THE DEMOCRATIC ACTION PARTY IN POST-1969 MALAYSIAN POLITICS: THE STRATEGY OF A DETERMINED OPPOSITION

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my own work and all the sources used in its composition have been acknowledged.

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In writing this thesis, my purpose is to show how the Democratic Action Party (D.A.P.), a political party based on ideology and non-communal in approach, pursues its constitutional struggle in an environment of communal politics with all its inherent and contrived difficulties, the most serious being racial polarization. Although what I have written may appear partisan to the "seasoned" and experienced observer of contemporary Malaysian politics, my intention nevertheless, is to assess and gauge the perception the average Malaysian Chinese, particularly the younger generation, has on the D.A.P. vis-a-vis the National Front (N.F.) government in post-1969 Malaysian politics. My only disappointment is the inability to contact certain D.A.P. leaders, who, for reasons best known to themselves, have not even once replied to the repeated requests by my supervisor and I for primary material and other relevant information about the party which would improve the quality of my thesis. Guarantees by us that whatever information received would be used strictly and solely for academic purposes were also unheeded.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A.B.I.M.	Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (Malaysian Islamic Youth Council)
A.C.C.C.I.	Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce & Industry
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BERJAYA	Bersatu Rakyat Jelata Sabah (Sabah People's Union)
C.E.C.	Central Executive Committee
C.U.F.	Communist United Front
C.W.C.	Central Working Committee
D.A.P.	Democratic Action Party
D.B.P.	Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Language and Literature Agency)
E.S.R.	Essential Securities Regulations
FELDA	Federal Land Development Authority
F.I.D.A.	Federal Industrial Development Authority
G.R.M.	Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (Malaysian People's Movement)
H.S.C.	Higher School Certificate
I.C.A.	Industrial Co-ordination Act
I.G.P.	Inspector-General of Police
I.M.P.	Independence of Malaya Party
I.S.A.	Internal Security Act
K.I.T.A.	Kesatuan Insaf Tanah Air (National Consciousness Party)
L.P.M.	Labour Party of Malaya
MARA	Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Council of Trust for Indigenous Peoples)
M.C.A.	Malayan Chinese Association
M.C.E.	Malaysian Certificate of Education
M.C.P.	Malayan Communist Party
M.I.C.	Malayan Indian Conggress
M.L.S.	Malay Language Society

M.P.	Member of Parliament
M.S.T.A.	Malay School Teachers' Association
M.T.U.C.	Malayan Trade Union Conggress
N.B.I.	National Bureau of Investigation
N.C.C.	National Consultative Council
N.E.P.	New Economic Policy
N.F.	National Front
N.G.C.	National Goodwill Council
N.O.C.	National Operations Council
P.A.P.	People's Action Party
P.A.S.	Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (Pan Malaysian Islamic Party)
PEKEMAS	Parti Keadilan Masyarakat (Social Justice Party)
PERKIM	Pertubohan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (Muslim Welfare Organization of Malaysia)
PERNAS	Perbadanan Nasional (National Corporation)
P.P.P.	People's Progressive Party
P.S.R.M.	Parti Sosialis Rakyat Malaysia (People's Socialist Party of Malaysia)
R.T.M.	Radio Television Malaysia
S.D.P.	Socialist Democratic Party
S.F.	Socialist Front
S.I.	Socialist International
S.M.P.	Second Malaysia Plan
S.N.A.P.	Sarawak National Party
S.P.M.	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (Malaysia Certificate of Education)
S.T.P.	Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan (Higher School Certificate)
S.U.P.P.	Sarawak United People's Party
T.A.R.C.	Tunku Abdul Rahman College

T.M.P.	Third Malaysia Plan
U.C.S.T.A.	United Chinese School Teachers' Association
U.D.A.	Urban Development Authority
U.D.P.	United Democratic Party
U.M.N.O	United Malays National Organization
U.M.S.U.	University of Malaya Students Union
U.S.N.O.	United Sabah National Organization
U.T.M.	University of Technology Malaysia

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The Democratic Action Party (D.A.P.) was registered as a political party in March 1966, some 7 months after the expulsion of Singapore from the Malaysian Federation in August 1965.[1] It was made up from the remnants of the People's Action Party (P.A.P.) in Malaya with Devan Nair as Secretary-General and Dr. Chen Man Hin as Chairman. Its main purpose was to carry on the "Malaysian Malaysia" struggle which the P.A.P. had left off in 1965 in the belief that the aspirations of large numbers of Malaysians of all races for political, social, cultural and economic equality did not disappear after the challenge from Singapore had ceased.[2] The D.A.P.'s registration was grudgingly allowed by the Alliance government after a considerable period of delay, and only after certain Alliance-dictated conditions through an amendment in the Societies Registration Act (1966) were fulfilled. Among these were the insistence that its original name of P.A.P. (Malaya) be changed and its distinction between cadre and ordinary members in its ranks be dropped. These conditions reflected the attitude of the Alliance to prevent the repetition of the old quarrel between the P.A.P. and itself which led to the break with Singapore. They were premised on the fact that the Alliance regarded the D.A.P. as the P.A.P.'s extension in Malaysia, the manifestations of which were the similarity in objectives between the two parties and the leadership of Devan Nair, a prominent Singaporean with close links to the P.A.P. leadership although he was born in

1. For full details of the D.A.P.'s formation and registration, see Michael Ong, The D.A.P.: Case for a Malaysian Malaysia Re-stated, M.A. Thesis, La Trobe University, 1969, Ch. II.

2. See Central Executive Committee (C.E.C.) Report presented by Dr. Chen Man Hin, Chairman, to the First Conference of the D.A.P. held at Setapak, Kuala Lumpur, on 17th March 1968, Who Lives if Malaysia Dies? D.A.P.'s Case for a Multi-racial Society, D.A.P., Petaling Jaya, 1969, pp. 53-63.

Malaysia. By insisting on compliance to these conditions, the Alliance intended to ensure that the D.A.P. would find it extremely difficult to become the threat the P.A.P. had been in Malaysia. The decision of the Alliance to allow the D.A.P. to function as a political party was due to the fact that it had become stronger after the P.A.P. challenge. The Alliance felt that with the Societies Registration Act amended prior to the D.A.P.'s registration, it could control the activities of the D.A.P. in accordance to the law without appearing to be too dictatorial. Moreover it was keen to show that it staunchly upheld democracy in the country. This was necessary in view of the fact that the D.A.P. had won a state by-election in Rahang, Negri Sembilan, in December 1965 with Dr. Chen contesting as an independent while the party was still awaiting registration.[3] Besides, the D.A.P. had complied with the Societies Registration Act(1966) stipulations to change its name and drop its cadre membership requirement.

Once it was registered, the D.A.P. was determined to show the Alliance that even without the P.A.P., it could still carry on the fight for a "Malaysian Malaysia". It contended that even if the P.A.P. had not entered Malaysia, Malaysians still would have fought for the same objectives. The D.A.P.'s contention was based on the conclusion of well-informed observers that from the time an independent Malaysia (then Malaya) was considered a reality, the future and success of such a nation must be based on multiracialism.[4] Previous attempts to build a united Malaysian(Malayan) nation

3. The result was as follows: Independent (D.A.P.) 3,576; Alliance 2,038; Socialist Front (S.F.) 1,231. Sunday Times, 12th December 1965.

4. See F.H.H.King, The New Malayan Nation, Institute of Pacific Affairs, New York, 1957, T.H. Silcock, Towards a Malayan Nation, Eastern University Press, Singapore, 1961 and W.L. Holland, Asian Nationalism and the West, MacMillan, New York, 1953.

along multi-racial principles by the Independence of Malaya Party (I.M.P.) under Dato' Onn and the P.A.P. under Lee Kuan Yew had failed because the cleavages (e.g. economic, political, linguistic, cultural and religious) between the Malays and the non-Malays were both numerous and deep. These failures had led to Dato' Onn's political demise and Singapore's expulsion from the Malaysian Federation. However, they did not appear to discourage the D.A.P. It fervently believed that a multi-racial Malaysia with equality for all races was possible and indeed the only alternative to chaos in the final analysis, provided a non-communal approach to nation-building was taken. Although such an approach was acknowledged as difficult by the D.A.P., it nevertheless charged that the Alliance with its brand of communal politics - dividing the people into "bumiputras"(i.e.Malays) and "non-bumiputras" (i.e.non-Malays) and openly discriminating in favour of the former - was deliberately preventing the development of a multi-racial nation. The D.A.P. held that the Alliance's approach to national unity based on Malay hegemony was impracticable in view of the nation's multi-racial demography in which no community by itself, formed an absolute majority. It also regarded the "quid pro quo" division of political and economic interests between the senior partners of the Alliance, the United Malays National Organisation (U.M.N.O.) and the Malayan Chinese Association (M.C.A.) as not representative of Malay and Chinese interests in general since only the Malay elite and the rich Chinese of both parties benefitted.[5] As the eagerly anticipated date of

5. The "quid pro quo" arrangement was a legacy of the British "divide and rule" colonial policy where the Malays under U.M.N.O. controlled political power and the Chinese, led by the M.C.A., were given free play in the economy. There was a gentleman's agreement, with Tunku Abdul Rahman,the former Prime Minister as arbiter, that each was not to encroach upon the other's sphere of influence. See R.K.Vasil, The Malayan General Election of 1969, Oxford in Asia Current Affairs, Oxford University Press, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, 1972, p.2. Tunku Abdul Rahman has always maintained that this was his formula for a "happy Malaysia" and warned of the dangers of a change in this arrangement. Alex Josey, Lee Kuan Yew, Donald Moore, Singapore, 1968, p. 103.

the 1969 general elections approached, the D.A.P. intensified its campaign for a "Malaysian Malaysia" in the belief that the Alliance,with its communal brand of politics, was actively working towards a Malay Malaysia.[6] In this, it went beyond the P.A.P.'s position in defining its own interpretation of "Malaysian Malaysia" in its Election Manifesto.[7] To the Chinese, the D.A.P.'s campaign appeared a panacea for all their grievances against the Alliance. But to the Malays, it was interpreted as a Chinese attempt, similar to Lee Kuan Yew's 1964-5 political challenge, to do away with their pre-eminent political position in the country. The D.A.P.'s campaign reflected the zeal of its leadership. Goh Hock Guan, who had taken over the position of Secretary-General from Devan Nair, and Lim Kit Siang, the Organising Secretary, were the main strategists of the campaign. They were then comparatively new to politics, raw and inexperienced by the standards of veteran politicians like Dr. Lim Chong Eu and Devan Nair, and ~~tend~~ tended to speak on fundamental issues like language, culture and education with a marked degree of frankness which was likely to provoke Malay anger.[8] Under these circumstances, they were regarded as reckless proteges of Lee Kuan Yew by the Alliance. Their style reflected the D.A.P.'s purpose to build a strong urban base first and to win the support of the Malays later from a position of strength.[9] However the May 1969 racial riots with their aftermath of National Operations Council (N.O.C.) rule and the subsequent 1971 Constitutional Amendments banning the public

6. For full details of the D.A.P.'s campaign, see R.K.Vasil(1972), op. cit., Ch. III and Chin Fook Kiong, An Analysis of the Democratic Action Party in the 1969 General Election, Graduation Exercise, University of Malaya. 1970.

7. For full details, see R.K.Vasil(1972), op. cit., pp. 30-3. Although the manifesto's objectives appeared multi-racial, they shrewdly articulated the aspirations of the non-Malays, especially in relation to language, culture, education and an end to Malay special privileges.

8. See Goh Cheng Teik, The May Thirteenth Incident and Democracy in Malaysia, Oxford in Asia Current Affairs, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, 1971, p. 24.

9. R.K.Vasil(1972), op. cit., p. 22.

discussion of "sensitive issues" made obsolete the D.A.P.'s pre-1969 strategy. Its leaders then decided to map out another strategy in the light of the changing political situation.

The aim of this dissertation is to examine and evaluate the post-1969 strategy of the D.A.P. and its underlying assumptions, and to analyze the problems and difficulties that the party encountered. Lim Kit Siang's determination and philosophy were the driving force behind this strategy.[10] He had assumed top position of the Secretary-General of the party following the resignation of Goh Hock Guan after the May riots. The D.A.P.'s post-1969 strategy involved selecting key issues which flowed from the government's policies. The next step was to incessantly harp on these issues to highlight whatever adverse effects they might have, while carefully avoid mentioning their intended advantages. Finally the D.A.P. would offer its own solutions, which ignoring all the constraints of a multi-racial society faced by the government, appeared to be very attractive to those affected. The party did not have to worry about the implementation of what may have been perceived by the government impracticable solutions, as it was not the government. Since the government's post-1969 policies, e.g. the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.) and the New Education Policy, worked towards the interests of the Malays, it was inevitable that the overwhelming majority of the issues that the D.A.P. stressed concerned the grievances of the non-Malays, particularly the Chinese. As these issues, e.g. National Language, special privileges,etc., were considered "sensitive" and could not be publicly discussed as a result of the Constitutional Amendments of 1971, the D.A.P. resorted to insinuations in an attempt to air them publicly, though not

10. For full details of Lim Kit Siang's philosophy, see Personality Profile on Lim Kit Siang, Malaysian Business, December 1979, pp. 26-31.

directly. This was to circumvent prosecution under the Seditions Act. However when the issues did not appear to be sensitive, e.g. the implementation of the N.E.P.'s objectives, the D.A.P. was more forthright in its criticisms, sometimes to the point of exaggeration. The D.A.P.'s post-1969 strategy did not significantly depart from its pre-1969 strategy. The abrasive and combative style, typical of Lim Kit Siang, was still present, the only difference being that sensitive issues were criticised indirectly through nuance. The government, apparently exasperated at what it considered to be the D.A.P.'s persistence to stir up non-Malay dissatisfaction in a subtle way and thus mar its new approach of accommodating and developmental politics, attempted to subvert the D.A.P. through prosecution of its leaders, undermining its morale and denying it access to the mass-media to defend itself. The government was concerned to prevent the Malays from joining the D.A.P. in significant numbers as it would compromise U.M.N.O.'s cardinal approach to politics, that is, the unity of all Malays and the political supremacy of U.M.N.O. Despite these difficulties and harrassment, the D.A.P. was determined to carry on with its new strategy and appeared willing to pay the heavy price of prosecution. This reflected its conviction that ultimately its ideology based on class and economics would be accepted by the majority of Malaysians once they realise the folly of racial politics as advocated by the government.

The crucial question which concerns everyone, most of all the D.A.P. and the government, is,"What are the possible effects of the D.A.P.'s strategy on race relations and national unity in Malaysia?" This question is important in the sense that since 1957, the year Malaysia (then Malaya) became independent, both the P.A.P./D.A.P. and the Alliance/National Front (N.F.) government acknowledged that national unity in the country had yet

to be achieved.[11] An understanding of the D.A.P.'s post-1969 strategy and all its implications would not be complete without an analysis of the events immediately following the riots in May 1969 which had a direct or indirect impact on the D.A.P.'s strategy. Among these, the important ones were the secret merger talks with the M.C.A. and the D.A.P. leadership struggle.

11. See interview with Lee Lam Thye regarding the D.A.P.'s charge of the non-attainment of national unity by the government, Malaysian Business, September 1978, pp.5-15.

CHAPTER II

(a) The D.A.P./M.C.A. Merger Talks

Between February and April 1971, the D.A.P. held talks on a possible merger with the M.C.A. The talks concerned a dissolution of the D.A.P. whereby its members would join the M.C.A. and other racial components of the Alliance as individual members. In return the D.A.P. was to participate in the government by having its leaders appointed to certain Ministerial and Deputy Ministerial posts as M.C.A. representatives. The talks broke down because the M.C.A. could not accept the D.A.P.'s condition that component parties of the Alliance dissolve themselves to form one multi-racial party with it. The talks were conducted in secrecy, but they were ~~accidentally~~ deliberately leaked out to the press some 3 months later in July 1971.

After some 18 months of emergency rule under the N.O.C., Parliament was reconvened in February 1971. Its first task was to pass the Constitutional Amendment Bill.[1] It became an offence to question "sensitive issues" like special privileges for Malays, the National Language, the status of the traditional rulers and citizenship. By an overwhelming majority of 126:17, the Bill was passed.[2] Thus the restoration of Parliamentary democracy brought about a truncated debating chamber where Members of Parliament (M.P.) could not speak freely on sensitive issues. Since these issues appeared central to the nation's problems, from either the Malay or non-Malay point of view, the ban imposed on their public discussion, in or out of Parliament, severely restricted the appeal of opposition parties

1. For details of this, see R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia, Federal Publications, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, 1978, pp. 94-99.

2. The debate on the Bill lasted a week with all the opposition parties, except the D.A.P. and the People's Progressive Party (P.P.P.), supporting the government. Straits Times, 4th March, 1971.

which had made proposals to solve such problems their platform in the elections. The D.A.P., which had capitalised most on these sensitive issues in the 1969 elections, was severely affected. Contrary to its expectations of playing a meaningful role as an aggressive and abrasive opposition party, it found that its pre-1969 style was restricted and much of its appeal lost. There was to be no return to the status quo ante where it could speak freely on sensitive issues. Hence the D.A.P. found that it became increasingly isolated from the mainstream of politics where the trend was towards some form of co-operation with the government. The resignations and defections of D.A.P. members and elected representatives which had begun after the riots (and which the D.A.P. had grounds to believe were induced by the government) continued with the ex-members usually maintaining that the party had no future in the country.[3] To further restrict the D.A.P., the government prosecuted some of its leaders. The M.P. for Kampar and Editor of the party's journal, "The Rocket", Fan Yew Teng, was charged with sedition in printing the speech of a D.A.P. leader in Penang in the December 1970 issue of the journal.[4] The speech to commemorate the release of Lim Kit Siang from detention after 18 months under the Internal Security Act (I.S.A.), allegedly criticised the government of favouritism towards the Malays. The D.A.P. regarded the sedition charge as an act of government

3. In December 1970, Lee Kuo Ming, a state committee member of the Johore D.A.P., maintained that the party had become racialistic and its policies were harmful to a multi-racial,democratic Malaysia. He defected to the Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (G.R.M.). For details, see Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, "Decline of the D.A.P.: The reasons why....", Straits Times, 11th July, 1972.

4. Fan was charged and convicted in 1971. He however appealed successfully on the grounds that the trial was a nullity with no preliminary inquiry. Fan was charged a second time with a preliminary inquiry conducted and convicted on 13th January 1975 on the same earlier charges. Fan's fine of $2,000 automatically disqualified him as a M.P. R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, op. cit., p. 237.

persecution to undermine its morale; Fan had been one of the party's most vociferous critics against the government during the 1969 general elections.

Meanwhile the M.C.A. was taking a serious look at reorganizing itself. Following its disastrous setback in the 1969 general elections, it had first opted out of the government, but later rejoined it.[5] The M.C.A.'s reorganization was prompted by Tun Ismail's speech which stressed strongly that U.M.N.O. would not work with the M.C.A. and the Malayan Indian Congg-ress (M.I.C.) if they continued to be "neither dead nor alive".[6] Although Tun Tan Siew Sin, the then M.C.A. President, initially had reacted angrily, the M.C.A. took Tun Ismail's advice seriously. The Chinese Unity Movement under the initiative of some young members headed by Alex Lee, son of for-mer Finance Minister, Tun H.S.Lee, was inaugurated in February 1971.[7] A

5. For full details, see Goh Cheng Teik, The May Thirteenth Incident and Democracy in Malaysia, Oxford in Asia Current Affairs, Oxford Univer-sity Press, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, 1971, p.28. The M.C.A. had decided to stay out of the government because it felt that it had lost the support of the Chinese as indicated by the results of the 1969 general elections. Later when the heat of the May 1969 racial riot subsided, it indicated its willingness to return to the cabinet at the persuasion of the Chinese Chambers of Commerce. See also R.S.Milne and D.K. Mauzy, op. cit., p. 175.

6. Straits Times, 18th January, 1971, Op.cit. Tun Ismail, a former Minister, had been re-called from retirement to strengthen the cabinet after the 1969 general elections. His speech seemed to hint to the M.C.A. and M.I.C. that they must drastically overhaul their entire organisations if they intended to continue as U.M.N.O.'s partners in the government. Tun Tan Siew Sin's angry reply was to show that the M.C.A.'s dilemma arose in trying to satisfy the legitimate demands of the Chinese which conflicted with the pro-Malay government policies it had to uphold as a partner of U.M.N.O. He maintained that the M.C.A. would only be too glad to stay out of the Alliance as it would face fewer constraints. Straits Times, 19th January, 1971.

7. Straits Times, 8th/9th February,1971, James Morgan, "Malaysia: Con-fessional Victory", Far Eastern Economic Review, 20th February, 1971 and Alex Lee, "Trends in Politics: A Malaysian-Chinese View", Patrick Low ed., Trends in Southeast Asia No.2., Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, July 1971, pp. 49-53; "Roundtable Discussion", op. cit., pp. 78-80.

committee of 10 was formed to work towards unity within the Chinese community as a pre-condition for national unity.[8] It was believed that if the Chinese were united as a community, they would be in a better position to bargain effectively with U.M.N.O. in the Alliance to safeguard Chinese interests. The Chinese Unity Movement, though officially not a component of the M.C.A., was nevertheless given the party's blessing.

It was in this atmosphere of the D.A.P.'s increasing isolation from the mainstream of political developments and the formation of the Chinese Unity Movement that the first moves to effect a possible merger between the two parties took place. Although reports conflict as to who actually initiated the talks, observers generally gave the benefit of the doubt to the D.A.P.[9] This was based on the fact that the leader of the Chinese Unity Movement, Alex Lee, was anxious to secure Chinese unity under whatever circumstances. Despite the D.A.P.'s multi-racial objectives, the Chinese Unity Movement nevertheless considered it as a Chinese party and its leaders, Chinese leaders. Believing that the D.A.P. which commanded substantial Chinese support (as indicated by the 1969 general elections results) would split the unity of the Chinese if it remained in the opposition, Alex Lee

8. The members of the committee were:
   Alex Lee, lawyer.
   Sim Mow Yu, President of the Chinese School Teachers Association.
   Dr. Too Chee Cheong.
   Dr. Chong Yew Chong.
   Lam Kuan Kit, lawyer.
   Koo Eng Kuang, businessman.
   Chow Seng Yau, prominent in the Merdeka University project.
   Choong Han Leong, businessman.
   Teh Wai Boon, rubber dealer.
   Wong Wei Keong.
   Patrick Low ed., op. cit., p. 99.

9. See James Morgan, "A Case for Legal Dissent", Far Eastern Economic Review, 31st July, 1971.

sent out feelers towards Lim Kit Siang in February 1971, requesting a meeting on 7th March, to discuss the possibility of a merger between the two parties in the interest of Chinese unity.[10] Alex Lee made it very clear that he was representing the M.C.A. and the venue of the meeting was to be the Royal Commonwealth Society in Kuala Lumpur where Lim Kit Siang would meet Tun Tan Siew Sin.[11] It was to be a secret meeting. Why the M.C.A. approached only Lim Kit Siang and not the other D.A.P. leaders was not clear. Perhaps the M.C.A. acknowledged Lim Kit Siang as the undisputed leader of the D.A.P. It could also be the M.C.A.'s intention to create dissension within the D.A.P. by singling out its leaders in an attempt to buy them over. What made Lim Kit Siang turn up at the appointed time without the knowledge of his colleagues also seemed unclear. But given his strong commitment to the party to the extent that he was prepared to go to jail for it, it may be surmised that he intended to find out more about the M.C.A.'s moves before acting accordingly. Already he was aware that the M.C.A. was inducing D.A.P. members and elected representatives to defect. Nothing concrete came out of the first merger talks. As they were held in secrecy, one can only speculate that Lim Kit Siang rejected the M.C.A.'s offer of a merger between the two parties. It was also unclear, what details, if any, of the possible merger, had been discussed at the secret meeting.

The next attempt at another secret meeting transpired in mid-April during the campaign for the Bekok state constituency by-election in Johore. Since Lim Kit Siang proved unamenable, the M.C.A. approached Goh Hock Guan,

10. Alex Lee however claimed that it was the D.A.P. who first sent out feelers for a meeting between the two parties. Straits Times, 12th July, 1971. Lim Kit Siang's version was that a Chinese newspaper reporter arranged for a meeting between him and Tun Tan Siew Sin. Straits Times, 3rd August, 1971.

11. Straits Times, 12th July, 1971.

the former Secretary-General who resigned after the riots in May 1969. Despite his relegation to one of the Vice-Chairmen of the party, the M.C.A. believed that Goh was still a prominent leader of the D.A.P., given his part as one of the party's successful strategists in the 1969 general elections. The M.C.A. hoped that Goh would prove to be more amenable than Lim Kit Siang to effect a possible merger between the two parties. Its second attempt at persuading the D.A.P. marked its desperation to secure Chinese unity at all costs. The Chinese Unity Movement which began with much publicity in February had fizzled out some two months later in April 1971. The "Old Guards" in the M.C.A. had become highly suspicious that the initiators of the movement were trying to undermine their power base and thus successfully thwarted their efforts at canvassing Chinese support in the M.C.A. Also prominent leaders of the movement had been charged with sedition.[12] In this context the D.A.P.'s role as an intended substitute for the defunct movement appeared important. The D.A.P. was persuaded to concede a walk-over to the M.C.A. in the Bekok by-election as a prelude to a possible merger between the two parties.[13] The M.C.A. might have been encouraged by the fact that the D.A.P. had withdrawn from the earlier Kapar (Selangor) Parliamentary by-election held in April although it had finished a close second to the Alliance in the 1969 general elections.[14] It had

12. James Morgan,"Without fear or favour", Far Eastern Economic Review, 24th April, 1971. The leaders concerned were Sim Mow Yu and Koo Eng Kuang.

13. Bekok had an electorate of 13,755 voters made up of 2,825 Malays, 8,143 Chinese and 2,771 Indians. The by-election was caused by the death of the M.C.A. incumbent.

14. Kapar's electorate of some 25,000 voters comprised 12,000 Malays, 10,000 Chinese and 3,000 Indians. In the 1969 general elections, the Alliance (U.M.N.O.) candidate won by a majority of 1,047 over his D.A.P. and Parti Islam(P.A.S.) rivals. Straits Times, 12th May, 1969. In this by-election, caused by the death of the incumbent M.P., the U.M.N.O. candidate beat his P.A.S. rival by a majority of 8,762 in a straight fight. Patrick Low ed., op. cit., p. 93.

withdrawn from the by-election because it felt that its chances of success were virtually nil in an atmosphere of accommodation politics where the main issue appeared to be economic development. The M.C.A. hoped that the D.A.P. would withdraw its candidate for the Bekok by-election for the same reasons as in the case of the Kapar by-election. Goh's initial reply to the M.C.A.'s request was a firm rejection, fully convinced that the D.A.P. would beat the M.C.A. in that predominantly Chinese constituency. He was then informed by Lee San Choon (the then M.C.A. Youth Deputy Chairman) that Lim Kit Siang had already met with Tun Tan Siew Sin earlier, possibly in conjunction with the M.C.A.'s request for a walk-over and an intended merger between the two parties.[15] Goh was brought to see Tun Tan Siew Sin where he was given the M.C.A. President's full reasons for wanting to meet him. Tun Tan stated that if the M.C.A., after having been chided by Tun Ismail for being "neither dead nor alive" were to lose the Bekok by-election, its already unfavourable position in the Alliance would worsen.[16] He added that the position of the disunited Chinese community would be in danger if the D.A.P. won the by-election in that predominantly Chinese constituency, for U.M.N.O. would interpret this as the Chinese opting for chauvinism. Tun Tan rationalised that should this happen, it would trigger off Malay extremism, making the Chinese position even more untenable. The message Tun Tan was driving to Goh was that at the prevailing stage of the country's political development, the D.A.P. was regarded as an extreme Chinese party by U.M.N.O., having the same aims and objectives as the Singapore P.A.P. Tun Tan continued that the D.A.P. could not hope to contribute towards national unity under these circumstances. He maintained that only the M.C.A. which

15. See Goh's version of the D.A.P./M.C.A. secret merger talks, Straits Times, 12th July, 1971.

16. Ibid.

was acceptable to U.M.N.O. as a moderate Chinese party, would be able to lead the Chinese community out of its dilemma through co-operation with U.M.N.O. This could only be effected successfully if the M.C.A. were strong. Thus if the D.A.P. cared for the country in general and the Chinese in particular, Tun Tan suggested that it should first of all concede a walk-over to the M.C.A. in the Bekok by-election and then dissolve itself to merge with the M.C.A. Goh appeared (as Lee San Choon was to put it) convinced of Tun Tan's sincerity in concerning himself greatly with the plight of the Chinese.[17] He however expressed the D.A.P.'s fears that it would lose its power base, if, after it dissolved itself, the M.C.A. decided to play it out.[18] In what way the M.C.A. would deceive the D.A.P. was not clearly spelt out by Goh, but it could be surmised that D.A.P. leaders were fearful over the prospect of being excluded from power and thus policy-making within the M.C.A. once they dissolved the party. Obviously the D.A.P. demanded as a price from the M.C.A., some share of power with some of its leaders co-opted into the M.C.A. Central Working Committee (C.W.C.) as a safeguard against any possible arbitrary action by the M.C.A.[19] Hence the question of D.A.P. leaders holding Ministerial and Deputy Ministerial posts was brought up. The M.C.A. was to state later that the D.A.P. proposed 3 Ministerial and 2 Deputy Ministerial positions in addition to the Deputy Presidency of the M.C.A. for itself. However Tun Tan Siew Sin insisted that before the M.C.A. could consider these proposals, the D.A.P.

17. See Lee San Choon's version of the talks, Straits Times, 13th July, 1971. Goh was to clarify a year later (following the D.A.P. leadership struggle in his reply to Kit Siang's charges that he was keen on the D.A.P.'s merger with the M.C.A.) that if the country appeared to be in danger(as a result of Chinese disunity), his first duty was to the country, and then only the party. Straits Echo, 22nd June, 1972.

18. Straits Times, 13th July, 1971

19. Ibid.

must first of all satisfy 3 basic conditions: (1) Dissolve itself with its Chinese members joining the M.C.A. as individuals while its non-Chinese members would join other racial components of the Alliance; (2) Declare publicly that it accepted the M.C.A. and Alliance policies; (3) The proposals would have to be approved by Tun Razak and the M.C.A. C.W.C.[20] By stating these conditions,Tun Tan had apparently placed the M.C.A. in a strong bargaining position, contrary to the D.A.P.'s expectations that the M.C.A. would seek its co-operation at any price. These 3 conditions placed the D.A.P. in a vulnerable position. The first would mean that the D.A.P. voluntarily sacrifice its power base, the second would involve a betrayal of the multi-racial principles on which it was formed in 1966 and the third was that there was no guarantee the D.A.P.'s proposals could be approved. Even if all the 3 conditions were met by the D.A.P., the M.C.A. had stated that it would only consider the proposals, and consideration need not necessarily amount to full acceptance. Under these circumstances, it could be surmised that the D.A.P. decided not to merge with the M.C.A. A meeting of the top D.A.P. leaders - Lim Kit Siang, Goh Hock Guan, Dr. Chen Man Hin and Fan Yew Teng - took place and sought an honourable way out. The D.A.P. in accepting the M.C.A.'s 3 conditions, would suggest a counter-proposal that all parties concerned should publicly make a declaration of multi-racial principles.[21] Not only the D.A.P. but U.M.N.O. and M.C.A. should also dissolve themselves to form one big multi-racial party. The D.A.P.'s counter-proposal must have stemmed from its belief that given U.M.N.O.'s unchallenged position in the Alliance, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to extract favourable concessions for the Chinese. It might also

20. See Tun Tan Siew Sin's press statement, Malay Mail, 11th July, 1971.

21. See Goh's account of the talks, Straits Echo, 22nd June, 1972.

have grounds to believe that despite Tun Tan's professed sincerity, the other M.C.A. leaders, mostly the "Old Guards" who still held much influence, appeared untrustworthy. The fact that the M.C.A. at first gave the Chinese Unity Movement its blessing, and then later through the Old Guards, worked against it to render it ineffective, was sufficient testimony of this. There was also a fear that in the event of co-opted D.A.P. leaders proving themselves more popular than their M.C.A. counterparts, efforts would be made to undermine them. Thus the D.A.P. felt that the counter-proposal (which would be anathema to the communal set-up of the Alliance) would be a sure and effective way of terminating the talks. Goh was asked to relay the D.A.P.'s latest stand and predictably, the talks broke down. There was agreement on both sides that the talks should be kept secret.

