advantage of the great change in the situation (Lees 1986:65). In April 1940, Rajah Brooke visited Lawas (trading and administrative center near Trusan), and said: "I am amazed at the change in the Murut [Lun Bawang]. I believe you have done more good in a few years than Government has done in forty [years]" (quoted from Lees 1986:67).

3.3.2.2. Christianity Among the Kelabits

Prior to their acceptance of Christianity in the 1940s, the Kelabit were ardent animists. They looked to the birds (eagle), the snakes, the barking of the deer, the sound of the fallen tree and various other omens and taboos. Blessings and healing were performed by a few gifted elderly people whose knowledge of the art of invoking the spirits of the dead were highly respected (Yahya 1979).

The Kelabit had been exposed to Christianity during the first contact with a Borneo Evangelical Mission (BEM) missionary in 1935 at Medihit in Upper Limbang river in the Fourth Division of Sarawak. The missionary, Frank Davidson managed to learn the Kelabit language but he had to give up evangelism among the Kelabit in 1938 because the Kelabit did not show much response towards the Christian teachings. Instead of continuing the evangelistic work among the Kelabit, the missionary concentrated on evangelism among the Lun Bawang as there was greater response from the latter. Although the BEM missionaries concentrated on the Lun Bawang, Kelabit still had access to Christian teachings due to the mission's work among the Lun Dayehs in Kalimantan, along the border near Bario (Saging & Bulan

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1989:114). The Lun Dayeh spread information about Christianity until it reached the Kelabit settlement in Pa’ Lungan (in Bario area, see map 3.3).

BEM never opened a station in Bario, and the evangelistic work was mainly continued by the Lun Bawang who were converted to Christianity by BEM missionaries. They evangelised and assisted the Kelabit who were interested in becoming Christians. In 1939 when the Kelabit headman, Tama Bulan, was converted to Christianity, the Lun Bawang helped him in calling for pastors and Bible teachers to teach his followers. This was the first attempt of a Kelabit leader to encourage the Kelabit to listen to Christian teachings. Tama Bulan invited a missionary, Tuan Aris (no other name for Tuan Aris was mentioned but Aris may refer to a Mr. Harris), who worked under C&MA to teach the Kelabit about Christianity. Tuan Aris, who was an American was in Kalimantan in 1938, preaching the Bible to the Berian, Kurid and the Murut speaking tribes of Kalimantan. He was assisted by a Malay Christian convert called ‘Tuan Agong’ from Celebes who had come to the interior of Borneo on behalf of the American Christian mission before World War II (Harrison 1959:255). Tuan Aris went to the Kelabit settlement, Pa’ Main longhouse at Bario in 1941, accompanied by a Murut (Lun Bawang) pastor who acted as the interpreter, then to Pa’ Lungan longhouse and preached the gospel to the Kelabit. Tuan Aris told the Kelabit that practising the traditional ritual was a deadly sin, (Talla 1979:464). In the 1940’s, the Kelabit leader still had a great control over the longhouse and its households. However, the Kelabit were not inspired by Tama Bulan’s enthusiasm for Christian teachings.

I also think that due to their earlier exposure to education in Kalimantan in 1940, the Kelabit became more receptive to elementary education than
Map 3.3: Kelabit settlement in Bario region, Sarawak.
Christian teachings. The Kelabit were more interested in literacy. It was not inevitable that by reading and studying the Bible in school, the Kelabit would be persuaded to listen to Christian teachings. It is, nonetheless, quite possible that they understood the stories in the Bible but were unable to relate the stories with Biblical teachings because they were not yet Christians. Furthermore, Christianity had not yet been accepted among the Kelabit when they were introduced to the elementary education. It is possible that they were more inspired by education, particularly when three individual Kelabit went to a school established by an American Christian missionary at Belawit, Kalimantan, Indonesia in 1940. They were taught to read and write in Malay (Talla 1979:429).

