Thus, though the rhetoric of political leadership affirms the gradual evolution of a Malaysian culture and the seeking of common values (in keeping with Islam), it is Malay (and Islamic) symbols and values which increasingly prevail in national life and educational texts.[11] This is underlined by the unchallengeable "sovereignty" of Malay as the national language[12] and the incorporation of Islamic studies and educational philosophies into the education system.[13]

Such a localisation process has been gradual and has reflected developments in the political scene. Originally, British educational forms and practices were consciously borrowed. Included in the package were not only school architecture, curriculum, examination systems, university academic apparel and ethos, etc.; but also Euro-centric educational texts and knowledge disciplines[14]; and, the English public school (with its emphasis on literary education) as the predominant educational model.[15]

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[11]For comments regarding the predominance of peninsular Malay symbols and values in Malaysian textbooks refer: Hena Mukherjee (Project Head), *The Malaysian Lower Secondary School Curriculum and National Unity*, A Report presented to the Department of National Unity, (Kuala Lumpur: Department of Social Foundations, Faculty of Education, University, March 1984).

[12]For example refer to comments by the King in *NST*, (6.8.95) in the article 'King: UKM's use of national language proved sceptics wrong'; 'Bahasa has helped forge national unity', *NST*, (30.8.95), p.8.

[13]'D-G: Emphasis is on Islamic and Moral Education', *NST*, (22.1.95), p.4.

[14]References to Christmas trees and robins in English texts were somewhat incongruous in the Malayan setting. (Maier, *In the Centre of Authority*, p.111); Note comments in the Government Report: The Ministry of Education, Malaysia, *Education in Malaysia 1975*, (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1975), p.1; that the curriculum in the English medium schools was the same as that in the United Kingdom.

[15]Mahathir's father was the first Malay headmaster of an English-language school in Kedah (appointed 1908). This school has been described as replicating the "British educational system" with its emphasis on uniforms, team games, and English cultural values. Refer

This academic and literary emphasis (not dissimilar to the classics emphasis in traditional Chinese and Tamil education or the Quran-centredness of Islamic education) has resisted change. Those in government continued on in the mould of the Oxford and Cambridge-educated British administrative elite. Until recently, an Arts-based education was seen by Malays as guaranteeing a secure government job. It has only been since the 1970s, and particularly since Mahathir's Vision 2020 announcement[16], that the government has vigorously sought to encourage Malay students into the Science stream and into vocational and technical education.

Nation-building imperatives underscored by racial sensitivities have justified full Federal Government control over the educational function. This has been gradually accumulated with the Education Act of 1995 being somewhat the final jewel in the crown. It will bring private educational institutions (including those involved in twinning arrangements with foreign universities) and pre-school educational curriculum also under the Education Ministry's purview.[17] Tertiary education is also to be domiciled within Malaysia with a reduced reliance on sending students abroad.

It is because educational issues have been perceived as affecting one racial community's position *vis-à-vis* others, that they have been highly politicised and are sometimes

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to comments in Adshead, *Mahathir of Malaysia*, pp.23-28; Refer also: Rudner, *Malaysian Development*, pp.301-2,324,333.

[16]What became known as the Vision 2020 statement was first announced at a business function on 28.2.91.

[17]'Najib: Pre-school system will be reviewed', *NST* (14.7.95), pp.1-2.

potentially explosive. Politicians have to tread warily. Extensive consultation and, often, even Cabinet approval is necessary before educational changes can be implemented.

As a consequence the education ministry became a key portfolio in the Cabinet and a training ground for potential Prime Ministers. All four of Malaysia's Prime Ministers (and the likely successor, Anwar Ibrahim) have served as either Education Officers or Education Ministers. Significantly, as was the pattern in the days of British colonial officers Wilkinson and Winstedt, educational oversight has remained in the hands of state administrators, with educational goals and methodologies subservient to political and bureaucratic objectives and priorities. This is apparent when reviewing leaders' contributions to educational development.

4.1.2 The Rahman/Razak 1955-1969 Era: Razak Report for National Unity and Development

It is suggested that since independence there have been three 'changes of gear' in Malaysian political policy, which have directly impacted educational philosophy. The first came from the need following independence to nation-build and, thus, to inculcate a common civic culture and national loyalty. Additionally, there was the need to strengthen the nation's economic foundations by raising educational levels. This first phase I am labelling the 'Rahman/Razak 1955-1969' era.[18] The second (the 'Razak/Hussein 1969-1981' era) followed the May 13th 1969 racial riots, when the Tunku's failed "social compact"[19] was seen to warrant radical societal restructuring. Increased Malay participation in the economic sector was to be aided by an increased Malay educational participation. The third (the 'Mahathir/Anwar 1981+' era) coincides with Dr Mahathir's term as Prime Minister. It can be characterised by his so-called Vision 2020 announcement. During this period a concerted effort has been made to upgrade scientific and technical skills in order to achieve rapid industrialisation goals. Attention is now turned to assess the contributions of the Rahman/Razak team.

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[18]Such labels indicate a gross neglect of the contributions of other Malaysian Deputy Prime Ministers and Education Ministers. For a full list of these people refer to Appendix V. The intention is simply to limit the scope of the study to those principal actors (Malaysia's Prime Ministers), who played the lead roles.

[19]This is a reference to the political and social arrangements, which applied in Malaysia between 1955 and 1969. Malays played a more dominant role in politics, whilst the Chinese were more dominant in the economy. Implicit in this was the assumption that this was the natural order of things.

Whilst the Tunku was working to weld his alliance of communal parties[20], his able deputy, Tun Razak, had the task of laying out a National Educational Policy, which would serve to bridge the racial divides in the longer term.[21] He chaired a committee appointed in September 1955 to establish a "national system of education acceptable to the people of the Federation as a whole ... 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 ..."[22]

The resulting "Razak Report" was to reflect the Alliance elite-bargaining political formula. The report was "linguistically plural (recommending maintenance of several language streams at primary level), integrally national in content (a "Malayan outlook" was to be inculcated by the use of "common content syllabuses and time-tables" and by a gradual move towards the use of Malay as "the main medium of

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[20]Between 1955 and 1969 Malaysian politics was structured around three main communal parties (UMNO, MCA, MIC), which were formed into a governing Alliance Party. (This is further discussed in Section 2.2.1.) After 1969 UMNO became much more the dominant player in an enlarged *Barisan Nasional* alliance of parties. (Previous opposition parties, e.g. PAS, Gerakan, had been drawn into the BN fold by Tun Razak.)

[21]Note that the 1950 Barnes Report had plunged the country into racial politics. It envisaged a national education system centred around the English and Malay educational streams. This brought the Chinese community together as never before to resist the threat to their culture. Since then, the educational and language issues have often been key issues in general elections. Following the 1955 elections the Chinese were disenchanted with Tunku Abdul Rahman and the MCA for backing down on pre-election promises. (Kua Kia Soong, *Chinese Schools*, pp.84,115-128); In the 1959, 1964 and 1969 elections, educational and language issues were prominent, contributing to the racial riots of 1969.

[22]*Report of the Education Committee*, 1956, p.1.

instruction"[23]), Malay in symbolism, developmental in purpose, ... [and] literary-academic in orientation".[24] The Razak Report and the review of its implementation (the Rahman Talib report of 1960) formed the foundation of the Malayan educational system, which has continued largely unchanged to the present.

The Rahman Talib Report institutionalised the Alliance philosophy. It recommended that all secondary education be in either Malay or English. Post-primary English education was, thus, to be the means of producing a non-Malay elite, acceptable to the Alliance communal accommodation set-up.[25]

The Razak Report's emphasis on "common timetables" as a mechanism for achieving national unity stimulates further reflection on the intent of its 'hidden curriculum'. Daily school timetables and yearly schedules have the effect of causing an ordering of family routines around a state-produced division of

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[23] *Report of the Education Committee*, 1956, pp.2-5,26-27; Other recommendations included a reorganisation of educational administration, the removal of over-age pupils from the Primary stream by 1960, establishment of a national type secondary schooling with a common syllabus (language medium ambigious), the compulsory teaching of English and Malay (in Rumi script with provision for Muslim students to learn Jawi script) in all schools with a certain standard of achievement necessary before promotion to Secondary level, and the registration of teachers.

[24] Rudner, *Malaysian Development*, pp.301-302.

[25] Non-Malays immediately raised a storm of protest. Note Tun Razak's response: *Ucapan-Ucapan, 1961*, pp.129-137 (Speech at the Annual Convocation of the University of Malaya on 10.6.61). The Rahman Talib went even further to appease Malay interests by recommending the gradual introduction of Malay as the main medium of instruction in all schooling; the provision of Religious and Moral Education; universal, free but non-compulsory primary and lower secondary education with automatic promotion up to Form III, thus ushering in nine years of government-sponsored education.

time. They demand an attention to time and punctuality.[26] The common experience of interacting with the state-arranged school physical environment; with its representatives (the teachers) and its egalitarian uniformity (uniforms; set conditions of admission, retention, and dismissal; age-limits; the segregation into age groups; the compartmentalisation into subject disciplines, a single national curriculum and a competitive examination system), serves to give a sense of participation in the larger collective that is 'the nation'. This, in effect, posits a relationship with the abstract institution of the State and its more personable authority figures - the political leaders. The learning of school rules and the demand for obedience and compliance teach 'appropriate' behaviour, self-discipline, and respect for parental, teacher, and ultimately 'state' authority.[27] Perhaps, this is what Razak's committee had in mind.

Much of Tun Razak's energy at this time was directed towards rural development. These priorities were reflected in educational policies, particularly following the 1964 elections. A continuing literary educational emphasis had led to a shortage of technically skilled manpower. This had to be ameliorated by giving manpower planning considerations

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[26]This was not a new feature. Colonial officials saw schools as a means of inculcating "habits of industry, punctuality, and obedience". Swettenham, Perak Annual Report 1890, p.16, cited in Kua Kia Soong, *Chinese Schools*, p.24. An independent national government now takes on this role.

[27]It is noted that in the new *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* Moral Education syllabus there is a similar emphasis. For example, in the *Tingkatan* 2 textbook, Chapter 8 is entitled *Penghargaan Kepada Ibu bapa, Guru Dan Negara* (Appreciation of Parents, Teachers, and the Nation); Wan Aziz Wan Bakar (ed.), *Pendidikan Moral Tingkatan 2*, (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1994).

primacy over competing educational goals.[28] Despite attempts to upgrade Malay participation in the technical and science streams, positive results were not forthcoming. Malaysian education continued to have a scholastic bias, as evidenced by the greater prestige given to academic rather than vocational education.

Both the Tunku and Tun Razak, by force of circumstance and because of its potential in achieving political and social goals, gave emphasis to education. Both were to serve as Chancellors of Malaysian universities indicating also a personal interest (or society expectation of them to be interested) in education.[29] An Anglo-Malay academic bias was reflected in their educational policies and in the Alliance political arrangements of the day. However, this was changed under the New Economic Policy (NEP).

4.1.3 The Razak/Hussein 1969-1981 Era: NEP Goal of Restructuring Society

Tun Razak proposed a radical restructuring of Malaysian society, following the racial violence which erupted on May 13th, 1969. His New Economic Policy, introduced as part of the Second Malaysian Plan 1971-1975, was designed to eradicate

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[28]Refer to the: Malaysian Government, *First Malaysia Plan 1966-1970,* (Kuala Lumpur: Government Press, 1965). The educational policy was being reorientated to achieve not only nation-building but also economic goals. Educational expenditure came to be seen as an investment rather than a social service. (Rudner, *Malaysian Development*, p.310)

[29]Tunku Abdul Rahman served as the first Malay Chancellor of the University of Malaya (UM). Tun Abdul Razak was Chancellor of the Universiti *Kebangsaan Malaysia* (UKM).

poverty and to give Malays full partnership "in all aspects of the economic life of the nation".[30] To achieve these goals, education was to be radically restructured under 'Malay ownership' - a task which fell largely to Hussein Onn and Dr Mahathir as Education Ministers.[31] By a process of affirmative action, it was intended to bring Malays into higher levels of education and, thus ultimately, into the professional and business echelons of society.

As Education Minister, Hussein Onn oversaw the general introduction of Malay as the medium of instruction - a process which began in 1970 (with all Standard 1 classes) and which would be completed at university level in 1983. The repercussions included the downgrading of English to a second language status; the marginalisation of Chinese secondary schools which refused to comply; and, the assisting of Malays through linguistic advantage into higher education.

Hussein Onn also introduced a racial quota system for tertiary admission.[32] Efforts were made to bring Malays into those disciplines (for example, Commerce, Science and Engineering),

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[30]*Second Malaysia Plan 1971-1975*, p.1

[31]Education Ministers during this period were Hussein Onn (1970-1973); Mohamad bin Yaakob (1973-1974); Dr Mahathir (1974-1978); and, Musa Hitam (1978-1981). Dr Mahathir was Deputy Prime Minister from 1976 to 1981.

[32]Quotas were introduced in 1971 following the Majid Ismail Campus Study Report. Note Hussein Onn's speeches as P.M. on the issue: 'No Monopoly in Education at any Level', UMNO Education Convention in K.L. on 9.6.79, in J.V. Morais, *Hussein Onn: A Tryst with Destiny*, Singapore: Times Books International, 1981), pp.167-169; 'Varsity Intake: Fair Share for all', Opening of MIC Assembly in Klang on 30.6.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.170-172.

in which they had been under-represented.[33] Tertiary education was rapidly expanded with the establishment of an additional four universities (between 1969 and 1972) especially catering for Malay needs.[34] The government provided bursaries and scholarships to enable Malays to study at home and abroad.

Subsequently, a new urban, more Islamic Malay professional and business class was to emerge. At the same time non-Malays, who had been denied a place in a local university, were forced to resort to expensive overseas education. Frustration's raised political temperatures, particularly when the Chinese made another bid to gain approval for a private (Merdeka) university. Consequently, the policies implemented to assuage the sense of Malay disadvantage merely served to shift the disaffection to the other racial communities.

During this period the federal government moved to gain increasing control of Islamic affairs (taking over responsibility for religious instruction in primary schools and control of religious secondary schools from state governments) as well as university campuses. Following student demonstrations in 1974, Dr Mahathir moved to arrest a number of student leaders and academics (including ABIM leader, Anwar Ibrahim) under the provisions of the Internal Security Act

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[33]Special residential colleges were set up to help counter Malay disadvantage due to the inadequate facilities for teaching science in rural schools.

[34]*Universiti Sains Malaysia* (USM) was established in 1969; *Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia* (UKM) in 1970; *Universiti Pertanian Malaysia* (UPM) in 1971; *Universiti Teknologi Malaysia* (UTM) in 1972.

(ISA). Dr Mahathir oversaw the 1975 amendments to the University and University and Colleges Act (UUCA) of 1971, which were to further restrict student group activities on campus.[35] In addition, he chaired (from 1974 to 1979) a committee appointed to review Malaysian education. The committee's report recommended mechanisms for control of private schools and an educational philosophy in keeping with government goals to meet national manpower needs, whilst producing a "disciplined" and "trained" society.[36]

Thus, it can be seen that education during the Razak/Hussein Onn period became increasingly Malay focussed and government controlled.

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[35]After Malay students from the University of Malaya, the Islamic College, and the MARA Institute of Technology joined in mass demonstrations demanding the Tunku's resignation and 'Malay sovereignty', Tun Razak was to institute government control of campus activities by means of the UUCA, 1971. This forbade association by students with a political party or a trade union. It also gave university authorities the power to dissolve any student group acting in a manner "prejudicial" to the university. Similarly, in 1974 student demonstrations against peasant hunger and poverty in the town of Baling resulted in mass arrests and the UUCA, 1975. All finances for student groups were to be handled by university authorities and no group larger than five persons was allowed to meet without prior permission. This led to an increase in small-group *dakwah* (missionary) activities.

[36]*Report of the Cabinet Committee to Review the Implementation of Education Policy*, (Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education, 1985); Note Dr Mahathir's definition of "discipline" as "limiting individual desires and interests to give priority to the interests of society". (Mahathir, *The Challenge*, p.137)

4.1.4 The Mahathir/Anwar 1981+ Era: Vision 2020 Industrialisation and Final Decolonisation Goals

Under the Mahathir administration the push has been towards industrialisation. In a final bid to discard hangover inferiorities from the colonial era, Malaysia is targeted to become a fully developed nation by the year 2020 AD. But to accomplish this goal, educational emphasis is to be given to tertiary (specifically scientific and technical) education, Islamic principle and character formation.

Recognising that the days of cheap labour and assembly-line manufacturing were nearing an end[37], Mahathir saw that Malaysia needed to climb up the learning curve as quickly as possible so as to become a generator rather than user of technology. An info-rich, computer literate, research-oriented society needed to be created post-haste. Elements of this plan included a national car project, a local heavy industry program, technology parks, and a Malaysian space program - all requiring Malaysians to upgrade their technological and management skills.

At the educational 'coal face', this has meant keeping more people in education longer. It has meant trying to coax more students into science streams, upgrading English (and other) language skills[38], putting computers in schools[39], and creating

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[37]Foreign investment was beginning to be directed to countries like China and Vietnam, which now had cheaper labour rates than Malaysia.
[38]The learning of other languages apart from English and Malay (including Chinese and Japanese) are being encouraged in recognition of the need to access international know-how and markets. Some Malays are seeing the ability to speak Chinese as a key to success in business

additional university places.[40] Despite opening four more universities between 1983 and 1995[41], supply has not kept pace with demand - a demand made more pressing by the huge increases in educational costs overseas.[42]

Whilst sticking to its policy of disallowing private universities[43], the government was to allow twinning arrangements with foreign universities, though on a supervised basis.[44] Similarly, the Government was to appeal to the private sector for its close cooperation in expanding educational resources. Private companies were expected to invest in staff training and foreign investors to engage in technology transfer.[45]

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locally and in future dealings with China. Thus, some are sending their children to Chinese schools. (M. Hiebert, 'Golden Tongue: Non-Chinese flock to Mandarin-language schools', *FEER*, (20.7.95), p.22)

[39]The Education Ministry has proposed that computer studies be made compulsory in all schools under the Seventh Malaysia Plan. 'Plan for mandatory computer studies', *NST*, (15.7.95), p.2.

[40]University enrolments are to be increased to 20,000 a year from the present 12,000 to 15,000. V. de Paul, 'Push for technology', *NST*, (10.8.95), p.1

[41]The International Islamic University (IIU) was opened in 1983. The *Universiti Utara Malaysia* (UUM) was opened in 1984 and more recently universities were opened in Sarawak and Sabah.

[42]Other Commonwealth countries were to follow Britain's lead (announced in 1979 and implemented in the 1980/81 academic year) in introducing full fees for overseas students. This increased the cost to the Malaysian government of sending Malay students abroad and put an overseas education out of reach for many prospective Chinese students. (Doh Joon Chien, *University Places: Options for a Creative Response*, Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia, 1986).

[43]The Universities and University Colleges Act of 1971 (amended 1975) disallowed the establishment of any private universities. This was to prevent the Chinese community establishing its own university with a Mandarin instructional medium. Chinese-educated have to go overseas if they wish to pursue further studies in Mandarin.

[44]M. Vatikiotis, 'Staying On: Malaysians combine study at home and abroad', *FEER*, (10.6.93), p.15; 'Conditions for Foreign varsities', *NST*, 11.1.95, p.1.

[45]'Transfer of technology needed at all levels, says DPM', *NST*, (17.5.95), p.2.