It was only some 3 months later in July 1971 that news of the secret merger talks leaked out to the press. The reasons for this appear conflicting, but the trend of political developments indicated that the D.A.P. was losing support to the M.C.A. It was presumably this that led to the leakage of the talks. The first indication of this was the Bekok by-election held in May 1971. Despite the M.C.A.'s fears that it might lose in this Chinese-predominated constituency to the D.A.P., the M.C.A. candidate won. The significance of the victory was not the victory itself, but its margin, in which the M.C.A. candidate almost doubled his predecessor's 1969 slim majority over an independent.[22] The M.C.A. was of course elated, interpreting this as the party regaining the confidence of the Chinese since the 1969 general elections. It was therefore inclined to make

22. The M.C.A.'s fears were manifested by Tun Tan's statements shortly before the by-election. He said:"The whole country would interpret the result as either a vote of confidence for the M.C.A. or D.A.P." Straits Times, 15th May, 1971, op. cit. In the event, the M.C.A. candidate won by 1,542 votes compared to 780 in 1969.

public statements to this effect, adding that Tun Tan Siew Sin's undisputed leadership had been mainly responsible for this. This indirectly had an undermining effect on the D.A.P.'s sagging morale in what it perceived as an U.M.N.O. contrived political environment to place the Chinese at a sevère disadvantage. A seemingly jubilant and united M.C.A. tend to reflect upon the D.A.P.'s own confused leadership and divisive ranks. It therefore interpreted the M.C.A.'s statements as unwarranted boasts and taunts. The D.A.P. was also worried and resented the M.C.A. apparently cutting into its potential areas of Chinese support in the new villages, especially in Perak. Although the Chinese Unity Movement had become defunct, its leaders were not idle behind the scenes. The Task Force Movement, its subsidiary, had been active under the leadership of Dato' Tan Siew Eng, particularly in Perak. Tun Razak appeared to be satisfied with their efforts, and appointed Dr. Lim Keng Yaik through the Senate, a Minister with Special Functions to take charge of new villages. In a fit of anger, the D.A.P. leaked the news of the secret merger talks to the press.[23] The move appeared to spite the M.C.A. in an attempt to refute its claims to having regained the support of the Chinese. Never failing to remind the M.C.A. that Tun Ismail had once dubbed it "neither dead nor alive", the D.A.P. claimed that it was so desperate at one stage that it had to beg the party to merge with it, offering Ministerial posts as incentives. The D.A.P. implied that any apparently regained Chinese support was due to fear of a repetition of the May 1969 racial riot than an acknowledgement of the M.C.A.'s capabilities. As for the M.C.A.'s claims of Tun Tan being the acknowledged Chinese leader, the D.A.P. pointed out that he had always been returned in a Malay rather than a Chinese-predominated constituency.[24] Thus the D.A.P.'s intentions were to show that despite the M.C.A.'s self-proclaimed credibility, it was still a

23. See Straits Times, 15th July, 1971 for further details.

24. Tun Tan has always contested in a Malay-majority constituency in Malacca.

weak and useless party as far as the Chinese were concerned.

It is difficult to surmise whether the D.A.P. realised the harmful effects the disclosure of the secret talks with the M.C.A. would have on its credibility. If it did, it probably underestimated the damage that would befall it, given its vindictiveness to hit at the M.C.A. The first damaging blow to the D.A.P. was that the secrecy in which the talks were held, manifested the intrigue and suspicion within the party's Central Executive Committee (C.E.C.) which was supposed to work in caucus. Contrary to this, it appeared that top leaders were dealing individually and secretly with the M.C.A. Goh and Kit Siang only knew that each had secretly met with the M.C.A. a month after the first meeting (involving Kit Siang) had transpired. The other leaders of the C.E.C. - Dr. Chen Man Hin and Fan Yew Teng - apparently became involved only after the first two talks had taken place. If the M.C.A. had intended to confuse and cause dissension within the D.A.P. leadership, Goh and Kit Siang had played into its hands. Other members of the C.E.C., particularly Dr. Soorian,(M.P. for Port Dickson and one of the Vice-Chairmen) complained that they were kept in the dark on such an important matter although they had a right to be informed as C.E.C. members.[25] The feeling among the non-Chinese members,as typified by Dr. Soorian, was that the D.A.P. had betrayed its multi-racial principles and acted as a Chinese party. Dr. Soorian felt that it was even worse than the M.C.A. While the M.C.A. had publicly claimed that it was fighting solely for Chinese rights, the D.A.P. had secretly indulged in doing so, while publicly professing to be a multi-racial party.[26] To Dr. Soorian, it

25. Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, op. cit.

26. See Dr. Soorian's press statement, Straits Echo, 19th June, 1972 for full details.

was immaterial as to who (M.C.A. or D.A.P.) had initiated the secret talks. What was more important and which the D.A.P. could not deny was the fact that it did participate in secret merger talks with the M.C.A.; and the principle that the D.A.P. would dissolve itself at the right price, i.e. if the relevant Ministerial and Deputy Ministerial posts were given to its leaders was not disputed.[27] It could be argued that if the P.A.P., the D.A.P.'s predecessor, had been practising double standards, the D.A.P. apparently appeared more dishonourable. In this instance, the P.A.P., claiming to be a democratic socialist, multi-racial party, had actually exhibited its Chinese exclusiveness by publicly indicating its desire to replace the M.C.A. in the Alliance before the 1964 general elections. Unlike the P.A.P., the D.A.P.'s moves to merge with the M.C.A. and participate in the government, were shrouded in secrecy. Had it succeed in merging with the M.C.A., its non-Chinese members rationalised that they would be in a quandary, either having to join the other racial components of the Alliance or give up politics entirely.

In retrospect, the secret merger talks with the M.C.A. marked the D.A.P.'s first and only concerted attempt to opt out of the opposition and join the government. It revealed the party's despondency in the face of increasing political isolation and possible disintegration in the changing political situation. Signs of the D.A.P.'s increasing political isolation were manifestated during the period of N.O.C. rule when its efforts to effect some form of co-operation and decision-making with the government were repeatedly spurned.[28] This despondency revealed an incohesive leader-

27. See Kam Woon Wah's press statement, Straits Times, 15th July, 1971.

28. Jerome Bass, Malaysian Politics, 1968-1970: Crisis and Response, Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1973, pp. 459-77.

ship within the C.E.C., marked by suspicion and intrigue, in which individual leaders attempted to trade the party's principles for the spoils of power by merging the party with the M.C.A. The D.A.P. at first appeared keen, but apparently backed down when the stakes involved were considered too high. It then leaked the talks to the press in an attempt to spite the M.C.A. in response to what it considered unwarranted taunts and boasts by its rival, following the latter's victory in the Bekok by-election. However the move backfired with all its damaging consequences to the party's credibility. The failure of the talks was a prelude to the leadership struggle a year later, which spelled more trouble for the party.

(b) The D.A.P. Leadership Struggle

A struggle for the leadership of the D.A.P. took place almost a year after the disclosure of the unsuccessful merger talks between the party and the M.C.A. It involved the two most prominent leaders of the party, Lim Kit Siang and Goh Hock Guan. Both had different and conflicting ideas as to how the party, whose morale had been sagging since Parliament was reconvened in February 1971, should map out its strategy in the country's changing political environment. While Lim Kit Siang favoured a tightening of discipline and weeding out members who could not conform to the party's pre-1969 strategy, Goh Hock Guan advocated some form of co-operation with the government. Goh believed that the D.A.P.'s pre-1969 abrasive strategy was suicidal in the prevailing circumstances. The struggle which subsequently degenerated into a personal feud, ended with the expulsion of Goh and confirmed Kit Siang's position as undisputed leader of the party.

Following his release from detention in late 1970, Lim Kit Siang assumed the top position of Secretary-General of the party which had been vacated by Goh Hock Guan shortly after the May 1969 racial riot. The changing political environment in the country after the reconvening of Parliament in February 1971 reflected a mood of caution manifested by a marked reduction in political activity. Politics was along the lines of accommodating to rather than confronting the government. The fear of a repetition of the May 1969 racial riot sowed the seeds of such a development. It was strengthened by the Constitutional Amendments of February 1971 banning the public discussion of "sensitive issues" in the belief that this would lessen racial tension. The government's political supremacy was thus beyond doubt and it was in a position to isolate recalcitrant political opponents like

the D.A.P. Lim Kit Siang's response was to intensify the D.A.P.'s pre-1969 struggle for the fundamental interests of the non-Malays because he felt that the position of the non-Malays, vis-a-vis the Malays, had deteriorated after the 1969 racial riot and the period of N.O.C. rule. Any delay in doing so would aggravate the already bad situation the non-Malays were in. His response was premised on the fact that the D.A.P. and the non-Malays at large rejected the government's contention that the racial riot of 1969 was caused by the questioning of sensitive issues by the non-Malay opposition.[29] They had grounds to believe that the real culprits were U.M.N.O. extremists fearful of a loss of political power.[30] The government had held that the Constitutional Amendments of 1971 banned the public discussion of sensitive issues so that the racial riot of 1969 would not be repeated. Lim Kit Siang charged that the government had deliberately premised the riot of 1969 on wrong causes so as to protect the real culprits. As such the ban imposed would not lead to the disappearance of the so-called sensitive issues.[31] Both Malays and non-Malays could still discuss them privately, indeed emotionally and irrationally. Racial tension and polarization, a by-product of the unresolved sensitive issues, would therefore still be visible although muted. There was a danger that they would explode in the future to cause a repetition of the May 1969 riot on a larger scale. Lim Kit Siang

29. For the government's view of the riot, see National Operations Council, The May 13 Tragedy: A Report, The N.O.C., Kuala Lumpur, October 1969, and Tunku Abdul Rahman, May 13: Before and After, Utusan Melayu Press Ltd., Kuala Lumpur, 1969.

30. This appeared to be evident from the experiences the non-Malays suffered during the riot. For a justification of this view, see John Slimming, Malaysia: Death of a Democracy, John Murray, London, 1969.

31. See Parliamentary speech, "The Sword of Damocles", on the Constitution Amendment Bill 1971 on 23rd February 1971 in Lim Kit Siang, Time Bombs in Malaysia, 2nd ed., D.A.P., Kuala Lumpur, 1978, pp. 207-24 for full details.

was concerned that the ban was likely to work against the non-Malays in practice rather than the Malays. He stated that an U.M.N.O. leader could still call with immunity to deprive the citizenship of a trade union leader criticizing the government, although citizenship was one of the sensitive issues.[32] He therefore advocated measures that would not jeopardize the position of the non-Malays further. Sensitive issues, he held, should be resolved at their root causes. Regarding the National Language, Kit Siang contended that the non-Malays had accepted the position of Malay unquestioningly and this was not a cause of friction. What was at stake was the use and sustenance of the Chinese, Tamil and English languages. Owing to ambiguity, this Constitutional guarantee had been rendered formless and sterile by an educational policy emphasizing solely on Malay supremacy. He therefore called for a Parliamentary Commission to define in clear terms the clause "to preserve and sustain the use of the other languages".[33] Once this was done, Kit Siang held that language would cease to be an explosive and divisive issue.[34] Concerning Malay special privileges, Kit Siang stated that the government had made the justification of such privileges racial instead of economic to uphold its class interests.[35] While stressing that the D.A.P. did not object to the principle of special privileges to alleviate the incidence of Malay poverty, he argued that poor non-Malays also needed similar assistance. The sum of Kit Siang's arguments was thus to call on the government to chart the course toward a genuine multi-racial Malaysia with equality for all instead of a Malay Malaysia.

The trend of political events in the country however rendered Kit Siang's strategy extremely difficult. The D.A.P. was finding that the

32. Ibid., p. 213.
33. Ibid., p. 215-6.
34. Ibid., p. 216.
35. Ibid., p. 217.

ban on the public discussion of sensitive issues had deprived it of its most lethal weapon against the government, i.e. aggressively harping on sensitive issues.[36] The prosecution of some of its leaders like Fan Yew Teng for sedition was a constant reminder to this effect. Moreover the non-Malays, fearful of a repetition of the May 1969 racial riot, were inclined to respond to the M.C.A.'s offer of accommodation and development. As a result, the D.A.P. found that it was losing its support among the non-Malays to the M.C.A. as indicated by a series of by-election defeats in Bekok in May 1971 and Ulu Selangor in June 1972.[37] Although these by-elections were caused by the deaths of M.C.A. incumbents, erosion of D.A.P. support was manifested by a decrease in the number of D.A.P. votes polled resulting in a corresponding increase for M.C.A. votes.[38] At the same time there was a spate of D.A.P. defections and resignations among its members, elected representatives and even C.E.C. members, many of them induced by the government. The most damaging blow in this aspect were the defections of 2 important C.E.C. members and M.P.'s, Richard Ho and Walter Loh, to the M.C.A. on the eve of the nomination for the Ulu Selangor Parliamentary

36. See Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, op. cit.

37. For details of the D.A.P.'s by-election defeat at Bekok, see Section (a) of this chapter. The Ulu Selangor Parliamentary by-election was caused by the death of the incumbent M.C.A. Minister, Khaw Kai Boh. Michael Chen, the defeated M.C.A. candidate for the Parliamentary constituency of Damansara (Kuala Lumpur) in the 1969 general elections, won this by-election against the D.A.P. Asian Almanac, Vol. X, No. 32, 12th August, 1972.

38. In the case of Bekok, the M.C.A.'s winning margin of 780 votes over an independent in the 1969 general elections, was increased to 1,542 over his D.A.P. opponent in May 1971. Straits Times, 18th May, 1971. As regards Ulu Selangor, the late Khaw Kai Boh polled 8,278 votes against the D.A.P.'s Liong Ah Nai who obtained 6,755 votes in 1969. In the 1972 by-election, the D.A.P.'s total vote was reduced to 5,439, a decrease of 1,316 while that of the M.C.A. rose by 2,774 to 11,052. In terms of the victory margin, the M.C.A. had increased its representation by over 4,000 votes. Asian Almanac, 12th August, 1972.

by-election.[39] The front-paged headlines of their defections in the government-biased local press had a demoralizing effect on an already psychologically disadvantaged D.A.P. against the vastly superior campaigning resources of the government.

Certain leaders of the D.A.P. became concerned over the party's decline and feared that if it failed to modify its recalcitrant attitude in line with political realities, it was sure to disintegrate. Hence the leadership of Lim Kit Siang came to be questioned. Goh Hock Guan, the party's former Secretary-General, was convinced that Kit Siang's inflexible pre-1969 strategy was unnecessarily reckless and therefore suicidal for the party. Goh rationalised that the political environment had undergone many changes which made the D.A.P.'s aggressive style obsolete.[40] If the D.A.P. persisted in being abrasive as in the pre-1969 situation, it would continue to be regarded by the Malays and the government as an extreme Chinese chauvinist party. Consequences of this would be a Malay backlash, leading to another May 1969 racial riot or the intensification of government measures to punish the D.A.P. as evident in the prosecution of Fan Yew Teng for sedi-

39. See Straits Times, 18th May, 1972, Asian Almanac, Vol. X, No. 29, 22nd July, 1972 and James Morgan,"Democratic Defections", Far Eastern Economic Review, 27th May, 1972. Their defections had been the successful efforts of Alex Lee and Dr. Tan Tiong Hong, former members of the defunct Chinese Unity Movement. Richard Ho, a lawyer, and Walter Loh, an accountant, were elected as D.A.P.M.P.'s in Sitiawan(Perak) and Setapak (Kuala Lumpur) respectively in the 1969 general elections. Richard Ho stated that since May 1969, the D.A.P. had become unacceptable to large sections of Malaysians. As a D.A.P. M.P., he found it next to impossible to serve his constituents. He felt that it was more in the interests of his constituents to work within the government (M.C.A.) than to rabble-rouse outside (D.A.P.) it. Interview with Richard Ho, Malaysian Business, June 1979. Walter Loh declared that for some time he had felt that D.A.P. leaders were too leftist and communal and he did not wish to suffer another May 13 riot.

40. See Goh's press statement, Straits Echo, 19th June, 1972.

tion. In either of these two eventualities, Goh maintained that the D.A.P.'s position would be even more precarious. He however appeared more concerned over the party's attrition through the resignations and defections of members, elected representatives and even important C.E.C. members.[41] This would aggravate the already serious problem of the dearth of good D.A.P. leaders as evident in the case of the 1969 general elections when the same candidates contested for both Parliamentary and the State Assembly seats. Richard Ho and Walter Loh, according to one source, represented "the Fabian Wing of the D.A.P., i.e. well-heeled socialists of cosmopolitan outlook who provided the party with overlooked strength through its membership of Socialist International and ability to win friends overseas".[42] As such their defections would be a big blow to the D.A.P., possibly triggering off further defections and resignations. Thus Goh suggested that it would be better for the D.A.P. to adjust to political realities. For its own good, the D.A.P. should practise accommodation politics or at least appear not to deliberately confront the government.[43] Goh's questioning of the ability of Kit Siang's leadership appeared to be premised on his belief that though in a relegated post of Vice-Chairman, he still had a prominent role to play in helping to chart the D.A.P.'s post-1969 strategy. After all he was one of the party's founder members, former Secretary-General, and continued to

41. Goh stated that at the time of his resignation from the D.A.P., 4 M.P.'s and 8 State Assemblymen had resigned. Straits Echo, 21st June, 1972.

42. James, Morgan, ibid, Op. cit.

43. Goh's suggestions, initially by hints, became more evident after he had joined the G.R.M. prior to the 1974 general elections. Campaigning for the G.R.M. which had by then become a component of the N. F., Goh talked about the built-in system of checks and balances in accommodation politics where unity could be achieved through a belief in dialogue and a spirit of give and take to effect equality for all. Straits Echo, 14th August, 1974.

to enjoy the support and confidence of the moderate members of the party and the Chairman, Dr. Chen Man Hin, who he claimed, had authorised him to act on the party's behalf in the unsuccessful merger talks with the M.C.A. Besides the harrowing experience of the May 1969 racial riot had convinced Goh that there was certainly a limit to the D.A.P.'s abrasive style of politics.

Predictably Lim Kit Siang resented the manner in which his leadership of the party was being questioned and was inclined to interpret it as an unnecessary challenge to his authority, thereby constituting a breach of discipline. He believed that at the time the party was experiencing serious difficulties to the extent that its survival was being threatened, the duty of all members, irrespective of rank, was to rally behind the leader instead of unwisely questioning his authority. He repeated that the D.A.P. would never change the abrasive manner in which it had fought for the rights of the non-Malays under whatever circumstances. For in that eventuality, the party would have to operate more circumspectively and thereby less effectively. It would lose its distinctive identity as a fearless and agressive party, and with it, much of the support(which was necessary as a nucleus for the future long-term expansion plans of the party)it had won from the non-Malays in the 1969 general elections. Kit Siang appeared convinced that the ban imposed on the public discussion of sensitive issues and the 1971 Constitutional Amendments, far from subduing the non-Malays, would only increase their resentment towards the government. As long as these so-called sensitive issues(which he equated with the legitimate grievances of the non-Malays) remained unresolved, the D.A.P. would always benefit from the increasing number of the already substantial non-Malay protest votes. As a solution, Kit Siang therefore felt that to circumvent being penalised by the Seditions Act, the D.A.P. had to cloud the so-called sensitive issues by making insi-

nuations and innuendoes when criticising the government. In this way, the D.A.P. could still articulate the grievances of the non-Malays by airing the so-called sensitive issues publicly but indirectly. The D.A.P. Secretary-General was aware of the difficulties he was facing and their possible harmful effects on the party such as increased Malay antagonism and government subversion, but he seemed to be guided by the philosophy that great sacrifices preceded success, and accordingly applied it to his strategy. Kit Siang believed that his approach would ultimately be viable in the long run, although the contrived political situation had rendered it precarious for the time being. To ensure that his strategy be followed at all times, Kit Siang advocated that strict discipline should be enforced in the party and authority be obeyed unquestioningly. Members found to be wanting should be expelled, as this was likely to cause division and dissension in the party, which the government would exploit, to subvert it.[44] In this aspect, Kit Siang held that the defections of Richard Ho and Walter Loh were no loss to the party as they had betrayed the party's cause for personal interests.[45] This appeared to be a direct rebuff to Goh's advocacy of accommodation politics, thus increasing the resentment of the latter.

44. In an address to the D.A.P. Serdang (Selangor) branch, Kit Siang warned that the government was trying to infiltrate the D.A.P. through the Projects Section of the Special Branch so as to cause maximum damage and chaos to the party. He reminded the members that a similar tactic had been successfully used which caused the destruction of the Labour Party of Malaya (L.P.M.) in the 1960s. Kit Siang's warnings were based on the predictions of the Home Affairs Minister, Tun Dr. Ismail, to an U.M.N.O. Youth conference that there would be rebellion in the D.A.P. leading to mass resignations and the disintegration of the party. Asian Almanac, Vol. X, No. 41, 14th October, 1972. He therefore urged D.A.P. members to exercise maximum vigilance to forestall such an eventuality. Malay Mail, 1st July, 1972.

45. Straits Echo, 20th May, 1972. Dr. Chen Man Hin, the Chairman, however, tried to allay the fears and doubts of members by stating that their defections (or expulsions) were necessary corrective measures, in which the party would emerge stronger in the aftermath.

Apparently exasperated at failing to persuade Kit Siang to modify the D.A.P.'s strategy, Goh chose to resign, giving as his reason that he could no longer tolerate what he considered as the dictatorial attitude of Kit Siang, manifested by Spartan disciplinary measures which many members found unbearable.[46] In retaliation, Kit Siang, with the backing of the C.E.C., at first suspended but later expelled him from the party on the vague charge of "flouting party policy and (indulging in) activities detrimental to party discipline and morale".[47] The leadership struggle between the two leaders subsequently degenerated into a personal feud. In an attempt to smear Goh's personal integrity, Kit Siang dwelt on Goh's part in the D.A.P.'s unsuccessful merger talks with the M.C.A. and blamed the D.A.P.'s damaged credibility on Goh's mishandling of the whole affair where the D.A.P. was concerned. He held that Goh was responsible for making the D.A.P. vulnerable to M.C.A. charges that it was interested in Ministerial and Deputy Ministerial positions as a price to merge with the M.C.A.[48] The implication was that Goh was prepared to sacrifice party principles for personal gain, since, as the D.A.P.'s main negotiator and a prominent leader, he would presumably be given a Ministerial post should the D.A.P merge with the M.C.A. Goh retaliated by stating that he had the full

46. For full details, see Straits Times, 19th June, 1972, M.G.G. Pillai, "D.A.P. Dilemma", Far Eastern Economic Review, 1st July, 1972, Asian Almanac, Vol. X, No. 41, 14th October 1972 and Asia Research Bulletin, Vol. II, No. 2, July 1972.

47. Straits Times, 19th June, 1972, op. cit. Kit Siang stated that Goh chose to defy the collective stand of the C.E.C. by making separate press statements on issues such as the government's claim that the Straits of Malacca was Malaysia's territorial waters and the government's recognition of Bangladesh as an independent nation. In these statements, Kit Siang claimed that Goh's views were opposed to those of the C.E.C. This had caused confusion and disunity within the party. Straits Echo, 22nd June, 1972.

48. Straits Echo, 21st June, 1972 and Asian Almanac, 14th October, 1972.

authority of Dr. Chen to negotiate with the M.C.A. on the D.A.P.'s behalf and that he had fully reported what had transpired to Dr. Chen and Kit Siang. This was an apparent move to clear himself of the charge by Kit Siang that he was acting individually for personal gain. He in turn charged that Kit Siang had met secretly with Tun Tan Siew Sin first in an attempt to show that Kit Siang was unprincipled and dishonest. Goh held that Kit Siang was also self-centred and selfish, and seemed to believe that just because he had spent 1½ years in prison, he could do no wrong.[49] Kit Siang, according to Goh, was indifferent to the loss of 12 M.P.'s and State Assemblymen, even though the rank and file appeared concerned over the apparent loss of leaders of high calibre.[50] It was also claimed by Goh that Kit Siang had maintained an unnecessarily tight discipline over D.A.P. M.P.'s in forbidding them to speak in Parliament before he did.[51] The M.P.'s according to Goh, felt restricted and therefore resentful. The dispute took a new turn when Dr. Soorian, a former Vice-Chairman who was expelled at the same time as Goh, joined in the attack against Kit Siang.[52] Dr. Soorian appeared to hold Kit Siang responsible for his being kept out of the merger talks with the M.C.A. although he was a member of the C.E.C.

49. See Goh's press statement, Straits Echo, 19th June, 1972.

50. Straits Echo, 21st June, 1972.

51. Straits Echo, 19th June, 1972.

52. Dr. Soorian, M.P. for Port Dickson, had been expelled on the grounds that he withheld information about the defections of Richard Ho and Walter Loh. Soorian denied this, claiming that Kit Siang intended to silence him because he was critical over his (Kit Siang's) dictatorial attitude. Asian Almanac, 14th October, 1972. It appeared that Soorian's charge was trumped up by Kit Siang, as no evidence was produced. See letter to Far Eastern Economic Review, 12th August, 1972. For details of Soorian's attacks against Kit Siang, see his letter to F.E.E.R., 12th February, 1973, Straits Echo, 19th and 26th June, 1972 and Asia Research Bulletin, Vol. II, No. 2, July 1972.

The outcome of the leadership struggle hinged on the C.E.C., the supreme policy-making body of the party. It held the balance of power. However some attempts were made to reconcile the differences between the two men earlier to prevent a split within the party as in the case of the G.R.M. in 1971.[53] Dr. Chen Man Hin, the Chairman, had at one stage, proposed to step down in favour of Goh so that both he and Kit Siang could work together as a team on more or less equal status.[54] This was apparently unsuccessful when Dr. Chen was urged to remain as Chairman in view of both his popularity and elderly stature in the party. The C.E.C. was left with the choice of either Kit Siang or Goh. In the event, Kit Siang was preferred. Personal abilities to respond fearlessly to crises seemed to be the determining criteria. This appeared to work against Goh. In the aftermath of the May 1969 racial riot, his escape overseas to elude possible arrest and his subsequent resignation as Secretary-General were regarded as cowardly acts by the C.E.C. To cover up the D.A.P.'s embarrassment over Goh's actions, the C.E.C. claimed that it had to publicly state that Goh had gone to the Socialist International Conference in London to lobby for international support against the Malaysian government to release Kit Siang. To be fair to Goh, he had actually pleaded Kit Siang's case successfully in London so that Kit Siang was released earlier than anticipated. It was also a human instinct to flee if arrest appeared imminent. Goh was not the only

53. The G.R.M. split into 2 factions over Dr. Lim Chong Eu's increasingly pro-Alliance policies. This will be discussed fully in Chapter III.

54. Dr. Chen was reported to have said: "Perhaps I should withdraw as Chairman in favour of you (Goh) so that with you as party Chairman and Kit Siang as Secretary-General, the D.A.P. will have 2 very strong leaders to lead the party". Asia Research Bulletin, Vol. II, No. 2, July 1972, op. cit. Goh claimed that this was Dr. Chen's way of persuading him to return as party leader following Kit Siang's release from detention. Dr. Chen's suggestion was premised on the fact that the Chairman and Secretary-General were the two most powerful positions in the C.E.C. As a semblance of their power, only they could authorise press statements on behalf of the party and sanction the party's policies.

D.A.P. leader to do so as Fan Yew Teng, the editor of the party's journal, "The Rocket", had also gone underground.[55] However the fact that Goh had displayed a fearless and charismatic Lee Kuan Yew image in the build-up towards the 1969 general elections which gave him the highest number of votes polled in the history of Malaysian general elections until 1978, negated this.[56] If the C.E.C. expected its leaders to stick by it in times of crises, the feeling was that Goh should be in the forefront in view of his top position as Secretary-General. Thus his apparent desertion of the party at the time when it needed him most damaged his credibility severely. This was to prove fatal to him when he contested the 1974 general elections on a N.F.(G.R.M.) ticket as an incumbent in the same Parliamentary constituency of Bungsar (renamed Petaling). In that general election, he lost to a relatively unknown D.A.P. candidate although the mood of electoral caution appeared to favour the N.F.[57] In contrast, Kit Siang appeared determined to stand by the party under whatever circumstances. Despite warnings that he would be arrested on his way home from Sabah where he had been ordered to leave by Tun Mustapha after campaigning there, Kit Siang nevertheless returned, presumably to shore up the party's sagging morale in the aftermath of the May 1969 riot.[58] He was subsequently detained for 18 months under the I.S.A.

55. See Peter Simms,"A Quiet Coup in K.L.", Life (Asia Edition), Vol. XXXXVII No. 2, 21st July, 1969.

56. In the 1969 general elections, Goh polled 37,050 votes, having a majority of over 25,000 votes over the M.C.A.'s Lew Sip Hon who obtained 9,648 votes. Straits Times, 12th May, 1969. This was only exceeded by Kit Siang's 41,017 in the same enlarged constituency and Chan Kok Kit's 40,307 in Sungei Besi in the 1978 general elections. See Appendix C.

57. Following his resignation from the D.A.P., Goh remained an independent M.P. until he joined the G.R.M. in 1974. Straits Times, 11th April, 1974. After his defeat in the 1974 general elections, Goh has since been politically inactive, though still a member of the G.R.M.