Education became more familiar to the Kelabit through a school set up by Tom Harrisson. Tom Harrisson brought a Timorese named Paul Kohuan\(^4\) from Roti Island, near Timor, to offer a basic education (to read and write) to the Kelabit during the Japanese occupation in Sarawak. Soon after the Japanese occupation, the first school\(^4\) was established at Bario in 1946. At the school's establishment, as there were no materials or textbooks available, Paul Kohuan had to use the Bible as the textbook. Thus, the Kelabit were exposed to Bible teaching while they were learning to read and write. However, many Kelabit refused to listen to Christian teachings, and those who showed interest in the teachings still maintained the practices associated with their traditional religion (Lees 1978:87). When a few of them gave up traditional practices such as charms and fetishes, they still struggled with the issue of alcohol.

\(^4\) Roti Island had long been mainly Christian through the work of the Dutch Reformed Church. Paul Kohuan’s desired to be a Christian worker, and was admitted for training to the C&MA Bible School at Makasar in the Celebes (now called Sulawesi). He was brought to Borneo, with other teachers by John Willfinger, and after Japanese invasion Paul Kohuan was brought by Tom Harrisson to stay with the Kelabits at Bario. As a result, the Kelabits were influenced by the Gospel he preached through the school that set up by Tom Harrisson.

\(^4\) The first school at Bario established at Pa Mein longhouse.
Drinking *burak* (rice beer) was condemned by the missionaries, especially Paul Kohuan, as not appropriate because drinking was not good for their health. However, this advice was taken lightly by the Kelabit. Although Paul Kohuan emphasised that drinking, as a practice was bad the Kelabit were not convinced. According to Paul Kohuan:

“The people (Kelabit) burnt all their skulls, they prayed to God before they drank themselves happily drunk. I used to teach them in between drinking bouts while they were still just about sober enough to listen” (Lees 1978:86).

In this sense, during that particular period, the conversion to Christianity among the Kelabit was a slow process, from the 1930’s until the revival in 1973. The Kelabit did not understand the religion. They still practised charms and fetishes even though they attended the Christian meetings, and also drank *burak* and got drunk before the meetings. However, they learnt about new things introduced by the missionaries such as reading and writing. There is no doubt that Christian values in the Bible were not seen as important as the Bible itself which was utilised to help make people literate. Nevertheless, by utilising the Bible as a textbook the missionaries may have made the Kelabit receptive to Christianity.

Elementary education became more attractive to the Kelabit since they could see the progress and change in those who pursued elementary education. Tom Harrisson had chosen four Kelabit to go for a teaching course at Batu Lintang Teachers Training College, Kuching in 1949, and all of them came back to teach in Bario in 1952. In 1962, education was offered up to the level required for the Sarawak Education Department Selection Exam. Through this examination, many Kelabit furthered their studies in Kuching. The enrolments
of the students in the schools at Bario were so impressive that in 1963, A.G. Smith, the Director of Education in Sarawak visited the schools and decided to build a boarding school for the students. By 1964, about 240 Kelabit students lived in the boarding school, which was administered and run by the teachers, without any Christian missionaries.

Apart from education, Tom Harrisson offered medical aid to the Kelabit during the years of 1945-1952, after which a small dispensary was opened in Bario. He also sent a Kelabit for basic medical training in Kuching, and a year later, five other Kelabit pursued the same course. All of them went back to Bario and worked in the dispensary. The British government also directed medical officers to pay annual visits to Bario after the airstrip at Bario was extended in 1962. In 1967, a Rural Health Supervisor was employed to conduct the health service at Bario. Under this supervisor, a health committee was formed responsible for the general cleanliness of the entire Kelabit community in Bario region (Talla 1979:428-410).