With all this emphasis on improving technological skills, there was one proviso: it must not be at the expense of local culture or Islamic principle. Thus, in his Vision 2020 statement Dr Mahathir emphasised spiritual development alongside economic and intellectual development. During Mahathir's term as Prime Minister, religious subjects have been added to school curriculum. Religious education has been made compulsory for all Malays with non-Muslims having the option of choosing a Moral Education subject. Educational curricula were revised in the late 1980s and early 1990s to bring them in line with a so-called 'holistic' and 'child-centred' educational philosophy.[46] It sought to produce not only a modern, skilled, trained, and creative workforce but also one with appropriate moral and character qualities. Compulsory co-curricular activities, now even at a university level, are aimed towards these ends as well as towards achieving national integration goals.[47]

As is characteristic of Dr Mahathir's "think big" approach, the goal is not only to achieve developed nation status but to make Malaysia a research centre and a centre for educational excellence in Asia. Malaysian firms are to become research leaders and successful competitors in a high-tech international

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[46]This was to be in accordance with the *Report of the Cabinet Committee, 1979*, which Dr Mahathir charied whilst serving as Education Minister.

[47]'Co-curricular activities vital, King tells students', *NST*, (4.8.95), p.2; That national unity is far from being achieved became only too evident when educational issues in the highly politicised environment of 1987 sparked off a new episode of racial tension. Anwar Ibrahim was Education Minister at the time. It came to a climax with the furore over the appointment of non-Mandarin trained teachers to senior positions in Chinese schools. A new round of ISA detentions were to follow. (*NST*, (29.10.87), p.1)

marketplace. It will be interesting to see what form the current 'Malaysia Incorporated' concept of proactive government cooperation with the private sector will take in an increasingly globalised information market place. Already-present limitations on the Federal Budget restrict investment in public sector-led research. Mahathir perhaps recognises this, and, thus, is seeking mechanisms by which it can guide a cooperative private sector.

Such cooperation will be increasingly called upon as a government-managed university privitisation process gets underway this year. The University of Malaya is first 'cab off the rank'. University privitisation and the internationalising possibilities of open universities and internet access are potential centrifugal forces, which may test a political leader's ability to ensure a skilled yet compliant population.

4.2 The Influence of Education on Politics

4.2.1 The Influence of Education on Elite Formation

Despite the divisive pluralism resulting from the Colonial regime's racial and social (especially, educational) policies, there were countervailing forces contributing to a unity and sense of collective belonging. These forces, operating within the educational process, were to be of special significance in the process of elite formation with implications for the forms Malaysian institutions were to take.

Malays of privileged backgrounds from the various states were brought together in a residential school situation at the elite Malay College of Kuala Kangsar. They were welded together by common experience in the classroom, dormitory and extramural activities. Some went on to further studies in Great Britain. There, their 'otherness' brought them together in student groups such as the Malay Society of Great Britain.[48] The list of their companions and acquaintances reads like a "Who's Who" of later Malay, British and Commonwealth society elite. Their shared backgrounds and educational experiences and the friendships they forged whilst in England were to shape the nature of things to come.[49] They were also exposed to nationalist stirrings amongst students from other British colonies.[50] They had access to, and were able to, observe the British elite on their 'home turf'. Such experiences stood them in good stead when it came time to negotiate terms for independence with the British. It also later made for congenial relations with foreign counterparts in international forums.

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[48]Tunku Abdul Rahman was a founder and President of this student society. Tun Razak was to serve as its Secretary and later its President. The first *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* of Malaysia, Tuanku Abdul Rahman was its President for a short time.

[49]A further example of the influence of student associations is that of Tunku Abdul Rahman's decision to take on the leadership of UMNO after being encouraged to do so by members of the Malay Graduates Association of Johore. Tunku's mentions Dr Tun Ismail, Datuk Suleiman, Dr Awan Hasan, Haji Hassan Yunus. (Tunku, *Something to Remember*, p.12 ('The Crises UMNO has Faced'))

[50]Tunku Abdul Rahman through attending meetings of other foreign students "began to admire both Mr Nehru and Mahatma Ghandi". (Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.69 ('College Insult which sowed Seeds of Independence')); Refer also to: Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.146 ('Pre-War Days', 13.8.79).

So it was that the Tunku, Tun Razak, Tun Dr Ismail[51], Dato' Onn bin Ja'afar and his son, Hussein Onn, were all to share a similar outlook and Western or pro-British orientation. This gave them a common basis upon which to work. Those educated in the local English stream would share a similar outlook. A number of Malays were able to transit from the Malay vernacular system into the English stream.[52] However, it was urban Chinese and Indians, who took most advantage of the social and economic mobility an English education offered. English-medium schools were in urban areas and were usually well funded and resourced and, thus, had higher educational standards.

It was only the English stream, which provided an avenue to tertiary education and a setting in which young people of various races could inter-relate. In Singapore's tertiary institutions[53], the common language of instruction and educational experience built a sense of camaraderie and mutual understanding, that helped bridge the racial divides. This was to lay a basis for the system of elite accommodation, that became the central feature of Malaysian politics.

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[51]Tun Dr. Ismail bin Dato' Abdul Rahman was the third-ranking man in Tunku Abdul Rahman's cabinet and deputy Prime Minister under Tun Abdul Razak. Unlike the others who were educated in Britain, he graduated as a medical doctor from the University of Melbourne in Australia.

[52]In the 1954/55 year only 10% of the University of Malaya undergraduate population were Malays, compared to 61% Chinese, 13% Indian, 11% Ceylonese (now Sri Lankan), 3% Eurasian. (Tregonning, 'Tertiary Education in Malaya', p.6); Both Tun Razak and Dr Mahathir had been students at Raffles College in Singapore.

[53]The SS and FMS Medical School opened in Singapore in 1905. It was later renamed the King Edward VII College of Medicine. It was merged with the Raffles College in 1949 to become the University of Malaya.

As the nationalist movement gathered momentum, parties began to coalesce along communal lines. Party leaders were mostly from among Western-educated elites in each community. A political system which evolved depended on the political elites reaching accommodative solutions to public issues. An Alliance coalition (later expanded to become the *Barisan Nasional*) of the three major communal parties was formed, thus providing a means of mobilising general mass support.

However, within the major communal groups there were educationally-influenced cleavages that were to generate political oppositions. Amongst the Malays there were those who had received a religious education in rural *pondok* schools[54] and then (for some) in the universities of the Middle East. Many had been influenced by the modernist Islam circulating at Cairo's Al-Azhar university and elsewhere.[55] Though losing out to traditionalists[56], modernists stirred a re-examination of Islamic tenets and faith that was to later find political

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[54]Pondok schools are located in the agriculturally-based states of Kedah, Perlis, Trengganu, and Kelantan. It is in these states that PAS has enjoyed strong support.

[55]Most prominent amongst pioneer Malay nationalists was Syed Sheikh Alhadi (1867-1934), a student of Muhamad Abduh, the well-known Egyptian modernist and teacher at the turn of the century. He advocated that Malays return to the Quran and Hadith and discard unorthodox Islamic practices so that they could progess out of their backwardness. He advocated that Malays should adopt modern education and technology. With others he started newspapers such as *Al-Imam* (1906) and Arabic schools in Penang and Melaka. Refer: W.R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationlalism*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp.82-83.

[56]The traditionalists (*kaum tua*) combined with the ruling elite to clamp down on modernist (*kaum muda*) activity. Refer: Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, pp.79-81.

expression in PAS opposition to UMNO's 'secular state' and in the revivalist movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

The Chinese community was fragmented by dialect, clan, place of origin, and class differences. However, educational experience was to provide a further line of cleavage. Those who pursued an English stream education came to have quite a different outlook in comparison to those who had been Chinese educated. Whilst education in Mandarin had earlier served to some extent to unify the Chinese community, many of the English-educated were unable to speak, read or write Mandarin. In addition ideological cleavages from Communism, Democratic Socialism, Liberalism, to disenchanted-with-Alliance-ism added further hurdles to the Chinese community producing representative and effective leadership.

Following the easing of communist insurgency and Indonesian confrontation threats and the separation of Singapore from Malaysia[57], pressures within the Alliance and its constituent parties began to intensify. A younger vernacular-educated elite "with a greater concern for some of the core values of their ethnic cultural heritage" began to appeal for support from within their communities on the basis of such issues and to more openly challenge their western-educated elders.[58] This

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[57]The Emergency declared because of communist insurgency was declared over in 1960, however sporadic communist activity continued through the 1970s. Singapore separated from Malaysia in 1965 following Lee Kuan Yew's 'Malaysian Malaysia' campaign, which stirred racial sentiments. The Indonesian Confrontation officially concluded in 1966 following events which saw Suharto take over power from Sukarno.
[58]G.P. Means, *Malaysian Politics: The Second Generation*, (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1991), p.3.

contributed to the 1969 outbreak of racial violence. In many ways this was the beginning of the end of the Tunku's "old guard", as was apparent when Tun Razak took over as Prime Minister. The "young Turks" such as Dr Mahathir and Musa Hitam were brought in from political exile to take up key posts and the older clique were eased from power.

The MCA has struggled to recover the influence it lost in the 1969 General Elections. The Chinese vote has since been split between the MCA and other opposition parties such as Gerakan and the DAP. Since Tun Tan Siew Sin stepped down as Finance Minister in 1974, UMNO has been unwilling to yield any major portfolios to the MCA. Within PAS, also, there has been a changing of the guard with a number of past ABIM members rising to fill leadership posts. PAS lost its distinctiveness as a party as a result of its inclusion in the 1970s into the *Barisan Nasional*. Since leaving the BN, PAS has regained ground and continues to challenge UMNO's legitimacy as a protector of Malay (and Islamic) issues.

The events of 1969 effectively led to the termination of Tunku's 'elite accommodation' system. In its place is an UMNO-led coalition and political system, in which the Prime Minister has the central role. Thus, it has moved in the direction of the 'one-party, one-race' system of government that Dr Mahathir once agitated for and culminated in his expulsion from UMNO.

The racial polarisation presently observed on university campuses, and now accepted as normal, merely reflects the

political realities within the country.[59] The lack of camaraderie and racial interaction at a social level on present-day tertiary campuses does not augur well for future mutual racial understanding and friendship at the elite level.

4.2.2 The Political Influence of Teachers

Teachers have traditionally been highly respected figures in Malay communities. The *guru* of the past had an authority and mystique by virtue of their spiritual prowess and superior knowledge. In a largely illiterate society, the literate had an added respect. In Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic traditions, teachers are venerated. These factors aside, certain circumstances have conspired to give teachers a significant role in Malaysian politics.

For intelligent young Malays of a non-elite background, opportunities for intellectual and social advancement were limited. Those educated through the *pondok* and Arabic schools and then able to go overseas for further studies would return as religious teachers and officials. They were isolated during the colonial period from the political mainstream, though they had substantial influence in their village communities. They had no central network to make them a cohesive political force nor did they encounter any great opposition from the British, which would cause them to seek to unite in a common cause. The situation was to be different for their counterparts in the Netherlands East Indies, who through their *pesantren* schools

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[59]Refer: M. Samad, 'Rooting out Polarisation among Undergrads', *NST*, (4.10.87), p.8.

came to provide an Islamic network for anti-Dutch sentiment. PAS's emphasis on Islamic and Malay issues was to find support from religious teachers, who became influential in the party's ranks.

Those educated through the vernacular stream had little chance of going onto higher education. For most, the only avenue to education beyond four or five years of primary schooling was to train as a Malay teacher. Thus, the Sultan Idris Training College (SITC) for many years took the cream of rural Malaya and trained them so that they could return to their villages as teachers of future Malay agriculturalists and fishermen.[60] Due to the influence of the College principal, O.T. Dussek, the political leanings of a number of its Malay tutors, and the nationalist flavour of literature coming in from what is now Indonesia, a sense of nationalism and political awareness grew amongst the students. Upon graduation they took this awareness with them when they were scattered in schools throughout the length and breadth of the country.

The teachers were mostly men, although colonial administrators did endeavour to train female teachers. They came initially from the elite, as rural Malay parents were generally reluctant to allow their girls outside of the home especially after they reached puberty. Amongst the first Malay women's organisations were teachers' unions. The first was founded by Hajjah Zain binti Suleiman in Johore in 1929.

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[60]For a study of the SITC history, aims, and impact refer: Awang Had Salleh, *Malay Secular Education and Teacher Training in British Malaya*, (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1979).

Another was founded in Melaka in 1938.[61] When protests erupted across the country against the British Malayan Union proposal, immediately following World War Two, both men and women took part.

From the time UMNO (and *Kaum Ibu*) was/were formed in 1946, Malay teachers were amongst the "strongest members".[62] They had grass-roots access to the people in the kampongs. They were thus able to wield significant power within the party. In 1949 UMNO was facing a party split when Malay teachers who were disgruntled over lack of salary parity with English school teachers threatened to leave UMNO to join the opposition. After independence dissatisfaction with progress towards replacing English with Malay as the medium of instruction, caused the National Association of Malay Teachers to issue an ultimatum to the government that the school system be changed immediately. It was ignored and calls came for teachers to withdraw their support from UMNO. The government immediately acted to forestall their influence through opposition political parties by passing a ruling to restrict teachers as government servants in taking an active part in political parties as either ordinary or committee members. They were to remain politically influential working behind the scenes.[63]

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[61]L.M. Manderson, *Women, Politics, and Change: The Kaum Ibu UMNO, Malaysia, 1945-1972*, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford Univeristy Press, 1980), p.51.

[62]Tunku, *Something to Remember*, p.7 ('The Crises UMNO has Faced');

[63]Tunku Abdul Rahman, *Looking Back: Monday Musings and Memories*, (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1977), pp.191-193 ('Events that Posed a Threat to UMNO', 23.6.75).

Amongst the SITC graduates who were to have a significant political influence were Ibrahim Yaakub, Senu Abdul Rahman, Abdul Rahman Talib, and Abdul Ghafar Baba.[64] Abdul Rahman Talib was to become Education Minister, whilst Abdul Ghafar Baba was to hold many senior positions within the party and the government including that of Deputy Prime Minister.

The influence of teachers within UMNO was evident in the contest between Musa Hitam and Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah for the UMNO Deputy Presidency in 1981 and then again in 1984. Musa Hitam won by a small margin on both occasions. Musa had been a popular and energetic Education Minister between 1978 and 1981 and had been able to build up a substantial support base amongst teachers.[65] His opponent, Finance Minister Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, had, on the other hand, built up an extensive support base through patronage in Kelantan and amongst business circles.

Thus, not only has the Education Ministry been a key portfolio because of its sensitive racially-related political ramifications

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[64]Senu Abdul Rahman was at one time the Personal Assistant to the Kedah Superintendent of Education - at that time Tunku Abdul Rahman. He then went on to serve as Malaya's Ambassador to Indonesia and Germany and then as Minister of Information and Broadcasting. Abdul Rahman Talib was to chair the educational review resulting in the Rahman Talib Report, 1960, which was to become with the Razak Report, 1956, the foundation of the Malaysian educational system.

[65]In the early days more than 2/3 of delegates at UMNO assemblies were teachers; in 1981 40% were teachers; in 1984 32%; in 1987 only 19%. (Hasan Hamzah, *Mahathir: Great Malaysian Hero*, (Kuala Lumpur: Media Printext), pp.22,149,308); Refer also: Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, *Lest We Forget: Further Candid Reminiscences*, (Petaling Jaya: Eastern Universities Press (M) Sdn. Bhd., 1983), p.183 ('The Race of UMNO's No.2', 25.5.81).

and because of its sheer size[66], but also because of its potential for raising political support within UMNO. Access to top positions within UMNO is a prerequisite for senior political leadership in the country.

Gradually the teaching profession has suffered a decline in status and prestige. No longer is it the major professional destination for bright young Malays, because opportunities for the tertiary-educated now abound in many fields. Teaching's poor salaries and working conditions, the possibility of postings away from home and family, the regimentation of curriculum, its tedium, and, the pressures to perform mean that there are now far more lucrative and attractive career paths elsewhere.[67] The teaching profession has also been 'feminised',[68] and, though there are a sprinkling of women serving at ministerial level, the *Wanita UMNO* - UMNO setup means that women have no access to senior UMNO party positions beyond that of *Wanita UMNO* President.

Added to this is the ascendancy of the Finance Ministry within Cabinet. The NEP's success in bringing Malays into the urban, professional and commercial sectors, and, the patronage opportunities available through the Finance Ministry's supervision of the awarding of government contracts and

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[66]The Education Ministry is a large ministry in terms of its budget and large numbers of employees throughout the whole country.

[67]Note such comments about the teaching profession as "underpaid", "dead-end job", "overworked", "do not enjoy as much respect ... as they did in the past" in 'upgrade the noble calling', *NST*, 16.5.95, p.36; Refer also: 'Tackling cases of 'burnout' among teachers', *NST*, 24.7.87, p.8.

[68]In 1993, 70% of trainees in teachers colleges were women (NST, 2.1.93, p.3); In 1995, only 20 to 30% of teachers were men and it was hoped to "increase their number to 60%". (*NST*, 19.3.95, p.8)

bumiputra access to share capital, has resulted in a challenge to the Education Ministry's leading 'key portfolio' status.[69] Ironically, it has been the educationalists' success in improving Malaysia's 'human capital' and in extending educational options, as well as the government's increasing involvement in and regulation of education, that has led to a downgrading and stifling of the teaching profession. Though their political clout has diminished, because teachers are essential to the process of becoming a 'developed' nation and because they are the state's agents of social change in what continues to be a racially polarised society, they, and the Ministry which governs them, will continue to be seen as having a key role.

4.2.3 Implications of a Textbook Culture

Not only have Malaysian politicians ordered the educational landscape, but pedagogic methodologies (and their embedded cultural assumptions) have also helped to shape Malaysian thinking. A text-centred learning teaches compliance with already-determined truth.

Curriculum planning has received a high government priority ever since the Razak Report's emphasis on a "common content syllabus" to impart a "Malaysian outlook".[70] Agencies of the

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[69]'Key' ministries are "entrusted with what the government sees as the crucial decisions of national importance". In 1982 'key' ministries were the Prime Minister's Department, Finance, Education, and Trade and Industry. (L.J. Reid, *The Politics of Education in Malaysia*, Political Science Department, University of Tasmania, Monograph Series, June 1988, p.23, citing Malaysian Chinese Association, *The Malaysian Chinese: Towards National Unity,* (Kuala Lumpur: Federal Territory MCA Liason Committee, 1982), p.26.)

[70]*Report of the Education Committee, 1956*, pp.17-18. The National language question has been the other major 'unifying' instrument.

Federal Government have been responsible for laying down curriculum content as well as school and teaching timetables, textbook production and organisation of external examinations. Thus, the nitty-gritty of day-to-day school operation is a Federal Government responsibility. Because of communal sensibilities, curriculum planners have been very much servants of political priorities.

A major issue which had to be faced was that of defining a "Malaysian outlook". Was there a common culture, or, did this simply mean that it was the views of the Malay-dominated government, which would take precedence? Education is, of course, not "value-free" and, obviously, nor is it intended to be. Initially, Malayanising meant removing Euro-centrism from textbooks and the rewriting of the history of the Malaysian state - a placing of Malaysia at the centre of the 'textbook' world. After 1969, it meant the translation of all post-primary texts into Malay as Malay became the general medium of instruction. More recently, with publicly-voiced concerns for declining moral standards amongst the youth, it has meant extensive searching for 'common' moral values.[71] Consistency with 'Quranic' principles is the over-riding guide. This, and the general Malay tenor of Malaysian education, implicitly asserts that all "Malaysians belong to Malaysia but that Malaysia belongs to the Malays".[72]

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[71]*NST*, (9.7.93), p.33.
[72]Rudner, *Malaysian Development*, p.308.

Besides the communal and religious issues, what are the broader implications of a "textbook culture"? Ghandi is quoted as saying: "If textbooks are treated as a vehicle for education, the living word of the teacher has very little value."[73] The teacher is denied autonomy and initiative and becomes a cog in the bureaucratic structure, thus, devaluing teacher status. With the mandatory co-curricular activities, over-full and often changing school syllabi, burdensome administrative duties and gruelling performance expectations, teachers (and students) complain of pressure and monotonous classroom routine.[74] Even the weight of schoolbags becomes a ministerial priority[75] and the failure of the *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* to produce textbooks in time for the school year assumes almost national crisis proportions.[76] The textbook, the teacher and classroom surroundings become a symbol of government presence and influence and an arena in which the government itself is expected to perform.