58. For full details, see Personality Profile on Lim Kit Siang, Malaysian Business, December 1979, pp. 26-31.

Following his release from detention in late 1970, and after assuming the position of Secretary-General, Kit Siang reiterated his intentions to pursue the D.A.P.'s objectives in the same way that the party did in the 1969 general elections. The C.E.C. thus decided that it could rely more on Kit Siang to lead the party out of the precarious position it was in, rather than Goh, despite Kit Siang's overt dictatorial attitude. It therefore threw its support to Kit Siang, and with that, Goh's fate was virtually sealed. However an extensive nation-wide tour of the party's branches to explain the C.E.C.'s decision followed by a Special Delegates Conference at Seremban in August 1972 ~~were~~ was necessary to ratify Goh's (and Soorian's) expulsion.[59]

Thus the leadership struggle between Lim Kit Siang and Goh Hock Guan began with a difference over the strategies to be used to arrest the D.A.P.'s decline which was manifested by a series of by-election defeats, resignations and defections of members, elected representatives and C.E.C. members. It degenerated into a personal feud with the washing of dirty linen in public as both Kit Siang and Goh tried to show that each was unprincipled and dishonest in mishandling the merger talks with the M.C.A. The dispute widened with Dr. Soorian attacking Kit Siang's dictatorial attitude and Goh trying to implicate Dr. Chen in the merger talks. As a result the party's credibility was badly damaged. The crucial issue appeared to be Goh's challenge to Kit Siang's leadership. Had he unquestioningly serve in a subordinate role to Kit Siang as Vice-Chairman, the dispute, which led to his expulsion, would not have started and the party would even do its best to cover up what it considered his past cowardly acts. The

59. For details, see M.G.G.Pillai's reply to Fan Yew Teng's letter to the Far Eastern Economic Review, 29th July, 1972. Fan had protested over Pillai's report that there had been a split in the D.A.P.

fact that Fan Yew Teng, who also escaped after the May 1969 riot, and was not castigated, testified to this. However Goh felt that his suggestions, interpreted as a challenge to Kit Siang's leadership, were rational and aimed at sparing the D.A.P. further punishment by the government. Unfortunately for him, they were considered by the party's hard-liners, who dominated the C.E.C., as a sell-out attempt. Moreover Goh was at a disadvantage owing to his desertion of the party in the aftermath of the May 1969 riot and his part in the secret merger talks with the M.C.A. Kit Siang successfully capitalized on this to sway the C.E.C. against Goh. Although Kit Siang was not entirely principled in the sense that he had first indulged in secret talks with the M.C.A., and his dictatorial attitude was also obvious, the C.E.C. appeared prepared to overlook this in view of his willingness to stick by the party in times of crisis. The leadership struggle was a turning point for the D.A.P. in the sense that it either had to retain its pre-1969 strategy(albeit with minor changes) or opt for accommodation politics altogether. With Kit Siang's victory over Goh, the D.A.P. engaged on the former course to rebuild itself. The manner in which Kit Siang disposed of challenges to his authority showed his apparent disregard for the norms of democracy, manifested by his intolerance of opposing views.[60]

60. This was confirmed by his purge of the Penang D.A.P. Chairman, Yeap Ghim Guan, in early 1978. The C.E.C. had been unhappy with the Penang D.A.P. after the 1974 general elections, particularly after the only 2 elected D.A.P. state assemblymen defected to the M.C.A. This left the D.A.P. with no representation in the Penang state assembly. As the 1978 general elections approached, the C.E.C. suspected that the Penang D.A.P. was making secret deals with the M.C.A., a move it strongly denied. Lim Kit Siang therefore decided to control the Penang D.A.P. by having Karpal Singh, the party's legal adviser and defence counsel in numerous I.S.A. trials, co-opted in the Penang D.A.P. state committee. Yeap Ghim Guan protested, fearing that Karpal Singh would usurp his position as Chairman in Penang. Lim Kit Siang thereby suspended Yeap and later expelled him. For full details, see articles,"No Warlords", Asiaweek, 20th January, 1978 and "Party Time Everyone", Asiaweek, 27th January, 1978. See also article, "Yeap ousted as D.A.P. No. 2", Malaysia, February, 1978. Yeap eventually formed a splinter party, the Socialist Democratic Party (S.D.P.) which was eliminated in the 1978 general elections.

CHAPTER III

Democracy, Internal Security and Human Rights.

(a) The National Front Coalition

The extension of the Alliance coalition (U.M.N.O., M.C.A. & M.I.C.) into a broader-based National Front (N.F.) to include its traditional opponents, the Sarawak United People's Party (S.U.P.P.), the Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (G.R.M.), the People's Progressive Party (P.P.P.) and Parti Islam (P.A.S.) was a new feature of post-1969 Malaysian politics. The 1971 Constitutional Amendments and their implications had brought about this new development. To prevent a recurrence of the 1969 racial riot, the government under Tun Razak had placed "sensitive issues" - Malay privileges, the National Language, citizenship and the status of the sultans - beyond the pale of public discussion.[1] However the government felt that the ban by itself was not enough to ensure political stability, given the uneasiness of the non-Malays that the Constitutional Amendments worked towards their disadvantage. Thus to ensure that the non-Malays had some semblance of political power in what was a ~~wholly~~ predominantly Malay government, Tun Razak decided to seek the co-operation of the non-Malay opposition parties which had substantial electoral support.[2] This was necessary owing to the dismal performance of the M.C.A., the traditional Chinese partner in the government, at the 1969 general elections.[3] By bringing in these non-Malay opposition parties, Tun Razak hoped to restore the confidence of the non-Malays to effect better

1. For the government's reasons to ban the public discussion of sensitive issues, see the full text of Tun Razak's speech on The Constitutional Amendment Bill, Malaysian Digest, 28th February, 1971.

2. For full details, see Michael Chen,"Changing Political Structures and Alignments" in Yong Mun Cheong ed., Trends in Malaysia (2), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1974, pp. 58-64.

3. The role of the M.I.C., owing to its size and representation, is insignificant here.

Sino-Malay co-operation in what was perceived to be a new era of accommodation and development. Separate coalitions were meted out with each of the non-Malay opposition parties, beginning with the S.U.P.P. in late 1970, followed by the G.R.M. in early 1972 and the P.P.P. in mid-1972. To reduce politicking on its Malay flank, a coalition was also made with P.A.S. in early 1973.[4] In seeking out the non-Malay opposition parties as coalition partners, Tun Razak's initial criteria appeared to be that the parties concerned held some measures of power, i.e. they must be in control of a State government or hold the balance of power. What was even more important to Tun Razak was that the parties concerned must appear to be moderate to the Malays. This was because the government had attributed the cause of the 1969 racial riot as Malay reaction to the provocations by extremist Chinese-based parties who had challenged the very basis of Malay political power by their questioning of special rights, National Language, etc. In exchange for their co-operation, the Central Government would promise aid in developmental projects in the states where the parties concerned controlled or held the balance of power. The G.R.M. appeared to satisfy these two conditions stipulated by Tun Razak.[5] It captured 16 out of the 24 constituencies in the Penang State Assembly in the 1969 elections. Dr. Lim Chong Eu as Chief Minister of Penang, had during the period of N.O.C. rule, shown the G.R.M.'s willingness to co-operate with the Central Government by concentrating on promoting goodwill among the different races and improving administration in the state. U.M.N.O. appeared satisfied that the G.R.M. was a moderate party when the latter voted with the government in the Constitutional Amendment Bill in February 1971. In the case of the P.P.P., it had always been

4. For details of the separate coalitions, see R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia, Federal Publications, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, 1978, pp. 178-88.
5. In this discussion, the roles of the S.U.P.P. and P.A.S. are omitted.

the Alliance's traditional opponent since its leaders, the Seenivasagam brothers, had been vociferous critics of the government's pro-Malay policies. Although U.M.N.O. regarded it as a ~~extreme~~ sectarian Chinese party, the fact that it won 12 out of the total 40 seats in the Perak State Assembly in 1969 gave it the balance of power.[6] The dismal failure of the M.C.A. in Perak - it won only 1 state seat (Tapah) - made U.M.N.O. prepared to overlook the fact that the P.P.P. voted with the D.A.P. against the Constitutional Amendment Bill, as Perak was one of the important states to the government. Although the D.A.P. appeared to have significant Chinese support at both State and Federal levels (13 M.P.'s and 31 State Assemblymen) after the 1969 general elections, and theoretically it was possible for U.M.N.O. to effect a coalition with it, especially in Selangor where it held 9 out of the total 28 seats, U.M.N.O. nevertheless rejected the D.A.P. as a coalition partner. It felt that the D.A.P.'s "Malaysian Malaysia" campaign in the 1969 general elections intended to do away with Malay political supremacy in the country. Given its primary task to re-assure the Malays that Malaysia was first and foremost their country, U.M.N.O. could not co-operate with the D.A.P under whatever circumstances. In the new era of accommodation and development, U.M.N.O. considered the D.A.P.'s abrasive role provocative, and therefore irrelevant.

The D.A.P.'s reaction to the coalitions effected by U.M.N.O. with its former allies, the G.R.M. and the P.P.P., was a combination of resentment and defiance. Its reaction was consequent on the trend of events following the 1969 racial riot. During N.O.C. rule, the government had repeatedly spurned its overtures to participate in measures to promote good-

6. The P.P.P.'s representation was however reduced to 10 when 2 assemblymen defected to the Alliance. They were Samsuddin Harun (Sungei Raya) and Cheam Moi Tuck (Chemor). There were allegations that they were induced to defect.

will among the various communities and policy-making, on the grounds that its abrasive Chinese image and style of campaigning in the 1969 general elections had been responsible for the riot.[7] The government had resented what it considered the D.A.P.'s unsolicited advice and uncalled for criticisms in the manner its ad hoc bodies such as the National Goodwill Council (N.G.C.) and National Consultative Council (N.C.C.) were run. This would hamper what the government regarded as the smooth administration of these bodies. The government's attitude was premised on the fact that the country was under emergency rule and the D.A.P.'s unnecessary criticisms would offend the Malays.. This would aggravate an already existing bad situation which it was trying very hard to improve. The government also resented the fact that the D.A.P., unlike the other parties, had insisted on conditions which appeared unacceptable before it agreed to participate in the ad hoc bodies. For instance, the D.A.P. insisted on having Lim Kit Siang (who was then in detention under the I.S.A.) as its representative in the N.C.C. as a condition for its participation, a move rejected by the government. The D.A.P. on its part felt that the ad hoc bodies in which the other political parties were represented would be meaningless if the government continued to disregard or did not take seriously any advice that they might offer on the grounds that the Malays felt offended by such advice. In the D.A.P.'s view, any non-acceptance of what it considered legitimate criticisms would turn these bodies into mere rubber stamps. If the government appeared to magnify the gravity of the situation, the D.A.P. was inclined to overlook the fact that the country was under emergency rule. When the country prepared for the restoration of Parliamentary rule in February 1971, the D.A.P. regarded the threat by Tun Razak that the country would not revert to Par-

7. For full details, see Jerome Bass, Malaysian Politics, 1968-1970: Crisis and Response, Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1973, pp. 459-77.

liamentary rule unless the Alliance obtained the required two-thirds majority (to amend the Constitution to ban the public discussion of sensitive issues) as political blackmail. Thus when the Constitutional Amendments were tabled in Parliament in February 1971, the D.A.P.'s 13 M.P.'s (together with the 4 P.P.P. M.P.'s) predictably voted against them. The party believed that the amendments had restricted the traditional right of M.P.'s to speak freely in Parliament. This was tantamount to the government making a mockery of democracy. Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. regarded the coalitions with the opposition parties as a drift towards a one-party state.[8] The D.A.P. charged the government with intending to eliminate the opposition, first by suppression (as in the case of the L.P.M. and now increasingly itself), and then by absorption (as in the case of the G.R.M. and P.P.P.).[9] It warned U.M.N.O. that if the latter believed that by bringing the opposition parties into its fold, it could also secure their following, then it (U.M.N.O.) would be sadly mistaken. What would eventuate, according to the D.A.P., would be a withdrawal of support for the opposition parties concerned, unless U.M.N.O. resolved satisfactorily the political, social, economic and educational grievances of the non-Malays, the traditional supporters of the opposition parties which had joined the coalitions.[10] The D.A.P. stressed that the coalitions were attempts by U.M.N.O. to give legitimacy to its suppression of the frustration of the non-Malays. The party's reactions were principally the views of Lim Kit Siang. Following his release from deten-

8. See Parliamentary speech, "Democratisation of Malaysian Life", on 11th May, 1972 in Lim Kit Siang, Time Bombs in Malaysia, 2nd Ed., D.A.P., Kuala Lumpur, 1978, p. 17. See also his speech on coalition politics at the Fourth Great Economics Debate at the University of Malaya, Malay Mail, 26th August, 1972.

9. Ibid. See also D.A.P. charge by Lee Lam Thye that the N.F. was a strategy aimed to reduce genuine Parliamentary democracy. New Straits Times, 5th March, 1973.

10. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 17.

tion, Lim Kit Siang had become something of a martyr to the party. As Secretary-General, he had consolidated his power in the C.E.C. after the challenge from Goh Hock Guan was stopped. Of the D.A.P. leaders, the government regarded Lim Kit Siang as an extremist, pandering to Chinese chauvinism, the reason for which he was detained under the I.S.A. Kit Siang's views, (see preceding Chapter) indicated that the party must not deviate from what it stood for by the 1967 Setapak Declaration and its abrasive style in the status quo ante.[11] This appeared to be doubtful following the D.A.P.'s unsuccessful secret merger talks with the M.C.A. (see preceding Chapter). Hence it could be surmised that the D.A.P.'s condemnation of the coalitions reflected its moves to wipe out the stigma of disgrace which was attached to it following the failure of the talks. Attempts to do this had already been underway earlier, during the party's leadership struggle when Kit Siang blamed the D.A.P.'s blunder in the talks on Goh Hock Guan to clear himself. In condemning the coalitions, the D.A.P. hoped to draw attention to its pre-1969 fearless and combative role to win the support of what it perceived as a growing anti-establishment mood in the urban areas, especially in Penang and Perak, the strongholds of the G.R.M. and the P.P.P. Since the 1959 general elections, these areas had never supported the M.C.A. because of what the predominantly Chinese electorate considered as excessively pro-Malay policies by the Alliance government. Their support had been given to the Socialist Front (S.F.) in Penang and the P.P.P. in the Kinta District of Perak. Even during the 1964 general elections, when the whole country appeared to support the Alliance owing to Indonesian Confrontation and the M.C.A. did remarkably well, these areas continued to remain solidly pro-opposition.[12] In the 1969 general elections, with the mood of the urban

11. See Appendix A.

12. The most prominent were the Parliamentary constituencies of Tanjong and Dato Keramat in Georgetown (Penang) and Ipoh and Menglembu in Perak. In the 1964 general elections, Tanjong went to Dr. Lim Chong Eu of the United Democratic Party(U.D.P.) while Lim Kean Siew retai-

electorate strongly anti-Alliance, the opposition candidates from the G.R.M. and the P.P.P. won by unprecedented majorities in these areas.[13] This had lent credence to the D.A.P.'s allegation that the urban electorate in these areas voted for the G.R.M. and the P.P.P. more in protest against the Alliance than their support for these parties.[14] The D.A.P. rationalised that with the 1971 Constitutional Amendments, the traditional anti-establishment mood of these areas would be re-inforced as a sign of protest. It was with this priority in mind that the D.A.P. directed its attacks mainly on the G.R.M. and the P.P.P., but also to a lesser extent on the M.C.A.

The G.R.M.

The D.A.P. had not been on friendly terms with the G.R.M. since the latter's inception in early 1968 from the moderate remnants of the L.P.M. (Dr. Tan Chee Khoon, V.Veerappan and V.David), the U.D.P. (Dr. Lim Chong Eu) and a group of intellectuals, Professors Syed Hussein Alatas, Wang Gungwu and Dr. J.B.A.Peter. The D.A.P.'s initial dislike for the G.R.M. was its fear that the latter would be a serious rival to it in the fight for the growing anti-Alliance mood as a prelude to the 1969 general elections. It also believed that the G.R.M. was divided on important issues like language and culture. This belief appeared vindicated in the Big Cultural Debate in late 1968 between the 2 parties when the D.A.P. attributed

ned Dato Keramat for the S.F. In Perak, the Seenivasagam brothers retained the seats of Ipoh and Menglembu respectively.

13. Straits Times, 12th May, 1969. Part of the reason for the resounding victories was the electoral pact in which the opposition parties engaged in straight fights with the Alliance.

14. See Lim Kit Siang's speech on coalition politics, Malay Mail, 26th August, 1972.

the G.R.M.'s stand on language and culture to be more extreme than U.M.N.O.'s, based on the views of Dr. Syed Naguib Alatas, brother of Professor Syed Hussein Alatas, the G.R.M.'s Chairman.[15] Dr. Naguib's stand appeared to the D.A.P. to conflict with that of Dr. Tan Chee Khoon and Dr. Lim Chong Eu, who were reportedly in favour of multi-lingualism. Despite this mutual hostility, the D.A.P. came to an electoral understanding with the G.R.M. in which each pledged not to contest against the other in the 1969 general elections so as to effect straight fights with Alliance candidates. This arrangement, which was acknowledged by both parties as no more than a marriage of convenience, arose after the Alliance (M.C.A.) victory in the Serdang (Selangor) state by-election in early 1969. In that by-election, caused by the detention of the S.F. incumbent, Karam Singh, who had held the seat since 1959, the G.R.M. split the opposition vote to enable the M.C.A. to beat the D.A.P. in a three-cornered fight.[16] Both parties realized from the experience at Serdang that if they contested against each other in three or multi-cornered fights, Alliance candidates would win as a result of a split in the opposition vote. After the 1969 general elections, signs of an open rift between the two parties developed. The D.A.P. was offended by the G.R.M.'s rejection of its call (together with the P.P.P.) to form coalition governments in the deadlocked results of both the Selangor

15. Lim Kit Siang, the D.A.P.'s main speaker, accused Dr. Syed Naguib Alatas of planning to Indonesianise multi-racial and multi-cultural Malaysia through cultural and linguistic uniformity based on Malay. For the full text of Kit Siang's speech, see "The Big Cultural Debate" in Who Lives if Malaysia Dies? D.A.P.'s Case for a Multi-racial Society, D.A.P., Petaling Jaya, 1969, pp. 71-94. The debate, which lasted some 5 hours, settled nothing between the 2 parties. On the contrary, it created even more bitterness. Dr. Naguib resigned from the G.R.M. shortly after the debate, to the relief of Dr. Tan Chee Khoon and Dr. Lim Chong Eu. Nancy L. Snider,"Race, Leitmotiv of the Malayan Election Drama", Asian Survey, Vol. X No.12, December 1970, pp. 1071-87.

16. The result of the by-election was as follows: Alliance 6,535 D.A.P. 5,928 G.R.M. 1,330. Sunday Times, 6th January, 1969.

and Perak state assemblies.[17] Although the results indicated otherwise, the D.A.P. (and P.P.P.) seemed to believe that the G.R.M. had deliberately prevented the formation of D.A.P./ P.P.P. led coalition governments in Selangor and Perak.[18] The D.A.P. regarded the G.R.M.'s attitude as treacherous, since it believed that by keeping out of Penang, it had helped the G.R.M. to capture that state government in straight fights with the Alliance. The G.R.M.'s rejection of the D.A.P.'s call and its intention to remain neutral in the Selangor and Perak state assemblies demonstrated its concern to pacify the Malays who had become alarmed at the extent of the non-Malay opposition success in the 1969 general elections. Besides it could afford to ignore the D.A.P. since it had an absolute majority in Penang to form the state government by itself. As far as the G.R.M. was concerned, the marriage of convenience between the two parties was over. Following the period of N.O.C. rule in the country, the G.R.M. appeared to move closer to the Alliance. The Central Government controlled the funds necessary for Penang's development (including the construction of a bridge linking the island and the mainland) which the G.R.M. had promised the Penang electorate in the 1969 general elections. It would therefore be in the interests of the island to cultivate and maintain good relations with Kuala Lumpur to effect developmental aid for Penang. If the G.R.M. moved closer to the Alliance, it was moving further away from the D.A.P. Dr. Lim Chong Eu repeatedly spurned what he considered to be unsolicited advice from the D.A.P., particularly from its Penang Chairman and state assemblyman, Yeap Ghim Guan, as

17. The deadlocked results were as follows:
Selangor: Alliance 14 D.A.P. 9 G.R.M. 4 Ind. 1 (Total 28)
Perak: Alliance 19 P.P.P. 12 D.A.P. 6 G.R.M. 2 P.A.S. 1 (Total 40) Straits Times, 12th May, 1969.

18. Even if the G.R.M. agreed to join the D.A.P./ P.P.P. coalition in both states, all 3 parties combined could not effect a simple majority in the deadlocked results as indicated in Footnote 17.

regards how the state government should be run. Apparently angry at being repeatedly spurned, the D.A.P. retaliated by accusing the G.R.M. of betraying the trust of the Penang electorate in pointing to the increasing rapport between the G.R.M. and the Alliance. The D.A.P.'s intention was to show that the G.R.M. was no different from the M.C.A., which the Penang voters had completely rejected at the 1969 general elections. Several developments within the G.R.M. appeared to vindicate the D.A.P.'s charge. The G.R.M. had voted with the Alliance in the 1971 Constitutional Amendment Bill, a move portrayed by the D.A.P. as pro-Malay, and by implication, anti-Chinese. In mid-1971, the G.R.M. itself split into 2 factions over Dr. Lim Chong Eu's overtly increasing pro-Alliance attitude regarding Penang's relationship with the Central Government.[19] The rival faction headed by Dr. Tan Chee Khoon became Parti Keadilan Masyarakat (PEKEMAS) with basically the same aims as the G.R.M. at its inception in 1968. With the departure of its prominent leaders at both Parliamentary and State levels, Dr. Lim Chong Eu was virtually alone, thereby being forced to move even closer to the Alliance to maintain his shaky position.[20] The fact that Dr. Lim Chong Eu was once a President of the M.C.A. was not lost on the D.A.P. as regards his increasingly close association with the Alliance.[21] The D.A.P. suggested that he had returned

19. For full details, see Straits Times, various issues, from 18th June to 12th July, 1971.

20. The prominent leaders who resigned were Professor Syed Hussein Alatas, Dr. Tan Chee Khoon, V.Veerappan, V.David, Yeoh Teck Chye and Mustapha Hussein. In Parliament, Dr. Lim was the only G.R.M. M.P. left of the 8 who were elected in 1969. At state level, the G.R.M.'s 16 assemblymen were reduced to 13, having a bare majority of 1. Dr. Lim was thus forced to turn to the 4 U.M.N.O. assemblymen for support.

21. Dr. Lim, then a leading "Young Turk", had defeated Tan Cheng Lock, the incumbent President, for the M.C.A. Presidency in 1958 by 89 votes to 67. R.K.Vasil, Politics in a Plural Society: A Study of Non-communal Political Parties in West Malaysia, East Asian Historical Monographs, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1971, Ch. I. He gave up the M.C.A. Presidency after the U.M.N.O./ M.C.A. crisis over the allocation of seats for the 1959 general elections. After a short interval, he formed the United Democratic Party (U.D.P.) in 1962.

to the fold of the Alliance after completing a circle from the M.C.A., the U.D.P., the G.R.M. and finally, back to the M.C.A.[22] Thus the D.A.P. justified its contention that the G.R.M. joined the N.F. coalition to prevent the dwindling of its political fortunes rather than to effect the interests of the Penang electorate which had voted it to power.

The P.P.P.

Compared to the G.R.M., the P.P.P. appeared closer to the D.A.P. in the sense that both parties shared common objectives of multi-lingualism, cultural democracy and antagonism towards Malay special privileges. The P.P.P. had tried to merge with the D.A.P.'s fore-runner, the P.A.P., but its overtures were turned down following the Singapore racial riots of 1964. Lee Kuan Yew had intended a political truce with the Alliance and therefore felt that formal links with an overtly anti-Malay party like the P.P.P. would be an obstacle. In turn the D.A.P. had always admired the vociferous anti-Alliance stand taken by the late P.P.P. leader, D.R.Seenivasagam.[23] Although prospects of a merger between the 2 parties appeared good in view of similar objectives, the P.P.P. feared that in such an event, it would be submerged by the larger and broader-based D.A.P. The P.P.P.'s fears were not entirely groundless. In the middle 1960s, the D.A.P. had established several branches in the P.P.P.'s stronghold in the Kinta Valley of Perak as part of its nation-wide expansion plans. The P.P.P. regarded this as efforts

22. For a justification of this view, see James Morgan,"Full Circle for Dr. Lim?", Far Eastern Economic Review, 25th December, 1971.

23. D.R.Seenivasagam became the first non-Malay opposition M.P. when he successfully contested the Ipoh-Menglembu Parliamentary by-election in late 1957 against the M.C.A. on a P.P.P. ticket. R.K.Vasil, op.cit., p.232. He retained the seat in both the 1959 and 1964 general elections. He had on many occasions spoken out strongly against the National Language, special privileges for Malays and publicly advocated equality for non-Malays. He died in March 1969.

by the D.A.P. to undercut its support, but this was denied by the D.A.P.[24] It was also alleged that the D.A.P. had induced the en-masse defections of P.P.P. local councillors and office bearers so that the D.A.P. actually came to control a former P.P.P. local council.[25] Despite these differences, their common antagonism towards the Alliance brought about an electoral pact which appeared to be more than a marriage of convenience for the 1969 general elections. Following the elections, the D.A.P. was prepared to help the P.P.P. come to power in Perak by forming a coalition government to include the G.R.M. and even P.A.S.[26] However this was not successful owing to the G.R.M. rejecting the proposal and the subsequent racial riot in Kuala Lumpur. The last semblance of a D.A.P. / P.P.P. unity was their common stand against the Constitutional Amendment Bill in February 1971. After it came into effect, the P.P.P., like the D.A.P., found its pre-1969 appeal became severely restricted. It realized that it would also face political isolation in the new era of accommodation politics. Added to this disadvantage was the intention of the Alliance to take control of the P.P.P.-administered Ipoh

24. In opening a D.A.P. branch in Ipoh in 1967, the then Secretary-General, Devan Nair, stated that "the object of the D.A.P. in setting up a branch was not to fight with the other opposition parties like the P.P.P. but rather to find a united front against the Alliance". Straits Times, 26th June, 1967, op.cit.

25. For details of the D.A.P.-induced P.P.P. en-masse defections, see The Guardian, Vol.I No.11, August 1967. These allegations were exploited by the M.C.A. to cause a rift between the P.P.P. and the D.A.P.

26. Since its inception, the P.P.P. had never really come so close to controlling a state government than after the 1969 general elections. Its leader, S.P.Seenivasagam, had even sought an audience with the Sultan of Perak to discuss the possibility of a P.P.P.-led coalition government. The P.P.P. intended to muster all 21 opposition state assemblymen (P.P.P. 12, D.A.P. 6, G.R.M. 2 and P.A.S. 1) so as to effect a simple majority of 2 against the Alliance's 19 members in the assembly. S.P.Seenivasagam wanted to make the sole P.A.S. representative the Speaker so as to neutralise his vote. This would appear rather far-fetched, since the P.A.S. assemblyman had publicly indicated his desire to back U.M.N.O. in the event of a non-Malay political threat. See Goh Cheng Teik, The May Thirteenth Incident and Democracy in Malaysia, Oxford in Asia Current Affairs, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, 1971, p.25.

Municipal Council as part of the Central Government's exercise of abolishing local councils initiated since 1971. As the P.P.P. was unwilling to lose its only semblance of political power, it rationalised that the only alternative was to come to terms with the Alliance, so that incumbent P.P.P. municipal councillors could still continue in office under the Alliance. Thus the P.P.P. regarded Tun Razak's offer of a coalition government in Perak as the only way out of its quandary in the prevailing circumstances. Besides Tun Razak's terms also appeared generous; state/federal funds could be procured to effect the Ipoh Municipal Council's development projects and the P.P.P. could also participate in the Perak state government, something it had always desired.[27] The D.A.P. was angry that its only ally after the 1969 racial riot had to chosen to desert it at the time it was facing increasing isolation. The D.A.P.'s anger at the P.P.P. appeared to be greater (compared to its dislike for the G.R.M.) since the former had shown itself not only to be opportunistic but cowardly as well. It therefore sought to discredit the P.P.P. by contrasting the conciliatory approach of S.P.Seenivasagam in coming to terms with the Alliance with the earlier strong anti-Alliance stand taken by the late D.R.Seenivasagam. It even went a step fur-

27. P.P.P leaders tried very hard to explain the justification of the coalition with the Alliance to their constituents. S.P.Seenivasagam and Khong Kok Yat stated that the P.P.P. wanted to do something constructive owing to a change in political realities in the country. Seenivasagam added that the P.P.P. faced these realities and accepted the fact it could only fulfil the expectations of its supporters by working closely with the Alliance. Straits Echo, 22nd May, 1972. Speaking at the Fourth Great Economics Debate at the University of Malaya, Seenivasagam said,"We cannot change the basic policies of the government, but we most certainly can ensure a more just implementation of those policies. If we stay out and maintain a confrontation with the Malays, the result will be chaos. Once we get a mandate from the people we represent, a coalition government cannot ignore their voice..." Malay Mail, 26th August, 1972, op. cit. He pledged that if there was bad faith, then the P.P.P. would pull out of the coalition government. Ibid. The P.P.P.'s lengthy explanations were designed to counter the D.A.P.'s charges that it had sold out the rights of the non-Malays it represented by coming to terms with the Alliance.

ther to allege that P.P.P. state assemblymen received bribes and favours when the P.P.P. joined the coalition, never failing to imply that the late D.R.Seenivasagam had once exposed a corruption scandal involving a government minister in the early 1960s.[28]

The M.C.A.

The D.A.P. also turned its attack on the M.C.A. This seemed to indicate that as far as it was concerned, the row with the M.C.A. over the leakage of the secret merger talks in mid-1971 was far from over. The D.A.P. felt that the M.C.A.'s raising of the principle of joining it (i.e. the M.C.A.) if the price was right, which it could not deny, had been particularly damaging to its credibility. Moreover the M.C.A. had been inducing its elected representatives and members to defect prior to its leadership struggle in mid-1972. Being aware that the M.C.A. appeared unhappy over the decision of U.M.N.O. to bring the G.R.M. and the P.P.P. into an extended N.F. because this would hamper its (i.e. the M.C.A.'s) efforts to regain Chinese support, the D.A.P. derided the M.C.A.'s inability to rebuild itself after its shattering defeat in the 1969 general elections.[29] The D.A.P. regarded the M.C.A.'s efforts to reorganize itself through the "new blood"

28. Lim Kit Siang alleged that a P.P.P. State Assemblyman was alienated 1,000 acres of oil palm land worth $100,000 in the district of Hutan Melintang in Lower Perak when the P.P.P. joined the Alliance coalition. See Parliamentary speech,"Corruption in High Political Places", in Lim Kit Siang, Time Bombs in Malaysia, 2nd ed, D.A.P.,Kuala Lumpur, 1978, p.46. For details of how the late D.R.Seenivasagam exposed the corruption scandal involving the former Education Minister, Rahman Talib, see Karl Von Vorys, Democracy without Consensus, Communalism and Political Stability in Malaysia, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1975, pp. 183-8.

29. See Lim Kit Siang's speech on coalition politics, Malay Mail, 26th August, 1972.

as mere propaganda which impressed no one, least of all U.M.N.O. That was why the latter had lost faith in the M.C.A.'s capability to canvass for Chinese votes and sought new non-Malay partners. It pointed out that even the M.C.A. victory at the Ulu Selangor by-election in June 1972 was due more to U.M.N.O.'s efforts, since the M.C.A. could not muster more than 30% of the total votes.[30] The D.A.P.'s tirades against the M.C.A. appeared to be a reaction to the latter's remarks that rabble-rousing and unwarranted criticisms on its (i.e. the D.A.P.'s) part were no solutions to the problems of the non-Malays in the new era of accommodation and development.[31]

In retrospect, the D.A.P.'s attacks against the non-Malay partners in the N.F. coalition appeared to be a show of resentment and defiance. It resented the fact that the government decided to isolate it by creating conditions not conducive to its survival unless it changed its basic policies. Lim Kit Siang decided to intensify the D.A.P.'s pre-1969 strategy in the feeling that if the government decided to isolate the D.A.P. politically, the D.A.P. would fight back with whatever means it had. The party rationalised that whatever the merits of the N.F. coalition as claimed by its former allies, the legitimate grievances of the non-Malays relating to their fundamental rights would not be resolved unless the basic pro-Malay policies of the government were reviewed. As in the old Alliance, where the roles of the M.C.A. and the M.I.C. appeared insignificant, the D.A.P.