The constant influence of outsiders contributed to Kelabit resistance to Christian teachings. Tom Harrisson confused the Kelabit by claiming he was a Christian while drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes, activities which were against Christian teachings learnt from the Lun Bawang, C&MA and BEM missionaries. Many Kelabit who later followed BEM Christian teachings mentioned that Tom Harrisson tried to get them back to their traditional religion and superstitions. However, most Kelabit were unable to resist the influence of Tom Harrison because the Kelabit were introduced to much new

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43 I interpret Tom Harrisson’s actions as an attempts to preserve the culture of the Kelabit. He was very interested to learn about the Kelabit culture. He worked with Museum of Sarawak after the Second World War when he was appointed the Curator. I assume that he saw the introduction of Christianity among the Kelabit as a process heading to the elimination of the Kelabit traditional culture.
knowledge, especially to education. C.H. Southwell suggested that Tom Harrisson intended to keep the entire Kelabit cultural practices as “an anthropological, living museum”

I conclude, based on the assistance that Tom Harrisson offered that he wanted the Kelabit to modernise (through Western education), but at the same time maintain their culture.

Through Western elementary education, the Kelabit gradually changed the pattern of their agricultural practices. For example, the calenderical year became well known to the Kelabit, as a result of Western elementary education. As a result the ‘birds’ calendar gradually went out of use. The Kelabit also no longer relied totally on growing rice. Through the educated Kelabit, the British government established an agriculture sub-station in Bario in 1958. Agriculture among the Kelabit became more diversified. The government introduced development schemes, such as the Assistance to Rice Planters, Coffee Subsidy Scheme, Sugar Subsidy Scheme, Ulu Pig Scheme and Fresh Water Fishpond Subsidy (Talla 1979:330-331). Other ethnic groups may have received the same assistance but the Kelabit were quite advanced in the sense that they were more receptive towards development.

The important point that needs to be emphasised in comparison of the Kelabit and the Lun Bawang is that both went through changes, particularly in the quality of health and exposure to literacy but the differences were in the way the changes were brought about. Among the Lun Bawang, the BEM missionaries played a very important role and had strong influence. The fact that the Lun Bawang were not much exposed to non-missionaries offering them elementary education, resulted in a majority of Christian Lun Bawang

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44 C.Hudson Southwell mentioned this in his Memoir (1928).
enrolling at the Bible School in Lawas when it was opened in 1947\textsuperscript{45}. Most literate Lun Bawang at that period became missionaries. Furthermore, the health condition of the Lun Bawang improved because of the hygiene teaching of the BEM missionaries during the Brooke reign rather than through British government health officials.

3.3.3. \textit{Evangelism Among the Kayan and Kenyah}

Apart from establishing the Bible School in Sungai Pranga in 1928, which was left in charge of other missionaries, C.H. Southwell evangelized further up the Baram river (see Map 4.1) among the Kelabit. Through the Kelabit, C.H. Southwell reached the Kayan and Kenyah who were at that time “deeply entrenched in their own customs” (Lees 1986:86-88). However, there were several individuals among the Kayan and Kenyah who wanted to meet the BEM missionaries because they had heard about the changes in the Lun Bawang, especially the improvement in the control of epidemics\textsuperscript{46}.

When C.H. Southwell met Tama Paya Anyi the leader of the Uma Pu’ clan of Kayan from Long Atip for the first time in June 1948, Tama Paya Anyi was strongly opposed to the Christian evangelistic work. He even came to another Kayan village, Long Sinei, which was also, evangelised by C.H. Southwell to intervene against those who wished to leave the old traditional worship to become Christians. However, his interest in Christian teachings changed when he witnessed the changes among the Lun Bawang in terms of the improvement of their health. He also observed the changes among other Kayans in Long

\textsuperscript{45} C.H. Southwell opened this Bible School and directed Brian Morcombe as the principal assisted by a small administrative staff; Mrs. Morcombe, Mrs. Davidson and Alan and Madge Belcher (Talla 1979:468).