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[73]Cited in Krishna Kumar, 'Origins of India's "Textbook Culture"', *Comparative Education Review*, vol.32, no.4, Nov. 1988, p.452. Kumar traces India's 'textbook culture' to nineteen-century colonial origins. Though the British did have direct input into school curricula, especially for the Malay vernacular educational stream in the F.M.S. and Straits Settlement, it wasn't until the Razak Report that a concerted effort was made for a common curriculum across all communal educational streams and in all States.

[74]Fairos Nazri, 'When schooling is no longer fun for our overworked children', *NST*, (10.7.93), p.10.

[75]With six to seven subjects (each with its own text and exercise books) taught in a day, primary school children were carrying 5 to 6kg school bags. Successive education Ministers were photographed visiting schools weighing school bags and being reported as implementing a trial flexi-timetable plan. (Refer Lat's cartoon in *NST*, (26.12.94), p.12; and *NST*, (31.12.94),p.10; (6.1.95), p.2; (7.1.95), p.6; (13.6.95), p.7)

[76]The Standard Four *Sains dan Kajian Tempatan* textbooks (replacing the *Alam dan Manusia* text) were not ready for the Dec. 1st 1994 start of term. The Curriculum Development Centre had to supply teachers with leaflet notes for photocopying or dictation as a bridging measure. (*NST*, (21.1.95), p.9; (30.3.95), p.7)

Before textbooks are published they have to be approved by the Education Ministry. The Education Ministry also awards publishing contracts and fixes textbook prices. It filters knowledge discarding 'out-of-date theories' in favour of 'useful' knowledge.[77] It determines the 'right' or model answer and the 'right' method of teaching. According to the Education Minister, in 1995 ...

> the ministry was now studying the methodology and pedagogy which would be implemented in primary schools as well as new approaches to teaching science and mathematics.[78]

Additionally, the government through examination screening, monitors performance, controls success rates and influences ultimate career direction. Manpower needs dictate educational inputs and targeted outputs. For example, the Rahman Talib Report and the Second Five Year Plan put a 30% ceiling ratio on entry into Secondary Education. Thus, the public examination mechanism has been "wielded as an instrument for juxtaposing other policy objectives onto the education system".[79] The present focus is to try and bring a turn around in the present Science to Arts ratio in university enrolments of 40:60. It is targeted to be 60:40 by the year 2000 A.D.[80]

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[77]Refer to such comments in: 'Curriculum for STPM to be Malaysianised', NST, (1.10.85), p.10; 'No Sensitive materials in textbooks', *NST*, (14.7.88), p.4; 'All STPM subjects to be based on new syllabus by '97', *NST*, (28.3.95), p.7.

[78]'Changes to Maths, Science curriculums (sic)', *NST*, (24.5.95), p.13.

[79]Rudner, *Malaysian Development*, p.326.

[80]Note that in 1995 only 25% of secondary pupils preferred to enter the science stream. This is to be increased under the Seventh Malaysia Plan (SMP) to 60%. ('Push for Technology', *NST*, (10.8.95), p.1)

Government-owned media coverage of "successful" students, of "perfect" schools, of "top" teachers engenders a competitive environment, in which students and staff seek "parental" government approval. The all-consuming target is the all-important exam. For ease of marking and in order to avoid any hint of (especially racially-derived) partiality, 'objective' assessment has been favoured where possible. Multiple choice questions test knowledge in subjects from mathematics and science to languages and history.[81] A slavish devotion to the text engenders a rote learning pedagogy, a passive 'consumption' rather than an active 'production' orientation towards knowledge, a government-controlled production of 'truth' which tends to lag behind societal changes[82], and a non-reading culture.

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[81]Exam Tip Books become best sellers, whilst exams become tests of logic as much as of knowledge recall. Refer to 'S.R.P. Tips' in *NST*, (28.9.85), p.5; (30.9.85), p.9; (1.10.85), p.7, (4.10.85), p.5 as a sample. Examination questions are prepared by the Malaysian Examination Council up to two years in advance (*NST*, (9.7.93), p.33) and, thus, exam leaking becomes a criminal offence. (NST, (11.7.93), p.9; See also Lat's cartoon *NST*, (24.9.94), p.10)

[82]To illustrate: "All STPM subjects will be based on the new syllabus, adapted for local needs, by 1997." (The University of Cambridge Local Examinations were to be replaced.) The Science syllabus was expanded to cover "new knowledge" with each topic clearly defined to "prevent teachers touching on irrelevant aspects" and wasting time. (*NST*, 28.3.95, p.7) In changing the Cambridge-styled curriculum, "out-dated (economic) theories" would be excluded from the STPM curriculum. (*NST*, 1.10.85, p.10); The history syllabus was to be revamped to make it a "lively subject", to include a chapter on *Wawasan*(Vision) 2020, with changes such that students would not spend "more time memorising dates rather than historical facts". (*NST*, 28.11.94); The Dewan Negara was told that racially "sensitive matters will not be in the KBSM (Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools) textbooks being prepared". (*NST*, 14.7.88, p.4); Note that "we (the government largely) need to differentiate between beneficial and outdated ideas" and scrutinise "authors, especially those from the West, to ensure misconceptions do not jeopardise society's well-being", said then Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid. (*NST*, 23.12.94, p.7) Then Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak "spoke of the important role literary experts played in developing a dedicated, responsible and trustworthy society". (*NST*, 17.10.87, p.10)

Up to the 1970s the emphasis was heavily on academic development. In the 1980s the National Educational Philosophy shifted in focus to a more "child-centred" holistic approach to individual development. The New Primary School Curriculum, which was fully implemented in all primary schools by 1988, emphasised balanced in the "cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains ... fostering desired moral and citizenship values" so as to produce "trained and skilled manpower with a national consciousness and national identity".[83] The similar Integrated Secondary School Curriculum was implemented by 1992 at the Lower Secondary level. This has been part of the government's attempt to grapple with how to produce a disciplined and reading[84], innovative, 'technology producing' society.[85] The two objectives would appear to be somewhat contrary, at least to this author. The rigid state-determined pedagogical methods employed would seem to mitigate against achievement of government-targeted creativity and innovation.

4.2.4 The Effects of a Resurging Islam

Islamic activity amongst students on university campuses was to have enormous ramifications for Malaysia's political

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[83] *Education in Malaysia 1989*, pp.5,18-20.

[84] The Year 2000 has been set as a target for establishing Malaysia as a reading society. Illiteracy and an oral learning culture predated colonial rule. During colonial times minimal Malay vernacular education, only gradual improvement in availability of Malay literature, and, the then, and later, text book reliance set the stage for the underdeveloped reading habits of today.

[85] Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak recently announced changes to the science and mathematics curriculum in order to "create a more technically inclined society" (*NST*, 24.5.95, p.13)

discourse. No longer was Malay nationalism to centre around 'Malay' issues. It came to focus on Islamic priorities.

Influenced by events abroad and as a consequence of local socio-political circumstances, a resurgent Islam became apparent in Malaysia from the late 1960s.[86] Young rural Malays, who were insecure in the strangeness and demands of an urban (often foreign) academic climate, turned to Islam for support. Many encountered a more radical Islam on university campuses in Western and Islamic countries.[87] At home, other races were now speaking Malay and acknowledging the Sultans. Religion increasingly became the distinguishing feature for Malay identity. Increased government restriction of student political activity after the UUCA, 1975 saw public politicking move into mosque and *dakwah*-centred small group activities.

As UMNO and the Opposition party, PAS, competed for rural and now urban Malay support, Islam increasingly became a central political issue. Thus, when Dr Mahathir became Prime Minister, he announced his intention of incorporating Islamic values into his government. PAS at one stage accused UMNO of being *kafir* (unbeliever or infidel) and of imbibing modern

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[86]For more detailed studies of this phenomena refer to: Zainah Anwar, *Islamic Revivalism in Malaysia: Dakwah among the students*, (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1987); Chandra Muzaffar, *Islamic Resurgence in Malaysia*, (Petaling Jaya: Penerbit Fajar Bakti Sdn Bhd, 1987; N.J. Funston, 'The Politics of Islamic Reassertion: Malaysia', in Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique & Yasmin Hussain (ed.), *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), pp.171-179; Zainah Anwar, 'Pray less, play more', *FEER*, (25.1.90), pp.32-34.

[87]Note government concerns that university students overseas were being exposed to Sufi, Shia and Muslim Brotherhood organisations. (M. Vatikiotis, 'Radical Chic: Islamic fringe groups gain influence among the elite', *FEER*, (26.5.94), pp.35-36)

(Western) thinking, which they regard as not in accordance with the principles of Islam. Mahathir shrewdly took the advantage by enticing ABIM President, Anwar Ibrahim, into the UMNO. His government (especially with Anwar at the helm of the Islamic Affairs Department in the Prime Minster's Office) was to emphasise religious education in schools, take over the running of religious schools, set up training facilities for religious teachers, and establish an Islamic bank, Islamic insurance, and the International Islamic University (IIU).[88]

Increasingly, the interpreting of Islamic orthodoxy has become part of the government's purview.[89] In July 1992 the Malaysian Institute for Islamic Understanding (IKIM) was established "to promote a modern, moderate Islamic ideology".[90] It seems conservative Islamic values were standing in the way of progressive economic thinking. The government needed IKIM to legitimate its agenda of industrialisation and social and political modernisation. More recently the *Darul Arqam* movement was discredited as straying from Islamic orthodoxy and pupils from its schools

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[88]The objective of this university is to: "re-establish the primacy of Islam in all fields of knowledge as a continuation of the tradition of Islam in the pursuit of knowledge as reflected by those pioneering works of early Islamic scholars and thinkers that began with the teaching of the Prophet." (C. Forbes, 'Resurgent Islam targets Malaysia', *The Age*, (19.2.88), p.9)

[89]S. Jayasankaran, 'About Face: Mahathir backs Islamic 'rehabilitation' centre', *FEER*, (6.7.95), p.16. This article raises the question: "who decides who is deviationist?", and, answers it: "the government had identified deviationist groups".

[90]M. Vatikiotis, 'Hearts and Minds: New think-tank seeks to modernise Islam', *FEER*, (20.5.93), p.32.

converted back into the government stream.[91] An anti-hadith group has similarly been marginalised.[92]

Though officially under the purview of the Sultans, Islam has, to all intents and purposes, come under the government's wing. The government has begun to talk 'Islam'. Malaysian political discourse and 'knowledge forms' are increasingly Islamic.[93]

4.2.5 International Ramifications

For many Malaysians in the past, tertiary education meant going abroad in their "search for knowledge". This served to build bridges of friendship between Malaysia and 'host' nations. However, current educational policies may result in a change to past trends.

Prior to World War Two, the student elite either undertook tertiary studies in Great Britain, 'home' countries such as China or India, or in Singapore. The King Edward III and Raffles Colleges in Singapore offered medical, arts and science study streams. Thus, for most people, tertiary education involved an away-from-home study experience in a second language. It produced an Anglicised elite largely cut off from the masses at home, but also one that was at home in Commonwealth circles.

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[91]A ban came into force 29.7.95. (D. Tsuruoka, 'In the Name of Security: Government moves to ban radical Islamic sect', *FEER*, (11.8.94), pp.25-26)

[92]"More dangerous than the banned Al-Arqam movement ... the group relied on their logic and rationale to interpret the Quran... [rejecting] *ijtimak* ((consensus)" ('10 anti-hadith lecturers, politicians under probe', *NST*, (22.6.95), p.8); 'PM: Careful study of anti-hadith movement needed', *NST*, (5.7.95), p.5; 'State looks into anti-hadith teachers', *NST*, (6.8.95), p.6.

[93]The IIU objective encapsulates this by seeking to place knowledge in an Islamic framework. (Refer footnote above)

This was true also of government-sponsored, Colombo Plan, and private students, who were later to go in significant numbers to Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, as well as to Britain and Ireland.[94] The friendships formed and contacts made during student days were to lay a basis for warm diplomatic and trading relations between Malaysia and students' former host nations.

However, as local universities rapidly grew in number in the 1970s and 1980s, this was to change. Though many Malays as well as others (mainly Chinese forced off-shore by discriminatory university entry quotas) continued to study overseas because local facilities could not keep up with the demand, Malays educated in local universities began rising through the leadership ranks. They viewed Malaysian interests from the standpoint of a more Islamic and anti-Western outlook. Western nations were, however, often slow to pick up the changes in signals taking their relationship with this former British colony somewhat for granted.

Britain and Australia have both had to engage, at times, in some intense diplomatic manoeuvring to overcome difficulties in relationship with Malaysia. In 1979, the British government suddenly announced a full-fee policy for foreign students, refusing to make any concession for the 15,000 Malaysians (the largest single group) studying in Britain at the time. This

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[94]For a detailed study of Malaysian students in Australia refer to: C. Andressen, *Educational Refugees: Malaysian Students in Australia*, Clayton: Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, no.29, 1993.

soured relations between Britain and its former colony and contributed to Dr Mahathir's retaliatory "Buy British Last" policy.

Other nations were to follow suit. Education came to be seen as a marketable export commodity. Trade displaced aid and relationship priorities. The dramatic escalation in educational costs virtually closed the educational door to all but the privately-rich. Restriction on travel to Taiwan and the shortage of local tertiary places led to Chinese continues demands for a Merdeka (private) university. The increased political heat and enormous capital outflow associated with sending students overseas necessitated a search for local solutions, amongst them twinning programs with foreign universities and an expansion of places at the nine (as of 1995) universities in Malaysia.[95]

Malaysians have been studying not only in Western nations but also elsewhere, for example, in Egypt and Japan. Because of the success of Islamic revivalist movements of a more radical kind amongst Malay students studying abroad (in Western and non-Western countries), the Malaysian government has recently announced, that, in future, undergraduate students will study at home with only post-graduates to be sent abroad. Increasingly, this will mean there will be less opportunity for cross-cultural bridge building amongst students, who are at a formative stage in their lives.

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[95]Refer: Doh Joon Chien, *University Places: Options for a Creative Response*, (Kuala Lumpur: ISIS Malaysia, 1986).

Malaysia has its sights set on becoming a centre for educational excellence in Asia. Thus, Malaysia intends to become a competitor in the educational market.[96] If Dr Mahathir has his way, developed nations will be sending their students to Malaysia so as to broaden their education. Afterall, how many post-graduates from Asian universities are there in the Australian or British Parliaments?

Thus, the nature of international educational flows is set to change in the future, with potential implications for political and trade relations.

4.3 The Influence of Nationalist Leaders as Ideologues and Pedagogues

Because Malaysian leaders have a vested interest in declaring their prescriptions for their nation's *raison d'être* (that is, in espousing its 'political religion') and in guiding its religious development, they are playing a priestly role on behalf of their 'state'. In using their extensive state educational apparatus to mould its people, they are playing a pedagogic role. Thus, the priestly and pedagogic functions overlap in the person of the Prime Minister, who is supported by his state functionaries.

Education has served political objectives sometimes with great effect, as in the case of Razak's strategies to bring Malays into

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[96]Chan Cheng Tuan, 'More Students coming here: Malaysia realising aim of becoming centre for education', *NST*, (21.8.95), p.1; 'Australia urged to be our partner in education', *NST*, (2.9.95).

the business and professional worlds. Sometimes, results have been poor (for example, attempts to form a national unity by imposition of Malay as the medium of instruction). At times, there have been some unanticipated outcomes (for example, the 'islamisation' of Malay students on Western campuses).

The education system has continued to produce the political elites (all Malaysian Prime Ministers have been the products of tertiary education). These elites have in turn shaped its pedagogy. It is a pedagogy which has become increasingly Malay and Islamic, and remains text and leader-centred. It is a pedagogy which is preparing a citizenry to become effective participants in a state, which continues to be built by, and around, its 'raja-like' leaders.[97]

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[97]One commentator has remarked that "Japanese high schools are ... best understood as shaping generations of disciplined workers for a technomeritocratic system that requires highly socialized individuals capable of performing reliably in a rigorous, hierarchical, and finely tuned organizational environment." (T.P. Rohlen, *Japan's High Schools*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, cited in A. Milner (ed.), *Perceiving "Education"*, Australian-Asian Perceptions Project, Working Paper Number 7, Canberra: Academy of Social Sciences & Sydney: The Asia-Australia Institute, University of NSW, Nov.1994), p.6); Similar comments can be made about Malaysian high schools, except, in this case, students are being groomed for participation in a modern *kerajaan* state.

5.0 PRIME MINISTERS SHAPE THE DISCOURSE

Each of the Malaysian Prime Ministers has had to deal with the exigencies of the national situation, in which he has found himself - necessity often dictating outcome. Each has consequently left his mark on educational structures and pedagogical development within Malaysia. Similarly, each has contributed to the shaping of the political scene by endeavouring to model, to teach, and to shape national values and thinking. It is these contributions, which will now receive attention. Their personal world-views or interpretative frameworks will be probed so as to understand the nature of their motivations and the intent of the lessons flowing from the examples of their lives.

To do this, we will analyse their speeches and writings and make note of what others have said about them. However, this will in no way be an exhaustive review of all they have said and written, but, rather, an overview. Greater weight is given to what they have said and, thus, this account might seem biased in their favour. Few are free of the tendency to self-justify and portray oneself in a favourable light. This is reflected in the writings of these Prime Ministers. The goal of the current project is to simply understand how they saw things before trying to assess their impact.

Though there were differences in their personalities and in the issues they faced, there were many touching points. Each was engaged in a nation-building and modernity project. Each was

at the forefront of the *kebangsaan* (nationalist) ideological stream. Each (to varying degrees) had been influenced by his past educational experiences and by Western intellectual norms. However, each was primarily a Malay, a moderate Islamicist, and a politician seeking to improve the well-being of his people.

All these Malaysian Prime Ministers were contemporaries and had the opportunity to learn from their predecessors. The one whose lot it was to pioneer the way and lead Malaya into independent nationhood was Tunku Abdul Rahman - a Kedah prince[1] and an English-educated bureaucrat.

5.1 Individual Leaders and Their Messages

5.1.1 Tunku Abdul Rahman Teaches Democratic Politics[2]

By necessity of circumstance and in keeping with leadership models provided by his royal background, the Tunku (as Malaysia's first Prime Minister) came to play a central role in teaching democratic politics to his constituents. However, his notions of democracy were shaped not only by his Western education but, also, his *kerajaan* heritage.

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[1]He was the son of Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah of Kedah - the seventh child (of thirteen) born in 1903 to Makche Menjelara. She was the Sultan's sixth wife and the daughter of a Thai chieftain.

[2]Milner has suggested that from the 1930s the new *adat* (custom) of politics emerged on the Malay peninsular. Of course, politics has long been a part of human civilisation. What was new here was the notion that the people were now the central actors in a de-personalised state. Thus, it was a discourse of 'democratic politics'. (Milner, 'Inventing Politics', pp.125-129; Milner, *The Invention of Politics*, pp.289-296)

In the mid-1950s, the majority of Malays living in rural kampongs had been little touched by modernity. They had vigorously repelled threats (in the form of British Malayan Union proposals) to *kerajaan* institutions and Malay predominance. But in so doing the seeds of a new order had been sown - an order in which 'power' was to be in the hands of the people. Such seeds were to be watered by the Tunku (as had his nationalist predecessor Dato' Onn Jaafar) so as to bring this democracy to fruition.

This royal 'with the common touch' travelled up and down the country before the first federal elections in 1955 rallying support and insisting that the ordinary man could vote for political representatives, who would somehow be important in the scheme of things from their base in Kuala Lumpur.