30. Ibid.

31. For the M.C.A.'s views on coalition politics, see Michael Chen, "Changing Political Structures and Alignments" in Yong Mun Cheong ed., op.cit. See also Lew Sip Hon's speech delivered at the Fourth Great Economics Debate at the University of Malaya, Malay Mail, 26th August, 1972, and Tun Tan Siew Sin's speech delivered to the Historical Society of the University of Malaya on the dangers of venting racial issues in public, Suara Malaysia, 15th September, 1965.

believed that the G.R.M. and the P.P.P. would not be able to contain the dictatorial attitude of U.M.N.O. As such, contrary to their claims, they would be unable to effect meaningful changes to the advantage of the non-Malays whom they purportedly represented. The D.A.P. concluded that both the G.R.M. and the P.P.P. were only interested to preserve their identity and survival by coming to terms with U.M.N.O. By criticising its former allies, the D.A.P. hoped to supplant them in their traditional strongholds in the urban areas of Penang and Perak. The D.A.P.'s opportunity to do this came in the 1974 general elections. Charging that the G.R.M. and the P.P.P. had sold out non-Malay rights, the D.A.P. concentrated all its efforts in its bid to capture the state governments of Penang and Perak. Greatly handicapped by the cautious mood of the electorate, as the general elections were the first after the 1969 racial riot, the D.A.P. was unsuccessful in Penang. Dr.Lim Chong Eu's response of partially delivering the goods and the multi-cornered fights involving PEKEMAS, the P.S.R.M. and independents, were the contributing factors. However the D.A.P. succeeded in dislodging the P.P.P. from its stronghold in the Kinta Valley of Perak as the predominantly Chinese electorate could not reconcile itself with the P.P.P.'s about-turn stance which was not balanced by any significant manifestations of development as the P.P.P. had pledged.[32] In the 1978 general elections, the D.A.P. succeeded in making some headway in Penang, partly due to the rivalry between the M.C.A. and the G.R.M.[33] In Perak, it consolidated its 1974 victories in the Kinta Valley.

32. For full details, see Chandrasekaran Pillay, The 1974 General Elections in Malaysia: A Post-Mortem, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1974. In Penang, only 2 D.A.P state assemblymen were elected, but they subsequently defected to the M.C.A. In Perak, the D.A.P. won 11 state seats, defeating P.P.P. incumbents,including its strongman, S.P.Seenivasagam. The traditional P.P.P. Parliamentary strongholds of Ipoh and Menglembu were also wrested by the D.A.P.

33. The rivalry between the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. in Penang involved

(b) Local Government Elections

Local government in Peninsular Malaysia has always been associated with the towns and semi-urban areas. In the late 1960s, the structure of local government was as follows: Kuala Lumpur (Federal Capital), the 3 municipalities of Georgetown(Penang), Ipoh and Malacca, 37 town councils, 37 town boards, 7 district councils and 289 local councils which comprised some 60% of the new villages.[34] Elections to local bodies such as the above, had always been regarded as grass-roots democracy, where the people elected local representatives to run their own affairs. Local government elections were held from 1957 to 1963. It had been the practice of political parties to involve themselves in local government elections in addition to general elections. Thus what had been regarded as national issues such as language, culture and education, were brought within the realm of local politics in addition to what prospective candidates could offer personally to serve as local councillors. Local government elections were suspended in 1964, the year Indonesian Confrontation began. In 1965, their suspension was legislated, Confrontation being cited as the main reason. The Athi Nahappan Commission of Enquiry to study all aspects of local government in late 1971

the allocation of state seats for the 1978 general elections in Penang among the N.F. components. Owing to its dismal performance in the 1969 general elections, the M.C.A. was given only 3 seats to contest at state level in 1974. It won only 1, but managed to secure 3 more by inducing defections from PEKEMAS (1) and the D.A.P. (2). By 1978, the M.C.A. felt that it had sufficiently recovered from its 1969 debacle and that the Penang voters were getting dissatisfied with the G.R.M. Attempting to make a come-back, the M.C.A. demanded at least 8 seats at state level. The final N.F. decision however allocated the M.C.A. only 5 compared to the G.R.M.'s 11, U.M.N.O.'s 10 and M.I.C.'s 1. Obviously unhappy, the M.C.A. fielded "independents" against the G.R.M. to which the latter retaliated likewise. The result was that the D.A.P. benefitted from the split in the N.F. vote to wrest 5 state and 4 Parliamentary seats from the N.F. in Penang.

34. R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, op. cit., p. 284.

suggested the resumption of the suspended local government elections. However the recommendation was not followed and the government continued its abolition of elected local bodies by replacing elected local councillors with state-appointed members and restructuring the local bodies themselves in 1972.[35] Since 1976, the Local Government Act had restructured the then 374 local authorities (from municipalities to local new village councils) into 12 municipalities and about 90 district councils, with state-appointed councillors.[36]

The D.A.P.'s reaction to the continued suspension of local government elections was, predictably, unfavourable. As a party that was registered in 1966, a year after the suspension of local government elections was legislated, it never had the opportunity to participate in them, thereby testing its appeal at grass-roots level. Local government elections appeared important to the D.A.P. in terms of winning the Chinese vote. In the 10 most populous urban areas of Peninsular Malaysia, the racial composition was 29% Malay, 57% Chinese, 13% Indian and 2% Others.[37] In the municipalities of Georgetown, Ipoh and Malacca, the proportion of the Chinese was even higher in relation to the other races. As a Chinese-based party with its policies having a strong appeal for the Chinese, the D.A.P. rationalised that if such elections were held, it would be able to take control of several local bodies. Its rationalizations were premised on the victories of Chinese-based parties like the S.F. and P.P.P. in the earlier

35. For full details of the government's abolition of local government elections, see Paul Tennant,"The Decline of Elective Local Government in Malaysia", Asian Survey, Vol. XIII No. 4, April 1973, pp. 347-65.

36. R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, op. cit., p. 289.

37. Paul Tennant, op. cit., p. 347.

local government elections. These parties had been able to defeat the Alliance to take control of the municipalities of Georgetown (S.F.) and Ipoh (P.P.P.) exclusively, or by coalitions with other parties such as the U.D.P. in the case of the town councils like Taiping and Seremban.[38] The D.A.P. believed that control of local bodies would enable it to build up a strong power base to prepare itself for the State and Parliamentary elections.[39] If the D.A.P. had any hopes of controlling a state government, it believed that the necessary pre-requisite to this was to control the important local bodies in the state concerned, not withstanding the fact that state (and Parliamentary) constituency delimitations were gerrymandered in such a way as to favour the Malay vote. (This is to be discussed later). Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. was inclined to attribute the continued suspension of local government elections to U.M.N.O.'s alleged political motive of wanting to deprive the non-Malay majorities at the local level of position and influence.[40] In this Lim Kit Siang accused the government of not following the recommendation of the Athi Nahappan Report to resume the suspended local government elections, alleging that the ruling party, despite its support for democracy, did not openly accept the cardinal principle in democracy, that it should bow to the wishes of the electorate if the latter wanted a change of government.[41] The D.A.P.'s allegations seemed to suggest the intention of the Malay-led state governments to control local bodies either directly or indirectly. The latter case seemed more likely in view of the predominant Chinese population in the composition of the local bodies if

38. Ibid, pp. 347-65.

39. See Parliamentary speech, "Why Local Governments should be elected", on 11th February, 1972, in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., pp. 29-35.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid, p.31.

elections were held, at least theoretically. In such a situation, the Malay-led governments at state level would exercise control through M.C.A. elected local councillors, who would be responsible to the higher Malay authorities in the state governments. In practice, however, the likelihood of M.C.A. councillors being elected in predominantly Chinese local bodies to form exclusive Alliance-controlled local governments seemed remote, given what the average Chinese local government voter perceived as the M.C.A.'s weak and subservient role to U.M.N.O. in state and national politics. R.K.Vasil's analysis of the voting behaviour of the Malaysian electorate at state and national levels appears to validate this argument.[42] He concludes that voting followed racial lines and M.C.A. candidates could only hope to win in constituencies where the Malay minority was at least 30%.[43] Although Vasil's analysis refers only to State and Parliamentary elections, it also applies to local government elections, since the average Chinese voter for the State and Parliamentary elections was likely to vote in local council elections as well, if he happened to be in a local council area. Under these circumstances, M.C.A. local government candidates could only hope to win in local bodies with at least a 30% Malay minority. Alternatively, the Alliance could exercise power through coalitions with other parties or independents. It was thus very rare for the Alliance to have exclusive control in Chinese predominated local bodies through elections. On these grounds, the D.A.P. accused the government of wanting to kill democracy at grass-roots level by

42. R.K.Vasil, The Malayan General Election of 1969, Oxford in Asia Current Affairs, Oxford University Press, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, 1972, pp. 38-40.

43. Ibid. This assumes that the M.C.A. candidate is involved in a straight fight with a non-Malay opposition candidate and the Malay minority turns out in full force(at the persuasion of U.M.N.O.) to vote for the M.C.A. Any slight edge that the non-Malay opposition has over the M.C.A. would be offset by the solid Malay vote in the latter's favour. A way of ensuring the M.C.A.'s defeat in this situation is to split the Malay vote by the entry of a Malay party, e.g. P.A.S.

denying the non-Malays their right to choose their own representatives through local council elections to run their own affairs.

If the D.A.P. resented what it regarded as U.M.N.O.'s dictatorial attitude in continuing the suspension of local government elections, it was inclined to belittle the M.C.A. in the eyes of the Chinese. In this it referred to the state-appointed members to replace elected local councillors in the government's process of abolishing elected local bodies. As many of the appointed members were Chinese, it was obvious to the D.A.P. that they would be M.C.A. members. The D.A.P. alleged that the M.C.A. appointees were in the majority of cases, candidates defeated in the 1969 general elections who were trying to make a come-back to political power through U.M.N.O.'s authority via appointments.[44] It held that the M.C,A. was not in favour of local government elections because it (the M.C.A.) feared an even bigger defeat than the 1969 general elections.[45] Lim Kit Siang added that the M.C.A. appointees, including those holding responsible positions as in the case of Datuk Tan Cheng Swee(the Malacca Municipal Commissioner) would never be in their positions if elections were conducted.[46] The D.A.P.'s derision of the M.C.A. led it to suggest further that appointed councillors were inclined to be dishonest and corrupt. As they were not elected and therefore not answerable to their constituents, the D.A.P. alleged that appointed councillors could afford to be inefficient and neglect their responsibilities.[47] In making this allegation, the D.A.P. seemed to imply that elected local

44. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 32.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid, p. 33.

councillors appeared dedicated to their work as they had a responsibility to those who elected them. Thus the D.A.P. accused the M.C.A. of plotting with U.M.N.O. to kill grass-roots democracy by supporting the government legislation in 1972 to abolish elected local bodies. The D.A.P.'s scathing attacks on the M.C.A. over the issue of elected local government reflected its continuing struggle with its rival for the support of the Chinese in the urban areas and the new villages. The new era of accommodation and development ushered in by Tun Razak placed the M.C.A. at an advantage to undercut the D.A.P.'s support among the Chinese. Thus the D.A.P.'s outbursts against the M.C.A. along the lines of the latter's subservient role to U.M.N.O. were intended to blunt this challenge.

The government's decision to continue suspending local government elections, to abolish elected local bodies and restructure them eventually, were premised on both political and administrative reasons. In the government's view, they were inter-related. As regards political reasons, the government's rationale was that ultimate Malay control over local government was imperative if there was to be stability in post-1969 Malaysian politics. From previous experience, the M.C.A.'s record at local government elections was always poor. U.M.N.O. rationalised that if such elections were held in the prevailing period, there was no guarantee that the M.C.A would perform well, given its recent dismal performance at the 1969 general elections. As such U.M.N.O. would not be able to exercise indirect control over the local bodies through the M.C.A. Therefore it felt that the only way it could control local bodies was to have state-appointed members replacing elected local councillors. Besides, the non-co-operation between elected local bodies dominated by opposition parties and Alliance-led state governments in the past seemed to justify U.M.N.O.'s contention that local bodies should

have appointed members rather than elected ones.[48] Under these circumstances, whatever developmental plans local bodies(under the control of opposition parties) envisaged could be sabotaged. Thus to effect unhindered development, divergent political views had to be eliminated. As the state government was apparently in control of finance, it would appear that it had an advantage to insist that uniformity of political views be advocated. U.M.N.O. felt that this could be best achieved by having state-appointed councillors. As regards administrative reasons, it had been the tendency of previous elected councillors to engage in malpractices such as corruption and nepotism.[49] Although not all elected councillors were guilty, this stigma could not be erased. These malpractices were often at the expense of developmental funds. The government held that divergent political views and malpractices brought about stagnation in local bodies instead of progress. Thus it felt that by abolishing local bodies and restructuring them, divergent political views would be eliminated and development to include the provision of loans for minor projects and infrastructure facilities such as new roads, drains, public lavatories and street lighting, be effected.[50]

Thus it may be held that the D.A.P.'s criticisms of the abolition of local government elections touched on only one aspect of the problem, i.e. the political aspect dealing with the government's intention to do away with different political views. Although the D.A.P.'s criticisms derided the

48. Opposition-controlled local councils had in the past clashed with the Alliance-administered state governments. In this instance, the S.F.-controlled Georgetown Municipal Council had been reluctant to provide flags and illuminations to celebrate the end of emergency or the founding of Malaysia as requested by the Alliance-controlled Penang state government. R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, op. cit., p. 286.

49. Paul Tennant, op. cit., pp. 361-3.

50. For details of development in restructured local bodies, see New Straits Times, 2nd October, 1979 and 20th February, 1980.

M.C.A., they reflected its own frustration at not being given the opportunity to test its appeal at grass-roots level in the same way that the P.A.P. was being thwarted in 1965 when local council elections were suspended. Granted that they were resumed in accordance with the recommendation of the Athi Nahappan Report, there was no certainty that the D.A.P. would sweep Chinese predominated local bodies as it had given the impression that it was capable of doing so. There appears to be some justification for this contention when the D.A.P.'s popularity was tested against that of the M.C.A. in the Bekok state constituency by-election in 1971.' In that predominantly Chinese constituency in Johore, the D.A.P. was convincingly trounced by the M.C.A.[51] Assuming that this defeat may not be indicative of the non-acceptance of the D.A.P.'s abrasive style of politics in an era of accommodation and development, the fact that the government controlled the resources of development always placed the D.A.P. at a disadvantage. The D.A.P. was careful to avoid mentioning the administrative aspect of the problem which the government justified for abolishing elected local bodies. Beyond touching briefly on corruption which it attributed more to state-appointed councillors than elected ones, the D.A.P. avoided mentioning the inability of elected local councils to obtain funds for development. This difficulty was a major concern in that it was one of the problems of the P.P.P.-controlled Ipoh Municipal Council which led the P.P.P. leadership to accept the Alliance's offer of a coalition government in mid-1972. The absence of a long and deep-rooted tradition of local government among the Chinese in Peninsular Malaysia also made the D.A.P.'s call for the resumption of local government elections difficult.[52]

51. See Section (a) in Ch. II.

52. Paul Tennant, op. cit., p. 348.

(c) Constituency Delimitations

In Malaysia, where politics is based on race, constituency delimitations have played an important role in determining the vestiges of political power along the lines of race. Since the Malays control political power in the country, it has been the privilege of U.M.N.O., the dominant Malay party, to gerrymander Parliamentary and State constituencies in such a way as to guarantee and perpetuate Malay political supremacy. Constituency boundaries were drawn in such a way as to ensure to the Malays, political power disproportionate to their numbers in the country. Thus if the Malays comprised just over 50% of the country's population, the constituency delimitations guaranteed them at least 67% of the total seats in Parliament and the State Assemblies where they formed the majority of the voters. To the Malays, this was imperative to prevent the possibility of what they regard as a Chinese threat to take over the country via the ballot box. The 1957 bargain between U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A. had created liberal conditions in which the non-Malays could become citizens of the country. From 1955 to 1959, the proportion of non-Malay citizens in the country rose from 15.1% (Chinese 11.2% and Indians 3.9%) to 43% (Chinese 35.6% and Indians 7.4%) as a result of these liberal citizenship laws and the active citizenship recruitment drive by the M.C.A.[53] The Malays felt that as more and more

53. In 1955 when the first general elections were held, the Malays comprised some 84.2% of the electorate and formed the majority in 50 out of 52 Federal constituencies as against the Chinese forming only 11.2% of the electorate and predominating in only 2 constituencies, i.e. Georgetown (Penang) and Ipoh-Menglembu(Perak). The Alliance under Tunku Abdul Rahman however fielded 35 Malay, 15 Chinese, 1 Indian and 1 Ceylonese candidates respectively for the 1955 general elections. In 1959, the Malays comprised 56.8% of the electorate and predominated in 66 out of a total of 104 constituencies. K.J. Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1965, p.201.

non-Malays became citizens, their voting strength (and thereby political power) was also liable to be increased to the point that ultimately they would challenge the very basis (i.e. Malay political supremacy) of how the nation was built. This fear of the Malays was manifested in the under-representation of Singapore in the Federal Parliament when Singapore was in Malaysia from 1963-5.[54] Therefore the constituencies had to be gerrymandered in such a way that this possibility would not arise. The gerrymandering of the constituencies was also a means by the Malays to have at least two-thirds of all Parliamentary seats to amend the Constitution to forestall any possible change in the political situation that might disadvantage them.

From the D.A.P.'s point of view, the gerrymandering of Parliamentary and State constituencies to favour the Malays appeared to be the most glaring manifestation of political imbalance against the non-Malays and the urban areas. Disregarding the arguments of history that Malaysia was first and foremost a Malay country, it attributed this to the government's non-adherence to the principle of one-man-one-vote, considered to be the cardinal principle in Parliamentary democracy, which the government professed to uphold. The D.A.P.'s strategy in stressing this principle was to dwell on the increasing disparity between the rural and the urban areas, highlighting the incidental disadvantage of the latter. As rural and urban areas coincide with Malay and Chinese constituencies, the D.A.P. was in fact harping on the political imbalance against the Chinese. Lim Kit Siang argued that the rural/urban disparity,which he associated with the strengthening of the Malay vote and the corresponding dilution of the Chinese vote, was increasing

54. Singapore which accounted for about 16% of the total population of Malaysia was given only 15 seats(9.3%) out of a total of 159. In exchange, it was given autonomy in labour and education. R.K.Vasil, The Malayan General Election of 1969, p. 6.

rather than decreasing. This negated the principle of political equality for all Malaysians, which was guaranteed by Parliamentary democracy. He stated that rural constituencies had an advantage of 15% in the number of voters vis-a-vis urban constituencies as recommended by the Elections Commission in 1960.[55] However, U.M.N.O. was not satisfied with this and successfully sought an amendment to the Constitution in 1962 to provide for a 100% advantage for rural areas. U.M.N.O.'s amendment meant that the number of rural voters need be as few as half that of urban voters, its rationale being that this was necessary to overcome difficulties of area and communication to effect better rural representation.[56] In 1973, the D.A.P. pointed out that U.M.N.O. sought another amendment to the effect that the advantage enjoyed by rural constituencies was not to be bound by limits in percentage terms so long as difficulties of area and communication were present.[57] The D.A.P. held that under these circumstances, there was going to be no limit in the strength of the rural vote in relation to the urban vote and concluded that the urban vote might as well lose all its effectiveness and thereby, its value altogether. It cited the redrawing of the existing Parliamentary

55. See Parliamentary speech,"The Disenfranchisement of Kuala Lumpur" on 9th July, 1973 in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 243.

56. The 1962 Constitution Amendment Bill to approve a new basis of constituency delimitation, was moved by Tun Razak. It was as follows:

> "These are known and accepted principles and were taken into account when delimiting the present constituencies. There is therefore no new principle which has been brought in. One of these principles is the weightage of rural constituencies for area. Basically the number of constituencies in each area ought to be approximately equal except that having regard to the greater difficulty of reaching electors in country districts and other disadvantages affecting rural constituencies, weightage for area may be given to rural constituencies to the extent that in certain instances, rural constituencies may contain as little as half the number of electors in an urban constituency." Ibid, op. cit.

57. Ibid.

constituency boundaries to provide for an increase of 10 constituencies in Peninsular Malaysia from 104 to 114 in view of Kuala Lumpur becoming a Federal Territory in the early 1970s.[58] The greater portion of the increase, according to the D.A.P., occurred in the east coast states of Kelantan and Pahang with 2 constituencies each. This reflected U.M.N.O.'s intention as part of the coalition deal to appease P.A.S. by providing 2 extra constituencies in Kelantan, the latter's stronghold, and then balancing this by an equal number of constituencies in Pahang, its own stronghold. In both cases, the D.A.P. contended that the disadvantage worked towards the non-Malays. Even in Penang and Perak, the non-Malay predominated states, where an increase of one Parliamentary constituency each occurred, the D.A.P. was inclined to argue that the extra seat went to the rural (Malay) rather than the urban (Chinese) areas.[59] At the same time, the D.A.P. expressed its concern that the government was determined to dilute further the already weakened Chinese vote. Selangor, a Chinese-majority state, lost 3 Parliamentary constituencies from 14 to 11 when Kuala Lumpur became a Federal Terri-

58. The new Parliamentary constituency delimitations for the 1974 and subsequent general elections were as follows:

State	Present	Previous
Federal Territory	5	-
Johore	16	16
Kedah	13	12
Kelantan	12	10
Malacca	4	4
Negri Sembilan	6	6
Pahang	8	6
Perak	21	20
Penang	9	8
Perlis	2	2
Selangor	11	14
Trengganu	7	6
Total	114	104

Source: Yong Mun Cheong ed., Trends in Malaysia (2), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1974, pp. 11-2.

59. In Penang, the increase in one Parliamentary constituency was effected by the redrawing of the former Malay-predominated constituency of Seberang Utara (Province Wellesley North) into 2 new constituencies, Permatang Pauh and Kepala Batas. In Perak, similarly, the Malay-

tory. These constituencies, the D.A.P. held, were predominantly Chinese. At the state level, the D.A.P. charged that 9 predominantly Chinese constituencies held by the opposition in the vicinity of Kuala Lumpur during the 1969 general elections were abolished. As regards both the redrawing of new constituency boundaries and the transformation of Kuala Lumpur into a Federal Territory, the D.A.P. pointed out that the measures effected an accommodation of the migration of large numbers of Malays to the urban areas, a split in the concentration of anti-N.F. voters in marginal constituencies, and the lumping of the growing numbers of pro-opposition voters into the already over-crowded urban constituencies held by the opposition. The migration of large numbers of Malays into the urban areas, encouraged by the government to fulfil the aims of the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.) after the 1969 racial riot to create a visible Malay industrial and commercial community, had transformed traditional non-Malay-majority constituencies in the urban areas like Setapak in Kuala Lumpur, to Malay-majority constituencies, thereby justifying Malay (U.M.N.O.) Parliamentary candidates. The split in the concentration of anti-government voters in marginal constituencies had dispersed them to other pro-government areas, thus making the constituencies concerned "unsafe" for the opposition. This was evident in the case of Damansara in Kuala Lumpur. Finally the lumping of the increase of growing numbers of anti-government voters into a few concentrated areas as in the case of Ipoh in Perak and Bungsar (renamed Petaling) in Selangor made the D.A.P. suggest that the non-Malay increase in voting strength was meaningless without a corresponding increase in the number of their constituencies.

predominated constituency of Krian Darat was redrawn into 2 new constituencies, Parit Buntar and Bagan Serai. Before they were redrawn, the 2 original constituencies in Penang and Perak had roughly half the number of voters of their urban counterparts in both states. It would appear that with the redrawn boundaries, the ratio had fallen from $\frac{1}{2}$: 1 to $\frac{1}{4}$: 1 in favour of the rural constituencies.

The D.A.P.'s criticisms over the gerrymandering of both Parliamentary and State constituencies reflected its frustration and concern that no matter how hard it tried, it could never hope to win more than a third of the total number of seats in Parliament. As a Chinese-based party operating from the urban areas, the D.A.P. found that its Parliamentary representation could at the most be limited to the 22 Chinese-predominated and some of the 13 "mixed" constituencies in which the non-Malays formed a slight majority.[60] This assumed that voting would be along racial lines and that polarization was highest. Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. realized that it would always be a minority in Parliament, even if it were to succeed in wresting all the non-Malay constituencies held by the M.C.A. and the G.R.M., a remote possibility to say the least. If the situation was bad for the D.A.P. at Parliamentary level,it was even worse at state level where the gerrymandering was even more lop-sided in favour of the Malays. Out of the 312 state constituencies in all state assemblies in Peninsular Malaysia for the 1974 and subsequent general elections, only 51 and 25 were Chinese-dominated and mixed respectively, leaving 236 dominated by the Malays.[61] The D.A.P. felt that the gerrymandering of electoral constituencies was specifically aimed to curb its power and expansion plans. This was evident in Selangor where its strength was the greatest compared to the other states. At Parliamentary level, although there was a marked increase in the number of non-Malay voters, the D.A.P. claimed that the number of non-Malay constituencies did not increase. It was in Bungsar, the D.A.P.'s Parliamentary

60. For a breakdown of Parliamentary and State constituencies in Peninsular Malaysia for the 1974 and subsequent general elections, see Appendix in Ismail Kassim,Race, Politics and Moderation: A Study of the Malaysian Electoral Process, Times Books International, Singapore, 1979. The number of Malay-majority constituencies for Parliament has increased from 66 in 1959 to 79 in 1974. At the same time, the non-Malay-majority constituencies decreased from 38 to 35.

61. Ibid.

constituency first won by the P.A.P. in 1964, that the party accused the government of diluting the non-Malay vote. As early as 1967, the then Secretary-General, Devan Nair, had stated that Bungsar's then electorate of 69,021 was only a third as effective as the Kuala Kedah constituency of Tunku Abdul Rahman, the former Prime Minister, with 33,775 votes.[62] Devan Nair's contention was that one rural vote from Kuala Kedah was equivalent to 3 urban votes from Bungsar. Lim Kit Siang cited figures to show that over the years, the disadvantaged position of the urban vote had aggravated. In 1969, he stated that the disparity between urban and rural votes had increased to the former's disadvantage where 6 urban votes from Bungsar (81,086 in 1969) were necessary to match 1 rural vote from Johor Tenggara (13,821 in 1969).[63] The transformation of Kuala Lumpur into a Federal Territory was regarded by the D.A.P. as the government's intention to forestall any plans it might have of taking over the Selangor state government. In the 1969 general elections, the D.A.P. had won 9 state constituencies out of a total of 28, the majority of them within the vicinity of Kuala Lumpur where the non-Malays predominated. Although the motive of the government appeared to be to forestall future deadlocked election results as in 1969 when the Alliance and the combined opposition tied 14 : 14, the D.A.P. nevertheless believed that the government intended to reduce its representation to minimal by abolishing the 9 previous state constituencies it held.[64]

The D.A.P.'s other and more urgent concern was the possibility

62. The Guardian, October 1967.

63. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 242.

64. Ibid, p. 239.

that it might lose some of the Parliamentary and State constituencies that it currently held. The redrawing of certain boundaries had either made the marginal constituencies more favourable to the government(as in the case of Damansara in Kuala Lumpur) or amalgamated D.A.P. strongholds with those of other non-Malay opposition parties(as in the case of Kuala Lumpur Bandar).[65] This meant that not only would the D.A.P. have to field strong candidates to take on the government challenge, but also that of a third non-Malay opposition party. The D.A.P. felt that the government's intention behind such a move was to split the opposition vote so that it would win. Under the circumstances of increasing support for the accommodation and development features of Tun Razak's administration and the ban on the public discussion of sensitive issues prior to the 1974 general elections, the D.A.P.'s fears were more real than apparent.

The D.A.P.'s actions to get the partial constitutional delimitations redrawn more impartially to the non-Malays were restricted to merely expressing protests that the government was not following the one-man-one-vote principle which would in fact have led to some form of proportional representation, and calling for increases in the number of non-Malay constituencies. Lim Kit Siang called for an increase of 3 (instead of 1) constituencies for Penang and Perak so that their new representation would be 11 (instead of 9) in Penang and 23(instead of 21) in Perak.[66] He also wanted the number of seats in the Federal Territory to be increased to 10 (instead of 5) in view of the large population. This was to effect a fairer re-adjustment of the glaring disparity between the average numbers of voters in rural areas (20,000) and urban areas (45,000) per constituency.[67]

65. The D.A.P. lost Damansara to the M.I.C. in the 1974 general elections by a split vote in a 3-cornered fight.

66. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 245. 67. Ibid.

The gerrymandering of both Parliamentary and State constituencies reflected the fear of the Malays, especially U.M.N.O., that the non-Malays had intentions of taking over the country through elections, as they had attempted in 1969. Under such circumstances, the principle of political equality which would weaken the existing political supremacy of the Malays vis-a-vis the Chinese, could not be allowed. The D.A.P.'s call for the increase of non-Malay constituencies expressed its concern that the non-Malay vote was diluted and they could not have their fair share of political power in the country. Underlying the D.A.P.'s call for the adherence of the one-man-one-vote principle was its fear that the Malays with their overwhelming voting strength indiscriminately amended the Constitution each time they felt that their political supremacy was threatened. The D.A.P.'s rationale was that proportional representation would mitigate this measure to safeguard the fundamental interests of the non-Malays.

(d) The Essential Security Regulations and the Internal Security Act.

In October 1975, the government decreed 2 sets of complementary emergency regulations, the Essential(Community Self-Reliance)Regulations and the Essential(Security Cases)Regulations. These were designed to counter the recent resurgence of terrorism by the Malayan Communist Party (M.C.P.), particularly in 1974 and 1975. The new emergency regulations granted almost absolute and arbitrary powers to the Home Affairs Ministry where internal security was concerned. This meant that on the slightest grounds of suspicion that a person constituted a security risk, he could be charged under the new emergency regulations. Further, the right of suspects to be brought before a magistrate for trial within 24 hours of their arrest was replaced by indefinite periods of detention. Predictably there were strong protests from the Bar Council of Malaysia and the D.A.P. They argued that the new emergency regulations were an over-reaction to the internal security problem and a gross violation of human rights and constitutional guarantees in the country.

The early 1970s saw a marked revival of communist terrorist activities which paralleled those of the Emergency of 1948-60. Acts of terrorism were varied, and for the first time, extended to the urban areas of Peninsular Malaysia. They were designed to instil fear and despondency, and to show the government that despite Tun Razak's visit to China in 1974 to pave the way for the establishment of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and China, the M.C.P.'s traditional supporter, the M.C.P. would still continue the struggle against the government, with or without China's support.[68]

68. For details of Tun Razak's visit to China, see M.G.G.Pillai,"The Road to Peking", Far Eastern Economic Review, 13th May, 1974, "Opening the door to Co-operation",F.E.E.R., 27th May 1974and "Blazing the Peking Trail", F.E.E.R., 10th June, 1974.