\textsuperscript{46} Other Christian missions provide medical care but it is not mentioned in the literature that they visited the longhouse and teach the people about hygiene and cleanliness.
Tebangan of the Uma Peliu clan who lived a more healthy life after abandoning rice beer. He was further convinced of mission teachings, when the Kayans of Long Tebangan, which had been Christianised in early 1940’s by C.H. Southwell, reaped a bounteous harvest even without any sacrifices to placate the evil spirits. Thus, in January 1949, when Tama Paya Anyi met C.H. Southwell again, he invited him to his longhouse to teach the Gospels. C.H. Southwell and his wife, Winsome, went to see Tama Paya Anyi and his people in Long Atip in March 1949 after having studied the Kayan language by listening to Kayan conversations and collecting a fairly extensive vocabulary in a couple of months.

Tama Paya Anyi was a dayong (medium spirit), but because of the changes that he had witnessed among the Kayan in Long Tebangan and among the Lun Bawang, he dared to ‘confront’ the spirits by not offering any more sacrifices, and by ignoring the taboos. Instead he wanted to know more about Southwell’s evangelical work. He called great mass meetings of the people to proclaim the meaning of the Gospels. Language barriers hampered Southwell’s explanation of the Gospels. However, Southwell was assisted by a few Kayan from Long Tebangan who came with him, and they explained more clearly about the “message of salvation” by giving examples based on their own experience. According to Southwell, after three days Tama Paya Anyi gathered about 500 people, and they consented to follow Christian teachings.

Southwell’s teachings of the Gospels covered “God’s good news of deliverance from the powers of evil through trusting in Jesus Christ. Also, that through repentance from ‘sins’ they may receive forgiveness from God and escape His judgement”. The ‘sins’ referred to the work of charms and fetishes,
and the power of the shaman, or witchdoctor. Southwell also declared “God’s teaching about marriage which was not only to produce children, but was so that a man and a woman may have the closest union of heart and mind, and that they should love each other unselfishly” (Southwell 1928: 157). The Kayan, with an interest in Christian teachings, requested to be remarried according to Christian teachings and blessings.

The same pattern applied among the Kayan in Long Bedian, where the leader, Tama Asang, invited Hudson to teach to his household about Christianity. The influence of the leader was strong. Some longhouses, which were led by leaders who took a vow under a solemn oath among themselves in 1946 that they would never become Christians, proved resistant to Southwell’s evangelistic work (Southwell 1928:158). Among them were the Kenyahs in Long Terawin, led by Tama Uding, the Uma Beluyuh Kayan who were led by Aban Deng, also the Kenyah at Long Watt, led by Tama Wong. They showed a polite attitude towards Hudson and his teachings but firmly resisted any real interest in the Christian teachings (Southwell 1928:158). However, Hudson and his team continued to evangelise these longhouses even though their teachings were firmly refused.

3.4. The Headmen and Christianity: Why Were They So Influential?

The authority system among the Lun Bawang and Kelabit was similar. A headman, or leader of the longhouse, was a very influential character not only because he was an aristocrat (paran) but also because he had the final word in settling a crisis and in earlier years led headhunting parties. Among the Kelabit, the headman was the owner or a guardian of holy jars that legitimised the headman’s political authority within the longhouse (LeBar:1972:162;
Harrisson 1959:28). The headman also performed ritual functions, such as megalithic activities and burial ceremonies (LeBar 1972:163). The authority in these stratified societies was the adat, which was unwritten and passed down orally from one generation to another. Recognition of leadership within the longhouse was directly linked to familiarity with traditional adat and etiquette. The aristocrats normally held the position of the headman because they were taught about the adat and etiquettes, and at times informal instruction on the adat was given to their sons. Longhouse headmen were chosen from the aristocrats based on personal reputation.