> The Alliance ... had taken considerable pains to educate ... the electorate ... at least half [of which] was illiterate ... a large number of people would go to the polls with little idea of what they were doing, "although the amount of propaganda that has been thrown at them is nobody's business".[3]

This was all very foreign for Malays, who had been brought up to look to their *penghulu* and Sultans for leadership. The Tunku was also very much a product of his upbringing. His principal teachers had been his mother, who had inculcated a *kerajaan* ethos, love for his cultural heritage, and a sense of destiny;[4]

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[3]H. Miller, *Prince and Premier*, (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd, 1959) p.175.

[4]He speaks of his mother as a major influence in preparing him for the role he was later to play as national leader. (Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.228-229 ('The Role of Women in Islam', 21.1.1980)); Tunku, *Looking Back*, pp.353-359 ('A Mother to Remember: Bringing up a Future Prime Minister', 16.8.76).

and, the British who had demonstrated the 'superiority' of their 'good government' and intellectual disciplines.

As a consequence of his British tuteleage,[5] the Tunku was to oversee the conscious borrowing of much of the substance and philosophies of British institutional forms.[6] This was to include governmental structures, constitutional arrangements, administrative procedures, notions of bureaucratic efficiency, legal and education systems, and, even, Western dress[7] and

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[5]As was typical of the children of Malay royalty (at the interface between the British and the Malay community), the Tunku received the best of English education. (Note, it was these 'children' who were later to lead their country to independence.) His education included stints at the first English school in Kedah which opened in 1909 under the head mastership of Dr Mahathir's father, Mohamed Iskander; the Penang Free School which had some of the best teachers in the country including Mr H.R. Cheeseman; a Cambridge University B.A. gained in 1925 and finally in 1948 a law degree. (Tunku, *Something to Remember*, p.50-56 ('My Childhood Days' 15.6.81-21.6.82) After so many years spent there, it is no wonder he considered England as his second home. (Tunku, *Something to Remember*, p.86 ('Our Vital Links with the Commonwealth',15.6.81-21.6.82); Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.260 (Speech at Guildhall, London, in reply to the Lord Mayor of London on behalf of the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth at the State banquet given on their behalf, 13.1.69))

[6]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.48-49 (Of Law and Faith', 8.5.78); Note Tunku's explicit statement of a conscious decision "to adopt the British legal system in its entirety, with all its meanings and trappings". (For further comment on his input into the shaping of Malaysian institutions, note pp.57 ('Of Oaths and Loyalty', 28.8.78); The Tunku and the Malay elite have been criticised for merely continuing Western models without rethinking their suitability and relevance or searching for alternative models. Shaharuddin says "a social philosophy and intellectual reflection never developed among the elite (and) ... the model left behind by colonialism was taken for granted as historically given". (Shaharuddin Maaruf, *Malay Ideas on Development: From Feudal Lord to Capitalist*, (Singapore: Time Books International, 1988), p.121) However, despite the obvious loyalties to Britain and the deliberate choice of continuity rather than revolution or drastic reform, there is evidence in Tunku's writings of efforts to filter and adapt Western forms to local circumstances, e.g. the continued role of the Malay elite within a nationalist framework. (Shaharuddin Maaruf, *Malay Ideas on Development*, pp.127-128).

[7]Dress is often a very explicit statement of the inner person or society. The wearing of university gowns, of wigs by Malaysian lawyers, and of "British-cut coat and shorts or trousers ... Sometimes (of) heavy tweed" by Kedah officialdom in a tropical climate is a clear indication of the enthusiasm of at least the Malay elite to absorb what the British culture

leisure activities.[8] Despite the ongoing sensitivity of the language issue and the objections of the 'ultra-Malays' in UMNO, he insisted that English continue to be taught as an international language, whilst Malay became the national language.[9]

The intricacies and workings of this new institutional order became the text of his life's teaching. He taught the rule of law, the principles of Malaysia's Constitution, that power was with the people and thus leaders must follow the people's wishes and the party line.[10] The Sultans, also, were now (as constitutional monarchs) to be cognisant of the people's wishes.[11]

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had to offer. (Miller, *Prince and Premier*, p.28; Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.48-49 (Of Law and Faith', 8.5.78)

[8]The Tunku was a keen golfer and race horse owner. In his youth he had been a keen footballer. Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.122-123 ('Football in Malaysia and Singapore', 15.6.81-21.6.82); Tunku, *As A Matter of Interest*, pp.33-34 ('The Things I Cherish', 30.1.78); Tunku, *Looking Back*, pp.341-342 ('The Tunku at the Melbourne Cup Races', 10.11.75)

[9]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.39 ('The Middle Path', 10.4.78),249-250 ('The Right to a Good Education', 21.4.80); Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.57-64 ('English - The Language of the World', 15.6.81-21.6.82)

[10]Especially during the unsettling times of transition or uncertainty over succession, as Elder Statesman and retired Prime Minister he was constantly affirming the virtues of democracy as a check on leader having their own way. (Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.1-3 ('UMNO Poll Results won't affect Government Policies', 15.6.81-21.6.82); p.31 ('The Sound and Safe Policy to Follow') For examples of his political and legal instruction, refer: Tunku Abdul Rahman, *Contemporary Issues in Malaysian Politics*, (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1984), pp.59-61,83-88,95-98,106-111; Tunku Abdul Rahman, *Challenging Times*, (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1986), pp.23-28, ('Understanding Our Constitution', 19.3.84).

[11]Tunku saw a 'republic' as giving the head of state virtually unlimited political power. Thus, he saw Malaysia's unique monarchial system as a check and balance against absolutist rule. Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.61-62. Refer also: Tunku, *Challenging Times*, p.40 ('Installation Ceremony of the King', 8.10.84).

His new *kerajaan* order was a radical departure from the past. Yet, in the midst of the rapid changes the Malay world was experiencing, the *kerajaan* elements that remained served to give a comforting sense of connectedness with the past. Malay royalty were to retain much of their mystique, being as they were above the law and politics.[12] Royalty, though, were to be conscripted into the national cause. As a source of Malay identity, they could provide useful symbols as a focus of Malaysian national (and state) sentiments.[13] Royalty was to confer new titles and awards in recognition of national service. The Tunku, himself, supervised the crafting of the king's regalia and was concerned that appropriate ceremonies, celebrations, symbols, and etiquette be fashioned for the new nation.

He, in effect, was an advocate for the *kerajaan* institution and its values, overseeing its perpetuation in the political, as well as, the educational context. As the first Malay Chancellor of the

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[12]Though "real power" was "in the hands of the people who through their representatives run the government". Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.31 ('Princes and Politics', 23.1.78); Though using the 'Western' notion of power here, it is clear that Sultans were still seen as possessing and being subject to spiritual powers. The King's regalia was spirit-infused and able to cause *Tullah* (severe misfortune) if not treated with reverence. The kris is still a central element in the coronation ceremony. Significantly, Tunku himself was presented with a kris when at Malacca after returning from Britain he announced the agreed date for Malayan independence. Refer Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.32-34 ('The Kings & I: Malaysians are Better Served with Rulers', 1.3.76); Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.14 ('The Path to Independence', 31.8.77).

[13]Tunku, *Something to Remember*, p.96 ('Mentris Besar Crises', 15.6.81-21.6.82); Shaharuddin Maaruf, *Malay Ideas on Development*, pp.125,130. The sultans were to be "symbols of unity among the people of all races and creeds in this country" and, thus, to represent the interests of all peoples. In so doing, they provided a balance for the pro-Malay UMNO-led government. (Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, p.80) Additionally, they were a "defence ... against republican ideas" regarded as inappropriate for Malaysia. Shaharuddin Maaruf, *Malay Ideas on Development*, p.126.

University of Malaya, he was keen to emulate the Thai practice of royal involvement in graduation ceremonies.[14] Sultans have since officiated at graduation ceremonies and served as University chancellors. As Superintendent of Education in Kedah (1943-1945), high on his educational agenda was the teaching of manners (including table manners),[15] etiquette, moral values, *adat*, correct Malay, and proper forms of address. Thus, he was keen to perpetuate a ruler/ruled hierarchy in Malay society; a leader-oriented political culture in which loyal subjects looked to their political (and spiritual) protectors; a Malay-dominated society in which traditional Malay values and norms had continued currency.

He was, however, concerned that all races in his country be able to work and live together in harmony. The Alliance which he forged between UMNO and the English-educated elites of the MCA and MIC set the pattern of inter-communal bargaining, that was characteristic of politics during his term as Prime Minister. It was predicated on the racial stereotyping of the time allowing for Chinese economic dominance so long as Malays were in the driving seat politically.

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[14]Tunku, *Viewpoints*, pp.209-214 ('A Thai Convocation')

[15]The Tunku introduced the subject of 'Manners' into the curriculum on the basis that "courtesy and good manners (are) paramount assets in everybody's life". 'Table manners' included lessons in using a knife and fork. (Miller, *Prince and Premier*, p.68. Refer also Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.187-192 ('Manners Maketh Man', 22.10.79); Also p.240 ('Bangsawan', 15.3.80); Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.102-106 ('Honour the Honoured', 15.6.81-21.6.82); Shaharuddin Maaruf, *Malay Ideas on Development*, pp.130-131) He often referred to his revision of a well-known Malay proverb: "*Kasih adat bagaimana kasih anak.*" (Love your custom as you would your child.)

For many the Tunku seemed to be able to rise above racial acrimony. He demonstrated through his friendships, marriages and adopted children that it was possible to bridge racial divides.[16] Yet, it was later to become painfully obvious, that he had lost touch with the tensions at the grassroots of Malaysian society and within his own party. Many Malays felt that he had compromised too much with the Chinese and had not sufficiently advanced Malay interests. This was to lead to the events of May 13th, 1969 and to his subsequent political demise.[17]

He was to continue, though, to have an influence in the country (sometimes irritatingly so for his successors) as Elder Statesman and as the author of a regular column in the Star newspaper.[18] He wrote to have his say in the events of the day ("to help the government read the minds of the people and the people the mind of the government"),[19] but, also, so that younger Malaysians would come to understand and value their heritage.[20] The Tunku in retirement was in the unusual

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[16]He counted many non-Malays amongst his closest friends and associates. (Tunku, *Viewpoints*, p.35 ('Sincere Friends'); He was at different times married to a Thai-Chinese, an English, and a Malay woman of Arab extraction. He and Tun Sharifah Rodziah adopted children of various racial backgrounds. (Refer Abdullah Ahmad, *Tengku Abdul Rahman and Malaysia's Foreign Policy 1963-1970*, (Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing, 1985), p.14)

[17]Refer: *FEER*,(16.10.69), pp,150-151; (9.10.69), p.91; Shaharuddin Maaruf, *Malay Ideas on Development*, pp.113,119,124,135.

[18]See B. Gale's comments in Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.11-12; K. Das, 'The Tunku, 1903-1990', *FEER*, (20.12.90), p.19.

[19]Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, p.188 ('Mahathir and I', 20.2.78).

[20]Note, it was a heritage in which he had played an important role. He was to publish a series of books based on his Star articles so that Malaysians "continue to learn the lessons of history". Refer: Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, p.viii and B. Gale's comments on p.12 of the same book; Refer also: Tunku, *Viewpoints*, Foreword, p.8; Tunku, *Something to Remember*, p.5; Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, Foreword.

position of being able to address (and, at times, lecture) people in all levels of Malaysian society, including royalty.[21]

Though his lesson texts varied in their subject matter, there was a central theme. He was teaching the laws, structures, norms, values and history of the new democratic political order, which he had been instrumental in bringing to birth. He seemed to be able to reconcile in his person and thought the *kerajaan*, Islamic and *kebangsaan* ideological streams that competed for Malay allegiance. The Tunku was, at one and the same time, a *kerajaan* royal, a Muslim, a confessed Anglophile and Malay nationalist.[22] How was this possible? Some have questioned his anti-colonialist credentials[23] and, even, his intelligence.[24] What was the basis of his all-encompassing world-view?

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[21]Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.36-37 ('Tunku or Commoner, it makes no Difference', 15.6.81-21.6.82); 96-97 ('Mentris Besar Crises').

[22] Miller records him as having the desire to "better the lot of my own race, the Malays". (Miller, *Prince and Premier*, p.5)

[23]One author has questioned the extent of the Tunku's stated anti-colonial and nationalist sentiments referring to his nationalism as "mainly characterised by personal grievances and complaints" to do with his role within the colonial set-up and as lacking in rigorous "thinking and reflection". (Shaharuddin Maaruf, *Malay Ideas on Development*, pp.114-122); However, stirrings of such sentiments were obviously present, strengthened by the Tunku's experiences under Japanese occupation. (*FEER*, (26.2.59), pp.282-283); and his exposure to British racism especially during College days in England. (Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.68-69 ('College Insult which sowed Seeds of Independence', 15.6.81-21.6.82); Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.115-116 ('On Labour Day', 30.4.79), 144-146 ('Pre-War Days', 13.8.79); Tunku, *Viewpoints*, p.3.) Note: "...in those days the prejudice against colonial people, especially coloured people, was very high..." (Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.138 ('A Man's Best Years', 6.8.79))

[24]He has been referred to as a "play-boy prince" and an "indifferent scholar". (F. Abisheganaden,'A Great Statesman', p.7); Some did not take the amiable Tunku as a serious intellectual. Refer Nehru's comment in: 'The Tunku, 1903-1990', *FEER*, (20.12.90), p.20. Described as both candid and shrewd, he was, some say, able to get right to the point. A "Tengkuism" has been defined as "an important statement of fact expressed so simply that the more sophisticated can hardly be persuaded

Asked what his political aim was, he was reported to have said that it had always been to "make everybody happy".[25] This seems to have been a rather naive statement of political philosophy. However, a survey of his writings highlights a continual reference to a desire for peace and the happiness of the people.[26] He called himself at one time the "happiest Prime Minister in the world".[27] Malaya's Proclamation of Independence stated that the *Persekutan Tanah Melayu* (Federation of Malaya) shall be "founded upon the principles of liberty and justice and ever seeking the welfare and happiness of its people...".[28]

The 'greatest good' and 'the happiness of humankind' was, of course, the goal of the European enlightenment project. Much in his institutional borrowings from the British would indicate that the Tunku, too, had imbibed a great deal of such Western thought. He was also said to have an "unbounded faith ... in the

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to take it seriously." (*FEER*, (26.2.59), p.283) In his student days he preferred to learn by listening rather than reading. This priority of personal contact continued to be a feature of his leadership style. He regularly entertained senior government or overseas oficials at home or on the golf course. (F. Abisheganaden, 'A Great Statesman', p.4,6) Was his simply a 'government of personality' or were deeper intellectual currents also in evidence?

[25]F. Abisheganaden, 'A Great Statesman: Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj', Pelita, vol.1, no.6, 2nd Quarter, p.2; Miller, *Prince and Premier*, p.210; *FEER*, (26.2.59), p.283.

[26]Miller, *Prince and Premier*, pp.5; Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.109,110, ('Controversy over a New Town', 16.4.79);199 ('The Lesson of Kampuchea', 5.11.79); In his forword to *Contemporary Issues in Malaysian Politics*, Tunku spoke of his belief that "the future will portend happiness for our people". He concurs with Lord William Beveridge statement: "The object of the Government ... is not the glory of the rulers or of races but the happiness of common man." Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.viii, 64-65; Refer also pp.111 and Tunku, *Viewpoints*, p.40 ('Seventy-five and Still Going Strong').

[27] Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.7,140 ('All for the Sake of UMNO Unity', 16.1.84),153-4 ('The Role of the King', 13.2.84),387; *FEER*, (9.10.69), p.91.

[28]Miller, *Prince and Premier*, p.209.

inherent goodness of his own people".[29] He advocated modernity and democracy, and was determined to fight constitutionally for independence.[30]

During his student days, it seems that he was associated with people from both sides of British politics. He seems to have expected that Malayan independence would be more readily forthcoming from those more inclined towards the left. Thus he later looked to them for assistance in lobbying Malaya's cause.[31]

One commentator has described the Tunku as "fervantly anti-communist and anti-socialist, and an ardent liberal at heart".[32] He, himself, stated his belief that "Malaya and Communism can never co-exist".[33] He had stood strong in resisting the

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[29]Miller, *Prince and Premier*, pp.89,215. Note that within Islam also (as has been indicated in Section 3.3) there is the notion of humankind's inherent goodness.

[30]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.60,62 ('Might is not Always Right', 16.10.78); Tunku was at one time "active in Saberkas, an organisation which aimed at establishing an independent democratic and Socialist Malayan state, but later withdrew his support because of the organisation's apparent willingness to resort to violence against the returning British." commented B. Gale in Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.4-5.

[31]He is said to have been friends with H.V. Davis (a thoroughbred liberal). (Ranjit Gill, *Of Political Bondage*, Singapore: Sterling Corporate Services, 1990), p.8); Principal among his friends on the left was David Rees-Williams (later Lord Ogmore), who assisted the Alliance delegation in lobbying members of the Colonial Fabian Bureau and Members of Parliament over terms for independence. (Miller, *Prince and Premier*, pp.110;84-5,134-137,148); It was to be the conservative party, which was gave Malaya its independence.

[32]Shaharuddin Maaruf, *Malay Ideas on Development*, p.118.

[33]Miller, *Prince and Premier*, p.193; He himself attributed the lesson that no friendship can exist between a Communist and non-Communist to Communist arch-enemy Chin Peng. (Tunku, *Viewpoints*, pp.8-9 ('Memories of Momentous Years')

communist threat from without and within.[34] However, it may be that his motivations were rather more mixed. Dato' Abdullah Ahmad records that, in an interview he had with him in 1983, the Tunku said he was "not anti-communist *per se*" so long as "they [China] keep their ideology within their borders [and] leave Malaysia alone".[35] Local Chinese economic supremacy, the Emergency, Sukarno's Confrontation, and the PAP's 'Malaysian Malaysia' campaign in 1964 fuelled Malay insecurities about Peking and local Malaysian Chinese intentions. He had good reason to be 'anti-Communist China'. Despite some apparent naivety, he clearly saw Communism as being anti-God and anti-Islam.[36]

The Tunku was a Muslim not only by birth but also by virtue of a personal commitment, which deepened during the uncertainties of the Japanese occupation.[37] Especially in the late 1960s, his government was actively involved in Islamic affairs at home and abroad.[38] It hosted the first international conference of Muslim countries held in 1969 to discuss the

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[34]Miller, *Prince and Premier*, pp.70-72,214-215; Tunku relates how members of the Communist Party of Indonesia sought to recruit him in an armed struggle for independence, but without result. Refer to: Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.60 ('Might is not Always Right', 16.10.78).

[35]Abdullah Ahmad, *Tengku Abdul Rahman*, pp.4-5.

[36]Tunku *Something to Remember*, p.75-76 ('Narcotics - Evil Influence from the West', 15.6.81-21.6.82).

[37]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest,* p.140 ('A Man's Best Years', 6.8.79).

[38]Islamic revivalism had begun to take root in Malaysia in the late 1960s. Note that the proselytisation of Islam was a conscious element in the nationalist 'education' program. Tunku relates: "On independence this country proclaimed Islam as its official religion. We were aware at that time how important religion was in bringing the people of faith together. ... We built mosques and schools, carried out extensive programmes of teaching the religion in every nook and corner of the country." Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, p.249 ("The Plight of the New Muslims Beyond the Fringe of Conversion', 18.8.75).

establishment of a World Muslim Missionary Centre.[39] The Tunku had helped to found and lead PERKIM, the local Islamic missionary and welfare organisation.[40] He extended the Quran reading competition within Malaysia and, in retirement, personally helped to set up an International Islamic Secretariat (serving as Secretary General), the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Council of Europe.[41] He advocated prayer, often quoted from Islamic Scriptures and commented on Islamic issues, and advocated Islam as "a strong armour of defence against evil" (including the moral evils of the West).[42] He recommended the winning of converts by telling non-Muslims the "facts of Islam".[43]

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[39]Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, p.296 (PERKIM'S Vital Role in Promoting Islam', 16.8.77); For an account of the resolutions from the conference held over seven days starting April 21st, 1969, refer to: Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.174-177 ('Islam: The Tasks Ahead', 1.10.79).