The first major assault against the government was on the East-West Highway project near Grik in north Perak on 23rd May 1974 when about 100 terrorists blew up earth-moving equipment valued at nearly $15 million.[69] This was an attempt to disrupt transportation in the country's economic development programmes. Hardly a month later on 7th June 1974, the Inspector-General of Police (I.G.P.) and a former head of the Special Branch, the intelligence wing of the police, Tan Sri Abdul Rahman Hashim, was assassinated in broad daylight in Kuala Lumpur during the lunch hour traffic jam.[70] This was a follow-up to the attacks against the Special Branch when 5 Chinese officers of the Branch were killed between 1973 and 1974. The communist victories in Cambodia and Vietnam in April 1975 seemed to encourage the M.C.P. to intensify its "war of liberation". Casualties were inflicted on the security forces in Perak and Kedah.[71] Shortly in the early hours of the morning on 26th August 1975, the National Monument, which was built to commemorate the nation's declaration of the end of the Emergency in 1960, was partly blown up.[72] The government had hardly recovered from this shock when hand-grenades were thrown into the headquarters of the para-military police force in Kuala Lumpur, killing 2 constables and wounding 41 others.[73] Attacks against the Special Branch continued with the assassination of the Chief Police Officer of Perak, Koo Chong Kong.[74] As in the past, the M.C.P.'s terrorism was

69. See R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, op.cit., p.317 and Far Eastern Economic Review, 10th June, 1974, p. 15.

70. For full details, see Harvey Stockwin, "A Deadly Pattern from the Past", F.E.E.R., 17th June, 1974, pp.14-6. The assassins were officially identified as a Chinese and a Malay from the M.C.P. and the reasons given for the assassination were personal. This was to prevent an exacerbation of racial tension leading to possible racial riots.

71. See K.Das, "The Terrorists go to Town", F.E.E.R., 12th September, 1975, pp. 10-1. Based on official count, 24 soldiers were killed and 49 wounded between 7th and 11th April, 1975.

72. See K.Das, "Striking at the Heart of a Nation", F.E.E.R., 5th September, 1975, pp. 28-9.

73. See K.Das, "The Terrorists go to Town", F.E.E.R., 12th September, 1975, pp. 10-1.

74. See K.Das, "Malaysia prepares for total war", F.E.E.R., 26th December, 1975, pp. 23-5.

portrayed as a struggle for a "cause". Whereas the cause in the 1948 Emergency was for the country's independence (via a Communist Republic) against British colonialism, the cause in the 1970s appeared to be for the overthrow of class oppression and racial discrimination by the government. Basically, as in the past, the M.C.P.'s appeal was directed towards the Chinese masses who had been the victims of race and class discrimination as a result of the government's post-1969 policies.[75]

The government considered the communist challenge as a grave threat to the nation's security in view of its motives and dimensions. It classified the threat into 2 aspects - military and subversive - for the purpose of meting out counter-insurgency measures. Militarily, the government appeared confident of defeating the M.C.P.(as it had done so in the 1948 Emergency with British military aid) with the expansion of the police force, the reorganization of the Special Branch and military collusion with Thailand and Indonesia.[76] However subversion could pose serious problems as it was usually by subtle means. Previous experience had shown that the M.C.P. had infiltrated schools, trade unions, old boys associations and left-wing political parties to subvert the government as in the case of Singapore in the

75. F.E.E.R., 12th September, 1975, pp. 10-1. A leaflet published by the "People's Army for the liberation of Malaysia" was found in Ipoh, Perak, on 3rd July 1975 during the height of urban guerilla terrorism. It accused the government of reneging on the 1957 Merdeka contract to practise racial and class discrimination against the Chinese. The leaflet urged the Chinese to stand up and fight for their just rights.

76. The government announced that from 1973 to 1975, 150 terrorists were killed and 709 surrendered. New Straits Times, 5th February, 1976. The strength of the police force depleted after the Emergency ended in 1960, was increased by 20,000 members. Both the Police Field Force, concerned with anti-terrorist operations mostly in the jungle, and the Special Branch, were reorganized by providing incentives such as pay increases and decorations in recognition of public services on police officers by the King. R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, op. cit., p. 319. Joint military exercises with Thailand against the terrorists in the Malayan-Thai border were stepped up and more officers of the Malaysian army were sent to Indonesia for military training.

1950s and 1960s. As the M.C.P. was predominantly Chinese, it was obvious to the government that its subversion would be directed at the large Chinese community, particularly in view of Chinese grievances. This did not mean that the government considered the Malays impervious to communist subversion. Indeed the detention of 2 prominent Malays, Samad Ismail, the managing editor of the New Straits Times, and Mohamed Samani, assistant editor of the Berita Harian , revealed that the Malays were also vulnerable to communist subversion. Their public confession leading to the arrest of 2 Malay deputy ministers in late 1976, affirmed this.[77] The government's most effective weapon to deal with subversion was the Internal Security Act (I.S.A.). The I.S.A., a legacy of the 1948 Emergency Powers and Regulations of the executive to effect indefinite preventive detention without trial to uphold national security, was legislated in 1960.[78] It has since formed the cornerstone of both the N.F. and P.A.P. rule in Malaysia and Singapore, and is the most feared legislation by the government's opponents. In view of the dimension and sophistry of the latest communist subversion, the government felt that the I.S.A. should be strengthened and supplemented by new emergency regulations. Several factors were considered before the government decreed the new regulations. There was no need to declare another state of emergen-

77. Samad Ismail was detained in June 1976 for suspected communist activities shortly after he had received a top literary award. His arrest was a follow-up to the detention-cum-public confession of 2 Malay journalists in Singapore by Lee Kuan Yew for communist activities. On 1st September 1976, Samad confessed on television that as a communist agent, he had moved close to the core of the U.M.N.O. leadership and had been successful with the younger generation of U.M.N.O. leaders. His confession started a communist "witch hunt" in U.M.N.O. led by Jaafar Albar(President of U.M.N.O. Youth) and Senu Abdul Rahman(Secretary-General of U.M.N.O.) and instigated by U.M.N.O. Youth. Subsequently on 3rd November 1976, Abdullah Ahmad, former political secretary to Tun Razak, and Abdullah Majid, former press secretary to Tun Razak, became victims of this witch hunt and were detained under the I.S.A. K.Das,"The Enemies Within" and "Switching on the Confessions", Far Eastern Economic Review, 2nd July, 1976 and 18th February, 1977.

78. For details of the I.S.A., see Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol. IV, 1974, pp. 375-81.

cy like Indonesian Confrontation in 1964 and the racial riot in 1969. A declaration of emergency would scare away badly-needed foreign investment for the success of the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.) to benefit the Malays. As the emergency regulations of 1964 and 1969 had not been repealed, they were still binding, and in fact the country was officially still under emergency without the need to publicise it. The new Essential Securities Regulations(E.S.R.) would form an integral part of the forthcoming Third Malaysia Plan(T.M.P.) in relation to internal security. Thus the first set of regulations, the Essential(Community Self Reliance)Regulations(or Rukun Tetangga) was decreed in late 1975 under the unrepealed provisions of the emergency regulations which were introduced by the N.O.C. since the 1969 racial riot.[79] Participation in the scheme would be compulsory for able-bodied men between the ages of 18-25; they would be responsible for patrol and guard duties and checking on the movement ofpersons from one sector to another in certain areas designated by the government.[80] The second, the Essential(Security Cases)Regulations, to be tabled in Parliament shortly, was complementary to the first. It concerned the arrest and pre-trial procedures of persons considered a security risk who were detained as a result of the first set of regulations. Its main feature was that the accused had to determine his innocence rather than for the prosecutor to prove his guilt. Anticipating objection and protests from critics, the government moved circumspectively to defuse any potential volatile situation that might arise. While explaining that the new emergency regulations would make the law-abiding more conscious of their role in showing their loyalty to the nation, the government gradually played down the pro-Malay emphasis

79. For full details see K.Das,"Insurgency and the Rule of Law", Far Eastern Economic Review, 10th October, 1975.

80. R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, op. cit., p. 320.

of its policies. For instance, a gentle campaign to improve the system of teaching English was carried out to effect the pronouncement that while Malay was the National Language, other languages, particularly English, had a major role to play in the country.[81] To stem the widespread belief among the Malays that the Chinese were communists and therefore their loyalty to the country in doubt, it was stated publicly that the vast majority of the Chinese in the country were loyal and valuable citizens.[82] These measures were calculated to win Chinese support for the new emergency regulations. The government then tried to rationalize and justify the promulgation of the E.S.R. to ward off protests from critics and also to accommodate the increasingly restless Malay mood. Tan Sri Abas Saleh, the Solicitor-General, stated that the government was considering the overall issue of internal security posed by the communist threat. He stressed that it was necessary to protect the country as a whole by the E.S.R. even to the extent that the rights of some were curtailed.[83] He maintained that the sacrifice of some personal liberties was not a great price to pay to ensure overall internal security. Once the security situation in the country returned to normal, the E.S.R. would be revoked.[84]

Unlike the Bar Council, which viewed the new emergency regulations as "panic measures" to curtail the fundamental liberties of Malaysians, the D.A.P. considered them as part of an overall government plan to do away with human rights and constitutional guarantees with a view to stifling Parlia-

81. See K.Das,"Malaysia prepares for total war", Far Eastern Economic Review, 26th December, 1975, pp. 23-5.

82. Ibid.

83. For full details, see K.Das,"Panic Measures under fire", F.E.E.R., 31st October, 1975, pp. 11-3.

84. Ibid. Tun Razak gave this assurance over radio and television in his Hari Raya message to the nation.

mentary democracy and turning the country into a police state.[85] The government, according to the D.A.P., had exploited the security threat to vest absolute and arbitrary powers on itself as manifested first by the I.S.A. and now the E.S.R. The D.A.P.'s fears were that the government was likely to use its powers to silence even legitimate and constructive criticism on the grounds that the vague and much-abused term, "national interest" was threatened.[86] Under the circumstances, the D.A.P. held that it was very easy for the government to detain dissidents indefinitely by branding them communists or subversive elements even though they were not. Previous experience had shown the D.A.P. that the I.S.A. was a favourite instrument to stifle all forms of dissent, not all of them necessarily due to communist activities. Lim Kit Siang himself was detained for 18 months after the 1969 racial riot even though he had been very outspoken against the communists. The former Sarawak deputy Chief Minister and Sarawak National Party (S.N.A.P.) stalwart, James Wong, was also detained on flimsy and vague charges not related to communism.[87] As the E.S.R. appeared to strengthen the I.S.A. considerably in this case, the D.A.P. felt that its duty was to do all it could to highlight the unsavoury aspects of both the E.S.R. and the I.S.A. to bring about public revulsion. However the party's initial reaction to condemn the E.S.R.

85. For a detailed account of the D.A.P.'s views on this, see Fan Yew Teng's two articles,"Malaysia:Growing Insurgency and Increasing Repression", Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol. VI, 1976, pp. 371-5 and "Repression in Malaysia: Tightening the screws on lawyers and university teachers", AMPO Japan Asia Quarterly Review, Vol. X No. 4, 1978, pp. 23-6. The D.A.P. through Fan, who had lost his sedition conviction appeal after a re-trial in 1975, was highlighting the Malaysian government's dictatorial attitude on human rights and constitutional guarantees overseas to embarrass it in the hope that the draconian laws would be modified.

86. See D.A.P.'s letter,"Abuse of Detention Powers", Far Eastern Economic Review, 24th February, 1978, pp. 6-7.

87. For the D.A.P.'s views on James Wong's detention, see Parliamentary speech,"Detention of Datuk James Wong", on 9th December, 1975 in Lim Kit Siang, op.cit., pp.313-7. As a condition for James Wong's subsequent release, S.N.A.P. was persuaded to join the N.F.coalition just before the 1978 general elections.

was thwarted by Tun Razak's challenge to the opposition to declare their stand on the mounting urban guerilla activity in the country.[88] His call came after U.M.N.O., P.A.S., and the G.R.M. had expressed their full support for the first set of the E.S.R., the Essential(Community Self Reliance) Regulations, while the second set, the Essential(Security Cases)Regulations was awaiting ratification in Parliament. All 3 parties concerned had urged for its immediate implementation.[89] To stave off possible charges of disloyalty which would give the government every pretext to use the E.S.R. to harrass it, Lim Kit Siang was forced to declare that D.A.P. members were prepared to give their lives in defence of the country if and when necessary.[90] He later explained that the D.A.P.'s stand did not mean that it supported the first set of the E.S.R., but merely an expression of the party's loyalty to the King. He stressed that support for the government's policies and loyalty to the King were entirely different things. The D.A.P. then called for a Parliamentary debate to express its opposition and concern to the E.S.R. At the same time it instructed its lawyers to study the legal and constitutional implications of the E.S.R. with a view to challenging the government to court.

In opposing the first set of the E.S.R., the D.A.P. pointed out that they sought to turn the country into a police state with the tendency for people to turn informers either out of fear or for personal gain. The party held that the government's motive was to start a communist witch hunt by making it compulsory that all residents in designated areas, including

88. See Lim Kit Siang's letter to the Far Eastern Economic Review, 7th November, 1975.

89. See K.Das,"Panic Measures under fire", F.E.E.R., 31st October, 1975, pp. 11-3.

90. See Lim Kit Siang's letter, F.E.E.R., 21st November, 1975.

children above 14 years, inform the authorities of persons inside or outside the areas having committed, attempting to commit or having been suspected of committing offences in relation to security. The nature of the offences was so vaguely defined that they covered not only offences under the law but also almost anything deemed by the authorities to be prejudicial to the economic, morale or social well-being of the area. The D.A.P. continued that if residents failed to report any offences or suspected offences committed, they themselves would be deemed to committing an offence. Thus the residents affected would be in a dilemma as they could either be incriminated for offences they did not commit or charged with failing to report offences that they were unsure of. Since the truthfulness of the evidence of informers need not be ascertained, the D.A.P. argued that this would encourage people to become informers, either to settle old scores, to receive bribes or for a variety of other reasons. The D.A.P. also highlighted the questionable principle of group liability in which all members of a household were collectively responsible for crimes committed by any member, even though they may be innocent. It regarded this as a way to intimidate children to spy on their parents and vice-versa. The constant surveillance of the movements of all residents in designated areas, according to the D.A.P., thus violated the principles of justice.[91]

The major part of the D.A.P.'s criticisms was directed towards the second set of the E.S.R., the Essential(Security Cases)Regulations.

91. See Fan Yew Teng(1978), op. cit., p. 24. To substantiate his charges. Fan quoted an excerpt from the June 1976 issue of the Review, the official organ of the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists:

> "Equally disturbing are the provisions of the Community (Self-Reliance)Regulations, 1975, which make every member of a household above the age of 14 years responsible for the family's activities. This is either to be regarded as a form of guilt by association, or as a form of reprisal. In either case, it is a serious violation of the basic principles of justice."

It felt that the gross abuse of absolute and arbitrary powers by the government to intimidate its opponents was most likely to take place in conjunction with security cases. The D.A.P. held that the Essential(Security Cases) Regulations strengthened the I.S.A. in detaining suspects indefinitely without trial. They were so obnoxious to the rule of law that the usually docile Bar Council of Malaysia had even called for their repeal at an extraordinary meeting in Kuala Lumpur in early 1976. The Bar Council's grounds for objecting were numerous and varied, but the conclusion derived was that the accused did not have the slightest chance of proving his innocence due to the draconian measures introduced to negate a fair trial. It accused the government of a gross abuse and misuse of power. In fact the Secretary of the Penang State Bar Committee alleged that the 2 sets of the E.S.R. reflected the government's inability to secure convictions under existing laws (i.e. the I.S.A.).[92] The Bar Council's reaction was a manifestation of its disappointment that the government never consulted it before the E.S.R. were decreed in 1975 and amendments to the Constitution were made in 1976, to make them more effective. As a result, on 18th October 1977, it instructed its members not to appear in trials under the Essential(Security Cases) Regulations.[93]

92. See K.Das,"Panic Measures under fire", Far Eastern Economic Review, 31st October, 1975, p. 12.

93. Fan Yew Teng,(1978), op. cit., p. 25. The following resolution was passed by the Bar Council at the meeting:

> "To resolve that all members of the Bar of the States of Malaya be advised not to appear in trials under the Essential(Security Cases) Amendment Regulations 1975 whether retained or assigned from henceforth as these regulations are oppressive and against the rule of law. Provided that those who have been retained prior to 18th October 1977 may either discharge themselves or refund any fees collected or complete their brief", Op. cit.

Fan claimed that by 24th October 1977, 4 lawyers had abided by the above resolution and decided to withdraw their services to clients who were appealing against sentences passed under the E.S.R.

In tabling his motion on 19th December 1975 in Parliament to get the Essential(Security Cases)Regulations repealed, Lim Kit Siang cited several grounds of objection, especially the violation of the principle of the rule of law.[94] This was to give the impression that the D.A.P. was not alone in its opposition to the government and that the Bar Council was behind it. The D.A.P. accused the government of deliberately seeking to give a different interpretation to the principle of the rule of law to strengthen its powers. The party contended that the government had actually advocated and practised "legality" while misleading the people to believe that it upheld the rule of law. These two concepts, according to the D.A.P., were entirely different. Lim Kit Siang held that legality, which corresponded rather to the rule of men, need not necessarily follow the rule of law; that was why there were so many amendments to the Constitution to make the law follow the whims and fancies of those in power, i.e. the N.F. The essence of legality was to make the actions of those in power legitimate and justifiable. The predictable consequences of legality, he added, was the drift towards a dictatorial state along the lines of Hitler's Germany. Manifestations of this were the gross abuse and misuse of power and the arbitrary interference with the fundamental rights and liberties of individuals. The D.A.P. claimed that the wide and arbitrary powers of the Attorney-General as provided by the Essential(Security Cases)Regulations were likely to be abused and misused.[95] It was alleged that he could use his discretion

94. Lim Kit Siang listed 6 objections. They were (i) A blow to the rule of law; (ii) A blow to human rights; (iii) Constitutional violations; (iv) Gross abuse and misuse of power; (v) Parliamentary democracy would be undermined and (vi) A set-back in the battle for the hearts and minds of the people. For further details, see Parliamentary speech,"The Security Cases Regulations", in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., pp. 184-98.

95. Ibid, p. 192. See also K.Das,"Law Critics cut deep", Far Eastern Economic Review, 11th November, 1977.

to certify whether cases brought before him were security cases, premising his criteria solely on opposition to the government, irrespective of whether it was inspired by the communists or not. Once a case was certified to be a security case, it was up to the accused to prove his innocence rather than for the prosecutor to find him guilty. The D.A.P. contended that this removed one of the most fundamental safeguards for a fair trial.[96] It also violated Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.[97] The retroactive effect of the Essential(Security Cases)Regulations to 1957 as a result of an amendment to the Constitution also violated Article 3 of the 1948 Declaration that guaranteed the individual's right to life, liberty and security.[98] The D.A.P. then highlighted the violations to the Constitution in the government's alleged perversion of pre-trial procedures in security cases trials. It claimed that no warrant of arrest was needed to detain a suspect and suspects were detained for a week and a further 60 days for questioning before they were put on trial.[99] Lim Kit Siang pointed out that this allegedly violated Article 5(4) of the Malaysian Constitution by removing the constitutional right of suspects to be brought before a magistrate within 24 hours of their arrest.[100] He argued that the acquittal

96. This was the presumption that a person is assumed innocent until proven guilty.

97. Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948,states:
" i. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all guarantees necessary for his defence.
ii. No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act of omission which did not constitute a penal offence,under national or international law, at the time it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed. "
Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 190.

98. Ibid. Article 3 reads:"Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person". Op. cit.

99. Fan Yew Teng(1978), op. cit., p. 24.

100. Lim Kit Siang,op.cit.,p.191. Article 5(4) of the Malaysian Consti-

of a suspect through insufficient evidence to commit him was not guaranteed. The prosecutor could invoke Clause 21 of the Essential(Security Cases) Regulations to recommit the suspect for trial. This clause allowed the evidence of prosecution witnesses to be heard in camera in the absence of the accused and even his counsel.[101] Prosecution witnesses could be protected from being identified either by wearing hoods(appearance) or elect to have their evidence relayed by an interpreter(voice). The government justified evidence in camera so as to encourage as many witnesses as possible to testify without the fear of reprisal. The D.A.P. charged that this would in fact encourage informers and agent provocateurs to incriminate innocent persons by resorting to perjury and even blackmail, since their credibility could not be effectively challenged.[102] It further claimed that the jury and even assessors(as in the case of trials under the 1948 Emergency) were abolished, leaving the judge to be the sole arbiter of the outcome of the trial. If and when the accused failed to prove his innocence(and the D.A.P. submitted that this was more than likely under the prevailing circumstances), the judge was pressured to impose the maximum mandatory sentence, i.e. the death penalty. If for some reason the maximum sentence was not imposed, the prosecutor was thus likely to appeal.[103] The chances of a successful appeal in favour of the prosecutor were very much higher than the accused appealing against the maximum sentence. This was because the traditional appeal to the court of last resort, the Privy Council, had been abolished.

tution reads:"Where a person is arrested and not released, he shall without unreasonable delay, and in any case within 24 hours(excluding the time of any necessary journey) be produced before a magistrate and shall not be further detained in custody without the magistrate's authority". Op. cit.

101. Ibid, p. 187.

102. Ibid, p. 188

103. Ibid, p. 189.

By this the D.A.P. implied that the Malaysian Judiciary was biased towards the government.[104]

In voicing its objections to the E.S.R., the D.A.P. was also showing its concern over the arbitrary detention powers of the I.S.A. Two of its members, National Treasurer, Chan Kok Kit and the M.P. for Batu Gajah, Chian Heng Kai, were detained together with Abdullah Ahmad, Abdullah Majid, Tan Kwee Shen and Kassim Ahmad under the I.S.A. on 3rd November 1976, for allegedly being deliberately or unknowingly, directly or indirectly, involved in activities which(in the government's opinion) could be regarded as assisting the advancement of the Communist United Front (C.U.F.).[105] The government's motive in detaining the above-mentioned individuals was to highlight the gravity of communist subversion through infiltration. This affected even the parties and individuals who were unlikely to be influenced by communist propaganda. Except for Kassim Ahmad, the Chairman of P.S.R.M., whom the government regarded as having strong Marxist-Leninist tendencies, the others were in the government or component parties of the N.F. Abdullah Ahmad and Abdullah Majid were both deputy Ministers and Tan Kwee Shen was the Executive Secretary of the M.C.A.[106] In detaining the above-mentioned individuals, the government gave the impression that it did not discriminate against anyone when dealing with communist subversion, even government

104. Fan Yew Teng(1978), op. cit., p. 25. Fan stated that this was likely to occur because the Judiciary was under pressure from the government to toe its line. It was alleged that Dr. Mahathir, the Deputy Prime Minister, gave a thinly veiled threat at the end of 1977 that the Judiciary should not attempt to force its views on the legislature otherwise it could face adverse consequences. This was in response to some judges opposing the E.S.R.

105. New Straits Times, 5th February, 1977. See speech by the I.G.P., Tan Sri Haniff Omar on communist subversion and the justification of the arrest of the above-mentioned individuals.

106. For details of the arrest, see K.Das,"Purge from Within", Far Eastern Economic Review, 12th November, 1976. For details of the con-

ministers. The D.A.P. however attributed the detention of its 2 members to a consequence of intra-party fighting in U.M.N.O. Lim Kit Siang stated that both Chan and Chian were sacrificial victims of this, in the same way that he had been detained for 18 months under the I.S.A. shortly after the 1969 racial riot. He denied that both had been involved in the activities of the C.U.F., either directly or indirectly and held that the real reason for their detention was their consistent advocacy of Chinese educational issues(which,according to the D.A.P., were lawful and constitutional) from 1971 to 1976.[107] This was in response to the I.G.P.'s address on television on 4th February 1977 dealing with communist subversion and the confessions of all the detainees except Kassim Ahmad. Lim Kit Siang claimed that the I.G.P.'s address had inferred that both Chan and Chian had confessed their involvement with the C.U.F. privately because they wished to continue with their political activities on their release. According to him, this was an attempt to smear the integrity of both men. He therefore challenged the government to either prove that both men had in fact been involved in C.U.F. activities or release them unconditionally. His challenge was predictably ignored.

The D.A.P.'s inconsistent stand over the I.S.A. made it very vulnerable to charges that it practised double standards. Before the 1969

fessions of Abdullah Ahmad and Abdullah Majid, see K.Das,"Switching on the Confessions", F.E.E.R., 18th February, 1977. For Tan's confession, see K.Das,"The Subtle Art of Subversion", F.E.E.R., 26th February, 1977. For Kassim Ahmad's detention and earlier harrassment, see Fan Yew Teng,"Torture and Ill-treatment of political prisoners in Malaysia", AMPO Japan Asia Quarterly Review, Vol. XI No. 4, 1979, pp. 12-7.

107. See Parliamentary speech,"Chian Heng Kai and Chan Kok Kit: Detention under I.S.A." in Lim Kit Siang,op.cit.,pp. 202-6 for full details. To persistent D.A.P. calls for their release, the Home Affairs Minister, Ghazali Shafie explained that both men had, in accordance to the laws of the country, been given several opportunities to defend themselves. They had been brought before a Review Board

general elections, the D.A.P. had in fact supported the I.S.A. as shown in the 1967 Setapak Declaration.[108] Acceptance of the I.S.A. was dictated by historical ties with the P.A.P. which had not only supported the provisions, but had similar ones in Singapore.[109] The D.A.P.'s position subsequently changed with the detention of Lim Kit Siang for 18 months after the 1969 racial riot. At the 1971 D.A.P. Conggress, Lim Kit Siang condemned the I.S.A. in Malaysia. Though he did not directly condemn the I.S.A. in Singapore, he called for the release of the "Operation Cold Store" detainees (since 1963) Said Zahari, Dr. Lim Hock Siew, Dr. Poh Soo Kai and Ho Piao.[110] Kit Siang's critics interpreted this as the D.A.P.(or at least Kit Siang) still supporting the I.S.A. in Singapore. They appeared vindicated when the D.A.P. Secretary-General called for the P.A.P.'s re-admission to the Socialist International (S.I.) at a meeting in Tokyo in January 1978,after the P.A.P. had been expelled for allegedly violating human rights under the I.S.A. Kit Siang stated that Singapore's detention-without-trial laws were necessary owing to the threat of militant communism on the island.[111] He added that curbs on Singapore's abuse of its detention-without-trial powers could be more effectively meted out with Singapore inside the S.I. rather than outside it.[112] This statement precipitated some confusion in the D.A.P.'s ranks, leading to the resignation of Fan Yew Teng who had been actively campaigning overseas against repression in both Malaysia and Singa-

on 6th and 12th October, 1978. So far the latter was still not satisfied that they were no longer security risks and therefore could not release them. New Straits Times, 6th December, 1978.

108. See Item 8 in Appendix A.

109. See letter to the Far Eastern Economic Review, 31st March, 1978 by an ex-D.A.P. member in Penang.

110. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. xxx.

111. See D.A.P.'s letter,"Abuse of detention powers", to the Far Eastern Economic Review, 24th February, 1978, pp. 6-7..

112. Ibid.

pore, as manifested by the excessive detention powers of the I.S.A.[113] In his letter of resignation, Fan had accused Lim Kit Siang of condemning repression in Malaysia while condoning it in Singapore by his support of Singapore's re-admission to the S.I.[114] Lim Kit Siang tried to clarify the D.A.P.'s position to refute Fan's charges. He held that the D.A.P.'s call to the S.I. to re-admit the P.A.P. did not depart from its official stand in opposing the I.S.A. in both countries. The D.A.P. had proposed an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) commission on human rights to end detention-without-trial laws in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines in the Parliamentary debate on 24th March, 1978.[115] However this appeared unconvincing to many of its critics, who, in the absence of a direct D.A.P. condemnation of the I.S.A. in Singapore,publicly, considered this a generalisation on Kit Siang's part and in no way reflected the D.A.P.'s clear stand on the I.S.A.

In retrospect, the D.A.P. opposed the E.S.R. and the I.S.A. in particular and the government's overall handling of the security situation in general. Its opposition was premised on the strong belief that the government intended to use the E.S.R. on its political opponents, rather than on the communists. The D.A.P.'s strategy was to condemn the government for abusing and misusing the arbitrary powers vested in itself and to show that while the government abused the law, it staunchly upheld it. This was manifested by its association with the Bar Council's criticisms of the E.S.R. The government was thus portrayed as undermining democracy

113. For Fan's condemnation of repression in Singapore, see Harvey Stockwin,"Exit S'pore", Far Eastern Economic Review, 11th June, 1976. For his resignation from the D.A.P., see New Straits Times, 29th May, 1978.

114. Ibid.

115. See Lim Kit Siang's letter to the Far Eastern Economic Review, 28th April, 1978.

in the country. The D.A.P. highlighted the adverse effects of the E.S.R. on the average citizen rather than the communists by the government's detention of suspects and then its meting out the mandatory death sentence in one-sided trials.[116] It decided to make political capital out of the death sentence meted out to a 14 year-old boy for possession of firearms by publicly associating itself with the international and domestic outcry over the sentence.[117] By this it was also drawing attention to itself as a victim of government persecution and harrassment in the hope that public outcry would help to secure the release of its 2 detained leaders, Chan Kok Kit and Chian Heng Kai. The D.A.P.'s usual theme was to suggest that the correct way for the government to check the communist threat was to ensure that political, social, cultural, educational and economic equality be given to all. It held that these existing inequalities provided the communists with issues to exploit and thus exacerbate the communist threat. It

116. Fan Yew Teng (1978), op. cit., p. 25. Fan stated that more than 40 people were awaiting the death sentence since the E.S.R. came into effect in late 1975. He added that up to October 1977, not more than 7 of the persons tried under the E.S.R. had been acquitted. These were all on technical grounds. The first execution by hanging under the E.S.R. involved a Malaysian house painter on 6th January, 1976. In March 1980, there were 3 more hangings of I.S.A. cases. New Straits Times, 15th March, 1980. Lim Kit Siang urged the government to order a stay of execution of persons sentenced to death for I.S.A. offences if no violence had been committed although the accused were in possession of firearms. This was to enable them to seek pardons from the King by having their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment. Kit Siang's pleas were based on humanitarian grounds.

117. See K.Das, "Executing the letter of the law", "A Boy's Life in the Balance", and "Security Act row spreads", Far Eastern Economic Review, 9th September, 1977, 10th & 14th October, 1977. The boy, Lim Hiang Seoh, was charged under the I.S.A. with possession of a Browning pistol and 20 rounds of ammunition in a coffee shop in Penang at 9 p.m. on 14th February, 1977. Both offences, possession of guns and ammunition, carried a mandatory death sentence under Section 57(1)(A) & (B) of the I.S.A. A 15 year-old boy who acted as informer for the police could not be produced to the defence, neither was his identity revealed. The judge, F. Arulanandom, in adhering closely to Section 3(3) of the Essential(Security Cases)

reminded the government that the proclamation of emergency regulations and increased military expenditure would not defeat the communists as in the case of South Vietnam. By this it implied that there was corruption in high government political circles and taunted the government that the E.S.R. would be better used against its own corrupted officials instead of the average citizen.

The D.A.P.'s criticisms overlooked the gravity of the communist threat and the difficulties arising from it that the government had faced. They were calculated more to discredit the government by stressing on the unsavoury rather than remedial effects of the E.S.R. and the I.S.A. The government regarded the widespread and unprecedented activities of the M.C.P. as a threat to its efforts to achieve national unity through the N.E.P., then entering its second phase in the form of the T.M.P. The government's fears were premised more on the implications of the M.C.P.'s terrorism causing racial strife between the Malays and the Chinese, given the background of the 1969 racial riot. Already there were signs of restlessness among the Malays, particularly U.M.N.O. Youth, over the spate of terrorism by the M.C.P. That was why the government had to play down the racial factor in the assassination of the I.G.P. in 1974 by publicly stating that one of the 2 assassins was a Malay and that the cause of the assassination was personal, although it was widely believed that both assassins were Chinese.