In relation to evangelistic work, the Kelabit leader, for instance Tama Bulan, may have played quite an important role as a supporter of Lun Bawang and also other Christian missionaries from Kalimantan, Indonesia. Tama Bulan was a leader of good reputation and respected among the Kelabits, and he managed to convince his households to respond positively towards Christian teachings. The positive response of other Kelabit (commons) who were converted to Christianity in 1940 in Belawit, Kalimantan, helped Tama Bulan. They taught Christian hymns at traditional ritual functions, songs that they learned during their school days in Kalimantan. They also narrated biblical stories to the Kelabit at the longhouses and introduced the notion of praying even if meant it had to be said concurrently with their traditional practices (Talla 1979:463). This resulted in Kelabit holding their traditional practices concurrently with Christian practices.

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47 The megalithic activities included the erection of an incised stone, dolmen or monolith, and the excavation of ditches and the cutting of the openings through the vegetation at the crests of hills done as a permanent memorial for the deceased. This was accompanied by the feast (LeBar 1972:163).

48 The reputation depends very much on a few criteria such as being a reliable and courageous person, competent to lead his people in war and raids, capable of making calm and sound judgements (Talla 1979:89).
Soon after the federation of Malaysia in 1963 which included the states of Sabah and Sarawak, the local state government decided to appoint a community leader to replace the old pattern of leadership among the Kelabit, meaning that a Kelabit leader could be anyone that the government considered suitable. Preference was given to a Kelabit who was able to communicate with the government to represent the Kelabit community. Therefore, knowledge of traditional religious ritual was no longer significant. The community leader’s
d job as a chief was to settle community disputes, and preside over such matters as a judge would in a court of law.

Among the Lun Bawang, the case was probably different. Among the stratified societies in general longhouse size was usually a function of the political power, economic success and prestige of the leader. A fall in population through an epidemic, or loss of subjects through conflicts and partition, could seriously weaken the position of the leader, and ultimately lead him to subordinate himself to others (King 1993:217). This was probably the situation that had fallen upon the Lun Bawang leadership. The smallpox and malaria endemic had resulted in a decline in the population. No doubt that had weakened the position of the leaders, and gradually resulted in Lun Bawang losing faith in the traditional practices and values as well. The only available alternative at that time was Christian leaders who seemed able to explain what the diseases were and able to give certain medical treatment required which was more sophisticated than any traditional medicine.

\footnote{The community leader called the Penghulu, was appointed by the Government since Sarawak joined the Federation of Malaysia in 1963. The position of the leader in every community in Sarawak was designed by the Government to suit the pattern of political administration in Sarawak. Thus, the traditional leadership pattern, or structure was no longer in practice since then.}

\footnote{I have mentioned the fall of Lun Bawang population in the earlier section. This was also the reason Brooke rulers did not permitted BEM missionaries to evangelise the Lun Bawangs because they were seen as disappearing.}
Among the Kenyah and Kayan, like the Lun Bawang and Kelabit, the word for leader or chief (paran) is also extended to refer to aristocrats. The same practice is found among the Kayan with the term maren (Rousseau 1990:187ff). Among the Kayan and Kenyah, traditionally, as Rousseau (1990) argues, the leaders played crucial roles in the management and control of the relations between villages (quoted from King 1993:216). Such groups as Kayan and Kenyah produced paramount chiefs who exercised power and influence over several communities, using the network of marriage alliances forged by aristocrats (King 1993:218). This explains why Tama Paya Anyi, the Kayan leader mentioned in the earlier section, was very concerned about other Kayan villages and dared to intervene whenever a Kayan attempted to follow Christian teachings. His action was a result of his obligation to maintain these relations between the villages threatened by conversion to Christianity. Intermarriage between aristocrats among these villages was limited. However, Tama Paya Anyi was convinced after he witnessed the other Kayan village (Long Tebangan) which had been Christianised. As a result he finally welcomed the evangelistic work by BEM missionaries, and strengthened the relations with the Christian Kayan village of Long Tebangan.

3.5. The Outcome of Evangelistic Work on Intergroup Relations

By accompanying C.H. Southwell in his journey for the mission work, the Kelabit interacted with the Kayan and Kenyah, and through the evangelistic work, the Lun Bawang developed a reasonably strong relation with different groups. Through the mission work in which local individuals introduced
Southwell to other ethnic groups, they also established occasional contact with the Penan and the Tagal.