[40]According to the Tunku, "PERKIM (*Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia*) was founded in 1957 with the object of propagating Islam in Malaysia". Financial contributions came from Rabita Al-Islam of Saudi Arabia, Libya, and the United Nations - the latter to assist PERKIM in its resettling of Islamic Indo-Chinese refugees from Kampuchea. The Mubailegh (missionary) School he started in 1967 contributed personnel. As a result of this work "many people embraced Islam" - including non-Malays. Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.249-250 ('The Plight of New Muslims', 18.8.75),256-259 (PERKIM's Progress', 3.7.79),292-293 ('PERKIM's Vital Role', 16.8.77). Refer also Tunku, *Viewpoints*, p.43 ('Seventy-five and Still Going Strong'); Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.69-70 ('The Hai Hong Episode', 20.11.78). The Regional Islamic Organisation for Southeast Asia (RISEAP) began as an offshoot of PERKIM.

[41] The *Mutka'mar al-Islam* (Secretariat of the Conference of Muslim Foreign Ministers) began to be set up in 1970 with the Tunku devoting his energies to it after he stepped down as PM of Malaysia. Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.127-128,131 ('The Muslim Dilemma', 18.6.79). For his comments on Quran reading and his international Islamic work refer to Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.38-42 ('Towards Greater Islamic Brotherhood'),144-146 ('Arabs must make a Defence Pact'); Tunku, *Viewpoints*, pp42-43 ('Seventy-five and Still Going Strong').

[42]Tunku, *Viewpoints*, p.45 ('Tumult in Every Land'); Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.72-73 ('Narcotics- Evil Influence from the West'); Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.226 ('The Role of Women in Islam', 21.1.80)

[43]This comment was made in the context of others about militant Islam in Iran. Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.221 ('Iran, Islam and the

For him, there was no apparent division between a spiritual and a physical realm or between the sacred and the secular. The world and its inhabitants were at one and the same time physical and spiritual in make-up - a unity and a harmony. Troublesome spiritual forces might need the intervention of a *bomoh*. 'Acts of providence' or 'divine intervention' were able to intersect human affairs.[44] Described as being superstitious, the Tunku confessed a belief in "phenomena and miracles", paid heed to dreams, and relied on intuition.[45]

Twentieth century Western humanism has sought to deny the existence of a God, a spiritual realm, an absolute, and any other sort of knowing except on the basis of human reason. How then did he reconcile his superstitions, his Western borrowings; his abiding love for horseracing, poker, smoking, wine and the 'good life' (all an anathema to Islam) with his Islamic faith?

World', 24.12.79). Tunku also advised: "To gain adherents, our duty is to project a good image of Islam and not weigh it down too heavily with intricacies of the religion. Let the new adherents know the first principle of Islam and in the course of time go further into its depth. There is no end to learning for the religion is wide, far-sighted and progressive." Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.295-296 (PERKIM's Vital Role', 16.8.77). Note also his work amongst new converts to Islam and his life ambition "to see the coming into being of a World Islamic Missionary Centre... to give new hope to the Muslims living in abject poverty (and) ... to spread knowledge of Islam to the world, and also spread goodwill and peace among mankind." Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.36-37 ('The Things I Cherish', 30.1.78).

[44]Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.32 ('The Sound and Safe Policy to Follow'), 34 ('Tunku or Commoner'); The Tunku saw himself as a man destined to be PM "by the will of God". (Tunku, *Viewpoints*, p.7 ('Memories of Momentous Years') Refer also to comments on the relationship between crime and spiritual forces. Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.107-111 ('Crime in Malaysia').

[45]Shaharuddin Marruf, *Malay Ideas on Development*, pp.128-130. For some, reference to Tunku's intuition may have been a polite way of disparaging his intellectual capacities. Yet, for the Tunku revelation, intuition, and reason were all acceptable means of knowing. Refer Tunku, *Something to Remember*, pp.63 ('College Insult'),152 ('The Way to Racial Harmony'); Tunku, *Viewpoints*, p.41 ('Seventy-Five and Still Going Strong'); Tunku, *Challenging Times*, p.60.

According to his interviewer, he saw himself as a practical and modern Muslim with "a mind of his own".[46]

Obviously, it was with some degree of compromise. Nonetheless, his was an Islamic perspective. Thus, people could "work together in the cause of Islam to bring peace and goodwill to mankind".[47] The humanistic cause would be advanced via Islamic means. The Tunku was advocating a modern and moderate rather than a fundamentalist Islam - religion "as a guide but not as a law unto itself"; an Islam whose essential nature was "peace and goodwill".[48] According to the Tunku:

> ... where religious leaders have taken over, a state of anarchy prevails. They introduce reforms to conform with the position of a Muslim state. But then they revert to forms of punishment imposed over a thousand years ago...[49]

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[46]Abdullah Ahmad, *Tengku Abdul Rahman*, p15.

[47]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.221 ('Iran, Islam and the World', 24.12.79); According to the Tunku, "Religions are created by God to bring peace and human dignity to man..." Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, p.287. He condemned "a group of fanatical Muslims who had set out to destroy Hindu idols (for) Any sane Muslim would have known that Hindu idols offer no danger to Islam. The Hindu religion (was practised) ... in this country long before the coming of Islam. All religions work for peace and happiness among men. While it is not possible to have one religion for all men, we can at least live together in harmony." Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.309-310 ('The Fanatics of Batu Pahat', 20.10.80). Thus, his emphasis was not on an exclusive Islam, but an all-encompassing humanity.

[48]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.140-141 ('A Man's Best Years', 13.8.79); Tunku, *Viewpoints*, p.40 ('Seventy-five and Still Going Strong').

[49]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.220 ('The Lesson of Kampuchea', 5.11.79); Tunku advocated Islamic law which was appropriate to a modern, democratic country. "The time of our Prophet and the time now, is so far apart and so different, and the laws at the time, can never be introduced in toto now in the modern and multi-racial society. It will also discourage others from showing interest in the Muslim religion. It is for us to show how adaptable is our religion to modern life..." Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, p.275 ("Stand Up and Be Counted', 18.7.77).

In his understanding it seems that Islam was to serve humankind, who played the central role. Islam, he says,

> ... has laid the basis for the unification of humanity ... for a brotherhood of Man which knows no bounds of colour, race, country, language or even rank - a unity of the human race beyond which human conception cannot go. It not only recognises the equality of the civil and political rights of men, but also of women. ... Islam is a good, sensible and progressive religion. ... It is ... all-inclusive (containing) ... within itself religions which went before it. ... (It) cannot be treated as a dogma, which a man must accept ... (to) escape everlasting damnation, but as a science based on the universal experience of humanity. There is not a single doctrine of Islam which does not form the basis of action for the development of Man to higher and yet higher stages of life. ... Man's future is not confined to the next world; his primary concern is rather with this life on earth. ... (thus) all God's creatures (have) a part to play.[50]

Islam (or its interpretation) was to be subject to the scrutiny and approval of State Rulers, and as Tunku would have it, a National Council for Islamic Affairs. Such a council was set up to seek a unity on Islamic issues between all states and allow the Federal Government to curb religious activities and movements contrary to "established Islamic practices" - "to take action against deviationists and fanatical movements where the need arises".[51] Tunku was also in favour of the Federal Government (rather than the States) having the power to prohibit and control "the propagation of alien ideology

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[50]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.225-6; 228 ('The Role of Women in Islam', 21.1.80).

[51]Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.310-311 ("The Fanatics', 20.10.80),323-324,326-335 ('Need for Uniform Muslim Laws', 3.11.80); Note that amongst Muslim fanatical movements he includes Wahabism (started by Muhammad ibni Abdel Wahab (1703-87)) in which "Western civilisation or modernisation" is regarded "as a threat to the survival of Islam. (They advocate) a return to (the) Islam of the first generation ... (want) to establish an Islamic State where the *sharia* (is) the law ... (and view) any change to develop Islam collaterally with modern civilisation as an abomination and a sin against the religion." Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.314-315 ('The Fanatics', 20.10.80); 322 ('Religion and the Constitution', 27.10.80).

among Muslims".[52] As for extending *Syariah* law and the move for an Islamic state, parliament was the sole law-making body in modern, plural Malaysia.[53] Clearly, the Tunku and his government aspired to have the upper hand in any ideological and political contest.

The Tunku was also, as already indicated, steeped in the traditions and ethos of Malay royalty, with its strong Indic influence. This is indicated by his preference for compromise and cooperation rather than confrontation, his abhorence of ill-manners, his patrician admiration of the Thai, and his advocacy for *kerajaan* institutions. Yet, how could hierarchy be justified in a universal brotherhood of man?

It was because "the monarchy [had] ... brought so much peace and good life to our country".[54] The Rajas had served the people well and were able to ensure the stability of the political and cultural order.[55] His determination to ensure that his father was not whisked out of the country by the British in the face of the advancing Japanese during World War Two stemmed from his knowledge that a Sultan must remain with his people "otherwise it would cause terrible panic and

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[52]Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.334-335 ("Need for Uniform Muslim Laws', 3.11.80).

[53]Human law (in the form of the British legal system) "accepts the authority of the Quran" and, according to the Tunku, with its proven track-record is a workable system for Malaysia. Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.44-49.

[54]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.31 ('Princes and Politics', 23.1.78).

[55]Tunku, *Challenging Times*, pp.40-41 ('Installation Ceremony of the King', 8.10.84); Refer also B. Gales's comments in Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.16-17.

eventual upheaval in the state".[56] Ultimately, *kerajaan* also served human well-being.

The well-being of Malays and Malaysia was his goal. The shaping of the necessary institutional structures (including his political party UMNO), the inculcating of sufficient knowledge and appropriate cultural norms were his means. He drew together the contesting royal, Islamic, and nationalist ideologies into a unifying discourse of politics - a discourse which was part of the wider 'modernity' project seeking the greater happiness of man. Such an end was not inconsistent with that of either the *kerajaan*, Islamic or *kebangsaan* streams.

5.2 Tun Abdul Razak Preaches Development

Whilst the Tunku was a man who enjoyed pomp, ceremony and lime-light, his long-time deputy, Tun Razak, was a quiet, serious, and hard-working man who preferred to achieve results behind-the-scenes.[57] Throughout his career as Deputy, and then as, Prime Minister, his speeches and life's example seemed to preach just one sermon - that of development (so as

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[56]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.215 (Loyalty Village: How a Kampung Stood by its Ruler in Love and Respect', 17.12.79); Tunku also related "The concept of kingship cannot be eradicated from the minds of the people here. Any other form of government could easily turn this country into another Kampuchea or Vietnam." Interestingly, the Japanese were aware of this and asked Tunku to make a 'national' broadcast asking Malay Rulers to remain in their respective states and to reassure the people. (Refer: Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, pp.216-217); As Malays have done from times past, Tunku associates national prosperity and well-being with good rulership. (Tunku, *Malaysian Politics*, pp.34-42 ('The Kings & I', 1.3.76)

[57]Note his approach to the difficult racial political issues such as the Education and National Language policies: "We solve [them] ... by working patiently and quietly on the ground". Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.271-274 (Speech at International House in Melbourne during April 1967 trip to Australia).

to ensure the greater happiness and well-being of the Malays and the nation).

Like the Tunku, he was an English-educated lawyer with elite connections. (He was the son of a Pahang chief.) He had a sharp intellect; was a practical and very able administrator; and had served as chief troubleshooter under the Tunku. As a politician he saw his main role as:

> ... not really to make speeches for his own glory but ...[to foster] a partnership between the people and the government ... the elected politician in between [is] a liason link, ... [a] persuader for good, and promoter of progress; not for his own gains, but, for the gains of the nation as a whole.[58]

When making a speech he seemed to have been operating not so much in ceremonial but, rather, in business mode - his purpose: to teach; to reassure; and, importantly, to galvanise towards partnership in progress.

It is important to remember the historical context in which he was operating. Malays had been consigned by colonial policy to a backward and economically-deprived rural existence. During Malaysia's first ten years of independence it was beseiged from both within and without by communist insurgency,[59] communist activity in Singapore, Sukarno's Confrontation Campaign; and tensions with the Philippines over its claim to Sabah. During this period Tun Razak had responsibility for

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[58]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.223 (Grand Alliance Convention in K.L., 31.3.63).

[59]The 'emergency' began in 1948 and officially ended in 1960, although the Malaysia Communist Party (MCP) was to continue its subversion in the 1970s, and then in desultory fashion until 1989 when its leader, Chin Peng, finally surrendered.

internal security and national defence. He later was given responsibility for the rural development portfolio.
Thus, it was as an experienced 'battle commander' that Tun Razak harnessed the same government machinery in the 'battle' for development. **Development** and **defence** (Tun Razak held both portfolios) were seen as the two keys to protecting Malaysian sovereignty and nullifying communist incursion. As Tun Razak stressed repeatedly: "The greatest safeguard of our country's sovereignty is not only Defence, but even more so, Development".[60]

However, Communism was not the only enemy. Malay lassitude, poverty, backwardness, inferiority, and poor self-image threatened to confine Malays to ignominious servitude to immigrant races in their own country. Tun Razak 'battle' rhetoric seemed targetted at the *status quo* of Malay disadvantage and the Alliance Government was to 'lead the charge'. He commented: "Is there any army in the world than can march forward and at the same time look backwards? No. One has got to look ahead, think ahead, be ahead and move ahead!"[61] He referred to organisations such as MARA, FAMA, Bank Bumiputra, which had been set up to help Malays, as being "major bridgeheads in our national advance towards getting fair and equitable participation by all in the economic

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[60]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.179 ('The Greatest Safeguard of Our Sovereignty: National Development and Defence', Speech given at the opening of the Afro-Asian on National Development in K.L. on 28.10.66); Refer also pp.172-3 (Remarks made at State Operations Room in Johore on 3.7.67),187 (Seminar at Faculty of Medicine, UM, on 21.2.66).
[61]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.236 ('MARA's Success has Already Surpassed all Expectations', Speech given at the opening of the Second Congress Bumiputra on 7.9.68).

life of the country".[62] He spoke of a "march to greater development"; "a two-pronged attack on agriculture"; "a second line of advance"; "one single, effective force"; *Gerakan Maju* (Operation Progress).[63]

From his Development Operations Rooms, he planned strategy and checked progress. He disciplined and rallied his troops so that each would join the battle and play his or her 'significant' part.[64] He went to kampongs in every corner of Malaysia taking the "administration down to the kampong folks ... to teach, to lead and to inspire the officers and men responsible for the various [development] undertakings". He modelled the dedicated leader always thinking of and "ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of the country."[65] He called for others (fellow politicians and senior civil servants) to be similar role

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[62]MARA = *Majlis Amanah Rakyat*, had the role of assisting *Bumiputra* in the fields of commerce and industry through educational and other programs; FAMA = Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority was charged with the role of introducing ways and means of improving existing markets and marketing methods; Bank Bumiputra Malaysia Limited was to remedy the lack of capital among the Bumiputera. Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.238 (2nd Congress Bumiputra, 7.9.68); 290-296 (National Development Operations Room, 30.9.65).

[63]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.xxiii,140-141 ('A Drive for Greater Progress', Speech given at National Agricultural Seminar in K.L. on 18.4.68),283 (Talk to members of the Gerakan Maju National Committee, heads of all departments concerned with extension services and to all State Development Officers).

[64]His strategy was well thought out and was to be so inculcated in each officer that it became part of his mental framework. In the first phase post-colonial Government departments had to be reoriented and reenergised; minor projects in each area were to be immediately undertaken in order to build community confidence in the government; development infrastructure had to be put in place. Then, in the second phase, the people were called on to play their part. (Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.215; 'Democracy and Development: How Malaysia Carries out her Development Plans and Programmes', Speech given at the Council of World Tensions Conference in K.L. on 28.2.64)

[65]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.xxiii,xxx.

models for their juniors.[66] Competent agricultural extension workers, as models and proselytisers of a new way, were to give farmers confidence in the government and in modern technology. Under the *Jayadiri* (Self-Improvement) drive the Government would promote a change in the attitudes of farmers and smallholders and "make the ready to accept changes brought about by science and technology".[67]

All the nation's resources, and particulary education were to be conscripted into serving national goals.[68] Government, though education, could shape its citizens. Education was to "make our children loyal and dedicated citizens", "good parents", "productive workers and active participants in society".[69] The "intellectual capacities of our people" had to be harnessed in "this age of science and technology".[70] Professional, technical and middle-level manpower needed for rapid industrial and agricultural modernisation had to be trained along with teachers and technicians. Traditional attitudes emphasising white collar jobs needed to be changed to produce skilled blue

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[66]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.244-246 (Tun Razak's address to members of the Malaysian Society of Public Administration in K.L. on 30.7.68)

[67]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.240 (2nd Congress Bumiputra, 7.9.68).

[68]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.268 (Address at the Seminar of Senior Government Officers of Malaysia in Petaling Jaya on 3.7.67).

[69]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.163 (Remarks made at the 10 years of Independence Exhibition at the Hisamuddin National School in K.L. on 28.8.67); See also pp.271 (Speech at International House in Melbourne during his April 1967 visit to Australia),288 (Speech to MCA Youth at the Chinese Assembly Hall, K.L. on 25.2.66).

[70]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.58 (Speech at the Formal Opening of the Radio House complex in K.L. on 11.3.73); *Ucapan-Ucapan, 1973*, p.52 (Speech at launching ceremony for the Kemubu Agricultural Development Board in Kota Bharu, Kelantan on 2.3.73).

collar workers.[71] Science and technology itself had to be harnessed in the march towards development. Scientific research was to be "problem-oriented" and focussed specifically on the country's development objectives.[72]

Education, literacy and rural development efforts alone were not to lead to "the preservation of peace" as he had indicated they would.[73] Racial riots in May 1969 were to catapault him into leading the country first as Chairman of the National Operations Council and then as Prime Minister in 1970. He promised a new order in which New Economic and Educational Policies would radically alter the structure of Malaysian society.[74] Malays were to be 'assisted' out of the *kampung* and into the cities, universities, and executive board rooms.

He focussed on crafting a new Malay and Malaysian mentality. His ideological apparatus produced a profusion of slogans and government-sponsored public celebrations. Malays were to be brought into modernity via a *Gerakan Pembaharuan* (Renewal

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[71]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.9 (Introducing Development Estimates for 1969 in the *Dewan Rakyat* on 3.2.69).

[72]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.139 ('A Drive for Greater Progess', theme of National Agricultural Seminar in KL. on 18.4.68).

[73]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.256 (message on International Illiteracy Day on 8.9.67). He once recommended that "men should be more educated, and ... be able to be masters of themselves ... [so that] there can be everlasting peace in the world ... in which the rule of force has been ... replaced by that of law". (cited in Shaw, *Tun Razak*, pp.23-24)

[74]He spoke of a "new social order with peace and happiness"; "*membentuk masyarakat Malaysia yang baru*" (creating a new Malaysian society) - one which was united, dynamic and progressive. (*Ucapan-Ucapan, 1973*, pp.20 (Opening speech at International Association of Universities in K.L. on 29.1.73),33 (Speech at a City Banquet on 1.2.73),56,57,59 (Speech at the Formal Opening of the Radio House complex in K.L. on 11.3.73))

Movement) launched in 1972 with its themes of change, material success, and positive attitudes constantly reinforced in the media over several years. The *Rukunegara* (national ideology) was launched in August 1970 pledging "united efforts to attain" a democratic and progressive society by "Belief in God, Loyalty to King and Country; upholding the Constitution; Rule of Law, and Good Behaviour and morality".[75] Thus, despite the increasing Islamic consciousness of the time, Malaysia was to retain her British-derived, 'secular' institutions. Religion (Islam) was to contribute a moral and ethical basis.