Amendment Regulations 1975 - where a person is accused or charged with a security offence, he shall regardless of his age, be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of these regulations and the Juvenile Courts Act(1947) shall not apply to such a person - imposed the maximum mandatory death sentence. Lim Kit Siang said that the boy's death sentence had made the law even more meaningless. He held that unfair and unjust laws offended the conscience of ordinary men who could not be expected to stand up and defend them, and thus submitted that the offensive laws could not win the confidence of the people. See also Parliamentary speech,"The 14 Year-old Condemned Boy - Aftermath", in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., pp. 199-201.

The government followed this up by publicly stating that the majority of the Chinese in the country were law-abiding citizens and not communists. These measures were calculated to prevent a recurrence of another 1969 racial riot. The government therefore justified the proclamation of the E.S.R. in its belief that they would only apply to the communists or their agents. It felt that law-abiding citizens could help it to check communist terrorism by participating in the Rukun Tetangga scheme provided by the first set of the E.S.R. It thus had a duty to protect witnesses from reprisal by permitting evidence in camera. As for the laws being excessively harsh in the case of the mandatory death sentence imposed on the 14 year-old boy for possessing firearms, the government intended it to be a warning to the M.C.P. not to use children as couriers and logistics supporters. It was to show the M.C.P. that it would hang even children, if and when necessary.[118] Whatever the demerits of the E.S.R., the government regarded them as a necessary price to pay for the maintenance of security in the country. Therefore it was oblivious to the D.A.P. charge that it was abusing and misusing the emergency powers, and thereby dismissed D.A.P. calls for the annulment of the E.S.R.[119]

118. On the Attorney-General's advice, the boy had his death sentence commuted to a period of detention in the Henry Gurney Reform School until he reached the age of 21 years.

119. The D.A.P. was nevertheless undaunted in its call upon the government to repeal the E.S.R. and amend the I.S.A. from time to time. In 1979 it called upon the government to annul the 4 proclamations of emergency in the country which it considered were no longer necessary. These were (i) The 1964 Confrontation by Indonesia (ii) The 1966 resurgence of communist underground activity in Sarawak (iii) The aftermath of the 1969 racial riot and (iv) The 1977 Civil Disorders in Kelantan. See Asiaweek, 13th July, 1979 and New Straits Times, 29th June, 1979.

CHAPTER IV

Education, Language and Culture.

(a) The Future of Chinese and Tamil Primary Schools

Education in the vernacular languages, either Malay, Chinese or Tamil, had been first and foremost, associated with cultural objectives.[1] Under these circumstances, Chinese and Tamil vernacular schools had always been resented by the Malays as cultural strivings of the immigrant communities. Among the extremist Malays, the feeling was that Chinese schools were nothing more than "little Chinas" transplanted into the country, thereby constituting an affront to its Malay cultural heritage.[2] First indications of Malay resentment towards Chinese vernacular schools was their support for the recommendations of the Barnes Report in 1951. The recommendations generally advocated Malay as the main medium of instruction in all schools, and by implication, would assert the predominance of the Malay culture in the country. As the British were still in charge, the views of the Chinese community were entertained through the Fenn-Wu Report, also in the same year.[3] That report called for caution and accommodation and suggested the importance of the non-Malay languages and cultures as ingredients of nation building through integration, in contrast to the assimilative intention of the Barnes Report.[4] Understandably both the recommendations of the Barnes and Fenn-Wu Reports were not considered on the grounds that they were likely

1. For full details, see Tham Seong Chee,"Issues in Malaysian Education: Past, Present and Future", Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. X No. 2, September 1979, pp. 321-50.
2. See Mahathir b. Mohamad,The Malay Dilemma, Asia Pacific Press, Singapore, 1970, op. cit., p. 144. Prior to becoming Deputy Prime Minister in 1976, Dr. Mahathir was very outspoken in his anti-Chinese views.
3. It is not proposed to discuss the views of the Indians in response to the Barnes Report in relation to Tamil education in this chapter.
4. Tham Seong Chee, op. cit., p. 325.

to provoke bad feelings between the Malays and the Chinese. Besides the Colonial Administration felt that the then English-medium predominated educational system in the country was sound and fair to all communities. It was the policy of the British to stress the importance of English as the main medium of instruction in schools for two important reasons. Firstly, because of its established status, English was practical in administration, commerce and industry, and provided access to higher education either in Malaysia(then Malaya) or overseas. Secondly, English, as evident by the partial integration of students of all races in English-medium schools, could serve as an effective neutral vehicle to bring about ultimate national unity among the races when the country became independent.[5] However the teaching of the vernacular languages in Malay, Chinese and Tamil schools was not discouraged for cultural purposes.

The Malays however began once again to assert their predominance in language and education in 1955 when the U.M.N.O.-dominated Alliance won 51 out of the 52 seats in the first general elections for the Federal Legislative Council. Since the Malays formed some 85% of the then electorate, U.M.N.O. felt that it had a duty to bring about an education system that would reflect Malay aspirations in relation to language and culture. There was a need to bring about a unified education system incorporating the various media schools, based on the dominance of Malay as the National Language although Chinese and Tamil could still continue as media of instruction in the schools concerned. Malay was thus elevated to the same status as English for official purposes and made compulsory, together with English, in all schools. The government's position was summed up in the recommendations of the Razak Report in 1956, a year before the country

5. See T.H.Silcock, Towards a Malayan Nation, Eastern Universities Press Singapore, 1961.

became independent.[6] Chinese educationists in the country however regarded the Razak Report as a subtle expression of the earlier Barnes Report. They were unhappy that the preservation of Chinese primary schools was conditional on their acceptance of the compulsory teaching of Malay and English.[7] To them, especially the United Chinese School Teachers' Association, (U.C.S.T.A.) who appeared dedicated to Chinese exclusiveness regarding education, the guarantee that other languages - in this case Chinese and Tamil - would be preserved and sustained was formless since the Razak Report, by stressing the compulsory teaching of Malay and English, had indirectly curbed the orientation of instruction in Chinese. This curb, in its extreme form, was interpreted as an affront to Chinese culture. Thus there were demonstrations by Chinese schools against the Razak Report in the big towns, especially Georgetown(Penang) and Ipoh(Perak) and the Alliance (M.C.A.) lost its first Parliamentary by-election in Ipoh in late 1957 to the P.P.P. over the issue of Chinese education.[8] If the government had been facing pressures from the Chinese over the Razak Report, it also faced coun-

6. Tun Razak was the then Education Minister. The Razak Report stated "that the ultimate objective of the educational policy in this country (Malaya) must be to bring together the children of all races under a national education system in which the National Language(i.e.Malay) is the main medium of instruction ...." Karl Von Vorys, Democracy without Consensus, Communalism and Political Stability in Malaysia, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1975, op.cit., p. 212. The main recommendations of the report were the following:
   Malay and English would be compulsory subjects in all primary and secondary schools;
   Instruction in Chinese and Tamil would be made available in all primary schools maintained in whole or in part from public funds when the parents of 15 children from any school required it;
   The other language media schools would remain in existence;
   All schools conforming to the government education policy would be eligible for grants-in-aid;
   A common syllabus and time-table for all schools was to be enforced.
   R.K.Vasil, Politics in a Plural Society: A Study of Non-communal Political Parties in West Malaysia, East Asian Historical Monographs, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1971, op. cit., p. 231.

7. Ibid.

ter pressures from the Malays, especially the powerful Malay School Teachers' Association,(M.S.T.A.) with many of its members U.M.N.O. supporters. They thus felt that the Razak Report was not forceful enough to pander to Malay aspirations because it indirectly supported the continued existence of Chinese and Tamil schools although it had asserted Malay as the main medium of instruction. Their feeling was that the supremacy of Malay culture was being threatened so long as the existence of Chinese and Tamil schools was guaranteed. Following the electoral success of the extremist P.A.S. in the 1959 state elections in the predominantly Malay east coast states of Kelantan and Trengganu, U.M.N.O. interpreted this as the materialisation of the earlier threat by the M.S.T.A. and its many supporters to withdraw their support from it over the Razak Report. Thus in an attempt to win back Malay support, an even more pro-Malay education system had to be advocated. This was the Rahman Talib Report in 1960. As far as the Chinese were concerned, it was even worse than the Razak Report.[9] Chinese secondary schools in their existing state of Chinese exclusiveness, were gradually phased out by the withdrawal of grants while Chinese and Tamil primary schools were tolerated "for the time being" until some propitious time when the government would accordingly deal with them.[10] Thus their fate depended upon the Educational Act of 1961(Clause 21(2)) which stipulated that the Minister of Education could convert Chinese and Tamil primary schools into National(i.e.Malay)

8. D.R.Seenivasagam was the successful P.P.P. candidate and it marked the beginning of his rise as a strong advocate of non-Malay rights. The by-election was caused by the resignation of the incumbent, Leong Yew Koh, to become the Governor of Penang. R.K.Vasil, op. cit., p. 232.

9. The Rahman Talib Report implied that "Chinese education would not be permitted to prosper:instruction in Chinese culture would be discouraged, instruction in Chinese language would be limited to promote an educational policy designed to create national consciousness and having the intention of making the Malay language the national language of the country". Karl Von Vorys, op. cit., p. 215.

10. Ibid, p. 216.

schools if he considered it necessary.[11] As a reaction, Chinese parents began to send their children to the English-medium schools. This was also due to the "publicly acknowledged superior academic and pedagogical standards, and more significantly, its direct linkage with the institutions of higher learning(particularly the University of Malaya) and to future economic prospects".[12] The Malay extremist outcry against the promulgation of the 1967 National Language Act on the grounds that it indirectly gave a semi-official status to English as an official language and permitted the liberal usage of Chinese and Tamil, re-affirmed the fears and apprehensions of the Chinese regarding their education and language.[13] These fears and apprehensions were revived by the announcement of the then Education Minister, Rahman Yaakub, on the New Education Policy in July 1969, shortly after the racial riot. The Minister stated that all English-medium primary schools would convert to the Malay-medium, beginning with Standard One from 1970 onwards. The conversion process would be carried out on a yearly basis so that eventually all levels of education, from primary, secondary and tertiary would be in the Malay-medium by 1983. Although Chinese and Tamil primary schools were not directly affected by this conversion process, the Chinese did not feel re-assured, granted their perception that the New Education policy was inspired by pressure from extremist Malays for one race,

11. See R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia, Federal Publications, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, 1978, p. 372.

12. Tham Seong Chee, op. cit., p. 328.

13. For further details of the 1967 National Language Act, see Karl Von Vorys,op.cit.,pp. 200-10 and Margaret Roff,"The Politics of Language in Malaya", Asian Survey, Vol. VII No. 5, May 1967, pp. 316-28. The extremist Malays in U.M.N.O. were angry at the National Language Bill introduced by the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership because the bill permitted the official usage of English at the King's discretion and also the liberal usage of Chinese and Tamil. They interpreted this as unofficial government support for multi-lingualism. The extremists wanted a firm and immediate shift from the use of English to the use of Malay in every facet of life, but in particular in the educational system. See also Patrick Low ed., Trends in Southeast Asia No.2.,

one language and one culture.[14]

Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. found itself forced to articulate the fears and apprehensions of the Chinese. Being a traditional opponent of the government, it was expedient for the D.A.P. to highlight the issue of the future of Chinese and Tamil primary schools mainly to consolidate its base in the urban areas.[15] This, however, is not to suggest that the party was not concerned over the future of the vernacular schools in question. Indeed the New Education Policy with its objective of assimilation towards Malay language and culture, was diametrically opposed to the D.A.P.'s advocacy of the free use of all 4 languages - Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English - as media of instruction in schools to eventually bring about a united Malaysian nation by integration. As such it may be argued that the D.A.P.'s concern for the future of Chinese and Tamil primary schools was within the context of its fight for a multi-racial nation with equality for all races against U.M.N.O.'s measures to promote Malay hegemony through assimilation by the New Education Policy. The D.A.P. identified the fears and apprehensions of the Chinese regarding the future of their primary schools as firstly, the possible conversion to the Malay-medium(in the same way that English-medium primary schools were converted)by legislation and secondly, the possible alteration of their Chinese character by subtle and

Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1971, p. 114.

14. Rahman Yaakub stressed that the educational policy was to achieve the target of "one country, one people and one language". Ibid, op.cit. This would imply assimilation of the non-Malays to Malay culture through education and language, a prospect which they resented and feared. For details of the conversion process in stages, see John Pillai,"The English-Bahasa Story", New Straits Times, 19th March, 1980.

15. After the restoration of Parliamentary democracy in February 1971, the D.A.P.'s influence in the urban areas became shaky due to the Constitutional Amendment Bill and the era of accommodation politics ushered in by Tun Razak. See Chapter II and Section (a) of Chapter III.

insidious means.

In the first instance, the party held that despite government assurances that Chinese and Tamil primary schools would not be affected by the conversion to Malay-medium of English-medium primary schools from 1970, there was no guarantee to this effect. The party justified its contention on the grounds that government policies, especially those where the non-Malays were concerned, were always ambiguous. It felt that although the Rahman Talib Report allowed the continued existence of Chinese and Tamil primary schools, Clause 21(2) of the 1961 Educational Act which permitted the Education Minister to convert them at his discretion, caused widespread apprehension among the Chinese and also Indians. Thus, according to Lim Kit Siang, the government had been too "equivocal on the future of Chinese and Tamil schools for too long".[16] This had been manifested by the government's vague reply that it would deal with the problem in 2 or 3 years time (from 1972) when pressed by the D.A.P. for a categorical assurance that Chinese and Tamil primary schools would not be converted into National(i.e. Malay) primary schools".[17] The D.A.P. believed that the government intended to do away with Chinese and Tamil primary schools from this vague and implicit reply. It held that Malay extremists who were the de facto rulers of the country had in fact earlier called for the abolition of Chinese and Tamil primary schools through the Utusan Melayu, the Malay vernacular press.[18]

16. See Parliamentary speech,"Future of Chinese and Tamil Primary Schools", in Lim Kit Siang, Time Bombs in Malaysia, 2nd Ed., D.A.P., Kuala Lumpur, 1978; op. cit., p. 272.

17. Ibid, op. cit., p. 274.

18. The Editor of Utusan Melayu, Melan Abdullah, published the allegedly seditious speech of Musa Hitam, then an assistant minister, calling for the abolition of Chinese and Tamil schools. He was fined $500 for sedition. See article,"A Clear Case", Far Eastern Economic Review, 20th November, 1971.

Although the Editor of the paper was charged with sedition, the D.A.P. felt that Malay feelings over this issue were generally in support of the paper's views. Sensing that the government continued to be indecisive which it interpreted as insincerity over what was a matter of vital concern to the non-Malays, the D.A.P. began to agitate for a categorical government assurance that Chinese and Tamil primary schools would not be converted. It argued along the lines of the right of non-Malays to be educated in their mother tongue as provided for by Article 152(1) of the Constitution.[19] The D.A.P. held that if the government decided to convert Chinese and Tamil primary schools to Malay, it would be deviating from Article 152(1) of the Constitution, and thereby the Rukunegara, which respected and upheld the Constitution. The D.A.P.'s consistent agitation reflected its belief that the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. could not effectively protect non-Malay interests such as education and language in the N.F. coalition.[20] Although the D.A.P.'s call to repeal Clause 21(2) of the 1961 Educational Act was not successful,

19. Article 152(1) of the Constitution states:
(1) The National Language shall be the Malay Language and shall be in such script as Parliament may by law provide;
Provided that:
(a) no person shall be prohibited or prevented from using(Otherwise than for official purposes), or from teaching or learning any other language;
and
(b) nothing in this clause shall prejudice the right of the Federal Government or of any State Government to preserve and sustain the use and study of the language of any other community in the Federation.
Lim Kit Siang,op.cit., pp213-4. He claimed that this clause was vague and caused great anxiety among the non-Malays, and called for a Parliamentary Commission to define clearly the phrase'to preserve and sustain the use and study of the language of any other community in the Federation'. In the absence of this, Kit Siang held that the non-Malays were entitled to interpret this as not merely the study of their languages as a subject(as the government had probably intended) such as French, German, etc., but also their use as effective media of instruction in Chinese and Tamil schools. Ibid, p. 273.

20. Despite earlier pledges by M.C.A. Ministers that the teaching of Chinese would not be curtailed after Malay became the sole official language of the country in 1967, the D.A.P. remained skeptical. Khaw

the government nevertheless had been forced to categorically state that it had no intention to convert Chinese and Tamil primary schools.[21] Whatever the government's reasons, the D.A.P. felt it was due to the government's fear of losing non-Malay votes in the forthcoming 1974 general elections.[22]

The D.A.P. did not believe that the categorical assurance by the government not to convert Chinese and Tamil primary schools reflected its sincerity that the schools should develop in such a way as to fulfil the cultural and linguistic aspirations of the non-Malays. It held that the government could always resort to subtle and insidious ways to alter their character so as to stifle their development. To prove this point, Lim Kit Siang cited several ways as to how the government intended to alter the character of Chinese primary schools.[23] He alleged that there had been no corresponding increase in the number of Chinese primary schools in relation to their increased enrolment. On the contrary he stated that there was a net reduction of 6 primary schools in Peninsular Malaysia from 1970 to 1973 when 4 new Chinese primary schools were built in exchange for 10 being closed down. He further alleged that the government had been indifferent in providing subsidies for the development and maintenance needs of Chinese

Kai Boh pledged that the M.C.A. would "ensure that the teaching and learning of the Chinese language is not prohibited and that the preservation and sustenance of the use and study of the Chinese language is not prejudiced". Suara Malaysia, 24th September, 1965, op. cit. Lee Siok Yew stated:"The position of the Chinese language has been clearly written in the Constitution which states that the teaching of the language will not be curtailed even after 1967 when the national language has become the only official language of the country". Ibid, 27th August, 1965, op. cit.

21. Parliamentary speech,"Future of Chinese and Tamil Primary Schools", in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 274.

22. Ibid.

23. For full details, see ibid, especially pp. 275-8. The intended possible alteration of Tamil primary schools by the government, according to the D.A.P., would also be along similar lines.

primary schools and neglected the teacher training programme for Chinese-medium teachers. As a result, Kit Siang claimed that there was a shortage of such teachers. In addition, he held that the teachers trained were not competent to teach in the Chinese medium, as they merely had 6 years of Chinese primary education, necessitating a switch to national-type(English-medium) secondary schools, taking Chinese as a subject only. Further it was alleged that their training in Malay(except for Chinese language and literature) blunted their effectiveness to teach in Chinese. Lim Kit Siang also maintained that the priority given to Malay as a mandatory pass in examinations caused the standard of education in Chinese primary schools to deteriorate owing to a lack of attention to the Chinese language. Finally the posting of clerks inclined towards the use of Malay in circulars and notices (previously in Chinese) and the government's refusal to conduct educational programmes in Chinese were cited by Kit Siang as further measures to alter the character of Chinese primary schools.

In retrospect, not all the allegations regarding the alteration of the character of Chinese and Tamil primary schools by the D.A.P. against the government were justifiable, considering the constraints of a multi-racial society. For instance, the training of Chinese school teachers in Malay did not blunt their effectiveness to teach in Chinese in the majority of cases. Lim Kit Siang was trying to link the priority given to Malay in Chinese primary schools, resulting in a corresponding neglect of mother-tongue instruction to the manner in which Chinese-medium teachers were trained, and then to suggest that the former adversely affected the latter. He contended that the spirit of Article 152(1) of the Constitution was violated because Chinese was not effectively used as a medium of instruction in Chinese primary schools. The government however regarded the D.A.P.'s allegations as reflecting the aspirations of Chinese extremist educationists

which were likely to work up Chinese passions. In particular, the government resented the D.A.P.'s subtle objection to the priority given to Malay in Chinese primary schools. In putting foreward its allegations, the D.A.P. was in fact comparing the unfavourable treatment given to Chinese and Tamil primary schools to the privileged treatment Malay(or National) schools received in the form of generous grants, modern facilities, etc.[24] The D.A.P. was perhaps more concerned in highlighting the fact that the government, forced to grant the continued existence of Chinese and Tamil primary schools, was nevertheless determined to stifle their development as manifestations of non-Malay cultural aspirations. Lim Kit Siang's allegations attempted to show that this was done in a subtle and insidious manner. Whatever the irregularities of the D.A.P.'s allegations, they as a whole, were nevertheless vindicated by 2 glaring manifestations of the New Education Policy: The first was the ineffective procedure adopted to teach Chinese and Tamil as a language in schools, owing to their absence in government or public examinations. This would cause Chinese and Tamil to lose their significance as media of instruction which may lead to their demise at some future date.[25] The second appeared to be the perceived absence of reward, particularly in access to higher education, in the study of Chinese and Tamil.[26]

24. The D.A.P. doubted the M.C.A.'s claim(through its Deputy Education Minister, Chan Siang Sun) that the government had done much for Chinese schools. For details of government grants to Chinese primary schools and the training of Chinese-medium teachers, see New Straits Times, 25th September, 1978, 28th October, 1978 and 11th July, 1979. The D.A.P. considered this claim as M.C.A. propaganda to win Chinese votes. It challenged the Deputy Education Minister to give a comparative breakdown of funds and allocations to the different media schools. Lim Kit Siang,op.cit.,pp275. By this the D.A.P. hoped to show that grants and allocations to Chinese schools were a mere pittance compared to what Malay-medium schools were given. The D.A.P.'s contention could be justified by Tun Tan Siew Sin's figures on grants to Chinese schools for 1954 and 1963, compared to grants for education as a whole. In 1954, the figures were $11.7 million and $99.9 million. In 1963, they were $44.6 million and $283 million. Suara Malaysia, 17th September, 1965. The D.A.P.'s contention assumed that the bulk of educational grants were for Malay-medium schools.

25. Tham Seong Chee, op. cit., p. 344. 26. Ibid.

(b) The 1972 Mass M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia Failures

On 19th March 1973, the results of the Malaysian Certificate of Education (M.C.E.) examination conducted the previous year were released. The M.C.E. certificate was normally awarded to candidates who passed the examination after 5 years of secondary school education. A pass in Bahasa Malaysia(i.e. Malay) which replaced English, is mandatory for the award of the certificate. The results disclosed an unprecedented high rate of failures and closer analysis revealed that the majority of the candidates failed because of Bahasa Malaysia. As Malay was not the mother-tongue of the non-Malays, it was predictable that the majority of the failures were Chinese and Indians. Figures released by the Ministry of Education on 4th April 1973 disclosed that of 27,784 non-Malay candidates who sat for the 1972 M.C.E. examination, 14,116(51%) failed because of Bahasa Malaysia as against 4,354 general failures.[27] It was also disclosed that among the Bahasa Malaysia failures, many of the candidates were from some of the top urban schools in Peninsular Malaysia.[28] These had traditionally distinguished themselves in the previous English-medium School Certificate (S.C.) examination conducted by Cambridge University. The S.C. had been discontinued after 1970 and replaced by the M.C.E. Also many of the candidates who failed Bahasa Malay-

27. See Parliamentary speech,"The 1972 Mass M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia Failures" on 18th April, 1973 in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 324.

28. The percentages of the 1972 M.C.E. passes of some of the leading urban schools were as follows:

Penang.	St. Xavier's Institution	26%
	Chung Ling High School	26%
	Han Chiang High School	27%
	Methodist Boys School	27.1%
	Penang Free School	57%
Ipoh.	St. Michael's Institution	17.4%
Kuala Lumpur.	Jalan Cochrane English School	28.3%
	Bukit Bintang Boys School	30%
	Assunta Convent, Petaling Jaya	58%
	Methodist Boys School, Sentul	62%

sia had brilliant grades, scoring some 7 or 8 distinctions in difficult subjects, especially Mathematics and Science. From this it was evident that had it not been for Bahasa Malaysia, many of these candidates would have distinguished themselves as in the case of the S.C., and the non-Malay pass rate for the 1972 M.C.E. examination would have been 84.5%(as against the existing 33.5%) compared to the Malay pass rate of 72.25%.[29]

The immediate reaction of the non-Malays - students, teachers and parents - was one of shock, dismay, grief and smouldering anger. The prevailing mood was that, whatever plans the candidates had or their parents envisaged for them, these had been thwarted. The all important M.C.E. certificate was the passport to pre-university classes and the minimum "meal ticket" to the job market. Without it, students, irrespective of the string of distinctions in the relevant subjects, could not enter pre-university classes, and eventually the university. Those who had qualified for places in 6th Form Classes by passing the requisite 6th Form Entrance Examination before the release of the M.C.E. results, were liable to have their places withdrawn if they failed the M.C.E. Prospective job-seekers either in the government or private sector, would find the doors of employment shut to them without the M.C.E. Perhaps what was even more important to them was the emotional and psychological sense of failure, a feeling that they had let down their parents and teachers. Under these circumstances, the affected candidates tended to visualize a bleak future without higher educational

Malacca. Malacca High School 57%

Source: Lim Kit Siang, ibid, p. 323. It should be noted that the above-mentioned schools used to have at least 85% pass rate in the previous English-medium S.C. examination.

29. Of the total number of 9,342 Malay M.C.E. candidates for the 1972 Examination, 6,751(72.25%) passed, 146(1.5%) failed because of Bahasa Malaysia and 2,445(26.25%) were general failures. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 324.

opportunities or jobs commensurate with their years of education in school. After the initial feelings of disappointment over failure had subsided, the tendency of the affected candidates was to re-examine the circumstances under which they had sat for the examination to find out what had gone wrong. The conclusions they derived as regards this were directly or indirectly consequential on the recent events in the educational field following the announcement of the New Education Policy by the former Education Minister, Rahman Yaakub, in July 1969. Within a period of 4 years from his announcement, many undesirable consequences in relation to making Malay the sole medium of instruction in all schools had been brought about, so far as the non-Malays were concerned. Their indications, according to the non-Malays, pointed to a new wave of Malay extremism.

Firstly, on 6th October 1970, some 500 Malay students belonging to the extremist Malay Language Society(M.L.S.) of the University of Malaya, tore down campus notices printed in English and painted over English words on sign-boards.[30] They regarded this as a legitimate move to protest against the slow pace in implementing Malay as the university's medium of instruction. The executive committee of the University of Malaya Students' Union(U.M.S.U.), a multi-racial body, criticised this action as vandalism. The M.L.S. and U.M.S.U. had been at odds previously because the former, unlike the Chinese and Tamil Language Societies, had refused affiliation with U.M.S.U., alleging it to be a non-Malay body, articulating non-Malay views only. The M.L.S., maintaining that its action was in line with the new Razak government, gave U.M.S.U. 24 hours to withdraw its vandalism charge. After some heated debate, U.M.S.U. reluctantly capitulated on the advice of its Malay members that there would be racial trouble if the vandalism charge was not withdrawn

30. For full details, see Jerome Bass,"New Malaysian Government", Asian Survey, Vol. XI No. 10, October 1971, pp. 970-83.

completely. Secondly, the government had rejected the revival of the demands of the Chinese for the recognition of Nanyang and Taiwan university degrees. It however agreed to give value to them in the sense that the graduates from these universities were paid less than their counterparts from recognized universities for doing the same work.[31] Under the prevailing circumstances, the government's decision was probably due to its fear of demonstrations by Malay extremists, thereby exacerbating racial tension. Thirdly, there were demands by Malay extremists that the existing character of the M.C.A.-sponsored Tunku Abdul Rahman College (T.A.R.C.) with its predominantly Chinese enrolment and use of English as a medium of instruction, be changed to bring it in line with the New Education Policy which meant, to the extremists, having a predominantly Malay enrolment and using Malay as the medium of instruction.[32] Finally, the extremists had demanded that as a pre-condition for the renewal of transport licences, vans, trucks and lorries belonging to the Chinese, should prominently display bold Malay lettering.

Under these circumstances, the non-Malays were inclined to, firstly, allege that the standard of the Bahasa Malaysia paper was deliberately high. Candidates, according to a M.C.A. allegation, were required to have a "feel"

31. The issue of the recognition of Taiwan and Nanyang University degrees had always been a constant source of friction between the Chinese and the Malays. Although the graduates from these 2 universities generally did the same work as those from other recognized universities, the government had repeatedly rejected calls to recognize Taiwan and Nanyang degrees. The grounds for rejection appeared to be emotional, cultural and racial, since their recognition would benefit solely the Chinese-educated.

32. The Tunku Abdul Rahman College (T.A.R.C.) was initiated by the M.C.A. to blunt Chinese agitation for the setting up of the Merdeka University prior to the 1969 general elections. Its dual purpose was to act as a feeder college to the universities and to provide professional training in commerce, science and technology for Chinese-stream students, but its public image was multi-racial. It was to be a privately run institution, but the government paid half its bills. For full details of the T.A.R.C., see the Guardian, Vol. II No. 9, August-September 1968 and editorial of the Alliance, Vol. III No. 2, August 1968.

for the language in answering the paper.[33] If this allegation was true, it gave an unfair advantage to the Malays since Bahasa Malaysia was their mother-tongue, and they were able to use better expressions to convey meanings than the non-Malays. The next allegation was that there had been partiality in the marking of the scripts. This had been done by Malay lecturers in the University of Malaya, and many of them had been sympathetic to the aspirations of the extremist M.L.S. Given the hostility shown by the M.L.S. towards the non-Malays, the tendency of the examiners, as alleged, was to fail as many non-Malays as possible on grounds that were not made public. Allegations of partiality in marking had been brought about by other allegations that Malay-stream candidates had been issued with answer scripts of a different colour to distinguish them from English-stream candidates.[34] As the non-Malays were constrained by the Seditions Act, they therefore confined all their frustrations to criticisms along the above allegations.

However the feeling that many non-Malays, either because of inherent prejudices or for a variety of other personal reasons, had shown a dislike towards Bahasa Malaysia, was not lost on the government and the Malays. The government's first reaction to the non-Malay allegations was that they were untrue.[35] It then accused the non-Malays of not being serious

33. See M.G.G.Pillai,"The M.C.E. Drama", Far Eastern Economic Review, 30th April, 1973.

34. Dr. Tan Chee Khoon, PEKEMAS M.P. for Batu(Kuala Lumpur) alleged that Malay-stream candidates for the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia(S.P.M.), the M.C.E.'s Malay equivalent, were given pink answer scripts instead of white ones issued to English-stream candidates. This was allegedly to facilitate partiality in marking. Ibid.

35. In a letter to the Far Eastern Economic Review, 28th May, 1973, the Public Relations Officer of the Ministry of Education, Mohd. Kaus b. Haji Salleh, denied Dr. Tan's allegation. He stated that all candidates, either for the M.C.E. or S.P.M., had the similar usual white answer sheets for the Bahasa Malaysia paper and any other paper. Even names were not written on the answer sheets, but candidates' numbers and their identity card numbers were.

about the importance of Bahasa Malaysia and advised them to take the failure as a serious warning, that unless they had an adequate command of the language, their future was liable to be bleak in Malaysia. On the outcry by non-Malays that it was unfair to fail candidates because of Bahasa Malaysia despite good results, the government's reaction was to ask why there had been no similar outcry against the mandatory English pass as in the case of the S.C. previously when brilliant students failed also because of English. The government's reaction reflected the anger of the Malays and their belief that the non-Malays were opposed to the status of Bahasa Malaysia as a mandatory pass for the M.C.E.

