended in 1960. (Official Year Book, II, 1962, p. 387.)
13 See Appendix.
after the war they had expected to seize control of the country, but resistance by the Malays and the arrival of British troops convinced them of the necessity of abandoning this direct approach for the time being.  

They resorted for a time to non-co-operation in whatever ways were legally open to them in order to maintain chaotic conditions where these existed in Malaya (which was almost everywhere due to wartime developments) and to create new problems whenever possible to add to those already facing the British colonial government. This last was achieved by gaining control of the trade unions of Malaya.

With the coming of June, 1948, the subversive actions of the Malayan Communist Party (subversive in that they did not openly proclaim their objectives—for they were a legal party up to this time) were converted into overt acts of violence—terrorism against the planters and miners of Malaya in particular, and against leading Chinese and European figures in Malaya in general.

It appears to have been the hope of the Communists that (1) the people of Malaya would become disillusioned with colonial rulers who could not produce peace, prosperity, and security, and (2) that the British would become disillusioned with the cost in men, money, and prestige involved in maintaining

15 See above, p. 38.
16 Alex Josey, Trade Unionism in Malaya ("Background to Malaya Series," No. 4) (Singapore, 1958), p. 27 and passim; Short in Wang's Malaysia, p. 152.
17 Short, p. 153.
their rule in Malaya and consequently either withdraw
outright or institute negotiations on independence which would
include the Communists.

On May 31, 1948, in the Federal Legislative Council (this
had replaced the Malayan Union Advisory Council), there was
talk of establishing emergency powers to meet the communist
terrorist activities in various parts of Malaya, and on June 16
this action was taken for a few areas in Malaya. Throughout
the remainder of the month, new regulations were issued which
increased the areas under emergency regulations.

On July 1, a new bill was gazetted entitled "The Emergency
Regulations Ordinance, 1948," which when passed (July 5) superceded all previous emergency regulations, and thus made it
possible to apply emergency regulations uniformly throughout
the Federation.

In spite of the new ordinance, the estate and mine
managers, not satisfied with the steps being taken to protect
them, made their feelings known to London. On July 5, Gent

18 *Federation of Malaya Government Gazette*, I, 10 (June 16, 1948).
21 While the bill was gazetted July 1, it was dated as being
signed by the Attorney General on June 11.
22 Winstedt, *History*, p. 25.
was called home to London for consultations. He never arrived, for his plane was in an air collision which resulted in his death.\(^{23}\)

The newspapers of his day in Malaya had hinted that Gent was on his way home to be replaced,\(^{24}\) and two other sources interviewed on the subject agreed.\(^{25}\)

Gent's replacement, announced on September 3, was quite a different sort of man. Sir Henry Lovell Goldsworthy Gurney had had a long career in British colonial administration, primarily in Africa, and had just completed a successful tour of duty in Palestine.\(^{26}\)

One of the actions taken by Gurney soon after his arrival in Malaya was the establishment of a committee to investigate the squatter problem.\(^{27}\) These squatters were mostly Chinese (85 per cent) who had moved, often illegally, onto lands bordering the jungle, where most of them either carried on subsistence cropping or market gardening activities. These

\(^{23}\) Malay Mail, July 5, 1948.

\(^{24}\) Straits Echo and Times of Malaya, July 3, 1948.


squatters were felt by the government to be the main source of both supplies and recruits for the terrorists.\textsuperscript{28}

In its first report (February 17, 1949), the committee recommended that (1) if possible, the squatters should be settled legally where they were; (2) if not possible, then the government should resettle them elsewhere; and (3) if they refused to be resettled, they should be subject to compulsory repatriation to China.\textsuperscript{29}

Out of this report came the establishment by the Malayan government of Resettlement Areas for the squatters. (In 1952 the areas were renamed New Villages.) Some 18,500 had been resettled by March, 1950. After this date the tempo of resettlement increased so dramatically under the impetus of the new director of military operations, Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs, that by March 1952, 423,000 had been resettled.\textsuperscript{30}

THE M.C.A.

An event in the Chinese community which was to have an even more lasting impact on Malaya than the advent of the communist terrorist Emergency occurred on February 27, 1949: the Malayan Chinese Association was founded. And, as with

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., pp. C 534-535.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., p. C 537.
UMNO and its founder, so with the M.C.A.—it was not that its founding or the men who founded it were at this time involved with educational policy development. Rather, accounts of these events are provided to furnish the necessary background for the time when they do assume major roles in education.31

The man most often associated with the founding of the M.C.A. is Tan Cheng Lock. Tan, an English-educated Chinese whose home was Malacca (where his family had long been established), had been active in promoting Malayan Chinese unity since before the war. He had been a member of the Advisory Council of the Straits Settlements before World War II and had become well known for his intrepid yet respected speeches in that assembly. During the war, while in India, father and son, Tan Cheng Lock and Tan Siew Sin, founded the Overseas Chinese Association.32 After the war he did not enter the successive political Advisory Councils set up by the British. He left that to his son, Tan Siew Sin. But he continued to be the leading speaker for the Chinese community.

In 1946 Tan Cheng Lock had wanted to form a Malayan Chinese League, but at that time he had to fight against the apathy of

31 See, for example, pp. 97-98.

32 It has been suggested that Tan Cheng Lock had had something to do with the ideas on citizenship found in the Malayan Union scheme. (See Margaret F. Clark, "The Malayan Alliance and its Accommodation of Communal Pressures, 1952-1962," Unpublished Master's thesis [Kuala Lumpur, 1964], p. 20. This was also brought out in an interview with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)
the Chinese. When the communist-dominated All-Malayan Council for Joint Action was formed, Tan Cheng Lock was made its president. The A.M.C.J.A. folded when the Emergency began, but Cheng Lock had withdrawn from this organization even before that time.

Tan Siew Sin says it was circumstances that developed out of the Emergency that gave his father the idea of forming a new Chinese association that would assist the federal government in relocating squatter Chinese in Resettlement Areas. This time he was able to obtain the support of the Chinese Legislative Council members as well as the active encouragement of Gurney.33

While its initial purpose may have been to aid the Chinese squatters, the M.C.A. went on to become recognized as the leading political voice for the Chinese viewpoint in Malaya.

THE EMERGENCY AND EDUCATION.

The first new educational policy statement to appear after the formation of the Federation of Malaya was the Report of the Commission on University Education in Malaya (the report of the Carr-Saunders Committee), which was published in May of 1948. This called for a university to be formed by joining Raffles College and the King Edward VII College of Medicine in Singapore, by October, 1948, if at all possible.34 There were


34 (Kuala Lumpur), p. iii. The University was not actually established until early 1949.
to be new departments in the three most important local languages, Malay, Chinese, and Tamil, as well as departments for law, engineering, agriculture, and education. The university was to be a jointly sponsored project of Malaya and Singapore. Other than this, the first year of the new Federation did not produce any government educational policy statements.

The impact of the Emergency on educational policy began to be felt almost immediately, for the Communists were correct in thinking that the cost of counteracting their terrorist acts was going to be large. And this was money which could otherwise have been at least partially used to implement educational policy.

The Emergency also had the effect of producing a dramatic increase in government concern for Chinese education, for while it was true that both the Long Term Policy Directive on education and the Cheeseman policy had recommended government


36 Singapore had been left out of both the Malayan Union and the Federation of Malaya, but Penang, Province Wellesley, and Malacca had been brought in, first to the Union and then to the Federation.


38 Malay Mail, February 16, 1949; Kelantan Education Files, No. 24 of 1949, Copy of Appendix B, Note to June Conference of Rulers, "Educational Provisions for Chinese in the Federation." But see letter from Holgate to S. of E., Kelantan, June 16, 1949, stating that this topic did not get discussed in the June 16 Rulers' Conference.
support for Chinese education, these were long-term commitments. The government of Malaya was finally breaking completely away from its decades-old policy of hands-off towards Chinese education in Malaya. The change, when it came, came rapidly, and some said too late.39

The government almost had to be concerned about Chinese education, for when the education statistics were in for 1948 they revealed that 212 Chinese schools had had to close during the year, involving over 11,000 students. Ninety-two Chinese teachers had been detained, and 15 killed.40 Also, because the communist terrorists seemed able to attract Chinese students to their forces, the government began to evidence much more concern than previously for the content and curriculum of Chinese schools, and Chinese inspectorial educational staffs were enlarged. Chinese teachers were much more carefully screened than previously, before they received their government registration, as were the Chinese school management committees' memberships.41

Meantime, in August of 1948 there appeared the first public expression of Malay desire for a government study of Malay education.42 And in October and November, demands

39 Kelantan Education Files, No. 24 of 1949, letter from British Adviser to Chief Secretary, April 9, 1949.
40 Annual Report on Education for 1948, p. 43.
41 Kelantan Education Files, No. 24 of 1949.
42 Utusan Melayu, August 1, 1948.
appeared to have Malay declared the national language. 43

However, it was in the early months of 1949 that increased evidence of Malay concern for educational policy began to appear. 44 (It is well to keep in mind that since this is a history of educational policy there may be some tendency to lost sight of the fact that the Emergency was the major concern of the people of Malaya—at least until 1952—and it still occupied a major position in the English language newspapers as late as 1956. So, for example, when it is stated that Malayans evidenced more concern for educational policy development than previously, this is not meant to be relative to their concern for the Emergency, but only to previous attitudes towards educational policies.)

There were demands for increased opportunity for Malays to gain an education in English-medium schools. 45 There were charges of neglect and apathy on the part of the British

43 See for example, ibid., October 18, 1948.

44 Malay Mail, January 2, 1949; Utusan Melayu, January 30, 1949. Utusan Melayu could, with some justification, lay claim to producing the most effect on the Malay community's thinking. It was the most quoted of the Malay newspapers in English-medium press, and often its views were quoted in legislative debates. The paper was violently pro-Malay, strongly anti-British, and highly suspicious of the Chinese. At the same time it was very much a left-of-center newspaper, favoring socialist ideas—so much so, in fact, that it found it hard to criticize the perpetrators of the Emergency, and thus came to find itself in trouble with the government on more than one occasion.

45 Utusan Melayu, February 24 and June 5, 1949; Proceedings 1948-1949, p. B 703 (Puteh Mariah) and B 204 (Kamaruddin), March 30, 1948.
colonial government towards the problems of educating Malays, and there was continued opposition to the formation of a university before the primary education of Malays had been overhauled and upgraded. 

Coupled with this was evidence of an increased concern by members of all communities in Malaya for more decisive government action on the question of a language policy for the colony's education systems than had so far been taken. Long-term goals were no longer satisfactory. Also, there was increased agitation for having Malay and English made the sole official languages in Malaya.

The Chinese, Indians, and not unexpectedly most Englishmen in Malaya were in varying degrees inclined towards English as the most important language for education in Malaya. The Chinese and Indians were also, however, deeply concerned lest their languages and cultures should be by-passed and allowed (or forced) to die out in Malaya.

THE COMMUNITIES LIAISON COMMITTEE.

The British and Malayan commitments to change on educational policy in Malaya received perhaps their greatest impetus

46 Utusan Melayu, February 24 and August 1, 1949; Utusan Zaman (Sunday edition of Utusan Melayu), June 5, 1949.


48 Malay Mail, July 15, 1949; Straits Times, September 23, 1949.

in this 1948-1949 period from a man who, when one first glances at the record of events in Malaya at this time, does not appear to figure at all prominently in educational matters, the Commissioner General for Southeast Asia, Malcolm John MacDonald.

The Commissioner General's job was to act as the representative of the British government in Southeast Asia (a position first created in 1948). MacDonald had held a similar position from 1946-1948—that of Governor General for Malaya and British Borneo. In neither post was he in direct control of any particular territory, and as Commissioner General his sphere of action encompassed all of Southeast Asia, and not just the British Territories. Since he had a direct link with the British home government, his position could be very influential if he chose to make it so—and he did.50

Few men were neutral in their feelings regarding MacDonald. He was either admired, respected, and liked, or he was denigrated, castigated, and disliked. All agreed that he was an excellent speaker, but to some this was equated with his being a spell-binder or charlatan sent out to lull Malaya into acquiescence to British rule.51 To others he was a man of the people, one who had an interest in helping Malaya to help itself, and thus was sincere in the statements he made

50 Interview with British military officer, October 19, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.

in his many talks to the Malayans and Singaporeans. 52

MacDonald's father was the famous English Labour Party leader, Ramsay MacDonald—the man who first became Prime Minister from the Labour Party. Malcolm had himself been a Labour member of Parliament in the 1930's. 53 Thus he had had a long exposure to Labour views on colonialism and imperialism.

MacDonald was the kind of person who often acted contrary to what the "Establishment" felt was proper protocol and procedure. The story is told of the time that he was invited to officially open a new swimming pool in Singapore. He arrived at the scene properly attired as did everyone else who was there—all such dignitaries as are usually connected with this type of occasion. His speech was a short one. He said there was only one way to open a swimming pool properly—upon which he proceeded to doff his clothes, revealing a swimming suit underneath, and jump briskly into the pool. 54 Among many incidents told of his actions among the people of Borneo is one of his walking the length of a long-house veranda on his hands. 55


54 Interview with former British newsman, September 23, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.

55 Ibid.
He was once in the city of Georgetown on the island of Penang with a group of leaders from all communities in Malaya. They had been discussing community relations. After the discussions were finished it was decided that they should visit an amusement area, located in the heart of Georgetown. They all did so, and they enjoyed themselves immensely, including MacDonald. He took off his coat and tie, he danced, and in general he behaved "like one of the boys." He was sent an official letter by the Resident Commissioner of Penang reprimanding him for this performance. Of course the Governor was actually not in a position to issue such a reprimand, and he himself was firmly reminded of this by MacDonald in MacDonald's reply.56

But the main point was, and is, that MacDonald was a man who did not stand on procedure, and he thus antagonized many of the "Establishment," the old civil servants, who felt that there was a need to have fixed standards for relationships between the colonial administration and the people of the country. On the other hand, he impressed others, especially the local people themselves, because many of them were convinced by his actions that he was sincere in his concern for, and interest in, their well-being and their future.

And that MacDonald's attitude was different from that of the average colonial official was noted even at the time, for

56 Interview with Abdul Aziz, November 5, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
Time Magazine ran a story on MacDonald which said at one point: "Despite Blimpish resistance in the civil service, MacDonald is pushing educational and economic plans (e.g., more village schools and a five-year plan to integrate rubber-rich Malaya's lopsided economy)."\textsuperscript{57}

It was MacDonald's ability to become friends with Malayans that enabled him to persuade leading members of the Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities to form what was called the Communities Liaison Committee in January of 1949. This committee was first informally organized at a meeting at the home of Dato Onn bin Ja'afar in Johore Bahru on the evening of December 29, 1948,\textsuperscript{58} and formally instituted on January 10 at a meeting in Penang.\textsuperscript{59} The key Malayans in this new organization were Dato Onn, Tan Cheng Lock, and E.E.C. Thuraisingham (not an original member).\textsuperscript{60} Thuraisingham was included when

\textsuperscript{57} Time was quoted in the Straits Times of February 24, 1950. The Straits Times ran an accompanying editorial which expressed approval for most of the article, but which took strong exception to the reference to "Blimpish resistance."


\textsuperscript{59} Straits Times, January 11, 1949.

\textsuperscript{60} Interview with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur. Other members included such men as Dato Hamzah bin Abdullah, Khoo Teck Ee, Y.C. Yang (who had replaced Leong Yew Koh), Dato Zainal Abidin bin Haji Abas, Dr. Mustapha bin Osman, Salim bin Hakim, Tuan Haji Eusof bin Yusoff, Quick Nai Nee, Lee Kong Chang, Syed Alladin Mohamed, and Sir Roland Bradell (who had replaced Sir Sydney Palmer) as of September, 1949. (Straits Times, September 18, 1949.)
it was suggested that the committee be not only a place where the two major viewpoints—that is the Chinese and the Malays'—would be represented, but where the other voice in Malaya (the Indians) should be heard. 61

Thuraisingham was a Ceylonese Tamil whose family had been successful rubber growers in Malaya. He had, like both Onn and Tan, been invited to be a member of the Legislative Council, and like Onn, he had accepted. He was an excellent speaker. His training as a lawyer helped him develop the ability to think on his feet, and he was especially effective in moments of repartee in the Council. 62

Thuraisingham had never acquired the same degree of respect in Malaya, either in the Indian community or in the other communities, that accrued to either Dato Onn or Tan Cheng Lock. 63 It may have been that Thuraisingham's love of humor had a tendency to impress men with the idea that he was

61 Included at the same time were a Eurasian and a planter. (Straits Times, February 11, 1949.)

62 Interview with Lee, October 25, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.

63 Even though Onn had rivals, his position as leader of the Malays was much stronger than Tan's position as leader of the Chinese. There were too many strong-willed Chinese men of wealth and influence for Tan to have the same ability to translate his convictions into action that Onn had, and this was to be of crucial importance in the political struggles of the early 1950's. It was probably the key factor in the fall from power of none other than Dato Onn himself, for it was the fact that Tan Cheng Lock could not deliver the support of the Chinese that was one of the key reasons for the failure of the Independence of Malaya Party (an intercommunal political party inaugurated in 1951 by Dato Onn). See below, p. 213.
not a deep nor a serious thinker, but in the light of future happenings, it is perhaps most accurate to say that Thuraisingham was not a political leader. He was too often outspoken in his likes and dislikes and appeared too able to see through other men's facades without the tempering humility to leave these weaknesses unexposed.

The Communities Liaison Committee's stated purpose at this early stage of its existence was to emphasize intercommunal co-operation at the highest levels. However, there are those Malayans who have accused MacDonald of setting up the Communities Liaison Committee in order to further British interests in Malaya. Others have claimed that MacDonald's encouragement of Onn's closer relations with the Chinese eventually lost Onn the leadership of the Malays. However, statements obtained from interviews with others involved in the activities of the period do not seem to support the idea that MacDonald saw in Onn the instrument for the continuation of British control of Malaya—but rather that MacDonald actually respected and admired Onn, and saw him as the eventual political leader of all Malaya. A statement attributed to MacDonald by one interviewee is

64 See Legislative Council debates, especially his and others' references to his size (he was a big man), and his love of horse racing.


66 Interview with Syed Nasir, November 8, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
indicative of this. After Onn's party had lost the municipal elections of 1952, MacDonald is quoted as saying that he still felt that Onn was the greatest Asian leader in all of Southeast Asia. 67

Newspapers from all sections of the Malayan community supported the formation of the Communities Liaison Committee and its purpose. 68 Perhaps one of the main reasons for the early support given to the committee was that every week or two new statements would be issued or a speech given in its name that stressed the need for intercommunity co-operation in Malaya in order to bring security and eventual independence to the area. 69

In September, 1949, the Communities Liaison Committee issued a statement outlining the policies it intended to support. Among other things, it stated: "It is the agreed view of the committee that the teaching of Malay and English languages should be compulsory in all Government and Government-aided primary schools." Further on it said: "The immediate problem is to send boys and girls out into the world with a Malayan mind and so strongly Malayan minded that they will pass it on in due course to their children." Elsewhere in

67 Interview with Lee, October 25, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
69 Straits Times, January 18, February 11, 1949; Singapore Free Press, March 5, 1949, etc.
the report it said: "Every encouragement should be given to the establishment of steadily increasing numbers of Government or Government-aided schools where the children of all races attend together, the medium of instruction being Malay and English. In these schools there should be facilities also for teaching to children other languages which are their mother tongues. As such schools increase the numbers of Government and Government-aided communal schools should be progressively reduced."70

This same statement contained political policy goals as well. These called for elections, first at the municipal and state level and later for a portion of the Federal Legislative Council. Self-government should be the ultimate aim of the Federation of Malaya.71

Just a few days after the Communities Liaison Committee was announced, the Commissioner General, MacDonald, stated in a radio address that self-government was a certainty for Malaya, and that Great Britain looked forward to the day when it would happen. The wording of this speech gave the impression that self-government was to be some rather far-off goal in the future of Malayan development.72

70 Communities Liaison Committee Statement of Policy Issued after meeting held in Johore Bahru, September 14, 15, and 16, 1949.

71 Ibid.

72 Malay Mail, January 17, 1949.
The Communities Liaison Committee would have been important to the history of the development of educational policy, if for no other reasons than that it was in this committee that the British felt they were gaining an insight into the thinking and desires of the Malayan communities—when in fact they were only obtaining the views of a small, western-oriented segment of these communities' views, which, as it turned out, were at variance with those held by the majority of the members of the various communities. But, furthermore, the Malayan leaders who attended these meetings came to be identified by the Malayan people as those who cooperated too closely with the colonial government. Both these factors were to affect the political future of the Malayan members of the Communities Liaison Committee and the educational policies they introduced in 1952.

But, more than this, the Communities Liaison Committee formulated ideas on educational policy which were acted on both by the communal parties the committee members led, and by the Legislative Council itself.

"MALAY AND ENGLISH... COMPULSORY" DEBATE.

In September, 1949, it was announced that the Central Advisory Committee on Education had been formed, and its members were listed. The purpose of this committee was to formulate educational policy advice for the Malayan federal government. Its reports were to be submitted to the
Federation's Legislative Council, and used as guidelines for actions by that body concerning the making of educational policy.73 But before the Central Advisory Committee on Education had had enough time to formulate any set of suggestions, members of the Communities Liaison Committee brought the language question into the legislature.

On November 28, 1949, a motion was introduced to the Federal Legislative Council which read as follows: "That the teaching of the Malay and English languages should be compulsory in all Government-aided primary schools."74 This motion was introduced by Dato Zainal Abidin, a close friend and confident of Dato Onn, and a member of the Communities Liaison Committee. Dato Zainal Abidin disclaimed any intention of representing or speaking for the Communities Liaison Committee. Instead, he stressed that this motion came from his own deep conviction that it was an urgent step


for Malaya to take at this time.\textsuperscript{75}

While this was probably a true statement as far as it went, it should not allow the fact to be obscured that the motion he presented was almost identical to the policy statement on this subject issued a month earlier by the Communities Liaison Committee.

Dato Zainal Abidin gave two reasons why he felt that these two languages should be taught in all of Malaya's primary schools: First, in support of Malay, he stated that eventual self-rule was the hope of the people of Malaya—and the promise of British colonial rulers. It was included as a stated goal in the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya, under which they were all governed. However, in order to become self-governing, it was necessary to develop a common means of communication between the various races in Malaya so that all its citizens could evolve a common loyalty. He went on to point out that Malay was the lingua franca of some eighty million inhabitants of the Malayan archipelago and therefore should be known by all in Malaya.\textsuperscript{76} And second, he said that since English was "the diplomatic and commercial language of the world, it too should be learned."\textsuperscript{77}

Following Dato Zainal Abidin's presentation speech,

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p. 534.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
Mr. Yong Shook Lin took the floor. Yong too was a member of the Communities Liaison Committee, a close friend of Tan Siew Sin and Tan Cheng Lock—and, what was more, he was a top official in the recently formulated Malayan Chinese Association. He said the M.C.A. fully supported the motion but requested that certain details connected with its implementation be considered: (1) Malay should be taught in the Rumi and not in the Jawi script; (2) teaching time for other subjects in the mother tongues of the vernacular schools should not be cut back because of this new motion; (3) all expenses incident to teaching Malay and English should be borne by the government; and (4) grants-in-aid to Chinese schools should be increased to make them equal to grants received by other government schools. (A request such as this should not be compared to policy statements approved by the Malayan Union Advisory Council that included recommendations for free primary education for all vernacular schooling. As was stressed then, those recommendations were to be long-term goals. This request by Yong was for immediate action.) Yong too stressed the need for a common medium of communications in order to build a common loyalty among the people of Malaya as a basis for independence.

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78 See above, p. 79.

79 In the Malay schools there were two methods of writing Malay: Rumi, a romanized alphabet, and Jawi, based on Arabic script.

Then the Director for Education, M.R. Holgate, took the floor. He reminded the assembly that he was a member of the Central Advisory Committee on Education and said that, although he did not wish to appear to be anticipating the findings of that committee, he could assure the Council that "... the Committee is in agreement with the principle that all children before they leave the primary school should be able to speak, to read and to write adequate Malay." He told the Council of the difficulties already being experienced by the Education Department in staffing Malay primary schools with adequately trained teachers, and said that he therefore took issue with Yong Shook Lin's implied suggestion that this was the time or the place to talk of implementation—that this was properly the job of the Central Advisory Committee on Education, and until their report was issued, the motion before the Legislative Council should be considered on its own merits and the problems of implementation should not be brought in.

Perhaps the most interesting point put forward by Holgate was contained in his comments concerning the problems faced by young Tamil and Chinese children having to learn three languages at once. He said: "Now, education is one of the vital factors

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81 Maxwell Russell Holgate had succeeded Cheeseman on December 17, 1948. (See above, p. 57.) A New Zealander, he had first joined the Malayan Education Service in 1920. (Malayan Civil List, 1940, p. 349; Malayan Establishment Staff List, 1948, p. 48.)


83 Ibid., p. 537.
in social development and in political progress. Circumstances may arise when education must adapt itself and depart perhaps from pure educational theory in the interest of some overriding need. I believe that in the present circumstances of Malaya to-day we are facing that need.⁸⁴

In effect the government was suggesting that while educational experts were convinced that the best way to educate a child was to start him in his own language and only later introduce the study of another language, it was willing to admit that there were circumstances in Malaya which might make it necessary to give first consideration to values other than purely educational ones in deciding what was taught in the schools. This represents one of the first times that the idea was publicly expressed that educational standards would not always constitute the basic consideration in decisions on educational policy for Malaya.

Later, Dato E.E.C. Thuraisingham spoke for the Indian community. He gave the motion his unqualified support and went on to call for even more educational innovation than the motion included. He asked for a commitment to bring the children of all races in Malaya under the same roof in the schools—to do away with the four-track communalism of the education of the present.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 536.
⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 539.
In supporting the present motion he pointed out that it did not prevent the teaching of other languages. Rather, these would be important because they were being stressed at the new university, i.e., chairs had been established in the Chinese and Tamil languages. He said that while all seemed to agree on a need for having a common loyalty to Malaya, there was some hesitancy over the idea of a common nationality wherein all would aim toward becoming Malayans instead of remaining Chinese, Malays, and Indians, each needing special privileges. The Malays claimed that their economic position was so weak vis a vis the Chinese that they needed extra encouragement in this field, and the Chinese claimed that their political position was too weak to enable them to resist being eventually swamped by the Malays. Thuraisingham challenged both views and said that each indicated a lack of faith in themselves, "a national cowardice."

As the debate continued, most speakers reaffirmed different aspects of the statements already given. They stressed the problems of learning three languages, the cost involved, the need for speed of implementation of the motion, and the need for the building of a national consciousness. One spoke of the need for improving rural education before worrying about language requirements. There was a call from the

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86 Ibid., pp. 539-540.
87 This from an Englishman, ibid., p. 545.
Chinese for more aid for Chinese schools. 88

The government representative, the Chief Secretary, called for an immediate start towards implementation of this new policy, suggesting that they not wait until all schools could be included before introducing the teaching of Malay and English, but rather to start in a few and add to their numbers as funds and staff became available. He stressed the unifying effects of all people in Malaya knowing one language: Malay. He said that all recognized the value of English in commerce and government, but the real cement of Malaya would come from all learning the Malay language. 89

The motion passed unanimously.

In considering the events of this two-year period, what seemed to have occurred by late 1948 was that British efforts to appease Malay communal interests, coupled with the threat to the Chinese community posed by the government's efforts to check the communist terrorists, had awakened the communalism of the Chinese.

British fears that this communalism might be exploited by the Communists had in turn led them to encourage first the formation of a Chinese organization to serve as a counter-attraction to the Communists, and shortly thereafter to foster the formation of a Communities Liaison Committee to help work

89 Ibid., pp. 552-553.
out the communal differences which threatened the country. They found the right man for the job in MacDonald, for he had been able to gain the confidence of the leaders of the two major communities.

While the British were working to achieve their goals, the leaders of the two Malayan communities were also awakening to the threat that communalism and communism presented to their aspirations. The Malay leaders were coming to see that, however much they might distrust the Chinese, it was necessary for the security of the country to spend money to bring them under greater control—and this would mean spending money on Chinese education, for thought control would need to play a major role in any permanent solution to the communist threat. At the same time these leaders came to realize that any desires they might have for successful self-rule would be contingent on interracial harmony in Malaya. So they were willing to encourage first a common language, and eventually interracial education—even if this meant that the government would have to do more for the education of the other races.

The Chinese leaders came to see that if they did not want to lose control of their people to the Communists, they would have to allow greater government supervision of Chinese education in return for more government money spent to combat communist efforts in that education. This was needed both to check the spread of communist propaganda among the students
and to reorient the Chinese teacher whose low salary and poor working conditions made him especially susceptible to communist promises. They were also willing to agree to the teaching of Malay and English in Malaya's schools because they too saw that it was necessary to have a greater degree of understanding between the races of Malaya if there was to be a viable self-government in Malaya's future. 90

One can speculate that the Malays wanted self-government because they wanted to play a greater role in the government of the country, while the Chinese saw self-government as meaning less competition from their business rivals, the British. But both seemed aware of the need to move carefully, because if the Malays gained too much political power they might demand a disproportionate share of the Chinese business world; whereas if the Chinese had enough economic strength they might be able to oust the Malays from control of the government. Both groups of leaders saw the British as providing protection from such a turn of events, and thus both had mixed emotions about gaining independence too rapidly.

The events of the years that followed were to provide evidence to support further these conclusions.

90 See Harry Miller, Prince and Premier: A Biography of Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, First Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya (Singapore, 1959), p. 97 (hereafter cited as Miller, Prince and Premier), and K.J. Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya (Kuala Lumpur, 1965), p. 154 (hereafter cited as Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process) for further comments on this.
These two years, 1948-1949, had shown that the pressures emanating from the Malayan leaders were finding voice and creating action. The faltering steps toward change recommended by the Cheeseman educational policy were becoming more firm. The commitments to changing educational policy held by those in control of affairs in Malaya were having to expand as never before.
TROUBLES AT SULTAN IDRIS TRAINING COLLEGE.

Whatever the feelings of accomplishment attending the passing of the motion to have Malay and English taught in all primary schools, it was soon tempered by events. Scarcely one month later, on December 14, 1949, trouble flared in the showcase of Malay vernacular education in Malaya, the Sultan Idris Training College (for Malay teachers) at Tanjong Malim, where student protests led to expulsion of all the second-year students and the consequent resignation of the other two classes in sympathy. ¹

The events of December at the college were such as to cause the government to appoint a special commission to make a report of the affair. On the commission were two Englishmen, a judge and a university professor; and two Malays, one a former Mentri Besar of Selangor and the other Dato Onn bin Ja'afar, President of UMNO and Mentri Besar of Johore. ²

An interim report was issued by the commission on March 1. This interim report's main recommendation was that the school


² Malay Mail, January 5, 1950; Minutes and Council Papers, 1950-1951, p. B 238. The judge was T.C. Spenser Wilkinson (Chairman); the professor, N.S. Alexander; the ex-M.B., Dato Hamzah bin Abdullah.
be reopened on March 16 and that all students be allowed to return at that time.³

In June of 1950 the commission's full report was released.⁴ It contained a step by step account of what had occurred in December, plus a statement of what the commission thought were the underlying and the immediate causes of the trouble. The report also contained a list of recommendations to correct what the commission felt were the weaknesses of the school.

A study of the report helps to shed light on some of the attitudes of the time towards the government's policies on Malay education. The report indicated that the immediate cause of the students' actions was that they were required to make teaching aids and felt that they could not make these aids, both because of lack of materials and because of lack of time. They had refused to attempt the assignment, even after being ordered to do so by the headmaster. This had led the Director of Education to expel the whole second-year class just eight days before the end of the term. The first- and third-year classes left within the next two days as a sympathy protest over the manner and severity of the expulsion of their

³ It was dated February 22, but not released to the public until March 1. See Malay Mail of March 1 and Minutes and Council Papers, 1950-1951, p. B 235.

⁴ Final Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Certain Matters Connected with the Sultan Idris Training College, Tanjong Malim (Council Paper No. 28).
fellow students.  

In interviews with the students the commission had discovered that they resented having to spend time with practical subjects such as gardening and basket weaving (two staunch pillars of prewar Malay education). Instead, these students wanted greater stress to be placed on academic studies, feeling that this training held more meaning for postwar Malay education. 

The commission's report related that the whole period after the war had been a time of unrest at the school. In the years right after World War II it had been assumed that the fact that older and sometimes married men had been in attendance was to blame for this, for they were assumed to be harder to discipline. But by 1949 this group had all graduated, and students of normal age were the ones who reacted dramatically to what they felt were poor education practices.

A rather interesting finding of the commission was that the European staff had quite uniformly expressed the opinion that the students at the college were of poor quality morally and mentally. The commission went further and claimed that Education Department officials had to some degree held the same feeling as did the European staff of the school. The report

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7 Ibid., pp. B 225-226.
added that the Malay members of the staff did not agree.8

The commission was quite critical of the way the Director of Education had handled the whole affair. The report suggested that the Director was wrong in overriding the recommendations of the headmaster not to expel the second-year students. The commission also wondered why neither the Director nor the Assistant Director had paid a personal visit to the school prior to such precipitous action.9

The commission's recommendations included: that certain of the staff be replaced;10 that no European women be on the staff of this wholly Malay college;11 that more concern be shown for the school on the part of the Assistant Director of Education (Malay) who, according to the commission's report, had very little knowledge of what was going on at the school;12 and that there be a general raising of standards with regard to both entrance requirements and instruction.13

The recommendation from the report which was to have the most impact on education in Malaya was the one which asked that a committee be constituted to study Malay education from

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10 Ibid., p. B 236.
11 Ibid. It had been a European woman teacher who had been the immediate cause of the students' complaints—-but the report gave no reason for this recommendation.
top to bottom throughout the country and make recommendations for its improvement. While many of the suggestions of the report were acted on, it was government follow-through on this last one that was to culminate in some of the most far-reaching and important recommendations made on Malayan education in postwar Malaya. (See the next chapter for a full account of this committee and its work.)

This Sultan Idris report was perhaps the first of its kind in Malaya, for the contents of the report reflect the fact that, first of all, one half of the commission's members were Malays; and, second, that of the two remaining members only one was a civil servant of the type usually found on these committees. As an editorial in the Malay Mail suggested, few reports so outspoken had ever been issued in Malaya.

The "Establishment" was not slow to respond. The Education Department took issue with the commission's report, especially the report's analysis of the causes of the trouble, in a separate statement issued along with the commission's report. Perhaps the most telling points the Education Department made were that there were no professional educators with a background in Malay education on the commission, and that the commission had declined to hear the views of the Director of Education at a late stage of its inquiries before issuing

14 Ibid., p. B 238. (See p. 114 and passim.)
15 June 15, 1950.
This affair helped to illustrate how much change had taken place in the thinking of Malays about the education offered them, as evidenced by the attitudes of the students at the Malay Teacher Training College—and in contrast to this, how little the average English education officer's outlook on Malay education had altered, as evidenced by the comments of the officials of the Education Department. In this case, the forces for change emanating from the Malays won the day. Dussek (the first headmaster of the Sultan Idris Training College) might have said it was about time.17

THE EMERGENCY AND CHINESE EDUCATION.

In 1950 there was increased activity by the communist terrorists. More daring and devastating attacks were carried out as the year progressed. Railroads were hit periodically, along with estates and mines. Individual killings were reported everywhere in Malaya—in the cities as well as in the countryside. School teachers were a prime target—especially those who did not support the terrorists in the area that they dominated, such as interior Pahang. Threats

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16 Observations by the Department of Education on the Report of the Sultan Idris Training College Commission of Inquiry in Minutes and Council Papers, 1950-1951, pp. B 241-244. Holgate had been interviewed; but apparently this was early in the inquiry (B 240).

17 See above, p. 21.
were delivered, and many a teacher left his school rather than face the possibilities of the future in that particular section of the country.18

Meanwhile, the government seemed torn between its desire to reassure the country that all was well in the Chinese schools and a desire to act on its own fears that the Chinese Communists were going to be able to subvert the Chinese students and teachers and turn them to communism (if they had not done so already).

A top Education Department official made a statement to the public that there was little communist infiltration of Chinese schools in Malaya.19 Yet in his opening address to the Legislative Council on February 8, 1950, High Commissioner Gurney asked for a new Registration of Schools Bill. He stated that no school in Malaya was going to be allowed to be influenced by communism; that he would "not have communism taught in this country."20 The bill would require that the staffs of all schools be registered with the government. (Excluded from the bill were government and religious schools.)21

An American who conducted a study of Chinese education for the Malayan government in 1950, Dr. William Fenn, maintained

18 Malay Mail, March 20, April 25, and May 5, 1950.
19 Straits Times, December 15, 1950.
21 Malay Mail, January 25, 1950.
that political activity was rampant in the Chinese schools in that year, and that it was not just communist activity, either. Kuomintang supporters were also much in evidence.22

Reports of the period show that police activities in connection with the Chinese schools were numerous, and that the Education Department was aware of this. Its federal officials were instructing state education officials to co-operate in every way with the police efforts to control communism in the Chinese schools.23

Thus, perhaps the most noticeable effects of the increased success of the terrorists were paradoxical. Because of the expenses involved in combating them, there was less money available for education, and yet the government felt that more money must be spent on education—most especially Chinese education.24

For example, in the Legislative Council meeting of April, 1950, the subject of support for Chinese education in Resettlement Areas was discussed. And while they must have felt mixed emotions about it, even the Malays in the Council

22 Interview with Dr. Fenn, October 5, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.


24 The Kelantan records offered an interesting case study of the federal government's attempts to increase its aid to Chinese schools, even in face of known disapproval existing in a Malay-dominated state such as Kelantan. (See Education Files, No. 24 of 1948.)
agreed in principle with the other members, Chinese, Indian, and English, that "This is a vital matter, and unless something is done for the education of these young people, anything we may do to stem this Emergency will be defeated and useless in twenty years' time."\textsuperscript{25}

THE DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

In late February, 1950, M.R. Holgate, Director of Education, gave a radio address in which he outlined the salient features of a new six-year government Draft Development Plan which related to education. The background of this plan was as follows: In 1945 the United Kingdom Colonial Development and Welfare Act was passed, providing a sum of $928,000,000 to aid colonial development schemes throughout the British colonies. The Malayan Union government had asked the heads of its various departments to furnish it estimates of their development needs, and this had been done by mid-1947. In late 1947 a special government committee was set up, with the Governor of the Malayan Union (Gent) as chairman, to determine the appropriate priority for the requests that would be submitted to the British government. In 1948 it was announced that the Federation of Malaya and Singapore together would receive $42,857,143, which was to be divided equally between the two areas. The Draft Development Plan itself was

produced by the Economic Affairs Department of the Federation, with the aid of the various other departments concerned. 26

Holgate got his materials from Chapter I ("The Development of Social Services"). This chapter had been issued separately in 1949, 27 but little public mention had been made of its educational aspects prior to this radio report by Holgate.

His talk emphasized the expenses involved in trying to solve the educational problems of Malaya. Holgate continued by asking for more teacher training facilities: one new college for English teachers, two for Malay, and a normal teacher training center for the Chinese. He also supported the new university by stating: "This argument [that higher education should be postponed] will not stand an examination, for to withhold the higher branches of learning from those who have proved themselves fit for it, is to hold up the natural process of the development of the very State itself, and to defeat the ever-present object of preparing locally born


27 Draft Development Plan (Council Paper No. 68 of 1949) (Kuala Lumpur, 1949). "The first instalment of the draft plan is published for information only; it has not yet been discussed with the Governments of the States and Settlements and the Federal Government proposes to initiate these discussions before considering the draft plan further. Further Chapters are in the course of preparation." (Cover page.)
citizens to participate in the government of this country.”

In the plan itself, it was stated that two alternatives for Malayan education had been suggested. The first would be free English education for all—which the report maintained was ideal, but impossible because of financial considerations. And the second would be to bring the two-thirds of the six- to twelve-year-old students who were not now in school into the present school system. This was also impossible, even if the population remained static—which the report pointed out was not the case, as an increase of 25,000 children per year in the age group mentioned was being experienced.

The Draft Development Plan then went on to recommend only a short-term program "aimed at consolidating existing services rather than at establishing new ones." Within this framework four goals were set: (1) build more facilities for training teachers; (2) extend educational opportunities for Malays, particularly in rural regions; (3) improve secondary education; and (4) increase government contributions to the University of Malaya.

For teacher training, it suggested one English residential

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28 Malay Mail, February 26, 1950.
29 Draft Development Plan, p. 4.
30 Ibid., p. 8.
31 Ibid.
teachers' college, an additional Malay men's teacher training college; expansion of the existing college for Malay women, plus a new one; one college for Indian teacher training; and normal schools for Chinese teacher training. Details were also furnished for expanding primary, secondary, and higher educational facilities.

While the first part of the Draft Development Plan was published in 1949, the Legislative Council did not debate it until July 26, 1950, after all three sections were in its hands.

From the Malayan Council members the chief criticism was that the Draft Development Plan was not ambitious enough. And from the Europeans the idea which most completely covered the British viewpoint towards educational development in the period 1945-1957 was clearly stated by C. Thornton (an unofficial member representing mining interests): "Priority to my mind--the essential priority--is to put the country on a sound economic basis. Everything flows from that." It seemed that the British were long on commitments by high-sounding educational goals but short on implementation.

In the plan itself there was a statement that was to

32 Ibid., pp. 8, 9.
33 Ibid., pp. 9, 15.
35 Ibid., p. 299.
haunt educational policy development as long as the British were in control, when on page 2 it stated: "Cut your coat according to your cloth." This old proverb was to become quite shopworn before it disappeared from the Malayan educational scene.

With only these few criticisms the plan was readily approved by the Council that day.36

The plan's educational features attracted but little comment in the debate, partly because these were only a small segment of the total plan, partly because these were not so much about policies concerning educational theory as they were about the financing of educational projects—and what was most important of all, the First Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education was scheduled to come up for debate the following day in the Legislative Council.37

Meanwhile, it was becoming increasingly clear that there were at least two developments on the Malayan educational scene of the time that were evoking an intensified concern from the more communalistic Malays. One was the evident increasing commitment on the part of the government to support Chinese

36 Ibid., p. 318. Actually, there were many circumstances that developed only shortly after this plan was approved that made its implementation difficult: decreasing prices for rubber and tin, a worsening of the Emergency—accompanied by increased expenses to control it—and in education a new law (1952) that made many of the recommendations in the plan obsolete. (See Progress Report, p. 5 and passim.)

education. The second was the growing agitation from many sections of the public (including some Malays) for more English education.

Also, editorials in most leading English newspapers stressed the importance of English as a medium of instruction, and many of the letters to the editors in these papers painted a picture of public support for English education.\textsuperscript{38} It did not help matters any that the Education Department issued frequent reports which indicated its concern about the fact that it was unable to cope with the exploding demand in Malaya for English education.

CENTRAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT.

While much Malay concern in the early part of the year was focused on the problems revealed by the revolt of the students at the Sultan Idris Training College, as outlined above, the first really outspoken criticism of educational policy by prominent Malays did not occur until mid-June—for it was at this time that the Central Advisory Committee on Education's First Report\textsuperscript{39} was submitted to the Legislative Council. (It was laid on the table June 14\textsuperscript{40} but the report

\textsuperscript{38} Straits Echo and Times of Malaya, June 8, 1950; Malay Mail of March 19 and June 19, 1950; Straits Times, April 25 and June 30, 1950.

\textsuperscript{39} See above, p. 95 for the composition of this committee.

\textsuperscript{40} Minutes and Council Papers, 1950=1951, p. B 245.
had been issued to the various state Education Departments by at least June 5.\(^{41}\)

This report seemed to flow almost directly from the educational policy statements of the Communities Liaison Committee. Paragraph 1 set forth the suggested primary aim for educational policy in Malaya. It called for an educational system designed to end communalism in Malaya--one which would encourage the integration of the various racial divisions existent in the land.\(^ {42}\) The report drew special attention to the proposed new commitments by listing the old (Paragraph 2). It stated: "In the pre-war period, the Administration and the Department [of Education] were pre-occupied with the development of the English school system and the steady expansion of Malay vernacular education . . . ."\(^ {43}\) It went on to describe estate Indian schools administered by the Department of Labour and a Chinese system set up and supported by private Chinese money and know-how.\(^ {44}\) It pointed out (Paragraph 4) that of these four separate systems, only the English schools contributed to "common experience, understanding and harmony" between the communities of Malaya.\(^ {45}\)

\(^{41}\) See Kelantan Education Files, No. 185 of 1949, Report from Chief Secretary to State Secretary, June 5, 1950.


\(^{43}\) Ibid.

\(^{44}\) Ibid.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., p. B 249.
Under the heading "Ultimate Objective and Limiting Factors" (Paragraph 5) it was pointed out that educational authorities agreed that the best language for beginning the education of children was that of their home. It recognized too that the present desire of parents was that their children be taught their "home" tongue. Then, despite these two admissions, it concluded the paragraph with this sentence: "Cogent as these considerations are, we are convinced that the ultimate desirable objective should be free (and, finally, compulsory) primary education in the medium of English." (It was these five paragraphs, and especially this last sentence, together with the section of the summary paragraph [19] which covered them, that were to prove so controversial during the debate.)

The succeeding paragraph dwelt at length on the word "ultimate." It stressed the idea that no force or coercion should be used to obtain acquiescence in this goal. Evolution, not revolution, was to be the keystone of achieving the aim of this policy. This objective would be gained, it stated, when people, seeing the values that English education could give, freely chose it for themselves and their children.

Paragraph 7 contained the first official statement of an idea which was to be a basic part of every proposed

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46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
government educational policy up until the Education Report of 1956 (and in fact was back in vogue as of 1966). Emphasis should be on the development of two types of free primary schools: English-medium in which Malay would be required, and Malay-medium in which English would be required. These schools were to be of six-year duration and were to provide opportunity for the learning of Tamil and Chinese by those children whose parents desired it. It would still be possible to shift from the vernacular primary system to the English primary system after completion of three years of schooling in the vernacular school. This would mean that the student would have had one year of English before transferring. The name was to be changed to "transfer classes" in place of "special Malay classes." These classes were to be open to all vernacular school children, not just to Malays (unlike the past policy).

The report concluded its recommendations on primary schools with the thought that although the goal of primary education should be to have such primary schools as had been described, the government should not withdraw its financial support from "existing Chinese and Indian vernacular schools," because these schools provided education for some 140,000 students, while in the country there were some 575,000

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48 Ibid., p. B 250.
school-age children not yet able to obtain an education.\textsuperscript{50} Chinese normal classes should be instituted to train teachers for Chinese primary schools. However, no government aid was to go to a Chinese or Indian primary school that did not teach English to third-year students and Malay to fourth-year students.\textsuperscript{51}

The secondary system envisaged also had both Malay and English schools, but these schools were not to be equally constituted. Instead, the English secondary schools were to be much more complex and in general of longer duration than Malay-medium secondary schools.

Malay post-primary education was to consist of a two-year course using Malay as the medium of instruction, with "... the study of English receiving more attention than heretofor [in the Malay primary classes]." Practical subjects preparing the student for a job after graduation would be a part of the curriculum.\textsuperscript{52}

The English post-primary schools would be of two general types. The first type would be called English schools, and the second type would be known as junior technical (trade) schools. These two types would be further subdivided into two parts: The English school would have one section very similar to the Malay post-primary schools—that is, two years

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p. B 253.
of work designed to prepare the student for a job upon graduation. The other stream in the English school would be the equivalent of the then-existing English schools—five years of general education leading to the School Certificate. Those completing this would then take an additional two years, if desired, to prepare themselves for university. The junior technical (trade) schools would be divided into junior technical schools and craft schools. The former would produce students ready for the demands of industry, whereas the craft schools would prepare a person to be ready to fulfill local needs for handymen including such skills as basketry, masonry, cycle repairing, and tin war work.53

There were to be no new grants for other than the types of post-primary schools listed above. New Chinese or Tamil post-primary classes were to be discouraged.54

The report called for full educational opportunities for girls, and co-education to help foster this.55 It also encouraged the expansion of the number of educational officers,56 the standardization of missionary school teaching staff,57 and the building of schools which were less expensive.58

54 Ibid., p. B 250.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid., p. B 255.
THE DEBATE.

The debate on whether or not the Legislative Council would accept this report took place (July 27, 1950) almost immediately after the Legislative Council had debated and approved the Draft Development Plan. M.R. Holgate, Director of Education and Chairman of the Central Advisory Committee on Education, led off the debate with a long explanation of the report's contents, and then he attempted to answer criticisms that had already appeared in the press. He was especially careful to stress the word "ultimate" again, and emphasized that "... the Committee did not consider that this would, in the Federation's circumstances, be practicable in the near future."

Holgate made one new proposal which he said he felt should be considered along with the committee's recommendations: that Local Education Authorities should be set up in order to encourage the involvement of the people in the problem of how to solve the financial demands of the new educational policy. In this connection, he commended the work of the kampong people in setting up temporary structures and getting some sort of education started when the Education Department


60 This idea probably originated from a Colonial Office Assistant Education Adviser, who had visited Malaya earlier in the year. (See Kelantan Education Files, No. 185 of 1949, "Extract from a report from Miss F.H. Gwilliam, Assistant Education Adviser, Colonial Office, 'Report from Malaya.'")
could not itself do so at that time. Holgate added that his department was assisting in these locally sponsored endeavors whenever possible. 61

One section of Holgate's speech contained comments on the last official educational policy passed by the legislature in Malaya, namely the Cheeseman policy of 1946. He stated as his opinion that its aim of having three vernacular primary systems feeding into an English secondary system had given the best possible transitional system from that which existed before the war to that which was needed after the war. Due, however, to changing conditions it was now necessary to re-examine educational policy. He suggested that the changes that necessitated this reorganization were (1) that the advent of the Federation of Malaya in place of the Malayan Union had produced a new educational situation, e.g., the implementation of government policy was now in the hands of the various States and Settlements; 62 (2) that the 1947 census had shown that the number of primary age pupils was not as large as had been presumed (the drop was assumed to be because of wartime increases in child mortality); 63 and (3) that changing political conditions which had occurred in Southeast Asia (one assumes he was referring especially to the fact that Indonesia had

62 See above, p. 73.
gained its independence) had pointed up the vital role for education in Malaya. 64

In answering criticisms, Holgate tackled first that one which stated that the report was not bold enough nor precise enough in its aims. "Cut your coat to fit your cloth" was dragged out and used again, even while he admitted that it had been used several times in the debate of the previous day on the Draft Development Plan. 65

As for the suggestion made by some that no Chinese or Indian schools continue to receive government aid, he asked: What is the alternative? They could not be converted overnight into Malay and English schools, nor should they be closed and the students cast adrift. 66

Referring to the demand from some Chinese newspapers that Chinese schools should receive government support as a third stream in the nation's educational system, Holgate went on to state that financial considerations and the need to break down racial barriers made this impractical. It was not that Chinese schools were bad. There were bad influences in a few Chinese schools, but generally conditions in them were good and improving—so much so that the Governor General had

64 Proceedings, 1950-1951, p. B 320. The Emergency was also a factor, although Holgate did not mention it in the speech. (See for example Annual Report on Education for 1948, pp. 31-32.)
65 Ibid., p. B 323.
66 Ibid., p. B 324.
permitted him to state that considerations were being given to increasing aid to the Chinese schools already receiving grants. 67

Here again it was evident that the government's ambivalent feelings regarding the communal problems it faced in Malaya were causing it difficulty, for on the one hand it gave evidence of feeling that the best solution to communalism was to educate the various communities' children together, but at the same time it finally recognized that present communal feelings among the Chinese necessitated continued government support -- indeed, increased government support -- for the Chinese vernacular schools in order to prevent, if possible, their coming under the influence of the Communists. And the government had to do this knowing full well that its actions tended to produce unhappy reactions from the Malays.

The first two speeches following Holgate's contained little of importance. Both supported the motion. Then a Chinese member of the Central Advisory Committee on Education, Leung Cheung Ling, 68 rose and moved to amend the motion. His amendment would have the teaching of Malay in Chinese schools changed to begin from the fifth year instead of from the fourth year, in deference to the hardships incurred by students learning three languages -- especially when Malay, the


third one, depended on a grasp of the romanized alphabet, a subject that they would have only just met with in their school work the previous year.69

Dato Onn bin Ja'afar counter-attacked this amendment by moving an amendment to the amendment to the effect that both English and Malay should start in the first year in Indian and Chinese primary schools. He added that the policy as contained in the report would create a Babel in Malaya and went on to call for the cessation of government support to all Chinese- and Indian-medium schools, pointing out that the government had admitted in the debate on the Draft Development Plan that it did not have enough money to implement its ideal educational plans. This, he said, would be a place to save. If there are people who want Chinese or Tamil education, let them pay for it, and not the government.70 Then he said: "Even English is a foreign language in this country, but it is accepted because we consider it necessary--even more so to-day--by virtue of the partnership of the Federation with England and the British Commonwealth countries. By virtue of that we accept the necessity of the teaching of English coupled with the teaching of Malay."71

Thuraisingham spoke to both amendments and said that

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70 Ibid., p. B 332.
71 Ibid., p. B 333.
the Council was wasting its time on these small particulars and should settle the major issues in the report first. He added that when the report itself came under direct consideration, he was going to oppose its adoption. 72

The original amendment was defeated. 73 Onn, having made his point, agreed to withdraw his motion. 74

A ten-minute adjournment was taken, and when the Council reconvened, Holgate, in an apparent attempt to salvage at least a portion of the report, offered a government amendment to strike out the first sentence of Paragraph 19, which was a summary of Paragraphs 1-5, and which included the statement, "that the ultimate desirable objective should be free (and finally compulsory) primary education in the medium of English." 75

The next person to take up the debate, Mr. R. Ramani, was quick to point out what should have been obvious—that while the government amendment struck out the summary statement, it left intact the earlier statements found in Paragraphs 1-5 of the report. 76 After the President of the Council ruled that both Paragraph 19 and Paragraphs 1-5 were

72 Ibid., p. 334.
73 The President of the Council ruled that since Onn's amendment was a direct negation of the first amendment by Leung, it should be treated separately.
75 Ibid., p. B 335.
76 Ibid.
deleted by the motion, the motion passed. 77

When Dato E.E.C. Thuraisingham took the floor, he ridiculed the now truncated version. The President rejoined by stating that although the amendment had passed, Paragraphs 1-5 were not deleted. When that bit of confusing information was forthcoming, Thuraisingham saw his opening and took it. He moved the adjournment of the debate until the committee had had a chance to reconsider what it really wanted to recommend, especially in connection with English education. 78

Onn supported the motion to adjourn, and while doing so castigated the Malays on the committee who had seen fit to concur in such a "gratuitous insult to the Malays and the Malay language," as was contained in Paragraph 5. 79 He asked that educational policy decisions be held in abeyance until the report of the committee to study Malay education in all of its aspects be made available. 80 (He was referring to the Committee on Malay Education that had been suggested in the report of the commission to investigate the Sultan Idris Training College troubles.)

Although previous statements by Holgate had made it appear that the government fully intended to try to gain
the approval by the Council of the report, the government made an apparent attempt to save face by declaring: "... that Government did not intend to press this motion to a vote this morning mainly because this Report has still to be considered by Their Highnesses the Rulers in Conference."^81

Debate on the report was adjourned, never to be taken up again. ^82

What was the meaning of all this? Here was a report that seemed to echo the unanimously agreed on recommendations of the Communities Liaison Committee made in September, 1949. Yet when it came up for debate, two of the most prominent members of that committee led the attack which resulted in the Council's nonacceptance of the report.

To answer the question it is necessary to go back a bit and recount a series of events which had unfolded within UMNO. As was indicated when the Communities Liaison Committee recommendations were issued, they contained not only recommendations concerning education, but also proposals for citizenship

^81 Ibid., p. B 341.

^82 The Kelantan Education Files provide an interesting addition to this affair. In a report dated August 31, 1950, it was stated that the Rulers in Conference had refused to accept Paragraphs 1-5 and No. 1 of Paragraph 19. They asked that this decision and the reasons for their rejections be given to Professor L. Barnes, Chairman of the committee set up to study Malay education. (No. 185 of 1949, Copy of Extract of Report of Proceedings from the Twelfth Meeting of the Conference of Rulers, held on August 31, 1950, No. 12 in K 1106/49.)
and elections. Almost immediately Onn had encountered considerable opposition within the ranks of UMNO to his request that it accept the proposals of the Communities Liaison Committee. Many members expressed a special concern for the consequences for Malays if the citizenship provisions of the Federation Agreement should be liberalized.