Indeed, alongside Tun Razak's emphasis on modernisation and development was a commitment to strengthen Islam. His government began to organise it own *dakwah* activities and it established a number of federal Islamic Institutions. It took over responsibility for religious education in primary schools as from July 1st, 1974. However, according to S. Ahmad Hussein, such Islam-related programs were in a private-devotional form similar to the initiatives under the Tunku.[76]

He differed, though, from the Tunku in his emphasis on youth and meritocracy. Tun Razak and his new breed of young Malay technocrats began to gradually entrench Malay political dominance (after the challenge to it of May 13th 1969) in a centralising trend that has continued to the present.

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[75]Refer: Appendix II.

[76]S. Ahmad Hussein, *Islam and Politics in Malaysia 1969-1982: The Dynamics of Competing Traditions*, Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1988, pp.610-612.

This was to take various forms. The government became an active player in business. Entrance quotas to tertiary educational institutions and employment regulations were weighted so as to assist Malay progress. Constitutional changes put issues sensitive to Malays above challenge. Opposition parties, including PAS, were drawn into a wider 'single party' type coalition. "Anti-national" and "subversive" elements were detained under ISA provisions. The old guard of UMNO were being eased out.[77] The media was domiciled under UMNO ownership. Political rallies were banned. University campuses, the recruiting grounds for socialist and Islamic revivalist movements, were brought under government control.[78] National symbols became more Malay and Bahasa Malaysia became the instructional medium in all educational institutions. Tun Razak's government became more and more interested in controlling and coordinating Islam in the country. Thus, Malaysia under Tun Razak became more 'Malay', Islamic and authoritarian, with the Prime Minister playing an increased role in the detail of the affairs of state.

Tun Razak was seeking to restructure peoples' values and thinking, but, what was the basis of his own thinking? He seems to have been influenced not only by his Islamic

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[77]Amongst them were Tun Mustapha, Chief Minister of Sabah, and Dato' Harun Idris, Chief Minister of Selangor and from 1971 UMNO Youth leader. Both had been fractious and critical of Tun Razak.

[78]Prior to the early 1970s, the dominant student organisations were the "left-socialists" (which attracted mainly non-Malays) and the "Malay nationalists". As more Malays began to enter universities, student leadership became increasingly Malay with an Islamic orientation. (S. Ahmad Hussein, *Islam and Politics in Malaysia 1969-1982*, pp.155-156)

heritage[79] but also by his English and early Malay educational background.

Tun Razak's began his schooling in a Malay kampung school with children from poor families whose "sufferings ... left an indelible impression on him"[80] and provided the basis for his later commitment to helping improve the lot of rural Malays. Tun Razak was also a product of the Malay and Raffles Colleges and legal training in England. As a consequence he appeared to have imbibed elements of both liberal and socialist thought. Like the Tunku, he related as a student with those of the British Labour Party. He was also a member of the Fabian Socialist Party.[81] Such (enlightenment-rooted) philosophical elements were evident in his speeches.[82] For example, he spoke of the fundamental laws of nature, specifically of a "law of development" and a "law of cause and effect", according to which nothing happens automatically.[83] In sympathy with

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[79]One of his biographers described him as "a zealous and devoted Muslim". (Shaw, *Tun Razak*, p.2) He completed the *haj* in 1961 and would spend time in his prayer room before his 12 hour day began. He wanted to promote Islam in Malaysia because "*ugama yang menjamin kebahagian dunia dan akhirat*" (It's religion which guarantees happiness in this life and the next.) *Ucapan-Ucapan,1961*, p.79 (Hari Raya, 17.3.61).

[80]Morais, Strategy for Action, p.xviii; His school in the Jambu Langaar *kampung* offered a general education in Malay in the morning and private tuition in religious subjects for paying students in the afternoon. (Shaw, *Tun Razak*, pp.15-16); See also Morais, *Stragegy for Action*, p.153 ('Great Economic Debates' Symposium at UM on 2.10.67) for Tun Razak's personal description of his education.

[81]Refer to: *Seluruh hidupnya untuk Malaysia (A Man of Malaysia)*, The New Straits Times Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1976, p.29; Note, his affiliations with those on the left of British politics were probably for the same practical reasons that led the Tunku to also have such connections - to facilitate Malayan independence.

[82]He may not always expressed his agreement with such views. Often he was to add his own interpretation or application.

[83]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.174 (Speaking to International delegates at the Second Seminar on Development held from 22.6 to

Malthusian thought, he called for the adoption of the idea of small-sized families and described family planning as "the saviour of humanity".[84] According to Morais, his concern was for "the greatest good for the greatest number - in the shortest possible time".[85]

According to Tun Razak, once people had acquired "the taste of progress and prosperity",[86] they would want more and, thus, provide the impetus for national development. Tun Razak explains:

> Once we set out upon a course of development, expectations are implanted in the hearts of the people. Expectations are in one sense limitless; the more we progress the greater the expectations. However, I consider expectations as the fuel of development. Without this our efforts would cease to be dynamic.[87]

There was always something beyond (and common to all) towards which a government could rally its citizens. "In the quest for development, no nation should ever be satisfied with its accomplishments".[88] Striving towards such goals would counter any tendency towards complacency, self-sufficiency, introspection and political contestation. For leadership, says Tun Razak, "is the art of indicating a distant and inspiring goal

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30.6.67),202 ('The Red Book and Its Aim: Partnership between the Government and the Rural People', Address given to UM Debating Union on 20.7.65),226 (Speech at the Grand Alliance Convention in K.L. on 31.3.63).

[84]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.248-9 (Launching Ceremony for National Family Planning Week on 8.6.68).

[85]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.xxix.

[86]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.286 (Conference of National Council of Social Welfare in K.L. on 27.4.66).

[87]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.151 (Opening of Regional Seminar on Development in K.L. on 5.2.68).

[88]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.159 (Great Economics Debate, 2.10.67).

so as to make all else seem trivial".[89] Herein, we see his *modus operandi* and an underlying dimension to his development emphasis.

In the context of seeking parliamentary approval for development expenditures, he espoused the "Alliance philosophy" as being "progress" and "democracy"; a philosophy which importantly "is bearing fruit in actual practice". He went on to accuse some (of the opposition) as being "blind followers of outdated doctrines and political philosophies formulated many years ago ... by such people as Karl Marx and Engels".[90] In contrast the Alliance government was deemed as progressive with ideas and thinking meeting the present day needs of the people; elected by the people, close to the people and representing the wishes of all sections of the people in order to make this "a happy and united country".[91] The Alliance was a moderating influence - rational, relevant, cool and sensible.[92] He countered ideological (and racial) discord advocating partnership towards a common goal.

> I don't care about Socialism, Communism, neo-Colonialism or Capitalism. I give you what is the most important-ism not only in Malaysia but in South East Asia today. It is Alliance-ism. It is the unity of purpose of every clear-thinking citizen of this country. It is an example to the world of what real progress can be made. Development is our defence, discord is our danger.[93]

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[89]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.175 (2nd Seminar on Development, June 1967).
[90]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.46-47 (Moving FMP, 15.12.65).
[91]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.62-3 (Budget Debate, 25.11.65).
[92]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.49 (Moving FMP, 15.12.65),61-2 (Budget Debate, 25.11.65).
[93]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.191 (Speaking on National Development in April, 1960).

In descibing the confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia as "a tension between Democracy and Dictatorship"; a contrast between "rule by rhetoric" and "front stage ... shallow and hollow" speeches, slogans, words and promises and "back stage ... hard work, sound thinking and action",[94] he was being critical of Sukarno's approach to national leadership and his ideological affiliations. However, Tun Razak was also indicating his own position, which entailed democracy, rationalism, practicality, realism, humanist endeavour and hard work.

> ..a Democratic Government must face the facts as they are rather than be too ideological in a hard and fixed way; it must also be eclectic in choosing from the modern forms of Government. In other words it must pick the best type of approach most suitable for the benefit of its people rather than being carried away into the clouds of high-flying theory, and intellectual ideological "-isms".[95]

He advocated a modern, progressive, free enterprise, united Malaysia - "a just and liberal society", in which all would have pride, and, to which all (from whatever race) would give their sole loyalty.[96] In this plural society "a heavy dose of nationalism" was seen to be "a necessary stimulant ... to unity and economic progress".[97] Malaysia, imbued with a sense of purpose and dignity, would assume its "rightful place in the

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[94]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.297 (Speaking to Students Union and Faculty Members of Singapore University on 24.7.65).

[95]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.212-213 (Council of World Tensions Conference, 28.2.64).

[96]In the context of "the battle for Democracy ... being fought in every Malaysian home and in the hearts of all our citizens", (p.287 (Social Welfare National Council, 27.4.66)) he advocated the preaching and practising of the ideology of democracy and of meeting the nation's needs in order to keep "this area safe for democracy and the democratic way of life" (p.231, Address to the Care-Medico Conference in K.L. in Sept.1968). Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.275, 278 ('Call to Nation for Unity: Need to Narrow the Gap between the Have's and Have-nots', Hari Raya message to the nation Jan.1967).

[97]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.49 (In moving the adoption of the First Malaysia Plan (1966-1970) in Parliament on 15.12.65).

international, economic community of free nations of the world".[98]

Malaysians, however, were not to be undiscriminating in their application of the theories and yardsticks of developed nations.[99] 'Pragmatism'[100] or utilitarianism was to guide the selection process. The "best" could be taken from socialism and liberalism and fashioned to serve Malaysia's puposes. This was not to be an unbridled free market environment nor one of over-enforced Socialism,[101] but one in which careful central planning maximised efficiency and use of resources for the maximum good. In this property-owning democracy, land and property were to be distributed to the poor, who were to be the owners and stewards and not simply the workers on collective property.[102] Whilst communists preached revolution

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[98]Tun Razak saw it as important to give Malaysians a sense of pride in their nation and its achievements, constantly affirming the "modern miracle" of Malaysia and its development program - the envy of other developing nations. No longer were they "a nation of rejected beggars", for even the leaders of those 'enlightened' and developed nations France and the United States had praised its achievements. (Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.30-31 (Motion of thanks in Dewan Rakyat for royal address on 13.6.68),64 (Budget Debate, 25.11.65),88-90 (Speech in Parliament on 1964 Development Estimates); He spoke of Malaysia having a "*nama yang sangat baik*" (a good name) abroad. *Ucapan-Ucapan, 1961*, p.81 (Hari Raya Speech on 17.3.61).

[99]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.222 (Grand Alliance Convention, 31.3.63);301 (UM Debating Union, 20.7.65).

[100]Pragmatism is a doctrine which "evaluates any assertion solely by its practical consequences and its bearing on human interests". (J.B. Sykes (ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 7th Ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.805)

[101]Said Tun Razak; "We want (our people) and their sons to have lively, inquiring, individual minds, each man using his own intelligence and energies to improve his lot. We don't want to place them into a rigid mould of centrally planned economic development. We want then to live their own lives as part of the progress of betterment with human dignity and free from the state of regimentation, fear and suspicion." (Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.185 (Afro-Asian Seminar, 28.10.66))

[102]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.299 (Singapore Uni., 24.7.65);303 (UM Debating Union, 20.7.65).

and the injustice of the 'haves' towards the 'have-nots'. The Alliance government would "level up and not level down" - giving to the 'have-nots' and helping them to stand on their own feet in a spirit of *gotong-royong* (self-help)- all without taking from the 'haves'.[103] There would be scope for "individual talents and enterprise". All were to be involved and work for change from within rather than be critical by-standers.[104] "Preaching about development" would not change a person but involvement would.[105]

Clearly, this was not to be a social welfare state. Humanitarian and voluntary services were not to be government dependent. Nor were they to be "post offices" sending on government money to the disadvantaged.[106] Privately-run institutions were to make their independent contributions to the welfare of the less fortunate as a demonstration of "democracy in practice". Private industry was also to make its contribution to the nation and have its "blue-print for action".[107] There were to be no sleeping bumiputra partners but joint ventures, competition,

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[103]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.60 (Budget Debate, 25.11.65);201-3 (UM Debating Union, 20.7.65);283 (Speech at 2nd annual conference of the Association of Vetinary Surgeons in K.L. on 1.7.66);293,296 (Speech at launching of FAMA and Bank Bumiputra at National Development Operations Room in K.L. on 30.9.65);302,304 (UM Debating Union, 20.7.65).

[104]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.141 (National Agricultural Seminar, 18.4.68);274 (Melbourne, April 1967).

[105]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.136-137 (National Agricultural Seminar, 18.4.68).

[106]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.285 (National Spcial Welfare Council, 27.4.66).

[107]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.232-233 (Care-Medico, Sept.1968);259 (Opening of Annual Conference of the Associated Malay Chambers of Commerce in Alor Star on 14.7.67).

industrialisation, foreign investment - interlacing national loyalty with international liberalism and awareness.[108]

Elected governments were to be accountable to the people.[109] However, unruly individuals and groups, who could threaten fragile communal harmony and national unity, would be treated as traitors to Malaysia and dealt with accordingly.[110] Abuse of the democratic process would not be tolerated. A "responsible and loyal opposition" was welcomed and would be allowed freedom to speak and to hold meetings so long as the rules of democracy were followed and the unity and happiness of the *rakyat* was maintained.[111]

Tun Razak's emphasis on communal (as against individual) priorities, on strong leadership and central government, on the modern and the scientific,[112] on proper use of time,[113] on improving Malay well-being, on hard work and shaping values,

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[108]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.262 (Malay Chambers of Commerce, 14.7.67).

[109]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.212-213 (World Tensions Conference, 28.2.64).

[110]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.277 (Hari Raya message, Jan.1967).

[111]Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.72-73 (Reply in Parliament on 3.6.65 to Lee Kuan Yew's query regarding the meaning of the words "the threat from within" in the Royal address); 277 (Hari Raya message, Jan. 1967).

[112]He wanted to modernise rural Malays. *Ucapan-Ucapan 1971*, p.272 (Speech summarising debate on the Second Malaysia Plan, 19.7.71); His analogies were invariably modern. He likened the friction wearing an engine to that in the machinery of Government; He spoke of automation, the tempo of modern travel, catalysts and controlled social laboratories. Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.143 (National Seminar on Agriculture in K.L. on 15.4.68); 224 (Grand Alliance Convention, 31.3.63); 286 (Social Welfare National Council, 27.4.66)

[113]Time was seen as "a valuable commodity" with only "1000 working days a year". A sense of urgency had to be instilled. Morais, *Strategy for Action*, pp.180-1 (Afro-Asian Seminar, 28.10.66); *Ucapan-Ucapan, 1961*, p.59 (Speech to Heads of Federal and State Departments on the Second Five Year Plan on 14.2.61).

on catchy slogans,[114] on an independent foreign policy and a confident Malaysia have much in common with Dr Mahathir's approach - someone to whom Tun Razak may have been *guru* and mentor. He was a man of action able to apply what he preached. *Bapa Pembangunan* (Father of Development) has left his mark in no small way on Malaysia. His strong interventionist approach was to add impetus to centralising tendencies, which found further expression under his successors.

5.3 Hussein Onn Models Benevolent Democratic Leadership

Like his predecessors, Hussein Onn was to assume a central role in defining the nature of his political realm and in modelling its values. It was a realm in which (benevolent) political leadership was to be close to the people, so that it knew how to better lead the people. As was also the case with his predecessors, the imprint of his background and personality was to be readily discernable in his polity and its political discourse.

Hussein Onn was to come to the Prime Ministerial post upon his brother-in-law's (Tun Razak's) death with an excellent pedigree

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[114]To give some examples: "just talking about **development**, just making **development** plans, just hoping for **development** will never in fact result in **development**" (Morais, *Strategy for Action*, p.226 (Grand Alliance Convention, 31.3.63)); "**P**lanning, **I**mplementation, and **E**valuation (**PIE**) are the key phases of development with implementation being the most critical." (p.208 (Address to Federal & State Heads of Departments on 4.6.64)); We need an **alliance** - an **alliance** of ideas and an **alliance** of efforts between the people and the Government" (p.165 (10 years of Independence exhibition, 28.8.67)); Politicians should "convert **emotion** into **motion** towards sound economic development" (p.226 (Grand Alliance Convention, 31.3.63))

- he was an English-educated lawyer with family roots in the Johore elite.[115] His father, Dato' Onn Jaafar, was the 'father' of the Malay nationalist movement, having founded UMNO and led the anti-Malayan Union campaign.

He was a quiet and shy man of integrity and sincerity. He had not sought high office, but took the responsibility seriously.[116] He did not seek popularity but only to do what was right. He had determined to deal with "corruption in high places"[117] and champion "efficient, honest and just government".[118] He was resolute in dealing with Communist insurgency[119] and faced communally-sensitive issues head on.[120]

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[115]His grandfather, father, and elder brothers were, in turn, *Mentri Besar* of Johore. His father, Dato' Onn Jaafar, had been adopted by Sultan Ibrahim of Johore. (Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.2-8,11-15)

[116]Perhaps too seriously ... he has been accused of being too cautious and slow in decision-making. It may have been that he was very aware of the flammability of the racial situation.

[117]Tun Razak before his death had begun to zero in on corrupt politicians. Amongst the 'old guard' who were to topple during Hussein Onn's term were Datuk Harun Idris (charismatic former leader of UMNO youth and Mentri Besar of Selangor); Tun Mustapha (the extremely wealthy Chief Minister of Sabah); and, Mohamed Asri Muda (President of PAS). (K. Das, 'The man who reined in the mavericks', *FEER*, (31.3.78), pp.16-19)

[118]'"A People-Inspired Government" for Malaysia', Electioneering for June 1978 at the opening of a Fire Station in Kepong near K.L., cited in Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.149

[119]The MCP launched its so-called seven-year plan to seize power shortly before Hussein Onn became Prime Minister on January 15th, 1976. He had received military training in India and served during the Emergency as officer-in-charge of the Johore Kampung Guards. After having had first-hand experience of communist insurgency, he announced on coming to office that he would give top priority to security. He set in motion what many liberals saw as draconian laws passed under Tun Razak. By 1977 around 2,000 communists and sympathisers had been detained or killed and a number of politically prominent people exposed and arrested.

[120]Hussein has been accredited as having battled against "the Three C's" of Communism, Communalism, and Corruption. However, it was Tun Razak who identified the Three C's as Malaysia's 'most dangerous enemies' in a speech in Kangar, September 18th, 1967. Refer to Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, *Seluruh hidupnya untuk Malaysia (A Man of Malaysia)*, The New Straits Times Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1976, p.73.

His term of office as Deputy and then Prime Minister coincided with the first ten years of the implementation of the New Economic Policy. His government was actively engaged in many sectors of society to bring Malays into equal participation. Hussein Onn came to espouse a "people-inspired" government,[121] which gave priority to the people's interests. The government and UMNO was to be close to the *rakyat*.[122] The *rakyat* was to support and "have faith in those elected". Leaders were to be faithful stewards, people of integrity strengthening their faith so as to resist wrongdoing,[123] and seeking Allah's wisdom on behalf of the people. He was proposing a benevolent, wise leadership and loyal *rakyat*. According to Hussein Onn, his government tried to "monitor feelings, adjust programmes, explain policies".[124]

Criticism and differences were not to be expressed openly in the public arena, but within UMNO and the *Barisan Nasional*.[125] By a process of consultation and consensus, difficulties would be overcome.[126] Politiking was to be put aside so as to get on

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[121]Electioneering for June 1978 elections, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.149

[122]UMNO was to be "people-oriented" and meeting regularly with the people "to learn more about their problems" and so that the people could "know about government policy and action". 'UMNO's Struggle Founded on Honesty', Presidential Address at 30th UMNO General Assembly on 6.7.79, cited in Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.107; Refer also: 'If UMNO's Influence is Lost', UMNO Divisional Meeting in Johore on 19.5.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.120-121; 'UMNO Integrity', Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.138-139.

[123]'UMNO Assembly', 6.7.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.112.

[124]Das, *FEER*, (26.1.79), p.21.