As a political opponent of the government, the D.A.P.'s inclination was to associate itself with the grievances of the non-Malays and at the same time attempt to refute the government's arguments. Lim Kit Siang's first move was to accuse the government of adopting an indifferent attitude towards the mass M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia failures problem despite the fact that the future of some 14,000 students was at stake.[36] He held that the Royal Address in Parliament did not make any reference to the problem although it was urgent. The D.A.P. re-affirmed the non-Malay allegations that there had been partiality in the marking procedures against them. It attempted to substantiate this by contrasting the dismal performances of the traditional top urban schools with the creditable performances of virtually unknown Malay-medium schools which scored almost 100% successes.[37] Lim Kit Siang even went further to insinuate racial discrimination by alleging that in a particular school in Jerantut, Pahang, although the M.C.E. pass rate

36. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 323.

37. Ibid, p. 324.

was 45%, there were 100% non-Malay failures in Bahasa Malaysia.[38] The D.A.P. believed that Malay extremists in U.M.N.O. were responsible for the measures that had caused the mass M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia failures among the non-Malays. It insinuated that by partial marking procedures, the government was trying to reverse the previous pattern of examination results which indicated that the non-Malays had traditionally performed better than the Malays. This reflected the resentment of the extremists towards the dominant status of the English language which could be attributable to its more extensive use in commerce, industry and higher education, and thereby commanded greater economic value and usefulness when compared to Malay. By insisting on a mandatory pass for Bahasa Malaysia, the D.A.P. held that the extremists were determined to do away with the pre-eminent status of English in these fields, and replace it with Malay by legislation, and if necessary, by force as in the case of the acts of vandalism by the M.L.S. In this way, it was held that the extremists wanted to secure for Malay the same economic value and usefulness as English, so that they, as ultra-champions of Malay, would benefit personally. Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. suspected that the government intended as many Malays as possible to pass the M.C.E./S.P.M. as a first step towards ensuring the dominant status of Malay in commerce, industry and higher education. By implication, this had to mean failing the non-Malays in significant numbers, and since the only obvious disadvantage the non-Malays had in relation to the Malays was Bahasa Malaysia, the mass failures among the non-Malays in 1972 in this aspect was predictable. The D.A.P. agreed with non-Malay complaints that the standard of the Bahasa Malaysia paper expected from students was too high. As proof, Lim Kit Siang stated that among the failures were those who had done very well in their

38. Ibid.

school trial examinations along the lines of the M.C.E., including a student from Chung Ling High School in Penang, who had won the Bahasa Malaysia competition for the whole school in that year.[39] Lim Kit Siang also refuted the government's retort that non-Malay students had not taken the Bahasa Malaysia paper seriously. He held that they had conscientiously studied the language as they and their parents were aware that it was a mandatory pass in the M.C.E., without which their chances of entering pre-university classes or seeking employment would be bleak. Besides the failures in Bahasa Malaysia in the previous years 1970 and 1971 with their adverse implications and consequences, had heightened the awareness of the students of the importance of passing the mandatory Bahasa Malaysia paper. As for the government's charge that there had been no similar outcry against previous S.C. failures because of English, Lim Kit Siang held that it was irrelevant since no parallel situation in the past involving 14,000 failures had existed.[40]

Having criticised the government strongly, the D.A.P. made its own suggestions regarding the solution of the problem. Lim Kit Siang urged the government to institute a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the causes and reasons for the high rate of Bahasa Malaysia failures, thus implying that the government had made a big mess out of the whole M.C.E. examination.[41] He called for conditional passes for those who would otherwise have passed had it not been for a failure in Bahasa Malaysia.[42] As for those who had

39. Ibid, p. 325.

40. Ibid, p. 326.

41. Ibid, p. 327.

42. Ibid. In the previous S.C. examination, students who had obtained the requisite number of passes for the award of a certificate but failed in English, were given a conditional General Certificate of Education pass. This would enable them to either seek employment or join pre-university classes if their grades were good. The majority of these cases, however, usually repeated the S.C. It could be held that the award of a conditional pass, as advocated by Kit Siang, was

qualified for admission into 6th Form classes before the M.C.E. results were released, Kit Siang argued that their places should not be withdrawn but that they should be made to repeat the Bahasa Malaysia paper.[43] He held that it was wasteful of effort for students with good results to repeat the whole M.C.E. examination as the government had suggested.[44] Besides it would be a great strain on the already insufficient numbers of qualified Bahasa Malaysia teachers to handle enlarged classes caused by repeating students.[45] The D.A.P. expressed the fears and apprehensions of the non-Malays over what it felt to be Malay extremist motivated measures in the mass M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia failures. It called upon the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership to adopt a humanitarian approach to the affected 14,000 non-Malay students and treat the mass failures as a national rather than a communal problem.[46] In this way, the party argued that goodwill and unity could be created by gratitude rather than resentment shown by the non-Malays.[47]

In retrospect, the 1972 M.C.E. mass Bahasa Malaysia failures was an act deliberately and insidiously contrived by Malay extremists in the government as a reaction to the seemingly lack of regard and interest shown by the non-Malays towards the importance of Bahasa Malaysia in the New Education Policy. The mass failures aggravated the bad feelings between the Malays and the non-Malays. This muted ill-will had been intensified by the increasingly pro-Malay policies of the government after the 1969 racial riot. If the non-Malays felt grievous over what they perceived as the

more in the purpose of removing the psychological sense of failure among the affected non-Malay candidates.

43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.

injustice perpetrated by the government, the Malays were quick to feel offended that the non-Malays had either deliberately chosen to ignore or had not fully understood the implications of the New Education Policy. The government thus faced pressures from the non-Malays to review the M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia results and counter-pressures from the Malays not to do so. Given the weaker political position of the non-Malays, it appeared that they could not do much(except to protest) in seeking redress. In the case of those with prejudices against Bahasa Malaysia for whatever reasons, they would have to change their attitude to master the language adequately to avoid, as the government warned, a bleak future in the country. Time has proved that, with determination and a change in attitude, non-Malays could overcome the problem of not being proficient in Bahasa Malaysia, as indicated by the M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia results of subsequent years.[48] Thus the problem of Bahasa Malaysia failures would tend to be gradually phased out in the future with the implementation of the New Education Policy as more and more non-Malays received their education in the Malay-medium.[49]

As a Chinese-based party, the D.A.P. held the government solely responsible for the dilemma of the 14,000 affected non-Malay students. It successfully articulated the fears and apprehensions of the non-Malays and proposed solutions which appeared attractive to them. To them, it appeared as a concerned party that was not afraid to speak on their behalf. The

48. For the 1978 M.C.E. results, Musa Hitam, the Education Minister, announced that the Bahasa Malaysia pass rate among the non-Malays was 83.3%. This was 3% higher than the previous year. Malaysia, May 1979.

49. The M.C.E. was discontinued after 1979 to be replaced by the wholly Malay-medium S.P.M. from 1980 onwards, thus completing the implementation of the New Education Policy at both primary and secondary levels.

D.A.P.'s criticisms however did not lead to a resolution of the problem in the way the non-Malays would have preferred in view of the huge N.F. majority in Parliament. They nevertheless drew the attention of the government of urgent problems confronting the non-Malays.

(c) Dimunition of Higher Education Opportunities; Falling Standards of English; the Brain Drain.

The above issues were some of the direct or indirect consequences of the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.) promulgated after the 1969 racial riot. The N.E.P.'s broad scope had advocated the expansion and training facilities for Malays as a means to increase productivity, enlarge opportunities and "reduce existing inequalities in the distribution of income between income and racial groups".[50] This sought to achieve its ultimate objective of making the Malays own at least 30% of the total commercial and industrial activities of the country in all categories and scales of operation within 20 years from 1970-90.[51] The marked increase in Malay enrolment at the local universities after 1970 predictably led to a corresponding marked decline in non-Malay enrolment, which was comparatively higher in the past. The increasing use of Bahasa Malaysia as a medium of instruction in schools brought about a decline in the standard of English. This further complicated the student enrolment issue in the sense that it reduced the chances of non-Malays going overseas for tertiary education. The ultimate consequences of the enrolment issue and the deteriorating standards of English caused many non-Malays to become frustrated and lose confidence in the education system of the country. A brain drain of non-Malay professionals to the white Commonwealth countries therefore took place. It was inevitable that the above issues became politicized. They assumed racial overtones with U.M.N.O. re-inforcing the demands of the Malays, forcing the D.A.P. to articulate the grievances of the non-Malays, particularly the Chinese.

50. See Outline Perspective Plan, 1971-90 in Chapter IV of The Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980, Government Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1976, op. cit. The New Education Policy also came within the N.E.P.'s scope.

51. Ibid.

The D.A.P.'s initial reaction to the considerable reduction of university places locally for eligible non-Malays was to criticise the government for not honouring its pledge that in the implementation of the Third Malaysia Plan's(T.M.P.'s) objectives, including education, no one should feel a sense of deprivation. The logical move of the party was to point out that many eligible and qualified non-Malays had been deprived of their right to enter the local universities because of the unusually large Malay enrolment. Lim Kit Siang stated that for the 1977/78 session, the enrolment of the 5 universities in the country had been 75% Malay to 25% non-Malay, and claimed that some 20,000 non-Malay students with the requisite Higher School Certificate (H.S.C.) entry qualifications were refused admission.[52] This disparity in favour of the Malays appeared to be an over-reaction to the government's rationale of increasing the Malay intake by the Central Processing Unit which was responsible for selecting students to the 5 local universities. The government stated that its rationale was to correct the under-representation of the Malays at university level prior to 1970.[53]

52. See Parliamentary speech,"N.E.P.'s New Injustices and Inequalities", in Lim Kit Siang,op.cit.,p.9. In 1977, he stated that a total of 25,998 students of all races applied for degree and diploma courses in the 5 Malaysian universities, the University of Malaya, the Science University, the National University, the Agricultural University and the University of Technology. Only 5,953 students were accepted. The racial breakdown of the successful applicants was as follows: Malays 4,457 Chinese 1,187 Indians 226 Others 43.

53. In an interview with Asiaweek, the Education Minister, Musa Hitam, gave reasons for the greater weightage in respect of Malay enrolment in the local universities. Prior to 1970, the enrolment at the University of Malaya, then the only university in Malaysia, was heavily in favour of the non-Malays because the best schools in the country were located in the towns in which the non-Malays predominated. The schools had acted as a feeder to the university. After 1970, with the expansion of educational facilities to the rural areas where the Malays predominated, the composition of the feeder base was drastically altered to favour the Malays. This was facilitated by the change in the educational policy with the switch from English to Malay as the medium of instruction. Musa stressed that the government's rationale was based on unusual circumstances in the sense that the number of Malay graduates be increased as much as possible within the shortest time avail-

It was based on the recommendations of a committee appointed by the N.O.C. in August 1969 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Majid Ismail to study the campus life of students in the University of Malaya.[54] Having as background that the May 1969 racial riot was caused by Malay dissatisfaction over economic and educational under-representation, the Majid Ismail Committee was mainly concerned with the comparatively small total number of Malay students in the University of Malaya as a whole, and also on a faculty-by-faculty basis.[55] The low Malay enrolment had been due to the pre-1970 admission criteria, based on merit, with the minimal entry qualifications being the H.S.C. Owing to a combination of several factors, the most important being their rural background, relative poverty and conservative Islamic-based value systems, many Malays failed to attain this. The committee therefore recommended that future admissions to the university should not be based on academic criteria alone, explaining that students in rural areas were under-privileged

able. He preferred to use the term "rural" to denote the government's favouritism towards the Malays against the "urban" Chinese. Asiaweek, 23rd June, 1978.

54. For full details, see Tham Seong Chee, op. cit., pp. 321-50.

55. Ibid, The student enrolment by race within each faculty between 1969 and 1971 of the University of Malaya was as follows:

Academic Year	Faculty / Race	Arts	Science	Engineering	Agriculture	Education	Medicine	Economics
1969/70	Malay	1,489	150	11	70	102	109	442
	Chinese	930	965	328	187	171	388	563
	Others	404	74	20	17	47	71	134
	Total	2,823	1,189	359	274	320	568	1,139
1970/71	Malay	1,996	157	5	91	436	128	510
	Chinese	867	1,118	365	208	147	417	663
	Others	402	88	22	25	59	86	187
	Total	3,265	1,363	392	324	442	631	1,360

Source: Majid Ismail Report, 1971, p. 36, cited in ibid. From the above table, it was evident that except for Arts, the Malays appeared under-represented in the other faculties, especially Engineering and Medicine. Even in Arts, the majority of Malay students majored in Malay and Islamic studies.

and that their full potential could not be known on the basis of the H.S.C. results alone.[56] The Committee published its report in 1971 with the main recommendation that the university should ensure as far as possible that the racial composition of its student population as a whole and also on a faculty-by-faculty basis, should reflect the racial composition of the population in the country. This would raise the Malay enrolment to at least 50% in both intended aspects. A loophole in the University of Malaya Constitution pertaining to admission of students enabled political influence to determine numbers admitted and the 1971 Constitutional Amendment Bill entrust the King to guarantee a certain quota of Malay admissions.[57] In increasing the Malay intake, the government also considered the high proportion of non-Malay students enrolled at overseas universities.[58] It justified its contention that the high percentage of Malay students in local universities was to balance this up, so that when both local and overseas university enrolments were added together, the composition would roughly reflect the racial composition of the country. The D.A.P. held that the criteria used by the government in selecting students to the local universities was unfair to non-Malay stu-

56. Ibid, p. 335.

57. Ibid, p. 338. In respect of the admission policy pertaining to university admission, Section 47 of the University of Malaya Constitution states that "A student shall not be admitted to the University to a course of study for a degree unless he shall have satisfied such requirements as may be prescribed by the Act: Provided that, except with the agreement of the Minister, students who have been awarded Federal or State scholarships or other similar financial assistance from public funds for university degree courses, shall not be refused admission if they satisfy such requirements". Tham states that this therefore allows the Minister of Education and state Mentri-mentri Besar to have a direct influence in determining the composition of students in the university as well as within each faculty, simply by increasing or decreasing the number of scholarship awards. Op. cit. In addition, the Constitutional Amendment Bill of 1971 stipulates that "if the number of places offered by the authority responsible for the management of the university, college, or such educational institution to candidates for any course of study is less than the number of candidates qualified for such places, it shall be lawful for the Yang di-Pertuan Agong (King) to ensure the reservation of such places for Malays....as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong may deem reasonable; and the authority shall duly comply with the directions". Op. cit.

dents, especially taking into consideration the non-Malay enrolment at overseas universities. It pointed out that the restriction on non-Malay enrolment at local universities had forced parents to send their children overseas in the first place, and held that if they did not go overseas, prospective students would miss a chance of university education at home altogether. In any case the numbers who went overseas were small and restricted to the rich, compared to the many who were qualified but could not enter local universities. Lim Kit Siang claimed that non-Malay students in schools faced a dilemma, because they were worried about getting a place to study in the university after completing their H.S.C. He was careful to stress that the D.A.P. did not object to more university places for Malays, but this should not be at the expense of deserving non-Malay students. Kit Siang suggested that the government should regard the problem of the diminution of university places for non-Malays locally as a national and not a communal problem, and should seriously resolve it to the satisfaction of all to ensure national unity in the country. He stated that the Malays, being more backward than the other races, deserved full governmental assistance in higher education, but at the same time there should be an appropriate and fair expansion of higher education opportunities for non-Malays. In this aspect, the non-Malay total intake of 1,456(Chinese 1,187 Indians 226 Others 43) for the 1977/78 session for the 5 local universities should be tripled for the forthcoming 1978/79 session without reducing the existing Malay intake.[59]

58. In 1975, there were about 31,500 Malaysian students enrolled in overseas institutions of higher learning. The racial breakdown was as follows: Malays 20.6% Chinese 69% Indians 9.2% Others 1.2%. Ibid, p.340.

59. Lim Kit Siang, op.cit., p.12. He further urged the government to set up at least 3 or 4 more local universities in view of the large number of qualified students who could not find places. New Straits Times, 27th December, 1979. This was apparently in response to speculation that a 6th university may be set up. New Straits Times, 15th December, 1979.

This would have, in the D.A.P.'s view, fairly reflected the racial composition of the country in the sense that the total enrolment for the 5 local universities for the 1978/79 session would be roughly 50% Malay and 50% non-Malay. The D.A.P. suggested that another avenue for the expansion of local education opportunities would be the establishment of private universities, such as the Merdeka University.(This is to be discussed fully in the next section of this chapter). It claimed that Chinese Guilds and Associations would only be too willing to set up a private university once the government gave them the permission to do so. At the pre-university level, the D.A.P. wanted the government to extend Taylor College's permit for as long as Malaysians required it to prepare them for the Matriculation Examination for entry into Australian and New Zealand universities.[60] The D.A.P. maintained that Taylor College had been performing a useful function in alleviating the shortage of educational opportunities at pre-university level. It suspected that the intention of the Malay-dominated Police Co-operatives to buy over the College's rented premises in Kuala Lumpur, causing it to cease operations by the end of 1978, was a move to deny non-Malays of higher education opportunities, since the overwhelming majority of the College's students were non-Malays.

The D.A.P. next concerned itself with the deteriorating standards of the English language as a result of the switch in the medium of instruc-

60. Taylor College was set up in 1969 in Kuala Lumpur. The number of students it had successfully prepared for the Australian Matriculation Examination on a yearly basis was as follows:

1969	26	1974	360
1970	48	1975	383
1971	63	1976	324
1972	78	1977	350
1973	217		

The College operated solely as a private institution.
Source: Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 11.

tion in schools from English to Malay. The party had always emphasised the importance of English in view of its practicality in administration, commerce and industry, and also an access to higher education overseas, especially in Science and Technology. Since the 1967 National Language Act which made Malay the sole official language in the country and downgraded the status of English, the D.A.P. had always called for its restoration as an official language. The party even went to the extent of suggesting that English could also be considered a Malaysian language in the same way that Chinese and Tamil could. Its contention was justified by the fact that the educated of all races tend to communicate with one another in English rather than Malay, and the English-medium schools had always been a meeting place of all races where some form of integration(i.e.Malayanization) had taken place. In concerning itself with the falling standards of English, the D.A.P. criticized the government for failing to preserve and sustain the use of English to the extent that the Ministry of Education had to recruit about 200 British teachers to arrest the decline of English in schools.[61] The D.A.P.'s criticisms revealed the dilemma of the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership in striving for an educational system based solely on Malay to reflect the supremacy of Malay culture in the country while at the same time retaining the use of English for practical purposes. The necessity of placing a premium on Malay predictably brought about a psychological and emotional rejection by the Malays of English, dubbed as a "colonial" language by Malay extremists.[62]

61. The Education Minister, Musa Hitam, said that there would be a sharp decline in the standard of English once it was no longer the language of instruction. However the decline was worse than what the government had expected. The Ministry of Education planned to have more English classes in schools with emphasis on both spoken and written English, with the intention of bringing English back into prominence as a second language in schools. Interview with Musa Hitam, Asiaweek, 23rd June, 1978.

62. See Musa Hitam's contention with regard to this in Rodney Tasker, "The Politics of Education", Far Eastern Economic Review, 23rd June, 1978, pp. 14-6.

In resuscitating the importance of English, the U.M.N.O. leadership had to repeatedly stress that this was not intended to bring the language to the same status as Malay. Conscious of the fact that the government appeared concerned at the falling standards of English, the D.A.P. repeatedly urged it to make a concerted effort to encourage its effective use in schools.[63]

The D.A.P. then tried to link the falling standards of English with the government's motive of reducing the numbers of intending non-Malay students at overseas institutions of higher learning. Lim Kit Siang stated that with the conversion of English-medium schools to Malay, students having to sit for the Malay-medium S.P.M.(in place of the English-medium S.C. or M.C.E.) at the 5th form,would find that their qualifications did not entitle them to automatic entry into pre-university classes in the white Commonwealth countries as the S.C. or M.C.E. had been entitled to in the past. This was because these countries had regarded the standard of English of the S.P.M. as below the minimal qualifying standard required for matriculation and eventually the university. Intending students, then, would have to sit for a proficiency test in the English language. Kit Siang held that with the declining standards of English in schools consequent on the switch to Malay, the chances were that many students would not be able to pass this test. Therefore they would not be able to pursue higher education overseas. The D.A.P.'s implication was that the government was trying to reduce the numbers of non-Malay students intending to enrol at overseas institutions of higher learning in this subtle manner. As English was the pre-condition for

63. In commenting on the government's decision to recruit 200 British teachers, Karpal Singh, the Penang D.A.P. Chairman, stated that the need to engage the British teachers, which stemmed from a shortage of language teachers, was the result of relegating English to a position of non-significance. He added that the standard of English had deteriorated to such an extent that it may well be impossible to acquire the levels of proficiency the country enjoyed before Merdeka(1957) unless the government made a sincere effort to encourage its use. See Karpal Singh's letter to Asiaweek, 17th August, 1979.

entry into overseas universities and colleges, the D.A.P. held that the government was indirectly encouraging(or doing nothing to discourage) its decline to shocking levels by the switch to Malay. This automatically disqualified many prospective students through failure in the language test. As most of the intending overseas students were non-Malays, the D.A.P. concluded that the net effect would be an edge to the numbers of Malay students when combining the overall university and college enrolments in both local and foreign institutions of higher learning. As a possible solution to this particular problem that prospective overseas students were facing, the D.A.P. called for the introduction of a specially up-graded English syllabus to ensure that students who passed the S.P.M. in 1980 and after would continue to command an adequate proficiency in English so that they would be able to pass the requisite language proficiency test.[64]

The D.A.P. next pointed out what it considered as the predictable consequences of the government's measures to switch the medium of instruction from English to Malay and the large-scale Malay enrolment in the local universities. In the former, it contended that educational standards were bound to fall. The party justified its contention on 2 basic grounds. Firstly, there were not enough qualified teachers to teach in Malay; during the initial stages of the implementation of the New Education Policy, several Indonesian teachers were recruited. Secondly, most of the textbooks and access to new knowledge were in English. The translation of material in English to Malay by the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka(D.B.P.) - Language and Literature Agency - was also liable to be fraught with difficulties considering the enormity of the task and the difficulty of translating technical and legal terms. In the latter case, the D.A.P. pointed out that the majority of these were admitted on minimal qualifications, while in the case of some, this had

64. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 11.

even been waived.[65] This was especially prevalent in the Science, Medical, Engineering and other faculties where the Malays had been heavily under-represented prior to 1970 when admission was based on merit. The D.A.P. went to the extent of alleging that standards had been deliberately lowered in a vain attempt to get as many Malays qualified in these fields as possible.[66] The logical conclusion to this was the different sets of criteria used for passing both Malay and non-Malay students, instead of a uniform set for all students as in the past. This had led to many resignations of academics from the University of Malaya. These, long accustomed to the high standards maintained by the university prior to 1970, had felt that cardinal principles were being breached by sacrificing standards in allowing the admission of students who were not qualified in the first place. Lim Kit Siang alleged that the decline in standards at the university was so serious as to warrant, for instance, a detailed report on curriculum, student performance, staff qualifications, etc., from the Medical Faculty before international recognition could be granted to the university's medical degrees. He maintained that this was tantamount to non-recognition unless certain conditions, such as those mentioned above, were fulfilled. Kit Siang reminded the govern-

65. For details, see the recommendations of the Majid Ismail Committee in the earlier part of this section. As a result of this liberal admission policy, there were far too many Malay applicants and the admission procedure had to be revised slightly. Musa Hitam, the Education Minister, explained that selection was based on merit, but there were separate merit lists for Malays and non-Malays. "Cut-off points" made up the selection criteria. For the 1977/78 session, the cut-off points were as follows: Arts: Malays - 36 points Non-Malays - 44 points Science: Malays - Minimal academic qualifications Non-Malays 54 points. It would appear that for the other faculties such as Medicine and Engineering, the admission criteria was even more relaxed for Malays. Determination of cut-off points was flexible, and was subjected to annual changes based on the number of places available. See Malaysia, December 1978.

66. This view was justified by Musa's contention that most of the architects, doctors and lawyers in Malaysia were non-Malays, and the only way to push up the Malay percentage(in these professions) was to"take them like a horse and pull them by the nose". See Hugh Lunn,"Malaysia, Racism and the Boat People", The Weekend Australian Magazine, 28th-29th July, 1979, op. cit.

ment that before it implemented the New Education Policy and the Majid Ismail Committee's recommendations, medical and other degrees from the University of Malaya encountered no problems in gaining international recognition.[67] Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. alleged that it was not surprising for the public to lose confidence in the educational system of the country as a whole. Lim Kit Siang pointed out that even Ministers and Sultans had lost confidence, preferring to send their children abroad for higher studies. Therefore professionals, academics and other skilled personnel could hardly be blamed for leaving the country in droves for the white Commonwealth countries. Their numbers, according to Kit Siang, exceeded the brain drain immediately following the May 1969 racial riot. He maintained that those who emigrated were not only young men in search of greener pastures, but also elderly people with established standing who had to uproot family and social ties. A good example of this was the doctor-brother of the deputy Education Minister, Chan Siang Sun. Malaysian students who graduated from overseas universities, preferred to remain in their host countries rather than return home. The D.A.P. concluded that the reasons for the severe brain drain appeared to be more for the sake of the children of those who emigrated; in Malaysia existing trends pointed to a bleak future for non-Malay children. The fact that many emigrants were prepared to take up jobs which were comparatively inferior to their previous jobs testified to this.[68] Thus to check

67. See Parliamentary speech,"Call for a Tunku Abdul Rahman Commission of Inquiry on Education" on 7th December, 1977 in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 261. This report was requested by the United Kingdom General Medical Council which concluded that it doubted the ability of the Medical Faculty of the University of Malaya to continue to maintain international academic standards.

68. For details of the brain drain, see Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., pp. 13-4, Fan Yew Teng,"Growing Insurgency and Increasing Repression", Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol. VI, 1976, pp. 374-5 and Susan Lim,"The Malaysian Brain Drain", Insight,October 1978, pp. 17-20. Government reaction to the brain drain varied. While the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, according to Lim Kit Siang, showed concern by asking Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, not to allow Malaysian students

the deterioration in standards in the education system to regain the confidence of Malaysians and thus arrest the brain drain, the D.A.P. suggested that the whole education system be entirely reviewed. It called on the government to set up a public inquiry on education to comprise of a cross-section of Malaysian citizens, including top educationists, academics and administrators under the chairmanship of the former Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman. The party felt that the appointment of the Tunku, given his great reputation for impartiality, as chairman, would restore the confidence of the non-Malays and also arrest the divisive tendencies along racial lines that the present education system had brought about. The D.A.P.'s suggestion of a public inquiry was also in response to the government's failure to produce a report on education under the chairmanship of the then Education Minister, Dr. Mahathir, within 6 months of the 1974 general elections at the suggestion of the late Prime Minister, Tun Razak.[69] The D.A.P. had hoped that its pressure would speed up the government's intention to review the entire education system by the Mahathir Report.

To conclude in this section, the D.A.P.'s arguments on the issues just discussed, suggested that it was opposed in principle to the New Educa-

to remain behind after completing their studies,(Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 13) Dr. Mahathir and Musa Hitam expressed contradictory opinions. Dr. Mahathir said that he was convinced that if Malaysia was to open its doors to professionals like doctors, the country would be flooded with these people from the Indian sub-continent, who would only be too willing to come and practise in Malaysia and who would not question the country's education system. Susan Lim, op. cit., p. 18. Dr. Mahathir's attitude to the emigrants thus appeared to be 'good riddance'. Musa Hitam stated that a brain drain of intellectuals was a very common phenomenon all over the world, even from developed countries like the United States, Britain and New Zealand. Malaysia was thus no exception, according to Musa. New Straits Times, 17th December, 1979. It would appear that Hussein Onn, unlike Mahathir and Musa, understood and was more concerned about the psychological and emotional factors behind non-Malay frustration which led to the brain drain.

69. The Mahathir Educational Report was only released in November 1979, some 5 years later. New Straits Times, 27th November, 1979.

tion Policy and the recommendations of the Majid Ismail Committee to admit more Malays into the local universities. In putting foreward its suggestions, the D.A.P. tried to simplify a complex situation by projecting an image of practicality of itself. To the external observer and those affected, the D.A.P.'s suggestions seemed rational solutions; for instance,if the non-Malays were under-represented and the Malays over-represented in local universities, the simple solution would be to increase non-Malay and decrease Malay subsequent university enrolment accordingly. However what was at stake and more important were the political and racial under-tones involved. The D.A.P.'s contention that the problem of the allocation of local university places be resolved to the satisfaction of all communities appeared rather far-fetched. Given the inherent antagonism between the Malays and non-Malays, one group's satisfaction was liable to be at the other's expense, either in absolute terms or percentage wise. Thus if the D.A.P.'s suggestion that the non-Malay intake for 1977/78 session be tripled without reducing the existing intake, the Malays were bound to feel the sense of loss by their reduced percentage from 75% to 50% in the overall student enrolment. Given their belief that discrimination in their favour was intended to correct previous imbalances in the educational field against them, they were liable to react emotionally and irrationally should the D.A.P.'s suggestion be carried out. Under these circumstances, the government would regard the D.A.P.'s suggestions as attempts to rabble-rouse the Chinese, ignoring the fact that it,(i.e. the government),had caused the frustration of the Chinese in the first place, either directly or indirectly. The D.A.P. knew that whatever suggestions it gave would never be accepted by the government, yet Lim Kit Siang seemed undaunted in articulating freely non-Malay grievances at every available opportunity. It would thus appear that the D.A.P. intended to constantly remind the government that Chinese problems were also urgent, and as such, should be treated as national, not sectional, problems.

By stressing on the importance of English and accusing the government of deliberately causing the standards of English in schools to drop, the D.A.P. was in fact showing its opposition to Malay as the sole medium of instruction. It however couched this objection by dwelling on the adverse effects of doing away with English, such as the fall in the overall standards of education. However the D.A.P.'s arguments against the New Education Policy were not without their weaknesses. The party had suggested that owing to a switch from English to Malay, there was a likelihood that prospective students would fail the English language proficiency test for entry into white Commonwealth universities and colleges. This was because their command of the language was poor. The D.A.P.'s contention in this aspect lacked substance, since there had been no reported cases of mass failures of prospective candidates in these language tests. On this basis, one can conclude that the majority of the candidates who sat for these tests passed and were admitted into the white Commonwealth institutions of higher learning.

In referring to the loss of confidence in the educational system, not all the reasons given by the D.A.P. were correct. Lim Kit Siang pointed out that Ministers and Sultans had preferred to send their children overseas, thus implying that they had no confidence in the Malay-medium instruction educational system. It should be noted that even before the switch from English to Malay, Ministers and Sultans had already sent their children abroad; preference for an overseas education need not necessarily mean that one has lost confidence in one's own educational system. Also the overseas recognition of the S.P.M. as equivalent to the G.C.E. 'o' levels passes and the Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan (S.T.P.) as equivalent to the H.S.C. for entrance to the University of Singapore(subject to an English language proficiency test being taken by prospective candidates) were ample testimony that

the standard of education, as alleged by the D.A.P., did not deteriorate to such low levels that confidence was lost in it.[70]

70. For recognition of the S.T.P. as entrance qualification by the University of Singapore subjected to an English language proficiency test, see New Straits Times, 4th March, 1980.