In two successive general meetings of UMNO (May 20 and June 10) Onn attempted to convince UMNO members to support the Communities Liaison Committee proposals—to no avail. At one point he said regarding education that "the future of Malay participation in industry, trade and commerce is closely bound up with education in English." After reminding his listeners that the government had set up a Central Advisory Committee on Education whose report would appear shortly, he went on to state that the committee was going to recommend that the educational system provide free primary education for all children in schools in which the medium of instruction was to be English, with Malay as an obligatory subject, or schools using Malay as the medium of instruction with English as obligatory.

As a result of UMNO's second failure to support his

83 See above, pp. 93-94.


85 Communities Liaison Draft Report of meeting (undated, but internal evidence indicates either the May or June, 1950, meeting of UMNO--more probably the May meeting).
request that it record its approval of the Communities Liaison Committee recommendations, Onn resigned as president of UMNO, and he was followed in this action by almost all its other top officials. However, after considerable support for him personally had been evidenced, he again accepted the post of UMNO president, but this was in August, 1950, so at the time of this debate he was not the president of UMNO.

It would seem that Onn's attack on the Central Advisory Committee's report was based at least in part on his inability to gain the support of his Malay followers for the report's more noncommunal features. He chose to single out the phrase that talked of having the ultimate goal of making the English language the sole medium of instruction, because this was something he himself disapproved of.

The most probable explanations for the moves taken in the debate by the government seem to be that while it sincerely wanted the report passed and was willing to water it down in order to appease the opposition it knew existed concerning the "ultimate goal" statement, it bungled the attempt and so came to agree that the report needed to be redone.

It seems most unlikely that the British would have used their official majority to gain Council approval for the report, for they could ill afford to stir up more communal

86 Ishak, p. 85.
87 Ibid., p. 86.
opposition to their rule than already existed.

While the report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education failed to gain acceptance in the Legislative Council, many of the ideas it contained were to find a home in later reports. It was an important link in the line of reports that were to lead to the educational policy of Independent Malaya. From this time on the British were to see their role as masters of educational policy change increasingly taken over by the Malayans.
CHAPTER V

THE BARNES REPORT

GENERAL CONDITIONS IN MALAYA.

The fact that the first report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education had not been accepted by the Legislative Council did not by any means indicate that there was a rejection of the idea of the need for change in the educational policy of Malaya. Rather, it indicated a defeat for those who were more interested in English-oriented education than they were in Malayan-oriented education. Those Malayans who were attempting to build for the independence of Malaya gave every evidence of being quite aware of the vital role that education could and should play in such an endeavor. They agreed with the Advisory Committee's report that education should be used to develop a national consciousness, but they did not agree that English-medium education was the best way to achieve this national consciousness, nor, especially, that it should be the "ultimate goal" of education.

Actually, although there was concern among Malayan leaders about educational policy, the situation that continued to loom largest on the Malayan scene was the Emergency. It had been getting progressively worse. The government had not been able to come to grips with the situation in any way that would lift the morale of the Malayan people or appear to blunt the ability of the communists to carry out their terrorist
activities. The High Commissioner, Gurney, was respected by most of the people, but he did not seem able to inspire them.

The economy, in spite of the costs of the Emergency, was good. The Korean War accounted for this. The demand for rubber and tin had increased, and as the demand increased, so did the price. This resulted in greatly increased revenue for Malaya, since the chief source of government income was a tax on the export of raw materials.

THE MEMBERS SYSTEM.

In 1951 a change was introduced into the governmental setup of the Federation of Malaya. On January 24 the Legislative Council debated the idea of introducing a member system of government in Malaya's Federal Legislative Council. If adopted, this would mean that certain of the departments of the federal government would have a "Member" of the Legislative Council at their head (somewhat similar to ministers in the English parliamentary system, or secretaries of the President's Cabinet in the United States political system). The immediate motive of the British for instituting a member system seems to have been that they felt that since this step

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1 Actually, the instituting of Resettlement Areas may very well have begun to have an effect on the operations of the terrorists, but this was not yet apparent to the people of Malaya.

2 Onn had traveled to London in 1948 to ask for increased Malay participation in the federal government. He wanted the heads of some departments to be Malays, and a new post created, Deputy High Commissioner, which also should be taken by a Malay. (Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process, p. 146.)
would provide a sign of advancement toward the goal of independence as well as involve the Malayans more directly in the affairs of the country, it would develop greater enthusiasm among the Malayans to fight the Communists.

In the debate on the proposal, the only strong voices lifted against the idea came from some of the European planters and mining representatives in the Legislative Council, and two Chinese, including H.S. Lee. Just why Lee opposed the idea is not entirely clear. It seems most likely that he could envisage who would fill the new positions and did not like what he saw. Perhaps, too, he felt that those who would occupy the new posts would not have the best interests of the Chinese in view.

The proposal passed, and in March the system was put

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3 Lee was a very successful businessman. He had come to Malaya before World War II for a brief visit and never returned to China. He had only been in Malaya a short time when he purchased the first of many tin mines, and he went on from economic strength to economic strength. During the war, Lee served with the British in India and China, and it was during this time that he gained the rank of Colonel. After the war he became active in politics and was appointed to the Legislative Council. (Interview with Lee, October 25, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.) He was not a good speaker and usually came off second-best in open debate. But he had a quick and agile mind which saw the times clearly, and he therefore usually acted in a way that used the events of the times to the best advantage. (Interviews with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; Abdul Aziz, November 5, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; Tan Siew Sin, November 14, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)

4 One interviewee suggested that Lee did not understand the member system, but it seems more likely that he did not appreciate the idea of those who supported it, e.g., Thuraisingham and Onn, obtaining positions in the new system—as it was quite evident that they would if the system were adopted. (Interview with Thuraisingham, November 2, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.) See also Proceedings, 1950-1951, pp. 617-632.
into effect. One of the key reasons for its passage was the strong support given it by the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney.5

Under the new member system, Dato Thuraisingham was made Member for Education. His was a compromise appointment, neither the Chinese nor the Malays being willing to agree that one of them should hold the post. For example, the Perak UMNO protested the appointment, claiming that because the formulation of educational policy and its implementation were matters of vital importance to the Malays, a Malay must be appointed to the position. The contention was that it was through education that Malays would be able to achieve the ability to stand side by side with the other communities.6

Less than a week later, at an UMNO general meeting in Kuala Lumpur (on March 25), Dato Onn (who was to resign from UMNO some three months hence) gave an address to the assembly in which he supported Thuraisingham's appointment.7

When put into operation in other colonies of Great Britain, the institution of a member system had been considered as an intermediate step towards independence. In Malaya it provoked an ambivalent response, for by 1951 the idea of

5 Miller, Prince and Premier, p. 103.
6 Malay Mail, March 21, 1951.
7 Ibid., March 25, 1951. The next day Onn was defeated on the question of the slogan for UMNO. He desired that it be "Hidup Melayu" (Long Live Malaya”), but "Merdeka" ("Independence") was chosen instead. (Malay Mail, March 26.)
swifter transition to independence for Malaya was becoming a political issue. It was not so much a matter of debate between the British and the Malayans as it was among the Malayans themselves. Dato Onn had hitherto maintained a go-slow policy vis-à-vis independence. In his public statements he insisted that Malaya was not yet ready for complete independence. He and his followers wanted such intermediate steps as the member system to be introduced first so there could be a gradual and orderly transfer of government powers to the Malayans. (It appeared that one of Onn's motives may have been that he thought the Malays themselves were not prepared to have complete independence thrust upon them--that he saw the British as inhibitors to Chinese ambitions, as witness the struggle against the Chinese Communists.)

There had been even before the war a few Malays who wanted immediate complete independence for Malaya, and this idea had continued to exist among a certain small segment of the Malay leadership. Their views had often found expression in the newspaper Utusan Melayu, but it was at this time that Dato Onn provided them with an opportunity to wrest away the leadership of UMNO.

THE I.M.P.

As has been indicated, Onn also felt, and he had been encouraged in this belief by the British, that in order to achieve a viable, independent Malaya, a start should be made first toward intercommunal co-operation. The Communities
Liaison Committee was one manifestation of this conviction. Another was his attempt to have Chinese included as full members of UMNO. Onn had since at least 1949 called for open membership in UMNO. He defined this as meaning that all those who saw Malaya as their place of allegiance—Malayans in the truest sense of the word—should be welcomed as members of UMNO. Elements among the leadership in UMNO who were not too pleased with Onn's leadership welcomed this chance to attack him on an issue which they felt would win for them the support of the Malay ra'ayat (common people). Onn was only able to obtain associate membership for the Chinese and Tamils in 1949, and this did not satisfy him. He continued to press his case with UMNO members, while at the same time becoming deeply involved with MacDonald and the Communities Liaison Committee. When in mid-1951 Onn failed to gain the support of the UMNO assembly for his ideas on membership, he resigned for the second time (and this time permanently), with the avowed intention of forming a new, noncommunal party, whose membership would be drawn from those who fitted his definition of Malayans.

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8 It is always risky to speculate on unstated motives, but it appeared that opposition to Onn was based on at least two other factors besides the questions of Chinese membership in UMNO and the speed of achieving independence: (1) His own personality seemed to some to be opinionated and domineering; (2) he threatened the position of the traditional Malay leaders (those of noble blood).

9 Ishak, pp. 81-82.

10 Interview with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
of Malayan citizens and who supported his views on achieving independence. 11

Onn always insisted that he did not leave UMNO with any aim of wrecking it. He himself helped to pick the new president of UMNO, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj. 12 To those who accused Onn of betraying the Malays, he answered: "My lips are sealed... you would help if you knew... ." 13 In effect, however, Onn had split the Malays. Some followed him into his new party; others remained loyal to UMNO.

On September 16, 1951, the Independence of Malaya Party was launched by Onn with the full support of Tan Cheng Lock and Thuraisingham. The I.M.P. was to be nonexclusive. Its members could continue holding membership in their communal parties. Initially, most of the leading Malayans from all communities gave their support to the new party. 14

The formation of this party was yet another achievement of the Communities Liaison Committee. However, soon after

11 Ibid.
12 Interview with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; Miller, Prince and Premier, p. 105.
13 Straits Times, August 27, 1951, quoting Onn's farewell address to UMNO. He may have meant by this enigmatic statement that he did not wish to discuss the reasons for his leaving UMNO, because they dealt with personalities and he did not wish to engage in a public name-calling debate. One who opposed him, Colonel H.S. Lee, maintains that Onn was one man in public and quite another in private. (Interview with Lee, October 25, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)
14 Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process, pp. 151-156.
the I.M.P. came into being, events transpired which in effect finished the Communities Liaison Committee, although no death notices were printed.

It is difficult to assess precisely the role played by the British in this struggle among Malay leaders. Some have accused them of deliberately encouraging a split, and have cast MacDonald in the role of chief instigator. Some suggested other British leaders of the time (e.g., Gurney) as the main perpetrators of this rivalry. It seems very probable that the British did encourage the formation of the new party, but equally improbable that they had ulterior motives in so doing. It is hard to imagine their having much sympathy with what they must have seen as rather small-minded, communalistic Malay leaders (i.e., those who opposed Onn's efforts to enlarge the membership of UMNO, the citizenship rights of the Chinese, and the intercommunal educational efforts of the government).

Yet, while it does not seem likely that the British purposely attempted to split the Malays, their encouragement of Onn's actions in support of intercommunalism had the effect of not only leaving him open to attack from his Malay rivals, but it also was to prove to have the effect of cutting him off from the support of the Malay people. The Malay people saw him as betraying them by offering too much to the Chinese, and they could not but feel that this was because he was too close to the British and had become unduly influenced by their
attitudes. Whatever else it did, this political dichotomy amongst the Malays was to have a profound influence on Malayan educational policy in the following years.

BARNES REPORT.

While these political events were unfolding in Malaya, educational policy formulation became so controversial as at times to push even the Emergency off the front pages of Malaya's newspapers. In mid-1950, with the adjourning of the debate on the Central Advisory Committee on Education First Report, the people of Malaya sat back to catch their breath and await further developments. It was known that a committee was soon to be announced to study and make recommendations for the education of Malays. On August 11, 1950, the committee chairman was announced by the government. He was Mr. Leonard Barnes, Director of Social Welfare Training at Oxford University, a former colonial officer, and an erstwhile member of the Carr-Saunders Committee on University Education in Malaya. The members of the committee were announced on August 25, and they got down to work forthwith. There were fourteen members on this government-selected committee: nine Malays and five Englishmen (except for Barnes, these were Malayan

15 See debate on Central Advisory Committee First Report for mention of this by Onn, above, p. 130.
16 Malay Mail, August 11, 1950.
education officers), making this one of the very first times such a committee had a Malay majority.  

Editorial comment was generally favorably inclined toward the committee, its purpose, and its membership. A Straits Times editorial was off just a little in its prediction that the report of the Barnes Committee would rank second to that of the Carr-Saunders in importance, for as it turned out, it quite probably should be ranked first in importance in its degree of impact on Malayan educational policy.

However, as an indication of things to come (the Chinese were to oppose this committee's findings), the Chinese-owned and operated Singapore Standard entitled its editorial "The Bling Alley," stating that the study of a particular vernacular educational system (in this case Malay) in Malaya was a blind alley—it led nowhere. It might have social and religious value, but no economic value—the bread-and-butter language of

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18 The committee members were: L.J. Barnes (Chairman); Tunku Ya'acob bin Sultan Abdul Hamid, Mentri Besar, Kedah; Mahmood Mahyiddeen, Kota Bharu, Kelantan; Dr. Mustapa bin Osman, Alor Star, Kedah; L.I. Lewis, Acting Senior Inspector of Schools, Negri Sembilan, Seremban; L.D. Whitfield, Deputy Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur; Miss N.B. Macdonald, Principal, Malay Women's Training College, Malacca; Tom binte Dato Abdul Razak, Lady Superintendent of Malay Schools, Education Office, Kedah, Alor Star; E.M.F. Payne, Headmaster, Victoria Institution, Kuala Lumpur; Aminuddin bin Baki, Inspector of Schools, Province Wellesley; Tuan Syed Esa bin Alwee, Inspector of Malay Schools, Batu Pahat; Tuan Syed Nasir bin Ismail, Assistant Inspector of Malay Schools, Johore Bahru; Mohamed Nor bin Suleiman, Group Teacher, Johore.

19 September 2, 1950.
Malaya was English. Instead, the paper suggested that the entire primary and secondary education system in Malaya should be reconsidered\(^{20}\) (a statement it later undoubtedly regretted having made!).

On June 10, 1951, the Barnes Report was released to the press. It created a sensation in Malaya, for instead of making recommendations for the education of Malays only, it had made them for an educational system that would include all Malayans. There were logical reasons for this, as the committee showed, but it caught the public unawares—especially the Chinese section of the public.

When a committee such as that of Barnes was constituted by the government, it was given what were labeled "terms of reference." The "terms of reference" of the Barnes Committee (the committee on Malay education) were long, but included a summary sentence which stated that the purpose was: "To inquire into the adequacy or otherwise of the educational facilities available for Malays. . . ." The committee was to take into consideration Council Paper No. 68 of 1949 (the Draft Development Plan) and the Central Advisory Committee on Education's First Report, and more particularly to consider Malay vernacular education; selection of students for the Malay teachers' colleges; how to raise "scholastic attainment" and "pedagogic training" of these college students; the

\(^{20}\) August 26, 1950.
The committee set out its own conception of what ought to be the main purposes of Malay education: "We believe that Malay education ought (a) to foster the growth of individuals towards the best in knowledge, skill and character which they have it in them to attain; (b) to encourage and enable the Malay community to occupy its rightful place in relation to other communal groups in the mixed society of Malaya; (c) to assist the formation of a unified citizen body, or nation, composed of all such groups."

The report itself was long, running some ninety-odd pages. The committee had taken great pains to justify its recommendations—to furnish them with a complete rationale, as it were. Indeed, the first nineteen pages were taken up with this type of information.

The first chapter dealt with such aspects of Malayan educational history as would help support the conclusions arrived at by the committee. It is in this chapter that the attempt is made to show clearly that in the past the Malays

22 Ibid., p. ix.
23 Ibid., pp. 1-7.
had not been neglected by the government. Malays had had the only teacher training colleges in Malaya, one for men and one for women, and had had the only residential English schools; and Malays had been the only people for whom the government provided hostels at sixteen different English schools. In addition, Malay students had received free places and scholarships at English schools and scholarships for higher studies. There was more, but it added up to the fact that up to that time in Malaya of the three communal groups the Malays had received the most educational benefits from the government. 24

The chapter concluded by stating: "We simply take note that such discrimination exists, is of long standing, and has been carried to a high degree of elaboration." 25 But then came the catch, for in spite of all this the Malays seem to have been very dissatisfied with the educational opportunities afforded them by the British. The next chapter attempted to show why.

Chapter II was indeed an interesting one. Its writers claimed for it that its contents were obtained from extensive interviewing of Malay people; that it was presented in the report in the same form as it was presented to the committee—nothing held back; and that it therefore reflected the feelings of the vast majority of Malays towards education in Malaya.

24 Ibid., p. 6.
25 Ibid., p. 7.
It may well have been that this chapter was written entirely by the Malay members of the committee. 26

This, then, was the Malay view, as presented in Chapter II of the Barnes Report:

Historically, when missionary education came to Malaya, the Malays had quite naturally had a deep suspicion of this education. The religious convictions of the Malays were such that they saw the educational efforts of the missions as a threat to their religious convictions and way of life. Furthermore, there seemed to be little economic need for obtaining such education as was offered by the missions. The upper-class Malays had lands or government subsidies. The lower-class Malays had no opportunity to obtain work which required such an education, since the British brought in clerical help from Ceylon and India, and mining and plantation labor from India and China. In contrast to the Malays, the Indians and Chinese took every advantage of whatever education opportunities were offered. 27

The Malays' lack of understanding of economic matters allowed many of them to be economically exploited by the immigrant races—and this "in full view of the protecting

26 Ibid., p. 8. In an interview with one of those who had been on the Barnes Committee, Tuan Syed Nasir bin Ismail (November 8, 1966, Kuala Lumpur), he suggested that one of the chapters in the Barnes Report was written by the Malays. The interviewee did not indicate which one it was, but it is the author's opinion that this would be the chapter.

power." When this occurred it meant that even if a Malay wanted education for his child he could not afford it. And to complete the cycle, the economic depression of the Malays led to health problems and reduced earning ability. 28

Meanwhile, with the Indians and Chinese controlling most businesses, they could afford to send their children overseas for training, and thus came to fill the professional ranks with members of their races. True, the British threw the Malays a few bones, such as an occasional appointment in the administrative service. But few Malays were sent overseas for training. Instead, a "college" 29 was set up in Malaya. This "college" was never considered by the British to produce the equivalent of a British education—so its graduates, unlike Malays sent overseas, posed no threat to English administrative officials in Malaya. 30

Then came the Japanese invasion. The question began to be asked by the Malays: How had these people, little different in looks and stature, and having an Asian background, come to be able to defeat so easily a powerful western nation like England? And, further, they asked themselves why, in their long years of contact with the British, had not the Malays also learned the ways of the West and prospered? 31 The Malays

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28 Ibid.
29 Malay College, Kangsar.
30 Barnes Report, p. 9.
31 Ibid., p. 8.
decided that the answer to these questions lay in the fact that the British, with their vast experience as colonial rulers, knew that uneducated colonials were docile and dependent, and therefore made no real effort to educate the Malays. 32

When the war ended, the Malays welcomed back the British as liberators only to receive the shock of the MacMichael Treaties and the attempted Malayan Union, wherein it was proposed that the immigrant peoples would be included in the government. The Union, under pressures from an aroused Malay nationalism, was abandoned and the Federation of Malaya introduced in its place. 33

The next two pages of the report provide a clear picture of the views on education held by most Malay leaders until at least 1955. The emphasis was on increasing the opportunities for Malay children to obtain an English education. The report said: "... the English school is the key to all technical, professional and administrative employment of any importance in all parts of Malaya." 34 It added that "The decision of Government to teach English in Malay schools has been received with acclamation by Malay parents." 35

It stated that some Malays, after having tried to send

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32 Ibid., p. 9.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., p. 10.
35 Ibid., p. 11.
their children directly to English schools and being turned down for lack of accommodations: "... have therefore to send their children to Malay schools as there is no other alternative." 

It seems, then, that most Malays supported the idea of English education for their children at the time. But this was to change. Among other things, ultra-Malay nationalist propaganda concerning the danger to Malay culture presented by English education apparently came to convince most Malays that they must support Malay education. Also, those Malays with a vested interest in Malayan education were to react sharply when they came to see just how much they would lose if English-medium education were to supplant Malay-medium education. (However, even in 1966 the average Malay had ambivalent feelings about which medium in which to educate his children. On the one hand he wanted them to have English education "so they could get ahead," and on the other he wanted to support his own language and culture by having his children in a Malay-medium school.)

Then followed the committee's assessment of Malay vernacular schools of the time. The report said these schools lacked equipment, textbooks, and libraries. Often there were no partitions between classes in a school, \(^\text{37}\) and many villages

\(^{36}\) Ibid.

\(^{37}\) This was still true of many rural schools in 1966.
had no schools at all. Furthermore, there was nothing for the Malay child to do between the time he graduated from school at the age of twelve and the time when he could get a job at the age of sixteen.

Also, there was little character training, since no religious instruction was being offered in the schools. The Malay boy was obliged to go to school in the afternoon in order to receive his religious training, and thus sap his strength because he has to spend so much extra time in school. 38

During the survey the committee had attempted to determine if there were other causes for lack of success of the Malay educational endeavors. They arrived at some very interesting conclusions in Chapter III—conclusions that are just beginning to be re-examined scientifically in Malaysia today. 39

The first such conclusion made was that to the Malay, "Education is thought of as something that is done to one, not as a form of self-activity." 40 The report suggested that one cause of this attitude could have been the long paternal protection provided by the British. The report went on to suggest that Malays did not see education as an end in itself.

38 Barnes Report, pp. 12, 13.

39 Discussion with Professor Ruth Wong, head of the Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. (The author's observations of Malay children in 1966, both at school and at home, had led him to make much the same conclusions even before he had read this report.)

It was only seen as a means of gaining employment. 41

In the committee's view, the Malay child's educational problems were magnified because he found "... one complex of beliefs and desires approved in his own home, another recommended to him in school, and yet others accepted by large numbers of fellow citizens further afield." 42 The attitude of Malay parents toward bringing up children affected the child's educational efforts. Much love and tenderness were shown—too often to the point of permissiveness—and this seemed to cause the child to be unable to face the frustrations found in the school situation. 43

There were other factors involved that helped explain the lack of success of the Malay child in education. The wrong kind of diet lessened the healthiness of the Malay student. 44 Also, the pressures of his society to become married at an early age disrupted many a Malay child's education. 45

Even if the Malay student did reach higher levels of education, he often carried with him a residual incapacity to do well in school. When to this was added an intolerance of frustration, and a lack of concern for and sympathetic support

41 Ibid., pp. 14, 15.
42 Ibid., p. 15.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid., p. 16.
45 Ibid., pp. 16-17.
of his educational efforts from home—and from the mother in particular—it made it difficult for him to successfully complete his education at these higher levels. 46

It was concluded by the committee that the future of Malay education lay in the hands of Malay mothers. The problems of Malay education would not be solved until these mothers developed different attitudes towards education and towards the rearing of children. The committee also pointed out that, considering the problems, it would take teachers trained like soldiers—dedicated, aware, and themselves willing to accept the challenge of working in such a milieu—for education as presently existing in the Malay community to begin to supply the educational needs of the Malays. 47

THE BARNES REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS.

In Chapter IV and those following, the committee got down to the business of recommending the methods to be used to solve the problems outlined in the previous pages. They began their list of solutions with a statement of what they considered to be the main role for primary education: "Our approach is governed by the belief that the primary school should be treated avowedly and with full deliberation as an instrument for building up a common Malayan nationality on the basis of those elements in the population who regard

46 Ibid., p. 17.
Malaya as their permanent home and as the object of their loyalty. This we regard as an essential part of the process of achieving self-government within the Commonwealth."\(^{48}\)

This object was to be achieved by setting up a new type of school called a "national school." The national school was to be a bilingual school, using both English and Malay as mediums of instruction. The aim was to obtain bilingualism for all its students by the time they graduate. Its teachers would use both English and Malay for instruction, depending on which one was most appropriate to the subject being taught at the moment. And these national schools would not provide instruction in any other language. "It has been clear throughout [their survey of Malay education] that two languages, and only two languages, should be taught in the National Schools, and that these two must be the official languages of the country, namely, Malay and English."\(^{49}\)

The idea was emphasized that the bilingualism called for in the national schools was for nation building. Then it added: "If any parents are not happy about this [the teaching of only the two languages, Malay and English], their unhappiness would properly be taken as an indication that they did not so regard Malaya...[as]...the object of their undivided loyalty..."\(^{50}\)

\(^{48}\) Ibid., p. 20.
\(^{49}\) Ibid., p. 21.
\(^{50}\) Ibid., p. 24.
The plan called for the eventual disappearance of all vernacular\textsuperscript{51} as well as strictly English schools.\textsuperscript{52} The point was stressed that these national schools should not be forced on anyone. Rather, they should be made so attractive that parents would choose to send their children to them instead of to the now-existing vernacular schools. The best teachers should be assigned to national schools—teachers who should have three years of training in a teacher training college after having obtained the School Certificate. And not only the staff, but the buildings and equipment should be the best in Malaya.\textsuperscript{53}

The writers of the report seemed to sense that one of the major criticisms that could be leveled at them would be that they were advocating a lowering of educational standards, for they were not only advocating the discontinuation of vernacular schools, but of English schools as well. And the latter had for long constituted the epitomy of Malay education. So for more than a page they defended this particular recommendation. But they defended their recommendation concerning English education only \textit{vis a vis} the Malays. That is, they compared their new recommendations only to English education as it had affected the Malay community. They took great pains

\textsuperscript{51} When this word was used as a collective it referred to education using Malay, Indian, or Chinese as a medium of instruction.

\textsuperscript{52} Barnes Report, pp. 20, 21.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., p. 21.
to show that the Malay students would be better off educationally under the new system—that they would be better prepared to go on to secondary school and higher education. But they did not make a comparison between the educational values of national schools and the values now received by children who were taking their education entirely in English schools. 54

In order to aid in preparing students for secondary education, in the last three years of primary school there was to be an enrichment program in English for the top 20 per cent of the students in the national schools. The students who would be included in the enrichment program would be determined by I.Q. tests. It was not intended that only these students would be eligible to go on for secondary schooling. That would be determined at the end of the primary course by academic achievement along with I.Q. scores. 55

Sixty per cent of the national school students would be considered as able to undertake technical training after graduation, and the other 20 per cent as only capable of completing the primary national school education. These percentages were not to be thought of as absolute figures, but were only used as illustrations of how the program would

54 Ibid., pp. 24-27.
55 Ibid., pp. 26, 34.
be oriented in its structure. 56

The report's recommended curriculum for national schools included Islamic religious instruction for those who desired it. It was in these religious classes that the Jawi script would be taught to Malays--in other Malay-medium instruction Rumi would be used. 57

The recommendations on secondary education contained little that was new, and in effect there was little in this portion of the report that did not come directly from the First Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education. For example, the two-year secondary program was for students who were not in the academic stream. The main purpose of the program was to provide a place for young people between the ages of twelve-plus and sixteen-plus--the time between leaving primary school and obtaining work. 58

Concerning the academic stream secondary schools, it was recommended that there should be more openings made available, especially for rural students. 59 It was emphasized that standards should not be lowered from the standards of the present English secondary schools. 60 The report suggested

56 Ibid.
57 Ibid., pp. 29-30.
58 Ibid., pp. 34-38.
59 Ibid., p. 39.
60 Ibid., p. 38.
that at least 15 per cent of the children of thirteen years of age should be able to enter secondary English schools of an academic type. At the time, only some 4.5 per cent were in such schools.

A whole chapter (VI) was devoted to the needs of Malay girls. Everything recommended for boys was to be considered as having been recommended for Malay girls as well. But, beyond that, special programs should be designed to awaken the Malays from "their age-old, and now long outworn, prejudice and apathy" regarding education for women. Further along it was added: "We do not want to see any poor relations where educational provision is concerned, but if and when some kind of poor relationship proves inevitable, we should prefer its incidence to be on boys rather than on girls. The social loss would be less."

It was recommended that there be three educational aims for Malay girls:

(1) Find and train those having the ability to achieve professional goals; (2) improve their knowledge of how to run a home; and (3) train large numbers of them to serve as teachers in the lower three standards of primary schools.

In order to gain these objectives for Malay girls, a

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61 Ibid., p. 39.
62 Ibid., p. 40.
63 Ibid.
College of Social and Domestic Science should be set up; a residential school where highly trained women would work with the Malay girls in attendance should be set up; and encouragement should be given to the formation of an organization of educated Malay women.64

On teachers' training, the committee proposed that at least two years full-time training for all teachers be provided as soon as practical, but it admitted that, for the present, normal class training for Chinese and Malay school teachers and, for some, emergency one-year full-time courses would be necessary.65 The time should come, however, when there would be just two types of teachers in Malayan schools: those turned out at the university, and those trained at teacher training colleges which had as a requirement for their entrance the School Certificate.66

Two other recommendations concerning teachers were eye-catching. The one suggested that all teachers must serve for not less than three years in rural districts before being eligible to cross their first efficiency bar.67 The other suggested that since in England the government was in the process of closing down wartime emergency training centers,

64 Ibid., p. 41.
65 Ibid., pp. 44-52.
66 Ibid., p. 45.
67 Ibid., p. 48. This was a step required before a teacher moved into a new salary level.
these centers might be available for temporary use by Malaya as a place to train at least 100 teachers a year.68

Another important idea presented in the Barnes Report was that there should be an educational Inspectorate set up in Malaya. This was to be based on the English system of His Majesty's Inspectors.69 These inspectors were to be independent:

Independence in such a context includes at least three material ingredients. The first is separation from the employers of the teachers: the inspector has nothing to do with the appointment, promotion, or dismissal of teachers either in his own person or as representative of any third party; he is not himself employed by any employer of teachers, and no employer of teachers is in a position to affect his career. In the second place, the inspector, though, as we have said, he works in the field and is familiar with the educational climate of his locality, is fully protected against the pressures of local interests. In the third place, he enjoys and is expected to avail himself of unusual latitude in his dealings with the central education authorities themselves.70

They were to inspect with the idea of improving, not just to look for trouble.71 They would operate throughout the country, often working in teams of three or four.72 These inspectors should teach courses at teacher training colleges

68 Ibid., p. 74.
69 Ibid., p. 56.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid., p. 55.
72 Ibid., p. 54.
prepare and keep up to date a handbook on methods of teaching, work with those responsible for teacher training college curriculum, examinations, and practical training, and should inspect the teacher training colleges on occasion. 73

The writers of the report referred to the speech made by M.R. Holgate, Director of Education, when he presented the First Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education, wherein he had called for Local Education Authorities, and agreed that such authorities should be established. These groups should be in charge of the spending and collecting of money, the hiring and firing of staff, and the care and maintenance of schools. Half the cost of operating schools should be raised at the local level. 74 It was felt that these Local Education Authorities, if introduced, would develop more interest in the schools at the local level. The people making up these Local Education Authorities should at first be nominated and provided with training in their work, but eventually they could be elected. 75

In order to help answer the problems of parental antipathy towards education, government educationalists should work closely with R.I.D.A. (the Rural and Industrial Development Agency) in fostering mass education and communications, said

73 Ibid.
74 Ibid., p. 74.
75 Ibid., pp. 57-58, 60.
the report. It was suggested that a new office headed by a Community Development Officer should be created. This officer should try to work with the local people to build their confidence and to help them to realize their potential. 76

Finally, the report offered ideas for implementing the suggestions presented in the report. The national schools should be started in only a few areas at first. Quality should always come before quantity. These new national schools would begin with Standard I in a particular school and add a new standard each year, so that it would take six years for a school to be completely converted to a national school. Grants-in-aid would be used as a lever to get recalcitrant vernacular schools in an area to co-operate, i.e., to convert. 77 When the problem of placing national schools in rural areas was considered, it was suggested that perhaps it would be necessary to use vernacular schools in local areas for the first three years of a child's training and a centrally located national school for their last three years. This was not to be construed as a recommendation of the committee, but only as a suggestion for debate when the committee's report was considered. 78

The report admitted that there were four main barriers

76 Ibid., pp. 61-64.
77 Ibid., p. 65.
78 Ibid., pp. 69-70.
to carrying out its ideas. They were: lack of (1) money, (2) teachers, (3) books, and (4) buildings. It then set out a detailed study of just how the program could be made financially feasible. But the report showed that even if its figures were possible and applied, by 1965 only three-eighths of the children in the country would be in national schools. 79

It is evident that this report was strongly influenced by the thinking of Malays who were themselves influenced by western ideas on the proper goals for Malay education. It would not be too hard to imagine this report being prepared by the Communities Liaison Committee (at least its Malay and English members).

The recommendations of the report were designed to develop an educational system that would produce racial harmony, which would in turn provide the proper basis for a stable Malayan nation. Much of the report was in direct line with both the 1949 Communities Liaison Committee's recommendations and the First Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education.

While the report came down heavily in favor of improved opportunities for the Malays, its recommended method for doing this was to provide increased opportunities for English education. Theoretically, this was a good answer. It was true then (and was to remain true until the present) that

79 Ibid., p. 71.
English education provided the major avenue to a successful career in government, business, or the professions.

The catch was that the report did not take into account the cultural insecurity of the Malays, who came to feel that it did not encourage enough the development of the Malay language or culture. It was quite natural that the report should not do this, for the men chosen to prepare the report were almost by necessity those trained in western ways—those who had been long associated with western ideas and thus those whose standards of educational value were oriented toward the path which they themselves had taken to succeed in obtaining important positions of employment.

As will be seen in the next chapter, those voices that reflected vernacular-speaking Malays were not altogether happy with the report, and as succeeding events will show, they became less so as time went on.

Thus, both in the political and educational field the first group of Malay leaders to emerge after World War II were offering answers to the problems of the country that were too far in advance of the thinking of the people whose problems the answers were designed to solve. In both fields, too, it seems quite evident that the British were avid supporters of (and quite probably instigators of) the answers which the Malay leaders brought forth. That both were at fault in the speed with which they attempted to move was to be shown in the years to follow, for both the I.M.P. and the national school were to succumb to communal pressures before independence was achieved.
While the Barnes Report was in preparation, the government did not remain static in its treatment of Chinese education. The government had agreed at the time of the debate on the First Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education that it was considering increasing support for Chinese schools. Indeed, in August, 1950, a letter was dispatched to the State and Settlement Secretaries from the Federation Government Chief Secretary, outlining the reasons why the government felt compelled to ask their support in increasing the grants-in-aid to Chinese vernacular schools. The State Secretaries were reminded that in 1947 government aid to Indian schools had been substantially increased.¹

The letter went on to point out that a survey in 1949 showed that 93 per cent of Chinese children in aided vernacular schools were Malayan-born, and "... it has become increasingly clear that a consistent policy of education for children of the several races which now regard this country as their home cannot be delayed indefinitely." Increasing

taxation and rising costs meant that Chinese business and trading communities could not afford to support the Chinese schools as well as they had done before the war. ²

"It is believed that there is already among the Chinese Communities a growing sense of loyalty and 'belonging' to the Federation, accompanied by difficulty in understanding why the education which they struggle to support receives relatively so small assistance from a Government which presses them to be loyal citizens."³

The letter went on to state that the government believed that the Chinese would prefer to share a common educational system maintained by general taxation, and these preferences should be fostered "... because it is vital that Chinese children should not grow up uneducated in any language and therefore an easy prey to communist doctrine..."⁴

The government proposed doubling the grants-in-aid to the Chinese schools when these schools fulfilled certain conditions: (1) When the school's progress in Malay and/or English and mathematics was satisfactory; (2) when it was agreed that the appointment and dismissal of teachers of Malay and English be subject to Department approval; and (3) when the Chinese schools had introduced such textbooks

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
as might be specifically recommended by the Government.\footnote{Ibid.}

As an example of state reactions to this proposal, this is what happened in Kelantan: The Acting British Adviser of Kelantan, Tuan Haji Mubin Sheppard, expressed his views to the State Superintendent of Education that he was opposed to a general grant to Chinese schools, but would support a specific grant for teachers of English and Malay in Chinese schools. He added that as long as the rubber boom lasted he saw no danger in Chinese businessmen being unable to support Chinese schools.\footnote{Kelantan Education Files, No. 122 of 1950, Minute of September 28, 1950.}

Later the Kelantan Executive Council and the Sultan agreed with Sheppard's opposition to a general grant increase for Chinese schools and his acceptance of government salary support for approved teachers in Chinese schools.\footnote{Ibid., Minute of November 4, 1950.}

In November the Perak Chinese took advantage of the occasion of a visit to Ipoh by Sir Christopher Cox, Educational Adviser to the Colonial Office, to present him with a memorandum which asked for more financial support for Chinese education from the Malayan government.\footnote{Malay Mail, November 25, 1950.}

In the Legislative Council meeting of January, 1951,
Leung Cheung Ling asked the government what had happened to their assurances that there would be increased financial aid for Chinese schools. The answer: "Education is a State and Settlement matter, and proposals for an increase in Grants-in-Aid to Chinese schools have been made to the State and Settlement Governments," and that a decision would be announced on this matter in the future. This answer was to appear enough times to make it seem a government dodge for avoiding unpleasant or sticky questions.

Apparently the government received enough affirmative replies from the states to its proposals on Chinese education, for on June 13, 1951, it was announced by Thuraisingham's office that as of the next month, grants to Chinese schools would be raised 100 per cent.

THE FENN-WU MISSION.

While these efforts to increase government aid to Chinese schools were unfolding, the most significant Chinese educational policy development in the early months of 1951 was the announcement and putting into operation of a mission to

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9 An ex-member of the Education Department, where he reached the level of Inspector of Schools (Chinese), Selangor.
11 Ibid., p. 610.
12 Malay Mail, June 13, 1951, See also Kelantan Education Files, No. 122 of 1950, State Executive Council Report, June 4, 1951.
study and make recommendations on Chinese education.\textsuperscript{13}

On this mission there were only two men, instead of fourteen as were on the committee to study Malay education, and both these men were from outside Malaya. Dr. William P. Fenn was from the United States,\textsuperscript{14} and Dr. Wu Teh-yao was an official of the United Nations. Dr. Fenn says he was selected because he was recommended to the British Colonial Office after it had asked the United States Commissioner of Education's office if it knew of anyone who could do the job. Dr. Fenn had lived for long years in China, and, while he spoke Chinese, he insisted there be a Chinese on the committee with him. He recommended Dr. Wu, whom he had taught in China. Dr. Wu, although born in Hainan, had been a resident of Malaya at one time and had actually attended school in Penang in his high school days. Wu's university education was obtained in the United States.\textsuperscript{15}

There are conflicting opinions as to just why this mission was set up. A Malay member of the Barnes Committee\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{14}] Fenn was at the time Secretary of the United Board of Protestant Missions in New York City.
\item[\textsuperscript{15}] Wu obtained his Ph.D. in International Relations from Harvard. (Interview with Dr. Fenn, October 5, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)
\item[\textsuperscript{16}] Tuan Syed Nasir.
\end{itemize}
claims that as the early reports of the Barnes Committee's work reached British government officials they became worried and set up the Fenn-Wu Mission to prepare a counter-balancing report to the expected product of the Barnes Committee.  

However, Dr. Fenn claims that most of the British officials he met during his mission's work in Malaya were opposed to his study and especially to the fact that it was an American who was carrying it out.  

It is just possible that both these views are correct, for it may have been the top government officials—men such as the High Commissioner, Gurney—who became convinced that the sweeping recommendations being prepared by the Barnes Committee needed to be leavened by the views of the Chinese, since the Barnes Committee recommendations seemed so pro-Malay. At the same time, the average education officer with whom Fenn and Wu had to deal may well have opposed their study, partly because he would see them as outsiders, partly perhaps because he was influenced by anti-Chinese feelings developed out of the Emergency, and partly because he saw the country as belonging to the Malays—whose position in that country he must protect.  

THE FENN-WU REPORT.  

On June 10, 1951, the Barnes Report had been released to the press, and a month after its release, the Fenn-Wu Report

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17 Interview with former Legislative Council Member, November 8 1966, Kuala Lumpur.  
18 Interview with Dr. Fenn, October 5, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
was published. This report was officially known as Chinese Schools and the Education of Chinese Malaysians. Drs. Fenn and Wu had taken an entirely different view of their task than had the Barnes group. As they saw it, they had been asked to treat Chinese education, and they stuck to their topic. However, the two reports did have one thing in common. They both stressed that whatever educational policy was finally agreed on, it should be such as would aid in building a nation. The Fenn-Wu Report said the objectives of the study were to make "... recommendations that would lead to a greater contribution by Chinese schools in Malaya to the goal of an independent Malayan nation comprised of people of many races but having a common loyalty."19 And in the conclusion it stated: "It is only natural that Malaya's educational policy should be directed towards the goal of an ultimate Malayan nation."20

The mission's terms of reference had been talked over between Drs. Fenn and Wu and the man who was responsible for their appointment, Sir Christopher Fox, Educational Adviser to the Colonial Office. It was agreed that there would be no prior commitments to which the mission must conform.21 But before the mission arrived in Malaya an official statement was issued by the Federation Secretariat giving the nature

20 Ibid., p. 40.
21 Ibid., p. 1.
and objectives of the coming inquiry. This stated that there would be a "... preliminary survey of the whole field of Chinese education ... with particular reference to (i) bridging the gap between the present communal system of school and the time when education will be on a non-communal basis with English or Malay as medium of instruction and other language as optional subject, and advising on (ii) preparation of textbooks for present use with a Malayan as distinct from a Chinese background and content."²²

The two men on the mission and many members of the Chinese community in Malaya reacted to this government statement with strong protests. Fenn and Wu pointed out that they had been assured that they were to work with no prior restrictions. They also expressed the thought that even if this statement was not binding on them, it had developed so much suspicion among the Chinese that the job of the mission was made that much more difficult. And so it turned out—"... at every meeting with Chinese leaders and teachers, fear and suspicion prevailed."²³

The report recorded the opinion of the mission that there was some benefit gained from the issuance of the Federation Secretariat's statement, for it helped to document for all to see just how concerned the Chinese were about the

²² Ibid., p. 2.
²³ Ibid.
need to preserve their culture. 24

And then the report went on to point up what it maintained was a valid reason for Chinese concern:

On pages 4 and 5 of the report there was a section entitled "'Malayanization.'" It contained some very strong statements concerning the possibility-or desirability of achieving "'Malayanization.'" The report claimed that there was as yet no such thing as a Malayan culture. 25 Rather, there were four cultures, each with its own distinct language, religion, and tradition. Therefore, the Chinese felt that talk of "'Malayanization'" of the Chinese only meant that they were being asked to become Malay-like. This they had no intentions of doing. 26 If force were used to obtain an immediate fusion, this would, in the mission's opinion, only lead to greater cleavage between the various communities. The report suggested instead that each culture had much to offer to a Malayan nation, and if each met the others in the proper spirit of understanding and appreciation, then the nation would receive the values these four cultures could contribute, for "... out of present diversity may come future glory." 27

24 Ibid., p. 3.
25 Ibid., p. 5.
26 Ibid., p. 4.
27 Ibid., p. 5.
Fenn and Wu offered the idea that there should develop in Malaya an education designed to create a Malayan nation, something that the present Chinese, Tamil, Malay, and English schools were not doing. These latter were the result of a "... lack, years ago, of understanding of the need for tailoring education to fit local needs. ..." New curriculum for Malaya's schools should be developed and introduced, based on what was of value in each of the various cultural backgrounds from which these schools sprang. 28

A comprehensive analysis was offered of the conditions that existed in Chinese education in Malaya at that time. Some of the more important weaknesses listed were that the schools (1) lacked equipment, buildings, and grounds; (2) were too often academically weak; and (3) were too "China-conscious." This last weakness was felt to be as much the fault of past government policy as of Chinese intentions. The government had forced the Chinese to build their own schools by not providing any alternatives. And then it left these schools almost entirely on their own. The report added that while this was a valid criticism, these schools were no more Chinese-oriented (and thus no more out of line) than the English schools were English-oriented, the Indian schools Indian-oriented, or the Malay schools Malay-oriented. 29

28 Ibid., p. 7.
29 Ibid., pp. 9-10.
The report maintained that Chinese schools in Malaya would continue for a long time. Attempts to crush these schools would be met with increased determination to preserve them on the part of the Chinese. "They cannot be eliminated until the Chinese themselves decide that they are not needed, which will happen only if and when there is an adequate and satisfactory alternative. That day may never come, for it is quite possible that Chinese schools should form an integral part of any educational program of the future Malaya."\(^{30}\)

Figures on the monetary commitments of the Chinese for financing of their own and government schools were furnished. It showed that 90 per cent of the cost of Chinese schools was carried by the Chinese. Further, that over 50 per cent of the cost of other schools was paid for by the Chinese through taxation, while their children constituted only about 15 per cent of the enrolment of these other schools. And, finally, that the Chinese schools received almost none of the government monies given to schools for land and buildings.\(^{31}\)

The Chinese themselves did not escape criticism. They were told that Chinese school teachers should get rid of methods of teaching imported directly from China; that foreign political orientation should be completely removed from these schools; that competition between Chinese schools in the same

\(^{30}\) Ibid., p. 10.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., p. 11.
location should stop, because this resulted in more than one weak school in an area where one strong one could exist; and that a stop should be put to the present graft and corruption centered on the obtaining of textbooks for Chinese schools.  

The key weakness in the Chinese schools, said the report, was their teachers. This was not to say that there were not some fine, dedicated teachers—but rather that in general their quality was very poor. There were reasons for this—the growth of the number of Chinese schools after the war, the poor pay and working conditions, political problems, and government restrictions in obtaining new teachers from China. Some 60 per cent of the teachers in Chinese schools had not completed secondary school; only 5 per cent had a university degree. And 78 per cent of the teachers had no teacher training. At least two thousand Chinese teachers were of such poor quality that even though the government required very little for registration, they were unable to obtain this registration.

THE FENN-WU REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

To the question of what should be done to remedy all this, the report answered (1) that since the Chinese should and did welcome the idea of trilingualism, the first two years

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32 Ibid., p. 13.
33 Ibid., p. 23.
34 Ibid., p. 24.
of Chinese primary schooling should be in Kuo Yu, English should be introduced in the third year, and Malay in the fifth year. The mission suggested that the reason for delaying Malay was that since it was more familiar to the Chinese children of Malaya, it would be easier to learn and thus required less time in the curriculum.\textsuperscript{35} (2) There should be an immediate increase by the government of its grants-in-aid to Chinese schools of at least 200 per cent, with an additional 100 per cent increase in 1952 and another in 1953.\textsuperscript{36} (3) A three-year teacher training college should be set up at first exclusively to train Chinese teachers. Gradually, however, this college should be shifted to train teachers from all communities in Malaya. This Chinese teachers' college should eventually offer education at the post-secondary level, but for now the graduates of junior and senior middle schools should be placed in two courses designed for their respective abilities within "a single self-respecting Teacher Training Institution."\textsuperscript{37}

Meanwhile, the present scheme, which called for four normal-type training schools for Chinese should be scrapped. It was felt too that the present week-end training\textsuperscript{38} for

\begin{itemize}
\item [35]\textit{Ibid.}, p. 6.
\item [36]\textit{Ibid.}, p. 12.
\item [37]\textit{Ibid.}, p. 27.
\item [38]These were expanded versions of the prewar locally operated centers for training Chinese teachers. They offered
Chinese teachers was entirely inadequate. However, for the time being this should continue, but be recognized as only make-shift and be terminated by 1956 at the latest. 39

Refresher courses for those already in teaching, and a national institute which would bring in Chinese education experts from outside Malaya to train a selected group of sixteen Chinese educationalists for seven months should also be set up. This latter group would in turn conduct vacation programs for Chinese teachers. 40

The report stated that many Chinese preferred English schooling for their children, and that most of them insisted that English be taught in Chinese schools. To the Chinese, English was the lingua franca of Malaya. 41 Then it added that the teaching of English in Chinese schools was generally "deplorable." To correct this it was recommended that new textbooks be prepared and teachers of English in Chinese schools be provided with additional training in both methods of teaching and in the actual command of the English language. 42 Then the report went on to recommend that Chinese language studies be introduced into English schools. 43


41 Ibid., p. 35.
42 Ibid., p. 36.
43 Ibid., p. 38.
The following statement, while it did not conclude the report, seems best to sum up what Fenn and Wu felt were the desirable goals for Malayan education: "We look forward to the day when all vernacular schools are private, with all Government schools, by whatever name, truly common in the sense that they provide a balanced Malayan education for all . . . . and that Government schools ('English' or 'National') will have taken a sufficiently increased share of the load of primary education to enable private Chinese schools to carry their share more effectively."44

It is not hard to imagine why this report would be rather coolly received by the Malayan government. Since 1949 much effort had been directed toward the breaking down of communal exclusiveness (especially the Chinese variety), and now here was a report which seemed to lend support to that exclusiveness.

And what must have made it worse was that in most respects the report was quite accurate in its observations. In one sense it was like the Barnes Report: It was all right as far as it went. It was just that there was more involved than either report was willing (or able?) to admit. The Barnes Report failed to take into account the depth of feeling held by Malay vernacular-educated Malays—the Fenn-Wu Report failed to recognize the depth of the commitment held

44 Ibid., p. 32.
by western-oriented Malayans for an educational system that would help to do away with communalism.

There can be little doubt but that the report of Fenn and Wu represented the thinking of Chinese vernacular educationalists. The future was to show just how correct the report's analysis was. It was just that the truth quite literally hurt the efforts being made by the government to break the communal mold within which Chinese education had been cast for so long.

Fenn and Wu were quite right when they pointed out to the British that it was their past neglect of Chinese education that allowed, if not encouraged, it to become so Chinese-centered. The problem was that pointing this out did little to help the present situation.

The colonial government had tried to set the study on the "right" track with their pre-study announcement of the purposes of the mission, but because the mission had been picked and given its directives by a Colonial Office official who himself was unlikely to appreciate fully what was being attempted in Malaya, the mission was able to go about its business in its own way, rejecting completely the views of the Malayan government as to the purpose of its visit.

PUBLIC REACTION TO BARNES AND FENN-WU REPORTS.

With the release of this report on Chinese education, the battle of words picked up in tempo. The Chinese newspapers greeted the new report with unreserved enthusiasm. The
English language press was considerably more reserved, but said that much of value was contained in the report. The Malay newspapers rejected it out of hand.

Soon after the Fenn-Wu Report was released, it, together with the Barnes Report, was turned over to the Central Advisory Committee on Education. The committee was asked to make recommendations based on the two reports and submit these recommendations to the Legislative Council.

Malaya's newspapers spent the time between the appearances of the Barnes and Fenn-Wu Reports and the date the Central Advisory Committee presented its report to the Legislative Council in a concerted attempt to influence the public and later the decision of the committee.

Most Malay newspapers came down foursquare in favor of the Barnes Report. Majlis, on June 10, 1951, said editorially that the recommendations of the Barnes Report were something for which the Malays had been waiting for a long time. The Report would test the sincerity of the non-Malays' desire to create a united nation of Malaya.

However, Utusan maintained its critical approach to anything sponsored by the government. It supported the Barnes Report, but doubted that national schools would produce a national consciousness, because Malay would only be taught for six years. The standard of Malay education advocated was too low. Even if the proposals of the Barnes Report were carried out, Malay would never become the language of business
and communication in the country.45

A July editorial in Utusan maintained that the resistance of the Chinese and Indians to the Barnes Report showed that these groups were not anxious to make the sacrifices necessary to create a Malayan nation.46

In August the Annual General Assembly of UMNO passed a resolution offering full support for the Barnes Report's policy recommendations.47

While the Malay press said relatively little about the Fenn-Wu Report, the Chinese newspapers spent more time attacking the Barnes Report than in extolling the Fenn-Wu (and they did quite a bit of the latter!).48 For example, the Kwong Wah Yep Poh,49 on June 11 asked that mutual respect for one another's educational interests and cultural values be maintained, and two days later pointed out that until there was a national consciousness there could not be a national system of education.50

The Sin Chew Jit Poh maintained that as a result of the Barnes Report, Chinese education faced a crisis. It said

45 June 17, 1951.
46 July 11, 1951.
47 Straits Times, August 27, 1951.
48 Malay Mail, August 26, 1951, speech by Thuraisingham.
49 (Penang daily).
50 June 13, 1951.
that there should be a fusion of the four streams of education, and not just Malay and English.\(^{51}\)

The *Nanyang Siang Pau* stated that the Barnes Committee had exceeded its terms of reference by going into things other than Malay education. If followed, the recommendations of the Barnes Report would drive Chinese and Indian education to the gallows. It maintained that Malayan educational policy should not be finalized until after Malaya achieved its independence.\(^{52}\)

The English language Chinese daily, *Singapore Standard*, said that the idea of strangling all languages other than Malay and English was a policy which was both futile and dangerous--futile because more than half the population opposed it; dangerous because it promoted communal exclusiveness.\(^{53}\)

It was not just the vernacular newspapers that gave forth their views on these education reports. The European-owned newspaper editorials on the subject did not appear as often, perhaps, but they gave lengthy comments when they did.

Right after the Barnes Report appeared, the *Straits Times* noted that the report said that the schools of Malaya should be used as "... an instrument for building up a common nationality," and yet agreed that educationally it was best to educate the child first in his mother tongue. It went on to state:

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\(^{51}\) *Singapore daily*, June 11, 1951.

\(^{52}\) *Singapore daily*, June 13, 1951.

\(^{53}\) June 16, 1951.
"But surely educational policy must put the child first and political theory second. Anglo-Malayan theorists in particular who are not domiciled in this country themselves, should hesitate before using education as a means of forcing the pace and the creation of Malayan nationality."

In its editorial on the Penn-Wu Report, the Straits Times stated: "In origin and outlook it [the Penn-Wu Report] is an American document... and if it would not be true to say that they have pulled no punches in their report (since they are not out to punch anybody), it is certainly true that they have not minced their words." It went on to state that the Penn-Wu Report was an indictment of British educationalists in Malaya who had allowed feelings of insecurity and suspicion to develop among the Chinese with regard to the position of their schools and cultures in Malaya's future.

The Malay Mail called the Barnes Report "one of the most forward-looking pronouncements yet made" on the future of educational policy in Malaya. It approved the abandonment of vernacular education and its replacement by a national school system of education.

Besides the activities of the country's newspapers, individuals and groups expressed themselves freely on this

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54 June 13, 1951. This was the second editorial; the first appeared June 11.
55 July 11, 1951.
56 June 11, 1951.
question of educational policy.

A series of letters to the Straits Times debated the question of whether or not the language in Chinese schools was the language of the home. The first in this series quoted Bernhard Karlgren's book, The Chinese Language, to the effect that China's southern dialects were as different from Mandarin as Italian from Spanish, and it concluded therefore that in Malaya the language of the Chinese at home was not the language taught in the school. 57

Chinese correspondents responded by claiming that there was not as much difference between the southern dialects and Mandarin as claimed in the June 19 letter, 58 and that 90 per cent of all Chinese understood spoken Kuo Yu—and all who were literate could read it. 59

An Indian, V.D. Kuppasamy, a member of the Perak Council of State and President of the Perak Teachers Union, stated in an article that the Barnes Report was just another Anglo-Malay report like the one that formed the Federation, and that "... this is only another instance of British officials making a bargain with leaders of the Malay community, and treating the non-Malay communities as pawns in the game." "From the report it is clear that practically every decision arrived at

57 June 19, 1951.
58 Ibid., June 23, 1951.
59 Ibid., June 28, 1951.
was motivated by a desire to solve some particular problem of the Malay people.\(^\text{60}\)

The Straits Times took issue with Kuppasamy. It disagreed with his contention that Chinese and Indian should also become mediums of instruction in national schools. But the paper added: "Further reflection on the Barnes Report shows that there is one outstanding fault in it, and that is that nowhere does it acknowledge that there is a place for the study of the Chinese and Tamil languages in the National Schools."\(^\text{61}\)

From July on, Chinese attacks on the Barnes Report were reported almost daily. A group of leading Chinese at a public meeting in Ipoh called the Barnes Report political rather than educational in its aims.\(^\text{62}\) Mr. Chong Khoon Lin, a member of the Central Advisory Committee on Education, said he would do all he could to prevent the implementation of the Barnes Report.\(^\text{63}\) In mid-July the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce submitted their views on the Barnes and Fenn-Wu Reports to the government,\(^\text{64}\) and in September they issued a strong attack on the Barnes Report: "If adopted, it will

\(^{60}\) Ibid., June 23, 1951.