[125]'Highlight the Benefits Each Community is Enjoying', at Opening of 5th General Assembly of the Gerakan Party in K.L. on 26.5.79; Being able to criticise ministers within UMNO was "true democracy". 'UMNO Integrity Remains Intact', UMNO General Assembly, 15.9.78, p.137. (Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.119-120)

[126]'Varsity Intake: Fair Share for all Promise', MIC Assembly in Klang on 30.6.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.172.

with the real business of government.[127] In implementing the NEP with its bias in favour of Malays, such difficulties would have been not inconsiderable. He saw the NEP as a necessary but short-term social corrective. Once all races were on an equal footing, it seems that he held out a utopian hope for a "new system" - a non-communal multiracial Malaysia.[128] Racial diversity was a blessing and a challenge for which young leaders had to be prepared.

> I am concerned with getting our people together, united. That is why my high priority is to create this leadership, with good leaders for the future drawn from all the races.[129]

His priority was "to engrave the correct attitude on these leaders".[130] He saw "education, including political education ... [as helping] people eventually to learn to thrash out mutual problems without getting emotional as they do now".[131] Such concerns probably came out of an awareness that younger "Malay ultras" within UMNO were straining at the leash to take over from the "old guard". Two such men who were to get the nod for senior Cabinet posts were Dr Mahathir and Musa Hitam. They were promoted to Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister, respectively. Like Tun Razak, he encouraged the up-and-coming young technocrats and innovators.[132] Amongst

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[127]UMNO Assembly, 6.7.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.108.

[128]Both he and his father withdrew from UMNO when it would not open itself to all races. Thus, he was zealous in advancing Malays perhaps so that Malaysia would one day be able to move on from its communal divisions. Refer comments about being ready to "accept a new system" in: 'Gerakan Assembly, 26.5.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.120.

[129]Das, *FEER*, (26.1.79), p.19.

[130]K. Das, 'The Inner Thoughts of Hussein Onn', *FEER*, (26.1.79), p.19.

[131]Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.212.

[132]Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.37-43; Refer also 'An Appeal to Students in the U.S.', in Los Angeles on 25.9.78, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.150.

them was his nephew Datuk Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, who at 25 was the youngest in Malaysia's political history to hold a ministerial office.[133] A number of non-Malays were also to receive promotions in the civil service.[134]

He was concerned to inculcate moral values and a "spirit of discipline" in the younger generation.[135] Government employees at all levels were to have the qualities of "trustworthiness, honesty and integrity".[136] Malaysia needed a new breed of officers, working as a team and skilled in management techniques and scientific disciplines.[137] He envisioned that Malaysia, like Japan, would develop its own management culture. Malaysian's inventiveness, flexibility, and adaptability would help them in developing a distinctively Malaysian culture. Inappropriate western practices which were developed in a western setting were to be discarded.[138] Malaysia needed its own history and culture - its own character.[139]

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[133]He was appointed Deputy Minister of Energy, Telecommunications and Posts. He is the Minister for Education in the present Mahathir administration. Another to get her start was Datin Rafidah binti Abdul Aziz. Datuk Hussein appointed her as Deputy Minister of Finance. She is presently Malaysia's Trade Minister. Refer Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.42-43.

[134]Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p45.

[135]'UMNO Assembly', 6.7.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.113.

[136]'UMNO's Struggle Founded on Honesty', Presidential Address at 30th UMNO General Assembly on 6.7.79, cited in Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.111-112.

[137]'The Need for Compromise, Balance and Fair Play', Malaysian Institute of Management dinner on 24.3.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.125-128

[138]'UMNO Assembly', 6.7.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.110.

[139]'A Multi-Racial Society Can Live and Prosper', National Day Broadcast on 31.8.78, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.143. (Note the National Day celebrations theme *Kebudayaan Sendi Perpaduan* (Culture is the Cornerstone of Unity)); 'Study our Culture Call by Hussein', *Sunday Star*,

Malays were to be self-reliant and not dependent on the government, disciplined, hard-working, cooperating (*gotong-royong*), and saving, so as to be able to invest.[140] Malaysians were to have a spirit of progress and sense of duty to their nation. He himself modelled grit, determination, integrity, faithfulness to his word, humility and selfless service to his nation and its peoples.[141]

Malaysia was to stand tall in the international scene with a foreign policy based on mutual respect, neutrality, equidistance, non-interference, peaceful coexistence, economic interdependence and real partnership.[142] South Korea, he suggested, had much to offer the developing world in terms of technical expertise. It had managed to progress whilst maintaining its cultural values.[143] He criticised "developed world protectionism" and "interference" and advocated a new international economic order.[144] Much of this thinking also

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12.10.75, p.27. (Hussein was speaking as President of the Malaysian Historical Society)

[140]'UMNO Assembly', 6.7.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.111; 'Stand On Your Own Feet', at the launching of *Kewangan Usaha Bersatu* on 13.5.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.121-123.

[141]The motto on his office wall was "My job and your job is to serve the country." Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.55; He also said: "I will always be guided by God's commandments, the dictates of reason, and the interests of the nation." Outlining the *Barisan Nasional*'s Election Manifesto on 1.7.78, Morais, p.152; Sabda S., *Kaleidoskop Hussein Onn*, pp.36,75.

[142]'Basic Human Needs are Basic Human Rights', Maiden speech at 26th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London 8-15.6.77, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.202-204.

[143]'The Region of the Future', Speech at reception in the Presidential Palace in Seoul on 18.7.79, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.175-176.

[144]'Need for Compromise', 24.3.79, p.126; Maiden Address at the UN General Assembly in New York on 30.9.77, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.197-198; 'Basic Human Needs', 8-15.6.77, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.201.

seems to resonate with that expressed in the 1980s and 1990s by Dr Mahathir.

Ideologically, he stood on similar ground to that of his predecessors - a democrat, concerned for the well-being of (Malays and) Malaysians. He advocated reason, the priority of the collective over the individual,[145] progress, and rigorously supported the rule of law and standards of justice irrespective of rank or status.

He was a committed Muslim who sought to live (and encourage others to live) according to the principles of the Quran; who actively furthered Islamic education; and, who sought to build relations within the international Islamic community.[146] He stood within the moderate Islamic stream (resisting 'deviant' teachings)[147] and seeking to serve his fellow man.
He had elite *kerajaan* connections and shared their outlook. The Tunku once complimented him as demonstrating refined Malay manners, demeanour, thoughtfulness and cultural polish.[148] It was this outlook that gave his benevolent leadership a central role in serving and guiding its loyal *rakyat*.

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[145]Speech at opening of the new Financial Complex, Jalan Raja Chulan, K.L., 2.7.79, *Kaleidoskop*, p.103.
[146]Speech at the opening of the National Quran Reading Competition, 14.9.76, opening of National Quran Reading Competition, 20.8.78; cited in Sabda S., *Kaleidoskop Hussein Onn*, (Kuala Lumpur: Knight Publisher, 1981), p.89,92.
[147]'Muslims Warned, No Fanatacism', UMNO General Assembly, 5.9.78, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, pp.164-165; 'The Need to Maintain Religious Freedom', UMNO General Assembly, 5.9.78, Morais, *Hussein Onn*, p.164.
[148]Tunku, *As a Matter of Interest*, p.192 ('Manners Maketh Man', 22.10.79)

5.4 Dr Mahathir shapes a new Malay for a Developed Malaysia

Whilst his predecessors, according to Khoo Boo Teik, "found it politic to speak in terms of leading the Malays when in fact ... [it was] more accurate to say that they found it habitual to rule over the (Malay) masses, only Mahathir, a plebian of anti-patrician bent, staked his claim to Malay support on the basis of his total identification and empathy with the Malay masses".[149] He claimed to know the Malays and what was best for them. As their leader he sought to "teach by precept and ... example"[150] and shape in Malays the values and attitudes necessary for their advancement and success.

Dr Mahathir was neither a blueblood, English-educated, a laywer nor a golfer. He was of a younger, locally-educated generation - impatient with the establishment and the *status quo*. Following the racial riots in 1969, he was expelled from UMNO for his criticism of Tunku Abdul Rahman. The Tunku was also to ban Mahathir's controversial treatise, 'The Malay Dilemma', which gives insight into his thinking and political motivation.

As has been characteristic of his approach to political problem solving during his career, the 'good doctor' gave in this book a "therapeutic diagnosis" of the Malay "ailment" and resulting frustrations, which led to the May 13 running *amok*.

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[149]Khoo Boo Teik, *Paradoxes of Mahathirism: An Intellectual Biography of Mahathir Mohamad*, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.300.
[150]Khoo Boo Teik, *Paradoxes*, p.276.

"Hereditary and environmental" factors, he indicated, had contributed to Malay economic backwardness. As "racial equality is a prerequisite of ... national unity", it was imperative that government embark on an ambitious social engineering program to correct the injustices; a process of "conscious accomodation" or "constructive protection" to allow Malays to take their place amongst the other peoples within Malaysia.[151]

He had examined the Malay condition and could show the way forward. The lassitude and indignities of inferiority, the legacies of a colonial past, the fatalistic and conservative attitudes standing in the way of progress were to be cast aside. He proposed a revolution led from above - a radical change in Malay character, thinking, value system, social code and situation through educational, economic, employment and town planning policy.[152] Malays were to be relocated (urbanised) and remade through changes implemented by the "political rajas of today". As the *rakyat* of old had followed their rajas in becoming first Hindus and then Muslims, a modern, dynamic and educated elite, through correct interpretation and application of Islamic doctrine, would lead the way into the 21st century.[153]

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[151]Mahathir, *Malay Dilemma*, pp.31,62,67; He defined racial equality as existing only "when each race not only stands equal before the law, but also when each race is represented in every strata of society, in every field of work, in proportion more or less to their percentage in the population" (p.79).

[152]This was to be no anarchial revolution but one which was "carefully planned" and "enlightened", working within established institutions and circumstances, thoroughly implemented to bring about targetted but drastic change. (Mahathir, *Malay Dilemma*, pp.103-114)

[153]Mahathir, *Malay Dilemma*, pp.104-5,173.

After becoming Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir demonstrated that he was determined to lead by example. Civil servants were to be punctual, accountable and service-oriented. All had to clock-in and wear name tags - the latter directive was to include the Prime Minister. The 2M (Mahathir-Musa) administration projected itself as being liberal, no-nonsense, dynamic, forthright and hard-working.

The NEP state was to be disciplined by Dr Mahathir. Unprofitable government corporations were closed down or privatised. Malays were to be weaned from government dependence.[154] A procession of slogans encapsulated the new policy directions and administrative emphases - "Leadership by Example", *Bersih, Cekapdan Amanah* (Clean, Efficient and Trustworthy Government), *Penerapan nilai-nilai Islam* (Assimilation of Islamic values).

Mahathir believed that "the state of a society is determined by its system of values". It was "those with the training and authority in a society ... [who] must play significant roles in selecting and shaping new values and substituting these for the old." The problem was that "Malay values ... [had been] changing without systemic study and without guidance."[155] Under his tutelage this was to change. Neither Rajas nor the *ulama* were to be the intellectual vanguard. It was to be a scientifically-trained political/intellectual elite. Political

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[154]This refers to a Malay dependence on the government for jobs, contracts, financial assistance, etc.
[155]Mahathir, *The Challenge*, p.103.

legitimacy was to be predicated not on heredity, spiritual power, or religious qualification, but on demonstrated intellectual achievement - "those with training and authority".

Thus, according to his somewhat contradictory Social Darwinism, Malays, by readjustment of their values, were to be 'assisted' up the survival-of-the-fittest ladder. This was to include a re-orientation in how Malays perceived themselves. Towards the end of 1981, he announced a "Buy British Last" policy and, then soon after, a "Look East" policy. The *murid* (pupil) had become disenchanted with his *guru* and it was time to look elsewhere.[156]

No longer was Malaysia to be the inferior partner in relations with its former colonial power. Britain must now do business on Malaysia's terms with Malaysia as an equal partner. This move stimulated a new sense of Malay dignity, self-worth and a discarding of the past inferiority and resignation towards the *status quo*. Malaysia must no longer be a victim of more dominant nations' economic and cultural colonialism.

Not only values but knowledge, organisation, and discipline were to be important in the industrialised society Mahathir envisaged. Thus, Malaysians had to be "instructed" to emulate the achievements of Japan and South Korea, who had

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[156]Khoo Boo Teik, *Paradoxes*, p.65; Britain had seemed to give scant regard to its former colony. The British government's decision to suddenly raise fees for overseas students in the UK alienated Malaysian sentiments. Britain had also attempted to stall *bumiputra*-controlled Permodalan Nasional's bid to take over Guthrie. (Chung, *Mahathir Administration*, p.12)

successfully modernised by absorbing Western technology and management techniques, whilst maintaining their cultural integrity. Malaysians were to emulate their diligence, work ethic, productivity, attention to detail, loyalty and commitment to the common good. A "Malaysia Inc." would be fashioned after the Japanese model,[157] as would in-house unions and Japanese-style corporate arrangements. Joint-ventures, cooperation on "think-big" projects, technical assistance and capital were to be sought.

However, the rapid changes met with some resistance from within his own ranks. As a direct consequence of the NEP economic and educational policies put in place in 1970, Malays were now better educated and more involved in the commercial sector. Many had become involved politically for politics was seen as an avenue to power and wealth. For some of these people Mahathir was going too far too fast. He was criticised for not having properly explained his policies and for being autocratic. In addition, a series of corporate and financial misadventures in the 1980's threatened to undermine his government's credibility.[158]

The new professional elites were to present a further challenge of a different nature. Many of them had been 'islamicised'

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[157]"The Malaysia Incorporated concept means that Malaysia should be viewed as a company where the government and the private sector are both owners and workers in this company." Mahathir, 'New Government Policies', translation of a memorandum by the Prime Minister to senior government officials dated 28.6.83, in Jomo (ed.), Mahathir's Economic Policies, (Kuala Lumpur: INSAN, 1988), pp.1-2.

[158]This included the BMF scandal and the government's attempt to prop up the tin price in the world market.

during student days at local and overseas campuses. Such new blood had also been injected into PAS leadership. Thus, the UMNO-led government found itself no longer focussed on protecting Malay interests *vis-à-vis* the other races, but on justifying its claim to represent Malay (Islamic) interests. In his second book, *The Challenge*, Dr Mahathir as a Malay nationalist gives his reading of Islam in response to those religiously-educated, who were wary of 'secular' education and 'secular' knowledge, even labelling UMNO as *kafir*. Mahathir is said to have recast the "Malay Dilemma ... as a Muslim dilemma" and reoriented Malay nationalism "from the Chinese inward to the Islamic world and outward onto the West".[159]

To overcome the Malay and Muslim dilemma, knowledge was to be valued and sought. The lesson of the West, according to Dr Mahathir, was that though 'indiscipline'[160] and lack of attention to moral values was causing its present decline, it had once been strong because it valued and mastered knowledge. Such knowledge had been the product of Islam's 'Golden Age'. Islam, however, made no distinction between 'religious' and 'secular' knowledge. Thus, Malays should pursue all knowledge that is "useful to mankind".[161] The lessons of history indicated that it was "paucity of knowledge" that had caused many nations to be colonised. Such a condition must not be allowed to be repeated.

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[159]Khoo Boo Teik, *Paradoxes*, pp.47-48.

[160]This is a word often used in the Malaysian context, for example: 'Najib: Problem of **indiscipline** among pupils under control', *NST*, (29.9.95), p.2.

[161]According to the Quran, knowledge was to be pursued "even to China". Thus, according to Mahathir, Muslims were to pursue all, not only religious, knowledge. (Mahathir, *The Challenge*, p.29)

How was this to be achieved? The good and useful aspects of foreign knowledge would be systematically selected by the Malaysian government. Afterall, the modernisation of Japan which took place during the Meiji period was the result of a "planned assimilation of foreign civilisation".[162] Also, education was to be provided which suited "the interests of society". A student must "accept the directive or at least the guidance or advice given by the leaders or planners of society" to decide educational direction - whether to enter a Science or Arts stream.[163]

Thus, Dr Mahathir, in acting out his conception of leadership, has continued to "forsee challenges, identify problems, supply ideas and present solutions".[164] In his centralised, leader-oriented democracy, 'discipline' and organisation are essential. "Discipline ... means limiting individual desires and interests to give priority to the interests of society ... the aim of limiting the interests of the individual is the preservation of the society".[165] The 'government' would be the arbiter of what classified as communal interests; acceptable interpretation of Islamic doctrine (in consultation with a cooperative *ulama*); knowledge; and, cultural values and norms.[166]

Sensitive to slight and condescension, Dr Mahathir has brought Malays, sometimes protestingly, out of the *kampung* and onto

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[162]Mahathir, *The Challenge*, p.55.
[163]Mahathir, *The Challenge*, p.40.
[164]Khoo Boo Teik, *Paradoxes*, p.272.
[165]Mahathir, *The Challenge*, p.137.
[166]Mahathir, *Malay Dilemma*, pp.90,100,142-143.

the international stage. Since his student days of diagnosing the Malay condition (writing his newspaper articles under the name of Che Det), and of tutoring his fellow Malay students to ensure their success, Dr Mahathir has continued to seek to uplift Malays.

With the realisation of his Vision 2020 goals the final end is in sight - a generation of Malays, who through hard work, mastery of knowledge and sophisticated technology, and adoption of appropriate values and Islamic principles, have made it to the top. Such an achievement would, of course, not be possible without the input and direction of their enlightened and active, pedagogic leadership.

5.5 Anwar Ibrahim advocates Change in accordance with Islam

As heir apparent to the office of Prime Minister, Anwar also embodies an intellectual -elite, political leadership committed to shaping his nation's political discourse and moulding its citizens. Leaders, he says, should "teach and guide the younger ... men and women ... to realise the principle of upholding character and noble eastern cultural values".[167] His lesson text contains much the same elements as those of his predecessors,[168] yet his theme has a new emphasis. His predecessors spoke of Malay nationalism in the context of

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[167]'Be Prepared to Face Bigger Challenge', *NST*, (24.11.95), p.13 (Speech at the joint opening of UMNO Youth and Wanita assemblies).

[168]Amongst his themes have been Malay advancement; uplifting the rural poor; youth causes; inculcating values appropriate to a "disciplined" society; establishing a common Malaysian culture and identity.

Islam. Mahathir is said to have "re-oriented" Malay nationalism towards Islam.[169] However, Anwar is seeking to redefine Malay nationalism in terms of Islam. (*Bangsa Melayu* (Malay race) has become *umat Melayu* (the Malay community of believers, i.e. Muslims).)[170]

His lifelong aim is reputed to be "to learn to apply Islamic principles to the solution of the nation's political and social problems".[171] For him Islam is a "way of life" not a "religion of rituals" - a transforming, comprehensive worldview resulting in a social system with high moral values guaranteeing peace, harmony and equality.[172] Thus, nationalism is not to be narrow and chauvenistic. Rather it is to respect the principles of justice, humanitarianism and the universalism of Islam.[173] The UMNO struggle, he says, "breathes the spirit of Islam".[174]

However, he rejects Islamic extremism and fanaticism, being concerned for the success of the "main root of Islam". He suggests that Muslims must act as *pendetewah* (teachers), not as judges, so that through greater understanding of Islam non-Malays will come to see that they, too, agree with most of Islam's moral values and codified laws.[175] He indicates that he

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[169]Khoo Boo Teik, *Paradoxes*, pp.47-48.

[170]*'Krisis Identiti Umat Melayu'*, compiled from speeches given at the Second Malay Intellectuals Congress in 1989, cited in Anwar Ibrahim, *Menengani Perubahan*, pp.119-128.

[171]Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, p.1.

[172]Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, pp.2,8.

[173]*'Generasi Penggerak Zaman'*, a compilation of four speeches - two as UMNO Youth Leader in 1983 and 1984 and two as ABIM President in 1980 & 1981, cited in Anwar Ibrahim, *Menangani Perubahan*, (Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing Sdn. Bhd., 1989), pp.45-46

[174]'Be Prepared', *NST*, (24.11.95), p.13.