Interaction of the students of the Bible School with various groups was also heavily emphasised by the missionaries. A number of students from the Bible School at Lawas accompanied the missionaries on evangelistic trips to groups other than their own. However, the interaction between groups through the mission work had already begun during the Japanese occupation, when the Lun Bawang had gone to evangelise the Kelabit without the presence of the missionaries.51

The positive outcome of inter-group relations through the mission was clearly portrayed when in 1954, a representative body was formed for the administration of church affairs. It comprised representatives of six different churches (different areas of BEM evangelism): the Lun Bawang, Kayan, Kenyah, Kelabit, Tagal (in Sarawak), and Dusun (in Sabah).

In the following year, 1955, over ninety pastors and their wives from these ethnic groups came together for a conference in Miri, and the Bisaya Church was represented for the first time. In the same year, the first inter-group convention took place in a Kelabit village, Pa Main (population 150). The inter-group convention in 1955 involved activities such as preaching, discussing Christian values and spirituality, and prayer meetings. There were about 1,200 Kayan, Kenyah, Lun Bawang and Penan, with even a few from the small Saban tribe from the Upper Baram present. The people traveled to Bario by boat along the Baram River. As the host of the gathering, the Kelabit

51 The Lun Bawang had been left during the war years (between 1942-7) with the local leader in each group and they had evangelised to the Kelabit replacing the missionaries.
provided accommodation and food, and the people stayed at the Kelabits’ longhouses.

The gathering in 1955 showed that inter-group relations were improving. This was the first social gathering in which individuals from various groups in Central Borneo interacted closely with each other (Lees 1986:109). It was the first sign that the interaction between groups was possible through a common values and belief system. The participants were involved in many different Christian activities such as praying, testimonies, singing songs of praise, presentations that required the participation of every one in groups in which every one was able to get to know each other.

Partly because of BEM evangelistic work among the local people interaction between the people improved. Kayan, Kenyah, and Lun Bawang were very ‘useful’ in evangelism because they were examples of indigenous Christians. The evangelism always included ‘testimonies’ about their new Christian lifestyle and values. Furthermore, since the decision of BEM to have the Fifteen-Years policy in 1950 (discussed in detail in Chapter 4), in which the indigenous people were asked to learn to administer and run the evangelistic work under BEM instructions and guidance, there were many indigenous people who became missionaries and evangelised groups other than their own. The fear of approaching other groups disappeared because the “responsibility to bring the news of the Gospel” was much stronger than any other fear. This was obviously associated with the commitment of the Christian indigenes to the Christian teachings.
The strength of the local indigenous missionaries was that they were able to attract more local people to Christian teachings through their personal testimonies. BEM also sent the local missionaries independently to evangelise other groups than their own when they graduated from the Bible School. For example, a Lun Bawang couple, Balang Selutan and his wife, Muring, was sent to evangelise the Kayar in Baram in 1952. Through such evangelistic activities, interaction between the people was established.

3.6. Conclusion

The important point discussed in this chapter is the capability of Christian missionary societies to bring people in Sarawak into contact. However, because of the differences in approach and in priority of people in the evangelistic work, every missionary society affected people’s life and interaction differently. All of the missionary societies such as the Anglican, Methodist, Catholics and Borneo Evangelical Mission were ordered to work in charity and peace, and the Brooke ruler was particularly interested to see an improvement in the welfare of the native inhabitant.