\(^{61}\) June 27, 1951

\(^{62}\) Malay Mail, July 9, 1951.

\(^{63}\) Ibid., July 13, 1951.

\(^{64}\) Ibid., July 17, 1951.
leave a black spot on British policy." To eliminate vernacular schools would be "educationally unsound, politically disastrous."\(^{65}\)

But it was left for the retired Director of Education, H.A.R. Cheeseman to issue the most scathing attack of all on the Barnes Report in a series of three articles appearing in the Straits Times of September 4, 5, and 6. The headlines of the three articles told most of the story: The first, "The Barnes Report recommends an intolerable burden for 477,000 children," referred to the children who would not receive their first year's education in their mother tongue. Cheeseman said in this first article that the financial stipulations of the Barnes Report would in effect make conversion to the new national schools compulsory.\(^{66}\)

The second headline, "The Barnes Committee failed to discover the Malays' chief trouble: economic, not educational," concerned Cheeseman's opinion that the best way to aid Malay education would be to give economic assistance for the individual Malay's education--and his complaint that the Barnes Report made no mention of this.\(^{67}\)

The third article, headlined "In spite of its errors of fact the Report is of undoubted value," claimed that the

\(^{65}\) Ibid., September 18, 1951.
\(^{66}\) September 4.
\(^{67}\) September 5.
Barnes Committee should have asked that its terms of reference be widened instead of just going ahead on its own to make recommendations affecting all types of education in Malaya. Cheeseman liked the idea of Local Education Authorities and independent Inspectorates being established.

His concluding remark was: "It is in my view of vital importance that funds should be made available to enable more Malays to receive a full secondary English education, and that this aid should be continued until the Malays are in a stronger economic position. This needs to be done at once, without waiting for decisions on matters of general policy." 68

SECOND ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REPORT.

The report on the Barnes Report on Malay education and the Fenn-Wu Report on Chinese education had come out of three meetings held by the Central Advisory Committee on Education. The first two had each lasted two days, the third meeting had lasted one. 69 Those who prepared this Second Report of the Central Advisory Committee had taken the Barnes and Fenn-Wu Reports and recorded their reactions to each separately.

The committee's report accepted in toto Paragraph 2 of

68 September 6.

the Foreword to the Barnes Report,70 in which it was stated that the aims of education should be to foster the growth of the individual, to enable the Malay community to achieve its rightful place in relation to the other communities, and to foster "a unified citizen body." But in the matter of national schools the committee did a little hedging. The report referred to Chapter 4, Paragraph 16, of the Barnes Report, and Chapter 6, Paragraph 2, of the Fenn-Wu Report and implied that these two paragraphs both supported the idea that a child's first education in primary school should be in his mother tongue.71 The only trouble with this was that it inferred that the Barnes Report recommended that the child learn first in his mother tongue, and the Barnes Report did no such thing. For a reading of the complete Paragraph 16 of Chapter 4 and the first sentence of Paragraph 17 revealed that the Barnes Report called for the use of Malay and English only in all national schools: "When all this has been said, the fact remains that Chinese and Indians are being asked to give up gradually their own vernacular schools, and to send their children, not indeed to Malay schools in the present meaning of that term, but to schools where Malay is the only oriental language taught."72

The Central Advisory Committee's report went on to

70 Quoted above on p. 146.
71 Central Advisory Committee Second Report, p. 3.
recommend that if educational principles were to be the determining factor in educational policy in Malaya, then the first two years of a child's education should be in his mother tongue. After two years another language should be introduced, but there unanimity was not achieved among the committee members. The majority favored English for all at this point in the child's education. The minority called for English for the Malays and Malay for all others. 73

However, in the next paragraph the report stated that when "present day circumstances and conditions in Malaya" were taken into consideration, other factors might take precedence over educational principles. With that in mind it recommended that all students in primary schools study Malay and English throughout their six years of schooling, and that Chinese and Indian students be provided with the opportunity to have instruction in Kuo Yu and Tamil. It modified the recommendations of the Barnes Report further by suggesting that the medium of instruction be either English or Malay in the national schools, rather than both. 74

The next section of the report urged the government to take all measures possible as quickly as possible to render assurances to the Chinese and Indians that government aid to their schools was not in imminent danger of being withdrawn.

73 Central Advisory Committee Second Report, pp. 3-4.
74 Ibid., p. 4 (italics added).
The government should tell them that this aid would be continued until such time as there were sufficient national schools to absorb all students. Also, the government should assure those concerned that the changeover from vernacular schools to national schools would be carried out in such a manner that no one would be without a job during the changeover or when it was completed.\(^75\)

The report also asked the government to assure the primary English schools that they would not be taken over for secondary work but would be converted to primary national schools. The committee expressed doubts as to the feasibility of the selection of the upper 20 per cent of the students at age nine-plus for special instruction in English, but agreed that it should be tried.\(^76\)

The committee's only modifications of the Barnes Report recommendations for secondary education were that those in academic streams be required to continue either with Malay or their own vernacular language as a subject, and that they be offered a commercial examination as an alternative to the School Certificate Examination.\(^77\)

The committee accepted the Barnes Report's ideas for teacher training colleges with the exception that it thought

\(^75\) Ibid.
\(^76\) Ibid.
\(^77\) Ibid., p. 5.
these colleges should be opened to both men and women. It registered its opinion that an adequate supply of well-trained teachers was the first requirement for any improvement in primary education in Malaya. 78

It accepted "whole-heartedly" the idea of an Inspectorate. But on the question of Local Education Authorities, it considered that this should be very carefully looked into before any action was taken. 79

The Fenn-Wu Report did not fare as well. In most instances its ideas were rejected out of hand, e.g., the committee believed the time would come when national schools would be accepted completely by the Chinese, in contrast to the thoughts expressed in the Fenn-Wu Report. It agreed, however, that the Malayan Chinese should be allowed to operate private schools as long as these fulfilled government standards. 80

The committee denied an allegation contained in the Fenn-Wu Report that there had been any control that would stop Chinese from going overseas for higher education. 81 It rejected the need for a Chinese teacher training college, and supported the idea of normal schools—all in opposition to the

78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p. 6.
81 Ibid., p. 7.
Fenn-Wu Report. It also believed that the present three-year weekend training for Chinese teachers should be continued. 82

The one point made by Fenn and Wu which gained almost complete support was the recommendation for an increase in government grants-in-aid to Chinese schools. It was recommended that these grants be carried out as soon as it could be determined that the first 100 per cent increase which had already been instituted had been properly used by these schools. 83 It also agreed that the conditions of Chinese teachers must be improved. 84

It is not surprising that the Central Advisory Committee on Education's Second Report should so favor the Barnes Report's recommendations. As remarked before, the Barnes Report's recommendations were much more in line with government thinking as expressed first in the Communities Liaison Committee and then in the Central Advisory Committee's First Report. On the other hand, the Fenn-Wu Report contained conclusions (i.e., that Chinese schools should continue to exist, and that Chinese language be encouraged) that if approved would have the effect of almost completely reversing the past efforts of the government to break down communalism in the educational structure of Malaya by interracial education

82 Ibid., p. 8.
83 Ibid., p. 7.
84 Ibid., p. 8.
and an emphasis on Malay and English as the two languages of education.

The men, both English and Malayan, who controlled affairs in Malaya at this time were determined to use education as a tool to lessen communalism in Malaya. The recommendations of the Barnes Report seemed to them to provide the best means to do this. Those of the Fenn-Wu Report did not. Thus the Second Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education contained many more of the recommendations of the former report than it did of the latter.

DEBATE ON THE SECOND CENTRAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REPORT.

On September 20, 1951, the findings of the Central Advisory Committee were brought before the Federal Legislative Council. The actual motion was to submit the Central Advisory Committee's findings to a special committee of the Legislative Council to be composed of the following Council members: The Attorney General, M.N.J.P. Hogan; the Member for Education, E.E.C. Thuraisingham; the Member for Home Affairs, Dato Onn bin Ja'afar; Raja Uda bin Raja Muhammad, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Dato Abdul Razak, Colonel H.S. Lee, Leung Cheung Ling, R. Ramani, G. Shelley, and Muhammed Yusof bin Ahmad. This Select Committee was to formulate a new law based on the report that would "cover all aspects of educational policy for the Federation of Malaya." 85

This was quite normal procedure, for the report itself had not been prepared by lawmakers and so its recommendations must needs be put in the form of a law before they could be finally acted on. 86

The debate on the proposal to have the Second Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education turned over to a special Legislative Council committee took two days. On neither of these days was the motion itself discussed. Instead, all the speakers treated the occasion as a time to offer either support or disapproval to such parts of the three reports as they felt were significant.

Dato Thuraisingham, the Member for Education, presented the motion and then gave the first of his two outstanding speeches on educational policy in Malaya. 87 The Legislative Council was apprehensive about this debate. If it went anything like the war of words carried out over the previous five months in Malaya, it could rend the country. Thuraisingham's speech set the tone. One senses an urgency there as much for the way the topic would be handled as for the topic itself.

86 There were times when sending a report to a committee constituted a stalling tactic—one used sometimes to avoid having to make a decision on a controversial issue. But that was not the case here.

87 The other occurred in 1954. See below, p. 362.
itself. Throughout his remarks Thuraisingham indicated that he was aware of the possible troubles that could result if a wrong word were spoken. Yet he made no attempt to hide the problems implicit in the questions surrounding the formation of a new educational policy in Malaya.

Perhaps the portion of Thuraisingham's speech which showed him at his best was that wherein he pointed out that since both the leading factions—the Chinese and the Malays—had endorsed one or the other, the Barnes Report or the Fenn-Wu Report, they must then agree on at least one point. For, he pointed out, central to both reports was the idea that educational policy must be designed to produce a Malayan nation, a national consciousness for Malays. 88

He also skillfully showed that there could be little disagreement in the matter of English language education, since if the Council wished to claim that it represented the wishes of the people, a quick glance at the pressures from parents trying to get their children into English schools would convince them all that this was the choice of the people. 89

Regarding Malay language teaching, he referred them to the motion passed unanimously in 1949 that Malay and English must be taught in all primary schools. 90 He undermined the

89 Ibid., p. 244.
90 Ibid., p. 245.
position of those who called for each child's education being in the language of the home by pointing out that except for Malay there were no languages found often enough in the homes of Malaya to call for their establishment as a medium of instruction in primary schools. The Chinese spoke a wide variety of mutually unintelligible dialects. The Indians did not even have dialects, but used truly different languages. 91

With all this said, he then gave his support to the formation of national schools which would teach Malay and English through the primary years and offer Kuo Yu and Tamil to those students who desired it. 92 He thus agreed with the Fenn-Wu Report to the extent of supporting trilingualism for those who desired it, 93 howbeit a trilingualism that did not include Chinese or Tamil as a medium of instruction in a national school.

Local Education Authorities received his support. He gave two reasons for encouraging this development. One had been included in the Barnes Report, i.e., that this would stimulate interest in education at the local level. Thuraisingham's point was that this would provide an opportunity for practice in local government--something that was badly needed in Malaya. 94

91 Ibid., p. 244.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid., p. 245.
94 Ibid.
And then Thuraisingham presented what amounted to a master stroke of debate strategy. He offered for further consideration the idea that a special education fund should be built up by a special tax assessment on primary products and businesses. This was just the thing needed to draw some of the fire away from the three reports, for it caused the Council members to include consideration of this new proposition in their speeches. It also had the effect of shifting somewhat the question under discussion from theoretical aspects of educational policy to practical aspects of financing that policy.

The only members who reacted strongly against the idea of a new tax were those concerned with primary products. It seemed, however, that the Chinese, the ones who would be most heavily hit if a business tax were imposed, were so concerned about countering the ideas of the Barnes Report that they did not take time in this debate to say much about the proposed licensing of businesses bill.

The Chinese spent most of their debate time stating what should not be. Tan Siew Sin was the most outspoken of this group. It was his contention that it was unreasonable to expect a child to be able to master three languages, especially three that were so dissimilar as were Malay, English, and either Chinese or Tamil.96

95 Ibid., p. 246.
96 Ibid., pp. 249-250.
His two strongest points were: (1) that the Barnes Report exceeded its terms of reference, for it was only supposed to make recommendations for Malay education, not for all education in Malaya; and (2) that only Malays and Englishmen were on the Barnes Committee, and the Committee neither consulted nor received memoranda from any but Malays and Englishmen. He went on to ask: On what basis had the Barnes Committee decided what was best for the Chinese and Tamils?

After pointing out that, contrary to the Central Advisory Committee Report, the Barnes Report called for only two languages, Malay and English, as mediums of instruction in the national schools, he quoted the sentence from the Barnes Report that suggested that persons who were not happy with these two languages were not happy to be in Malaya, and added: "These few words must surely be unique in the history of this country. Seldom, if ever, in the past history of this country has the maximum of racial bigotry, racial intolerance and deep-seated ignorance of fundamental political principles been compressed into so few words." 99

Every Malay speaker in the debate supported the Barnes Report. 100 The main theme of the Malay speeches was that

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97 Ibid., p. 250.
98 Ibid., p. 251.
99 Ibid., p.
100 There were 35 members whose names indicate that they were
the Barnes Report should be implemented. To illustrate, here are some of the points they made:

The Mentri Besar of Negri Sembilan claimed that, since the Malays were so poor and underprivileged, they needed the advantages contained in the Barnes suggestions. He was willing to allow such of the Penn-Wu Report's suggestions as did not disturb the basic principles of the Barnes Report. 101

The Mentri Besar of Selangor indicated that he could not see what all the fuss was about. The national schools were not that different from the present English schools into which all were so eager to get their children. 102

Datin Puteh Mariah, wife of the man who had introduced the 1949 motion to make teaching of English and Malay required in primary schools, said that she supported the Central Advisory Committee's Report because to her it was an amended version of the Barnes Report. 103

The most conservative voice from among the Malays that spoke was that of Muhammad Yusof bin Ahmad. This man had received a strongly Malay-oriented education, starting with

Muslims, and 16 Chinese, 6 Indians (counting the President), 18 Englishmen. In this latter group would be included at least one Eurasian, perhaps more.

102 Ibid., p. 248.
103 Ibid., p. 253. (This hardly made the report's suggestions more popular with those who so opposed the Barnes Report!)
Malay primary school, then going to the Malay Teachers College (when it was at Malacca), and finally to the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar. He had served since 1919 in the Malayan Education Service. While he agreed that great changes had come in the thinking of Malays, he suggested that Jawi was not being given enough time—that thirty minutes a day was not nearly enough to master this subject. He reminded his listeners that the Jawi script had been a source of pride to the Malays for some five hundred years.

A most interesting speech was given by the new UMNO president, Tunku Abdul Rahman. He completely agreed with the picture drawn by the Barnes Report as to the underprivileged position of the Malays, but his conclusion was that the government should put the Barnes Committee's recommendations into effect for the Malays and anyone else that wanted them, and forget the rest of the people. Let them do as they pleased.

He insisted that the learning of a language did not make one loyal to a nation, and to think that having people learn Malay would make them loyal to Malaya was not valid. At this time he showed no reservations concerning the Barnes Report recommendations themselves. Nor did his

106 Ibid., pp. 259-260.
107 Ibid., p. 260.
good friend, Dato Abúl Razak. Razak wanted the Barnes Report implemented, rather than the recommendations of the Central Advisory Committee on Education's Second Report, for he said that only Malay and English should be taught in the national schools: Malay because so many Malayans already knew and used it, and English because it was the commercial language of the world as well as the language of Malaya's intelligentsia. Let Chinese and Tamil be taught privately if so desired, he said. He agreed that the willingness to learn languages did not prove a man's loyalty, but it was at least an indication that such a motivation existed.

Tuan Haji Rejab felt the Barnes Report suggested the best means of unifying the country. He said that the Fenn-Wu Report was only for those whose allegiance was located outside Malaya. Other Malays who supported the Barnes Report were Dato Onn's son, Captain Hussein, and Chik Mohammed Yusof.

108 Razak, the son of a major chief of Pahang, received his schooling at the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar, and after graduation joined the Malayan Administrative Service in 1939. In 1947 he went to England to study law and passed his final examinations in 1949. On his return to Malaya he received an appointment to the Malayan Civil Service. In 1955 he was made Acting Mentri Besar of Pahang. In August, 1951, he became Deputy President of UMNO. He is now (1967) Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia.

110 Ibid., p. 264.
111 Ibid., pp. 268-269.
112 Ibid., p. 271.
113 Ibid., p. 272.
Dato Haji Mohamed Eusof said that the Council should legislate for the citizens of Malaya and not worry about the opinions of non-citizens when they made these laws. Most of the Malay speakers included a favorable mention of the education fund. None opposed it that spoke that day.

The Indians that took part in the debate tended towards a position midway between that of the Malays and the Chinese. They were not so harsh on the Barnes Report as the Chinese, yet they too evinced concern regarding the future of their language and culture.

Mr. Durasamy stated that the parents' demand for English education for their children was not based entirely on either their love or respect for English education, nor on their rejection of their own vernacular education per se. Rather, it quite accurately reflected their awareness that English education in Malaya was better education because it received more money per child than did vernacular schools. Thus English schools could and did hire better qualified teachers, build better buildings, and in general provide those things that went into producing a better education. He called for vernacular education for all students in their first two years of primary schooling.

Mr. Narayanan, a representative of estate workers,

114 Ibid., p. 274.
115 Ibid., p. 267.
declared that as they now existed, trade schools were terrible. He implied that if the estates would support education in the same way that they supported funds set up for their defense against terrorists (he used the word "workers"), then they would not need to be afraid of their workers. 116

There had been little question but that the motion to have the report turned over to a special Legislative Committee to be approved, for this was the logical thing to do in order to prepare a law on education. The two studies, that of Barnes and that of Fenn-Wu, had been made and digested for the Council. Now it was up to the Council to produce a law. The motion passed.

Taken all in all, this debate on the Barnes and Fenn-Wu Reports must be judged as a triumph for the Member for Education, Dato Thuraisingham—not so much for what was said as for what was not said, for neither side in this dispute let loose with their heavy guns. The Council members covered all the territory covered in the newspapers, but they covered it in a restrained and respectful manner. It is from this debate, perhaps, that one can trace the beginnings of an evident willingness to hold back and compromise which was to emerge as the key to stability in multicommunal Malaya.

116 Ibid., p. 273.
DEATH OF GURNEY.

There was a lull of almost a year in the public's struggle to influence the formulation of educational policy after the Legislative Council had approved the establishment of the Special Legislative Council Committee on Education. This was a lull in the public's activities—the government gave ample evidence of being increasingly concerned about effecting changes in policy as it affected Chinese education.

Quite probably the main reason for this relative lack of public concern for educational policy was that first a terrorist act of crisis proportions, and then the impact of the dynamic personality who brought the problems of the Emergency under control, commanded the attention of the people of Malaya in 1952.

The crisis occurred only a fortnight after the Special Committee was given the go-ahead. The High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney, was killed by terrorists on Saturday afternoon, October 6, 1951.¹ Mr. M.V. del Tufo became the "Administrator of the Government" until a new High Commissioner was appointed.²

¹ Malay Mail, October 7, 1951.
Most people who lived in Malaya throughout the period of the Emergency claim that the weeks after the death of Gurney represent the nadir of the fortunes of those opposing the terrorists. They add that it may or may not have been the time of the terrorists' greatest military success, but it was certainly the time of lowest morale amongst the people fighting them.

There was a time lag of over three months before the new High Commissioner was announced. Speculation was rampant as to who would get the job. Some saw Malcolm MacDonald as a possibility; and it was rumored that he wanted the job. All were certain that the new man had better be good.

GENERAL TEMPLER.

And then on January 15 the appointment of General Sir Gerald Templer as the new High Commissioner of Malaya was announced. Templer was to loom large on the Malayan scene for the next two and a half years, but the first year, 1952, was all his. If it could be said that the Emergency was the center stage in Malaya in 1952, Templer would have to be called the main actor on that stage. He was a small man, but his presence almost immediately created in the people of Malaya a renewed hope and confidence.

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3 Interview with Sheppard, October 3, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
4 Malay Mail, January 16, 1952.
5 An awareness of Templer's impact on the people of Malaya was obtained by numerous interviews in which he was discussed, and only one man evidenced anything but the greatest respect and admiration for him.
He introduced few innovations into the struggle against the terrorists, but he was able to carry through effectively such plans as had already been instituted by Gurney and Briggs. His one major change was to reorganize and upgrade the information and intelligence gathering facilities of the government and military in Malaya.6

He demanded much from the people who served him, but he demanded no less from himself. He was blunt and honest—a man who brooked no interference when once he saw the action that needed to be taken.

He set the tune and Malaya played it. His arrival marked the beginning of the end of the Emergency.

A short time after Templer's appointment was announced by the British government the Federation of Malaya Legislative Council was asked to approve an amendment to the Federation of Malaya Agreement so that a Deputy High Commissioner could be appointed. It was felt that this was necessary, because Templer was not only to occupy the post of High Commissioner, but was also to be the officer in charge of military operations against the communist terrorists.

There was no question of whether or not to agree to such an appointment, so far as the Legislative Council was concerned. Most members of the Council were quite happy to do so. But there was a question as to just where the person appointed

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6 Interview with Sheppard, October 3, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
to the position should come from. Tunku Abdul Rahman moved an amendment that the Deputy High Commissioner should be Asian, i.e., Malayan in origin.

To the Malayans, the post of Deputy High Commissioner offered a clear chance for one of them to gain political experience prior to their country's independence.

To the British, it seemed that the most important consideration was to get the Emergency over with, and to this end they must pick the strongest team possible.

The Tunku's amendment was defeated, but not before a long debate on the subject had taken place. The main motion itself, for amending the Federation of Malaya Agreement to allow the appointing of a Deputy High Commissioner, was then passed easily, and on February 4 Donald Charles MacGillivray's appointment as Deputy High Commissioner was announced.

FORMATION OF THE ALLIANCE.

It was in this same month of February, 1952, that


8 Ibid., p. 531. See also Onn's moves in 1948.

9 It has, by the way, been alleged that the British had already appointed D.C. MacGillivray to the position of Assistant High Commissioner even before the debate took place. (Interview with Kennaird, September 20, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)


11 Ibid.

12 Malay Mail, February 4, 1952.
municipal elections were scheduled to be held in Kuala Lumpur. As has been mentioned in Chapter V, Dato Onn had founded the I.M.P. in September, 1951. Now he was to have the opportunity to demonstrate its strength in these municipal elections.

The I.M.P. looked to have all the advantages: well-known leaders, many of them in the Legislative Council, and the evident disarray of its two main opposition parties, the M.C.A. and UMNO. The M.C.A. had little chance of winning on its own because of citizenship requirements for voting, and UMNO supporters were supposedly split in their loyalties—some following Dato Onn; others remaining true to the party. 13 And to compound this confusion, most of the more prominent leaders of both these parties were members of the I.M.P. However, both the M.C.A. and UMNO did have certain strengths. The M.C.A. was well-supplied financially; UMNO had its basic organizational structure intact. 14

Suddenly (almost literally overnight) the political picture for the up-coming Kuala Lumpur municipal elections was changed—and Colonel H.S. Lee was the man who brought about the change.

Colonel Lee was the president of the Selangor branch of the M.C.A., and as such had issued a manifesto for the election which said in part: "We feel that in running a

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13 Interview with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
municipality local interests should be paramount; local affairs should be neither influenced by politics nor conducted on a communal basis." The manifesto added that the M.C.A. was entering six candidates in the Kuala Lumpur municipal elections, some of whom would not be Chinese.

It became known to Lee that Dato Haji Yahya bin Abdul Razak, Chairman of the UMNO election subcommittee in Kuala Lumpur, was interested in the idea expressed in the manifesto that both Chinese and non-Chinese would contest the elections with the support of the M.C.A.--and the upshot was that Lee and Yahya met and decided that the M.C.A. and UMNO would work together in the Kuala Lumpur elections. As the Malay Mail of January 9 headlined it, "Malays & Chinese Merge for K.L. Elections." Thus was begun what was to emerge as the most powerful political organization in Malaya, the Alliance.

When on February 17 the Kuala Lumpur municipal elections

15 Interview with Lee, October 26, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
16 Miller, Prince and Premier, p. 114.
17 Interview with Lee.
18 There had been a long period of mutual animosity between Dato Onn and Colonel Lee which had culminated in Lee's being left off of the working committee, composed of Chinese and Malay leaders, set up to organize the I.M.P. (Interviews with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; former Legislative Council member, November 11, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; and Thuraisingham, November 2, 1966), and this has been suggested as having motivated Lee to take actions described above--and it certainly seems true that he did not hold any great love for Onn and his followers. (See Clark, "The Malayan Alliance," p. 31.)
were held, the Alliance swept to victory.\textsuperscript{19} Only two of the twelve seats contested were won by I.M.P. candidates.\textsuperscript{20} The Alliance had won all but one of the others. Shortly thereafter, UMNO and the M.C.A. moved to extend their alliance to other municipal elections scheduled to be held elsewhere in Malaya.\textsuperscript{21}

It seems a possibility that one reason for the success of the Alliance and the decline and failure of the I.M.P. might have been in the change of British leadership in Malaya. Gurney apparently supported efforts to foster co-operation amongst the Malayan leaders and had been instrumental in arranging more than one compromise within their ranks. His absence spelled the doom of the I.M.P. Lee could have been repudiated by the other leaders of M.C.A. and UMNO, but without Gurney's influence this did not occur.

Templer was too concerned with matters more directly related to the Emergency to be able to understand and take action to foster intercommunalism. Templer may have later regretted this neglect, for he was apparently completely convinced that the gaining of independence should be gradual, and his failure to support those Malayan leaders who agreed with this view helped to bring about the victory of more independence-minded leaders.

\textsuperscript{19} Malay Mail, February 17, 1952.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., February 18.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., February 22.
BRITISH VIEWS ON INDEPENDENCE.

Evidence of British views toward independence at this time was contained in a Kelantan Government Circular which outlined British plans for Malaya in 1952. It stated that the policy of His Majesty's Government concerning Malaya was as follows: In due course Malaya should become a fully self-governing nation, but to achieve a united Malayan nation there must be a common form of citizenship for all who regard the Federation or any part of it as their real home and the object of their loyalty. The ideal of a united Malayan nation would not involve sacrifice by any community of its traditions and culture and customs. Before Malayan unity could be fully realized, the Malays must be encouraged and assisted to play a full part in the economic life of the country so that the present uneven economic balance might be redressed. Meanwhile, the primary task of the High Commissioner would be to restore law and order, i.e., defeat the communist terrorists. 22

There was a Federation of Malaya Government Circular of this time which indicated that the government had adopted this policy in toto. 23

In January, 1951, the British Commissioner General for

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23 Ibid., Federal Government General Circular No. 5 of 1952.

24 "Politics in Mala
Southeast Asia, Malcolm MacDonald, had had an article published in *Malaya*. In it he stated that the ultimate purpose of the British policy in the Colony was that the peoples of Malaya should become a united, self-governing nation within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

He went on to say that no one was in any great hurry for self-government, and that the Malayan people would be content with gradual, but steady evolution towards independence—so long as they could feel confident in the sincerity and zeal of the British government in this regard. MacDonald blamed the Emergency for slowing down the process for gaining independence.

MacDonald's views on the Malayan people's attitude toward independence illustrate the British misjudgment of political realities existent in Malaya at the time. It would be natural to think that if one were in steady contact with what looked to be the top Malayan leaders, as had been MacDonald, one would be in touch with the political pulse beat of Malaya. The trouble was that not only was MacDonald wrong about the feelings of the people of Malaya towards independence—the I.M.P. leaders were too. And the two groups, the Malayan leaders and the British colonials, almost seemed to feed on

each other's views.

MacDonald was also incorrect in his estimation of the effect of the Emergency on the speed with which independence was to come, for in retrospect it seems clear that the Emergency actually acted on the British as a spur, so that in spite of themselves they increased their willingness to grant more self-government (and finally independence) to Malaya.27 Apparently the British hoped in this way to develop the needed support of the Malayan people for the fight against the terrorists.

This mistake in estimating the people's reaction to independence in Malaya was to have an effect on educational policy, for it was the failure of the British and the initial group of postwar Malayan leaders to appreciate and act fast enough on this issue that, together with their failure to appreciate fully the depth of the communal problem, was to lead to the eventual rejection of their educational methods for overcoming communalism in Malaya.

THE GOVERNMENT, THE EMERGENCY, AND CHINESE EDUCATION.

As has been related earlier, almost as soon as the Emergency began, the government cast about for means to bring the Chinese under greater control. Now in 1952 the tempo of these efforts increased considerably. The tone was set by

27 This viewpoint is supported by Tunku Abdul Rahman, in an interview November 18, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
General Templer's remarks at the opening of the new Legislative Council session for 1952. In this speech Templer included many remarks on education. He prefaced these remarks by stating:

> When I arrived to take up my duties as High Commissioner, I made it plain that it is a tenet of my faith that the Emergency cannot be overcome by military measures alone. A campaign must be fought on the social, economic and political fronts as well. 28

He went on to say (referring to a directive given to him by His Majesty's Government): 29

> The directive stated that to achieve a united Malayan nation there must be a common form of citizenship for all who regard the Federation or any part of it as their real home and the object of their loyalty. I myself will govern all my thought and energies in the future towards bringing about this truly united Malayan nation on which alone the future of this country must depend. 30

Then, swinging fully into educational problems, he said:

> This country requires also an educational system by which in due course every man, woman and child will be able to have at least some contact with the members of other communities, through the medium of a common language in addition to their own. This Government wholeheartedly endorses the statement made by the Honourable Member for Education in his speech to this Council on the 19th September last, in which he said that

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29 See above, p. 216.

'the ideal school would be a school in which children of all races would be educated under the same roof and educated in all those subjects which a child needs for a full and complete education.'

He went on to say that people in Malaya must not let the future distract them from the present. On the question of teacher training, he gave as his opinion that there could be no fully developed national school system until there was an assured supply of qualified teachers for such a system. He said that they needed teachers, not only in the English schools, but in the vernacular schools, which would continue to be around for a long time.

He stated, in regard to those already teaching, that the government must be certain that these teachers'... are in fact educating them [the students] in accordance with the social principles of our own way of life, and not in accordance with the dogmas of some country beyond the seas.' He said that teachers must be adequately paid, and that textbooks must not be in conflict with the purposes of the country.

The reactions to this speech in the press were in most cases favorable. The Utusan Melayu said that it hoped that the common language for unifying the country referred to by

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31 Ibid., p. 10.
32 Ibid., p. 11.
33 Ibid.
Sir Gerald Templer in his speech would be Malay and not English. After all, it said, Indonesia used this language—and, besides, Malay was easier to learn than English.\(^{34}\)

The *Penang Gazette* of March 22, 1952, stated that it liked Templer's statement that the Emergency could not be stopped by guns alone. It agreed that educational methods could not be over-stressed as a means for getting the different communities to co-operate and live together.

Actually, there was little that was new in these remarks, but they showed that Templer, at least for the time being, was going to support the general policies previously enunciated by the Communities Liaison Committee, the Barnes Report, and the Central Advisory Committee on Education's reports—that a common language must be fostered along with an educational system that taught children of all races together in the same classroom.

In April this was spelled out more clearly. A Report of the Council of Rulers, dated April 24, contained a speech of the Mentri Besar of Selangor in which he opposed the ideas of the government providing funds for paying increased salaries in vernacular schools. He did not use the words "Chinese schools," but the High Commissioner in his response urged the necessity and urgency of reorienting the attitudes of the

\(^{34}\) March 21, 1952.
Chinese towards Malaya and its government.\textsuperscript{35}

Nor did the government consider that plans to integrate Malaya's races educationally constituted sufficient action on its part to overcome the problems presented by Chinese education. Throughout the year 1952 there was increased government effort to gain control of what it saw as the immediate problem --the threat of communist infiltration and control of Chinese school students and staff.

Templer, without naming the Chinese, had indicated the government's increased concern about this problem in his address to the Legislative Council when he said that the government would not permit teachers to educate students "in accordance with the dogmas of some country beyond the sea."

Added evidence of the efforts of the government to gain and maintain control of Chinese education comes to light when a letter from the Member for Education to the various state Education Departments is considered. He was answering complaints from some states that they did not like the cost of nor the duration of the government scheme to aid Resettlement schools. Thuraisingham said in this letter: "It has been found that the engagement of all teachers and the payment of their salaries under this scheme gives to the Education Department a very desirable measure of control over these schools.

\textsuperscript{35} Kelantan Education Files, No. 122 of 1950, Extracts from the Minutes of the 20th Meeting of the Conference of Rulers held at Kuala Lumpur on 24 April, 1952, [No.] 5 "Salary Proposals for Vernacular Schools."
at the present time. . . "36

He said that at first it was assumed that these schools would not take on any special relationships with the Education Department, but on further consideration it was decided that there was much to be said for not allowing these schools to slip back into the admittedly deplorable conditions of the average Chinese rural school.37

On June 12 the government announced that there were now 216 New Village (Resettlement—the name having been changed) schools in operation, employing some 900 teachers. It added that these schools were not supported just because they taught the children, but it was expected that these schools would also have an impact on the children's parents.38

On July 2, 1952, Council Paper No. 33 of 1952 was introduced to the Legislative Council. It was entitled Settlement, Resettlement, and the Development of New Villages in the Federation of Malaya. Section 11, "Education in the New Villages," started off by stating: "It was recognised in 1950 that education in the new villages represented a special problem and that the Government must take an active part in establishing primary schools in these areas and must maintain some degree of subsequent control until social cohesion has

37 Ibid.
38 Malay Mail, June 12, 1952.
been obtained."\textsuperscript{39} It went on to point out that a scheme was
drawn up for government financial aid to be given for class-
rooms, teachers' quarters, and salaries (including sums ear-
marked for teachers of English). Also a certain amount was to
be given for the cost of books, furniture, and equipment.

The idea had been that after the first year, assistance
for salaries would be reduced, but this new report proposed
that, providing Malay and English were taught, the full rate
should continue until the end of 1953.

The Council Paper went on to state that the government
hoped that the schools of these villages "... will not only
help to make the children into useful citizens but that they
will exert a powerful influence for good in the lives of the
adult populations. ... In this way these schools may come
to stand for progress and enlightenment and the development
of a Malayan national consciousness in each village."\textsuperscript{40}

Meanwhile, the government's desire to exert more control
over the already existing Chinese education was manifesting
itself in action.

In March, the Assistant Director of Education (Chinese),
L.I. Lewis, sent a letter to all state Education Departments.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{39} Minutes and Council Papers of the Federal Legislative
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 324.
\textsuperscript{41} Kelantan Education Files, No. 64 of 1949, Letter of
December 12, 1951.
In this letter Lewis said that there had been a lot of discussion concerning the 100 per cent increase in grants-in-aid to Chinese schools. The main concern seemed to be: What was the money to be used for, and what were the conditions requisite for its receipt? He answered the two questions this way:

The grants were to be used for the general maintenance of schools, not specifically as contributions towards the salaries of teachers. Government could not dictate to the committees of management what they should pay their teachers so long as the grants made were less than the current salaries of the teachers. When the grants-in-aid were equal to or more than the current salaries, then the government prescribed minimum salaries to be paid by the recipients of these grants. "But I think it is desirable to express our sympathies with the lot of the Chinese teachers and to make it known that grants-in-aid are given on condition that schools are efficient in ways defined by the Department of Education, and that to use some or all of the increased grants-in-aid to improve the salaries of their teachers should have the effect of increasing the efficiency of their teachers."

He went on to say that other conditions were: (1) that there would be satisfactory progress in the teaching of Malay, English, and Math; (2) that textbooks must be approved by the Department of Education; and (3) that there must be satisfactory treatment of teachers.

In late June the government announced that it was
increasing its aid to Chinese primary schools to the extent that the aid given would in all cases now be sufficient to allow the salaries of the Chinese teachers in these schools to be equivalent to those of government teachers. 42

In November, 1952, in response to a question in the Legislative Council from Leung Cheung Ling in which he had asked what the latest regulations were regarding the new grants-in-aid to Chinese schools, Thuraisingham answered by making mention of the need to give Chinese teachers job security and to improve their status. Then he went on to state: "The grants-in-aid will be given only when schools conform to certain conditions (many of which are already statutory obligations) one of the most important of which is that the grant shall be used in its entirety towards the payment of salaries." 43 In order that the schools might receive these grants, the following conditions had to be fulfilled: The Education Department concerned must have final approval over (1) hiring and firing of teachers; (2) teachers' salaries; (3) enrolment of students from other schools; (4) textbooks and curriculum. Thuraisingham listed other stipulations, but these were the four major ones. 44

The Education Department's answer to the long-voiced

42 Malay Mail, June 28, 1952.
44 Ibid.
need for better facilities for training Chinese teachers was presented to the public with the opening on May 12 of the Green Lane School in Penang. While this action of the government was not openly stated as being inaugurated to obtain control of Chinese education, it was an action which would certainly have aided the government's efforts along this line. The Green Lane School was to take students from both the junior middle and senior middle Chinese schools to train for careers as teachers in Chinese primary schools in Malaya. To start with, this school was to have 250 students. The aim was to have an eventual enrolment of 500. It was not the full fledged teacher training college envisioned by the Fenn-Wu Report, but was rather the first of a proposed four normal teacher training centers for Chinese. 45

And then in June, 1952, Singapore took an action that did not help matters in Malaya one bit. It announced that it was adopting the Fenn-Wu Report as its model for education in the island. 46 From this time on those Chinese in Malaya who supported Chinese vernacular education (primarily those who had received this type of education or who were directly involved with this education, i.e., teachers and management committees) could and did point to Singapore as an example of what should be done for Chinese education in Malaya.

46 Malay Mail, June 12, 1952.
The day after the Singapore announcement was made, the Malay Mail took the Federation government to task for the fact that it had yet to produce an educational policy for Malaya. The editorial said that the New Village schools showed what could be done in education, both as to type and results, when the interests of the country were the primary consideration. It added that the government's patting itself on the back for its efforts in introducing education into the New Villages was not merited, since almost half of these new settlements were as yet without a school.\footnote{June 13, 1952.}

A month passed, and then evidence began to appear that some Chinese teachers themselves opposed the idea of government aid, if it meant that in return for their salaries becoming equivalent to those of government school teachers, their schools would become government controlled.\footnote{Straits Times, July 29, 1952.}

In late August the Chinese School Committees Association also asked for assurances that Chinese school curriculums would not be interfered with if this proposal came to fruition. But at the same time they asked that government financial aid be extended to include the middle schools.\footnote{Malay Mail, August 31, 1952.}

In a monthly report on Chinese schools, issued in mid-September to the states by the federal Department of Education,
it was stated that, since the announced increases in grants-in-aid for Chinese primary schools, all Chinese teachers associations had discussed the advisability of acceptance. Almost all would not accept unless the conditions were amended. They expressed the fear that acceptance of the scheme would eventually lead to a loss of control of their schools by the Chinese, with a resultant drastic reduction in the hours Chinese language would be taught.  

Government response to these reactions from Chinese educationalists was contained in a letter addressed to the "Presidium of the Meeting of Representatives of Chinese School Committees and the Teachers and the Federation Representatives of the Malayan Chinese Association." Copies of this letter were sent to all state and settlement Education Departments. The subject was stated as: "Salary Scheme," and the letter was in response to modifications of the Education Bill requested by the addressee.

The letter stated that, as to curriculum, the government could make no promises, but it should be clear that the government would consult interested parties before changing any curriculum of Chinese schools. As to the dismissal of teachers, the government's intentions were to protect the teachers while at the same time supporting the committees of management in removing inefficient teachers. There was, the letter stated, 

no plan at present to extend government aid to middle schools. Nor would any further concessions be made to Chinese schools vis a vis requirements to obtain government aid, since many valuable concessions had already been included. However, the grant-in-aid scheme for Chinese primary schools would be reviewed at the end of three years.51

While those involved with Chinese education gave indications that they were becoming worried about the increase in government concern for their schools, the M.C.A. gave no indications that it supported this concern. In fact, in April the M.C.A. announced its support for the government's plan to Malayanize Chinese textbooks. It hitched a few riders to its approval, the chief of these being that all textbooks in Malaya should have their emphasis shifted to the study of Eastern cultures from that of Western cultures.52

And it was not just the Chinese educationalists who were worried about increased government interest in their affairs. There was at least one clear indication that Malays were restive about the increased attention given to the Chinese by the government. In the May meeting of the Legislative Council, in a debate on the Village Councils Bill (a bill to introduce village councils in Malaya as a means for training people in self-government at the local level), Datoh Haji Mohamed


52 Malay Mail, April 29, 1952.
Eusoff said that while Malay kampongs were "the poor relations," New Villages were the "blue-eyed boys" of the time. It seemed, he said, that the magic name was "Emergency," and all must bow before it. 53

ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS.

While it was true that except for the Chinese educationalists there was little evidence of public concern for educational matters in Malaya--the Emergency dominating the scene as it did--there was one educational development which involved the people of Malaya and not just the government. This was the development, by "public-spirited citizens," of adult education associations in the summer of 1951. The associations made it a point to disclaim any connection with political organizations or the government (although they welcomed government grants to help carry on their work). They stressed that they were independent, voluntary organizations arising out of popular demand for expanded adult education. 55

However, there is some evidence to indicate that this development was not just a fortuitous happening for the government of Malaya. Despite the insistence of their organizers, it appeared that the government may very well have had considerable influence in causing these associations to bloom

forth at this time.

For one thing, the most prominent of those who began this movement was Heah Joo Seang, a wealthy rubber estate owner from Penang, and a man well known for his support of Chinese education in his city. He was a good friend of Dato Onn's and was later to become the Chairman of the Penang branch of I.M.P. and its successor, Party Negara. Heah became the president of the Adult Education Association, Federation of Malaya. This body was set up in July of 1951 with the aim of encouraging states and settlements to inaugurate member associations. By the end of the year, Penang, Perak, and Pahang had such member associations. These associations had as their stated aim the conducting of literacy campaigns among adults whom educational opportunities had passed by.

For another thing, a speech given on the occasion of the inauguration of the association in Pahang, by Pahang's Mentri Besar, Tengku Penglima Prang, Tengku Mohamed (himself a government official), which stated the aims of these associations, seemed to echo the expressed ideas of the government on education. He said: "This country is now engaged in an


all-out fight to end banditry and terrorism. It is a necessary part of this war that the less fortunate members of our community, particularly those long in the rural areas be given an opportunity to become literate and to appreciate the ideals that we are presenting to them. It is only by doing this that we will be able to prevent them from being brought into the Communist fold.  

A final bit of evidence was provided during the time in 1953 when parents groups were trying to force the government to provide more places for their children in English schools. The Adult Education Association offered to provide the needed classes, and the parents' representatives responded by calling the proposal an attempted "government white wash" of the affair.  

The comparative lull in the evidence of public concern for educational policy which had begun in November, 1951, was almost over by September, 1952. The contents of the Legislative Council Special Committee's report had leaked to the press as early as August, 1952, and by the time of its official release the public was making known its feelings on the subject.  

The November 1951--September 1952 period was marked by


60 See below, p. 295 for more details.

the emergence of the first communal reaction to educational policy by a segment of the population of Malaya who were not themselves connected with the government or newspapers: the Chinese educationalists. They were the first, but they were not to be the last—and their initial efforts appeared mild when compared to their future moves.
CHAPTER VIII

THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, 1952

OCTOBER 1952--NOVEMBER 1952

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT.

The Report of the Special Committee Appointed on the 20th Day of September, 1951, to Recommend Legislation to Cover All Aspects of Educational Policy for the Federation of Malaya, was officially given to the press for publication on October 9, 1952, a month and a half before it was scheduled to be presented for debate in the Legislative Council. Included with the report was an Appendix, which set forth a proposed Education Bill.

The report of the Special Committee began by listing what the committee felt should be the object of education in the Federation: "(a) to foster the growth of individuals towards the best in knowledge, skill and character which they have it in them to attain; (b) to encourage and enable each community to occupy its rightful place in relation to other communal groups in the mixed society of Malaya; (c) to assist the formation of a unified citizen body, that is a Malayan nation, composed of all such groups." The committee added

1 (Council Paper No. 70 of 1952) (Kuala Lumpur, 1952). There was talk in the debate as to what name to apply to the Report — one member suggested "Hogan;" Hogan himself said "Thuraising-ham." Actually, no short title seems to have caught on.

that it was to be understood that no section of the Malay community would "lose its individuality," and "that the cultures of the Malay, Chinese, Indian and other inhabitants should be preserved and developed to evolve a common Malayan culture."³

Also included as an educational goal for the Federation was universal and compulsory primary education. But, at the same time, the committee cautioned the country that merely having large numbers of students in school was not enough—quality must be maintained and improved. Other goals were that: primary education should be free; girls as well as boys should receive the full benefits of education in Malaya; and hostels should be considered an urgent need in order to redress the imbalance between the rural and urban areas' educational opportunities, for hostels would allow rural children to obtain a better education.⁴

Like the Barnes Report before it, this report incorporated a description of existing educational facilities in order to provide a frame of reference for the recommendations which followed. A summary is included here, both for the reason it was included in the report, and because it helps to show how little change in education had actually been carried out since 1945.

³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid., p. B 776.
The Malayan primary schools of 1952 provided six years of training for boys and girls between the ages of six-plus and twelve-plus. One of four mediums was used in most of these schools: Malay, Kuo Yu, Tamil, or English. Generally, only Malays attended Malay-medium schools, Chinese the Kuo Yu-medium schools, and Indians the Tamil-medium schools. Children of all three races attended the English schools. Some vernacular schools offered English as a subject, and some of the Chinese and Tamil schools taught Malay. Malay boys and girls could, after three years in a Malay school, transfer to an English school. There they took special English language classes for a year or two, after which they joined the regular English-medium streams.

The Malay schools were free—their financial support coming from the government—as was the case with the Indian estate schools. Chinese schools were financed partly by government funds and partly by local Chinese funds. The children who attended Chinese schools had to pay fees. The English schools also charged fees, but they provided many free places for their students. Much of their money came from government grants and missionary funds.

There were only two mediums of secondary academic

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5 This was a change from 1945.
7 Ibid.
education offered: Chinese and English. Six years were offered in the Chinese secondary schools. English schools provided five years in preparation for the School Certificate Examination, followed in some by a post-School Certificate course of about twenty months. Both the Chinese and the English secondary schools charged fees. 8

Other types of secondary education were also available: e.g., the two Malay-medium teacher training colleges; junior technical (trade) schools; Chinese senior normal classes; three-year teacher training classes for teachers of Malay, Chinese, and Indian schools; and two-year teacher training classes for teachers of English in vernacular schools. 9

The most noteworthy post-secondary school was the University of Malaya. There were also a few special post-secondary schools: namely, the Technical College and the College of Agriculture, both three-year institutions; commercial schools; pre-university classes; and normal teacher training for primary English school teachers. 10

The Special Committee decided, after reviewing the three previous reports (Barnes, Penn-Wu, and Central Advisory Committee on Education Report on the Barnes and Penn-Wu Reports), that the objects of education which the Special Committee had

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8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
set forth could best be fulfilled by national schools. But, unlike the originally proposed national schools, which were supposed to use both Malay and English, the Special Committee recommended that each national school use only one medium of instruction, either English or Malay. The decision as to which medium to use would rest with the community in which the school was situated. The Special Committee agreed with the Central Advisory Committee's recommendation that if fifteen or more parents of the children attending a particular national school wished to have their children taught Kuo Yu or Tamil, these languages would be offered as subjects in the national schools. 11

In the Malay-medium national schools, English would be taught starting from the first year, while in the English-medium national schools, Malay would be taught from the third year. The script used for Malay would be Rumi, not Jawi, in all national schools. 12

The committee expected that not only government schools, but some private schools would be converted to national schools. If they elected to do this, private schools would remain private; but upon conforming to national school standards, they would receive full government aid. They would then not be expected to charge fees. 13 Since the supply of teachers

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11 Ibid., pp. B 778, 779.
13 Ibid., pp. B 779-780.
would be the determining factor in setting up these new national schools, and since this supply would be limited, it was suggested in the report that whenever possible, efforts should be made to locate the initial national schools in rural areas.\textsuperscript{14}

The committee sounded a note of caution in relation to standards in the national schools. It was recognized by the committee that the urge to create a nation might cause some to stress nation building at the expense of educational standards in these new schools. The report expressed it this way: "In the atmosphere of enthusiasm in which, we hope, these National schools will grow there may be some danger that they will be used primarily as places where individual children can be integrated into the community life of a plural society and only to a secondary extent as places for imparting instruction and knowledge and for building character. The Federation could not afford the lowering of academic standards which such a distortion of its educational system would bring about."\textsuperscript{15}

Then the committee issued a special plea for understanding of the emphasis it had placed on the learning of English. It pointed out that English was necessary for secondary and higher education, for "... as a world language, it is the gateway to modern ideas, technical knowledge and all forms

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.}, p. B 780. \\
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}, p. B 781.
of research..."\(^{16}\)

It added that while English education had in the past always led to white collar jobs, this did not mean that now frustration must result when young people who took English education were no longer able to find white collar jobs. For as rural standards of living improved, there would come a parallel awareness that the pursuit of agricultural and vocational activities did not imply a lower status than employment at a desk.\(^{17}\)

The committee recommended that government aid be continued for all types of vernacular schools, stating, in the case of Chinese schools, that: "Clearly Chinese vernacular schools are an integral part of our educational system and must continue to be so for a very long time to come..."\(^{18}\)

The committee rejected a plea from the Eurasian Association that the children of that community be given free places in English schools, although it admitted that these students needed support and special consideration for entrance to English schools, since they had no vernacular schools of their own to attend.\(^{19}\)

A memorandum received by the Special Committee from the

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\(^{16}\) Ibid.

\(^{17}\) Ibid.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., p. B 782.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., pp. B 782-783.
Society of Committee Grant-in-Aid Indian Schools, Selangor, had asked that a separate study be carried out on Indian education in Malaya. The Special Committee did not feel that it had a mandate to suggest such a step, but it did ask of, and receive from, the Department of Education a paper on Indian educational facilities existing in Malaya at that time. 20

The committee report suggested changing the names applied to schools set up by estates and mines from "'Estate Schools'" to "Aided-Employee Schools." Legislation for regulating these schools and insuring their existence should be transferred from the Labour Code to the proposed Education Ordinance. 21

After presenting the idea that estate schools should be encouraged to combine and form large enough units to create the size necessary to convert them into national schools, the report went on to suggest that the estate and mine owners should provide transportation to the schools for such of their children as needed it. 22 This latter suggestion proved to be one of the major issues in the debate on the Education Ordinance itself.

There were sections in the report on a variety of other educational problems: e.g., non-government schools and special schools for juvenile delinquents; the deaf, dumb, and blind;

20 Ibid., p. B 775.
21 Ibid., p. B 783.
22 Ibid.
and aborigines.23

Religious instruction was given a great deal of attention. It was suggested that each school allow one half hour for the religious instruction of every pupil in the school. In the case of private missionary schools, released time at the beginning and end of the school day would suffice. Each child would be taught the religion of his parents, and in the language of that parent.24 It was in these classes that the Malays were to receive their Jawi script training.25

If there were less than fifteen students of a particular religious belief, then these students could be given released time to allow the students to be withdrawn from the school for instruction in their own religion.26

On the matter of teacher training, while in general the committee concurred with the recommendations of the Barnes Report and the Central Advisory Committee on Education's Second Report, it added the idea that teachers ought to bond themselves for future service to the Education Department if they were provided with free teacher training.27

The committee approved of the concept of an independent

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23 Ibid., p. B 784.
24 Ibid., p. B 786.
26 Ibid., p. B 786.
inspectorate. 28

On secondary education, the Special Committee accepted the idea that some 20 per cent of the primary students in Malaya should continue on to an academic education in either a two-year "secondary modern" school, or the regular secondary school leading to the university; that 60 per cent should be trained for crafts and trades; and the other 20 per cent should be expected to finish only their primary training. 29

The committee members expressed themselves as strongly in support of adult education. They listed four main streams for this type of education: (1) vocational; (2) training for leisure time; (3) literacy training; and (4) development of civic-mindedness. Voluntary bodies in the field of adult education should be encouraged, and government grants should be provided as long as careful accounting was maintained. 30

The idea of creating Local Education Authorities was rejected. The main point against them was the thought that they would result in unequal financial support for education to the detriment of rural areas. It was also felt that the inexperienced personnel available at the local level were not the right ones to chart education through the troubled waters of the next few years in Malaya. 31

30 Ibid., pp. B 791-792.
31 Ibid., p. B 792.
Instead of local authorities, the Special Committee recommended that Educational Advisory Committees be set up at the various levels of government. At the top would be the Central Advisory Committee on Education for the Federation government, below it an Advisory Committee for each state and settlement, and then District Committees. At the local level parent–teachers associations would provide the answer to the need for more concern on the part of parents for educational problems.32

Finally, the committee recommended that education rates (property taxes) be made uniform throughout Malaya, and that the present limit of 2 per cent of property valuation be increased "substantially."33

If the recommendations of this report were put into effect, they would constitute a frontal assault on communalism in Malaya, and would at the same time provide a western-oriented education with English-medium education in the dominant role. There was little evidence in the report of any compromising when educational standards were weighed in the balance with the need for expanding education to include more students. Since including more students in Malaya's schools would necessitate more teachers and more buildings if standards were not to be lowered, and since these two

32 Ibid., p. B 793.
33 Ibid., pp. B 793-794.
commodities were not readily available, any large-scale expansion would have to wait until such commodities were in greater supply. No watering down of present facilities was to be considered.

The members of the Special Committee represented the three major political forces in Malaya at the time: the British (the Chairman, Hogan), the I.M.P. (Thuraisingham, Onn, Rumani, and Muhammad Yusof), and the two Alliance partners, UMNO (Tunku Abdul Rahman and Razak) and M.C.A. (Leung Cheung Ling and H.S. Lee).

Yet, while the committee seemed to be fairly representative, in fact its members were almost all men who had given evidence in the past of a commitment to changing educational policy in order to enable that policy to encourage the breakdown of communal barriers. There were no representatives of those who supported the view that vernacular education should be conserved and improved. Almost nowhere had any of them indicated an awareness of the depth of feeling held by the exclusively vernacular-speaking people for their own educational and cultural practices.

What give and take had occurred on the committee was apparently between those who advocated the inclusion of Chinese and Tamil features within the framework of inter-communal education—and those who were to varying degrees opposed to such inclusions. The Chinese and Indians won out on the point that Kuo Yu and Tamil should be offered as
subjects in the new national schools, but the desire of Chinese educationalists to have Chinese made a third medium of instruction got nowhere.

The more extremist Malay view also did not prevail. Jawi lost out to Rumi as the script to be recommended for studying Malay, and efforts to have religious instruction recommended for more than one half hour's duration each day also failed. These results were not surprising, for there were no Malay or Chinese representatives on the committee who could be classified as ultra-communal in their views.

The report, like its predecessor, the Central Advisory Committee on Education Second Report, included little that had been recommended by Penn and Wu. In essence it represented the culmination of the educational ideas first put forward by the Wartime Planning Unit, with modifications by the Communities Liaison Committee, which were later supported and expanded by the Barnes Report and the two Central Advisory Committee on Education reports. It was a report which quite clearly showed the marks of western influence, and at the same time even more clearly rejected the idea of developing a co-operating multi-cultural people in Malaya in favor of attempting to develop a uni-cultural citizenry. The aim was to have all children become Malayanized by educational means, and while this should not have produced as great a hardship for the Malays as for the Chinese and Indians, it did in fact ask the Malays to modify their culture considerably by asking them to accept English as
at least an equal language in primary education and as the only language in secondary and higher education.

The aim of the report, to recommend an educational system that would foster noncommunalism in Malaya, can hardly be faulted. Where it erred was that it asked for a commitment to a revolution when the country was only just possibly ready for evolution.

PROPOSED EDUCATION BILL.

The proposed Education Bill that was appended to the Special Committee's report included four parts which contained features not found in the report's recommendations (apparently because they were based on previous law or government directives.) These were concerned with: compulsory attendance (Part VI); services other than education which were to be provided by the Education Department (Part VIII); scholarships and research (Part X); and the registration of schools and staff (Part IV).