[175]Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, pp.8,12.

has never advocated an Islamic state or order for multiracial Malaysia.[176] However, he is advocating change[177] in accordance with Islam.

Early Islam produced an outpouring of cultural and scientific achievements and is not inflexible, intolerant or anti-development. Development and intellectual advancement must have a moral (Islamic) basis (rather than the Western, humanistic outlook which has dominated through recent centuries).[178] He is suggesting that 'modernity' has collapsed as the dominant perspective - a 'modernity' which accomodates change because "things change". Rather, it is for the *ummah* "to "change things" only in the realms that are absent of or contrary to the norms and ilan of Islam within a consensus of values".[179] He is not rejecting 'modernity' *per se*[180], simply discarding its old ideological basis and relocating it within an Islamic discourse.

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[176]Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, p.33.

[177]That he has assumed the mantle of a leader so as to bring about change is evident from the title of his book (a collection of his speeches) published in 1989. On the front cover stand the words "ANWAR IBRAHIM Menangani Perubahan" (Anwar Ibrahim handles change).

[178]Refer to his speech closing the International Conference on Islam and Technology, 5.6.83, reported in Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, pp.73-76.

[179]Anwar Ibrahim, 'Initiating Change', *NST*, 11.10.87, p.16 (Speech at International Islamic Conference).

[180]He advocates the use of the latest technology, for example his recommendation that the *Universiti Pertanian Malaysia* set up an Agricultural Seminar Centre for the demonstration to farmers of the latest advances in agriculture. (Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, p.39); He also advocated the use of modern technology in the propagation of Islam. ("Key to the Propagation of Islam", 7.3.83, cited in Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, pp.95-96)

He has sought not only to preach but to live out his world-view. As a student he was at the forefront of Islam revivalism in Malaysia. Whilst studying at the University of Malaya, he served as President of the Malay Language Society and the National Union of Malaysian Muslim Students. He was to help found ABIM[181], later becoming its President, and *Yayasan Anda Akademik*, which aimed to ameliorate the Malay student drop-out problem.[182] This reflects his longstanding interest in education. He took an early interest in religious education in Malaysia recommending government coordination of religious schools, curriculum and teacher training. As Education Minister he oversaw the defining of a National Education Philosophy and its implementation.

As Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department he was associated with improvements to the Pilgrims' Fund and Management Board, the establishment of an Islamic Bank (which he had long advocated), and the laying of the foundations for an International Islamic University. He is recognised at home and abroad as an authority on Islam and has represented Malaysia in UN and international forums on youth and Islamic matters.

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[181]ABIM (*Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* - Muslim Islamic Youth Movement) was established 6.8.71 "to provide a platform for graduating students to continue their Islamic mission ... to generate an Islamic movement as the path to Islamic revival in Malaysia'. Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, p.2.

[182]Anwar and five other young University Graduates set up this school in Kampung Baru and later at Pantai Baru (in Kuala Lumpur) serving as teachers on meagre salaries. Islamic studies are promoted and English taught as a compulsory subject in recognition of its utility as an international language. Morais, *Anwar Ibrahim*, pp.3-4.

In advancing the Islamic cause in plural Malaysia, he has advocated searching for common values - values which all communal groups would uphold. He is widely read on other cultures. He advocates the introspective examination of the "thoughts and practices" of one's own culture and the discarding of that which is unhelpful. Religion based on "the good book" is central to law and tradition. "What actually determines the continued prosperity of any culture is its ability to adapt to the principles promoted by religion."[183] He advocates "social responsibility", "social justice", a democracy which "depends on discipline and moral principles", "rational and analytic thinking". He advocates a "mental revolution" as a prerequisite in shaping a just, consensual, and benevolent society. Our principle of consensus, he says, is based on "the words of Allah, the Prophet, our heritage and common agreement".[184]

The young in his society are to have "high morals and character", to know their roots, and to generate new internal strengths through knowledge of their culture.[185] Knowledge is to be valued and strenuously sought after. ('Cultural' knowledge allowed even small nations in the past to influence larger or more militarily-powerful nations.)[186] He suggests

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[183] 'Be Prepared', *NST*, (24.11.95), p.12.

[184] 'Be Prepared', *NST*, (24.11.95), p.13.

[185] 'Be Prepared', *NST*, (24.11.95), pp.12-13; '*Bentuk generasi berwawasan*: *Anwar*', *Berita Harian*, (17.5.95), pp.1-2 (Speech given launching *Hari Guru Peringkat Kebangsaan* 1995).

[186] Anwar indicates that the issue of scholarship (*keilmuan*) is one very close to his heart and that he has stressed it from the time he was active in the youth and student movements. (p.x) 'Budaya Ilmu' in Anwar Ibrahim, *Menangani Perubahan*, pp.76-87 (a compilation of speeches given on Teachers Day (*Hari Guru*) 1986, at the *Yayasan*

wide and critical reading - the inculcation of a reading culture. He speaks idealistically of an 'Asian renaissance'[187], suggesting that "the Asian mind has finally free from the [Western] intellectual morass. ... We are at the threshold of a new Asian consciousness"[188]; a new social order, which, for Malaysia, is one atttained at the direction of a transforming, intellectual leadership[189] - a leadership, which seeks wisdom wherever it may be found but primarily by viewing "the world through the pages of the Koran".[190]

Penataran Ilmu 1987 and the *Pelancaran Penulisan Buku Pengajian Tinggi* in 1988)

[187]'Asia's New Civility', *FEER*, (6.10.94), p.34 (Speech delivered in Bangkok to Institute of Policy Research for Development); 'Time for Japan to take Moral Stand', *NST*, (3.9.94), p.14 (Speech given at the forum on 'Japan and Southeast Asia in the 21st century' in Tokyo on 2.9.94).

[188]Speech given at the Opening of the International Seminar on Islam and Conficianism: A Civilisational Dialogue - Anwar Ibrahim, 'Towards Global Peace, Understanding', *NST*, (14.3.95), p.14.

[189]'Masa Depan dan Kesinambungan Sejarah', a compilation of two speeches given at the Malaysian History Association Conference in 1988 & 1989, cited in Anwar Ibrahim, *Menangani Perubahan*, p.143.

[190]S. Boseley, 'Behind the Veil of Student Activists', *The Canberra Times*, (15.5.86), p.6.

5.2 Individual Leaders and Their Influence

As was the case with the Rajas and Sultans of old, Malaysian Prime Ministers seem to have been larger-than-life figures having an inordinate influence on their nation's direction and thinking. They have been out in front supplying the vision and ideas, that will shape their nation after the mould they envisage. As leaders they have sought to model and teach the values they're recommending.[191] Their political legitimacy seems to rest on their 'giftedness' (some combination of charisma, character qualities, intellectual ability, vision), and their ability to gather their societies around themselves.

Under colonialism the economic, political, administrative, and educational functions were largely separated from the domain of the Sultans and their responsibility assumed by the public administrators of 'secularised' state. However, as became apparent following independence, the pull of a powerful, personalised leader figure has remained strong. Additionally, the emotional imperative of needing to secure Malay predominance in a plural society has allowed Malay leaders to re-accumulate to themselves the necessary levers of power to assume control over the state and its institutions. A modern, educated, and more recently non-royal elite have, in fact, with

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[191] Note that those in authority at all levels of Malaysian society are encouraged to model and teach. For example in a recent Malaysian Civil Service manual: "Senior Government officers must set good examples though their personal deeds nd actions. ... They should act as teachers, coach, mentors and counsellors. Through this strategy, the core values will be easily adopted by the Civil Service employees." (Tan Sri Dato' Seri Ahmad Sarji bin Abdul Hamid (Chief Secretary to the Government), *The Civil Service of Malaysia: A Paradigm Shift (Improvements and Development in the Civil Service of Malaysia 1993)*, (Kuala Lumpur: Government of Malaysia, 1994), p.832)

colonial assistance effected a coup largely ursurping the role formerly played by the Sultans and Rajas of old.

The Sultans remain but fulfil roles now defined by the 'state' and its leaders. The people still have the power and "heavy responsibility" to choose their leaders and to call them to account.[192] However, leaders are able to guide the peoples' thinking and choices and structure the arenas and agendas of debate. Once 'chosen' there is the expectation that the leader will not be openly challenged, but that issues will be pursued via the "proper channels".[193] Malaysia's 'benevolent' leaders, by virtue of their position, know more than their opposition or public and, thus, command trust and support.

It must be added that political leaders play a central role in most countries today. To what extent this is the result of the immediacy of modern electronic media should perhaps receive further reflection. Television cameras are now recording 'every' event, word, expression, and nuance - live, as it happens - filtered through camera angles, camera distance, editting, dubbing, and so on. Today, the ordinary citizen can inform and be informed instanteously across the globe. In de-personalised city and work environments, in which people are increasingly living in smaller and more isolated 'family' units, political elections have to do with personality - with who will be the next leader - as much as considerations of ideology, party policy, or track record.

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[192]*New Straits Times*, 11.9.95, p.1.
[193]Refer Dr Mahathir's comments reported in *New Straits Times*, (11.9.95), p.1.

Electronics via the micro-chip has given bureaucracies the means for centralisation in diverse and populous societies. Technology is changing societies with implications for social science theory. Will democracies of the twentieth century resemble those of the 21st century? To what extent has the greater entry of political leaders into the homes and ken of their citizens changed their role and peoples' expectations of them?

This aside, other factors prevail in Malaysian politics to enhance the individual leader's role. Amongst them are leaders' ability to effectively 'control' the press, the civil service, religious authorities, and, to some extent, the private sector; and, the weakness of the checking and balancing mechanisms on political power, for example, the opposition, courts, institutions of parliamentary debate and the cabinet.

In referring to the cabinet, Dato' Abdullah Ahmad[194] pointed out that Tunku Abdul Rahman rarely consulted the cabinet on domestic or foreign policy issues. He might separately consult with individuals[195], but most often he presented a decision *fait accompli* for cabinet ratification. Writing in 1985, Dato' Abdullah Ahmad inferred that this "had become a peculiarly Malaysian pattern of Cabinet system of government".[196]

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[194]He was once regarded as a Malay "ultra" - colleague of Mahathir and Musa Hitam.
[195]Amongst Tunku's inner circle were Tun Razak and Tun Ismail.
[196]Abdullah Ahmad, *Tengku Abdul Rahman*, pp.1-2.

During Tun Razak's time as President of UMNO and as Prime Minister, he chaired all the major national committees and councils and had a say in all major appointments. It is said that "UMNO General Assembly meetings became timid 'briefing sessions' [with] major issues such as the 1972 coalition agreement with PAS presented to the Assembly as fait accompli".[197]

Dr Mahathir has continued to centralise party, federal and bureaucratic power.[198] His aim according to Bowring is "cohesion and executive efficiency through curtailing checks and balances, and eliminating unnecessary intermediaries ... [so as to create] a centralised state ... along East Asian lines".[199] Mahathir has also been accused of being autocratic and not consulting his colleagues. Musa Hitam's perceived exclusion from Mahathir's "kitchen cabinet" led to his resignation as deputy Prime Minister in 1986.[200]

When an individual monopolises decision-making his personality, idiosyncracies, strengths and weaknesses can become imprinted on his decisions. Dato' Abdullah Ahmad has pointed out it has the advantage over bureacratic systems of cutting through red tape and of flexibility. However, in dealings

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[197]S. Ahmad Hussein, *Islam and Politics in Malaysia, 1969-1982: The dynamics of competing traditions*, (Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1988), p.147

[198]Chandran Jeshurun, 'Malaysia: The Mahathir Supremacy and Vision 2020', *Southeast Asian Affairs 1993*, pp.203-223; Note especially comments about "a massive expansion of the Prime Minister's sphere of authority under Dr Mahathir", p.222.

[199]P. Bowring, 'Power to the Centre', *FEER*, (14.4.88), p.22.

[200]*Mahathir: Great Malayisan Hero*, p.239; Ranjit Gill, *Of Political Bondage*, p.124.

with leadership centering on an individual one must be far more cognisant of feelings, egos, and custom. Diplomacy and managing relationships becomes more important than consensus or policy negotiation. Perceived slights can affect international relations. Hasty on-the-run decision-making may lead to commitment to ill-thought-out projects from which there can be no retreat without major loss of face.

Theoretically, the Malaysian Prime Minister can be voted out of office. In practice this has never yet occurred. He is able to manipulate the election apparatus to his advantage. He prefers to stand down when it suits him, whilst the electorate seems to prefer the stability of the known. Dr Mahathir, himself, has suggested that democrary does "not mean that leaders should be replaced for the sake of change, especially if they are capable".[201] In fact, Malaysian democracy with its strong leadership is seen as more locally-relevant than the confrontational Western forms, which are seen to verge on anarchy.[202]

Malaysian general elections have not been the real arena of political contest. This has largely taken place within UMNO itself. A fierce competition and manouvering for position resulted in all the top jobs, including that of Prime Minister, being contested in the 1980s. Mahathir, though, has since moved to limit the contest. After UMNO's reconstitution as

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[201] K.P. Waran & J. Ritchie, 'Democracy not for change alone', *NST*, (11.9.95), p.1

[202] Note Dr Mahathir comments regarding the strengths of Malaysia's democratic system in his Speech at the BN Convention on 25.3.95, 'Cooperation vital for BN success', *NST*, (26.3.95), p.15.

UMNO (*Baru*), the revised party constitution has put more power into the hands of the President and the Supreme Council. Bowring comments:

> UMNO may never have been quite the populist, democratic grass-roots organisation of its own mythology ... semi-feudal in origin ... sustained partly by modern forms of partonage as well as by Malay gut appreciation of the necessity for political unity.[203]

Within the peculiarly-Malaysian flavoured political culture which Malaysian leaders have helped to shape since independence, both continuities and changes are evident. Leaders remain central to the political order.

Vigour and high education were necessary requisites for Sultanship and they remain important in political leaders today.[204] Traditional Malay society respects age and wisdom. The word *ketua* (leader or head of a group) suggests that age was a significant aspect of headship or leadership in Malay society (*tua* means old). In 1951 Tun Razak recommended that the older Tunku be invited to lead UMNO. He knew himself to be too young.[205] In today's youth culture, achievement has come to somewhat undermine the importance of the age criteria. Academic performance determines progress through educational ranks. Proven performance (and loyalty to

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[203]Bowring, *FEER*, (14.4.88), p.23.

[204]Note the Tunku's 'comforting' comments about Dr Mahathir's educational background when he first became Prime Minister. (Tunku, *Something to Remember*, p.30 ('The Sound and Safe Policy to Follow') He was of the view, commonly held in Malaysia, that leaders must be educated. "Our country is too precious to be entrusted to leaders with little or no education at all." (Tunku, *Something to Remember*, p.60 ('English - The Language of the World')) In his time maturity/age was also a prerequisite. However, this was to receive a lesser priority as the need for technocratic qualifications began to take precedence.

[205]Ranjit Gil, *Of Political Bondage*, p.26.

superiors and followers) in lower political ranks augers well for prospects in higher positions of office.

Heredity, though, still seems to be a factor. In the current crop of up-and-coming leaders are the current Education Minister (and former Defence Minister and UMNO Youth Leader) is Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak - eldest son of Malaysia's second Prime Minister. Hussein Onn's son, Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, is now also a Member of Parliament and one of the rising hopefuls.[206]

It seems Malays expect their leaders not to appear to grasp at power, to be self-effacing, humble, hard-working, strong, benevolent, true to their word, loyal, genteel in speech, decorous, diplomatic and able to save face[207], skilled in nuance and subtlety, willing to bend, pragmatic and down-to-earth, and upholding Islamic values and principles. Malays seem to place societal well-being above that of the individual, for societal well-being will flow over to the individual. This is in stark contrast to many Western nations where individuality emerges standing apart from and in competition with others and, thus, must be guarded by legislated rights.[208]

For Malays conformity to norms and emulation of models rather than departures from them is preferred. A consensual

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206'Great Expectations: The Rise and Rise of the "Third Wave" of Leaders', *Asiaweek*, (30.6.95), p.34.
207When removing people from office, they are usually given a face-saving option.
208For an Australian perspective, refer: Brett, *Menzies*, pp.70-71.

approach is preferred to confrontation.[209] A dissident individual can be regarded as a disloyal, troublesome rebel threatening the equanimity of all. The need to have strong leadership is often justified so as to be able to control disruptive elements which might lead to disruption of social harmony.

Malays do not take kindly to others criticising their leaders. They have sympathy for the underdog (a category in which they have placed themselves) and, thus, approve of Mahathir's championing of the cause of the Third World, the non-aligned, and the South. Political leaders have rallied support by alluding to Malaysia's 'continuing struggle' against internal enemies such as poverty and against external enemies, into which category 'the West' and 'the North' conveniently fit.

'The West' has long been a preoccupation of Islam and its from an Islamic perspective that Malays view their world. Malays and their leaders are not rationalists to the point of denying revelation or intuition. Nor are they relativists appealing to sociologically-determined law. Divine standards define right and wrong. The Quran is central to 'truth' and shows the way to human happiness and progress.

Malays, however, retain much from the various other ideological influences which were pervasive in the past. This is reflected, for example, in their notions of leadership and loyal followership, societal hierarchy and politeness, and the

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[209]'Cooperation vital for BN success', *NST*, (26.3.95), p.15.

importance of the well-being of the collective. Malays are 'realists' and 'pragmaticians' and, in now keeping with Quranic injunction, would see themselves as continuing to seek after knowledge. However, knowledge is now to be sought, not only from without, but also from within, through local research and scientific endeavour.

Strong continuing cultural currents, communal realities, the impulse towards power (here understood in its western sense), and a limited experience of alternative political models have ensured the survival of a Malaysian polity with its *Raja* and his court as its centre. The nation's political discourse and pedagogy are moulded by that centre and directed towards the goal of a developed Malaysia. Malaysians have been engaged in a discourse of 'modernity', but they propose to approach modernity by means of a locally-grown discursive tradition.

6.0 CONCLUSION

As Malaysia has been directed by its leaders towards achieving developed-nation status, its people have found a new self-confidence. Their leaders have also found a useful rhetoric and common goal, on which to focus national effort and attention. Malaysian leaders remain central in the scheme of things.[210] Rather than choosing convergence towards the western norms of their colonial surrogate, Malaysian leaders have chosen to cut the apron strings and lead Malaysia down its own path.

Western leaders will need to be increasingly cognisant and responsive to the implications of Malaysia's (and Asia's) claim of distinctiveness. Dr Mahathir's assertion that Australia is not sufficiently 'Asian' for participation in an East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC)[211], his distaste for Western media interference, his refusal to allow the U.S. and others to impose their standards and values on his country by linking trade with human rights and environmental issues, and his call for a

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[210]Mahathir is an advocate of a government-directed democracy. Note his comments: "The days of the demigod leader are largely over. In Southeast Asia where change has been effectively managed, much has been taken stock of. The obvious mistakes of the West will not be repeated. The **relevance of Government** and **a focussed national purpose through a supportive society** remains the prerequisite for development. ... **the Malaysian Government has been the major actor** in the exercise to restructure society ..." (emphasis mine) In other words, it is the role of the government and its leaders to direct the national effort. ('Give developing world rightful place', Speech by Dr Mahathir at the UN World Summit for Social Development at Copenhagen on 11.3.95 in *NST*, (13.3.95), p.14)

[211]Refer to article: 'Australia must be 'Asian culturally' to join EAEC', *NST*, (18.5.95), p.2. (Written whilst Dr Mahathir was on a five-day trip to Japan in May 1995. It was a clarification of statements reported in an article written by *The Australian* foreign editor, Greg Sheridan, following an interview Sheridan had with Dr Mahathir. Refer: G. Sheridan, 'Mahathir backflip on our Asian Role', *The Australian*, (15.5.95), pp.1-2)