The allocation of each missionary society to a particular region definitely was an obstacle to interaction between ethnic groups. People were introduced to different ideas and denominations. Based on such differences, interaction was limited. All of the missionary societies except BEM channeled their evangelistic work through educational programs in elementary schools that aimed at conversion of students to Christianity. Automatically, elementary schools functioned as a useful institution to spread Christian values and virtues.
The BEM, instead, was keen to set up Bible schools, which functioned as institutions to teach the students to preach the Gospel as trained missionaries and pastors. The Bible schools were for those who were Christians, and did not function as an institution to convert the students to Christianity. Furthermore, the BEM evangelised by communicating with individuals from different ethnic groups face to face, and by developing a Christian community in various locations. Of course, the degree of acceptance and rejection varied because of the differences in culture and attitude but this situation did not stop the interaction between the people, whether Christians or non-Christians. Through the evangelistic, work the BEM connected individuals from different ethnic groups and from various locations. Based on this connection, BEM unlike other missionary societies was able to combine various ethnic groups in many of its Christian events. The participation of the various people was no doubt due to the fact that they held a common belief system (Christianity) under the same institution (BEM).
Chapter 4
Sidang Injil Borneo, Revival and Interpersonal Relations

4.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the role of the Sidang Injil Borneo (SIB) as a church for the indigenous people in Sarawak, particularly in the building of interpersonal relations among the congregations. It analyses the impact of Christian revival in Bario region in 1973 not only for the Kelabit who lived in Bario but also for the SIB institution. Personal spiritual experience is identified as an important ingredient of conversion and of changing relations between individuals.

4.2. The Formation of Sidang Injil Borneo: The Fifteen-Year Policy (1950-65)

Fully aware of the fact that Borneo Evangelical Mission (BEM) would not be permanent in Sarawak, as by definition, missions were temporary affairs (Lees 1986:101), a decision was made by the missionaries of BEM in 1950 that an evangelical church must be founded which stood on its own feet: self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating. It was a goal of BEM to evangelise all tribes, and to establish an indigenous church and leadership amongst the converted (cf. Ooi 1992:326). Although, their educational work took the form of the establishment of a Bible School with a purely religious curriculum (Ooi 1992:326), the Bible School was not enough to prepare the natives to govern their own church. Hence, in 1950, BEM missionaries constituted a policy which gave BEM a fifteen year period to complete

52 BEM was started in Melbourne, Australia in 1927.
53 "BEM newsletter" (Lees 1986:101).
their task in Borneo\textsuperscript{54} in general, and in Sarawak in particular. The task included giving instructions and teachings to make the church sufficiently grounded to be able to take over the responsibility of the Christian BEM mission work and administration (Lees 1986:103).

The Fifteen-Year policy gave the missionary a new sense of urgency, not only in the area of teaching but also in a more intensive program of evangelisation. Central to the whole program was the continued development of the Bible Schools and training of future church leaders together with the establishment of Feeder Bible Schools in different areas. Thus, a Deacon School program was introduced to the villagers to train Bible teachers to teach and preach in the village. Through this program, the villagers were assisted by a pastor in learning to read and write so as to enable them to read the Bible and preach to the congregations in the village during the absence of the pastor. The Deacon School program was held over the month of May every year. Apart from this, BEM also shortened the time of journey to the interior for mission work by sending the missionaries by aircraft. The aircraft service owned by BEM saved time, energy and the expenses of surface travelling. In this way, vital energy was given more effectively into the urgent evangelisation work.

In 1954, a representative body was formed for the administration of church affairs. This managed to gather six ethnic groups\textsuperscript{55}, Lun Bawang, Kelabit, Kayan, Kenyah, Dusun, and Tagal. After 1956, all meetings were chaired by a Lun Bawang pastor, and the BEM missionary was asked to join the council as adviser to liaise between the church and missionary body (Lees 1986: 105). The constitution for an evangelical church in Borneo was drawn up in a conference in 1959 assisted by representatives

\textsuperscript{54} BEM also has its mission works among the Dusun in Sabah.

\textsuperscript{55} I have mentioned the gathering organised and attended by a few Lun Bawang pastors since 1952 to discuss the evangelistic work and plan. This gathering was transformed into a representative body for the administration of church affairs.