The recommended requirements for compulsory education contained a loophole similar to the one found in the prewar laws on compulsory attendance for Malay children: If the child could not walk to a school, he did not have to attend.34 (The old laws had exempted the child if he lived more than two miles from school.)35

35 See above, p. 22.
If passed, Part VIII would have had the Education Department provide medical inspection, meals, board and lodging, clothing, and transportation for students whenever necessary and practicable. The amount to be paid by the student would be determined by the circumstances.  

Scholarships (Part X) were to be offered in order to enable deserving students to gain an education. Part X also included a brief statement which would, when approved, allow the government to carry out research on education.

Part IV, containing the suggested legal requirements for registration of schools and staff, was quite detailed. For instance, reasons a school could be refused registration included: (1) that the school was unsanitary; (2) that the school was being used for spreading political propaganda; (3) that the headmaster was unfit for his job; (4) that any teacher in the school had been refused registration; (5) that there were already enough schools in the area; and (6) that the opening of such school would be detrimental to the interests of the Federation or of the public.

Reasons for refusal to register a member of the staff of a school included: (1) that the person had been convicted of an offense punishable with imprisonment; (2) that the person

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38 Ibid., p. B 822.
had been a member of the staff or a school that had lost its registration; (3) that the person had acted contrary to the regulations found in this bill; (4) that the registration of the person would be harmful to the interests of the Federation or the public; (5) that the person was not qualified to be a teacher; and (6) that the person had made a false statement in his application to be registered. 39

The rest of the bill's contents were legal statements of the recommendations found in the Special Committee's report. 40

PUBLIC REACTION.

Editorials from the newspapers of October 10 and afterwards carried lengthy comments on this latest attempt to formulate an educational policy for the Federation. These, as expected, ranged from those comments that extolled the recommendations of the report to those that found much in it that was undesirable.

Of the English language newspapers, the Malay Mail, the Straits Times, the Free Press, and the Penang Gazette, all issued statements on October 10 41 that supported the report. The Straits Echo and Times of Malaya gave the report its support

39 Ibid., pp. B 825-826.
40 Parts I, II, III, V, VII, IX.
41 The newspaper accounts referred to in this chapter all appeared in 1952 newspapers unless otherwise indicated.
on October 10 (and repeated this support on October 20), but on November 14 it came out with another editorial that questioned the provisions for languages other than English and Malay.

The Singapore Standard, a Chinese-owned English language newspaper, voiced certain reservations on October 10, saying that recommendations of the report were based too much on the Barnes Report. On October 15 they complained that the time allotted for the teaching of Chinese and Tamil was inadequate.

Chinese opinion on the report was well illustrated by an announcement emanating from a Conference of Chinese School Management Committees of November 9. The announcement declared that the proposed national schools (a feature of the new Education Bill) would lead to the disappearance of Chinese vernacular schools. At the same time (referring to earlier actions by the government) it expressed concern that the revised government salary scheme for Chinese teachers would lead to diminution of Chinese culture in Malaya, because if the government gave money to Chinese schools it would almost certainly try to seek administrative control of these schools. 42

Dato Tan Cheng Lock, in addressing the meeting, made the following points; He said that the Chinese must never lose their grip on their mother tongue or lose sight of the noblest

42 Malay Mail, November 10.
ideals of the Chinese race. But it was equally incumbent upon them to be politically united with the rest of the inhabitants of Malaya. They must be animated by a united Malayan consciousness and Malayan loyalty.43

Mr. H.R. Hòwse, Superintendent of Chinese Schools, Federation of Malaya, was reported as responding to the concerns of the Chinese by stating that, in contrast to what was now offered by the Chinese community, national schools would provide better education for the younger generation. Meanwhile, government grants to Chinese schools would continue to be provided to improve working conditions for teachers and to equip Chinese schools.44

Then on the day of the opening of the Legislative Council meeting in which the Special Committee Report, 1952, would be debated, representatives of Chinese educationalists issued a direct plea to Templer to "Help preserve Chinese culture." They admitted that their plea was founded on fear, caused by the Special Committee's report on education. They felt that passage of the proposed Education Bill would be detrimental to the development of the languages and cultures of the people in the Dependency, and would thus be contrary to the British government's past policy of supporting this development.45

43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 Malay Mail, November 19.
The representatives of the Chinese educators asked that the languages of the four races of Malaya be used as mediums of instruction in the proposed national schools, and that English be made a compulsory language with a view to its becoming the common language of the country. They claimed that as it stood, the proposed Education Bill did not provide for any definite amount of time for the teaching of Kuo Yu or of Tamil, and that the bill also called for the gradual withdrawal of support for Chinese schools. They pointed out that the original idea behind national schools, of having them racially mixed in attendance, had already been lost, for the report called for two types of national schools, either Malay or English. They said: "From an educational point of view, it is imperative that school-aged pupils should never lose grip of their mother tongue lest they be deprived of the vehicle to think."46

And the Malays were not entirely happy with the Special Committee Report, either. On November 18 the Melayu Raya, a Singapore newspaper, said the Malays opposed the introduction of the two types of national schools. Rather, they wanted only one type, which used Malay as the medium of instruction. The Utusan Melayu of the following day contained an item which made the same point.47

46 Ibid.
47 November 19.
At this same time, the UMNO branches of Penang and Pahang were reported as opposing national schools. They claimed that these schools would create racialism and disharmony. 48

In the Legislative Council meeting of November 19, General Templer gave the annual speech of the High Commissioner outlining the situation in Malaya and the government's proposals for handling such problems as existed.

He reminded his audience that he had previously stressed the need for education such that everyone would have the ability to communicate with other members of the community through the medium of a common language. 49 Then, referring to the Special Committee Report, 1952, which was to be considered later in the session, he said: "No one can dispute the difficulty of the subject; no one can minimize the conflicting interests and points of view. All must recognise the need for securing the greatest possible measure of agreement consistent with the ultimate good of the country as a whole." 50 He went on to stress the need for greater literacy in the country, but he added that literacy itself was not enough. He said that the people of Malaya must know something of the workings of government, and to this end rudimentary

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48 Malay Mail, November 19.
50 Ibid.
civics courses were being offered in almost every state and settlement. These courses were designed, he said, to give rural people a fuller understanding of how government worked and what it was trying to do for their benefit. 51

In a written supplement which he did not read to the Legislative Council, but which was handed out after his address, he added that if the people of Malaya wanted universal education—and it appeared that they did—they must do all in their power to get rid of the existing state of emergency. 52 He emphasized the usefulness of adult education associations in the country, 53 the need for education of high quality in Chinese New Villages, 54 the need for upgrading Malay education; and he reviewed the continued high demand for English education in the country. 55

In the same session of the Legislative Council in which the above speech by Templer was given, four separate major motions concerning education were introduced for consideration. The debate on these four educational matters took almost three days.

First the Council considered the Special Committee

51 Ibid., p. 472.
52 Ibid., p. 491.
53 Ibid., p. 497.
54 Ibid., p. 494.
55 Ibid., p. 492.
DEBATE ON THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT.

The motion made concerning the Special Committee Report was that it "be approved in principle." This motion was presented by the Attorney General, Hogan, since he had been the chairman of the committee.

As Hogan pointed out in his opening remarks, one of the most difficult problems the Legislative Council faced in making a law on education was that, for all intents and purposes, there was no previous law to build on. A few statutes dealing with school attendance had been passed in the period before 1945. Those, along with the Registration of Schools Act of 1950, which covered only that aspect of education indicated by its title, were all upon which they had to base their present statute. Educational regulations in the past had been primarily a result of departmental administrative directives.

Hogan commented that this past way of dealing with educational matters had had advantages. For one thing, it seldom resulted in all the problems of education being considered by anyone at any one time. Now, by proposing to pass a

56 Ibid., p. 696.
comprehensive law on education they would be focusing people's attention on all the problems inherent in education. And since educational matters had always been and would continue to be controversial just because everyone had his own idea about how education should be carried out, they were bound "to sharpen controversy itself and draw out criticism which otherwise might have lain dormant" (a most prophetic statement, as it turned out). 58

He went on to say that a further problem facing the law-makers was that the existing laws as found in the Federation Agreement of 1948 set out clear boundaries between the federal government and the governments of the various states and settlements. Many who had criticized the proposed bill did so because it did not provide enough centralization of administration for education. But Hogan pointed out that the committee's job had been to make recommendations for a statute on educational policy, not on constitutional changes. For example, religious instruction was clearly reserved for the states if it concerned Muslim education. 59

Hogan finished his talk with the point that the bill was not designed to be a model for other countries. It was instead the best that the committee could discover for fulfilling the particular needs of Malaya. 60

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58 Ibid.
59 Ibid., p. 617.
60 Ibid., p. 620.
In the remarks of the members of the Legislative Council which followed, the Malays gave forth with one set of reservations, the Chinese with another, and the Europeans with yet another.

To the Malays, the main problem was just how long a period of time in each day was to be allotted to the study of Jawi. They accepted the report without hesitation, it seemed, but they worried lest one half hour a day of Jawi would prove to be insufficient. They also expressed their concern lest English not be made available in rural areas. It was not that they opposed the report, but rather that they wished to make sure that Malays would be provided with sufficient opportunities for advancement. And those who spoke equated "opportunity to advance" with the opportunity to study English.

Dato Abdul Razak, who in two years' time was to chairman a committee whose purpose was to prepare an education report designed to correct the alleged evils of the report the Council was now considering, and who himself had helped to prepare this Special Report said: "I do not think that anyone who has the love and loyalty for this country and who has judged its history and background and its future development in true perspective, can doubt the correctness of this policy or the urgent necessity of implementing it."61 However, he did call on the government to give a "catagorical assurance" that students from Malay-medium schools would be trained properly

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61 Ibid., p. 621.
so as to be able to enter and compete in secondary schools. He showed that he felt he was not alone in his concern for English education for Malays, for he spoke to Malays when he said that there was nothing in the report that would force a Malay-medium vernacular school to change to a Malay-medium national school. They could, instead, opt to become an English-medium national school.

Raja Musa bin Raja Mahadi asked that more time be provided for Jawi study in the national schools. He referred to those Legislative Council members who had had to pass exams on the subject, and asked them if they thought one half hour a day would have been sufficient. He said he felt that the attitude of the Special Committee was well illustrated by a section of the report which read as follows: "While we do not wish to dispute this assertion we do not see how a period of more than half an hour a day can be spared from the time table without neglecting other necessary subjects and gravely endangering the academic progress of the pupils concerned." Raja Musa added that the word "spared" was used instead of "devoted" and that the words "spiritual progress" had given way to "academic progress." Like Razak, he also wanted English education to be made available in the kampong.

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62 Ibid., p. 622.
63 Ibid.
64 His italics, not the report's. See p. B 786 of the report in Minutes and Council Papers, 1952-1953.
It was time the kampong people had their turn; the urban areas had had theirs for long enough.65

Among the other ideas included in the remarks made by Malay members, Dr. Ismail suggested that schools be set up patterned after English grammar schools, wherein the boys would live at the school full time. To him this grew naturally out of the suggestion in the report that hostel facilities be vastly expanded. It was Ismail's contention that hostels were cold, dreary places, whereas boarding schools built up a feeling of loyalty and self-respect.66

A second suggestion of his was that since teachers did not like to go into the less developed areas of the Federation, inducements should be provided to encourage them to do so. These inducements should take the form of better pay, better quarters, and the promise that the teacher would not have to serve in these areas for too long a period.67

The Europeans who took part in the debate on the report gave warning of what was to be the center of their concern when the debate on the actual bill took place. For example, Mr. Mathison stated, after extensive introductory remarks of a laudatory nature, that: "It must be pointed out that there are some discriminatory and offensive clauses in the bill."

66 Ibid., p. 641.
67 Ibid., p. 642.
He indicated that he was referring to those sections of the bill that talked of estate owners having to transport children to the proposed "combined schools." He asked what had happened to that fine statement of the Member for Education in September 1951 which said in part: "'I feel... that education is the sole responsibility of the state, a responsibility which it must not shirk and could not surrender to anyone.'"68

Mathison also voiced the opinion that providing education for all could not mean that all would obtain white collar jobs, and he felt that it would come as a "shock" to the "masses" if, after they learned to read and write, such a job was not waiting for them.69

The chief concern of the Chinese members was for the preservation of their vernacular schools. Assurances had been given on this subject. For example, Hogan had said: "I do want to make it absolutely clear that there is nothing in the Report or in the Bill, if we decide to adopt it, which will prevent private and vernacular schools continuing to operate."70 But even with the assurances issued by those people who were responsible for educational policy and its implementation, there still existed amongst the Chinese a large reservoir of doubt and fear on the subject. Apparently

68 Ibid., p. 629. Mathison was a representative of estate owners.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid., p. 619.
what convinced some of the Chinese members that there was trouble ahead for Chinese vernacular education lay in the provisions set forth in the report for financial support for the various types of schools of Malaya.

Mr. Wang Pak Choy asked if the intention was to make it more and more difficult for non-English and non-Malay schools to exist. He felt that a reading of the report and its proposed Education Bill indicated that the answer was yes. If so, he asked, how could this be made to coincide with another statement of the report that said it was impossible to predict when, if ever, Chinese vernacular schools would cease to exist. If that were the case, then why put financial pressures on these same vernacular schools to change to national schools, especially when it was hard to see the time when the government itself could provide enough schools for all the children of Malaya. 71

Colonel H.S. Lee asked for an assurance that the promises given by the committee report vis a vis Chinese education would always be honored. Governments have changed, he said. And what was to stop a future government from forgetting the promises of the present one? 72

Colonel Lee later was often to be accused of selling out Chinese interests in that, as a Chinese, he had signed this

71 Ibid., p. 631.
72 Ibid., p. 644.
Special Committee's Education Report. But the evidence seems clear that he had been in close touch throughout with M.C.A. officials and had obtained their backing before signing the report. 73 Lee himself claims that Tan Cheng Lock did not really expect as much for Chinese education as was actually offered in the report and would have been satisfied to receive less. 74

While there were these few faint rumblings of discontent among the Council members who spoke to the motion, in general they all expressed approval of the Special Committee's report. And when the Council was asked by Hogan to pass the motion by acclamation (indicating unanimity) it was done. 75

DEBATE ON THE EDUCATION BILL.

Then, almost without even taking time to catch its breath, the Legislative Council swung into a debate on the Education Bill of 1952 itself. This time the Member for Education was the lead-off speaker.

The remarks on the Education Bill, 1952, by Dato Thuraisingham were designed to head off expected opposition to portions of the bill from the Chinese and the estate and mine owners.

74 Interview with Lee, October 25, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
Thuraisingham, as had Hogan, attempted to convince the Chinese that the educational policy the government was preparing would not discriminate against Chinese culture in Malaya. He reminded them that if this Education Bill were passed, Kuo Yu would be taught from the first year of the primary school. The government already offered Kuo Yu in the secondary schools of Malaya and had just opened a teacher training school for Chinese in Penang (the Green Lane School). There were plans to build two more Chinese teacher training schools elsewhere in Malaya, and the university was seeking "desperately" for a professor in Chinese Studies. 76

He asked, "Is this discrimination, or is it ample proof of the goodwill of the Government and the respect the Government has for Chinese culture?" 77

Then Thuraisingham tried to counter the expected arguments of the estate and mine owners in opposition to the bill. Here he must have had ambivalent feelings, for while he, like most of the children concerned, was of Indian racial background, he was also an estate owner.

His main point was that the education obtained in estate and mine schools was "not what it should be." 78 But then his emotions seemed to gain the upper hand, for he said:

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76 Ibid., p. 662.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid., p. 663.
"I would plead with my Honourable friends the representatives of the planting, mining and industrial communities to accept this measure as cheerfully as it is possible (laughter) and recognise that you have to accept it—there is no alternative (laughter). You have to accept the new philosophy in life (laughter) that it is the duty of everyone, who can, to assist those in want."79 He was probably to wish that he had not expressed himself in just this way.

The debate that followed centered around two points: whether or not estate owners should provide transportation to school for children on their estates if needed; and the requirement imposed by the Federation Agreement of 1948 that implementation of educational policy concerning primary education be carried out by the states and settlements rather than by the federal government.

Mathison, referring to Thuraisingham's "you have to accept it" statement, said it smacked of dictatorship. He questioned that education would produce contented workers. He agreed with a speech of the previous day that the Member for Education was "a king of quibblers" for the manner in which he tried to wiggle out of his September 1951 statement that education was the sole responsibility of the state. Mathison finished by stating that the Member's words could not be trusted, for first they meant one thing and then another.80

79 Ibid., p. 664.
80 Ibid., p. 665.
Mr. Mead called Thuraisingham's remarks a "pitiable defence," referring to this statement's tryint to justify the new obligations placed on estate and mine employees.\textsuperscript{81} Mr. Waring declared that what the government was trying to do was in effect farming out its responsibilities to the various industries, and he objected to it.\textsuperscript{82}

Mr. Facer lamented the fact that the good feelings of that morning when the Report of the Special Committee on Education had been unanimously accepted had now been spoiled by the remarks of the Member for Education.\textsuperscript{83}

Dato Thuraisingham was not alone in his defense for this portion of the bill which required estate and mine owners to do more for education. Narayanam\textsuperscript{84} and Rajagopal\textsuperscript{85} labor representatives, sprang to its defense. They attempted to show that it was really only a slight extension of what had been law before.

Narayanam added that when more than one estate pooled their resources to build a school it would certainly cost less per estate than the old individual ones had.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., p. 666 (representative for tin mining industry).
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., p. 669 (representative for tin mining industry).
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., p. 670 (representative for rubber estate owners).
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., pp. 665-666.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., pp. 667-668.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p. 664.
Mr. Davis, the Secretary for Chinese Affairs, added that as the law had been constituted regarding education rates, the estates and mines did not have to pay anything, and this was why they were expected to do a little extra for the education of their work force. 87

It was one of the Chinese representatives, Mr. Yeap Choong Kong, who complained that the Federation Agreement blocked the federal government’s seeing to it that the bill, if and when it passed, was properly and evenly implemented throughout the Federation. He suggested that it was time to knock a few holes in the "very thick brick wall"--the Federation Agreement--in order that progress might more readily occur. 88

When the Council went into a Committee of the Whole in order to consider amendments to the bill, at least 50 per cent of the changes, that were not mere corrections of oversights such as spellings or grammar, were designed to insure that the bill did not impinge on the rights of the states and settlements. 89

87 Ibid., p. 670.
88 Ibid., p. 666.
89 Ibid., pp. 671–674, e.g., Clause 2 (1): "... Delete the words 'officer so designated by the Director;' and substitute the words 'head of the State or Settlement department of education'..." (p. 671); Clause 31, Line 4: "Insert the words 'or by a State or Settlement Government' immediately after the word 'Member'." (p. 673); Clause 92 (2) (b): Line 2: "Insert the words 'other than religious studies' immediately after the word 'studies'." (p. 674).
The Education Bill of 1952 passed late that afternoon, but there were still two bills affecting education that had to be considered by the Legislative Council.

REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF BUSINESSES BILL.

The first of these two bills to be considered by the Council was the Registration and Licensing of Businesses Bill, 1952. It was designed to provide funds for the next bill, entitled the Education Development Fund Bill, 1952. These two bills were Thuraisingham's "babies," and he had first proposed the ideas incorporated in them in the September 1951 Legislative Council session when the Second Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education had been considered and referred to the Special Legislative Council Committee. At that time Thuraisingham had suggested a one cent tax on exported rubber and a similar amount on tin ore, copra, and coconut oil; and also a licensing fee of $25.00 on all businesses in Malaya. It was only this last revenue source that was finally included in the bill now being debated, and the tax on businesses was a graduated one, going from $25 for the smallest to $1,000 for the large companies.

The opposition to the first of these two bills came to a large extent from Council members who represented business interests: the Chinese and the Europeans. Most who opposed

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90 See below, p.
the bill decried the idea of having a tax to support education that hit only one part of the population, whereas the whole population benefited from education. However, nobody came right out and said the obvious—that this was a bill that hit the Chinese much harder than it hit the other Malayan races.92

The British members based their arguments against the bill on the concept that it was bad financial practice for a government to set up a tax earmarked for a special fund, a tax which, after it was collected, would not be under the control of the Council.93

Chinese Council members presented a more varied attack on the bill. One of their points was that actually the businessmen themselves would not pay this tax. Instead, the tax would be passed on to the consumer—the little man, the kampong dweller.94

Others claimed that it would work a hardship on the small businessman, who could ill afford to pay such a tax. Consider, they said, how this would hit the Malays who were just beginning to form new businesses.95

Yet another point raised was that the businessmen who should pay would avoid doing so, and those who were honest enough or too inexperienced to know how to avoid paying

92 See for example, ibid., pp. 684, 687, 688.
93 See ibid., pp. 692, 694-695, 696, 702.
94 Ibid., pp. 684, 687, 688, 696, 697.
95 Ibid., pp. 684, 687, 688, 696, 697.
would be the very ones who would end up paying most of the money.96

Colonel Lee maintained in his speech that to place a special tax on a certain section of the community was not the kind of thing done in a democracy.97

Thuraisingham, when he presented this bill to the Council, had said that if it passed its second reading he wanted it referred to a special committee for further study before submitting it to the third and final reading.98 (When it passed its third reading it became law.) This was opposed by most of the Malay and Labour members of the Council. They claimed that every time a controversial question of any kind was brought before the Chamber it was ducked by referring it to a special committee. This, they said, was a short and simple bill and should be passed at this time.99

There was an important speech made in favor of the bill by Yong Shook Lim. He was at this time a member of the Taxation Advisory Committee and considered to be one of the leading experts on taxation.100 He gave his whole support to this tax bill. He began by pointing out that the bill which the members had just passed, the Education Bill of 1952,

96 Ibid., p. 685.
97 Ibid., p. 687.
98 Ibid., p. 677.
called for much in the way of free items for school children: free compulsory education, free transportation, free books, free food, free medical and dental treatments, and in some cases free clothing.\textsuperscript{101}

Now the members had committed themselves to all that—but where was the money to come from? A new source must be found. It did not matter whether it went directly to the Education Department, or first went to the Treasury and then to the Education Department. It had to be found, or all those fine sounding programs just could not be carried out.

He told the members that the Finance Advisory Committee had studied the alternatives and had come to the conclusion that this bill offered the simplest and surest way to collect some of the needed money.\textsuperscript{102} He concluded by saying: "To all those who have opposed this Bill, may I give them this message. 'Accept this Bill with the best of grace. It might have been worse.' (laughter)\textsuperscript{103}

This speech was really the government's answer to the criticisms of those who opposed the bill, for rather than having the introducer, Thuraisingham, answer questions and criticisms, it was Yong who took up the individual criticisms offered by the members in the debate and answered them.

\textsuperscript{101} Proceedings, 1952-1953, p. 703.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., pp. 703, 704.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p. 707.
The second reading was accepted by the Council. On the question of whether or not it should be referred to a special committee, the government allowed a free vote—i.e., the members of the government were not obliged to vote for the government's motion. However, the motion to send the bill to a special committee was passed, with the stipulation that the report must be ready by December 21, 1952. 104

THE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT FUND BILL.

The Education Development Fund Bill, 1952, when passed would establish an Education Development Fund Board to administer the fund. The source of the funds would be the revenue from the business licenses when the law was passed that required it. The chairman of the board would be the Financial Secretary, and there would be fourteen other members, eleven of whom would be representatives of the states and settlements. 105

By the time this fourth bill concerning education came up for debate, most of the Legislative Council members seemed to have had their fill of the subject. There was, as Colonel Lee stated it in his speech, opposition expressed "on principle"—not because those who expressed their opposition expected any change in the results of the vote because of

104 Ibid., p. 711.
105 Ibid., pp. 712-713.
their opposition. The bill passed both its second and third readings.

When the Registration and Licensing of Businesses Bill came before the Council a month later, it too was passed, with but token opposition on the part of those who did not want to see it passed. Colonel Lee tried to amend the bill so that as a business acquired additional partners the partners would pay progressively less tax. This amendment was defeated easily. But the vote on the amendment was interesting, for it showed that the UMNO members of the Alliance would vote with their Chinese Alliance partners on an item that on the face of it was to the advantage of the Malays, since they owned very few businesses and yet would be included in the educational projects sponsored by the Education Development Fund. (Tunku Abdul Rahman and six other Malays voted for the amendment. Dr. Ismail went so far as to give a short speech in its favor. Those Malays who so voted were members of the Alliance, and Razak and two other Malay Alliance members abstained from voting.)

Tunku Abdul Rahman also offered an amendment of his own

106 Ibid., p. 713.
107 Ibid., p. 716.
108 Ibid., p. 859.
109 Ibid., p. 853.
110 Ibid., p. 858.
to the bill to the effect that those taking part in weekly
fairs not be obliged to pay a business tax.\textsuperscript{111} He succeeded
in getting the President of the Council to agree to have his
amendment considered by the High Commissioner in Council,
upon which the Tunku agreed to withdraw it.\textsuperscript{112}

The passing of these four bills concerning education
marked the apogee of two confluent commitments to changing
educational policy in Malaya. The British and the western­
oriented Malayan leaders had both become convinced that the
introduction of an educational system designed to produce a
unified people was the answer to Malaya's educational needs.

To the British, it offered a means to strengthen the
country's resistance to the communist terrorists and a con­
comitant means to achieving more stability in Malaya through
increased racial understanding and harmony.

The western-oriented Malayan leaders, as typified by
Dato Onn, Dato Thuraisingham, and Dato Tan Cheng Lock were
men of vision, but their vision was a vision tempered by
their years of contact with the West and, what was to prove
more damaging to their dreams, almost equally untempered by
contact with the people of Malaya. Their vision was

\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 851.
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 853.
manifested not only in educational policy developments, but in political developments as well. In the first they wanted to go too fast; in the second too slowly. And in both cases, the failure of these leaders to sense the strength of communal feelings existent in Malaya was to lead to defeat for the policies they advocated.
CHAPTER IX

IMPLEMENTING THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, 1952

NOVEMBER 1952--MARCH 1954

FORMATION OF PARTY NEGARA.

Politically, 1953 saw the demise of the I.M.P. and the continued increase in the strength of the Alliance. The various municipal elections held throughout Malaya in 1952 had revealed that, in the cities at least, the Alliance was by far the stronger political party. As this had become more apparent, many of the leading Malay and Chinese members of the I.M.P. had drifted back into their old communal parties, the M.C.A. and UMNO, giving these parties added strength. And this in turn had strengthened the "Alliance" of these two parties.

Onn, seeing that the noncommunal I.M.P. was failing, turned to his original source of political strength--the Malays--and attempted to re-establish his political base there. As one of his methods for doing this, he chose to create an image of being more Malay-oriented than UMNO's leaders. ¹

In late March, Dato Onn gave a speech in which he made an all-out attack against the M.C.A. and the Chinese Chambers of Commerce. ² The key point in his speech was that these two

¹ Interview with Hussein, October 28, 1967, Kuala Lumpur.
² Malay Mail, March 26, 1953.
organizations were trying to turn Malaya into China's twentieth province.

The leaders of the Alliance lost no time in branding his talk an "irresponsible utterance" and one designed "to encourage friction between Malays and Chinese." Now ever since the advent of the member system, Onn had held the post of Member for Home Affairs and had in fact been the acknowledged leader of the members (acknowledged as such by the British, at least). The upshot of the speech was a motion of censure presented in the Legislative Council on May 6 by Tan Siew Sin, an erstwhile member of I.M.P. and long-time friend of Dato Onn.

The motion stated that: "... this Council deplores the speech printed in the press which was made by the Member for Home Affairs, Dato Onn bin Ja'afar at a meeting of the Independence of Malaya Party, Kuala Lumpur, on the 25th March, 1953, as one calculated to stir up interracial discord." Tan went on to condemn Dato Onn's communalistic attitudes and statements against the Chinese.

Tunku Abdul Rahman and Dato Ismail both made speeches

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3 Ibid., April 4, 1953.
4 Proceedings, 1953-1954, col. 328. (Beginning with the Proceedings of 1953, only column numbers are available. There are two columns to a page, numbered consecutively throughout each volume.)
5 Ibid.
in support of the motion, the Tunku's being the seconding speech. The motion of censure did not pass, but it served to focus the attention of the country on the Alliance's contention that while it was indeed made up of two communal parties, UMNO and M.C.A., nevertheless it was not trying to block the interests of either large communal group. In other words, it stood for communal co-operation and rejected both noncommunalism and intercommunal denigration. This position on communalism was also to be the basis of its educational policy when it later was in a position to produce such policy. In retrospect, it seems that Onn and his followers first lost out because they tried to introduce noncommunalism into the country's politics and education, and now were laying the groundwork for a second defeat because they were trying too hard to encourage intercommunal rivalry.

Meanwhile, UMNO leaders increased the number and volume of their demands for federal elections. In April, 1953, the UMNO annual convention approved a plan whereby forty-four of seventy-five council members would be elected in 1954. It also passed a resolution stating that if elections were not held in 1954 UMNO and M.C.A. members of the Legislative Council would resign. In August the stand taken by the UMNO Assembly in this matter was confirmed by the Alliance

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6 Ibid., cols. 367-377.
7 Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process, p. 161.
at a national convention in Kuala Lumpur. 8

In the meantime, the government had announced in May the formation of a committee to study the question of elections. 9

Perhaps one reason why the British were willing to have the question of federal elections considered at this time was that they were gaining rapidly in their efforts to control the Emergency. Clear evidence of their successes was furnished later in the year when the government announced (1) in September that certain areas of Malaya were no longer to be under Emergency regulations, 10 and (2) in December that the man who had so successfully led the forces fighting the Emergency, the High Commissioner, General Templer, was to be recalled in 1954 and his place taken by his deputy, Mac-Gillivray. 11 Templer had indeed done his job well.

The British also may have felt that elections would keep the most people happy in Malaya. It is even possible that they saw the Alliance as gaining ground at the expense of Onn and his followers and wanted to hold a federal election before things went too far in that direction. (If so, they waited too long, as events were to prove in 1955.)

In any event, these elections were to play an important role in the formation of educational policy, for it was not just

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8 Malay Mail, August 24, 1953.
10 Malay Mail, September 3, 1953.
11 Ibid., December 31, 1953.
who won in 1955, but the views held towards educational policy by many of those who played key roles in shaping the victory, that were to effect a change in the approach to solving the educational problems of Malaya.

EARLY GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS ON IMPLEMENTATION.

However, at this time, while the political leaders of Malaya were preoccupied with their struggles to strengthen their positions for the coming federal elections, the federal Department of Education got down to the business of seeing what needed to be done to carry out the sweeping mandate for change embodied in the Education Ordinance of 1952.

In the last month of 1952 the Director of Education, L.D. Whitfield,\(^\text{12}\) issued a statement to the public on the government's plans for implementation of the 1952 Education Ordinance. National schools would be established "step by step." They could not be created overnight. It would be the prerogative of the states and settlements to decide which of their schools would be converted.\(^\text{13}\)

Five days later he suggested in an interview with the *Malay Mail* that the first schools to be converted should be the present English schools. He said that by the end of 1953 it was hoped that several vernacular schools would also be

\(^{12}\) Lionel Digby Whitfield replaced Holgate March 24, 1951. (See *Malayan Establishment Staff List* of January 1, 1952, p. 60.)

\(^{13}\) *Malay Mail*, December 2, 1952.
turned into national schools. He stressed that "the last thing we want to do is to impose the national school system on unwilling people."  

On January 7, 1953, Whitfield sent a letter to all state and settlement Superintendents of Education asking for suggestions on implementing the proposed national schools plan. He said the conversion of schools to national schools should start right away. Probably English schools would be easiest to convert, but vernacular schools should be included as soon as possible. He reminded the superintendents that there were to be two types of national schools: Malay- and English-medium. Whichever medium it was, the main characteristic the department wanted stressed was that Malayan children of all races would learn together. On no account, either for convenience, or for organization, or for any other reason, should Malay pupils be placed in one stream and Chinese pupils in a parallel stream and Indian pupils in yet another.

The letter went on to say that the facilities for learning Kuo Yu and Tamil must be made available whenever fifteen children's parents so requested. But while it was incumbent on the parents to initiate the request for such facilities, Whitfield suggested that the Superintendents of Education in the various states and settlements instruct their headmasters to ask the parents if they wished such facilities.

14 Ibid., December 7, 1952.
As for determining which medium of instruction would be followed, Malay or English, Whitfield instructed that they try to follow the parents' wishes as far as possible, but if in doubt perhaps the State or Settlement Advisory Council on Education (those called for by the Education Ordinance, 1952) should be asked to advise. He suggested half an hour a day be assigned for teaching Kuo Yu and Tamil, and the same amount of time for religious instruction. In the Malay-medium schools English should be taught for one and a half hours a day.15

INCREASE IN SCHOOL FEES.

One of the last important actions of the federal Department of Education in 1952 was to announce that there would be a 100 per cent increase in secondary school fees (from $30 to $60 a year), effective January 1.16 For once, newspaper editorials from all sections of the Malayan press were unanimous in their condemnation of a government action taken in the field of education. The Straits Times asked a telling question when it wondered why this move had not been discussed in the just-completed Legislative Council meeting.17 The Malay newspapers said that this move would hit the Malay community

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15 Kelantan Education Files, No. 4 of 1953.
16 Malay Mail, December 17, 1952.
17 December 18, 1952.
especially hard.\textsuperscript{18}

The question did not long stay out of the Legislative Council. The next session began on January 7, 1953, and one of the first questions during question time came from Yeap Choong Kong and was addressed to the Member for Education. Yeap asked why school fees were being raised. Thuraisingham's answer was that the cost of education had risen.\textsuperscript{19} This time the government raised the school fees with relative ease, but in 1954 it was to be another story entirely.\textsuperscript{20}

PRIVATE MOTIONS ON IMPLEMENTATION.

In this same Legislative session a motion was offered to the Council by Yeap Choong Kong. It read: "It is incumbent upon the Government to provide as soon as possible as many schools and/or facilities for schooling as are required in every State and Settlement." It was no sooner seconded than the Financial Secretary, Mr. E. Himsworth, moved to amend the motion as follows: to delete the full stop at the end of "'settlement'" and add "'having regard to the available financial resources of the country and the rate at which the necessary teaching staff can be obtained.'"\textsuperscript{21} He listed facts and figures to prove that it would be impossible to provide

\textsuperscript{18} Warta Negara, December 20, 1952; Melayu Raya, December 27, 1952; Utusan Melayu, December 19, 1952.
\textsuperscript{19} Proceedings, 1952-1953, p. 798.
\textsuperscript{20} See below, p. 275.
\textsuperscript{21} Proceedings, 1952-1953, p. 817.
as many schools as would be required, let alone the teachers to staff them. For buildings alone, the cost would be some $531 million. He granted that not all of these schools would have to be built at once, but he claimed that at least $175 million a year would have to be found, or 30 per cent of the budget. And this did not include the cost of any other than primary education. He reminded the members of the Council that the present budget called for $78 million (13.5 per cent of the budget) for education. Government, he said, had pitched its education policy high, and did not intend to abandon it. But it did not want to build up false hopes, either. 22

One of the Chinese members later in the debate suggested that maybe the government could build schools a little more cheaply. He claimed that Chinese schools cost about one-fifth as much to erect as government schools of the same size erected by the Public Works Commission. A government response to this did not occur until the next day. 23

The motion as amended passed. But Mr. Yeap was not yet finished. The next day he introduced a new motion: "It is incumbent on the Government to give consideration to the immediate implementation of the new Education policy for free primary education for children between the ages of 6 and 12." 24

22 Ibid., p. 818.
23 Ibid., p. 819. See below p. 282.
24 Ibid., p. 826.
And again the Financial Secretary moved to amend it such that the words after "consideration" would be deleted and the following words be substituted: "to the implementation of the policy of free primary education in National Schools as set out in the Education Ordinance, 1952, as soon as possible, having regard to the available financial resources of the country and the rates at which the necessary teaching staff can be obtained." 25

This time the Member for Education, Dato Thuraisingham, joined the debate. After seconding the motion to amend, he said that if the original motion was passed it was sure to result in too many children applying for Malaya's schools. He added (apparently harking back to the point made in the debate the day before that the Chinese could build schools for one-fifth of the cost of Public Works Department built schools) that the government had no intentions of putting up just any sort of building and calling it a school. It wanted clear and healthy classrooms designed for reasonable permanency. 26

Actually, this second motion of Mr. Yeap's was but a small sign of the concern evidenced throughout the period for the implementation of the Education Ordinance of 1952. For instance, in the January session Toh Eng Hoe asked how many

25 Ibid.
26 Ibid., pp. 828-829.
national schools the government proposed to establish in 1953, to which the government replied that the answer to this question would depend on the availability of finances, staff, and buildings.

Further examples were furnished when in the March session of the Legislative Council the members were permitted for the first time to debate the opening address of the High Commissioner. During the debate, Dato Abdul Razak, one of the top men in UMNO at the time, wanted to know why no mention had been made in the speech of plans for implementing the 1952 Education Ordinance. He suggested that since a shortage of teachers was the main barrier to implementation, the government should set up emergency training centers near the principal English schools in the country so that the staffs of these schools could be used to assist in training the student teachers at the centers. Perhaps, he added, boys and girls with qualifications slightly below School Certificate level could be trained at these centers.

Raja Musa bin Raja Mahadi also suggested that lower standards for those accepted for training as teachers be considered. He added that they "might as well try to get any sort of building... which would meet our immediate and very urgent and necessary requirements." He said there was a

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27 Vice-President.
Malay saying that fit the situation: "Where there is no roton [rattan] you've got to make do with akar [any root or fibre]."\(^{30}\) Raja Musa was supported in his suggestion for cheaper schools by Yeap Choong Kong, who also said that the implementation of the Education Ordinance, 1952, was too slow.\(^ {31}\)

Dr. Ismail\(^ {32}\) said that of the two bills passed concerning education, the Education Bill and the Registration and Licensing of Businesses Bill, the second one had been put into effect very quickly, but nothing had happened to the first. He said he liked the promises in the Education Ordinance concerning Malay education. However, not promises, but action was what was needed.\(^ {33}\)

The Member for Education, Dato Thuraisingham, in answering these questions, was not quite so brusque as he had been in January in his rejection of the idea of lowering the standards for school building construction. Instead, he said that the question would be put to the new Central Advisory Council on Education which was being formed.\(^ {34}\)

\(^{30}\) This has the same connotation as saying: "Half a loaf is better than none."

\(^{31}\) *Proceedings*, 1952-1953, col. 201.

\(^{32}\) Presently (1967) Minister for Home Affairs in Malaysia.


\(^{34}\) *Ibid.*, col. 221. With the passing of the Education Ordinance, 1952, the Central Advisory Council on Education became a statutory body—it was therefore necessary to reconstitute it. And the name was slightly changed from Committee to Council, although its functions were the same.
On the instituting of national schools, he said it was planned that their features would be introduced in the primary schools at Standard I level and a new standard added each year. He concluded his speech by stating: "You can't set a hen in the morning expecting to have chicken for lunch."\(^{35}\)

In late April of 1953 the government-appointed members of the new Central Advisory Council on Education were announced.\(^{36}\) Thuraisingham pointed out in his address at their first meeting on April 28 that the Central Advisory Council on Education was the first offspring of the Education Ordinance, 1952.\(^{37}\)

GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION, MAY-NOVEMBER, 1953.

In November of 1953, almost a year after the Education Ordinance was passed, the federal Director of Education's attitude towards converting existing Malay schools to national

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\(^{35}\) Ibid., col. 220.

\(^{36}\) Government Press Statement, April 27, 1953. The new members were: The Director of Education, Whitfield; the Financial Secretary, J.E. Pepper; Raja Musa bin Raja Mahadi from Perak; Dato Hamzah bin Abdullah from Selangor; Dato Abdul Razak bin Dato Hussain, Pahang; Major Haji Mahmood Mahyiddeen and Tengku Abdul Kadir Kamaruddin, Kelantan; Tuan Syed Nasir bin Syed Ismail, Johore; Che Muhammad Yusof bin Ahmad, Negri Sembilan; Che Tom Binta Dato Abdul Razak; Mr. L. Natarajan, Public Trustee, Penang; Mr. Leung Cheung Ling, Selangor; Mr. Tan Siew Sin, Malacca; Mr. Lim Teong Aik, Penang; Mr. Chen Jen Hao, Johore; Mrs. B.H. Oon, Penang; Mr. Toh Eng Hoe, Perak; the Assistant Director of Education (Girls), Miss L. Lomas; Miss Carpenter, Principal St. Mary's Girls' School, Selangor; Rev. Brother Visitor, Christian Brothers Schools; Educational Secretary, Methodist Mission Schools, Mr. C.F. Gomes, Malacca; Mr. T.R. Abraham, Selangor; the Vice-Chancellor, University of Malaya; Che Maidin Mohamed bin Ibrahim, Trengganu.

schools was that, while he was aware of the necessity for doing so, he wanted to be sure the replacement was real and not illusory. He said there was no great problem in converting government and aided English schools, and the conversion would not affect their educational standards. However, "It would be all too easy to make the fatal mistake of introducing small changes gradually into larger numbers of Malay Schools and to hope that eventually the standards of education can be raised." He also said: "The extension of the National School System must be planned in such a way that it can be implemented without any lowering of standards and this means that the teachers for National Schools must not be inferior in quality to those now in Govt. and Govt. Aided English Schools." The immediate answer was to increase the number of hostel places for Malays, but the long-term goal would be to place most of the new National Schools in rural areas.

The Director concluded by admitting that the program drawn up for advancing the cause of national schools might appear disappointing, but the main holdup was in the supply of teachers.

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39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
One of the reasons why the introduction of national schools had gone so slowly was illustrated by the description of the staff of such a school in a letter from the Director of Education to the Superintendent of Education, Kelantan, in May, 1953. He prefaced his remarks by stating that there was apparently some confusion about the two types of national schools, Malay-medium and English-medium:

The only difference between the two types of National School is that they use a different medium of instruction. In all other respects they are the same, e.g. all teachers must be English normal trained or better.

At the end of six years the standard of English in Malay-Medium School must not be inferior to that in the English-Medium School.

A teacher in a Malay-Medium National School who teaches any subject other than the Malay Language must have at least passed School Certificate and have completed the three year English Normal Class or a two year full time course in an English-Medium Training College. He must also be able to teach through the Medium of Malay.42

With these standards for staffing the national schools it was little wonder that there were yet none of them in existence. It was not until late fall that the government announced the scheduled date for the opening of the first national school. The announcement stated it was not to be ready until April, 1954.43

42 Kelantan Education Files, No. 4 of 1953, May 20, 1953.
43 Malay Mail, October 8 and November 30, 1953.
FINANCIAL PROBLEMS (RUBBER AND TIN).

However, the main reason for the delays in implementing the provisions of the Education Ordinance, 1952, was to be found in the deteriorating financial situation in Malaya. Tin and rubber prices had begun to rise sharply in mid-1950, as the result of the United States' buying to meet the demands of the Korean War, but these prices began to fall in March of 1951—gradually for rubber, more precipitously for tin. Rubber prices continued to fall throughout 1951 and 1952, while tin prices leveled off in mid-1951, staying steady throughout 1952. 44

By December of 1953 rubber had dropped to a low of 58 cents a pound from its high of $2.25 a pound in February, 1951. Tin, which had held steady at around $480 per pikul (133 1/3 lbs.) in 1952, 45 averaged only $363 a pikul in 1953. 46

Since export duties on rubber and tin accounted for approximately 90 per cent of all export duties collected in Malaya, and since export duties accounted for, on the average, 30 per cent of the total federal government revenue, the price of tin and rubber was very important to the Malayan government's financial well-being. For example, in 1951 the income

44 Federation of Malaya Annual Report, 1956, p. 92.
45 Its high had been approximately $730 a pikul in February of 1951.
to the federal government from export duties on rubber and tin was 39.5 per cent of its total revenue. 47

Since it had become obvious to the government that implementation of the Education Ordinance, 1952, was running into financial difficulties, it was decided at a meeting of the Federal Executive Council, November 17, 1953, in the course of a discussion on educational financial policy, that it was necessary to set up a committee to consider "... the method of implementation of the policy obtained in the Education Ordinance 1952 in the context of the diminishing financial resources of the Federation to develop the priorities for the direction of educational development in the framework of the Ordinance for the future, and to check for additional sources of money." 48 This was accordingly done, but it was to be almost a year before the committee presented its recommendations. 49

PRESS REACTION TO IMPLEMENTATION.

Meanwhile, during 1953, the concern of Malays who were not in the government was focused not so much on the government's slowness of implementation of the Education Ordinance as on the validity of the policies embodied in the Ordinance.

48 Kelantan Education Files, No. 120 of 1955, Memorandum.
49 See p. 341 and passim for more detailed account of this committee and its work.
One should note that in 1953 nongovernment Malay opinion was almost exclusively a product of the Malay newspaper editors. It was not until 1954 that other nongovernment Malays began to express their opinions in the vernacular newspapers and in public meetings. And, not too surprisingly, the attitudes these other Malays took at that time towards educational matters were to echo those expressed in the Malay newspaper editorials of 1953.

Right after the passage of the Education Ordinance, 1952, two of the Malay vernacular newspapers declared in editorials that the wishes of the Malays were not being truly met by the new law. Majlis demanded guarantees that Malays would be able to go on to secondary education from Malay-medium national schools. 50

And the language issue was still prominent in the thinking of these Malays. The Utusan Melayu stated succinctly that the Education Bill endangered the development of the Malay language. It suggested that Malay school teachers would have to carry on without the support of the government to develop the Malay language in Malay vernacular schools. 51 (What the editors apparently meant by this was that as the educational policy now stood, English was the avenue to progress in business and in the professions. They wanted Malay to be upgraded

50 November 26, 1952.
51 December 4, 1952.
so that it would furnish the avenue to such advancement.)

An editorial in the February 24 Utusan took issue with the people in Malaya who felt that one way to improve the two Malay vernacular teacher training colleges was to raise the standard of English taught in them. The newspaper agreed that the two colleges needed improving, but maintained that Malay should be the only medium of instruction. In mid-March the same newspaper hit out at what it called the colonial type of educational setup in Malaya.

In June, Warta Negara reported what it said were proposals from certain quarters that Malay schools should be abolished because they were really of no benefit to the Malays. While the newspaper conceded that the education offered in the Malay schools needed improving, its main reaction to the suggestion was to propose that all non-Malay schools be abolished instead.

Sometimes editorial comments from the vernacular press were considered newsworthy enough by the English language press that the editorial comments would be translated and included as news. For example, an editorial from Warta Negara was included in the Malay Mail of August 28. The chief point of the Warta Negara editorial was that it was up to the Malays

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52 1953.
53 March 16, 1953.
54 June 1, 1953.
to protect their language. "We have no reason to condemn the demand made by the Chinese to learn their language but we must look at the demand as an example and a warning for us to equip and prepare ourselves to move forward to protect our language and our nation." 55

Utusan Melayu again in September reiterated its contention that the Education Ordinance of 1952 was a manifestation of colonial education policy. "We regard the Education Bill of 1952 as colonial education policy because it does not consider it logical or necessary to develop the languages of the people who have made Malaya their home as mediums for cultural, scientific progress in this modern world and because the bill was passed amid strong opposition from the people." 56

PARENTS ASSOCIATIONS.

That attention was being drawn away from the problems of the Emergency and that the Emergency was decreasing in its intensity and thus decreasing as a concern of the people, was noticeable when an upswing occurred on the part of the parents of English school children in their active concern for education. This made itself manifested when the government announced that certain students, those who had failed for the second time in any particular English school, were to be considered

55 Warta Negara editorial as quoted in the Malay Mail, August 28, 1953.
56 September 8, 1953.
as over-age and would be super-annuated—that is, asked to leave the school. There had been faint rumblings previous to December, 1953, on this subject, but it came to a head in Selangor at that time.

On December 17, a Parents Association was formed in Kuala Lumpur. The membership of this association would probably have been made up primarily of Indian and Chinese parents, since the largest proportion of the children in the English schools of Selangor came from these two communities. The leadership for this association seems to have sprung from those parents who became aware that their discontent was echoed by others. Being themselves of a vocal nature, they took up the cause. The purpose of the association was to provide a channel for grievances felt by parents about the educational system. It seems to have been quite a spontaneous organization and apparently had little impetus from other organizations.

The association elected leaders and sent these leaders off to the state government with the demands of the association. The first meeting between nine representatives of the association and state and federal officials lasted four hours. During this meeting, the problem that had triggered the formation of the association was of course discussed, i.e., the

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super-annuation of students. The government's answer to the association representatives was that there was less money for education, and unless fees were raised further (they had been raised 100 per cent in December, 1952) it would be better to give a chance to students who had not previously had an opportunity to attend school. It was not right, the government said, that students who had already had two chances and failed should take the places of those who were just reaching the age when they should be entering school.

Another demand put forth by the Parents Association was that all students aged seven-plus be allowed to start school the next term. Association leaders indicated that it was actually the government's duty to see that there were enough places for all six-plus students in English-medium schools who requested such places. 59

Newspaper editorials from almost all sections of the press rose in support of the parents. The association, at a second meeting between association representatives and state education officials on January 13, 1954, submitted a nineteen-point memorandum which, in addition to earlier requests, called for immediate introduction of compulsory primary education, the provision of afternoon classes in government schools, 60 and the turning over of more money from the federal government

59 Malay Mail, January 1, 1954.
60 In Malayan schools of that period schools only met in the morning, from about 7:30 to 12:30.
to the states for education.

The education officials' answer was "... that it [the government] just did not have the money." If, however, the parents wanted to start their own afternoon classes, why they were welcome to use the government schools' classrooms. Of course, high fees would have to be charged in order to pay the teachers of these afternoon classes. As for staff, perhaps the parents could lure some retired teachers back to do the job.61

Then on January 18 it was announced that the Adult Education Association62 was prepared to step in and organize classes for dismissed and super-annuated students. These classes would be held in the evenings. The Parents Association claimed that this was just an attempt by government to "eye-wash" the situation (an interesting suggestion, considering that the associations were not operated by the government). One parent said that adult education classes were only fit for illiterates wanting to learn English.

Mr. L.I. Lewis, Assistant Director of Education, issued a statement on January 22 which answered point by point the criticisms his department had been subjected to on the issues of super-annuation of students. He gave a set of facts and figures showing just how much education had expanded since

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61 Malay Mail, January 14, 1954.
62 See above, p. 228 and passim.
World War II. English schools had gone from the prewar enrolment figure of under 14,000 students to the present enrolment of 105,000. Vernacular school enrolments had increased from 380,000 to nearly 670,000. At the same time, government revenue had dropped since 1951. He said it must also be remembered that the government was having to spend more money on hospitals, water, lights, roads, "and a hundred and one other services." He went on to say, "The solution is in your hands. . . . If you want education you must pay for it, and the most expensive kind is that which is generally called free education."63

The Parents Association called Lewis' remarks an attempt to "throw dust in the eyes of parents." "The Department should have evolved a programme to meet the expanding need of education which became visible in 1947." The Association agreed to consider the formation of afternoon classes, but wanted the government's assurance that untrained teachers employed for these classes would be given normal training and eventually taken into the Education Department.64

An editorial on the same day in the Malay Mail agreed with the parents to the extent that it said: "... we are not convinced that even more could not have been done [for education] during the days of comparative prosperity."

63 Ibid., January 22, 1954.
64 Ibid., January 23, 1954.
Finally, on January 31, the Mentri Besar of Selangor announced that the state government's answer to the nineteen points submitted by the Parents Association⁶⁵ was that if the parents wanted more and better education, they would have to contribute more: either higher fees, or higher taxes.⁶⁶

On February 19 it was announced that the Parents Association had decided not to run any classes on its own. Most of its members apparently had felt that it was the government's job to provide education, and not that of the association. A bad precedent would be set, said association leaders, if they did this.⁶⁷ Five days later they called for a new government English secondary school to take care of the overflow. But by this time schools had been reopened for the new term long enough so that the matter of entrance for that year had lost its urgency for the parents, and their support for the association dropped.⁶⁸

Selangor was not the only state that experienced this upsurge of interest in education on the part of parents. Even such a remote state as Kelantan had its Parents Association. And, unlike its prototype in Selangor, its members

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⁶⁵ It is to be noted that when parents submitted their memorandum they did not submit it to the federal government, but rather to the state government which was directly concerned with implementing educational policy at this time.

⁶⁶ Malay Mail, January 31, 1954.

⁶⁷ Ibid., February 19, 1954.

⁶⁸ Ibid., February 24, 1954.
went ahead and set up classes for children who had been turned away from regular schools. 69

It had been a busy year. Educational policy had not been formally formulated as put to the test. The forces of change were on the move, marshaling their support against the Education Ordinance, 1952, probing for their adversaries' weaknesses, and finding that not only were there many weaknesses, but that their own strength was much greater than they had expected. It was the year in which for the first time the people and not just their leaders began to show signs that they were indeed vitally concerned with educational policy. They began to give notice that they were to be consulted as well as directed, if the country wanted harmony in education.

It was the year that the Attorney General, Hogan, was made to look a very prophet indeed, for as he had feared, the codification of educational policy had taken the before incoherent opposition that had existed and given it a target upon which to focus. This in turn allowed others to recognize and unite with those who opposed the 1952 Ordinance, if even for different reasons. It was a year in which the government carried on a desperate holding operation in education in the face of declining revenues and increasing boldness by those who opposed government policy. But it was above all the year of the Chinese voice in the field of educational policy—so much so that the

next Chapter will deal exclusively with it. Not that this voice directly molded educational policy, but that the country came to know that there was a large and vocal segment of the Chinese community that did not like the existing educational policy and would not rest until something was done about it.
EARLY CHINESE REACTION TO EDUCATION ORDINANCE OF 1952.

The Malayan government had given much evidence of concern for Chinese education by 1952—a concern prompted by its felt need to counter communist infiltration and agitation in Chinese schools in Malaya. As a Malay had said, "Emergency" was the magic word, and the Malayan government seemed to feel that it could not do enough fast enough for Chinese education.

The corollary of the government's increased financial commitments to Chinese education had been increased government control of the curriculum and staff of the Chinese schools.

By September of 1952, the Chinese were beginning to react unfavorably to a government largess with so many strings attached, and when the 1952 Education Ordinance came into being, the Chinese were more convinced than ever that government aid to Chinese schools was designed to do nothing more than to provide an opening wedge for destroying Chinese-medium education in Malaya. The reaction of the Chinese was such that an account of educational events in 1953 could, with some justification, be labeled "Chinese educators' agitation year."2

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1 See above, pp 104, 166-169, 184.

2 No attempt will be made to include a record of all the editorials and reports of speeches and meetings of Chinese in
After the Legislative Council had passed the Education Ordinance in November, 1952, both the Malay Mail and the Straits Times included remarks on the surprising lack of opposition to the bill by the Chinese in the Legislative Council. One of them suggested that perhaps the Legislative Council Chinese members were in advance of Chinese public opinion. Considering the clamor from the Chinese public, as reflected by their vernacular newspapers and their letters to the English press, it was certainly true that the Chinese Legislative Council members did not appear to represent the opinions of the majority of Malayan Chinese.

CHINESE UNIVERSITY PROPOSED.

There had been brief mention of the possibilities of starting a Chinese university in Malaya even before 1953, but it was in the first month of 1953 that the issue burst into prominence with the announcement that leading Chinese businessmen were setting up a fund to establish a Chinese language university, and that Tan Cheng Lock would back such a move. Apparently Tan Lark Sye, a Chinese millionaire, was the man who started the move to donate to such a fund when he announced which the provisions for Chinese education found in the Education Ordinance were attacked. Rather, the representative highlights of these attacks will be presented.

3 Malay Mail, November 23, 1952; Straits Times, November 24, 1952.

that he was giving $5 million to establish a Chinese university. ⁵

It has been suggested that the Chinese community brought forth the idea of a Chinese university for Malaya and promoted it as a sign of their discontent over the passing of the Education Ordinance of 1952, and certainly the timing would tend to support this suggestion. ⁶

The newspapers of Malaya reacted as expected: The Chinese vernacular press fully supported the move; the Malay press just as uniformly condemned it. At first most of the English press opposed it too. Then on January 30 the Straits Echo and Times of Malaya modified its opposition and listed some of the reasons the Chinese felt they had to set up a university. One such reason was the government policy of discrimination in granting scholarships to the University of Malaya. ⁷ Three days later the Penang Gazette also tempered its opposition to some extent. ⁸ By March of 1953 the Straits Echo and Times of Malaya had swung completely around to supporting the idea of a Chinese university. ⁹

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⁵ Malay Mail, January 23, 1953.
⁶ Interview, Sambanthan, November 14, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
⁷ January 30, 1953.
⁸ February 2, 1953.
⁹ March 25, 1953. It is not exactly clear why these two newspapers shifted their positions on this issue, but it was true that they had to sell these papers in areas which were predominantly Chinese.
The China Press reported in its issue of January 21 that the Member for Education, Thuraisingham, had been consulted on the matter on January 20 and had given his approval. But in a Government Press Statement released a week later, Thuraisingham denied having done any such thing. He admitted that he was contacted January 20, but he said that at that time he refused to make any statement, either officially or privately, on the matter.¹⁰

On March 18 in the Legislative Council, Raja Musa bin Raja Mahadi asked the government if it was aware of the move to establish a Chinese university, and whether or not the government intended to support such a move.¹¹ The reply was, that while the government had not been officially informed of such a move, it had taken note of press reports that there was a plan afoot to establish a Chinese university in Singapore. The government went on to state that it would look with disapproval on any proposal which was not in accord with official government educational policy. It recognized that there was a need for those trained in Chinese vernacular schools to have a place to continue their education at university level, and that these students were not linguistically prepared to enter the University of Malaya. However, it was the government's opinion that opportunity should be provided at the

¹⁰ January 27, 1953.
University of Malaya to bring these students up to the level of English necessary to complete their university education satisfactorily. It was the government's hope that the exact nature of the intentions of those interested in Chinese higher education would soon be made known to the government.  

An interesting reaction to the proposals to form a Chinese university was voiced by a well-known Malay spokesman in Penang, Mohamed Sopiee, Chairman of the Penang Malayan Labour Party. He claimed that the real danger was not the emergence of a Chinese university, but the neglect by young English-trained Malay men and women of their own language and culture. He added: "'Let us not cheat ourselves into believing that, even in time to come, Malay cannot be a medium through which a man can equip himself intellectually.'" And further on: "'Let us not prevent others from preserving their own cultures as long as they do not threaten our own cultural heritage.'"  

Actually, the announcement by the Chinese of their efforts to found a Chinese university was but one of many in a continued barrage of Chinese moves to impress upon the people of Malaya their complete commitment to changing the Education Ordinance of 1952. Since the issuance of the Barnes Report, the Chinese community had not been hesitant about letting

12 Ibid., p. 72.  
13 Malay Mail, March 15, 1953.
Malaya knew exactly how they felt about educational policy in general, and the policy that was proposed by the Barnes Report in particular. The interesting thing was the position taken by the Malayan Chinese Association leadership toward the new educational policy in the face of this obviously strong opposition from the Chinese educationalists.

It appeared that the M.C.A. leaders thought for a time that they could convince the Chinese people in Malaya to support the 1952 Ordinance and its policy of providing national schools to help break down communalism. For example, in a conference of Chinese School Committees and Teachers in Kuala Lumpur in April of 1953, Dato Tan Cheng Lock agreed that the Chinese language provided the true vehicle for gaining the timeless precepts of Confucianism. It was true, he said, that Chinese philosophy had a valuable contribution to make towards the construction of a common Malayan civilization, culture, and way of life. But, then he went on to state that English should be the basic language of Malaya, and that a knowledge of colloquial Malay was essential as an alternative means of interracial communication.

Dato Tan stated to the conference of Chinese educationalists, in answer to a question, that it was the policy of the

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14 One reason they felt this was necessary was that they thought the 1952 Ordinance was the best the Chinese could get from the government. (See above, p. 260.)

15 Malay Mail, April 20, 1953.
M.C.A. to see to it that the Chinese born and bred in Malaya should identify themselves politically with Malaya. He pointed out that one could not be a citizen of two countries anywhere else in the world. However, the M.C.A. would give full support to the use of the Chinese language as a teaching medium in Malaya so that: "There is nothing to prevent a Chinese remaining a Chinese socially, culturally, economically, and racially." 16 Apparently Tan was still giving his support to the efforts of the government to overcome intercommunal tensions. It seems likely that Tan and many other top M.C.A. leaders truly thought that the 1952 Education Ordinance offered the best the Chinese could hope for. One wonders, however, just how much he represented the thinking of the younger leaders of M.C.A., for it seems likely that even at this time many of these men were coming to view the communal demands of the Chinese regarding education as too strong to ignore if they wanted to retain their political leadership of the Chinese.

Tan's remarks did not suggest that the M.C.A. was opposed to the 1952 Ordinance. But two days later the Chinese newspaper, Nanyang Siang Pau, after rendering the usual opposition to the Education Ordinance as found in all other Chinese vernacular newspapers of the time, continued by exhorting all Chinese to stand by the M.C.A. in its opposition to the

16 Ibid.
Education Ordinance.\textsuperscript{17}

M.C.A. LOTTERY DISCONTINUED.

And then the government made a move which may have been the decisive factor in swinging many of the M.C.A. leaders away from support of the 1952 Ordinance.\textsuperscript{18} In mid-June of 1953 it was announced that the government was taking from the M.C.A. its privilege of conducting a lottery.\textsuperscript{19} The reason behind this was that since the M.C.A. was now deeply involved in political activities, as evidenced by its alliance with the UMNO in the 1952 municipal elections, the government felt it was time to discontinue a privilege designed to enable a welfare organization to carry on its mission of assisting Chinese squatters to move to New Villages.\textsuperscript{20}

This government action really jolted the M.C.A., and especially Tan Siew Sin, the son of its venerable president. Tan claimed that the action was taken by the High Commissioner, General Templer, to "punish" the winning Alliance, since it was this political organization that had been most adamant in its demands for independence.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{17} April 22, 1953.
\textsuperscript{18} Interviews with former Legislative Council member, November 11, 1966, and Tan Siew Sin, November 14, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Malay Mail}, June 19, 1953.
\textsuperscript{20} Interview with former Legislative Council member, November 11, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
\textsuperscript{21} Interview with Tan Siew Sin, November 14, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
Others pointed out that it was this move on the part of the Malayan government that caused Tan Siew Sin to withdraw from the I.M.P., for it had been I.M.P. leaders who pushed to have the lottery privilege rescinded.\(^{22}\)

Whatever the reason for the discontinuation of the M.C.A. lottery privileges, after June of 1953 the M.C.A. rarely gave any kind of support to the 1952 Ordinance. From this time on, its leaders did nothing openly to oppose those Chinese educationalists who were working to have "Thuraisingham's law" reviewed and revised, if not rescinded.

In July it was reported that the M.C.A. Education Central Committee and a similar body from the Malayan Indian Congress had been conducting discussions on the desirability of jointly approaching the government with their complaint that one half hour was not enough time for teaching either Chinese or Tamil in the national school curriculum, even if the additional one half hour outside school time recommended by the 1952 Special Committee Legislative Council Report was adopted.\(^{23}\)

In August the *Malay Mail* reported, using the *Malayan Mirror*, an M.C.A. newsletter, as its source, that the M.C.A. criticized the High Commissioner, Templer, for not receiving a delegation of Chinese educationalists. Templer was reported as having given as the reason for his refusal that there would not be any use in going over already well-trodden

\(^{22}\) Interview with former Legislative Council member, November 11, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.

\(^{23}\) *Malay Mail*, July 25, 1953.
A week later the M.C.A., supported by Chinese educationalists from throughout Malaya, was reported as ready to go to the Secretary of State for Colonies in England, and if necessary to the United Nations, in order to voice their grievances concerning Chinese education in Malaya.  

In the same news article, Temper was reported as stating that the Education Ordinance had been given plenty of publicity, and all who wished to could have at that time given their views on the subject. It was Templer's opinion that it was Chinese teachers' fears for their jobs that had led to all these protest movements. And Templer may well have been quite accurate in his analysis, for as events progressed it became increasingly apparent that it was Chinese educationalists who furnished the major portion of Chinese opposition to the Education Ordinance, and fear for their jobs could certainly have been one of the major factors affecting their views.

"THE YELLOW PAPER".

Chinese continued to agitate against the Education Ordinance, 1952, for the rest of 1953 and on into 1954. The summation of all that those Chinese were trying to say

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24 Ibid., August 18, 1953.

25 Malay Mail, August 25, 1953. If they did go, it went virtually unnoticed in Malaya, for the author was able to find no account of such a move.
concerning the Education Ordinance, 1952, in particular, and Chinese education in Malaya in general, was included in a "Yellow Paper," which was issued under the auspices of the M.C.A. in March of 1954. The paper was actually entitled: Memorandum on Chinese Education in the Federation of Malaya, but it is often referred to as the Chinese Yellow Paper on Education. The English version covered 21 pages (there was also a Chinese language version included in the same booklet). The memorandum clearly stated the attitudes of those Chinese opposed to the educational policy of the Federation of Malaya and the actions they wished taken vis a vis the Education Ordinance of 1952.

The memorandum began its second paragraph with this sentence: "There is no point in concealing the fact that this Memorandum has been prepared because of the fears created in the Chinese community of the Federation by the provisions of the Education Ordinance 1952." Then followed evidence to support the fear that the establishment of the proposed national schools would be but "the forerunner of the closure of Chinese vernacular schools and the end of Chinese education in the Federation."  

26 Issued by the Malayan Chinese Association and its Chinese Education Central Committee (Kuala Lumpur, 1954). Hereafter cited as Memorandum on Chinese Education.  
28 Ibid.
The memorandum maintained that recommendations of the Barnes Report to aid separate vernacular schools were embodied in Sections 18, 19, and 20 of the Education Ordinance, 1952.  

Section 18 stated in part that the government "may continue to maintain and extend or establish and maintain Government vernacular and English schools until, in the case of primary schools, they can be replaced by National Schools;" Section 19 stated that certificates permitting operation would be granted to such schools as the Chinese vernacular schools unless the government was satisfied that "sufficient national schools are already available in the area served" by such a school; Section 20 stated that after a new national school was introduced in an area certificates granting permission to operate such schools as Chinese vernacular schools could be withdrawn. To the Chinese, these sections of the 1952 Ordinance were a threat to the continuance of Chinese education, for in effect they allowed the government to close a Chinese vernacular school whenever it wished.

The memorandum pointed out that in order to dispel the doubts of the Chinese community about the future of their vernacular schools, a petition seeking clarification of government policy toward Chinese education had been sent to the High Commissioner, General Templer. In the petition,

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29 Ibid.
30 Education Ordinance, 1952 (Ordinance No. 63 of 1952).
31 Memorandum on Chinese Education, p. 2.
the flaws of the Barnes Report—that it had exceeded its terms of reference, and that it had made recommendations that affected Chinese and Indian schools "in the absence of Chinese and Indian consultation and advice"—had been pointed out. It had also mentioned that the government had added insult to injury by ignoring the recommendations of the Fenn-Wu Report.

Then, beginning on page 10, the memorandum analyzed and refuted almost line by line a written government statement given in response to representations put to the government by Dato Tan Cheng Lock, President of the M.C.A. and Chairman of the M.C.A. Chinese Education Central Committee.

The first section of the statement of the government said that the Report of the Special Committee on Education, and the Education Ordinance which followed it, did not deny that the Chinese had a valuable contribution to make toward Malayan education and culture. Rather, the report and the ordinance both provided for the teaching of Kuo Yu.

In its reply, the memorandum agreed that this government statement was true, but added that the complaint of the Chinese was that there was no assurance or guarantee in the ordinance that the "contribution" the Chinese could make towards education and culture could or would be made use of.

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32 Ibid., p. 5.
33 Ibid., p. 6.
34 Ibid., p. 10.
35 Ibid.
The memorandum stated that the wording of Section 21 (5) of the Education Ordinance\textsuperscript{36} allowed the Director of Education under certain circumstances to restrict the teaching of Kuo Yu or Tamil. And this, it claimed, conflicted directly with Section 8 of the Education Ordinance\textsuperscript{37} which stated that whenever possible pupils should be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.\textsuperscript{38}

The memorandum went on to state that what the Chinese wanted the High Commissioner to do was to make sure that the Chinese language and culture should be preserved in Malaya. The Chinese felt that: "The conflict between statement and fact, and the inconsistency of statements themselves leave the Chinese frustrated." They especially wondered if the statement that Chinese vernacular schools were "valuable nurseries of existing culture" was honestly believed by the Government, in the light of the fact that in another portion of the government's statement it contended that the Chinese schools did little more than provide instruction in Kuo Yu.

\textsuperscript{36} Which reads as follows: "Instruction in Kuo Yu or Tamil need not be made available at a national school unless there are in such school fifteen or more pupils of the same linguistic standard in such language and whose parents request instruction in it."

\textsuperscript{37} Which reads as follows: "... the Member and the Department shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the national educational policy, the provision of efficient instruction and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents."

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Memorandum on Chinese Education}, pp. 10-11.
The main question of the Chinese community, said the memorandum, was: Would the government subsidy to Chinese schools be withdrawn when national schools were established--for the Chinese contended that should such aid be withdrawn, Chinese schools would then definitely not be in a position to compete with free government schools. Government would, therefore, be "forcing the Chinese to close down." 39

The government's second statement claimed that education was not the only, or even the primary, institution responsible for the preservation of culture. Rather, the home was the mainspring of this preservation.

Response to this by the memorandum was that, while the government statement concerning the home was true, it rather avoided the main issue--which was that education in the school was also important for preserving culture. If no Chinese education were offered, the development of Chinese cultural values would be weakened. 40

The government was then quoted as stating that the demands of the Chinese and Tamil communities "strongly expressed to us" for an additional half hour of teaching of their languages at the primary school level should be met by making these languages available on an optional basis after school. How much time was devoted to languages during school

39 Ibid., pp. 11-12.
40 Ibid., p. 12.
time should be left to the Director of Education for a final decision.\textsuperscript{41}

The reply of the memorandum questioned that "strong demands" really had much effect on the government. Had not the Chinese made strong representations that Chinese be used as a medium of instruction in the national schools (as had the Indians for Tamil)? And were not these demands ignored when the 1952 Education Ordinance was passed? The memorandum pointed out that both Dr. R.O. Winstedt and Mr. H.A.R. Cheeseman supported the idea that the language of the home should be the first language used in education. It added that, "There are even open-minded and intelligent Malays who oppose the Ordinance. (See Utusan Zaman Editorial, 16th August, 1953)." The memorandum claimed that the people who created the Ordinance had ignored the demands of educationalists as well as the representations by the majority of the population, i.e., the Chinese and Tamils.\textsuperscript{42}

The next government statement considered was that there should not be an equation between the disappearance of Chinese schools and the disappearance of Chinese language and culture. The Chinese language and culture were too strong for that.\textsuperscript{43}

In reply, the memorandum pointed out that schooling was one of the main sources for developing and maintaining culture,
and that national schools as designed could act as nurseries of Chinese and Indian cultures. It maintained that Chinese schools and Chinese culture were complementary—that one was the key to the other.44

Then the federal government was quoted as stating that Kuo Yu, the national language of the Chinese, was the dialect of a particular area of China which was only made the national language for political reasons and was introduced into Malayan Chinese schools only as a "consequence of the expansion of the political conceptions of a united China extended to include Chinese overseas."45

The answer given by the memorandum was that Kuo Yu was generally used in China just as Malay had been generally used as the common language in Indonesia in the years before World War II. It was a communications device—it was not a political move. It pointed out that the Chinese schools in Malaya naturally followed the developments in education in China because they were under the cultural influence of China at the time. But there was no political significance in this.46

The federal government's next statement pointed out that no matter what the attitude of the government had been when Kuo Yu was originally brought into Malaya, it should be

44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
clear now that Kuo Yu could not be accepted in a united Malaya as a national language.\textsuperscript{47}

The reply was that the Chinese did not want it to be a national language. The Chinese wanted it to be an official language. They would leave to the future Malayan nation the job of determining what would be the national language.\textsuperscript{48}

The next government statement asserted that it was incorrect to describe Kuo Yu as the home language or mother tongue of the Chinese. The memorandum replied by saying that Kuo Yu was the basic tongue of the Chinese, because it was considered to be the source of the many Chinese dialects. The written language of all Chinese was the same.\textsuperscript{49}

The government next was quoted as stating that the idea of the child's first education being through the medium of his mother tongue had originated in the West, where the other languages to be learned later were much akin to the language of the home; and the thought process developed in the West through the study of the first language would be very much akin to the thought patterns found in the additional languages studied and learned.\textsuperscript{50}

In answer, the memorandum suggested that, rather than

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
trying to create a "unity of hearts and minds" by making all children learn one language, the government should introduce books and curriculum with a common content in schools of all language mediums in Malaya. The memorandum went on to make the point that if Kuo Yu and Tamil were objectionable on the grounds that they stemmed from different sources and had different thought processes, then that would seem to apply equally well to the English language as far as Malays were concerned. 51

The next statement of the government brought out the idea that there could be no comparison between the claims of Malays to have Malay-medium national schools and the Chinese to have Chinese-medium national schools. 52

The memorandum replied that the Chinese were not so concerned about whether or not they should have a national school as they were about the preservation of Chinese vernacular schools. It went on then to state, however, that if one wanted to talk about "legitimate claims" to having a particular medium of instruction in the schools, there were more Chinese than there were Malays in Malaya (if one counted Singapore). And thus, perhaps, the Chinese could be said to have as much a right to have their own medium schools in the country as the Malays. 53

51 Ibid., p. 16.
52 Ibid., p. 17.
53 Ibid.
In response to the government statement that what the Chinese really sought was to maintain their exclusive separatist position in Malayan society, the memorandum said: "Let us once and for all make it abundantly clear that Chinese community in this country has never sought, is not seeking and will never seek exclusive and separatist position in a Malayan society. They are merely asking for equality and justice." 54 The memorandum went on to say that the Chinese felt that they could best achieve their assimilation into the Malayan scene through bilingualism or even trilingualism, rather than through any compulsion on the part of the government to have the Chinese adopt English and Malay exclusively.

Representatives of the Chinese School Committees and Teachers in the Federation were quoted as deciding in a meeting on November 9, 1952, that they supported the idea of using mother tongues as the main teaching media for the proposed national schools, "and adopting English as a compulsory subject with 'the view to making it a common language for all.'" 55

The reply of the memorandum to the government's statement that Chinese schools developed in their students a spirit of partition from the rest of the Malayan community, was that if this were true, it would also apply to English, Indian, and even Malay schools. 56 It continued by stressing again that

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54 Ibid.
55 Ibid., p. 18.
56 Ibid.
there should be a Malayanization of content, rather than a change in language. 57

The final government statement considered in the memorandum included the remark that the large fall-off in enrolment in Chinese schools from the first year of primary schooling to the end of the sixth year, indicated that Chinese parents really did not desire a complete primary education in Kuo Yu for their children. 58

The memorandum's answer called attention to the statistics of other types of primary schools, which showed an almost equal decline in enrolment. It was also pointed out that there had been a record of government discrimination towards Chinese schools, and this tended to lessen the desire of parents to keep their children in Chinese schools. 59

The memorandum concluded its comments on Chinese education in the Federation of Malaya by offering recommendations for improvement. After reminding its readers that "... it will be detrimental to the creation of a Malayan culture... to eliminate Chinese schools," it recommended that instead of getting rid of Chinese vernacular schools, these schools should be supported and encouraged to adopt standardized, Malayanized textbooks. 60 It was recommended that the

57 Ibid., p. 19.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid., p. 20.
government use vernacular schools as weapons for Malayanization of the Chinese and the Tamils, rather than try to force the Chinese and Tamils to accept Malayanization through the medium of Malay and English. The Chinese and Tamils should be won over, not forced to become Malayans. 61

The report was signed by Dato Sir Tan Cheng Lock, President of the Malayan Chinese Association, and Chairman of the M.C.A. Chinese Education Central Committee, March 31, 1954.

There was surprisingly little initial reaction to the issuance of this memorandum. Perhaps the comment contained in a news report of the event indicates one reason, for the report (headlined "M.C.A. Makes its School Demands Again") said that the memorandum's contents were but another in a long series of attempts (two years) to modify the government's educational policy as first enunciated in the Barnes Report. 62

What was to be true was that the men of Party Negara often cited this Yellow Paper as an example of what would be in store for the country if the Alliance should win control of the government. *Warta Negara*, at this time a strong supporter of Party Negara, claimed editorially that the memorandum in effect denied that the country was Malay. If accepted it would mean that Malays would have no more right than new immigrants from China. It titled its editorial "Who Else?"

61 Ibid., p. 21.
suggesting that if this memorandum's ideas were accepted, who would next make demands to lessen Malay privileges?\textsuperscript{63}

Although the memorandum appeared under Tan Cheng Lock's signature, past and future development cause suspicion as to whether or not he and/or the leaders of M.C.A. were really in favor of the recommendations it contained. It seems more likely that the memorandum was the work of the Chinese educationalist-dominated M.C.A. Education Central Committee, whose views often did not receive the support of M.C.A. leaders.

If this is the case, the contents of the memorandum reveal the thinking and fears of Chinese educationalists, and it is interesting to note that like their counterparts, the Malay vernacular teachers, who in 1955 and 1956 emerge with strong convictions about educational policy, the policy that came to be adopted by the Alliance leaders when they came to power went a long way toward meeting the demands of this memorandum.

\textsuperscript{63} April 8, 1954.
CHAPTER XI

THE PUBLIC AND A PROPOSED INCREASE IN SCHOOL FEES

JANUARY 1954--OCTOBER 1954

MALAYAN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

In September of 1954 the Federal Legislative Council was presented once again with the opportunity to express itself in a full-scale debate on education policy. This chapter continues the account of the events in Malaya leading up to that debate. Chapter XII will consider the debate itself.

Briefly, these were the political highlights of 1954. When on February 28 Dato Onn launched his new political party, Party Negara, the aims of the party were announced. At the time, the claim made was that it was to be a noncommunal party. However, this was never the case. A few Indians, most notably Dato Thuraisingham, and a few leading Chinese continued their support for Dato Onn to the end, but by 1954 most of his support came from Malays.¹ The objectives of the party were: (1) to achieve national unity; (2) to establish a Party Negara government; (3) to uphold the position of the Malay Rulers as constitutional heads of state; (4) to secure by constitutional means the transfer of power; and (5) to establish a self-governing united states of Malaya.²

On March 28 the government announced its plan for federal

¹ Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process, pp. 158-159.
² Malay Mail, March 1, 1954.
elections in 1955.\textsuperscript{3} Templer left at the end of May, with MacGillivray taking over as High Commissioner.\textsuperscript{4} On June 24 the Alliance boycotted the Legislative Council, partly because it had promised to do so if there were to be no elections by 1954—and the bill as presented said that these elections would take place din 1955—but mainly because the Alliance felt that there were too many seats not contested by the elections, i.e., that were to be appointed by the British government (52 elected, 46 nominated).\textsuperscript{5}

By mid-September, 1954, two of the issues on which the two major political parties, the Alliance and Party Negara, were to disagree were becoming clear. One issue was the speed with which independence should come; the other was the degree of recognition to be given to the Chinese in the country.

On the first issue the Alliance stressed the need for Malayan independence now, whereas Party Negara maintained that the country must be made ready before it was granted independence. Party Negara leaders were quoted as saying that when Malaya gained its independence, then Malay would become a secondary language in the affairs of the country. Self-rule was asked for instead of independence. These "Malay

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., March 28, 1954.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., May 31, 1954.
\textsuperscript{5} Miller, Prince and Premier, p. 147, and passim.
experts" contrasted their views concerning the effects of independence on the Malay language to those of UMNO leaders, who said that the Malay language would disappear if Malaya did not gain its independence soon.6

As 1954 progressed, there was increased evidence to suggest that Alliance leaders at the national level were not committed to changing the Education Ordinance of 1952 so much as they were interested in securing a firm political base. It was practical politics, rather than logical conviction, that led most of them to the step of attacking Thuraisingham and "his" Education Ordinance of 1952.

PRESS COMMENTS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY.

Educational activities in the first seven months of 1954 continued to present a picture that was much the same as that of 1953: The Chinese continued their attacks on the 1952 Education Ordinance; the government continued its efforts to justify actions already taken, or more usually not taken, to implement the 1952 Ordinance—especially its national school features; and the Malay newspapers continued to be almost the only spokesmen for the nongovernment Malays on educational policy. There was a continued concern for Malay values in education put forward by the Malay newspapers. An editorial in the Utusan Zaman reiterated the paper's earlier view that English education was colonial education—and now

6 Malay Mail, May 11, 1954.
they added that it was this type of education that was the cause of the people's lack of interest in Malay literature.\textsuperscript{7}

Another Malay newspaper a month later complained that many Malays were leaving Malay schools to enter English schools. Some did not even attend a Malay school at all. This lessened these Malays' concern for improving the Malay language. The newspaper suggested that the solution would be to set up a Malay translation bureau so that Malay education could be upgraded.\textsuperscript{8}

In April there were at least two separate calls by prominent Malays for having Malay used in the conducting of government business. Both claimed that kampong Malays could not deal with the government so long as it insisted upon communicating with them in English.\textsuperscript{9}

One of the more unexpected educational policy position shifts at this time was one taken by the editorial staff of the \textit{Utusan Melayu}. It began to suggest that the Malays should support the Chinese in their attitudes towards the Education Ordinance of 1952.

In May, one of its editorials stated in effect that since all responsible Chinese organizations had indicated their concern for the future of Chinese education, and since the object

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{7} February 7, 1954.
\item \textsuperscript{8} Majlis, March 16, 1954.
\item \textsuperscript{9} Malay Mail, April 8 and April 18, 1954.
\end{itemize}
of the Education Ordinance was to create a sense of loyalty to Malaya via educational means, let that object be achieved by making sure that was the right content in the subject matter taught in Chinese schools. The Chinese did not have to be forced to learn English to achieve this loyalty.10

Later in the year an Utusan editorial said that the best way to fight to strengthen Malay education was to join with the M.C.A. in its struggle against the Education Ordinance of 1952. The editors justified their position by pointing out that the ordinance was destroying vernacular language education.11

One indication of just how far the Utusan attack on government educational policies had gone was contained in an editorial which included this statement: "What has happened in the past is that the Government has appointed separate committees to investigate Chinese and Malay education, and then insisted that the proposals of the Barnes Committee for Malay Education be imposed on Chinese Schools. But the proposals of the Barnes Committee were not only inimicable to the educational interests of the Malays, but to the educational needs of the Chinese community, because these proposals only attached importance to the English language."12

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10 April 2, 1954.
11 August 26, 1954.
12 September 9, 1954.
During the year there continued to be a stream of critical remarks from the Chinese directed towards national schools in particular and the 1952 Education Ordinance in general.\textsuperscript{13} But an interesting disclaimer was issued in September by the Chief Executive Secretary of the M.C.A., T.H. Tan, that a headline of August 23, 1954, in the Singapore Standard, which read: "Scrap the National School Plan, M.C.A.'s Educational Policy," was misleading. He claimed that the policy of the M.C.A. on this matter had not been decided. What had been reported was actually only a suggestion made by Chinese school teachers and managers, and this suggestion was now being studied by a subcommittee of M.C.A.\textsuperscript{14}

The English language newspaper, the Straits Echo and Times of Malaya, stated in an editorial in early April that progress had been painfully slow in education over the past two years. Therefore, it was not surprising that the public should think that the new charter was little more than a catalogue of lofty intentions (referring to the Education Ordinance of 1952).\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} For example: Sin Chew Jit Poh, February 10, 1954; Malay Mail, March 27, Ibid.; March 4; Kwong Wah Yep Poh, April 5; Sin Pin Jih Pao, April 4, Ibid., August 10.

\textsuperscript{14} Letter from Tan in Singapore Standard, September 3, 1954.

\textsuperscript{15} April 1, 1954.
GOVERNMENT COMMENTS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY.

These comments were almost equaled in volume by government attempts to justify actions already taken, or more usually not taken, to implement the 1952 Ordinance—and especially its national school features.

For example, in the Legislative Council meeting of January 27, 1954, Mr. Yeap Choong Kong asked if national schools had been started, and if so, where, and if not, why not? The government's answer, given by Thuraisingham, Member for Education, was that none had been started because of financial reasons. However, certain of the national school features had been introduced into government and government-aided English schools. Thuraisingham concluded with this statement: "In view of the difficulties with which the Department was faced on financial grounds, a full examination of the most effective method of implementing the policy outlined in the Education Ordinance within the resources available was ordered and has just been completed. The results of this examination are being made known to the Central Advisory Council [on Education] and will be discussed at a meeting to be held at an early date." 

In the next session of the Legislative Council, held on March 31, Enche Sopiee asked whether a national school Standard I

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17 Ibid., cols. 1097-99.
class could be introduced in every school where there was suitable accommodation. Thuraisingham answered that it simply was not feasible. The government was only able to introduce certain features of national schools in existing schools.  

In the Kelantan files a letter dated April 22, 1954, showed some of the behind-the-scenes efforts being put forth by the Education Department to get national schools started. In this letter the Director of Education, Whitfield, explained to the Chief Education Officer of Kelantan that the department hoped to find in various parts of the Federation places where neighboring Malay, Chinese, and Tamil schools could be combined and converted to English-medium national schools. The department wanted students admitted to this new type of school in the Standard I stream in 1955. It was felt that if a few such schools could be started, these would then provide an incentive for the formation of others. No fees would be charged. The Director of Education added that there would be advantages to carrying out the regrouping of these schools away from the big towns rather than in them. But, "there will be obvious difficulties not the least of which will be to persuade the proprietors of a Chinese school to participate in


19 Ibid., col. 29. Actually, for many schools the only thing lacking to the complete introduction of all features of national schools was that they were not free.
this scheme.\footnote{Kelantan Education Files, No. 181 of 1954. Subject of letter: "Group conversion of vernacular schools into National Schools."}

On May 6 the Kelantan Chief Education Officer responded by sending the Director of Education three possible locations for consideration.\footnote{Ibid., Memorandum from F.H. Jones, Chief Education Officer to Director of Education, Whitfield.}

Two public speeches by government officials indicated how hard they worked to acquaint the people with what they saw as the reasons for supporting government educational policy and its implementation. Dato Thuraisingham stated in his address to the people gathered to observe the Diamond Jubilee of the Victorian Institute: "Up to two or three years ago the pattern of education was set by the specialists in the Education Department, and that pattern was followed in our schools without question." He went on to state that the Education Ordinance had had the unanimous support of the Federal Legislative Council at the time of its passage. He claimed that it was most suitable to the genius of the people of Malaya. Implementation had been delayed by the lack of funds and by a shortage of qualified teachers of high standards. However, as more and more teachers came back from the United Kingdom the staff situation should become easier. The time was approaching, he stated, when responsibility for further expansion of education must be undertaken by communities and
parents. Federal funds had reached the limit of their expansion. 22

Almost two weeks later, on August 12, L.D. Whitfield, Director of Education, spoke to the National Union of Teachers at a meeting in Kuala Lumpur. English education was wanted by the great majority of the people of Malaya, he stated, as evidenced by the "... demands of parents for the admission of their children to English schools and the readiness with which parents withdraw their children from vernacular schools. ..." The problem had been that there were not enough well-trained teachers to even maintain the enrolment of English schools at what the government felt was the proper level. Now to try and convert existing streams in vernacular schools into national-type streams took teachers—and they did not have them. He asked the teachers' union to help the Education Department convince young teachers that "... they cannot all expect to work in English schools in large towns and that many of them must be prepared to work as national teachers in rural schools. ..." 23

The facts of the financial situation in Malaya that made it necessary for the government to consider an increase in school fees have already been presented. A decrease in government revenue, coupled with an increase in pressure on the

23 Ibid., August 12, 1954.
government to spend more money on education, were causing the government considerable concern by mid-1954.

REPORT OF THE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION.

On June 23, the Member for Education, Dato Thuraisingham, presented the First Annual Report of the Member for Education on the Education Ordinance, 1952. The report included in almost every section a comment on the lack of funds available in order to carry out the policies set forth in the Ordinance— or, as was sometimes the case, to institute certain sections of the Ordinance which had not yet been brought into operation.

For example, in the section on religious instruction, Thuraisingham said: "... I can see no likelihood of its full implementation until the finances of the Federation show a substantial improvement." On compulsory attendance he said: "It would seem as if, on moral grounds, these sections could not be gazetted throughout the Federation until we have money..." on statutory educational systems: "$... the desire to introduce National Schools [curriculums] has been frustrated by an insurmountable obstacle--shortage of funds;" 28

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24 Annual Report on Education for 1953, pp. 51-61. This report of Thuraisingham's was called for by the 1952 Education Ordinance.

25 Ibid., p. 53.

26 The action taken by the government to put them into effect legally by placing in the Government Gazette notification that a section of the law would go into effect as of some particular date.


28 Ibid., pp. 54-55.
on the Education Development Fund: ". . . it has been found that the resources of this Fund will be very much less than was previously anticipated;"29 on National Schools: "At present there are no Type A National Schools in the Federation."30 "The speed of conversion is, of course, affected . . . by financial considerations;"31 on inspectors of educational establishments: "Owing to lack of funds, it has not so far been possible to make any progress but. . . [he wanted it developed]. . . as soon as possible;"32 on teacher training: [after reporting on the completion of one teacher training college, he commented on the plans for two others] "In view of the present financial situation, the size and scope of these projects are being reviewed."33

Reacting to Thuraisingham's report, an editorial in the Malay Mail took a jab at the department on the matter of instituting Education Inspectors. The editorial writer did

29 Ibid., p. 55.

30 Thuraisingham had classified national schools as types A, B, and C. "Type A will have all the attributes mentioned in the Ordinance; Type B will have all the attributes of a National School in the full meaning of the term, except that fees are paid; and Type C will have some of the attributes of a National School, including . . . the essential attributes . . . [that] both teachers and pupils are of all races, both English and Malay are taught and the education has a Malayan orientation." Ibid., pp. 55-56.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., pp. 57-58.

33 Ibid., p. 58.
not see why having inspectors should be such a heavy drain on funds, especially when it was balanced with the thought that the threat of communist infiltration made it imperative to know what was happening in Chinese schools, estate schools, and village schools off the beaten track. Therefore, these schools at least should be inspected, if nothing else. The writer recognized that the Member called for inspectors "as soon as possible." But he wondered if this expression was not just a euphemism for "someday."\textsuperscript{34}

**HINTS OF PROPOSED SECONDARY SCHOOL FEES INCREASES.**

And then in August, 1953, all the frustrations of the people of Malaya which had developed out of their disagreements over educational policy found an avenue of release. The suspicion arose that the government again was contemplating an increase in fees for English secondary education, and on the strength of this suspicion the attacks on education achieved a magnitude and volume unlike anything in Malayan education since World War II.

Apparently a speech by Dato Thuraisingham on July 30 gave the public their first indication that the government might be considering the possibilities of increasing school fees.\textsuperscript{35} Thuraisingham later was to claim that he felt it necessary to give this public warning of the government's

\textsuperscript{34} July 1, 1954.

\textsuperscript{35} See above, pp. 331-332 for a more complete report of this speech.
thinking, for he was aware at the time that the Special Committee set up to consider the problems of implementing the Education Ordinance of 1952 had decided to recommend increases in school fees for secondary English-medium school children. He knew that it was prepared to call for a federal ordinance, superceding existing local ordinances, which would increase substantially the 2 per cent education property rates (taxes) and that the committee was also to recommend that locally collected funds be spent by local authorities set up in each municipality, town council, and town board, for all these recommendations had already been sent to the states for their comments by this time. 36

Apparently little notice was taken of the proposed increase in rates, but the states did not hesitate to express their opposition to the portion of the committee's proposals that dealt with fees. In Kelantan the State Education Advisory Council maintained, after due consideration, that an increase in secondary school fees would make secondary schooling impossible for the majority of those presently paying fees. If fees had to be increased, the increase should not be so much as was proposed by the Special Committee. The Kelantan Advisory Council prepared an amended version of the scheduled school fees increases, showing how much increase it

36 Kelantan Education Files, No. 185 of 1949, Memorandum from Secretary to the Member for Education, July 27, 1954. Contains extracts from a report by the Special Committee to Consider the Education Ordinance, 1952.
would consider acceptable. 37

The government of Perlis also opposed the increase in fees, saying that in Perlis at least 90 per cent of the enrolment in the schools affected were Malays. If fees were increased, the Federation's policy of encouraging more Malays to have English education would be thwarted. The Perlis government feared that fee increases might cause parents to withdraw girls from the English schools. It therefore suggested that girls' fees remain the same, and that boys' fees be raised slightly—if necessary. 38

In another move by the federal Education Department not known to the public, early in the month of August, G. Woods, 39 Deputy Director of Education, asked the state Education Departments to submit their budget estimates for 1955. These budgets were to be drawn up assuming that the fees would be at the rates proposed, and that education rates of 10 per cent would be levied as the federal government Special Committee was presently contemplating recommending. 40

37 Ibid., Letter from Jones, Chief Education Officer, Kelantan, to State Secretary, August 31, 1954. Cites comments made at Kelantan State Advisory Council meeting of August 28, 1954.

38 Ibid., Copy of letter from State Secretary, Perlis, to the Member for Education, August 31, 1954. Copies had gone to all State and Settlement Secretaries and Superintendents of Education.

39 G. Woods had become Deputy Director of Education on April 18, 1952 (Malayan Establishment Staff List, January 1, 1953, p. 73) and joined the Malayan Education Service in 1930 (Malayan Civil List, 1940, p. 374).

40 Kelantan Education Files, No. 185 of 1949, Letter from
Then on August 23 Woods reversed his earlier directive and said to prepare the 1955 budget estimates assuming fees would remain the same as in the past and the education rate would be no higher than in 1954 and would not be any more widely levied. (Not all states had education rates, e.g., Kelantan did not.)

Thus, in the light of the correspondence of Woods, August 23, it appears that the government, even before September, had decided not to propose an increase in fees or rates. But there was no official statement to this effect made to the public.

There were a few public comments opposing a raise in secondary school fees in the early days of August, apparently in reaction to Thuraisingham's speech. But the full force of the public's opposition to increased secondary English school fees did not strike until September. Even then there had been no official release of any proposal on the subject of increasing school fees. Rather, the idea of the proposed increase had somehow been prematurely leaked to the press.

There is probably little mystery as to how this

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Director of Education to Chief Education Officer, Kelantan, August 23, 1954. This letter of August 23 indicated that a previously sent letter had contained the above directive, and this August 23 letter was sent to countermand the first letter. The earlier letter was no longer in the file.

41 Ibid.

42 Malay Mail, August 3 and August 11, 1954.
happened, since each state and settlement government had been sent the proposed plan and had been asked to consider it, and they in turn had consulted their State Advisory Councils. With this many people involved, it was not surprising that some idea of what was afoot had leaked out.

Information was published on September 6 that purported to be the precise increases to be recommended by the Special Committee. To put these proposals in their proper perspective: From 1945 to the end of 1952 the average fee paid by a government secondary English school student was $2.50 a month. In January of 1953 this had been doubled. Now the report stated that it was being recommended that Form I (the lowest grade in secondary schools) pay $10; Forms II and III, $15; Forms IV and V, $20; and Form VI, $25 a month. For some this would be a 500 per cent increase!

The report was fairly accurate, for the proposals sent out to the states in July called for $15 for Forms I and II; $20 for Forms III, IV, and V; and $25 for Form VI, while the final report of the Special Committee suggested $15 for

43 See above, p. 228.

44 This change in nomenclature came as the result of recommendations made by G.E.D. Lewis to separate the primary and secondary schools and rename the secondary classes "forms." (Interview with Lewis, September 25, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; Annual Report on Education for 1954, p. 41.)

45 Malay Mail, September 7, 1954.

Forms I, II, and III; $20 for Forms IV and V, and $25 for Form VI. 47

It did not really matter what the exact proposals were. Any of them would have been too much for the people of Malaya to accept.

The Straits Times headlined its coverage of the proposed fees as: "S Bomb Goes Off Bang," using "S" to stand for school fees. The subheadlines accompanying it give a good indication of the public's reaction: "One third of my salary will go in fees alone;" "Less to eat;" "No smokes;" "Outrageous attack. . . . terrible blow;" "All say: We'll not stand for this." 48

Every newspaper editor had his say—and usually much more than once. 49 Two newspapers, the Straits Times and the Malay Mail, supported the increase in fees right from the first, while the Malay newspaper, Warta Negara, came around to supporting the proposal, 50 although it had originally been opposed. 51

The first Warta Negara editorial also complained that it

48 September 8, 1954.
49 Straits Echo and Times of Malaya, September 8, 11, and 18, 1954.
50 September 20, 1954.
51 September 7, 1954.
was not fair to blame Party Negara for the raise. Accusations that blamed Party Negara for the proposed fees increases often appeared in the press. For example, the _Nanyang Siang Pau_ pointed out editorially that all but three of the eleven-man Special Committee who were considering recommendations for implementation of the 1952 Ordinance were from Party Negara (two of the three remaining were British, and the third was an ex-UMNO member). And this was an interesting fact—that of the ten men in the committee, eight were members of Party Negara.

The committee was chairmanship by Dato Thuraisingham and included three Chinese, four Malays, one other Indian, and one Englishman. Five were members of the Executive Council, one was in the Legislative Council and not on the Executive Council, and the other four were picked by the states to represent the state and settlement governments.

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52 September 7, 1954.

53 It was officially only a ten-man committee, but apparently since the Director of Education sat in on all its meetings some sources referred to it as an eleven-man committee.

54 September 9, 1954.

55 Council Paper No. 67 of 1954, p. 7. The Special Committee was constituted as follows: Dato E.E.C. Thuraisingham, Member for Education (Chairman); Mr. E. Himsworth, Financial Secretary; Dr. Lee Tian Keng, Member for Health; Dato Nik Ahmed Kamil bin Haji Nik Mahmood, Member for Local Government Housing and Town Planning; Mr. V.M.N. Menon, Member for Posts and Telecommunications; Mr. Yong Shook Lin; Dato Haji Syed Abdul Kadir bin Mohamed, Mentri Besar, Johore; Enche Muhammad Yusof bin Ahmad; Enche Mahidin bin Mohammed Rashad; Mrs. Cheah Inn Kiong.
representative composition as between I.M.P. and the Alliance which obtained on the Special Legislative Council Committee to frame the 1952 Ordinance was no longer in evidence. Thus it could quite accurately be said that the committee's report represented Party Negara's thinking more than that of any other party, and the fact that Thuraisingham was the committee chairman added to the evidence in this regards. The lack of adequate Alliance representation on the committee probably reflected the fact that by the time the Special Committee was to be set up the Alliance leaders had ceased to offer the same kind of support to intercommunal education that they had in the 1951-1952 period. Since this committee's job was to consider ways to implement the intercommunal educational policy of the 1952 Ordinance, it would not have been realistic to have members on the committee who disapproved of the 1952 Ordinance.

Another possibility is that since the Alliance leaders in the Legislative Council had since 1952 come to be thought of and think of themselves as in opposition to the government, it would not have been normal to have opposition members on a government committee. The trouble with this theory is that there were Alliance men in the government as "Members." Perhaps the best answer is that this is but another example of how the British supported Onn and his followers much more than they did the Alliance.
PUBLIC REACTIONS.

Almost every conceivable platform was used to launch attacks on the proposal. The Parents Association leaders, speaking in their capacity as officers of the association, sounded off on the iniquities of school fees being raised. They said that the parents (some of the same people who had only brief months before demanded far more space for their children, even to the point of asking for more schools) rejected increased fees.56

Unions,57 social clubs,58 political parties,59 and student groups60 all got into the act. Most of them denounced the idea of any increase in school fees. Many meetings were called and were well-attended. Speakers of all types rose to the occasion. Enche Sopiee, Federal Councillor, issued a call for signatures to a petition opposing the plan. He eventually claimed to have gotten some 15,000 to 20,000 signatures.61

The Utusan conducted a "survey" in Kuala Lumpur which

57 Sin Pin Jih Pao, September 10, 1954.
58 Kwong Wah Yep Poh, September 4, 1954.
59 Utusan Melayu, September 13, 1954.
60 Ibid., September 10, 1954.
61 Straits Times, October 5, 1954; Straits Echo and Times of Malaya, October 5, 1954.
"proved" that the residents of Kuala Lumpur were convinced that the raising of fees was an indirect move by government to ban the "natives" of the country from obtaining education. Only the children of the rich would be educated.  

Both Party Negara and UMNO leaders agreed that they would not use this issue as a vote-getter. But Tunku Abdul Rahman, President of UMNO and the Alliance, prefaced his remarks to this effect by stating that when the proposal to increase school fees came up in the Legislative Council, the Alliance would vote against it. He added that actually the opposition of the Alliance was only in principle, for contrary to what many people believed, it seemed that very few Malays would be affected. This was because most Malays paid no fees at all, so an increase would not hit them. Even those who went to English schools usually had scholarships.

However, two news reports of mid-September showed that although both Party Negara and UMNO had agreed not to use school fees as a political issue, they did not always live up to the agreement. In Merdeka, the official newspaper of UMNO, an editorial attacked Thuraisingham and Party Negara for their part in recommending the raising of school fees. The editorial stated that these fees were suggested in spite of the fact that Malays were the poorest community in Malaya.

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63 Straits Times, September 8, 1954.
64 Ibid.
This, they added, was an example of what would be done by Party Negara if it were to come to power. 65

Thuraisingham, in an interview with Utusan Melayu two days later, answered by pointing out that since Malays got free education in primary schools and scholarships to secondary schools the increased school fees scarcely hit them at all—so for whom were the UMNO people protesting? He answered his own question by saying: Probably the Chinese and the Indians. 66

Dato Sir Tan Cheng Lock, President of the M.C.A., called the raising of school fees an outrageous attack and a terrible blow to the cause of English education. "One feels," he added, "that policy is inspired by a fear of giving too much English education which may widen political consciousness and which must therefore be restricted instead of being advanced." 67

Tuan Syed Ja'afar Albar, UMNO Information Officer, insisted that the whole idea of raising school fees was a plot by the British to continue colonialism by keeping Malays from getting educated. He also subscribed to another theme which was becoming familiar: that these increases were designed by Thuraisingham to support his pet project, the sending of Malayans to study at Kirkby Teacher Training College. 68

65 September 15, 1954.
66 Utusan Melayu, September 17, 1954.
67 Straits Times, September 8, 1954.
68 Majlis, September 9, 1954.
Letters to the newspapers poured in. Often the papers reported that they could not begin to print all the letters that were received opposing the proposition. Many of these letter writers also attacked the Kirkby plan for sending Malayans to England for teacher training, linking Kirkby and school fees together. They contended that it cost too much to send teachers to Kirkby to be trained. They said: Cut out Kirkby and there will be enough money.

Many of the attacks on the proposed fees reported in the newspapers had included a direct mention of Thuraisingham. One called him the satan of Malaya.

Other solutions to the financial difficulties of the government were sometimes offered in lieu of raising fees. The Tunku suggested that a grammar school modeled on those in England should be set up in each state and settlement, by converting one of the already existent government English secondary schools. These would be more completely self

69 Straits Times, September 11, and 13, 1954; Straits Echo and Times of Malaya, September 22, 1954.

70 See, for example, Singapore Standard, September 14, 1954; Singapore Free Press, September 10; Utusan Melayu, September 10, 1954. While most letters only mentioned Kirkby, actually a second teacher training college in England was announced by the Malayan government in August of 1954 (Malay Mail, August 13).

71 Majlis, September 14, 1954; Straits Echo and Times of Malaya, September 17 and 18, 1954.

72 Majlis, September 14, 1954.
supporting. Others called for increasing the income tax.

One man suggested that the public should meet the threat of increased fees by a Ghandi counterblow, i.e., by taking all children out of schools. This suggestion might not have received much attention except that the man who suggested it was a Penang Settlement Councillor.

Chinese newspapers made the point that the raising of school fees would put additional pressure on Chinese schools, since many Chinese parents would have to withdraw their children from English schools and enter them in Chinese schools. If this happened the government should have to give more money to Chinese schools and allow them to increase their enrolment (which was against government policy at that time).

GOVERNMENT DENIAL.

On September 20 it was first reported that school fees increases would not be included in the government's recommendations presented to the Legislative Council in October. But it was not until the official release on September 29, just one week before they were scheduled to be debated, of the

73 Merdeka, September 15, 1954.
74 Warta Negara, September 15, 1954.
75 Straits Times, September 10, 1954. His name was Ponnudurai.
76 China Press, September 13, 1954; Kwong Wah Yep Poh, Sep-
77 Straits Times, September 20, 1954.
Report of the Special Committee and its companion Statement of the Federal Government on the Report of the Special Committee that it was officially clear that the government did not propose to recommend an increase in secondary school fees.

Why had the government waited so long before informing the public that it did not intend to propose an increase in secondary English school fees? Woods' letter to Kelantan indicated that the government had decided as early as August that it was not going to include the Special Committee's recommended fees increases in its motion on the Special Committee Report.

Thuraisingham was to maintain at the time of the debate on the Special Committee Report on Education (October 6, 1954) that since the Special Committee's deliberations were confidential, "I was never in a position until last week to answer the bitter criticism made against the Government. . . ." But this does not answer the question of why the government felt the deliberations had to be so confidential that no statement could be made to dispel the effects of the already leaked contents of these deliberations. Thus the question remains an enigma.

As Thuraisingham was to remark in the same speech, the

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78 Both were included in Council Paper No. 67 of 1954.
79 Malay Mail, September 29, 1954.
furor created by the public's fear of a possible raise in fees did have one redeeming feature—it illustrated to the government the deep concern of the people of Malaya for education. The trouble was that once the genie of successful public interference in educational policy formation was out of the bottle, he was reluctant to return.

And it was true that the debate on a fees increase did illustrate to the Alliance leaders the amount of concern for educational policy existent in Malaya. It must also have done this for Party Negara leaders as well, but for them it was too late, for even if they had wished to change, they were too closely identified with the policy of intercommunalism in education to be able to rid themselves of that label.

Thus, as it was to turn out, the Alliance did not overtly use educational policy as a vote-getting device. They did not need to. The damage had already been done. All they had to do was remain relatively quiet on the subject to reap the benefits of their opponents' mistakes.
CHAPTER XII

THE WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION
SEPTEMBER 1954--OCTOBER 1954

THE WHITE PAPER--SUPPORTING EVIDENCE.

On September 29, just a week before its scheduled debate in the Legislative Council, the "Report of the Special Committee appointed by the High Commissioner in Council to consider ways and means of implementing the policy outlined in the Education Ordinance, 1952, in the context of the diminishing financial resources of the Federation"¹ was released to the press. For obvious reasons this was more commonly referred to as the 1954 "White Paper on Education."

It is important to remember both that some of the contents of the report had already leaked to the public and that some of the recommendations contained in the report had already been rejected by the government--i.e., an increase in school fees and an increase in local education rates.²

The Special Committee had been appointed in November of 1953 with the following terms of reference: (1) "to consider ways and means of implementing the policy outlined in the Education Ordinance, 1952, in the context of the diminishing financial resources of the Federation;" (2) to recommend

¹ Council Paper No. 67 of 1954, p. 7. The first six pages of this Council Paper consisted of a statement by the federal government on the Special Committee's report (see below, p. 358).

² See above, p. 347.
priorities for developing education in the next six years; and (3) to explore the possible sources of additional revenue for educational development.3

The opening statement by the committee in the report was that its guiding principle had been: "... the profound conviction that education must be one of the highest priorities in the national budget..." and thus one of the last areas to be financially retrenched if the government of the Federation decided that it must cut back on its total financial commitments.4

The committee reaffirmed its support for a single system of multi-racial schools teaching English and Malay and having a common content curriculum.5

The members of the committee examined and reported on the financial picture as it was presented to them by the Treasury Department. The Treasury's figures showed that the Federation budget of 1954 estimated a $175 million deficit, and that by the end of 1955 all the government's financial reserves would be gone. It was therefore the conclusion of the Treasury that there could be no additional expenditures on education above the $100 million spent in 1954.6

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4 Ibid., p. 8.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
The Special Committee's report noted, however, that because most of Malaya's teachers were quite young, they had not yet reached the end of the salary scale. Each year incremental salary increases to these teachers would add $3 million to the education bill. So, if no new educational programs were inaugurated there would still be an $18 million increase in annual educational expenses at the end of six years. Furthermore, the report concluded, the country could not afford to stand still in education. At least a small amount of additional money had to be found to enable the country to introduce a few new educational improvements.

In order to provide this money, the report suggested that, first, economies might be made in existing education programs. For example, it was suggested that brighter students be encouraged to complete their primary schooling in something less than six years. Further, the federal government should step in and cut back on the number of small and therefore inefficient post-School Certificate classes that often existed only as prestige classes in smaller secondary schools. Also, more money should be charged for evening classes, excepting those of elementary Malay and English classes.

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7 Ibid., p. 9.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., pp. 9, 10.
11 Ibid., p. 10.
Then the report suggested that new sources of revenue might be found. While admitting that present fees in primary schools did not cover the cost of primary education, it was recommended that school fees for primary students should not be raised in the schools now charging fees, nor introduced in those schools not yet charging them.

However, the majority of the committee recommended a 400 per cent increase in fees in secondary schools—from $4 a month to an average of $20 a month (more for the highest, less for the three lower forms). There would be no additional fees for other than academic secondary education. It was estimated that these increases would result in an additional income of some $4.3 million a year.

The report went on to stress that up to 37.5 per cent of the total fees payable should be remitted because the government had a moral duty to see that the best brains in the country received secondary education. Also, the report asked that all communities receive their fair share of this secondary education.

Referring to United Kingdom practices of the time, the report went on to recommend a uniform education rate on

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12 Ibid., pp. 11-12. While this was what the committee's report contained, the decision had already been taken not to ask the Legislative Council to approve this recommendation. See above, p. 347.

13 Ibid., p. 11.

14 Ibid., p. 12.
property—this to be spent in the locality wherein such funds were collected. These funds were to be administered by Local Education Authorities, which would be set up corresponding to municipalities, town boards, or rural boards. These rates would be applied to rural areas as soon as a way of assessing properties could be found.¹⁵

Using 10 per cent as its figure for the new rates, the report estimated an increase in revenue for Local Education Authorities of $3.5 million.¹⁶

Finally, the report recommended that teachers trained at regular teacher training colleges, either in England or in Malaya, should be required to remit a percentage of the cost of their education during the first few years of their teaching period.¹⁷ Other than some suggestions for reporting the money spent on education by new entry methods in the federal estimates,¹⁸ these were the recommendations covering financial matters.

THE WHITE PAPER—RECOMMENDATIONS.

Part II of the report was entitled "Future Programme."

The key features of this section concerned national schools

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¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 13-14. While this was what the committee's report contained, the decision had already been taken not to ask the Legislative Council to approve this recommendation.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 15. While this was what the committee's report contained, the decision had already been taken not to ask the Legislative Council to approve this recommendation.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 17.
and what should be done about introducing them to the country. Actually, since 1952 many schools in Malaya had reached the point where they were national schools in all but one aspect—that of school fees. A true national school did not charge these fees. The schools in which national school features had been introduced were still charging fees. These schools were designated national-type schools in the report, and it went on to point out that even these national-type schools cost some 20 per cent more than an English school and 100 per cent more than a vernacular school when the national-type school was fully in operation. The complete conversion of a vernacular school into a national-type school took six years. 19

With this in view the report listed four general recommendations: (1) to introduce national-type school features into primary vernacular schools as finances and staff permitted and build new national-type schools only in areas where there were no schools; (2) to give preference to vernacular schools for conversions; (3) to require English-medium national-type school children to pay fees; and (4) to give preference to converting those vernacular schools located in rural areas. 20

Vernacular education was to continue because "imperfect

19 Ibid., p. 18.
20 Ibid.
though it is, vernacular education is better than no education at all." 21 After reviewing the existing situation in vernacular schools, the report recommended that: increases in the number and size of these schools be kept to a minimum; their government grants-in-aid not be increased; Malay vernacular schools not go beyond primary level; national-type schools be introduced as qualitative improvement permitted; and that national-type streams be introduced alongside vernacular streams in vernacular schools. 22 It was emphasized that having the English teachers going into national-type streams in vernacular schools would not result in the retrenchment of a single vernacular teacher. 23

Regarding secondary schools, these should be administered separately from primary schools. Admission should be by merit, determined by examination. And not only national-type school graduates should be eligible, but entrance should be open to any who qualified. 24

"Modern" schools 25 were given qualified approval—the

21 Ibid., p. 21.
22 Ibid., pp. 22-23.
23 Ibid., p. 24.
24 Ibid., p. 19.
25 The name now applied to those secondary schools which would only offer two or three years' schooling, with an emphasis on practical education, and which had first been proposed in the First Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education. In England the secondary modern school concept
qualification being that these schools should not be poor relations of academic schools.\footnote{26} Hostels should be provided for rural students "of all races."\footnote{27}

In considering post-secondary education, the only area that was given careful treatment by the report was teacher training. In this field it was recommended that as long as costs were comparable, which it was anticipated they would be, training should continue at the two training colleges in England, "... until the present period of difficulties is over."\footnote{28}

The report concluded by presenting the usual survey of its essential features, but added that these features were presented in the order of their priority, which was as follows:

1. (a) The introduction of National School features into vernacular schools; (b) The
e envisioned a secondary school where most students would attend for three years—the course of study to emphasize practical training instead of academic training; and yet it would not be a technical school, either, for such subjects as social studies, art, and music would be taught. Most of the students who stayed on for a five-year course would be trained to take the London Chamber of Commerce Certificate Examination. The stated aim of the school was to provide suitable education for the great majority of students who would not profit from an academic course. Few of these schools were introduced during this time in Malaya, but in the 1960's they were introduced on a large scale only to meet with such parental resistance that by 1966 most of them had been converted into academic secondary schools.

\footnote{26} Council Paper No. 67 of 1954, p. 20.
\footnote{27} Ibid., p. 24.
\footnote{28} Ibid., pp. 20-21.
extension of training facilities for teachers; 2. Maintaining the enrolment in English primary schools at 7.6 per cent. of the primary age group (6+ to 12+) population; 3. Maintaining the enrolment of Secondary English schools of the academic type at 34,000 carefully selected pupils; 4. (a) The provision of Secondary Modern Schools; (b) the provision of Vocational Schools (Two years Post-National School Training); 5. The provision of vocational training for Malays who have passed Standard V, Malay Schools; 6. The provision of hostels for Secondary Schools pupils; and 7. The provision of Scholarships for training teachers of vocational subjects. 29

It then re-emphasized that the highest priorities must be given to Sections 1 (a) and 1 (b). The report was dated September 16, 1954. 30

THE WHITE PAPER—GOVERNMENT STATEMENT.

On October 6, 1954, the debate on the White Paper on Education took place. The government did not ask that all of the report be accepted. Rather, it was only portions of the report, and some of these modified, that were asked to be approved. The government issued to the Legislative Council a paper entitled: "Statement of the Federal Government on the Report of the Special Committee on the Implementation of Education Policy." 31 This statement gave the federal government's views on the proposals of the White Paper.

29 Ibid., pp. 24-25.
30 Ibid., p. 25.
The economic facts were as follows, said the statement: The annual cost of education in Malaya had risen from $11 million in 1946 to $100 million in 1954, and yet 30 per cent of the country's primary age students were not in school at all, let alone in national schools. To add to the problem, some 70,000 students each year were being added to this age group through natural increase in the country. These 70,000 alone would cost an additional $14 million each year to educate if all of them were educated in a national-type school. 32

To introduce national schools for all in 1954 would cost $220 million, exclusive of buildings, and ten years hence these schools would be costing the government $400 million. And this would be just for primary schooling. Add secondary, technical, and vocational educational costs of $320 million (again a figure predicted for ten years hence), and the $720 million total, when matched with the total annual income of the government of $600 million, told its own story. 33

There were two choices, stated the government: either cheapen education and get all children into schools, or impose "rigorous controls," over those allowed to enter the educational system. 34 The government opted for the second choice:

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32 Ibid., p. 2.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., p. 3.
"Both because it is practical and because it is educationally sound to place children by selection in their proper educational environment." 35

The plan set forth by the White Paper envisaged an annual expenditure of $145 million by 1960, 36 but this figure did not include any money for certain of the as yet unimplemented portions of the 1952 Education Ordinance, e.g., hostels, vocational training for those leaving vernacular schools, and the introduction of a Federal Inspectorate. 37

The government felt that at least some of these programs must be put into effect at some point in the next six years. It therefore recommended that the yearly increase in the amount of money spent on education in Malaya should be not less than $10 million. This would mean that the total spent on education in 1960 would be at least $160 million, instead of the $145 million figure recommended by the Special Committee's Report. 38

Furthermore, the government felt that the best answer to the felt need of the people of Malaya for improvements in vernacular education could be found in the establishment of Local Educational Authorities. 39

35 Ibid.
36 Ibid., p. 4. See also Table D of White Paper, p. 28.
37 Ibid., pp. 2, 4.
38 Ibid., p. 4.
39 Ibid.
The government sought the Legislative Council's approval for the following measures in order to include them in the next budget:

(a) The introduction of National School features into the vernacular schools, particularly by the means of the establishment of English medium classes; (b) The maintenance of enrolments in the English medium National type schools at not less than 7.6 per cent. of the primary age group; (c) To give effect to (a) and (b) above, the implementation of the teacher training programme recommended in the Report; (d) The provision of Secondary Modern schools and vocational schools in the general lines proposed in the Report; (e) Pending the completion of a survey of the country's absorptive capacity of the output from Secondary schools, the maintenance of enrolments in Secondary English schools at the present figure of 34,000 for the time being, and that selection of pupils for such education should be based on the results of a Central Examination; and (f) The establishment of Local Education Authorities administering their own educational funds within the framework of approved educational policy, and empowered to levy Education Rates for further expansion of education in their areas.40

When the government's motion reached the floor, further changes had been made in its final recommendations. Sections (a) through (d) remained as before, but the wording had been changed in Sections (e) and (f). Section (e) began as before, but now the exact number to be maintained in secondary schools was left out. Instead it was suggested that "... the enrolments in Secondary (academic) English schools should be carefully controlled with a view to ensuring that such enrolment

40 Ibid., p. 5.
Section (f) was no longer so-labelled. Instead, it was the final part of a concluding sentence to the motion. Now it followed these words: "The Council recognises that the above measures, which are likely to absorb such additional funds as may be available to the Federal Government for education, fall short of public expectations, and therefore welcomes the early establishment, in consultation with the State and Settlement Governments, of Local [etc.]. . ." 42

THE WHITE PAPER--DEBATE.

Again the job of introducing this motion fell to the Member for Education, Dato E.E.C. Thuraisingham. And at this time he produced the second of two outstanding speeches on educational policy in Malaya. 43 He did not duck the issues involved, but strove to meet them head on.

First he tackled the problems of fee increases. No recommendations on this had been included in the government’s motion, but there was no one in the Council who could have been unaware of the great public to-do over this that had manifested itself in the two months leading up to the debate.

42 Ibid., col. 623.
43 See above, p. 196.
Thuraisingham admitted that he had intended certain remarks made recently to the public to be a hint of things to come in education, as he did not want the public to be caught unawares on such important matters. "But," he claimed, "this statement has created a most fantastic situation." Speculation had run rampant, he added; however, this speculation had had its good points, for out of it the government was made to realize how much the people of Malaya were concerned about education. Then he continued: "As the Committee's deliberations were confidential, I was never in a position until last week to answer the bitter criticisms made against the Government and the members of this Committee. The crafty seized upon this opportunity to make it a political issue and to get political advantage thereby." 

At this point Tunku Abdul Rahman rose to remind the Legislative Council that his party had disclaimed any intention of using the issue of school fees in politics. "We can win any election hands down without making use of this." 

Thuraisingham continued by refuting the off-stated accusation that the government discriminated against Chinese education and he did this by giving figures showing that the government spent $162.09 on each Tamil student's education,

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44 Ibid., col. 607.
46 Ibid., col. 608.
$120.55 on each Chinese student, and $112.62 on each Malay student. "I leave it to my Honourable friends to find out against whom is the discrimination."

Thuraisingham next presented figures on the history of rubber, copra, and tea prices since 1951 that showed clearly why the Education Ordinance of 1952 had not been implemented. As the Council knew, it was because of these financial factors that a Special Committee had been appointed to consider the means of implementing the Education Ordinance, 1952. The Treasury indicated to the Special Committee from the outset that the limit of moneys available for education would be $100 million a year for the foreseeable future. After other facts and figures were provided to the Committee by the Education Department, a draft program was developed which was taken to England by the High Commissioner and submitted to the education experts there.

The British government had fully recognized the need for educational development in Malaya, both for its own sake and as the means for fighting the Emergency. Therefore it promised that the Malayan government's monetary efforts in meeting any educational plans developed would be supplemented by Britain

47 Ibid., col. 609.
48 See above, p. for more financial details.
50 Ibid., col. 611.
so that the total spent each year on education would be brought to $150 million by 1959. 51

Thuraisingham stressed that the government did not have enough money to educate all of Malaya's children in the manner their parents might have wished. He added that it should be kept in mind that "the Government refuses to lower the standard of education." 52

He expressed his support for the concept of free compulsory education. But he said that too many people stressed the word "free"—to him, the key word was "compulsory." He added that until there were enough facilities provided for all students, education should be made neither compulsory nor free. 53

Thuraisingham explained one of the key innovations called for by the White Paper—the introduction of national-type streams in the vernacular schools alongside the vernacular streams. He said that the stress was to be on introducing these into Malay schools, but Indian and Chinese vernacular schools that were prepared to accept them would also be offered the opportunity to do so. A multi-racial Standard I would be started in a vernacular school, and each successive year an additional standard would be introduced until at the end of six years the school would have become

51 Ibid.
52 Ibid., col. 613.
53 Ibid., col. 614.
It was pointed out by Thuraisingham that the English primary school enrolment figure of 7.6 per cent, found in (b) of the motion, was a minimum figure only. Also, since it was a percentage figure, the absolute number of those in English primary schools would go up each year. And this figure did not include students in national-type schools.

His defense of Kirkby and Brinsford Lodge as places for training Malayan teachers seemed especially clear and convincing (although, as will be seen from the debate itself, for many it would have taken more than logic to change their minds on the subject, for emotions and political advantage were at least partially involved). Thuraisingham's point was that before the war the ratio of trained to untrained teachers in English primary schools in Malaya was fifteen to one, and this teaching force had to handle only 32,382 students. In 1946 the enrolment was 50,000, and in 1954 it would be 114,191. This expansion put a terrific strain on the trained teachers, for these had to supervise teachers in training during the week and teach normal students on the weekends. (What he might have added was that it put a tremendous strain on the teachers in training, too.)

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54 Ibid., cols. 614-615.
55 Ibid., cols. 615-616.
56 Ibid., cols. 616-617.
The ratio of trained to untrained teachers had, by 1952, fallen to a ratio of two to one. Thus, when Malayan Education Department leaders became aware of the availability of Kirkby, they leased it—and, similarly, later they leased Brinsford Lodge. Thuraisingham went on to claim that, so far as could be determined, educating a teacher at one of these English colleges cost the government no more than educating a teacher at a teacher training college in Malaya. 57

Furthermore, as the members all knew, one of the goals of the parents of Malaya's students was to send them to England to obtain further education. This program had allowed poor parents to achieve such a goal—for one of the major criteria in selection of students to be included in this teacher training program had been the inability of the parents to send their children overseas themselves. 58

Thuraisingham mentioned that in order to cut out the present wastage in secondary education—80 per cent of English primary students went on for secondary schooling and only 30 per cent finished—a more careful selection process should be carried out. 59 He did not, however, suggest carrying out the proposal of the White Paper for a federally administered screening examination, stating that "... we should explore

57 Ibid., col. 618.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid., col. 620.
whether a central examination was likely to be prejudicial to any section of the community." He maintained that an examination of some kind must be given—and was being given. The question was, should there be a centrally administered examination. He said this idea would be brought up and covered in more detail at a later session in the Legislative Council.60

He finished his presentation by stating that the last section of the report of the government's recommendations, that on the establishment of Local Education Authorities, had already been twice approved—when the Barnes Report was accepted in principle—and when the Education Ordinance of 1952 was passed. Therefore, this portion was included in the motion to allow the government's intentions to be clearly shown, not because there was any need to debate it or to have the Legislative Council pass on it.61

The debate which followed was long, and at times more inharmonious than any previous postwar legislative discussion of educational policy. Yet, considering the acrimonious comments that had been hurled in all directions in the year and a half before it, and the degree to which the Malayans had been split politically, the debate was a model of decorum. The verbal barbs that were tossed in the debate reflected

60 Ibid., col. 622.
61 Ibid.
the mounting rivalry between the two political factions, the Alliance and Party Negara—but with one possible exception: they did not go beyond the bounds of propriety. Overt political comments did not appear very often, but the line-up of those for and against the training of teachers at Kirkby seemed to show how party affiliations may have had some impact on the determination of certain of the positions taken in the debate. Those opposed were Alliance people; those in favor from Party Negara. 

As a corollary to the attacks on Kirkby, there was an outpouring of support for normal trained teachers from many of the speakers. They seemed to realize that even support for Kota Bharu's new teacher training college would backfire, since the Member for Education had clearly shown that it would cost just as much to educate a teacher there as in England.


63 Yeap Choong Kong, col. 655; Leong Yew Koh, col. 663; Lim Khye Seng, col. 724; Ramanathan, col. 736.

64 This, the first English-medium teacher training college to be built in Malaya, was located in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, a city in the extreme northeast of Malaya. There had been some criticism of the Education Department for locating it so far to the northeast (Sopiee, cols. 630-631). In the question period preceding the first day's debate of this Legislative Council Session, Thuraisingham had explained that the wish to foster development of the east coast had been the chief motive for building the college there (October 6, col. 565). When officially opening the college some four days later (October 11) Dato Thuraisingham stated: "This state was deliberately chosen as one of the places in which a teachers' training college should be built, so as to bring to the East coast a development that is significant and full of promise for the future."
They were forced to support the normal training scheme if they wished to attack Kirkby on economic grounds. (Economy was the usual reason for the opposition to Kirkby found in the newspaper letters and editorials on the subject, but there were some who maintained that education in England would produce teachers who did not understand nor appreciate Malaya's educational system.)

Perhaps the clearest manifestation of political speech-making occurred when one of the Alliance Chinese members launched a bitter and slashing attack on Thuraisingham and the Department of Education. Leong Yew Koh spoke of being in violent disagreement with the Special Report—and then proved his words by such statements as: "I begin remarking that our present educational troubles seem to be the result of the ineptitude, extravagances and incompetence of the Education Department." He called the department's educational policy "squandermania," and its plans to institute central examinations "diabolical." Since the idea had been tried and rejected in the past, he asked: "Have we now like the dog returned to the vomit?" He maintained that the committee was not democratic, for it represented but one political party

65 col. 661.
66 Ibid.
67 Col. 664.
68 Col. 665.
primarily (Party Negara). "Here is taxation and victimization of a vicious type without representation."69

A trend in the speeches of the day which seems surprising in the light of all that had been said by the public previously was the amount of support given to the idea of national schools. Almost no one came right out and openly opposed this idea. Many who otherwise were opposed to all that the government had been doing in educational policy supported national schools.70

Since increased school fees were not included in the government's recommendations, most speakers did not comment on the subject. Of those who did, there seemed to be a conscious awareness that more funds were needed and that parents could reasonably be expected to pay some more. One speaker made the point that all should pay school fees, not just students in English primary schools. Thus all would be equal under Malayan educational practices.71

There were suggestions from labor representatives that income taxes be increased, especially the taxes of individuals in the higher income brackets.72 But these suggestions were effectively answered by other speakers, who pointed out that

69 Col. 664.
70 Sopiee, col. 640; Yeap Choong Kong, col. 658.
71 Lim Khye Seng, col. 723.
72 Sopiee, cols. 636-637; Tan Chong Bee, col. 648.
this kind of taxation policy would scare away capital investment;\(^\text{73}\) and, furthermore, if one looked closely at countries that had high rates for large incomes, it would also be found that their income tax schedules included many more of the lower-income people than did Malaya's.\(^\text{74}\)

Many speakers expressed concern over the government's proposals to limit enrolment in English schools. They were not convinced that a lower limit, as the 7.6 per cent figure was supposed to be, would not become the precise enrolment figure adhered to by the government, rather than its lower limit.\(^\text{75}\) Others questioned whether the 7.6 per cent figure

\(^{73}\) MacLeod, col. 640; Yong Shook Lin, col. 682.

\(^{74}\) Waring, col. 716. Whether or not an increase in the income tax of Malaya was justified is a matter upon which the author hesitates to make a judgment. Certainly at this time (1954) Malaya was having its difficulties financially, and it would have seemed a poor time to try to increase income taxes. In 1956 the tax was increased (effective January 1, 1957) as follows:

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<th>1948-1956</th>
<th>1957</th>
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<tr>
<td>For every dollar of the first $500 (chargeable income)</td>
<td>First $1,500</td>
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<td>3 per cent</td>
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<td>Exceed $50,000</td>
<td>Exceed 55,000</td>
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(Annual Report, 1951, p. 72.) (Annual Report, 1957, p. 95.)

\(^{75}\) Yeap Choong Kong, col. 658; Tan Chong Bee, col. 646.
was to be applied to each state individually, or whether it was to be a national figure—and if the latter were true, how would the total be apportioned to the various states and settlements? This was a concern because some states had many more than 7.6 per cent of their eligible students enrolled in English primary schools, while the enrolment figures of other states were below 7.6 per cent. 76

The English expatriates in the Council harped on their usual point—financial considerations must come first. They evidenced a general air of "I told you so," i.e., that the Education Ordinance of 1952 was far too ambitious, and those who had pushed it through had only themselves to blame for the reactions unleashed because of failure to put it into effect. 77

PRESS REACTION.

At the end of two days of debate the motion was passed. Editorial comment was quite as expected. The English language newspapers were restrained in their comments (comments which were in general favorable).

The Straits Echo of October 8 indicated that it felt the government was still at "sixes and sevens" over the problems of education. The Malay Mail called Thuraisingham's

76 Representatives of the Penang Settlement Council, col. 698.
77 Mr. Waring, col. 714; Mr. Himsworth, col. 668.
speech a "tour de force" and stated that the debate helped to clear the air.\textsuperscript{78} The Straits Times maintained that the most satisfactory aspect of the debate was the preservation of the party truce, although at times it wore thin. However, "The more the Council examined the Education Department's intentions the more it was forced to agree with them."\textsuperscript{79}

"The Dato Wins" headlined the editorial in the\textit{ Singapore Standard}. It included support for increased fees and opposition to increased income tax and Kirkby.\textsuperscript{80} The\textit{ Malay Mail}'s editorial after the first day's debate accused the Alliance and Labour Party members' speeches of being prompted by political rather than practical considerations. It said that the Kirkby issue was being used to beat the Education Member with, and asked: "Could education such as Malaya wished be laid on a foundation of Normal trained teachers?"\textsuperscript{81}

The Chinese press continued its attacks, but now broadened them to include the 1954 White Paper.\textsuperscript{82}

As with the other newspapers in Malaya, the Malay press did not change its views as a result of the passage of the government's new implementation policies for the 1952 Education

\textsuperscript{78} October 8, 1954.
\textsuperscript{79} October 8, 1954.
\textsuperscript{80} October 9, 1954.
\textsuperscript{81}\textit{Malay Mail}, October 7, 1954.
Ordinance. The Utusan, not really happy with either the Alliance or Party Negara, contented itself with a sharp attack on Kirkby training for Malaya's teachers. The editorial asserted that Kirkby-trained teachers received special treatment just because they had been to England, while normal trained teachers were discriminated against because they were trained in Malaya. 83

Warta Negara called the Legislative Council debate on educational policy a victory for the Member for Education, Dato Thuraisingham. It suggested that once people had seen and understood what was in the Special Committee Report, they changed their minds about it. The paper admitted, though, that no amount of reading of the Special Report was going to make people agree to an increase in school fees. 84

Was the Legislative Council's approval of the 1954 White Paper a victory for Dato Thuraisingham—or for that matter, the government? The answer would seem to be both yes and no. It was a victory in that the key feature of the paper, the recommendation to introduce national-type streams into vernacular schools, was left intact. True, the proposal to increase education rates had had to be removed, but these were not the major recommendations of the paper.

Why a "no" answer must be considered lies in the fact

83 October 8, 1954.
84 October 9, 1954.
that when the future is viewed, it becomes apparent that to some extent it was the attempted introduction of national-type streams into Malay and Chinese vernacular schools that solidified the opposition to Party Negara among an influential political group, the vernacular teachers. This in turn seems to have played an important role in the defeat of Party Negara in the federal elections of 1955.

The British and Party Negara leaders attempted in the White Paper of 1954 to solve the economic difficulties of their educational policy—they failed to make any adjustments to meet the problems presented to their policy by communalism. Paradoxically, it seems, they recognized the need to overcome communalism, but they failed to recognize the threat it posed to their educational policies.

**THURAISINGHAM RESIGNS.**

And then on October 20, barely two weeks after his "victory," Dato E.E.C. Thuraisingham announced his resignation as Member for Education and as a member of the Legislative Council, the resignation to become effective as of October 23. In a letter to the government, dated October 18, 1954, he stated that his resignation was because of deteriorating health. His doctors had advised such a step many months before, but he said he had not done so previously because he wanted to see the educational policy paper completed. 85

The Chinese newspapers welcomed the move. One said

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he should have resigned long ago and only did it now because he knew he would be replaced if a new party came into power. Majlis, a Malay newspaper, claimed his resignation meant nothing to Malays, for they had neither gained nor lost by his going. Educational policy was not in his hands, anyway (implying that it was in British hands).

The Utusan Melayu carried reports that UMNO leaders were sorry to see the Dato go. Dr. Ismail, at this time Deputy President of UMNO, was quoted as saying that although they were of different parties, he had a great respect for Thuraisingham and enjoyed his humorous speeches. The Straits Times and Malay Mail both lauded his work and regretted his resignation, as did the Tamil press.

It seems hard to imagine Thuraisingham resigning for any other than health reasons. To be acquainted with the man is to be quite sure that he would have enjoyed his position very much, and especially the lively struggles it involved. The only other answer even remotely possible was that he may have felt his resignation would cut down on his party's identification with educational policy. But there was no evidence found to support this conclusion.

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86 China Press, October 21, 1954.
87 October 21, 1954.
88 October 21, 1954.
89 Tamil Nesan, October 22, 1954.
Thus ended the era of Thuraisingham. Whether the policies he advocated actually originated with him or not, and it is the author's opinion that Thuraisingham was probably largely influenced by his colleagues in, first, the Communities Liaison Committee, and, later, the I.M.P. and Party Negara. Thuraisingham himself pressed these ideas with such conviction that one must assume that they had become his by the time he presented them—so much so, that his name was indelibly identified with the legislation that emerged on educational policy in the period from 1952 to 1954. While it is true that the laws passed during his term in office were not to remain long in the books, these laws were destined to furnish the platform from which educational policy in Malaya was to be shaped and implemented in the future.

90 Suggestions as to the source of Thuraisingham's inspiration for his ideas on education range from Onn to Thuraisingham's secretary while in office, L.H.N. Davis. Thuraisingham himself says he got some of his ideas from the educational system of Ceylon and from the English system. (Interviews with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; Mubin Sheppard, October 3, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; Dato Zainal Abidin, November 9, 1966, Kuala Lumpur; Thuraisingham, November 2, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)
CHAPTER XIII
IMPLEMENTING THE WHITE PAPER, 1954
OCTOBER 1954--JULY 1955

1955 FEDERAL ELECTIONS.

The differences in the circumstances that influenced educational policy in the 1954 period and those that affected it in 1955 were these:

(1) Whereas in 1954 expressions of Malay opinion on education originated from either Malay political leaders or Malay newspaper editors, in 1955 it was also the Malay teachers—and indirectly, through votes on whether or not to accept national-type schools, the Malay kampong dwellers—who let the country know their feelings about educational policy.

(2) Whereas in 1954 the Chinese community provided most of the recorded comment on the educational policy of the government, in 1955 it was the Malay community that came to provide the most copy on educational policy.

(3) (As a corollary to No. 2), whereas in 1954 the government had only to counter the opposition of the Chinese to the Education Ordinance of 1952, in 1955 the government found it necessary to meet the opposition of the Malays as well.

(4) Whereas in 1954 there was still some doubt as to the relative strength of the two major Malayan political parties, in 1955 the supremacy of the Alliance became clearly established.

The results of the 1955 federal elections were to have a
definite, perhaps a decisive, effect on the development of educational policy in Malaya—and this was not, as one would suppose, just because a new government was brought into being by these elections, although this was, of course, an important factor. What was more important was just which people had furnished the support that had enabled the men of the new government to win their seats in the new Federal Legislative Council.

The struggle for Legislative Council seats was thought to be primarily one between the Alliance and Party Negara. The Alliance Party put up a total of 52 candidates. (There were 52 seats available out of a total of 98 in the Council—the other 46 seats being nominated by the British High Commissioner.) Of the 52 Alliance candidates, 35 were Malays, 15 were Chinese, and 2 were Indians. Party Negara entered 30 candidates in the elections, all but one of whom were Malays—the other being Chinese. There were 65 other candidates who, except for 18 independent candidates, represented five other political parties.

Of the 52 constituencies involved in the elections, only 2 had less than 50 per cent Malay registered voters; while

1 The announcement that the Malayan Indian Congress (M.I.C.) had joined the Alliance was made on October 13, 1954. (See Malay Mail, October 13, 1954.)

in 37 they made up more than 75 per cent of those eligible to vote. No constituency had more than 15 per cent Indians voting. Only federal citizens over the age of twenty-one were eligible to register for this election.

It has been estimated that there were approximately 1,600,000 potential electors in Malaya in 1954, and of these, 1,250,000 were Malays. And thus, if every eligible federal citizen had registered, the Malays would have made up about 75 per cent of the electorate. As it was, the registration produced a result of 84.2 per cent Malays, 11.2 per cent Chinese, and 4.6 per cent Indians.

It can be seen from the above figures that the party which successfully controlled the Malay votes would have little trouble winning. No one was sure just how the rural people would vote when it came to choosing between Party Negara and the Alliance, for most elections prior to the federal elections of 1955 had been municipal. There had been two state elections: one in Johore and the other in Trengganu, and in each the Alliance had swept to victory. But for some reason or other most political observers of the time did not heed the implications of the results of these elections.

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3 Ibid., pp. 10, 11.
4 Ibid., p. 8.
5 Ibid., p. 10.
6 Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process, p. 185.
7 Miller, Prince and Premier, pp. 163, 172, 175.
At the same time as the 1955 federal election campaigning took place, the Malays were beginning to reveal their reactions to the move on the part of the government to have the various state Education Departments initiate national-type streams into Malay vernacular schools. In January of 1955, with the reopening of the new school term, the Malay teachers became more fully aware of the threat presented by the introduction of national-type streams into their schools. The teachers saw that, if accepted and introduced, the new streams would mean that whereas in the past they, the Malay vernacular teachers, had been among the most important members of the rural communities, now a more highly trained and respected (because they spoke English) group of teachers would move in and relegate the Malay vernacular teachers to a less important position in their society. Also, for many there was a genuine fear that they would lose their jobs, for they thought it was the government's aim to have national-type streams completely supplant the Malay school, and they were not qualified to teach in these national-type schools. Some teachers suspected that even if the government did not plan it that way, the fact that many a Malay would rather send his child to a national-type stream than to an old-style Malay vernacular one would cause a retrenchment of many Malay vernacular teaching jobs.  

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8 See editorial in Majlis, February 8, 1955, for comment on kampong Malay parents' desire to send their children to English schools.
Finally, there was the conviction held by many Malay vernacular teachers, that the emphasis being placed on the introduction of these national-type streams into Malay schools was but the opening of the final campaign of the government to displace the Malay language with English, or if not that, to relegate it permanently to a position of a language fit only for the bazaar.

One of the first indications that the Malay teachers might be thinking about the effects of having national-type streams introduced into their schools came when Captain Mohamed Ali, Assistant Inspector of Malay Schools, Selangor, felt obliged to announce to the public that the Selangor Malay Teachers Union (he was its advisor) was not opposed to national schools. Rather, he said the union believed that national schools would be in the interest of Malays and would not eliminate the Malay language. The Utusan took issue with what it called Captain Mohamed Ali's opinion that there was no need to oppose national schools. The editorial said, on the contrary—there was no hope for Malay schools if the policies of the 1954 White Paper on Education were carried out, for its provisions restricted Malay education to primary school levels only.

However, it was not until late January and early February

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9 Utusan Melayu, October 14, 1954.
10 November 2, 1954.
of 1955 that the Malay teachers' unions of the various states of Malaya began to issue statements opposing the introduction of national-type classes in Malay schools.\textsuperscript{11} In May the Federation of Malay Teachers Association unanimously rejected the national-type school scheme.\textsuperscript{12}

The Johore Teachers Union gave as its reason for opposing national school streams in Malay schools that (1) they were contrary to the Barnes Report; (2) they would cause all Malay schools to be closed down; and (3) they were not conducive to helping the \textit{ra'ayat} (common people) of Malaya march towards self-government.\textsuperscript{13}

Also appearing frequently were references by individual Malay teachers or their leaders condemning the introduction of national-type streams into vernacular schools. For example, in January Mohammed Noor, President of the Federation of Malay Teachers Union, expressed regret that the Member for Education, Whitfield,\textsuperscript{14} had seen fit to accuse Malay teachers of giving "selfish opposition" to national schools.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} \textit{Utusan Melayu}, May 11, 1955.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid., February 1, 1955.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Whitfield became Member for Education after the resignation of Thuraisingham, with the understanding that he would continue in this job only until after the results of the federal elections were known. (Government Press Statement, January 29, 1955.)
\item \textsuperscript{15} \textit{Majlis}, January 27, 1955.
\end{itemize}
At a large meeting of Malay teachers in Malacca, Tuan Lebai Jais (a Malay vernacular teacher) claimed that if the national school scheme was put into effect, then after a few years Malay teachers would become puppets, even if the government kept its promises that they would not be dismissed from teaching.\textsuperscript{16}

An official of the Selangor Malay Teachers Union, when announcing that his union was going to oppose the introduction of national-type classes into Malay schools, said these classes would "stagnate Malay education and culture," and later result in depriving Malay teachers of their jobs.\textsuperscript{17} (Apparently Captain Mohammad Ali did not speak for the Selangor teachers when he issued his statement on October 14.)

Malay school teachers in Kuala Lumpur said they were convinced that the Selangor Education Department's plan to set up national-type classes would mean the gradual destruction of the Malay language. The teachers were also worried about their positions if such classes were introduced.\textsuperscript{18}

It was apparent that the federal government was well aware of the fears and discontent of the Malay teachers. In February, a memorandum from the Director of Education to all State Chief Education Officers included excerpts from a

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., February 11, 1955.
\textsuperscript{17} Malay Mail, February 10, 1955.
\textsuperscript{18} Utusan Melayu, February 5, 1955.
The Perak Education Officer's report talked of Malay teachers' concerns about national-type streams. These concerns had been brought out in meetings between Perak Education Department officials and the Malay teachers in the Kuala Kangsar region of Perak. It became evident during these meetings that the most common fear of the Malay teachers was that there would be a gradual elimination of Malay teachers—or at least a decrease in their number, and this fear led them to believe, therefore, that the standard of Malay education would be lowered instead of raised with the introduction of the national-type school plan.\(^{20}\)

The memorandum from the Director of Education listed several points brought up by the teachers at these meetings in Perak, and went on to give arguments which the local officials might use to counter these points in their dealings with the teachers. The list included the following:

(1) The frequent talk about raising the standard of Malay education implied that what the Malay teacher was now doing was not acceptable. This complaint was difficult to counter, said the memorandum, because the answer given to the teachers should be that the standard of education in Malay schools was dependent on the standard of the teachers in these

\(^{19}\) Kelantan Education Files, No. 4 of 1953, Memorandum from Payne for the Director of Education, February 19, 1955.  
\(^{20}\) Ibid.
But it was obviously unwise to antagonize Malay gurus (teachers) unnecessarily by saying this. It suggested instead that perhaps the local officials could use a positive counter-argument along the lines that what mattered was the progress of the Malays. Or perhaps some comparison with the progress of other races might stimulate thought.

(2) With the acceptance of the national school plan the Malay schools would become "suppressed," while the Chinese schools would be allowed to go unhindered in their expansion. A suggested answer was that national schools would in reality be good for the Malays--and many Chinese, by refusing the national school plan, were throwing away their chances for improved English education. Furthermore, some Chinese were trying to induce the Malays to throw away their chances too, since the Chinese already had superiority in most fields--because a larger percentage of their community received an education in English secondary schools and universities.

(3) Not only would the introduction of school fees (national-type English-medium streams would have fees; Malay vernacular schools were free, as would be the national-type Malay-medium streams) hit Malay children most heavily, but such a measure would contravene treaties with the Malay sultans which called for free education for Malay children. The memorandum suggested that the local officials remind the teachers that remission of fees for Malays was a common
government policy.

(4) "Special Malay Classes" would be ended under the national school scheme. The answer to this concern was that it simply was not so. The classes would remain unreduced.

(5) Children from national-type streams would be unable to compete with English school or Chinese school graduates for places in secondary schools. One response to this assertion would be to explain that the Malay children were now at a disadvantage when trying for places in secondary schools, but they would not be if they had had six years of English-medium national-type stream education.

Some of the listed complaints of the Malay teachers were not given suggested answers. These included: (1) that there would be no religious instruction for the Malay children in the national schools; (2) that the Malay language would not become the official language of the government after independence; and (3) that the hope for a Malay university in which all subjects would be taught through the medium of Malay would remain a forlorn hope. It was apparently assumed that these complaints could be handled by the local education officers without the help of the federal Department of Education.²¹ (It was also apparent from other statements made by Education Department officials that they were aware of the teachers' concern for their jobs, but this question was not

²¹ Ibid.
Meanwhile, the Malay people themselves were acting on the request of the Education Department to decide whether or not they wanted national-type streams. In the months preceding the 1955 federal elections, the Malay vernacular newspapers carried daily reports of the decisions made locally as to whether these would be accepted or rejected. (Accepting the idea did not always mean that a community was given a national-type stream, for there were not nearly enough teachers to fulfill the demand.)

It was found that of the many reports, there were about three reports per newspaper per day, the balance seemed to lean a little to the side of nonacceptance of national-type streams, but it was close.

Besides the meetings held in individual kampongs to decide on whether or not to accept a national-type stream for their schools, there were also large rallies called under various pretexts in which votes were taken which registered approval or disapproval of national-type streams being

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22 See below, p. 392.


24 See also comments in Malay papers that concluded the same thing, e.g., Majlis, December 20, 1954. These newspapers usually referred to these schools as Sekolah Kebangsaan (National Schools), although it was national-type streams that were really under consideration.
introduced into Malay schools. 25

Two themes which recurred whenever reasons were included with the newspaper reports on the decisions taken by the Malay communities on introducing national-type streams into their schools were (1) that if there were going to be national-type streams, they should emphasize Malay rather than English; 26 and (2) that there should be Malay secondary schools. 27

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE ACCEPTANCE.

During the pre-election period there were attempts made by the government to convince the Malays to accept the introduction of national-type streams into vernacular schools as was laid out in the 1954 White Paper.

One technique which the government used to this end was to publish enthusiastic reports of Malays clamoring for national-type education. E.M.F. Payne, Deputy Director of Education, issued such a report in late December of 1954. He claimed that in some states the demand was so great that it would exceed the quota for 1955. This had already happened in Negri Sembilan, and he expected the situation would be the

25 See for example Utusan Melayu, January 7, 8, 17, February 1, 2 in 1955; Warta Negara, January 18, 1955; Majlis, January 22, February 3, 7, in 1955.


same in Perak, Johore, Selangor, and Kelantan. 28

That this was not entirely false propaganda was shown by a letter from the Chief Education Officer of Kelantan to the Director of Education, dated January 31, 1955. In it Jones, the Chief Education Officer, said that he had found no organized resistance to national-type streams in his state, but only enthusiasm. The only trouble was, he could not meet the demands, since his staff situation would not permit it. While there were thirteen places that had agreed to take national-type classes, he was only able to start one, and that one at the state capital, Kota Bharu. 29

In February Whitfield gave a talk on Radio Malaya entitled: "The Policy of the Government of the Federation of Malaya for Malay Schools." He first reaffirmed that the main purpose of educational policy was to make a happy Malayan society which would include boys and girls working together in common schools, receiving their education in a common language and without prejudice or damage to their individual traditional cultures. Next he said that additional government money was going to Malay vernacular schools for three purposes: to institute streams of national-type classes; to meet increases in teachers' salaries; and, to continue support for Malay streams started in the last few years such that the students

29 *Kelantan Education Files*, No. 4 of 1955.
could complete their six-year program of education.

He asserted that the Malays need not fear that their children would learn less of their own language in the new national-type streams. Ten periods a week were to be used for Malay language and religion in the first two years, and twelve periods in the last four years. He explained that at that time the average Malay child attended the vernacular school for only three years before dropping out. Now if they attended an English-medium school, they stayed for six years. Therefore, in the national-type stream they could be expected to learn more Malay than they had in the Malay vernacular school. Furthermore, he added, it was not true that students of these schools would be forbidden to attend Koran classes after school.

He assured his listeners that it was not true that when an English-medium national-type stream was introduced into a school, the whole school must become an English-medium school in six years. Rather, there would come to be two streams of education in the same buildings: Malay and English.

Also, he promised: "The introduction of English-medium classes will not result in the retrenchment of a single Malay teacher." He said that the reason for this lay in the fact that these teachers would be needed to continue their work in the present Malay schools as teachers, for the Malay classes in the national-type streams, in new ra'ayat schools (those set up by the people, not the government—but oftendlater taken
over by the government), or in English-medium national-type schools as teachers of Malay.

Whitfield took considerable time to explain how important an English education was to the Malays. He said that in the past Malays had been neglected because the English schools were in the cities, while the Malays lived in the rural areas. And then he made what should have been his most telling point (one that is still being used by Malayans who want English education when they argue with conservative Malay leaders who want Malay language education for all). He said: "I also know many thousands of Malay teachers in vernacular schools throughout the Federation. As teachers they should know the type of education which is best for Malay boys and girls and they will seek to send their own children to the schools which give that type of education which they believe to be best.

Now I would ask Malay parents to think of all the Malay teachers they know with children of their own and to consider how many of them have sent or have tried to send their own children to English schools. Example is better than precept. You may safely be guided by the example the Malay teachers set you in this respect." 30

30 Government Press Statement, February 8, 1955. Whether or not it was actually true that Malay teachers wanted to send their children to English schools at that time, it seemed to be true in 1965–1966. (Author's conversations with Malay teachers throughout Malaysia.)
"SEKOLAH KEBANGSAAN".

One of the most interesting of the government attempts to convince the Malays that national schools were to their advantage was contained in a lengthy paper prepared by Mohammed Yusof bin Ahmad, who had been a member of both the Special Committee responsible for preparing the White Paper of 1954 and the Select Committee of the Legislative Council that had prepared the report which led to the Education Ordinance of 1952. In fact, this man and Thuraisingham were the only two men common to both committees. His paper was entitled: "Sekolah Kebangsaan" ("National Schools") and was some ten pages in length in its Malay version. There was an English version, but it was issued only to education officials as a guide for the translation of the Malay version.31

The paper began by reviewing the support given to national schools by outstanding Malayans in the past two and one half years, including quotations from Dato Abdul Razak, Dr. Ismail, Colonel H.S. Lee, and Rajagopal.32 However, the major portion of Mohammed Yusof's paper attempted to anticipate and answer the major criticisms directed toward national schools from amongst the Malays. He also included arguments as to why the proposed national-type streams were of great

31 Page numbers refer to the English version. The papers are not dated, but reference is made to them in Majlis (editorial), January 13, 1955.

advantage to the Malays.

On the question of the danger presented to the Malay language by national-type education, he said that although the Malays cried "raise the standard of the Malay language," how was it to be done? In the five hundred years since the Malays had embraced Islam they had had to learn Arabic to study Islamic religious precepts—for to this day, how much of the knowledge of Islam was to be found within the Malay language? 33

Yusof maintained that the history of the growth of the Malay language in the last one hundred years showed that this growth took place best when in conjunction with another language already developed, i.e., English. 34

Further, people who opposed having the kampong folk learn English because they said it was the language of the administration, had themselves already done so. "... Why then should the kampong folk have to be encaged in the Malay language only." 35

He reminded his readers that in the future there would be times when employment in Malaya would be difficult to find, and when those times came, people with a command of English would be better able to obtain jobs. Therefore, Malay children

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33 Ibid., p. 4.
34 Ibid., pp. 8, 9.
35 Ibid., p. 4.
should obtain a knowledge of English.\textsuperscript{36}

Yusof went on to point out that Malaya's present leaders desired independence as much as leaders have anywhere, but because they wanted independence from the West, this did not mean that they hated either the British or their language. The Malays should follow the example of other races in Malaya. They should rise up and assimilate knowledge, knowledge that could only be found at that time in other than the Malay language.\textsuperscript{37}

Yusof reviewed the reasons the Chinese did not favor national schools, and showed that these reasons did not apply to Malays. He said: "If, however, the Malays are pressed into refusing national schools because they do not properly understand their aims they will not be aware that they are being used as tools by the Chinese."\textsuperscript{38}

Regarding Malay teachers, he gave categorical assurances that they would not be eliminated. Rather, they would, in the years to come, become increasingly better trained, having both English and Malay as their languages. (This, of course, did not reassure those Malay teachers who were at that time the backbone of opposition, because they were not in a position to take this additional training.)\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., pp. 4-5.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 5.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., p. 6.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
He said that national schools would mean an increase in
the number of Malay students going on to secondary school
education, and eventually to the university. Also, there
would be more Malays in teacher training colleges. Students
who only completed a six-year primary course would not be
limited in the future to going to Tanjong Malim and Malacca
(the Malay teacher training colleges). Instead, they could
attend evening classes in English.40

After asserting that a considerable number of Malays had
already accepted national schools (quoting the Singapore
Standard of December 30, 1954 to support his point)41 he
concluded with: "The Malays should unite to support the heads
of UMNO and Party Negara, because in the problem of education,
the two parties are in agreement, and have reached the same
conclusions. We of Malaya know more about the position of
our language than some clever people from Singapore who wish
to make all languages official."42

NOTES ON . . . ENGLISH . . . INTO MALAY VERNACULAR SCHOOLS.

There was also a government paper issued to the state
Education Departments at about the same time as Yusof's paper
appeared. In included information that could be used to con­
vince the Malays that national-type streams should be introduced

40 Ibid., p. 7.
41 Ibid., pp. 9, 10.
42 Ibid., p. 11.
in their schools. This paper was entitled: "Notes on the
Introduction of English Medium Classes into Malay Vernacular
Schools."43 A chart was included showing the enrolment
figures of the various races in government and aided English
schools. The chart illustrated that the Malays composed only
26.9 per cent of all enrolments in such schools in 1954. The
paper asked: "How many Malay doctors, engineers, lawyers,
accountants and so on are there? Why are there so few?" It
contended that no matter what language policy was pursued in
the next ten years, English was going to furnish the path
to responsible posts in the government. It assured Malays
that the new national-type schools would not cause the Malay
language to be lost to the Malays. Instead, Malay would be
strengthened because it would be in more demand at secondary
and higher education levels. Malays entering these higher
levels of education would aid in enriching the Malay language,
since "New words and technical vocabulary can only come by
the study of the subjects which use them."

Religious instruction in national-type streams would
be under the control of State Religious Affairs Departments.
As for Malay teachers, since 4 per cent retire each year,
Tanjong Malim and Malacca teacher training colleges would be
needed to furnish replacements for these retiring teachers.

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43 This paper was not dated, but there is evidence from its
contents which indicates that it was prepared in late 1954,
for it was after the White Paper was passed and before
schools opened in January of 1955.
Actually, the need for Malay teachers would increase as Malay trained teachers extended their work to other schools. The paper concluded by asking the question: "How many Malay teachers have sons or daughters of their own in English schools?"

POLITICAL LEADERS' EDUCATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS.

It has been mentioned that this upsurge in Malay concern for educational policy implementation took place while the election campaigning was going on. While most of the campaign speeches of the leaders of both Party Negara and the Alliance (primarily UMNO, since the Alliance membership was well aware that it was Malay votes which would determine most contests) were noncommittal on the problems of educational policy, there were enough public comments made by leaders of both parties on the subject to leave little doubt as to their attitudes toward introducing national-type streams into Malay vernacular schools.

In January a long statement on educational policy was issued by Tunku Abdul Rahman, UMNO president. While much of it was of a general nature, there were some indications of his views towards English education for Malays. He declared that educational policy was still under the control of the colonial power, and that the British government had for years been using educational policy as a weapon to perpetuate its rule. He contended that the British government had done a great injustice to Malays by not giving them the same
educational opportunities as it had given non-Malays. Admittedly its policy had included allowing Malays to enter English school at Kuala Kangsar, but to the poorer Malays the British had offered an education only at Malay vernacular schools. There were a few Malays who were given scholarships to English schools, but most received no English training. In the meantime, children of other races living in towns, whose parents were better off economically, had had more opportunities to enter English schools.

He said that to discover what should be done about this, the Malays had urged the government to invite experts on education to come to Malaya and prepare a report on Malay education. Barnes had come, and his report had said that English was the language which would enable the peoples of the colonies to improve their position in the economic, political, and social fields.

As an outgrowth of the Barnes Report (and others), in 1952 a Select Committee of the Legislative Council had, after giving thought to the matter, recommended two types of national schools. One would have Malays learn English, while using Malay as the main medium of instruction. The other would have them learn Malay, while having English as their medium of instruction.

The Tunku said that these national schools would help the Malays living in kampongs far away from town— that they were an opportunity for the Malays, if all that was wanted was a better education. If, however, the Malays wanted the
Malay language strengthened, they would have to wait until Malaya achieved its independence. "When we are the slaves of others this is the best we can get." 44

An editorial in the same issue of *Malaya Merdeka* agreed that if Malays were looking for an education, national schools would provide the answer, and if it was a strengthened language they wanted, that was a different matter. It claimed that the UMNO-M.C.A. Alliance had its own plan for education, which would appear after independence.

Three days later the *Utusan Zaman* (the Sunday edition of the *Utusan Melayu*) stated editorially that if UMNO leaders thought that the policies of the colonial government were so bad, why did not they oppose them now? Waiting until after independence was a passive attitude which the *Utusan* decried. 45

Another indication of the Tunku's views on national-type streams was revealed when he directed a series of questions to the Member for Education in the Legislative Council meeting of March 30, 1955. One of his questions was: How many national-type streams have been set up in Malay vernacular schools? When the answer was given that none had been set up as yet, for it took at least five years to introduce the complete national-type stream into a vernacular school, the Tunku's response, rather than registering disapproval

of the policy of introducing national-type streams into Malay vernacular schools, expressed impatience that the policy had not been implemented more rapidly.\textsuperscript{46}

Perhaps the most significant utterance in the light of what was to happen later was contained in a speech given to a meeting in Kuala Lipis by Dato Abdul Razak (at that time vice-president of UMNO and Acting Mentri Besar of Pahang). He emphasized that the aim of national-type streams was to create a united Malayan citizenship. He said they provided the best way for Malays to achieve educational progress. He warned that if Malays rejected this scheme, their standard of education would not improve.\textsuperscript{47}

That Malay leaders of the Alliance supported national-type education was reaffirmed by Maidin bin Mohamed Ibrahim, Chairman of UMNO, Trengganu, and member of the Trengganu State Council. He said that the present national-type streams were right for Malayan national education, and gave assurances that the Alliance would safeguard the interests of the Malay language in education.\textsuperscript{48}

In a companion statement, reported in the same article, the Mentri Besar of Trengganu, after affirming that the

\textsuperscript{46} Proceedings, 1955 (a new series of Legislative Council records were begun after the 1955 elections in July), col. 15.
\textsuperscript{47} Utusan Melayu, March 25, 1955.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., February 12, 1955.
object of introducing English classes in Malay schools was not to eliminate the Malay language, went on to insist that the Malay teachers would not be a bit affected by the scheme, because existing Malay school curricula would not be changed. 49

However, not all UMNO's membership conformed to the views of their leaders. For instance, at a meeting of the Ulu Langat division of UMNO, the President of the division attempted to explain the values of national-type streams for Malays. A delegate interrupted in protest, and said that what the President had been saying was an insult to the Malay language. (The president had said an education in only the Malay language would not provide a man with the opportunity to make a decent living.)

The delegate went on to claim that what the Malays really wanted was knowledge. All the knowledge now given children in English schools should be given to children in Malay schools—in the Malay language. 50 The outcome of the meeting was that it voted to oppose the introduction of national-type streams in Malay schools. 51

There was no evidence that the UMNO leaders at any time criticized openly the Malay teachers for their opposition to

49 Ibid.
50 Malay Mail, February 2, 1955.
51 Majlis, February 3, 1955.
national-type streams being introduced into Malay vernacular schools. In contrast, Dato Onn, the leader of Party Negara, while he quite naturally supported the national-type scheme of education for Malays (it was men of his party that had produced the scheme) was highly critical of the Malay teachers' opposition.

In February Onn condemned both the UMNO and the Malay teachers—who he said had instigated Malays to oppose national-type streams. It was natural that Chinese would oppose these, because they had their own scheme of education, including a university—but the Malays should not oppose something that was to their advantage.52

The Utusan Zaman rose to the defense of the teachers, asserting that they should be politically-minded. It was because most Malay education was of such poor quality that the teachers had become politically-minded.53 Two days later Utusan commented editorially on Onn's statement (that it was the Malay teachers' agitating among the Malays that had led Malays to oppose national-type streams). The fact was, said the editorial, the majority of Malays in the country had already opposed the scheme. However, even if it had been the teachers who were responsible for convincing other Malays to oppose national-type streams, at least they had right on their

53 February 27, 1955.
side; so if they had convinced others, that was so much the better. 54

FIVE GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS FOR CHINESE SCHOOLS.

Meanwhile, what of the Chinese attitudes toward education during this period? They had indicated almost from the day of its passage that most of them had wanted no part of the policies found in the Education Ordinance of 1952 that affected Chinese education. The White Paper of 1954 then was all the more galling to these Chinese, just because for almost two years they had been telling the government how much they dis­liked the Education Ordinance of 1952. Now, when the government had the chance, it had made practically no changes in its educational policies concerning Chinese education.

Reaffirmed Chinese opposition to national-type streams was revealed by a letter dated October 14, 1955, from the United Chinese Teachers Association. (This was the national association of Chinese teachers' unions.) The letter was sent to the Member for Education, Dato Thuraisingham, and released to the public on October 23 by the government. 55 In this letter the association asked Thuraisingham to explain how the conclusion that Chinese vernacular schools were in such shape that the report of the Special Committee of which he was chairman had included the statement that: "... we are unanimously of

54 March 2, 1955.

the opinion that the general standards of vernacular education are low and that the sooner National-type education can be provided the better it will be for everyone. ..." 

The Chinese association's letter claimed that this was just a pretext used by the government to eliminate vernacular schools from Malaya. What concrete facts were used to arrive at this conclusion?

Thuraisingham's letter of reply, dated October 21 but also released on October 23, said that the government's opinion on this matter had been based primarily on figures which showed the average length of time spent in school by children who attended Malaya's vernacular schools. According to the figures, the average Chinese student stayed 3.3 years in a Chinese vernacular school, a Malay student 2.8 years in his school, and an Indian 1.9 years. At the same time the average length of time a student stayed in an English-medium school was over five years. Also, he added, since the education of a child in Malaya was in part to prepare him to live in a plural society, it was best that the student be schooled in such an environment, i.e., in national-type streams.

In November there was a brief hiatus in Chinese attacks on educational policy, while Sir Tan Cheng Lock attempted to intervene once again with the High Commissioner on behalf of Chinese education. The Chinese Teachers Association issued a

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56 Council Paper No. 67 of 1954, p. 21, paragraph 58.
press statement that it was deferring its opposition to the new educational policy until after the results of these meetings were known.57

Apparently the talks were not successful, for a week later Sir Tan, in an interview, strongly defended Chinese schools and explained that the Chinese were "genuinely frightened that it is the government's idea to eliminate Chinese education." He was quoted further as saying: "The Chinese strongly object to having English and Malay classes in Chinese schools. They say it is the thin edge of the wedge towards closing Chinese schools."58

A Government Press Release of January 6, 1955, contained a copy of a letter sent by the Education Department to the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce of Malaya. The letter indicated that Chinese educationalists had come to the government and asked for more money in order to open new Chinese classes. They had claimed that these classes were needed because the government had had to turn down quite a few applicants for government English schools when schools reopened in January, and many of these rejected students were enrolling in Chinese schools. The government answered: If you agree to make the new classes English-medium, i.e., national-type streams, we will give you money for teachers and supplies.

57 Malay Mail, November 8, 1954.
58 Ibid., November 15, 1955.
After all, it added, since these students were English school rejects, they had wanted English-medium schooling in the first place. 59

The Chinese would have none of this and proceeded to set up private, non-aided classes in their already government-aided Chinese primary schools. 60 The government's answer was to issue five regulations to be carried out before these non-aided classes could be registered—and registration was required by law.

However, on January 7, just five days before the regulations regarding new classes in nongovernment Chinese schools were to be issued, the government released a three-page statement to the press entitled: "Government Policy Toward Chinese Schools." The statement set out once again the general educational policy aims of the government as found in the 1952 Ordinance, stressing common language and having the various races educated together "without damage or prejudice to their own natural and traditional cultures." The government went on to assert that the ordinance was misunderstood because undue emphasis was often placed on some of its minor sections. The statement maintained that the main problem of the government vis a vis the Education Ordinance of 1952 was how to implement


it with limited funds, and naturally the government tended to favor its own policies in the allocation of these funds. But at no time did the government intend to destroy the culture of any race. The statement agreed that as far as finances would permit, it was the government's responsibility to provide education for Chinese. But, "This is not the same thing as saying that Government must provide Chinese schools. . . ." The government intended to continue its present aid to Chinese schools, but was not going to add any money to the amount already given. The exception would be if the Chinese were willing to accept national-type streams in their Chinese schools. "It is not a policy of destroying, but of creating new opportunities. . . ." 61

On January 12 the regulations on non-aided Chinese school classes were issued by the Education Department to the Chinese schools and the state Education Departments. The regulations stated that these classes were to be registered as separate schools. They must have separate rooms. Their accounts must be kept separately, and they must have a separate headmaster and staff. The aided school staff could not work in these classes if the classes were held either in the morning or met for a full session in the afternoon.

When these regulations were sent to the Chief Education Officers of the various states and settlements, a covering

letter was included. The second paragraph of this letter said: "Although this circular sets out the regulations which you should impose in granting permission to start such classes it should be emphasized that you should do what you can to discourage the formation of such classes because such accommodation as is available would be better employed housing National-type streams."62

A month later, on February 17, a letter from a group of Chinese school managers and headmasters in Malacca to the Chief Education Officer, Malacca, was duplicated by the federal Department of Education and sent to all Chief Education Officers, along with the federal Education Department's point by point comments on the questions posed by the Chinese in the letter.63

In the letter to the Malacca Chief Education Officer the Chinese claimed they had made application for government aid for additional classes in their schools almost a year before the 1954 White Paper on Education had been passed, and they had therefore expected that the teachers in these new classes would receive government aid. In October, 1954, they were informed that this aid was refused. The Chinese pointed out that in the letter of refusal there was no mention of any


63 Kelantan Education Files, No. 3 of 1955.
conditions that these new classes must meet, but five days after the school opened in January, 1955, notification of these five conditions was received.

The Chinese insisted that their schools were already registered, and these were just additional classes. They claimed that placing two headmasters in the same school would cause confusion.

The Department of Education's reactions to the letter's contentions were contained in a set of instructions sent to the Chief Education Officer of Malacca. The instructions were: (1) Do not deal with headmasters, only managers on these questions. (2) These schools had no grounds for argument because they rejected government's offer to furnish English-medium classes. (3) Exceptions to some of the five conditions for additional Chinese classes could be given, but none of the conditions would be withdrawn. 64

A short time later another letter was sent to all Chief Education Officers in which it was stated that while the Member for Education had met with much protest from the Malayan-Chinese Association Education Central Committee, he had decided that the conditions as laid out were necessary. He reminded all concerned that these regulations affected all schools which had non-aided as well as aided classes, and not just Chinese primary schools. 65

64 Kelantan Education Files, No. 3 of 1955, February 17, 1955.
65 Ibid., Letter from Swan (for Director of Education) to Chief Education Officer of Kelantan, March 5, 1955.
On March 31 a Government Press Release was given out entitled, "Additional Un-aided Classes in Salary Contribution Scheme Chinese Primary Schools." It reiterated the last part of the Department of Education's letter of March 3—i.e., that it was not only Chinese schools that were affected by the regulations for additional classes in private schools. The press statement also included additional comment that seemed to indicate some softening of the original hard line taken by the government toward the Chinese school managements. It pointed out that opening new classes which received no aid from the government was not exceptional, for many large missionary schools had them. It announced that there was a modification regarding the requirement that the new classes must have a separate headmaster. The release put forward the idea that while a separate headmaster must be there if an additional full session was taught, for the purposes of general discipline in the two sessions a common supervisor of the school, with overriding authority, might be instituted.

For a couple of months there was a lull in the government's efforts to enforce the new conditions in the Chinese schools. For example, in April the Director of Education sent out a notice that no action should be taken at that time towards those Chinese schools having non-aided classes not

conforming to the five conditions. 67

In early May another letter on the subject from the Director of Education said that opposition to separate registration was declining. 68 But in mid-May the Federation of Chinese School Management Committees Association announced that it would take legal action if any Chinese schools were closed for disobeying the government's regulations to register the new classes in private Chinese schools. 69

Some four days later a memorandum from the Education Department stated that closing of schools would occur only as a last resort. 70

Just how complete the government's efforts to get the Chinese schools to conform to the five conditions were was indicated when the government admitted that a seventeen-day campaign by the Superintendent of Chinese Schools in Selangor to get the Chinese schools of that state registered had ended in failure. At one point the Education Department officials who had conducted the campaign, asked the Chinese why they were not going to register their schools. They answered: "We are not going to give you any reasons: we have decided--

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67 Kelantan Education Files, No. 3 of 1955, Form Letter from Payne, Acting Director of Education, to Chief Education Officer, Kelantan.


69 Malay Mail, May 12, 1955.

70 Kelantan Education Files, No. 145 of 1955, Report on a meeting of Chief Education Officers and Superintendents of
we are not going to register." It was in this same article that the government first stated publicly the reason for its concern over this issue: It did not want the same school to be both private and government-aided, for it was the government's fear that part of the government aid money would go to run the private portion of the school. 71

ELECTION RESULTS.

The political implications of Chinese educational policy were smoothed over within the Alliance. In January of 1955 representatives of the M.C.A. Central Committee on Education, UMNO, the United Chinese Teachers Association, the Chinese School Management Committees Association, and the Malayan-Indian Education Committee held talks on what the Alliance policy towards Chinese education would be if they came to power. 72 It was agreed at that time that the Chinese would drop their demands to have Chinese made a third official language, and in return they were promised that Clauses 18, 19, and 20 of the Education Ordinance, 1952, would not be enforced if the Alliance came to power. (These were the clauses that said the government would not support

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71 Malay Mail, May 20, 1955.
nongovernment schools when a national school was available in the area.)

Dato Onn and Party Negara tried hard to brand the Alliance as an M.C.A.—Chinese Chamber of Commerce dominated party, and UMNO has having betrayed the Malays. The M.C.A. Yellow Paper on Education was often referred to by them as proof of the desire of the Alliance to support Chinese as another official language, but this apparently had little effect, for when the results of the election were in, everyone of the 15 Alliance Chinese candidates had won—and only 3 of them did not have Malay opposition. (Seven of the twelve Malays they faced were in Party Negara.)

The Alliance had swept to a decisive victory, gaining 51 out of the 52 seats contested. Their only defeat came at the hands of a Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (P.M.I.P.) candidate. Party Negara won not a seat. Even Dato Onn went down to defeat—and in his own state of Johore, where he was

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74 Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process, pp. 192-193.
76 Report on the First Election, pp. 68-76.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid., p. 69.
beaten by Sulaiman bin Dato Abdul Rahman, Dr. Ismail's brother.

The contrasting attitudes taken toward the Malay teachers by the leaders of the two parties may have had some bearing on the outcome of these federal elections, for it has been claimed that the Malay vernacular teachers were a very important factor in determining the vote of the kampong Malay. 79

Whether this was in fact true or not, it seems quite probable that the attitudes of the Malay teachers toward educational policy, when coupled with those of the Chinese and Indian rank and file members of the M.C.A. and M.I.C., furnished one of the major reasons why the Alliance Government which came to power after the July elections set about establishing a special committee to study once again the educational policy of Malaya with a view to changing it—and why when these changes came they were to reflect a swing away from interracial education to communal education.

79 Interviews with Hussein, October 28, 1966, Kuala Lumpur, and Tunku Abdul Rahman, November 18, 1966, Kuala Lumpur. Also see editorial in Malay Mail, July 25, 1955, which said in part: "Although plenty of people are enjoying themselves chanting 'Merdeka' these days (some of the non-Malay politicians sounding a trifle self-conscious as they do so) it would appear from observations in at least half a dozen constituencies that among ordinary folk the political horizon extends little beyond local or domestic needs."
CHAPTER XIV

THE HAZAK REPORT
AUGUST 1955--MAY 1956

THE ALLIANCE GOVERNMENT.

The new ministerial appointments stemming from the Alliance victory were headed by Tunku Abdul Rahman as Chief Minister. He also took over the portfolio of the Minister for Home Affairs. Among the other Alliance members sworn in as ministers on August 9, 1955, were Colonel H.S. Lee as Minister for Transport, Dr. Ismail as Minister for Lands and Mines, and Dato Abdul Razak as Minister for Education.¹

Other than the fact that their party had a majority in the Legislative Council, the new ministers had little more legal power than their Malayan predecessors, the "Members." But the fact that they were elected and thus could claim to represent the will of the voters, and the fact that they did have control of the Legislative Council by virtue of their sweeping victory in the federal elections, allowed them to proceed with a confident independence of action that the members who preceded them seldom if ever achieved. Both Alliance members themselves and many of the people used the term "Alliance government" to refer to Malaya's government after the election of 1955. This usage is followed henceforth,

¹ Miller, Prince and Premier, p. 179. Two of these were changed in early 1956: Lee becoming Minister of Finance and Ismail moving to a new Ministry, Commerce and Industry. (Ibid., p. 262.)
although technically the British were still in control of all phases of the government until February, 1956, when a large measure of self-government was granted to Malaya.  

By mid-1955 the communist terrorists had been cleared from large portions of Malaya. In fact, so completely had the terrorists been contained that the government announced an amnesty to any who surrendered.

In December of 1955 the Tunku and David Marshall (Chief Minister of Singapore) met with Chin Peng, the leader of the communist terrorists, to try to arrange for a complete end to the Emergency. As it turned out, neither side was able to agree to the other's key demands—the terrorists that they be allowed to remain Communists with a communist political party so named; and the representatives of the two governments that the terrorists renounce future overt communist political activities in Malaya.

But the Malayan government representatives were able to get a promise from Chin Peng that if Malayan self-government was achieved—a self government that included control of defense and internal security—the terrorists would stop fighting.

In the last days of December, 1955, it was announced

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2. See below, p. 419.
that UMNO had voted for "Merdeka" ("Independence") by August 31, 1957.\(^5\) This was announced just a scant four months after Tunku Abdul Rahman had stated in his first speech as Chief Minister that the Alliance wanted independence in four years—adding at that time, "If it is delayed beyond this period, it will help spread communism, since communism thrives and flourishes in colonialism."\(^6\)

On December 31 a "Merdeka Mission," headed by Tunku Abdul Rahman,\(^7\) left for London. On February 8, 1956, it was announced that the Mission had succeeded. Independence was scheduled for August 31, 1957, and a commission headed by Lord Reid was set up to work out its terms.\(^8\)

And, what was more, as of this time, February, 1956,

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\(^5\) Ibid., December 27, 1955.


\(^7\) The Mission included Tunku Abdul Rahman, Dato Abdul Razak, Dr. Ismail, Colonel H.S. Lee, Mr. T.H. Tan (Alliance Party secretary); and the following Rulers' representatives: Mentri Besar of Perak, Dato Panglima Bukit Gantang; Mentri Besar of Selangor, Abdul Aziz bin Haji Abdul Majid; Deputy Mentri Besar of Johore, Dato Wan Idris; and Dato Nik Ahmad Kamil, former Mentri Besar of Kelantan (Miller, Prince and Premier, p. 195).

\(^8\) Reid was at that time Lord of Appeal in Ordinary. The other member appointed by the British was Sir Ivor Jennings, an expert on Commonwealth law. It had been agreed that Australia, Canada, Pakistan, and India also would each appoint a member, but Canada's nomination was not made in time. Australia appointed Sir William McKell, former Governor-General of Australia. India appointed B. Malik, a former Chief Justice of India, and Pakistan appointed Justice Abdul Hamid. (R.H. Hickling, An Introduction to the Federal Constitution [Kuala Lumpur, 1962], p. 12.)
self-rule was granted to Malaya. This included control of finance, internal defense and security. With their assumption of control of finance, the formulation of educational policy would be for the first time completely in the hands of the Malayans. And, because they had taken over internal defense and security, from that time on the fight against the terrorists would also be under their control. 9

As the Tunku pointed out at the time, Chen Ping, the well-known leader of the Malayan Chinese Communists (who is assumed to be continuing that role even today) had promised to give up the fight when self-rule was gained for Malaya. Therefore, Tunku felt certain the Emergency would soon be over. 10 But as it turned out, Chen Ping refused to give up the fight. 11

THE ALLIANCE GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY.

Perhaps because the possibilities of independence held the attention of the people, or perhaps because the contending forces had adopted a wait-and-see policy, the period immediately following the first federal elections in Malaya was a quiet one for educational policy development. It was evident that the old issues were still on people's minds, but the volume of comment on education dropped considerably and did not

9 Malay Mail, February 8, 1956.
10 Ibid., February 9, 1956.
again reach its pre-1955 election tempo until after the 1956 Education Report had been out for a month or so. ¹²

This meant that for almost a year—from July of 1955 until June of 1956—there was a relative lull "in the shooting from Barnes Hill and the volleying from Penn-Wu ridge," as a Legislative Councilor once expressed it. ¹³

But only relative. Almost before the polling places were closed, the Federation of Chinese Teachers Association sent a letter to Tunku Abdul Rahman asking the new Alliance government to revise educational policy; ¹⁴ and the Malay newspaper, Warta Negara, asked in its editorial of August 5: Just what plans did the Alliance Party have for improving Malay education? ¹⁵

Soon afterwards, the Malayan Graduate Teachers Union issued a statement asking the new Alliance government to give legislative priority to the formation of a "courageous, farsighted policy" on education. ¹⁶

The Alliance government was quick to indicate that it saw educational policy as one of the major problems it faced. On August 10, a statement was issued by Tunku Abdul Rahman

¹² See below, p. 443.
¹³ Hogan, when introducing the 1952 Education Ordinance.
¹⁵ 1955.
¹⁶ Malay Mail, August 11, 1955.
containing the promise that the Alliance government would examine new ideas for national education, because existing national schools had not been found popular.\textsuperscript{17}

The next day, in an interview with the \textit{Malay Mail}, Dato Abdul Razak, the new Minister for Education, indicated that in order to carry out the Tunku's promise, a special committee would be set up to study the problem of educational policy and its implementation.\textsuperscript{18}

In his first public speech, given at a National Union of Teachers meeting in Penang in mid-August, Razak again indicated that the Alliance government felt it necessary to review the provisions of the Education Ordinance of 1952. It had been thought, he said, that the Education Ordinance would furnish the cornerstone of education for many years—but it had proved so unpopular, and so unacceptable to the majority of the people of Malaya, that the Alliance government was going to re-examine it.\textsuperscript{19}

Later in the month, Razak was reported as stating that Malay would be the national tongue in ten years (this to the Union of Malay Teachers of Vernacular Schools in Kuala Lumpur).\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{17} \textit{Ibid.}
\bibitem{18} \textit{Malay Mail}, August 11, 1955.
\bibitem{19} \textit{Government Press Statement}, August 18, 1955.
\bibitem{20} \textit{Malay Mail}, August 20, 1955.
\end{thebibliography}
On September 14, the fifteen-man Legislative Council Committee on Education, later to be known as the Razak Committee, was officially announced. Its purpose was:

(a) To examine the present Education policy of the Federation of Malaya and to recommend any alterations or adaptations that are necessary with a view to establishing a national system of education acceptable to the people of the Federation as a whole which will satisfy their needs and promote their cultural, social, economic and political development as a nation, having regard to the intention to make Malay the national language of the country whilst preserving and sustaining the growth of the language and culture of other communities living in the country;

(b) For this purpose to examine the Educational structure of the country including such provisions of the Education Ordinance, 1952, as may require alterations or adaptations and the measures for its implementation contained in Council Paper on educational policy No. 67 of 1954.

This announcement produced a brief spate of comment in the Malay press. The Utusan Melayu insisted that the 1952

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21 Members of the Committee: Minister for Education—Dato Abdul Razak bin Hussain (Chairman); Minister for Labour, V.T. Sambanthan; Minister for Natural Resources and Local Government, Suleiman bin Dato Abdul Rahman; Mentri Besar, Selangor, Abdul Aziz bin Haji Abdul Majid; Mentri Besar, Negri Sembilan, Shamsudin bin Nain; Assistant Minister for Education, Too Joon Hing; Assistant Minister for Natural Resources and Local Government, Abdul Rahman bin Haji Talib; Goh Chee Yan; Zainul Abidin bin Sultan Mydin; Dr. Lim Chong Eu; Abdul Hamid Khan bin Haji Sakhamat Ali Khan; Leung Cheung Ling; Mohamed Ghazali bin Jawi; Lee Thean Hin; Mohamed Idris bin Mat Sil.

Ordinance be completely scrapped, calling it "colonialistic."  

Warta Negara, on the other hand, said that it was not that national schools using English as a medium of instruction should be abolished but that Malay schools should be brought up to the level of English schools.

The answer of the Alliance government to the pressure put on it to throw out the Education Ordinance immediately was that it intended to follow the present educational policy until such time as it was able to replace that policy with a carefully thought out new policy. Yet, while officially the Alliance government claimed that educational policy change was to be held in abeyance, this was not actually to be the case.

There were signs even in 1955 that indicated what were to be some of the main differences in educational commitments between the colonial governments of the past and the new Alliance government.

Perhaps one of the more noticeable differences was in the matter of finance for education. The phrase which seemed to epitomize British colonial attitudes towards educational finance was the oft-quoted statement: "Cut your coat to fit your cloth." Their first concern seemed to be to balance the

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budget: if there was not enough money, then it could not be done.

Closely coupled with this was another assumption: that whatever else was done, there should be no lowering of educational standards, especially those of English-medium schools--and this included the type of buildings built.

There had been some talk by Malayans of building less expensive schools during Thuraisingham's time as Member for Education, and there had been some indications at the time of the debate on the White Paper on Education, 1954, that the colonial government's opposition to constructing cheaper schools was weakening. These signs increased in the months just before the 1955 election. But the general impression given by the colonial government over the years had been that it would not lower "standards" of education, whatever else might be done.

The new Alliance government seemed more inclined to the approach that if it needed to be done, find a way to do it--even if it might mean that standards would be lowered a little.

For example, in mid-November Razak announced that the Alliance government planned to put up less expensive school buildings in areas that had more than fifty children but no schools.27

27 Malay Mail, November 16, 1955.
Another, perhaps better sign of how the new Alliance government's commitments toward changes in educational policy differed from the colonial government's appeared when on November 25, 1955, the news was released that there was to be a change of policy in regard to admission to English-medium schools.\footnote{Ibid., November 25, 1955.} Four days later the details were announced. Eight thousand more places for English-medium primary school children were to be provided.\footnote{Ibid., November 29, 1955.} Once more it should be pointed out that the British would have had to agree to this (self-government was still some three months away), but it was a policy that originated with the Alliance.

1955 BUDGET SESSION.

On November 30, the High Commissioner, MacGillivray delivered the budget address to the Legislative Council. In it it was stated that the government was going to ask the Council to approve an expenditure of $456,000 in order that the estimated 8,000 extra students who wanted to enter English primary schools next term might do so. In order to find enough teachers and classrooms for these 8,000 students, it was going to be necessary to hold afternoon sessions.\footnote{Report of the Legislative Council, 1955-1956, col. 142.}

On December 3, the Chief Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, delivered the opening remarks in the debate on the Supply
Bill, 1955. He emphasized that it was the Alliance government that planned to provide for the 8,000 additional children. He added that to do this, afternoon classes would be inaugurated, and if these were not enough, then the government would put up "jungle roller" schools\(^{31}\) in order to accommodate all school-going children of seven-plus age.\(^{32}\)

He went on to state that more hostels were to be built so that Malays could attend English primary schools; that the government was preparing to upgrade the academic qualifications of Malay teachers so that they could teach advanced Malay; and that it was hoped a Malay language research institute could be set up. The Tunku was also able to announce that Indonesia had agreed to arrange for the exchange of language experts in order to encourage the parallel development of their respective languages.\(^{33}\)

This was not the first time the new Alliance government had shown an interest in answers Indonesia might be able to provide for some of Malaya's educational problems. In November, 1955, Razak attended a ministerial meeting in Jakarta in which he reaffirmed the need for the close relationship of Malay and Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language). He said: "In my opinion, but I am putting this forward merely as

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\(^{31}\) Buildings having a frame of peeled logs which were covered with marsh grass thatch.


\(^{33}\) Ibid., col. 288.
a personal suggestion, if it were possible one day to merge
the Indonesian language with the Malay language I believe it
would be a big help to the peoples of both countries, especi-
ally to the people of Malaya, for if we in Malaya could use
books published in Indonesia, then our task of making Malay
the national language could be carried out as early as possi-
ble."34 He went on to say that at that time Malay education
lagged far behind Indonesia's in its use of the Malay language.
He also indicated an interest in learning more about how the
schools were set up in Indonesia, and how the teachers were
trained.35

The reaction of the British members of the Legislative
Council to the speech of the Tunku helped to point up the con-
trast between the colonial and the Alliance governments' out-
look on financing education. Mr. G.N. Knocker said that this
budget put the cart before the horse—for it extended facili-
ties of service before extra money was found.36 Mr. Thornton
expressed the thought that more caution and more realism should
have been used in preparing the budget.37 Mr. Waring challenged
the Tunku's statement that the budget was a "stand still budget."
Waring said that this budget instead went "up and up."38

35 Ibid.
37 Ibid., col. 326.
38 Ibid., col. 318.
Each section of the proposed budget was presented by the appropriate minister of the department concerned and debated separately. It was not until December 5 that the section on education was presented by Dato Razak. He used the occasion for a thorough review of his party's plans for education. He commented on the formation of a committee composed of fifteen council members to review the present policy on education, but cautioned that the well-known controversial nature of educational policy in Malaya made it necessary to proceed carefully in producing new recommendations. 39

He went on to state that while the Alliance government's (he of course did not use the term "Alliance government" but rather "government" when speaking of these affairs) policy on education had not been produced, this government had developed some schemes felt to be urgent enough to call for action before the new policy report was completed.

In order that graduates from Malay vernacular primary schools could have more opportunity to go on for further study, the Alliance government was going to propose that a number of residential schools for Malays be set up. 40

He said that the Alliance government had already decided that the provision of places for 8,000 more students in English primary schools would be put into effect. It was estimated

39 Ibid., col. 489.
40 Ibid., col. 490.
250 new teachers would be needed for these new classes, but no new buildings were planned for this year. Instead, double sessions would be instituted. He outlined just how much of a financial commitment this change would entail. It would only amount to about half a million dollars in 1956, but by 1960 the policy of admitting into English schools all who desired to attend would mean an annual additional cost of three and a half million dollars—exclusive of new buildings (which would possibly cost as much as fourteen million).

Razak assured the Council that ways to increase vernacular enrolment were also under consideration, and the Alliance government planned to do all in its power, financial limitations being the barrier, to see that every child aged seven-plus who wished to could obtain some form of schooling. In this regard he repeated the Chief Minister's statement that if it had to be, quality would be sacrificed in providing schools for these vernacular students.

One million dollars was to be allocated for expanding present Chinese vernacular schools, and serious consideration given to the request submitted from the United Chinese Teachers

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41 Ibid., col. 491.
42 Ibid., col. 492.
43 Shades of the British—but see 1957 decision on this, below, p. 466.
Association for an additional two million dollars for the same purpose. Supplying this money was to be in accord with the declared policy of the Alliance government that, while Malay was the national language, the government would preserve and maintain the growth of the languages and cultures of other races of the country. (However, it should be noted that while Razak used the word "expansion" twice when referring to the purpose of these grants, the expansion he apparently was referring to was the expansion of "existing schools," not the creation of new schools.)

Razak stated that the rest of the educational items in the Supply Bill provided funds for the obligations laid out in Council Paper No. 67 of 1954 (the White Paper on Education).

After giving this brief outline of proposed plans, Razak went on to state that "...the most important matter which looms in this vast field of education is the necessity—the urgent necessity of having an agreed policy on education which will be acceptable not only to this Council but to the country as a whole."

The response to Razak's speech by the council members was uniformly congratulatory. But each speaker seemed to have his own pet grievance to which he wished the government to give special attention. Some wanted more immediate action

46 Ibid., col. 494.
taken to set aside against the old educational policy. 47 Some wanted reassurances that "economy" was no longer to be the primary consideration in implementing educational policy. 48 Members representing labor called for greatly increased emphasis on vocational education. 49 Others spoke in favor of more government support for vernacular education. There were among these latter members a few who asked the government to support all types of vernacular schools; 50 but most asked only for government support for the needs of their own particular races. 51

There was some evidence of regionalism, particularly from representatives of the less developed areas— that is, the old Unfederated Malay States (leaving out Johore). They stated that they needed more assistance than the better developed, urbanized west coast states. 52

In his answers to the various comments made, Razak suggested patience on the part of the council members until after the report of the fifteen-man committee was completed—for until then there could not and would not be any great changes

47 Ibid., cols. 496, 500, 502, 526.
48 Ibid., cols. 496, 528.
49 Ibid., cols. 499, 502, 505.
50 Ibid., cols. 522-523.
51 Ibid., Malays: cols. 519, 520, 529; Chinese: cols. 506, 517, 518.
52 Ibid., cols. 501, 502, 529.
in educational policy.  

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY.

When the schools reopened in January, 1956, the Federation was able to live up to its promise of a place in English primary schools for every boy and girl who wanted one.  

However, a slight jolt was experienced when the Malayan Chinese Association Education Central Committee came forth with a claim that if 8,000 more places were to be guaranteed to those wanting English education, then it was only fair that those wanting Chinese education be guaranteed 12,000 places, and it submitted a formal demand to the government for the amount of money necessary for this end. The M.C.A. indicated that it was not associating itself with the demand, but was instead waiting for the forthcoming publication of the Alliance Education Report before taking any position on

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53 Ibid., cols. 530, 531.

54 Malay Mail, January 6 and 7, 1956; but see Singapore Standard of January 10, 1956, where it was claimed that some had been turned away in Penang.

55 There were by this time three organizations actively engaged in fostering Chinese educational goals. It is not clear just when each of these first came into existence, but the M.C.A. Education Central Committee was mentioned as early as March, 1954 (the Yellow Paper); the Chinese School Teachers Association by November, 1954 (Malay Mail, November 8, 1954); and the United Chinese School Committees Association by January, 1955 (Malay Mail, January 4, 1955). The make-up and position of the latter two is quite clear, but the M.C.A. Education Central Committee, although a part of the M.C.A., often seemed to take positions at variance with both the M.C.A. leaders and the Alliance. The Yellow Paper itself is one example. This demand cited above was another.
One of the Malay vernacular newspapers responded editorially by stating that if the Chinese demand for 12,000 additional places was going to be heeded by the government, what about Malays? They too would like more places. 57

The Alliance government was apparently not willing to change some things, however. A Government Press Release of January 30, 1956, laid out the essential reasons why there would be no secondary education in Malay for some time. Secondary education would have to be in English, for the time being, for that was the language of the university. Only 149 of the enrolment of 1270 at the University of Malaya were Malays. This was equivalent to approximately 12 per cent of the total enrolment. Most Malays were in arts classes. In medicine they constituted 6 per cent, and in science 10 per cent of those enrolled. The release stated that it was the hope of the government that Malays then taking English as a subject in Malay primary classes would be able to go on to complete their secondary education. "There will be many who will wish that this secondary education should be given through the medium of Malay, and this may be possible at some future date, but the facts of the present situation must be the progress of the pupils and the future of the Malay race. To

56 Malay Mail, January 9, 1956.
57 Warta Negara, January 12, 1956.
qualify for the university they must gain a command of the English language which can only come successfully when this is used as a medium. . . ." 58

In the first months of 1956 light gunfire occasionally cropped out on the education front—an infrequent editorial against national schools and/or the Education Ordinance; a brief report of some group being interviewed by the Special Legislative Committee on some phase of educational policy—but this was it. Everyone seemed to be holding his fire until the target should appear more clearly.

THE RAZAK REPORT.

In late March a Chinese newspaper announced that it had inside information on the government's 59 new educational policy, and that this new policy was going to call for just one type of national school for secondary education. That, in other words, Chinese, English, and Indian secondary schools would all be abolished. 60 The next day the same newspaper claimed its report was essentially correct, in spite of a denial from the government—for the paper had checked with the Committee on School Curriculum and Time Tables of the Federal Education Department, and found that this committee was working on a

59 Since self-government had been granted in February, 1956, the term "Alliance government" will no longer be used.
common curriculum. The paper admitted it had been wrong the
day before when it said the various secondary schools would be
done away with. Actually, they would remain, but would have
to teach a common curriculum.

Other papers claimed to have knowledge of the report in
mid-April. And finally, on May 7, the Report of the Education
Committee, 1956 (the Razak Report) was officially released--
some ten days before it was to be debated in the Legislative
Council.

The men who wrote the report--nine Malays, five Chinese,
and one Indian--suggested in a preliminary section that the
recommendations of the report were not to be thought of as
permanent. They admitted that in their attempt to "recommen
d an educational policy acceptable to the people of the Federa-
tion as a whole," they had sometimes had to overlook certain
technical and theoretical aspects of the educational picture.

The eventual goal of the committee was spelled out in
Paragraph 12. The members affirmed that: "We believe further
that the ultimate objective of educational policy in this
country must be to bring together the children of all races
under a national educational system in which the national
language [Malay] is the main medium of instruction, though we
recognise that progress toward this goal cannot be rushed and

61 The law which resulted from the Razak Report actually
lasted something less than five years.
must be gradual.\textsuperscript{63}

Two of the Razak Report's major recommendations had been made before, but not acted on: the establishment of Local Education Authorities and Federal School Inspectors. Some of the other major recommendations were modifications of policies already implemented. For example, national schools were to be named standard schools if they were in the Malay medium, and standard-type schools if they were in another medium.

Also, all primary schools were to have a common content syllabus—but, unlike that of the national schools, the required syllabus would be used by Chinese- and Tamil-medium schools as well as by Malay and English schools.

New features introduced by the report included a reorganization of the teaching profession so that "There would not be Government Teachers and non-Government Teachers; nor would there be English School Teachers, Malay School Teachers, Chinese School Teachers and Indian School Teachers; nor would there be Education Officers, Graduate Teachers, Normal Trained Teachers, College-Trained Teachers, Certified Teachers, etc.—there would only be teachers."\textsuperscript{64} However, it was recommended that this matter be referred to a special committee in order that the details could be worked out.

The goal of secondary education would be to have one

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., p. 9.
type of school, the national-type secondary school, "where the pupils work toward a common final examination." Now, as previously with the primary schools, Malay and English would be compulsory in these national-type secondary schools.\(^{65}\)

These national-type secondary schools would be open to all races. Such schools could use English or Chinese for instruction, but each would have a common curriculum provided by the government\(^{66}\) (as was predicted by the report of the China Press in March).

At both the primary and secondary level there were to be, financially speaking, only two kinds of schools: "independent" or "assisted" for primary;\(^{67}\) "independent" or "direct grant" for secondary. While both types of primary schools were to receive government moneys, at the secondary level there was to be only one type of school supported by the government: those labeled "direct grant." "Independent" secondary schools would receive no government support.\(^{68}\)

It seems clearly stated in the report's recommendations concerning grants-in-aid that "all schools, primary or secondary, which conform to the government's education policy shall be eligible for grants-in-aid on the same terms."\(^{69}\) However,

\(^{65}\) Ibid., p. 12.
\(^{66}\) Ibid.
\(^{67}\) Ibid., p. 6.
\(^{68}\) Ibid., p. 7.
\(^{69}\) Ibid., p. 19.
the catch appeared to be in just what was meant by "conform to the government's education policy," for in other sections of the report it stated that to obtain grants-in-aid "... the curriculum of the school shall be such as will prepare candidates either for promotion from a Primary school to a National-type Secondary school or in a Secondary school for the Federation of Malaya Lower Certificate and the Federation of Malaya Certificate of Education.\(^{70}\)

"The main financial effect of our proposals for secondary education will be that increased Grants-in-aid will be paid to those Chinese Middle Schools which wish to conform to the National Pattern Secondary School."\(^{71}\)

From all this it appeared that Chinese-medium primary schools which accepted the proposed curriculum and had properly qualified teachers got full aid, while independent primary schools would continue to receive such aid as was already being offered by the government. However, for the Chinese secondary schools to qualify, they would have to place much greater emphasis on English (and eventually Malay) than previously, because the examinations toward which their educational offerings had to be directed to qualify for government aid, the Lower School Certificate and the Certificate of Education,

\(^{70}\) Ibid., p. 37. See below, p. 440 for further details of these new examinations.

\(^{71}\) Ibid., p. 23.
would be set in English (and later Malay). 72

The report supported the formation of a Language Institute and a Literary Agency, both designed to encourage the development of Malay as the National Language. The Language Institute would train people to be better teachers of Malay, and the Literary Agency would encourage the development and publishing of literature and school textbooks in Malay. 73

There was also, in the report, support for the construction of cheaper school buildings. The report added that the committee was convinced that "... Aided Schools obtain better value for their expenditures [on building construction] than Government does." 74

The report gave the assurance that until the transition to standard and standard-type schools was completed, there would continue to be a need for non-standard primary schools, i.e., those Malay, Kuo Yu, Tamil, or English schools in which the teachers did not have the same qualifications as the teachers in standard and standard-type schools. 75

A new examination was to be introduced that would be taken after the first three years of secondary education. It was to be called the Lower School Certificate Examination.

72 Annual Report on Education for 1957, p. 27.
73 Razak Report, pp. 4-5.
74 Ibid., p. 23.
75 Ibid., p. 10.
Its purpose was to help decide which pupils should continue their education and to help students gain employment who would not complete the full secondary training course.\footnote{Ibid., p. 12.} Apparently now that they were in control of the Education Department, the Malays no longer felt as concerned about the possibilities of a government-controlled central examination as they had in 1954.\footnote{See above, pp. 367-368, 370.}

There was also a new examination to be set up for those completing secondary education. This would be named the National Certificate of Education Examination, and was to be equivalent to the Cambridge School Certificate Examination, which it was gradually to replace.

In effect, there would be a limit on examinations so that only three would be taken by a student who went all the way from Standard I to Form VI.\footnote{The other, third, examination was taken at the end of primary school to determine those going on to secondary education. \textit{Razak Report}, pp. 12, 13.}

Teacher training was to be changed. Those training as primary teachers would be chosen from students who obtained a Lower School Certificate. These young people would receive one year of full-time training and two more years of part-time training while they taught. This was to be a compromise between supporters of the old policy that called for two full
years of training and proponents of radical change who, recognizing the urgent need for teachers, recommended that students holding the Lower School Certificate be put right to teaching in the classroom, with their training restricted to weekends. Teacher trainees planning to work in the lower three forms (first three years of secondary education) would have to have completed five years of secondary education, plus one or two years in Form VI before undertaking two full years of teacher training.

Malays without a Lower School Certificate (i.e., primary school graduates) would continue to be trained as in the past—as long as the urgent need for teachers lasted.

Finally, the report recommended the repeal of the Education Ordinance of 1952.

The members of the committee concluded their report by affirming that: "We believe that an educational policy 'acceptable to the people as a whole' must provide for at least two things: it must satisfy the legitimate aspirations of each of the major cultural groups who have made their home in Malaya and it must offer the prospect of a place in school for every child born in the country."

79 Ibid., p. 18.
80 Ibid., p. 18.
81 Ibid., p. 20.
82 Ibid., p. 28.
PUBLIC REACTION.

In the main, the public reaction to the new education report was quite favorable. As one editorial put it, it was the only report of its kind to have escaped an instant storm of criticism.

But criticism there was. The Chinese press objected to two features of the report. They did not like Paragraph 12, the one (quoted above) which recommended that the ultimate aim of education in Malaya was to make Malay the "main medium of instruction." nor did these newspapers approve of the designation of "standard-type" for Chinese vernacular schools, insisting that these schools should also be known as standard schools (their point being that they felt that these were just as "standard" as those so named). 83

The Malay press reported concern amongst Malays that the report was too liberal in its treatment of other languages, in that it allowed them to be used in standard-type schools. 84

The National Union of Teachers (teachers of English schools) opposed Local Education Authorities. It wanted even more centralization of control than had existed up to that time. Its reasons were that since local taxes were to be tied in with the establishment of Local Education Authorities, the plan

would hit the poor hardest, and rural areas would suffer because their tax base would be less than that of urban areas. 

However, what objections there were were usually included in with statements of approval for most of the report's recommendations. The Chinese indicated a liking for the support their language would obtain; and the Malays were pleased at the increased emphasis and support planned for Malay.

In the general enthusiasm engendered by the release of the Razak Report, little notice was taken of a section of the report which indicated that the Education Department was planning to allow Malay teachers to sit for a special examination which would enable them to qualify as standard school teachers.

On May 15 the details of this special examination were released. It was to be in Malay and be the equivalent of a Lower School Certificate Examination. The only requirement for taking the examination would be that the person was a "certified" Malay teacher. Evening classes would be formed to help Malay teachers prepare, and translations of necessary

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85 Straits Times and Malay Mail of May 14, 1956.
87 "Certified" here seemed to be used to differentiate between trained and untrained Malay teachers. It was not a common designation for teachers. Malays who were trained, received this training either at the two Malay teacher training colleges or in normal classes (these latter were referred to as "Trained Under Other Schemes") set up by the various states—in some cases as early as 1948. (Annual Report on Education for 1948, pp. 89-90.)
textbooks were being produced so that these teachers could study the appropriate subjects. 88

Offering this examination was apparently one of the ways that the government felt it could counter the feeling of the Malay teachers that under the Razak Report's recommendations they were still being left at the bottom of the educational staff ladder. If, by taking the examination, enough of these teachers became qualified for positions in standard schools, there should develop a pool of support for these schools.

Before the Malay teachers had had time to react to this move of the government, the Razak Report was presented to the Legislative Council for its approval "in principle."

DEBATE ON THE RAZAK REPORT.

The debate was to reveal that there were quite a few Malays in the Council who wished to take a more extreme position on the language question than did those who submitted the report. Dato Razak had been warned of Malay feelings on this issue by press letters and editorials, so in his opening remarks he included a defense of the policy as it concerned Malays, their language, and their schooling. 89 (It may well have been Razak himself who helped keep this report's recommendations less communal, for he had been one of the leading supporters of the 1952 Education Ordinance.)

Razak stressed in his opening remarks that the role once assigned to multi-racial national schools for building and unifying Malaya should now be assumed by a common content curriculum in all schools. 90

On this point he was supported most ably by Dr. Ismail. Ismail insisted that it was important that races other than Malays in the country not be forced to discard precipitously their own languages. This, he said, would make the Malays themselves guilty of imperialism. The important thing was to have one common syllabus, taught in any of the four languages. This would serve the purpose of creating a common loyalty. The Malay language should, of course, be taught in every school. And, as for English—this language would be needed for a time in order to study such subjects as medicine and engineering. 91

One of the Mentri Besars that had been on the committee supported the report's recommendation that the government continue to support vernacular schools other than Malay. He pointed out that if these other schools were discontinued, between ten and fifteen thousand more teachers would be needed, and at the same time a like number of vernacular teachers would be out of a job. 92

90 Ibid.
91 Ibid., col. 1193.
92 Ibid., col. 1166.
The Malay speakers who expressed their fears about the relative positions of the various languages under the new policy included among their arguments: that if Indonesia could find the necessary technical terms to use Bahasa Indonesia for its education, why could not Malaya do the same with Malay;\(^93\) that unless Malay was the medium of instruction in higher levels of schooling, those entering lower levels would opt for English education;\(^94\) and that the Alliance government had promised to change the educational policy only in order to attract votes. Did the Alliance think that this policy was what the Malay people had voted for?\(^95\)

The Malays made a number of other demands: They wanted included in the report a definite date for the complete adoption of Malay as the sole medium of education. A time limit of ten years was often mentioned as a possibility.\(^96\)

Also, one speaker wanted the use of teacher training colleges in England discontinued.\(^97\) Razak rejected this, saying that the present need for trained teachers just could not be provided for by the facilities in Malaya.\(^98\)

\(^93\) Ibid., col. 1179.
\(^94\) Ibid.
\(^95\) Ibid., col. 1184.
\(^96\) Ibid., cols. 1195, 1196.
\(^97\) Ibid., col. 1181.
\(^98\) Ibid., col. 1201.
was a request that parents be allowed to indicate their choice of school at least a year in advance of the child's entry so the Education Department could plan to provide the type of schools wanted by parents.\textsuperscript{99} Razak replied that he could not at that time commit the government to such an idea, but would look into it.\textsuperscript{100}

No Chinese attacked the report. Only one spoke, and he had been a member of the committee.\textsuperscript{101} The Indian community was represented in the debate by four speakers, one of whom was on the committee. All four supported the report.

The report was approved by the Council, but it was confirmed by the debate that there was still considerable discontent amongst the Malays. Their communal educational interests had prevailed, but they were not yet satisfied. Because the original educational policy embodied in the 1952 Education Ordinance had been a rational one, it made itself felt in the policy adopted by those who wrote the new report. Razak admitted the committee's debt to past reports when he introduced the new one. He did not admit what was equally true: that the new policy was not nearly so complete a change as the electorate had wanted.\textsuperscript{102}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{99} Ibid., col. 1172.
\item \textsuperscript{100} Ibid., col. 1203.
\item \textsuperscript{101} Ibid., col. 1158.
\item \textsuperscript{102} An analysis of the implications of this report's recommendations is presented in the next chapter, after its provisions had become law. See p. 472 and passim.
\end{itemize}
But what was perhaps of most significance for the future of Malaya, the Alliance leadership had begun to practice the political policy that was to make Malaya a haven of stable political development in a sea of Southeast Asian turmoil. They had recognized and acted on the need for compromise.

The Alliance was to continue to dominate the government right up to 1967, and throughout that period there was little interparty compromising done. Instead, the compromising was carried out within the confines of the Alliance Party leadership meetings themselves. This meant that instead of communal political bickering in public between the three most powerful communal leadership groups, differences were hammered out in private, and a united front presented to the public. Thus there was no need for public promises to one's supporters or threats to one's enemies that had to be considered when one gained office. Democratic compromising was practiced--but not in the Legislative Council.
Immediate editorial reaction to the approval of the Razak Report by the Legislative Council was, except for portions of the Malay press, quite laudatory—as it had been in the weeks leading up to the debate. However, certain sections of the Malay community let it be known that they were unhappy. One spokesman went so far as to claim that the new educational policy was really not much different from that of 1952. ¹

Utusan editorially stated that the new policy was still colored by colonialism, but hoped this was because the colonial power was still around. The editorial claimed that as long as English was the avenue of employment, Malay would not be learned for itself, but studied only as a means of passing tests and obtaining promotions. This new policy should be treated as a temporary measure until independence was attained. Meanwhile, precautions should be taken to make certain that the drafting of the new education bill did not fall into the hands of people with a colonial outlook. ²

A good outline of conservative Malay complaints was

¹ Hassan bin Haji Mohamed, President of the Kelantan Religious Students Union, Warta Negara, May 19, 1956.
² May 19, 1956.
contained in a news report which listed several reasons why a branch of the Pan-Malayan Islamic Association opposed the Razak Report. The association said: The Razak Report (1) did not give definite assurances that Malay would be the national and official language within ten years; (2) allowed the use of other languages as the medium of instruction in standard schools; (3) included no sign that the status of English was to be lowered; (4) provided that the standard of English in standard schools was to be lower than the standard of English in English-medium schools; (5) did not call for a high enough standard of competence in the Malay language as a requisite for entry into secondary school; and (6) would result in the Malay kampong folk having to pay fees and buy their own books. ³

While the Chinese press had given initial approval to the Razak Report's passage by the Legislative Council, it was not long before the Chinese educationalists became embroiled with the Education Department over the new Lower School Certificate Examinations. Out of 20,000 students scheduled to sit for the examination in November, 2,000 would be from Chinese language middle schools. And these students knew little English, the medium in which the Lower School Certificate Examination was going to be given. ⁴ The Chinese educationalists'

³ Utusan Melayu, June 4, 1956. The Pan-Malayan Islamic Association constituted the local branches of the P.M.I.P.

⁴ The examination was to be given in Malay in some future year not specified. But indications were that it would be soon. (Malay Mail, June 15, 1956.)
position was that their students should be allowed to take the examination in Kuo Yu. They maintained further that the way the examination was being conducted violated the Alliance election program, which called for equal treatment of all grant-in-aid schools. The government insisted that the examination would be given in English with the Malay national language section becoming a requirement in 1959.

Meetings were held between representatives of the Chinese educationalists and the government to try to reach an understanding on this issue, but Razak, Minister for Education, held firm. He maintained that only after the Chinese had converted their secondary schools to standard-type schools would an examination be set at lower certificate level in Kuo Yu.

Razak attempted to explain that the main purpose of the test was to determine eligibility for government service. No one had to take it. Spokesmen for the Chinese position responded by threatening to call a boycott by all Chinese students of the Lower School Certificate Examinations. This could have meant the withdrawal from the examination of as many as 10,000 Chinese students, 8,000 from the English schools

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5 Malay Mail, June 13, 1956.
6 Ibid., May 31, 1956.
7 Ibid., June 9, 1956.
8 Ibid., June 11, 1956.
and 2,000 from the Chinese.  

On June 13, Razak publicly answered the critics of the Razak Report, both Malay and Chinese: "... I think I can safely say that this report represents the greatest measure of agreement among the many interests concerned that has yet been achieved in the field of educational policy in this country." He emphasized that the report represented a necessary compromise—and thus all sides must approach it with tolerance. He promised the Malays that the national language would be Malay in ten years.  

He assured his Chinese critics that consideration would be given later to the introduction of a Kuo Yu examination which would be equivalent to the Lower Certificate Examination, and could perhaps be used to determine those eligible to teach in Chinese primary schools. However, passing such an examination would not be recognized as a qualification for government service. (Apparently this was because a government service employee needed to show his qualifications in

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9 Ibid.

10 Government Press Statement, June 13, 1956. The expression "make Malay the national language" was to lead to much trouble in the future. What did it mean? The Legislative Council had already passed a resolution that Malay was the national language of Malaya (see above, p. 415). Some felt that it meant no other language would be used by the government or the schools, and the government was to add to the confusion by seeming to say one thing at one time and something different at another. (Observations of the author while in Malaya, 1965-1966.)

English, since this was the language used by the government.)

This disagreement between the Education Department and the Chinese educationalists was only over one small aspect of the Razak Report. But the manner in which the government handled the situation, plus other statements it issued on educational policy—apparently designed to placate the more vocal critics among the Malays—served to convince the Chinese that what read well in the report might not end up so well in the new education bill if pressure were not brought to bear.

This was probably part of the reason why by mid-August there was a considerable increase in criticism about the Razak Report from the Chinese educationalists. Their main demand was for equal treatment for Chinese schools. They rejected the idea as expressed in Paragraph 12 of the report, that eventually Malay would be the medium of instruction in all schools. Specifically, they asked the government: (1) to make Chinese one of the official languages of the country; (2) to bear half the cost of constructing Chinese schools; (3) to have all schools of whatever race receive the same grants-in-aid; ¹² (4) to have English be made compulsory only in middle schools; (5) to have mother tongue teaching in primary schools for at least two-thirds of the time; (6) to have Lower School Certificate and National School Certificate given in the language of instruction; and (7) to have Malay a

¹² See p. 437.
compulsory subject throughout.13

An editorial in the Straits Times criticized the Chinese for the extremism evidenced in their protests on educational policy. The editorial singled out for sharp censure comments which attacked expatriate officers (the Malayans' term for government officials from outside the country, i.e., British officials in the service of the Malayan government) as being behind the educational policy of the country. It finished by stating: "The special position of the Malays and of the Malay language cannot be overlooked and these points must be heeded by all other communities, however strongly they may feel on certain points at issue."14

It was almost as if the Chinese felt that if they did not attack the new educational policy, Malay pressure would cause a worsening of the Chinese education position—and Malay pressure was clearly in evidence.

THE MALAYS AND THE RAZAK REPORT.

The general complaints of the Malays in the period just after the acceptance of the Razak Report by the Legislative Council, found a specific point on which to focus in July of 1956. As was previously mentioned, one of the recommendations in the Razak Report had suggested that Malay teachers be allowed to sit for an examination equivalent in level to the

13 Malay Mail, August 15, 1956.
14 Ibid., August 16, 1956.
Lower School Certificate Examination, so that they could become qualified to teach in standard schools. An early indication of the discontent of Malay teachers regarding this examination was seen in an editorial of the Utusan Melayu of June 15, which stated that while teachers supported most of the recommendations of the Razak Report they did not accept the section which affected them directly, i.e., they did not want to sit for an examination to make them qualified to be teachers of standard schools. For once the Utusan did not support the teachers completely. Instead, it pointed out that Malay teachers did not have the level of training required to become standard school teachers, and, after all, the new examination was not required. The teachers could stay at their present level if they wished. But even in this matter, the Utusan would not completely support the government. It added a warning that the government best not ignore the uneasiness of the Malay teachers. 15

What the teachers really hoped for was that their schools, and they along with these schools, would be converted to standard level without any additional qualifications being imposed. 16

15 The softened criticism of the Utusan toward the government can in part be attributed to the fact that a new editor was installed after the 1955 elections. One story had it that the change was more or less forced on the Utusan owner, Yusof bin Ishak, after he and his lawyer (Lee Kuan Yew, now P.M. of Singapore) had been invited by the Tunku to come to Kuala Lumpur to discuss the situation. (Interviewee wishes to remain anonymous.)

16 Utusan Zaman, July 1, 1956; Utusan Melayu, July 2, 1956.
Some, notably the teachers trained at the Malay Teacher Training Colleges, claimed that the Razak Report was in effect looking down on the ability and qualifications of Malay teachers.\footnote{Malay Mail, July 5, 1956.}

On July 10, it was reported that the Malay Teachers Association had submitted a memorandum to the Minister for Education which called for Malay becoming the sole medium of instruction in all of Malaya's schools. The memorandum went on to state that all present Malay schools should be turned automatically into standard schools, and that the Malay teachers be allowed to teach in these schools without further examinations. If examinations continued to be required, the Malay teachers would continue to oppose the Razak Report.\footnote{Singapore Standard, July 10, 1956.}

There was talk of boycotting the examination.\footnote{Malay Mail, July 12, 1956.} But the big threat came when in mid-August the Federation of Malay School Teachers intimated that they would quit the UMNO if the Ministry of Education continued to insist that they sit for an examination in order to qualify as standard teachers. The teachers indicated that other political parties had been wooing them.\footnote{Ibid., August 6, 1956.} On the eighteenth they declared that they were going to take their protest directly to the Tunku.\footnote{Ibid., August 18, 1956.}
In July the Legislature voted approval of supplementary budget items which included a twenty million dollar sum for the construction of seven secondary schools, a teacher training college, a Language Institute, a Language Research Institute,\textsuperscript{22} four special teacher training colleges, and four day training centers for teachers.\textsuperscript{23}

Included in his answers to the questions raised during the debate on this item of the supplementary budget was a statement by Razak on the government's policy regarding Malay teachers, especially those trained at the Malay Teacher Training College or the Malay Women's Teacher Training College at Malacca: They would need to pass an examination equivalent to the Lower School Certificate Examination before they would become qualified to teach in standard schools. They would then be considered as fully trained teachers, equal in status to those receiving three years of secondary training and three years of teacher college training. He expressed the opinion that the concern of the Malay teachers about the examination arose through lack of understanding of what was involved. This would soon be remedied (a vain hope).

Further, he announced that as soon as there were Malay students who had completed the Lower School Certificate, the government would be able to upgrade Sultan Idris Training

\textsuperscript{22} Later to be known as the Agency for Language and Literature.

College and Malay Women's Teachers Training College so that their graduates would reach the same level as the graduates of the Teacher Training College at Kota Bharu. In August two comments on the issue were reported in the press. The Director of Education, E.M.F. Payne, issued an assurance that the government would not compel teachers to change from their present wage scale nor to take examinations to do so. And Razak was quoted at one point as explaining: "Change my mind? Never!" He asserted that the Education Report was sound and extremely fair, particularly to Malay teachers.

While this question of examinations seemed to be their main issue, the Malays continued their agitation for more emphasis on the Malay language in education, and it was probably this latter issue that created the most reaction among the Chinese. For example, in July a new organization called the Malay Education Congress held its first meeting. The main demand contained in a memorandum sent from this congress to the Minister for Education was that English should be replaced by Malay as the medium of instruction in all government-supported schools. It is not entirely clear just

24 Ibid., col. 1349. See above, p. 369 n.
25 Malay Mail, August 9, 1956.
26 Singapore Standard, August 14, 1956.
27 Malay Mail, December 8, 1955.
28 Ibid., July 10, 1956.
who was in this organization, but it had apparently planned to hold just such a meeting, scheduling it for about a month after the Razak Report was considered. This allegation was reported in December of 1955, some six months before the Razak Report came out. In this December report, the newspaper went on to claim that the congress would be composed of members from the Pan-Malayan Students Association, the Malay Teachers Union, and the Malay Literary Union, and said that its first planning meeting was held in December at UMNO headquarters. 29

Also in July, the Federation of Malay Teachers Association (the Malay teachers' organization that tended to be more concerned with professional problems of teaching than the Malay Teachers Union) spoke out in favor of using only Malay in government-supported schools. However, in its case, the demand was not for immediate action, but that the government should have this as a goal for 1962. 30

Party Negara's newspaper, Kritik, ridiculed the government's position on languages used in the schools. It suggested that since Kuo Yu was being taught in all Chinese schools, and in any Malay school where there were over fifteen Chinese who asked for it, it was being treated more like the national language than was Malay. They called this a great victory for the M.C.A. 31

29 Ibid., December 8, 1955.
31 July 11, 1956.
An editorial in the Utusan of the same day, while agreeing that the language question was the basis of most Malay opposition to the Razak Report, took issue with those who opposed the report because it sustained the growth of Kuo Yu and Tamil. This opposition was an example of communalism and was therefore wrong. 32

Kritik came right back in its next week's issue to ask: Why did the government of Malaya "approve in principle" the preserving and sustaining of Kuo Yu, the national language of the Chinese mainland and Formosa? It was Kritik's opinion that the average Malay did not approve of "preserving and sustaining Kuo Yu and Tamil" and did not want the government to do so either. 33

One of the educational dilemmas facing the Malays was that they wanted to upgrade their language and at the same time to improve their economic opportunities. The one demanded increased attention to Malay; the other seemed to demand an increased knowledge of English.

As an editorial in the Singapore Standard of November 17 pointed out, the Malays could not have it both ways: Malay language in schools and yet more Malays entering into an English-medium university. In fact, opposition to English education meant that it would be just that much harder to bring

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32 July 11, 1956.

33 July 18, 1956.
this English education into the rural areas. Indonesia should be used as an example—it was including English in its schools. 34 "OPERATION TORCH."

An idea which first appeared in public during the debate on the Razak Report, and which at that time was given short shrift by Razak, suddenly blossomed forth in July as a major government move. It was called "Operation Torch" and was designed to provide the government with some idea of the educational wants of the people of Malaya. Under the plan, parents were to register children between the ages of four and seven, stating at the time of registration their choice of the type of school (i.e., medium of instruction) that they wished their child to be enrolled in. In this manner the government hoped to find out how many places would be needed in the different types of schools over the next two years. 35

The proposed program was first announced on July 11, and the enrolment campaign opened with much fanfare on August 4, 1956. 36 By mid-August, however, unexpected hitches had developed. First, the parents objected to having their children fingerprinted. 37 The government had felt this was

34 1956.
36 Malay Mail, August 4, 1956.
37 Ibid., August 14, 1956.
necessary in order to guard against false entrants—that is, a student using another student's enrolment forms when he himself was not qualified to enter school, usually because he was too old.38

And, as if this were not enough, it soon became apparent that each communal group was busy campaigning amongst its people, exhorting them to enrol their children in a school having the language medium of their parents.39 Accusations were even leveled at English-trained teachers—those helping with the enrolment—that they were influencing parents to enrol their children for English-type schools.40 The government issued warnings and conducted investigations, but the enrolment went on.41

At one point the Chinese claimed that 90 per cent of their people had opted for Chinese education for their children.42 But the figures became slightly suspect when it was pointed out that these figures were released even before the tallying of the enrolment had begun.43

38 Ibid., August 17, 1956.
39 For example, see Utusan Melayu, August 23, 1956; Sin Pin Jih Pao, August 27, 1956; Tamil Nesan, September 1, 1956;
40 Utusan Melayu, September 3, 1956.
41 Singapore Standard, August 29, 1956; Malay Mail, August 17, 1956.
43 Straits Times, October 6, 1956.
Although the official results were never released as to just how many places in what type of school had been chosen, the Penang figures (which were released) showed that of those who would be eligible to enter school (who were born in 1949 and 1950) there were 8,979 registered for Malay schools, 14,882 for Chinese, 909 for Indian, and 6,041 for English. The 1957 Census does not provide the precise figures necessary to make anything but a rough check. That check indicates that 60 per cent of the children in Penang eligible to enrol were Chinese, and 48 per cent enrolled in Chinese schools; 29 per cent of the children eligible to enrol were Malays, and 29 per cent of them enrolled in Malay schools; 10 per cent were Indians and only 1.5 per cent enrolled in Indian schools. It would then appear from this very rough computation that the Malays enrolled almost 100 per cent in Malay schools, the Chinese had 80 per cent enrol in Chinese schools, and the Indians 30 per cent in Indian schools. But this is admittedly a very limited sample, and it would be interesting to see a more complete report on the outcome of this enrolment drive.  

By August the government sensed that there was need for further efforts to placate the communal feelings on education. It was announced that the Alliance planned to set up a fifteen-man education committee made up of five Malays, five Chinese, five Indians, five Chinese, and five Malays.

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and five Tamils, all Alliance members of the Legislative Council. The purpose of the committee would be to discuss and recommend ways to implement the Razak Report. This was admitted by the government to be necessary in the face of mounting tension and protest by Chinese and Malay educators. The committee was to look for ways to compromise.\footnote{Straits Echo and Times of Malaya, August 16, 1956; Malay Mail, August 14, 1956. Strangely enough, nothing more was heard of this plan. Whether it was carried out quietly by the Alliance as a political party or never instituted is not clear from the public records.}

THE 1956 BUDGET SESSION.

There were three legislative sessions in which educational policy was discussed between that in which the Razak Report was accepted and the 1957 session in which the Education Bill of 1957 was finally passed.

In November the annual budget session of the Legislative Council was held.\footnote{The key session in August had considered supplementing budget items for the 1956 fiscal year. This session was to consider the budget for 1957.} The by-now designated Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, gave the government's budget address. He reviewed briefly what was being done and what was planned to be done by the government, and then stated: "I merely wish to say enough to remind you of the immense programme which is being undertaken and to underline what all of us here have in mind, and what it is our duty to bring home to others—that is, that these things cannot be done without spending very large
sums of money every year; these sums cannot be found without considerable sacrifices on the part of all alike."  

It was not until almost a week later that the section of the budget concerning education was presented by Dato Abdul Razak. It was explained that the estimates prepared by the Education Department were designed to provide money to implement the policy of the Razak Report. He added that new legislation had already been drafted to put the report's recommendations into effect, and that it would be introduced shortly. "In the meantime," he stated, "I wish to put into effect the new policy as far as possible without any legislation."  

He listed the projects already introduced: teacher training colleges, new schools and hostels for Malays, the Agency for Language and Literature, the Inspectorate, and technical schooling of various kinds. Then he announced a new policy: admission of all children aged seven-plus and as many aged six-plus as possible into primary schools. "The Government is determined to do this by whatever means possible and by using whatever type of accommodation available."  

He added that it would be necessary to provide double sessions and to increase class loads from forty to fifty students, and if this was not enough, to construct new cheap, temporary

48 Ibid., col. 2164.  
49 Ibid., cols. 2168, 2169.
buildings. He concluded this portion of his speech by stating: "It may be... that some of the measures we intend to take to provide every child of the correct age primary education would mean a slight lowering of the standard of education, but it is my firm belief that it is better to offer a slightly lower standard of education temporarily than no education at all." 50

Later in his speech Dato Razak listed the many things which were included in the budget estimates for Chinese education: (1) The government was prepared to give support for Chinese middle schools that chose to become standard-type schools. (2) It was planned to provide training for Chinese teachers in day training colleges and give them allowances just as other teacher trainees had been receiving. (3) There were plans to send a certain number of Chinese teachers to England for further training. (4) There were provisions for adequate facilities to teach the national language in Chinese schools. And (5) a fair share of new capital works money would be given to Chinese schools as it became available. 51

The speeches that followed—and there were many of them—were almost unanimous in their unreserved praise for the provisions found in the Education Ministry's budget. Some of the Indian speakers wondered where the provisions for Indian

50 Ibid., col. 2169.
51 Ibid., col. 2171.
schools were to be found in the estimates, and some of the Malay speakers asked that schools be closed down during the Muslim fasting month, and that religious teaching be upgraded.

Razak pointed out in answer that Indian schools were included when standard-type schools were mentioned. It would be difficult for a number of reasons, he said, to have school holidays coincide with the Muslim fasting month—one reason being that the month changed each year in relation to the Gregorian calendar. As for religious instruction, that was being constantly upgraded as fast as qualified staff could be trained.

A memorandum to the state Chief Education Officers confirmed that the Education Department was following through on Razak's proposals. It outlined the department's policy for admission to primary schools in the coming year. In 1957 all children six and seven years of age who wished to enter Standard I in a primary school would be accepted. The department said this would admittedly mean some reduction in standards and accommodation, because teachers would be overloaded, even though afternoon classes were introduced, and

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52 Ibid., cols. 2175, 2181.  
53 Ibid., col. 2198.  
54 Ibid., col. 2204.  
55 Ibid., col. 2203.
untrained temporary teachers would have to be employed.

The memorandum went on to point out that this new policy would not only hit the vernacular schools, which would now be open to all who wished to enter, but the English schools as well—for the policy now included both six- and seven-year-olds. The year before, only seven-year-olds had been admitted to English schools. Also, those who had enrolled the year before as six-year-olds in vernacular schools because there had been no room in English schools would be allowed to change over in 1957. Pupils who did change over would, however, be expected to complete their primary education in five years instead of six, if at all possible. If, when schools were on double sessions, there were still children not in school, then the government would ask for special funds to build emergency classrooms.56

Here indeed was evidence of a commitment to change. The statement by Razak (repeated in the memorandum above), that in order to accommodate all children educational standards might have to be lowered, challenged one of the basic premises held by educationalists in Malaya since long before World War II.

Meanwhile, the government continued with certain of its plans for implementing the Razak Report even before a new

56 Kelantan Education Files (No number), Memorandum from Department of Education, Federation of Malaya, November 15, 1956. Subject: "Admission to Schools, 1957."
education bill had been passed. Schools were encouraged to conform to the recommendations of the Razak Report—sometimes by the use of economic blackmail. Local Education Councils moved progressively closer to reality, and by January 1957 were receiving briefings on how to administer their areas.

The first phase of the unification of teachers was revealed in December, 1956, when it was announced by the government that the country's primary school teachers would be provided with a unified salary scheme as soon as details could be worked out.

On October 1, 1956, the independent inspectorate was established, and around the same time the Federal Examination Unit took over the administration of the existing Cambridge School Certificate Examination and the promotion from primary to secondary examination, plus the administration of the newly inaugurated Lower School Certificate Examination.

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57 In fact, certain changes had been instituted even before the Razak Report itself was approved. See pp. 25-26 of the report: A "General Syllabus Committee had been set up and steps taken to set up a Literature Agency."


59 Malay Mail, August 29, 1956; January 25, 1957.

60 Ibid., January 25, 1957.

61 Ibid., December 5, 1956.


63 Ibid., p. 22.
As far back as May 29, 1956, the Straits Times, in referring to these activities, had asked editorially if the Legislature was nothing more than a "yes man" for the Alliance. The editorial ended by saying: "Neither the strength of the Alliance, nor the urgency of its desire for educational reform, justifies hasty action by the Government. Is the Legislature a Rubber Stamp?" And they had a point, for it did seem that many decisions were being taken and acted on—and then submitted to the Council for its approval.

Interviews with various men involved in the Alliance at that time lend support to the conclusion that agreement on most policy was hammered out within the Alliance, and only then presented to the Legislative Council for its approval. Those interviewed agreed that the other parties had little direct influence on legislation, but those parties did serve to keep the Alliance members, i.e., UMNO, M.C.A., and M.I.C., from ignoring the demands of their respective communities for fear these communities might transfer their affiliations if this was not done.64

The new year saw little change in the attitudes of the various groups concerned with education in Malaya. In February, 1957, reports were still being carried in the country's newspapers about the possibilities of Malay school

teachers boycotting the qualifications examination. And during this same period Malay newspapers continued to call for the cessation of a colonial type education based on English, and for it substituting an upgraded Malay.

Most Chinese educators rejected the idea of converting their middle schools to national-type schools, even if this meant no grant-in-aid.

THE EDUCATION BILL, 1957.

On March 6, 1957, when the Legislative Council met, the Education Bill, 1957, was presented for first reading. The bill was already different from the 1952 Ordinance in one respect—that is, even before it was presented, let alone passed, much of it had already been implemented. For the Alliance government the important thing seemed to be not so much ideas as action. Its credo appeared to be: Try it—if it doesn't work, then try another way. But no waiting until the perfect solution for all education problems is found before action is taken.

An interesting question around which to build conjecture

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65 Malay Mail, February 25, 1957.
66 Ibid., January 13, 1957.
67 Ibid., February 25, 1957.
68 Two other bills concerning education were also given first readings that day and passed later in the session, but neither the bills nor the debates on them presented significant materials on educational policy development.
is: What would this 1957 Education Ordinance have been like if there had been no 1952 Ordinance? One suspects that if nothing else, the first ordinance served to warn the Malayans of the depth of feeling which educational policy could engender. Furthermore, the 1952 Ordinance had provided a testing ground for educational policies which could be repudiated without loss of face by the new government, for the portions found objectionable could be blamed on the colonial rulers. 69

For purposes of comparison, it might be well to set out side by side the statements of fundamental policy found in the opening sections of both ordinances. The 1952 Ordinance stated:

The aim and purpose of the national educational policy of the Federation is to achieve a sound education of all children in the Federation using in the main, for this purpose, the official languages of the Federation and bringing together pupils of all races in a national type of school with a Malayan orientation: Provided that reasonable facilities for these children whose parents or guardians so desire shall be provided for learning the Chinese language in the medium of Kuo Yu and the Tamil language: and Provided further that the extent to which each official language is used in achieving the main purpose may vary throughout the Federation. 70

The 1957 Ordinance said:

69 Which would not be an altogether valid claim, since many of the 1957 leaders had fully supported the 1952 Ordinance—e.g., Razak and Tunku.

70 In Federation of Malaya Ordinances, 1957, p. 589.
The educational policy of the Federation is to establish a national system of education acceptable to the people as a whole which will satisfy their needs and promote their cultural, social, economic and political development as a nation, with the intention of making the Malay language the national language of the country whilst preserving and sustaining the growth of the language and culture of peoples other than Malays living in the country. . . so far as is compatible with the educational policy of the Federation, the provision of efficient instruction and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents. . . It shall be the duty of the Minister to secure the effective execution of the educational policy of the Federation including the progressive development of educational institutions where the National language is the medium of instruction.71

Note the first few words of each statement quoted. In the 1952 Ordinance policy statement, the emphasis was placed on achieving a sound education; whereas, in the 1957 Ordinance it was to "establish a system. . . acceptable to the people." The 1952 policy called for national schools to bring the children of all races together; that of 1957 offered to protect the languages and cultures of other races. The 1952 policy statement spoke of education with a Malayan orientation; the 1957 statement talked of promoting the Malay language. The 1952 Ordinance spoke of allowing some study of Kuo Yu and Tamil; in 1957 pupils were "to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents."

The demands of the Malays and the Chinese were almost equally reflected by the provisions found throughout this

71 (No. 2 of 1957), pp. 34-35.
second ordinance, although, not unexpectedly, the Malays fared somewhat better in this regard. For instance, the demands of the Chinese that Paragraph 12 of the Razak Report, which had said that the ultimate goal of education should be that all teaching be done in the medium of Malay, was not included in the 1957 Ordinance. Provisions for religious instruction were more favorable to the Malays than before.

And while the new law was both more Malay-oriented and more liberal with Chinese and Tamil, this was at the expense of promoting noncommunalism. Nowhere in the second bill was there any emphasis placed on the idea of students of the various races studying together. The Education Ordinance of 1957 was a compromise with communalism. This is not meant to imply that this compromise was necessarily wrong. Actually, the view of those Malayans who today state that the 1952 Ordinance was too advanced for the people of Malaya at that time is probably correct. This seems to have been a case where compromise was to be preferred to the possibilities of adopting intransigent communal positions which could very well lead to strife.

The provisions in the new ordinance for primary and secondary education were as outlined in Chapter XIV's discussion of the Razak Report. An analysis of the rest of the features of the new law follows:

There was provision for setting up a group to give advice to the head of the Education Ministry. In the 1952 law this
group had been titled the "Central Advisory Council on Education;" in 1957 it was given the title "Board of Education." But the functions of both were the same.72

The 1957 Ordinance called for the setting up of Local Education Authorities,73 but this was modeled almost entirely on the recommendations included in the White Paper of 195474 (and allowed by Clause 89 of the 1952 Ordinance).75

Both the 1952 and the 1957 Ordinances dealt with the subject of compulsory school attendance, and both recognized that limitations imposed by facilities made it impossible to compel all children to attend school.76

A new feature of the 1957 Ordinance was a section which established a group of "managers" for each primary school and a group of "governors" for each secondary school--these groups to be charged with running the respective schools.77

Another feature of the new ordinance first recommended in the White Paper of 1954 was the establishing of an "Examination Syndicate," which put the control of the Lower Certificate Examination and the Federation of Malaya Certificate Examination...
of Education Examination at the federal level.\textsuperscript{78}

The section on registration of schools was practically identical in both the 1952 and the 1957 laws.\textsuperscript{79} The inspectorate system was more thoroughly outlined in 1957 than it had been in the 1952 Ordinance, but in essence it was the same.\textsuperscript{80}

In the 1957 Ordinance, Islam was given particular mention and offered special treatment, i.e., its teaching was to be paid for by the government. Those desiring instruction in any other religion had to provide their own funds for defraying their religious instruction.\textsuperscript{81} The 1952 Ordinance had not specifically mentioned the source of financial support for religious education, but had provided time for religious instruction.\textsuperscript{82}

While it was true that one of the new features of the 1957 Ordinance was the provision of a unified teacher system,\textsuperscript{83} the 1952 Ordinance had included something like this by implication, for in the 1952 law national schools were to be staffed by teachers all having approximately equal training. The

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{78} Pp. 52-54.
\item \textsuperscript{79} Pp. 602-621 (1952); pp. 54-71 (1957).
\item \textsuperscript{80} Pp. 629-630 (1952); pp. 71-73 (1957).
\item \textsuperscript{81} P. 52 (1957).
\item \textsuperscript{82} Pp. 621-623 (1952).
\item \textsuperscript{83} P. 73 (1957).
\end{itemize}
ultimate aim was to have only national schools; thus all primary teachers would have been aiming towards a gradual unification of status. This, of course, would not have included secondary teachers nor Education Officers as it did in the 1957 Ordinance.

Much was made of the provision in the 1957 Ordinance for a common content syllabus. The clause which provided for this stated: "The High Commissioner in Council may make regulations prescribing the subjects and matters, not being religious studies, on which instruction may be given in schools and such regulations shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, cause to be provided in all primary schools and in all secondary schools curricula of studies of common content." 84 Actually, the clause did not seem to provide anything new, for the 1952 Ordinance had stated in Clause 24: "In every school the secular instruction to be given to the pupils shall for the purpose of and to the extent of ensuring a common policy, be under the control of the Member [for Education] who after consultation with the Central Advisory Council, may with the approval of the High Commissioner in Council, make rules controlling the content and form of such instruction." 85

And also, a section of the 1952 Ordinance entitled "Powers of the High Commissioner in Council to make

84 Clause 113, p. 78 (1957).
85 P. 595 (1952).
Regulations stated that regulations could be made for "admission to schools, the course and curricula of studies other than religious studies, and the books and apparatus to be used therein."

Reviewing these features of the 1957 Ordinance it becomes increasingly clear that while there were some important new ones, none of them were of such a nature that they could not have been incorporated in or added to existing law—with but one exception: the statement of educational policy and the guidelines for primary schools stemming from this policy.

DEBATE ON THE EDUCATION BILL, 1957.

The debate that took place in conjunction with the passing of the 1957 Ordinance added further evidence to support the conclusion that it was communalism that had won the day.

Razak, in his opening remarks when presenting the bill, perhaps summed up the situation best when he said: "The policy embodied in the Education Report, now enshrined in this Bill, represents in my view the maximum agreement possible under present conditions of education in this country." In the next sentence he

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86 Clause 92, Part 6.
87 P. 637 (1952).
added that "... it is impossible for all conflicting interests to have everything in their own way."89

An indication of the pressure that had been exerted from the Malays to include features favorable to their interests came when Razak announced that there would be an amendment to Clause 590 of the proposed bill—that clause which dealt with the duty of the Member for Education to support the educational policy of the bill. He explained that the reason for this amendment had been that the government had received from UMNO and from many members of the Council itself requests for a change in Clause 5 so that the Bill would state that "... both primary and secondary schools using Malay as a medium of instruction should be established. ...."91

The original clause read as follows: "It shall be the duty of the Minister to secure the effective execution of the educational policy of the Federation and to promote the progressive development of institutions to that purpose."

However, the amendments did not quite provide the changes that these people had wanted, for it said to: "Delete the words 'and to promote the progressive development of institutions to that purpose' and substitute therefor the words 'including the progressive development of educational

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89 Ibid., col. 2542.
90 See above, p. 474.
institutions where the National language is the medium of instruction."\(^{92}\)

In other words, where the Malays had asked for a specific commitment to secondary education using Malay as the medium of instruction, the amended clause would only commit the government to the "progressive development" of educational institutions... [etc.]

Both the expression "progressive development" and "educational institutions" were nebulous enough to allow the government to proceed to institute Malay secondary education only as rapidly as it chose.

Razak attempted in the same speech to placate the fears of the Chinese and the Tamils. Twice he insisted that discontinuing government support for existing primary schools which did not meet the requirements for standard and standard-type schools was a decision that would be exercised "reasonably and judicially."\(^{93}\)

He once again attempted to explain why the Lower School Certificate Examination would not be given in other than Malay and English, the two official languages. He repeated that the examination was "basically a public examination which qualified those that passed it for entry into Government service..."\(^{94}\) even though it could also be used as a promotion examination.

\(^{92}\) \textit{Ibid.}, col. 2565.

\(^{93}\) \textit{Ibid.}, col. 2533.

\(^{94}\) \textit{Ibid.}\[3pt]

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in many schools. And when promotion was the only purpose—then the government would provide translations in Chinese and Tamil for schools in the Federation.95

Razak spoke of Clause 113 (common content syllabus) as: "... one of the most important and crucial parts of the new educational policy." And his making so much of it lifted it out of the ordinary and focused attention on the intentions of the Education Department. It was not that the clause was a new one. It was not (see above). Rather, it was Razak's statement of intention concerning it that made the acceptance of the bill a commitment to use this educational line of attack in building a unified nation.96

He added that it would be the government's policy to encourage conversion to standard and standard-type schools—no force would be used. "But a refusal to conform means a refusal to accept full financial assistance which Government intends to give."97

The speeches that followed in this debate were, as had been the case with the Razak Report debate, laudatory in their treatment of Razak and "his" bill. But, unlike that earlier debate (and perhaps because of it), the points chosen upon which to make any sort of additional comment were usually

95 Ibid.
96 Ibid., col. 2542.
97 Ibid.
rather particular in nature. They did not deal with any of
the larger educational issues of the day. The Malays ex-
pressed concern about the details of religious teaching and
the training of Islamic teachers. Speakers of the other racial
groups asked why the government did not support religious
training other than Islamic in the schools. A few scattered
remarks were made on such topics as support for English edu-
cation\textsuperscript{98} and Chinese worries about the languages of the Lower
School Certificate Examination.\textsuperscript{99}

The debate was shorter than it had been on any other
educational report or bill in the postwar period (in amount
said, at least, for this debate occupied nineteen pages,
whereas, for example, the debate on the White Paper on Educa-
tion, 1954, took almost 150 pages to report). At its con-
clusion the Education Bill was read a third time and passed.\textsuperscript{100}

The debate furnished an even clearer example than the
one on the Razak Report that significant controversy over edu-
cation law-making was not going to occur in the legislature.
Internal disagreements over educational policy among the
partners in the Alliance must almost certainly have existed,
but the people of the country were afforded little evidence

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., col. 2556.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., col. 2547.
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., col. 2569.
Thus the public gave the appearance of being more concerned about the new law than the lawmakers.

PUBLIC REACTION.

Chinese newspapers admitted that the new law was better for the Chinese than the old one. But the new one by no means satisfied all the demands of the Chinese regarding educational policy.\textsuperscript{102}

The English language editorials hailed the new law, but indicated that they were aware that many of its provisions were not new—more especially Local Education Authorities and common content syllabuses.\textsuperscript{103}

The \textit{Utusan Melayu} continued its opposition to government educational policy. It asked that Malay be made the only medium of instruction. It was especially unhappy with the position of the Malay language in secondary schools. It concluded an editorial on the fourteenth of March by stating how glad it was that the Razak Report was scheduled to be reviewed in 1958.\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{101} But in the fall of 1958 the united front was temporarily shattered when the President of the M.C.A., Dr. Lim Chong Eu left the Alliance Party after clashing with UMNO leaders over, among other things, educational policy. (See Kelantan Education Files, No. 643 of 1957, "Quarterly Report on Education for Third Quarter, 1958.")

\textsuperscript{102} \textit{Sin Pin Jih Pao}, March 8, 1957.

\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Straits Times}, December 9, 1956; \textit{Sunday Gazette} (Sunday edition of the Penang Gazette), March 9, 1957; \textit{Straits Echo} and \textit{Times of Malaya}, March 9, 1957.

\textsuperscript{104} March 14, 1957.
The remaining months until Malayan independence saw little new in the field of educational policy development. The Chinese, after an initial indication that they were happier with the new Ordinance than with the old, 105 were not so vocal at this time as they had been. Certainly they were much quieter than the Malays. One newspaper indicated that the Chinese schools were no more willing than before to accept grants-in-aid if they had to convert to national-type secondary schools to get it. 106 As it turned out, eleven of the sixty-six Chinese middle schools had converted to national-type secondary schools by the end of 1957. 107

The Malay teachers increased the tempo and intensity of their agitation for improved status without having to take examinations, and they included in this barrage frequent demands for Malay secondary schools in the medium of Malay. News reports on April 22 gave three demands, issued by the President of the Federation of Malay Teachers Union, Kuala Lumpur: (1) that all Malay schools be converted to standard schools; (2) that all Malay secondary schools use Malay; and (3) that present Malay school Standards VI and VII be made Forms I and II of secondary Malay schools. 108

105 Sin Pin Jih Pao, March 8, 1957; China Press, March 6, 1957.
106 Malay Mail, May 14, 1957.
108 Utusan Melayu, April 22, 1957; Malay Mail, April 22, 1957.
In April the Malay teachers were reported as threatening to resign all offices held in UMNO (three did so). This time they were only going to resign from their UMNO offices, not from UMNO itself, as had been their threat in 1956. 109

In May the Malay teachers threatened to strike if their demands were not met—especially the demand for automatic inclusion in the unified teacher system without examination. 110 The Utusan reminded Razak that since he was a Malay, he should act in such a way as to make the Malay school teachers happy. 111

Some few days later the same paper stated that the Malay teachers should not be made victims of "colonial policy." 112

In late June the government announced that the special examination for Malay teachers was being postponed until 1958. 113 It was also indicated that the Malay teachers' other demands had been met. 114 But by mid-July these Malay teachers were again threatening to strike if the government did not meet their demands. And these demands were much the same as they had been before, with the exception that they did not include opposition to taking the examination, since that had

110 Ibid., May 22, 1957.
111 May 27, 1957.
112 May 31, 1957.
114 Malay Mail, July 1, 1957.
been postponed. 115

The new 1957 Education Ordinance went into effect on June 15, 1957, many of its features having already been implemented—others well on the way. 116 There were many problems left unsettled, but the basic educational policy had been set for the new nation that was to emerge on August 31, 1957.

115 Utusan Melayu, July 15 and July 31, 1957; Malay Mail, July 16, 1957.
CHAPTER XVI

CONCLUSION

The twelve years, 1945-1957, had proved to be most eventful years for Malaya. The march towards independence which began with faltering steps at best, had, what with the impetus given by actions of the communist terrorists and the Malay nationalists (not to mention the external stimulant provided by colonial neighbors gaining their independence) reached a tempo that after 1953 swept it on to its destination in 1957.

This swift march to independence was the most dramatic postwar development in Malaya. It even surpassed in magnitude the successful defeat of an indigenous Chinese communist terrorist campaign.

But while one must concede pride of place to these two themes in the history of Malaya, 1945 to 1957, changes in educational policy in the same period are also of great significance.

In order to provide a framework for consideration of the meaning of educational policy changes in the period, a brief chronological review of the formulation of these policies is offered.

Formation of postwar policies for Malaya, including educational policies, actually began during the war. Thus, in 1945 the British re-entered Malaya with a set of wartime-developed policies for the country in their hands—policies
designed to provide for the Malayans "what was best for them."

Harold Cheeseman, the first postwar Director of Education, introduced to the country this wartime-developed educational policy. The Colony's Advisory Council accepted it in early 1947, but it was not destined to remain long in effect. It was felt to be no longer appropriate when the Malayan Union was abandoned in 1948.

The colonial government of the newly constituted Federation of Malaya turned the job of producing a new educational policy over to a newly organized government-appointed group of twenty (of which nine were British). This group, the Central Advisory Committee on Education, produced recommendations for a policy in many ways similar to that which had been approved in 1947. This time, though, the Malayans in the Legislative Council rejected the proposed policy so vehemently that it was shelved, and the British in 1950 invited in two groups of experts—one to study and make recommendations for an educational policy for the Malays; the other to do the same for the Chinese. The Fenn-Wu Mission to study Chinese education went much further and ended by making recommendations for all portions of Malaya's educational structure. The recommendations which came from these two committees were combined by the Central Advisory Committee and submitted as recommendations to the Legislative Council. These in turn were worked on by a Special Legislative Council Committee, and out of its recommendations came the Education Ordinance of 1952.
Financial difficulties inhibited the implementation of this ordinance from the start, and in 1954 new methods of implementing the 1952 Ordinance were developed, included in a government White Paper, and submitted to the Legislative Council by yet another Special Committee on Education. After approval of this "White Paper on Education, 1954," implementation moved ahead more rapidly, especially in the rural areas.

Chinese educators had evinced an opposition to portions of the 1952 Ordinance almost from its inception, and after the 1954 White Paper was approved, an important segment of the Malay community—the Malay vernacular teachers—joined the ranks of the discontented. As a result, the Malayan leaders of the winning party in the 1955 elections, the Alliance, set up a committee to review the educational policy of the country—and the result was the Razak Report of 1956, followed some ten months later by the 1957 Ordinance.

Out of all this perhaps it could be said that educational policy development occurred in three phases:

Cheeseman introduced an educational policy that represented a blend of a British colonial government's attempts to maintain a stable colony together with western educationalists' ideas on education for education's sake, a policy that fitted in encouragement of intercommunal co-operation whenever this did not conflict with either of these goals.

The 1952 Ordinance introduced an educational policy that represented Malayan leaders' commitments to western ideas on
education for nation building's sake, strongly emphasizing the development of intercommunal co-operation, while maintaining as far as possible the standards of western education­alists.

The Alliance introduced an educational policy that represented western ideas on education for nation building as modified by the communal interests of the non-English speaking peoples of Malaya, and which maintained a much less sacrosanct attitude towards "educational standards" than did the 1952 Ordinance.

Commitments to changing educational policy in Malaya did not come about in isolation. There were many factors that played an important part in its formation.

First, there was the situation that had obtained in Malaya up to 1941: the relative isolation of the various educational systems, a nascent nationalism among the Malays, a Chinese people primarily concerned with China, and, over all, the concern of the British for stability in Malaya.

Second, there was the impact of the Japanese occupation during World War II: the economic disruptions, the increased nationalism and communalism of the Malays, the guerrilla activities of the Communist-led Chinese, and British planning for the day when they would regain control of the country.

Third, there was the postwar emergence of indigenous political activities. The 1945-1957 period was a time of rapidly increasing political awareness amongst the Malayans.
The attempts by the British to reorganize the government of Malaya by strengthening the central government at the expense of the states triggered a surge of Malay nationalism, based on fears for their communal well being, that led to the formation of the United Malays National Organization in 1946.

UMNO moved on from strength to strength. First, under the leadership of Dato Onn bin Ja'afar, it was successful in bringing to a stop the attempted introduction of the Malayan Union. Then it was able to recuperate from the loss of Onn as its president. In fact, the recovery was so complete that challenges presented by Onn's new party (I.M.P.) in the 1952 municipal elections, and by its successor (Party Negara) in the 1955 elections, were successfully met. UMNO met these challenges by uniting with the Malayan Chinese Association for the municipal elections and continuing and strengthening this Alliance for the 1955 elections. After winning the 1955 elections, the Alliance Malays took over most of the highest positions in the government (positions which they continued to occupy even after independence).

Postwar Chinese political development began with the Chinese Communists. Immediately after the war they made efforts to impose their will on Malaya, and in mid-1948 they produced an organized terrorist effort that resulted in the declaration of a state of emergency. The Emergency lasted until 1960, but communist activities were fairly well contained by the end of 1953.
Out of the Emergency came the M.C.A., for the activities of the Chinese Communists convinced the Chinese businessmen, who, prior to this had not been concerned with Malaya's political affairs, to unite in order to protect themselves from the terrorists, and protect their people from the threat of deportation by the colonial government. The result was that the Malayan Chinese Association was formed in 1949, ostensibly as a welfare organization to aid the squatter Chinese threatened with deportation, but certainly an organization designed to protect the interests of the Chinese community. Whatever the original intentions for it, the M.C.A. went on to become the most powerful Chinese political party in Malaya, and an important member of the Alliance.

Fourth there was the financial situation of the period: The rapidly changing fortunes of the government because of changes in rubber and tin prices were an almost constant source of embarrassment to those attempting to introduce and implement educational policy. It seemed that the government either planned to do too much (1952 Ordinance) and prices would fall (1952-1954), or the government was having to explain why it had not spent large government surpluses accumulated (in 1951 and 1955) as the result of high prices.

And in this field of finance, there was a marked contrast in the attitudes of the colonial and Malayan staffed governments. It seemed that the British saw the financial problems of the colony in terms of a business which must always be
made to pay, whereas the Malayans saw the problem in terms of people who must, if necessary at the expense of sound business practices, be provided with social improvement programs.

Fifth, the nature of the people involved influenced the development of educational policy. Who were these people—and what were some of the factors that shaped their concern?

There were the Malay people: a rural folk, planting their padi and catching their fish, holding few concerns for the morrow; a religious folk, Islamic in name—Islamic, Hinduistic, and animistic in practice; a superstitious folk—magic, the hantu (ghosts), the dukun, and the bomoh—all were important to them. Their language was spoken by some eighty million people, but they themselves were little aware of the cultural richness to be found among those eighty million people. The Malays saw their literature as scarce, their history brief, and their language underdeveloped. And thus they saw a need to build up their identity, or at least to protect it from those who possessed cultures more strongly rooted than theirs.

There were the Chinese people: keeping their small shops, working as day-laborers; a religious folk, but having a religion that placed a strong emphasis on the past. And, country, culture, history, and people all combined to make up that past.

Thus the Chinese were always aware that they were a part of a rich culture (containing a literature, language
and art second to none) and a long and glorious history. Yet they were also aware that they were outside the mainstream of Chinese culture and history because they lived in Malaya. Thus they felt they needed to maintain their identity in the face of a threatened submergence in an alien and "inferior" culture.

There were the Indian people: a rural folk, rubber estate workers; a religious folk, Hinduistic. And they, like the Chinese, had both a sense of belonging to a rich and long-established culture and a feeling that they were in danger of being separated from that culture. Thus they too saw their language as an important means of maintaining contact with their cultural heritage.

And, finally, there were the British people: an urban folk, government officials, businessmen and professionals; themselves convinced that this superiority of wealth and power was gained through a more significant culture—literature, art, and government.

At the same time, among the Malayan people (Chinese, Indian, Malay) there existed an English-educated, western-oriented, financially successful group. These people had much in common and recognized this fact. They spoke the language of the West and in many ways they thought like the West—so it was not surprising that the men of the West who controlled Malaya should find these Malayans attractive, rely on them, and assume that with their "obvious talents" they
were the logical men to gradually take over Malaya as the British left.

Among the people of Malaya there were certain individuals whose actions and attitudes were of such a nature as to merit special mention in a study of educational policy history.

There was Harold Ambrose Robinson Cheeseman: Cheeseman was in many ways a model English colonial educator. He was an honest, sincere, and dedicated man who was both loved and respected; loving and paternalistic. He felt he knew what was best for Malays and was influenced in this knowing both by western ideas of what was educationally sound and by a special feeling of obligation for the "native" Malays.

There was the British Commissioner General, Malcolm MacDonald: His personality, one much at variance with that of the usual British civil servant, made such an impact on the first Malayan leaders to emerge after World War II that he was able to instill in them a commitment to achieving independence for Malaya that would be based on a yet-to-be developed ability to co-operate among the three racial groups in Malaya. This meant a guided transition to independence, and it meant an educational policy which would lead to the development of co-operation between the races, i.e., "national schools," as formulated by the 1952 Ordinance.

There was Dato E.E. C. Thuraisingham, an English-educated lawyer: His sometimes brilliant, always respected debating skills, plus his deep conviction that intercommunal co-operation
was necessary to independence and could be fostered by education—a conviction gained at least in part by his association with MacDonald and the other members of the Communities Liaison Committee; enabled him to present and gain passage for the 1952 Education Ordinance and its concomitant 1954 White Paper on Education.

There was Dato Onn bin Ja'afar—English educated, and a brilliant speaker (in both Malay and English): It was he who led UMNO in its struggle to undo the MacMichael Treaties, and it was he, also influenced by MacDonald, who felt (and acted on that feeling) that in order to gain independence there must be intercommunal co-operation and a common Malayan identity developed. He too supported (and some say originated) the idea of using intercommunal education to achieve this identity.

There was Tan Cheng Lock: Although he spoke only English, he came to be recognized as the leader of the non-communist Chinese. As a man of vision, he saw the need for the Chinese in Malaya to become more closely identified with the land of their occupation, and so he too supported an educational policy which encouraged this.

And there were the second generation of Malayan political leaders—men such as Dato Abdul Razak and Tan Siew Sin (here literally a second generation leader, for he was the son of Tan Cheng Lock), but best exemplified by Tunku Abdul Rahman Al-Haj, the prince who became president of UMNO after Onn's resignation and Prime Minister of Malaya after the Alliance
election victory in 1955. An English-educated lawyer, he had not the brilliance of speech or of ideas of his predecessor Onn, but he did have not only an ability to recognize and act on the best ideas of others, but to understand Malaya's people and to convey a sense of concern for their well-being.

Finally, while there were many "isms" at work in postwar Malaya—communism, nationalism, and socialism, to name a few—communalism emerged as perhaps the leading factor influencing the development of educational policy in postwar Malaya. Activities of Chinese guerrillas against the Malay peoples—especially such activities in the period just after the war—prepared the ground, and when the Malayan Union was proposed, with its attendant rights and privileges for the Chinese, the Malays awoke more completely to the realization that they had certain prerogatives and goals that were being threatened by two other communities: their erstwhile "protectors," the British, and the "Johnny-come-lately" to "their"land, the Chinese.

The British, having returned to Malaya after the war with the desire to insure stability in Malaya and improve the efficiency of the government of the country, had designed an educational policy to support both these desires. Such changes as were proposed in educational policy were not supposed to be so radical as to stir up trouble. There was a recognition of the need for educational changes, such as English classes for all, but these were to be long-term goals, and they were to be
superimposed on the already existing educational structure. The biggest single change in education was to centralize its administration, both to improve efficiency and to standardize educational practices in the country.

The trouble was that political policies, designed to produce stability and efficiency, instead produced the unsettling reaction of Malay communalistic and nationalistic demands. These demands were not focused on the educational policy of the Malayan Union, but the effect of dislodging the Malayan Union was that its educational policy went too.

And then, just when the British felt they had adjusted matters to suit the Malays and so to produce stability again, they found themselves face to face with the Emergency.

The activities of the Communists, especially their terrorist campaign, had a strong impact on educational policy. It awakened the British colonials and the Malayan political leaders to the need for bringing the Chinese educational system under government control. And in order to do this, it seemed necessary to offer much increased government support to the Chinese schools. Further, they became convinced that it was not enough to control the Chinese schools, but that these schools should be "helped" to become "Malayanized," both in order to combat communism and in order to encourage interracial co-operation in Malaya. Thus financial blandishments were offered to get the Chinese to convert to national schools in 1952, and to accept complete curriculum content
How effective the government's attempts were to gain control of Chinese education is doubtful— but, by spending money on Chinese education, the government gave evidence that it was concerned about this education. And this convinced the Chinese educationalists that they must make an effort to influence educational policy-making if they wished to protect their educational interests.

On the other hand, while the activities of the Communist Chinese were not of themselves communalistic, the reaction of the British and the Malays was to see the problem as a Chinese one, and this in turn caused Chinese leaders in Malaya to realize that they too had communal interests that needed fostering. And thus, almost in spite of themselves, many Chinese became concerned with the politics and education of Malaya.

Increased British awareness of the threat of communalism to the future stability of Malaya led them to encourage efforts to reconcile differences between Malaya's communities. Meanwhile, when the leaders of the Malays and Chinese, Dato Onn and Tan Cheng Lock, became convinced that intercommunal cooperation was necessary before self-rule could be obtained (and perhaps even aware that a viable independent Malaya would also need it), they too began to support efforts to develop intercommunal cooperation. This, when coupled with British attitudes, resulted in the Communities Liaison Committee. Out of the Communities Liaison Committee came first the motion to
teach Malay and English to all children, and then the national school idea, wherein all children would learn together.

However, what seemed to have happened was that, having seen the problem of communalism, both the British and the initial group of postwar Malayan leaders proposed solutions which themselves only served to further the communalism they were designed to combat. And this was true both in educational policy and in indigenous political maneuvers. For education, this happened because the policy solutions offered proposed moving too rapidly from communal positions to noncommunal ones. And thus, instead of damping communalism, it provided fuel for communal fears, first of the Chinese and then of the Malays.

In the case of both the Chinese and the Malays, it was, quite naturally, the vernacular teachers who provided the major support for communal education—for, as they saw it, their jobs, and if not their jobs, their position in society, were threatened.

These vernacular educationalists in turn were able to gain support from their communities because there existed in the people of these two communities basic qualities that could be exploited by those interested in furthering communal goals.

The upshot was that a new wave of Malayan leaders emerged, who were both more sensitive to the communal forces at work and more willing to take these into consideration when developing educational policy.
While independence, citizenship, government employment, and economic opportunity were important campaign issues, communal interests—and among these, communal educational policy interests—played a leading role in the fortunes of Malayan politicians. It seems a possibility that education may have been the major factor in the victory of the Alliance in the 1955 federal elections, not because it was itself an overt campaign issue of the Alliance, but because this was the major concern of a politically very influential group of Malays in the rural areas—the Malay vernacular teachers. And what they were worried about, the institution of national-type streams into Malay schools, had become so completely identified with the leaders of Party Negara that the Alliance needed only to speak softly on this subject to reap the benefits of the Malay vernacular teachers' concern.

After the 1955 elections, the willingness of Alliance leaders to back down on a policy they had strongly advocated, i.e., that the Malay vernacular teachers must take an examination to qualify as teachers for standard schools, helped to indicate the power these teachers must have held in the Alliance political picture.

It is interesting to note that if one were to take a casual glance at the racial communities which existed in pre-independent Malaya, one would assume that the chances for a viable nation were slight once the stabilizing effect of the colonial government was removed. Yet, since obtaining independence, Malaya has been the most stable, politically and
economically, of all the nations of Southeast Asia.

There are many ingredients that have gone into producing this stability, and one among these would seem to be that so many of the Malayan leaders had had the common experience of an English education, an education which appears to have given these leaders a more or less common conception of a nation and how it should be run. It seems also to have had a tendency to convince these leaders that a common type of education was among the answers to the problem of how to break down communal barriers.

Another feature which helps explain Malaya's post-independent stability is that the leaders of the two largest communal groups have vested interests in maintaining stability in Malaya: the Chinese because they wish to protect their flourishing businesses; the Malays because they wish to maintain their near monopoly on the higher positions in the government. With the leaders of both groups having this vested interest in stability, it is, and was, not surprising to find them stopping short of open clashes on educational policy or on any other issue.

The Alliance was a party with no members, for it was (and is) made up of three communal political parties, and it was in these that one held membership. If the three parties had completely amalgamated, their ability to appear to speak for the interests of their own people would have decreased. If the three parties had remained completely separate they
would have had to debate their differences in public. An important factor in the ability of the Alliance partners to co-operate effectively was that the Alliance allowed for communal identification while at the same time providing the mechanism for effective intercommunal political co-operation. The leaders of both groups, the Chinese and the Malays, came to see that they had too much to lose not to develop methods for compromise; but they also recognized that communalism was a factor which must be lived with. Thus, when educational problems of a communal nature came along, the Malayan leaders (Chinese and Malay) produced a compromise: the 1957 Education Ordinance, which, while it did not satisfy completely the demands of either community, gave to both the most that could be given without disrupting too much the educational position of the other.

As was to be expected, the diametrically opposite pulls of the Chinese wanting to maintain their Chinese-ness and the Malays wanting to Malayanize the country, were not reconciled by the new law. But the spirit of communal compromise which was to be such an important factor in the success of the Malayan nation after 1957 had put down some of its sturdier roots during the development of commitments to educational policy change in Malaya, 1945-1957.
APPENDIX

RESEARCH METHODS AND SOURCES

The research on this subject was carried out almost entirely in Malaysia. The period of residence there extended from November 18, 1965, to November 18, 1966. While the main base of operations was Kuala Lumpur, extended research trips were carried out in various other sections of what today is called West Malaysia.

The initial approach was to scan carefully the major English language Malayan newspaper, the Malay Mail, for the period under study.1 This work was carried out at the Malaysian National Archives in Petaling Jaya. Notes were taken on all important events affecting Malaya, but emphasis was placed on those concerning education.

After completing this "over-view" of the country's activities from 1945 to 1957, attention was shifted to the legislative debates for the period.2 These were studied along with their companion council papers.3 An attempt was made not only to read, study, and take notes, but to gain possession of

1 1945-1957.
complete copies of the more important debates and council papers concerned with education.

The major portion of the work done on these Legislative Council records was carried out at the Parliamentary library in Parliament Building, Kuala Lumpur. Some of the more hard-to-locate materials were found at the office library of the federal Attorney General, and stray bits and pieces were located in the libraries of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Education Department, the Inspectorate of the Education Department, and the Agriculture Department.

Two other libraries were utilized which proved to be very helpful—the library of the Ministry of Information and the Kuala Lumpur library of the newspaper, the Straits Times. In the Ministry of Information library press translations of Malay, Chinese, and Tamil newspapers were available for the period 1951 to 1957. (A few press translations for the 1945–1951 period were obtained from the Singapore National Library.) News clippings on education and Government Press Releases were also obtained from the Ministry of Information library.

Located in the Straits Times library were extensive clippings on a wide variety of subjects. These were filed by

4 1945–1957.
6 1951–1957.
subject matter and provided a very convenient guide to research on various activities of the period. This library held the most complete run of the *Straits Times* obtainable in either Singapore or Malaya for the period after 1945. Also located in this library were the postwar runs of the *Singapore Free Press* and the *Malay Mail*. (Most of the company's prewar files were located in the *Straits Times* Singapore office.)

Shortly after arriving in Malaysia a written request was sent to the Ministry of Education of the Federation government asking for the use of their files. This request was refused. However, through the co-operation of the Kelantan Education Department, the education files of Kelantan were made available for use in this research. (These are now located at the National Archives in Petaling Jaya.)

Most of the major Malayan newspapers in English and Malay (both Rumi and Jawi script) were checked for their editorial content concerning events of the period. The best collections of these newspapers were at the Malaysian National Archives and at the Singapore National Library, although, as was indicated above, holdings of individual runs were often more complete in the offices of the newspaper concerned.

Efforts were made to ascertain the background and

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7 1945-1957.
8 *Education Files*, 1929-1957.
9 See bibliography for listing of papers used.
character of the newspapers by talking with men who had been involved in their publication. Not only were they asked about their own newspaper and its personnel, but about their reaction to the other newspapers of the day and the personnel connected with them.

Interviewing was carried out almost from the first. The early interviews were designed primarily to learn about the current educational system and its relationships to the past. In this regard, the Inspectorate of the federal Department of Education was most helpful, for they provided the opportunity to travel with them and visit schools whenever the author found it necessary.

The interviews carried out in the latter portion of the research year were with people who had, either directly or indirectly, been involved with education and/or political policy-making in the period 1945-1957. Those people who were out of the government by 1966 were interviewed first, and those who were still in public office were interviewed afterwards.

The interviewee was given the assurance that he would be sent a transcript of the interview. This transcript would be a record of the interview as the interviewer remembered it, using his notes to refresh his memory. The interviewee would then have the chance to correct any mistakes in fact or in opinion, and to indicate any sections he did not want attributed to him, returning to the interviewer the corrected
Secondary sources were obtained from the University of Malaya library, University of Singapore library, the Singapore National Library, the University of Malaya History Department library, the libraries of the various ministries in the federal government, from book stores located in Malaysia and Singapore, and from individual members of the History Department of the University of Malaya who had works in progress.

An evaluation of the major sources used follows:

In the period 1945-1957 many newspapers were published. An exact count was not taken, but an approximation of fifty would be a conservative estimate.\(^\text{11}\) The author does not pretend to have seen or worked with all the papers which are available in languages read by him (English, Malay—both Rumi and Jawi), let alone those in languages he does not read (Chinese and Tamil).

Many, if not most, of the approximately fifty newspapers did not have long runs. In the ten years after the war a considerable number of newspapers made their appearance, but most of these were defunct by 1957. Among those disappearing were some with respected names in the pre-World War II period.\(^\text{12}\)

\(^{10}\) See bibliography for listing of people interviewed.

\(^{11}\) There were 54 listed in the Malaysian National Archives as of 1964 (see Annual Reports on the National Archives for 1962, 1963, 1964).

\(^{12}\) e.g., the Malayan Tribune. (Interview with Allington Kennaird, September 20, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)
The two most outstanding English language newspapers of the period 1945–1957 were the Straits Times, published in Singapore, and the Malay Mail, with its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

During the period 1945–1957 the Straits Times gradually came to cover more of the Malayan scene and be less Singapore-centered. Whereas, from the start the Malay Mail focused its coverage on Malayan events, and more particularly on the capital, Kuala Lumpur, and southwest Malaya: Perak, Selangor, and Negri Sembilan. Thus the Malay Mail proved to be the most useful of the English-medium newspapers for the study of the development of educational policy in Malaya.

Even after control of the Malay Mail was assumed by the Straits Times in 1952, the Malay Mail continued to have more complete coverage of Malayan news than did the Straits Times. However, the gap continued to close until, by the time the Straits Times moved its headquarters to Kuala Lumpur in 1957, the two newspapers' coverage of Malayan news was approximately equal.

There were two other English language newspapers of a more local nature: the Penang Gazette and the Straits Echo and Times of Malaya (Penang). They were both politically middle-of-the-road, usually reserving their editorial comment for local affairs.

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13 Malay Mail of August 20, 1952. (Interview with former British newsman, September 23, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.)
Of the Malay vernacular newspapers, the Utusan Melayu,\textsuperscript{14} Warta Negara,\textsuperscript{15} and Majlis\textsuperscript{16} attracted the most readers. But it was the Utusan Melayu which could, with some justification, lay claim to producing the most effect on the Malay community's thinking. It was the most quoted of the Malay newspapers in English-medium press, and often its views were quoted in legislative debates. The paper was violently pro-Malay, strongly anti-British, and highly suspicious of the Chinese. At the same time it was a very much left-of-center newspaper, favoring socialist ideas—so much so, in fact, that it found it hard to criticize the perpetuators of the Emergency, and thus came to find itself in trouble with the government on more than one occasion.\textsuperscript{17} Its editors were sometimes detained, one for as long as three years.

The Utusan was very helpful in determining the thinking of leading segments of the Malay-educated elite. It often took issue with the thinking and actions of the English-educated Malay elite. This could be seen especially in its attitude towards Dato Onn bin Ja'afar and later towards Tunku Abdul Rahman, both successful leaders of UMNO, the strongest Malay

\textsuperscript{14} 1945-1957.
\textsuperscript{15} 1949-1957.
\textsuperscript{16} 1945-1955.
\textsuperscript{17} Interviews with Samad Ismail, September 10, 1966; Kuala Lumpur, and Zainal Abidin bin Haji Alias, November 21, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
national political organization. 18

The Utusan Melayu was published in Singapore until 1956, when it moved to Kuala Lumpur. It was a publicly owned company, but its chief stockholder and managing editor was Yusof bin Ishak, one of three brothers all of whom were well known in Malaya. These three were each connected in some way or other with politics, usually with socialistically inclined political parties. One of them, Abdul Aziz bin Ishak, was later detained for quite a considerable period of time by the Malayan government as one who favored union with Indonesia. Yusof bin Ishak later became President of the Republic of Singapore. 19

The Utusan Melayu became less critical of UMNO when the Federation government came to be controlled by the Alliance. This was the result of meetings with Malay UMNO leaders in 1955, who were able to convince the paper's owners and editors to modify their position. But this is not to say that the Utusan did not continue to contain controversial material right up to 1966.

Majlis was a Kuala Lumpur based newspaper. Its editorials also tended to be critical of any policy that was not strongly Malay. Warta Negara, published in Penang, was the most restrained of the three Malay papers. Often its editorials

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18 Interview with Zainal Abidin bin Haji Alias.
19 Ibid. Also with former British newsman.
appeared to support the more western-oriented Malay positions in policy-making struggles. *Majlis* supported UMNO; *Warta Negara* supported the I.M.P. (Independence of Malaya Party) and its successor, Party Negara's positions. 20

Press translations were the only sources used for Chinese and Tamil newspapers. The value of this source was limited by the fact that these were government press translations, and government translators translated things with which they believed the government would be concerned. Therefore, that which was translated tended to emphasize vernacular press criticisms of government actions. These press translations were semi-confidential and were not given to the public—thus their contents were designed to inform the government of public reaction to government actions. This can produce a certain amount of bias concerning these newspapers if the translations are read in isolation.

In order to balance somewhat this particular bias concerning Chinese and Tamil newspapers, men concerned in the publication of these newspapers, or people in the Chinese and Tamil communities who were acquainted with the newspapers, were interviewed. The information obtained from these people helped to modify the assessment of the vernacular newspapers mentioned as sources for history.

Sambantha, presently the leader of the Malayan Indian

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Congress and Minister of Works, Posts and Telecommunications in Malaysia, had this to say about Indian newspapers:

There were two leading Tamil newspapers in the 1945-1957 period, Tamil Merasu and Tamil Nesan. Of the two, Tamil Merasu was perhaps the more influential. It was a sectarian newspaper with a Dravidian outlook—i.e., it supported a sectarian movement in South India to set up a Dravidian state there. After 1955 this aspect of the paper’s outlook was gradually phased out and it became a more middle-of-the-road newspaper. Tamil Nesan was pro-Indian National Congress—a liberal paper.21

The Chinese not only published Chinese language newspapers, but also produced ones in English. For a time the Malayan Tribune was Chinese owned (1948-1951), and after its demise the Singapore (Tiger) Standard was brought out by the Au family, owners of Tiger Balm products. This same family produced a Chinese language newspaper, the Sin Chew Jit Poh, and had newspapers in Hong Kong, Rangoon, and Bangkok. The Sin Chew Jit Poh was a more liberal paper and more oriented towards the young Chinese people.22 The Singapore Standard was a supporter of the English-oriented Malayans and as such

21 Interview with Sambanthan, November 14, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.

22 Interview with former British newsman, September 23, 1966, Kuala Lumpur. See especially a letter alleged to have come from Tan Siew Sin, attempting to control their editorial content, in Singapore Standard, June 3, 1951.
supported the I.M.P. and Party Negara.

The Nanyang Siang Pau was most influential with the Chinese business community. At one time it had strong Kuomintang leanings.\(^23\)

Records for the legislative debates for this period were complete, as were the Legislative Council papers. Since education was one of the areas which received considerable attention in the legislature during this period, there was a wealth of information which tended to show the viewpoints of the various racial communities and pressure groups towards the developing educational policy of the period. This was especially true before the first nation-wide elections in 1955, for the British deliberately selected members for the Council so that all segments of the community would be represented. After 1955 the Alliance-controlled Legislative Council did not provide the same candid picture.

When the statements made in the Legislative Council are tied in with interview information obtained either from the people who made the statements in the legislature, or from people who knew them, the result constitutes perhaps the most valuable source available on the subject of educational policy development.

As was mentioned above, the interviews themselves were carried out in two phases: People who were out of the

\(^23\) Interview with former British newsman, September 23, 1966, Kuala Lumpur.
government were interviewed first, and those still in the service second. The value of arranging the interviews in this order seemed to be that the men in office, once they realized that those out of office had given their account of events, became quite willing to provide the time for interviews. It seemed that those who were in the government wanted to be sure that their views would also have a chance to be considered.

The fact that these interviews were corrected and signed by the interviewees tended to strengthen them as historical sources, although in a few cases restricting somewhat the amount of attributable quotes available.

The lack of access to the Ministry of Education files was not unexpected, for most governments wish to protect the living from having their foibles revealed by the historian. Actually, Malaysia's law covering this matter is quite liberal, for it keeps government files closed for only twenty-five years. This compares very favorably with the policy of most other nations.

The lack of access to such files by the researcher into modern historical events is balanced first by the opportunity the researcher has to talk with people who were directly involved in the events under scrutiny, and second by the fact that resources for the writings of the history of more modern times in Southeast Asia are fast being destroyed, either by nature (by the environment in which they are stored), or
by human action—or lack of it. Even if political unrest does not take its toll on the historical resources of new nations in Southeast Asia, personnel of these countries with the education to appreciate the past are too busy being concerned with the present to have time to see that the records of the past are being conserved. Thus the modern historical researcher in Southeast Asia is often using resources which might never again be available.

The Kelantan education files are a case in point. The condition of these files was such that their survival for any considerable time was in grave doubt. Rodents had already completely shredded some five feet of files, and silverfish had partially destroyed at least another five feet. All files had been thoroughly infested with silverfish, and all had some damage because of this.

The Kelantan education files proved very useful in this study. They began in 1920 and carried through to 1964. They contained directives and correspondence to the state government from the central government. Often these were general instructions to all states concerning formation or implementation of educational policy. There was correspondence between the state and federal education officials, between the state education officials and state government officials of other departments, and between the Kelantan state education officials and education officials in other states. There was also, of course, a considerable number of records of the everyday
running of the state Education Department: reports from the various schools for each month, financial reports of orders for purchasing, and complete files of what was purchased, for how much, and when.

These Kelantan files were made more valuable because Kelantan was one of four states which was turned over to Siam by Japan in 1943. In this collection there were about two and a half feet each of very pertinent prewar and wartime materials. These seemed much richer in their content, historically speaking, than most other portions of the collection and proved helpful in preparing the introductory material on education history.

The postwar Kelantan education files proved especially useful in evaluating the role of education in fighting the Emergency and in tracing the effects of the Emergency on educational policy, particularly policy concerning Chinese schools. These files also illustrated the relative positions of the state and federal governments when it came to making and implementing educational policy, and how the positions changed with the various changes in policy and politics in the country in the period after the war. The files also give evidence of the interesting relationship between the state Education Department personnel and other state government officials.

There are not many secondary sources for the period 1945-1957 in Malaya. Education policy-making has received
even less attention by writers than most other subjects. The one exception is a published version of Ho Seng Ong's Ph.D. dissertation entitled, *Education for Unity in Malaya*. He makes no claim to having written a history. He presents instead selected facts which he believes support his contention that primary education in Malaya should be in the English language, with students of all races attending the same schools. However, his book does contain some useful information on educational policy for the period between 1945 and 1951.

Political scientists have contributed the most writing on modern Malayan events. Of these, K.J. Ratnam's study, *Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya*, and the writings of Victor Purcell and Lucian Pye on the Emergency are best known. 24 Harry Miller's biography of Tunku Abdul Rahman contains much useful information, but it is marred by his too-heavy reliance on sources favorable to the UMNO-Alliance point of view. (One of the problems of this book is that there are few references to sources given.) 25 Robert Tilman's book on the developments in postwar Malaya's bureaucracy was helpful. 26

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25 *Prince and Premier*.

Anthony Short has been appointed as the official historian of the Emergency, and while he has been working on this task now for five years or more, he has not yet published the results of his labor.\footnote{Note the chapter on the Emergency by Short in Wang's \textit{Malaysia}.}

There have also been three collections of writings on Malaya which include useful materials on the postwar period: Wang Gungwu's \textit{Malaysia}, Thomas Silcock and E.K. Fisk's (eds.) \textit{The Political Economy of Independent Malaya},\footnote{Complete title: \textit{The Political Economy of Independent Malaya: A Case-Study in Development} (Canberra, 1963).} and John Bastin and Robin Winks' (comps.) \textit{Malaysia: Selected Historical Writings}.\footnote{(New York, 1966).}

The periodical writings of H.A.R. Cheeseman and Frederick Mason were found to be very useful.\footnote{Cheeseman, \textit{Education in Malaya}; Mason, "Education in Malaya."} Cheeseman was the first postwar Malayan Director of Education. He had been in the Malayan Education Department for a considerable number of years and had formed strong opinions on what educational policy there should be in Malaya. Mason was Professor of Education at the University of Malaya, and as such he was often called in or consulted when educational policy was being formulated.

There are good collections of books in Malaysia's bookstores on Malayan subjects. No one bookstore is outstanding...
for writings on Malaya in the English language, but the
Pustaka Antara, Kuala Lumpur, is the best of those stores
containing works in Malay, both in Rumi and in Jawi.

The libraries of the University of Malaya and the
Federal Parliament are both very useful to the modern re-
searcher, and the library of the Department of Agriculture
contains many old volumes on Malaya, although it holds little
on the subject of education. 31

The Malaysian National Archives is very new, but under
the guidance of F.R.J. Verhoeven and a small, but dedicated
staff of Malayans, headed by Enche Alwi, it has progressed
rapidly. Its collection of government files is extensive,
and it has the nucleus of a collection of materials on prewar
Malaya. As of the end of 1966 its wartime materials were still
scanty. Its collection of Malayan newspapers is good, but
marred by missing issues in many runs.

Staff members in libraries and government offices
throughout Malaysia were almost invariably anxious to be of
assistance whenever they could.

Certainly one misconception that was exploded while
carrying out this research project was the commonly-heard
comment that resources for research are in short supply in
Malaysia. This was definitely not true.

Another interesting phenomenon uncovered during the

31 See Kent H. Keeth, comp., A Directory of Libraries in
Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur, 1965).
course of the research was that the European researcher seemed to have a much easier time gaining access to files and materials in the country than did the Malayan--Malay, Chinese, or Indian. Perhaps the social and communal stratifications so prevalent in Malaya account for this situation to some extent. Whatever the reason, it points to the value of having an outsider doing research in Malayan history. He may not be able to become completely disassociated from his western bias, but he provides a good means of obtaining materials and of getting them into safe-keeping at the archives.
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