(d) The Merdeka University Controversy

The proposal to establish the Chinese-medium Merdeka University in 1978 marked a climax to the implications arising from the government's policies over the alteration of the character of Chinese and Tamil primary schools, the 1972 mass M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia failures and the lack of local higher educational opportunities for the non-Malays. It was a Chinese reaction out of fear and anxiety which interpreted the above issues as the government's intention to do away with Chinese language, culture and education in the country. The build-up to this fear and anxiety followed a logical sequence. Given the background of the long-standing Sino-Malay distrust and suspicion, which had been aggravated by the 1969 racial riot, the Chinese understandably perceived a new wave of Malay fanaticism, directly or indirectly condoned by the government. This was manifested by a series of events beginning with the acts of vandalism by the extremist M.L.S. in the University of Malaya in late 1970, followed by the government's adamant and repeated non-recognition of Taiwan and Nanyang university degrees, the call to change the admission policy and medium of instruction of the T.A.R.C. and the demand that Chinese transport vehicles prominently display bold Malay lettering.(See section (b) of this chapter). It was within this racially-charged background that the government's reaction to the above issues was meted. Chinese dissatisfaction to it was to revive the call to set up the Merdeka University which had been mooted as early as 1968 by Chinese educationists and the Chinese Guilds and Associations. It would appear that in agitating for Merdeka University, the Chinese were mainly concerned with the lack of local higher educational opportunities for their children, but this issue had become entangled by the fear of the loss of their culture and language as a result of the above-mentioned series of events which seemed to suggest government-condoned Malay fanaticism. Thus the Chinese perceived

the Merdeka University concept as a panacea to their educational, cultural and linguistic ills. The strong supporters of the proposed university were the Chinese Guilds and Associations and the various Chinese school teachers' unions. The D.A.P. decided to seek allies among them by fully supporting the proposed university. On the other hand, it was opposed by U.M.N.O. and the Malays outside the government. The Chinese partners of the N.F., the M.C.A. and the G.R.M., found themselves in a dilemma, torn between the need to satisfy the aspirations of their constituents and their commitment to the government stand. They sought to isolate the issue of the lack of local university places for non-Malays from the cultural and linguistic fears of the Chinese(which were regarded as inseparable by the D.A.P.) and then called for more places for non-Malays while at the same time rejecting the Merdeka University proposal. While the controversy over the proposed university escalated, it was complicated by another series of events considered by the Chinese as a further manifestation of Malay extremism. This took place in the latter half of 1978 and continued into 1979, beginning with the desecrations of Hindu temples, the convocation attire of the University of Technology Malaysia (U.T.M.), the alleged neglect of the Chinese and Tamil languages over Radio/Television Malaysia(R.T.M.), the speech by a M.P. calling for the abolition of Chinese and Tamil schools, the Vietnamese refugees and the controversial speech on the lion dance by the Home Affairs Minister, Ghazali Shafie. However the government's announcement that there would be more local university places for non-Malays temporarily defused the Merdeka University controversy.

The proposal to set up the Merdeka University using Mandarin as the medium of instruction to cater for the needs of Chinese-stream secondary school students was mooted as early as 1968 when the difficulty of these students to obtain places in local universities in Malaysia and Singapore

was felt. Chinese-stream students had found that their qualifications were not compatible for entry into the English-medium Universities of Malaya and Singapore. Also the doors to their traditional avenues of higher education, Nanyang University and the universities in Taiwan, seemed to be gradually closing. In the first place, these degrees were not recognized by the government. Secondly, in the case of Nanyang University, the admission requirements were gradually made more restrictive for Malaysian students.[71] Hence it was felt that a Malaysian-based Chinese-stream university along the lines of Nantah, would cater to the needs of the many Chinese-stream students. As language was closely associated with culture, it was also felt that the proposed university would serve as a cultural symbol to the large Chinese population in Malaysia. By the time of the 1969 general elections, the Merdeka University had become heavily politicised. The D.A.P. included it in its "Malaysian Malaysia" platform in a bid to win massive support from the Chinese community while the M.C.A. attempted to steer a middle course over the issue. The M.C.A. rationalized that if it supported the proposal to set up the university, it would compromise the government's official stand of opposing it. On the other hand, if it opposed the proposal, it was liable to lose the overwhelming support from the Chinese community who had become agitated over the government's pro-Malay policies. The importance of having continual access to the government and the fear of an extreme Malay backlash made the M.C.A. reject the proposal initially.[72] To mitigate this, the party called for alternative suggestions such as the upgrading of the Department of Chinese Studies at the University of Malaya into a full faculty, and the setting up of a feeder college, the T.A.R.[7]

71. In the absence of any official reasons given, one can only speculate that this was to increase the number of places at the university for Singapore students. By 1972 the full effects of this measure were felt when the Malaysian student enrolment at Nantah dropped significantly.

72. See Karl Von Vorys, op.cit., p.291. For the M.C.A.'s rejection of Merdeka University, see Straits Times, 9th February, 1968.

73. Foot-note 32 of this chapter.

These measures, with their various short-comings, did not satisfy the restless mood of the Chinese, who, instigated by the Chinese Guilds and Associations and the D.A.P., were insistent on the establishment of the Merdeka University. On the contrary, they provoked extremist Malays in U.M.N.O. to demand successfully for the setting up of a Malay-language National University.[74] As the 1969 general elections campaign intensified, the M.C.A., fearful of a big defeat at the polls, forced itself to fully support the establishment of the proposed university shortly before the elections.[75] A company called the Merdeka University Sdn. Berhad was registered on 8th May 1969 to pave the way for the establishment of the Merdeka University.[76] However the racial riots broke out 5 days later with their aftermath of N.O.C. rule, and whatever plans to set up the Merdeka University had to be suspended owing to the extreme sensitivity generated by the controversy in the build-up towards the general elections. The suspension was also part of the N.O.C.'s measures to dampen mutual communal antagonism to contain the riots. Despite its apparent permanency, the sponsors of the proposed university did not give up hope as they believed that it was only temporary, perhaps for the duration of the emergency. Following the restoration of Parliamentary rule in February 1971, they began to revive their plans to establish the university. They felt that the T.A.R.C. did not resolve the serious problem of Chinese-stream students who could not find places in local universities. It was only a feeder college

74. For full details of this, see Jerome Bass, Malaysian Politics, 1968-70: Crisis and Response, Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1973, pp. 47-52.

75. Tun Tan Siew Sin, the then M.C.A. President, invited the sponsors of the Merdeka University to join the government and those responsible for the T.A.R.C. to set up a national(i.e. Merdeka)university "devoid of any political undertones". Straits Times, 30th April, 1969, op. cit. Despite this last-minute change of strategy, the M.C.A. still lost a lot of support to the non-Malay opposition. It also incurred the displeasure of U.M.N.O.

76. The Merdeka University sponsors needed the M.C.A.'s support for setting up the proposed university because of its access to the government.

catering for pre-university classes and some professional courses. In fact by educating more students for pre-university classes, the T.A.R.C. was swelling the numbers of Chinese students with the H.S.C. qualifications. Moreover it was felt that since the government had agreed to the establishment of the Malay language National University, the request to set up Merdeka University was not unreasonable.[77] Shortly before the 1974 general elections, the Merdeka University sponsors claimed that Tun Razak had promised them that the government would take another look at the university plan on the condition that it did not become politicized.[78] According to them, officials close to Tun Razak held several private discussions with them. It could be surmised that the government's action, in this aspect, intended to pacify the Chinese community so as to win their votes for its Chinese partners, especially the M.C.A., in view of the latter's dismal performance in the 1969 general elections. The impression conveyed to the sponsors was that there was still hope for the proposed university to be set up. However, whatever hopes they entertained did not materialise. They claimed that they had been betrayed after the N.F. had won a landslide victory in the 1974 general elections and then refused to consider the matter despite Tun Razak's promise.[79] Meanwhile qualified non-Malay students were finding it increasingly difficult to enter local universities as a result of the highly discriminatory practice adopted by the Central Processing Unit in its selection procedure.(See preceding section). If the situation was bad for

77. See A.M.Healy,"Education and Politics in a Plural Society: The Case of Malaysia", World Review, Vol. XIV No.3, October 1975, pp. 26-34. The National University began its first session with a few hundred students in temporary premises in the former Malayan Teachers' College in Kuala Lumpur next to the University of Malaya, in 1970.

78. For full details of Tun Razak's unconfirmed promise, see article, "Storm over Merdeka", Asiaweek, 13th October, 1978, pp. 33-7.

79. Ibid.

the English-medium non-Malay students, it appeared even worse for the Chinese-stream students, given the biased attitude of the Central Processing Unit. By the time the Merdeka University sponsors renewed their campaign in early 1978, the racial composition in the local universities had been some 75% Malay to 25% non-Malay. In fact Musa Hitam admitted that it was closer to 85% Malay and 15% non-Malay.[80] The problem of the lack of local university places for non-Malay students was aggravated when the governments of Britain, Australia and New Zealand, for a variety of reasons, imposed restrictive quotas and higher fees on foreign students in their universities and colleges.[81] Added to the concern for lack of local educational opportunities in the universities for non-Malay students were the gradual weakening and erosion of the effective use of the Chinese language in schools(section (a)) and the apparently hostile government attitude towards Chinese cultural traditions like the lion dance. The emphasis to make Malay culture prominent after the 1969 racial riot had its predictable consequences on Chinese cultural traditions. While much publicity was given in the mass media to stress the importance of Malay culture as the national culture, restrictions such as the need to apply for permits(with restrictive conditions) were imposed on the performance of the lion dance, the pride of the Chinese, on public festive occasions.[82] Thus it may be argued that while the demand of the Merdeka

80. Tham Seong Chee,op.cit.,p.348 and Rodney Tasker, op. cit., pp. 14-6.

81. The New Zealand government, for instance, raised the fees of private overseas students from NZ$220 to NZ$1,500 per annum with effect from 1980. New Straits Times, 15th June, 1979. For details of the British government's imposition of higher fees for private overseas students also with effect from 1980, see New Straits Times, 3rd July, 1979.

82. Some of the conditions stipulated before a permit could be issued for a public performance of the lion dance were as follows: There should not be more than 20 people in a group. Fire-crackers and loud-speakers were not to be used. Martial arts exhibitions would also be prohibited and traffic should not be obstructed. New Straits Times, 6th February, 1980. Ghazali Shafie, the Home Affairs Minister, however clarified that any ban imposed on the lion dance would only be in processions. New Straits Times, 6th December, 1979.

University sponsors to set up a Chinese-medium private university could hardly be compatible with the real issue at stake, i.e. the lack of local higher educational opportunities, they were also motivated by the desire to defend what they perceived to be the steady(government-backed)erosion of Chinese language and culture. They thus saw in the Merdeka University project a symbol of their struggle against educational, linguistic and cultural oppression.

The Merdeka University sponsors decided to carry on their struggle by peaceful means and in accordance to the law. The establishment of universities and colleges in the country came under the provisions of the 1971 Universities and University Colleges Act(U.U.C.A.). Although the U.U.C.A. did not prohibit the establishment of private universities, it must first of all be approved by the King, who had to be satisfied that it was in the national interest.[83] The sponsors therefore sent a thick petition to the King, listing several detailed grounds as to why the proposed university should be established.[84] Their purpose was to stress the urgency of lack of higher educational opportunities locally for Chinese-stream students and to express Chinese fears that their language and culture were slowly being annihilated in the country. The sponsors claimed that the establishment of Merdeka University would resolve the problem and fears stated above. As regards the former, it would accommodate qualified Chinese-stream students who could not get places in the local universities owing to the interference of non-academic factors in university admission, a reference to the Majid Ismail Committee recommendations.[85] In the latter case,

83. See Asian Almanac, Vol. XVII, No. 11, 17th March, 1979.

84. For full details of the Merdeka University sponsors' petition to the King, see Asiaweek, 6th October, 1978.

85. Asiaweek, 10th November, 1978. The petition emphasised that the deteriorating situation(concerning the Chinese)of their language, culture and education must be redressed in the interests of national unity and racial concord.

by using Mandarin as the main medium of instruction, the proposed university would allay Chinese fears that their language and culture would not be stifled. The sponsors nevertheless stressed that although Mandarin would be the main medium of instruction, Bahasa Malaysia and English would be taught as compulsory subjects. The proposed university would complement the government's educational objectives of promoting science and technology by setting up faculties of science, engineering, arts and commerce.[86] Although it would cater primarily for Chinese-stream students, students from other language media would also be admitted.[87] The basis of selection would be on merit.

As expected, the King on the advice of the government, rejected the proposal on the grounds that it was against the national interest. The rejection was summed up by 3 reasons, namely(a) the private sector would set up the university; (b) it would use Chinese as the medium of instruction and (c) it would cater to students from Chinese-medium schools.[88] The government believed that although Bahasa Malaysia and English would be taught as compulsory subjects, the use of Mandarin as the medium of instruction would perpetuate the incompetence in Bahasa Malaysia which tend to isolate Chinese-stream students from the mainstream of the New Education Policy, thereby making its development as far as the Chinese were concerned, difficult. Although the proposed university intended to open its doors to all qualified students irrespective of media, the fact that it would be an essentially Chinese institution in practice was not lost on the government as the T.A.R.C.

86. Ibid. 87. Ibid.

88. For full details of the government's rejection of the Merdeka University proposal, see Malaysia, November 1978 and New Straits Times, 16th October, 1978. See also article,"Another No to Merdeka U", Asiaweek, 6th October, 1978.

had shown.[89] If merit was to form the sole basis of admission, the Chinese would, as the pre-1970 University of Malaya enrolment had indicated, tend to form the majority of the students admitted to the detriment of the Malays.[90] The manner in which Musa Hitam chose to make his rejection of the proposal produced a highly charged racial situation. So too was its timing at the U.M.N.O. General Assembly in September shortly after Musa had been elected one of the party's Vice-Presidents. He stressed that the New Education Policy was clearly stated and easily understood by anyone interested in education and would therefore not be reviewed.[91] This was to allay the fears and anxieties of certain quarters in U.M.N.O. that the government might review the U.U.C.A. to make the establishment of Merdeka University possible owing to the restless mood of the Chinese. Musa added that those Chinese who valued their citizenship in Malaysia should appreciate the government's decision to reject the Merdeka University proposal.[92] This was a reference to the 1957 Merdeka Agreement between U.M.N.O. and M.C.A. in which in exchange for liberal citizenship concessions for the Chinese, the Malays were to be entitled to special privileges guaranteed by their political supremacy. Since the racial riot of 1969, the scope of special privileges had been greatly extended to include education and criteria for university selection. Musa thus gave an implied threat that if the Chinese continued to agitate for the establishment of the Merdeka University, the government might be

89. Out of the T.A.R.C.'s total enrolment of 2,932 students in 1975, there were only 32 Malays, 157 Indians and 4 Others, compared to 2,739 Chinese. The Third Malaysia Plan, Government Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1976, pp. 402-3.

90. See foot-note 55 of this chapter.

91. See Malaysia, November 1978.

92. Ibid.

forced to review its 1957 stand on liberal citizenship concessions for the Chinese. He was solidly backed by U.M.N.O. Youth and the various Malay School Teachers' Unions.[93] Musa's announcement manifested the belief of the Malays that education in the Malay-medium, as sanctioned by the New Education Policy, was closely tied up with cultural, political and economic strivings, all three being intricately intertwined. Their claim to legitimacy through "Bumiputraism" with its special privileges was therefore to guarantee the existence of a salient Malay political, cultural, linguistic and even religious identity(based on Islam) in Malaysia's plural society at all costs. This appeared to be the very core of the political philosophy of the Malays and therefore not negotiable under any circumstances. The Merdeka University proposal was therefore regarded by the Malays as measures to promote Chinese chauvinism via education.

The government's arguments did not appear convincing to the Chinese who were growing increasingly resentful towards the increasingly overt pro-Malay policies, especially in education. From previous experience, the average Chinese had come to believe that each time the government preached multi-racialism, it was in fact practising Malay communalism.[94] Chinese resentment was strongest against the provocative utterances of U.M.N.O. Youth. Absence of government restraints publicly on U.M.N.O. Youth tend to be interpreted as its tacit support for the slide towards Malay extremism. Although there was a general feeling of anger and frustration over the government's rejec-

93. U.M.N.O. Youth President, Suhaimi Kamaruddin, called on the government to take a firm stand against the Merdeka University for no other reason than "that the aims of the university are contrary to the national education policy". New Straits Times, 21st September, 1978, op. cit.

94. This feeling was typically expressed in a comment by a prominent M.C.A. figure:"It's no use the leaders(i.e. U.M.N.O.) telling us Malaysia is a multi-racial country if a significant proportion(i.e. the Malays) of the population take it to mean the country must accept Malay hegemony". Asiaweek, 13th October, 1978, op. cit.

tion of the Merdeka University proposal, the Chinese were divided and confused as regards what measures they should take. The more militant wanted a strong united stand to agitate for the proposal in the belief that if the Chinese continued to be indecisive, Malay extremism would be encouraged further. On the other hand, the moderate elements felt that behind-the-scenes bargaining with the U.M.N.O. leadership would achieve a compromise and certain concessions for the Chinese such as more places for non-Malays in the local universities. However with the prevailing mood of anxiety among the Chinese due to the long-standing neglect of what they regarded as their legitimate grievances, the appeal of the more militant - the Chinese Guilds and Associations, the various Chinese School Teachers' Unions and M.C.A. Youth - appeared more attractive. Musa's reference to the 1957 Merdeka bargaining between U.M.N.O. and M.C.A. made the hard-liners direct their anger at the M.C.A., whose leaders they blamed for negotiating an agreement that was never really accepted by the majority of the Chinese where the future of their language, culture and education were concerned. Granted that the majority of the hard-liners were not the rich businessmen(who were in many cases foreign-born and appeared more committed to their big businesses than the future of the Chinese community) but were local-born, Chinese-educated and in many cases, having been the victims of discrimination in favour of the Malays, they could hardly be blamed for venting their wrath on the M.C.A. To them, the M.C.A. had been a useless, ineffective organisation which could not represent their interests effectively in the government. Thus the sponsors of the Merdeka University announced that they would organise a mass meeting of 10,000 Chinese on 22nd October 1978 to make a united stand after discussing the implications of the government's rejection of the proposal.[95]

95. For full details, see K.Das,"Anger over Ban on Merdeka U", Far Eastern Economic Review, 3rd November, 1978.

The D.A.P. which had been monitoring the situation closely, decided to associate itself with the sponsors of the Merdeka University and backed the proposal fully. During the 1969 general elections, it had campaigned vigorously for the university as an issue. It was forced to keep silent over the same issue in the 1974 general elections partly to avoid being penalised by the Seditions Act, and partly because the problem of non-Malays finding places in local universities had not yet been serious. However as the adverse effects of the New Education Policy became increasingly felt by the Chinese, the D.A.P. revived its campaign for the Merdeka University in the 1978 general elections, though on a lower key compared to the 1969 general elections. The party felt that the government had neglected and was continuing to be indifferent to the long-standing legitimate grievances of the Chinese over higher education opportunities locally, language and culture, to the extent that the Chinese were now becoming desperate. Instead of treating Chinese grievances as national problems and resolving them in a manner that would allay Chinese frustration, the D.A.P. accused the government of being more concerned about the Malay reaction to its treatment of Chinese problems. The difficulty of the whole situation was that Malay interests and Chinese interests tend to be diametrically opposed to one another where language, culture and education were concerned. The pandering to one must necessarily involve the deprivation of the other. Since the government depended on the Malays for its support, it had to perpetually see to it that they were reassured over its policies, otherwise they would transfer their support to the extremist P.A.S. thereby eroding U.M.N.O.'s power base. Hence all the pro-Malay features of government policies had to be widely publicised even to the extent of causing frustration to the non-Malays.[96] The government,

96. See exclusive interview with the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, Far Eastern Economic Review, 26th January, 1979, pp. 18-23. Hussein Onn stated that the Malays from time to time wanted to be reassured:

despite Hussein Onn's explanations, could not pacify the restless Chinese. On the contrary, over-zealous Malay bureaucrats often implemented its policies harshly against the Chinese, as in the selection of students to the local universities. When the Chinese protested, U.M.N.O. Youth was quick to take offence, often accusing them of bad faith and failing to understand the implications of the New Education Policy. The Seditions Act blunted the effect of Chinese protests. The D.A.P. warned that unless the bottled-up frustrations of the Chinese were given a legitimate outlet, they would be vulnerable targets for the M.C.P. The party justified its arguments that the government had persistently ignored its earlier warnings on Chinese frustration over the subtle alteration of the character of their primary schools, the 1972 mass M.C.E. Bahasa Malaysia failures and the denial of places in local universities for qualified Chinese students.(See sections (a) (b) and (c) of this chapter). It accused the government of either blanketing the frustration or grudgingly make negligible concessions which would later be more than balanced up by greater pro-Malay measures. A case in point was the decision to allow the M.C.A. to set up the T.A.R.C. to blunt Chinese demands for the Merdeka University. This angered the Malays and had to be more than balanced up by the establishment of the Malay language National University.[97] In the event the Chinese felt more dissatisfied than ever because their position vis-a-vis the Malays had deteriorated. The D.A.P.

> "We are not speaking of an urban, educated, sophisticated population. The majority of the Malays are in the rural areas. If there is silence for a time, they become suspicious, nervous that nothing is being done. This is where the impression is created that it is all for the "Bumiputra". It is mis-understood by the others. It is a pity, yes. But we have to do it!" Op. cit.

97. See A.M.Healy, op. cit., pp. 26-34.

sensed that the focus of Chinese frustrations would be the Merdeka University since it represented a symbol of their educational, linguistic and cultural struggle against the government. Earlier in March 1978, Dr. Chen Man Hin, the D.A.P. Chairman, unsuccessfully called on the government in Parliament to approve the establishment of the university.[98] The D.A.P. followed this up in the 1978 general elections campaign when it allegedly promised voters that it would seek to amend the U.U.C.A. to provide for the establishment of the Merdeka University.[99] The impression allegedly conveyed to the Chinese voters was that the amended U.U.C.A. would allow for the setting up of the proposed university, whereas the M.C.A. was to argue later that this was not possible.[100] Following the government's rejection of the Merdeka University sponsors' petition in early October 1978, the D.A.P. decided to table a motion in Parliament to amend the U.U.C.A. to provide for the establishment of private universities and private university colleges.[101] In making this move, the party felt that the Chinese had given it a mandate, as indicated by its increased support in the 1978 general elections, to press for their legitimate demands(to set up the Merdeka University) in Parliament. The D.A.P.'s strategy was to link the Merdeka University proposal with the lack of local university places for non-Malay students. Lim Kit Siang stressed that the problem of the diminution of higher education opportunities for non-Malays was the single most divisive issue in the country with more

98. See Mirror of Opinion, highlights of Malay, Chinese and Tamil Press, Ministry of Culture, Singapore, No. 67/1978, 23rd March, 1978.

99. See Rahman Adnan,"Losers All? Special Report on Merdeka University", Malaysian Business, December 1978, pp. 7-10. See also New Straits Times, 11th October, 1978.

100. Ibid.

101. For full report, see ibid.

than 20,000 qualified non-Malay students failing to gain entry into the 5 local universities in 1977/78.[102] This problem would be aggravated by the switch to Bahasa Malaysia from English in 1980 when students would no longer be entitled to automatic access to overseas universities as in the past.[103] As such even the limited access to higher education opportunities overseas for non-Malays would be closed. It was therefore justifiable for the private sector to set up private universities to cope with this problem. Kit Siang stressed that the establishment of private universities would complement and supplement the government's efforts to promote higher education.[104] He did not make any direct reference to the Merdeka University, but conveyed the impression that the Chinese had lost all hope of depending upon the government to resolve their problems concerning the diminution of higher education opportunities, and were now depending upon their own private resources to do so. He stressed that all the Chinese wanted was permission from the government to start the ball rolling.[105] If the U.U.C.A. was rigid, the D.A.P. felt that it should be amended. The D.A.P. knew that its motion would be defeated in view of its small representation in Parliament. It sought rather to force its rivals, the M.C.A. and the G.R.M., to make a clear stand on the issue.

The government's reaction to the D.A.P.'s motion was a firm rejec-

102. The government's rebuttal was that in 1978, out of a total of 30,625 applicants to the 5 local universities, 23,828 comprising of all races, were rejected. Ibid.

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid.

105. The Merdeka University sponsors had collected some $5 million for the "Chinese Culture Fund" and $600,000 for the Merdeka University project itself in the belief that more donations would be forthcoming from Chinese businesses, organizations and individuals when required. See Asian Almanac, 17th March, 1979.

tion by a vote of 117:15 in Parliament.[106] The Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn had realized the importance of the implications of the D.A.P.'s motion and thereby allowed it to be debated for some 4 hours before a vote was taken. This was a departure from the previous strategy of killing D.A.P. motions by calling for a vote immediately after they were tabled. Hussein's strategy was to encourage the non-Malay members of the N.F. to speak on the government's behalf so as to prevent what it saw as a one-sided version of the problem conveyed by the D.A.P. Malay back-benchers were deliberately restrained from making statements in the debate as he felt that they would tend to be emotional and thus exacerbate racial tension. This was one of the ways to get the Chinese to view the problem rationally.[107] However the government's chief spokesman had to be Musa Hitam, the Education Minister. Musa argued along the lines of the impracticality for the private sector to set up the proposed university in terms of cost and poor employment prospects for its graduates.[108] He cited the case of Nanyang University in Singapore which started off as a private university but had to be taken over by the government because its sponsors could not generate the millions of dollars annually to maintain the university. He added that despite the degree of the university being recognized by the Singapore government, the bigotry, especially of the private sector, to accord it a lower status compared to the University of Singapore degree, could not be done away with. Owing to the importance of English as a result of increasing contacts with

106. See New Straits Times, 11th October, 1978.

107. For details, see K.Das,"Hussein stops the rot", Far Eastern Economic Review, 20th October, 1978.

108. It was estimated that the initial cost of establishing a university to accommodate 2,000 students would be $30 million. $10 million would be needed to run it annually. Asian Almanac, 17th March, 1979.

the outside world in terms of commerce and industry, science and technology and access to higher education - this implied the downgrading of Mandarin for practical purposes - Nanyang University had to become a bi-lingual university, and eventually English was officially made a medium of instruction in 1975. The status of the university was downgraded further when a joint-campus programme merging it with the University of Singapore was initiated in 1978.[109] The government's reference to Nantah was that the proposed Merdeka University would suffer a similar fate, forcing the government to take control of it eventually. Musa stressed that even the T.A.R.C., which was meant to be privately sponsored, had to depend on the government for half its bills, a further reminder to the Merdeka University sponsors of the impracticality of private universities and colleges.[110] His arguments were rational and markedly toned down from the implied threat of violence in his earlier announcement to reject the proposal at the U.M.N.O. General Assembly in September. The M.C.A. accused the D.A.P. of trying to make political capital by confusing the issue of the diminution of higher education opportunities for the Chinese with the need to set up the Merdeka University.[111] Lee San Choon, the M.C.A. President, charged that the D.A.P. was misleading the Chinese by promising them something which was not attainable within the stresses and strains of a multi-racial society.[112] He maintained that the M.C.A. shared the concern of Chinese parents over a lack of

109. For full details, see Susumu Awanohara,"The Great Debate rumbles on", Far Eastern Economic Review, 4th April, 1980, pp. 14-5. See also article,"Nanyang U at the cross-roads"in New Straits Times, 3rd April, 1980.

110. See interview with Musa Hitam, Asiaweek, 23rd June, 1978.

111. For full details of the M.C.A.'s arguments, see New Straits Times, 11th October, 1978 and Rahman Adnan, op. cit., pp. 7-10.

112. New Straits Times, 11th October, 1978. The M.I.C., G.R.M., S.N.A.P. and S.U.P.P. gave broadly similar views.

higher educational opportunities but that Merdeka University was not the solution on impractical grounds of cost and employment opportunities for graduates as stated earlier by Musa. Sensing the anxiety and fears of the Chinese, Lee appealed to them to think over the problem objectively and unemotionally(as the M.C.A. leadership had done so to great lengths and in great depth) while he would make a plea for more places in local universities for the Chimese.[113] The M.C.A. was afraid that any emotional outburst by the Chinese would provoke an extreme Malay backlash and weaken the position of the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership. Already Malay extremists were talking about the need to set up an Islamic University if the Merdeka University proposal was approved.[114] Even the M.C.A.'s acknowledgement of the lack of higher educational opportunities for the Chinese was sufficient to provoke concern among certain quarters in U.M.N.O., particularly U.M.N.O. Youth.[115] The tendency of U.M.N.O. Youth was to regard the government's discrimination in admitting more Malays to the universities as a corrective measure to rectify the pre-1970 imbalances against the Malays. They were angry in the sense that corrective measures such as these were continually being thwarted by the admission of more non-Malays in overseas universities, disregarding the fact that lack of opportunities at home had forced the non-Malay students overseas in the first place. U.M.N.O. Youth wanted to settle for no less than the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. showing complete and unqualified rejection of Merdeka University and an acknowledgement that discrimination in favour

113. For details of the M.C.A.'s rejection of the Merdeka University, see New Straits Times, 27th November, 1978, Malaysia, February 1979, and Asian Almanac, 17th March, 1979.

114. For details, see Thaung Myine,"Merdeka University:Why that debate?", Straits Times, 16th October, 1978. See also Mirror of Opinion, highlights of Malay, Chinese and Tamil Press, Ministry of Culture, Singapore, No. 25/1978, 31st January, 1978.

115. Rahman Adnan, op. cit., pp. 7-10.

of Malays as regards university enrolment was imperative.[116] Thus when Dr. Goh Cheng Teik, a deputy minister representing the G.R.M., appealed to Musa to reconsider his earlier U.M.N.O. General Assembly announcement to reject the Merdeka University on the grounds that the principle to set up private universities was being compromised, Malay extremists from U.M.N.O., P.A.S. and the Kedah Malay Teachers' Union attacked him and even asked him to resign.[117] Under these circumstances, the Home Affairs Minister, Ghazali Shafie, could not allow the proposed meeting of 10,000 Chinese on 22nd October 1978 to discuss the implications of the government's rejection of the proposed university. His fear was that Malay extremists would organize a bigger counter-demonstration, thus exacerbating racial tension. Ghazali therefore banned the scheduled meeting under the I.S.A., whereby the Merdeka University sponsors took steps to challenge the government's rejection of the proposed university on legal grounds.[118]

The D.A.P. was angry with the government for banning the proposed 22nd October meeting, as it had counted on this meeting to drum up Chinese support.[119] It however denied that it was politicizing the issue, insisting

116. A typical comment from U.M.N.O. Youth was that the M.C.A. leadership must come out, more often, more boldly and forcefully on some of the issues that require the Chinese being given a lecture. Rahman Adnan, op. cit., pp. 7-10.

117. New Straits Times, 23rd September, 1978 and K.Das,"Caught on the rebound", Far Eastern Economic Review, 24th November, 1978. Dr. Goh, the G.R.M.'s Political Bureau chairman, had earlier stated that the reasons given by Musa for the government's rejection of the Merdeka University meant that the government was closing its doors not only to the university as proposed by its sponsors, but also to any proposed privately funded institution of higher learning regardless of whether it conformed to the education policy or not. Goh had regarded the decision as too wide and rigid. For further details, see K. Das,"A Test of Strength on Education", Far Eastern Economic Review, 6th October, 1978. Musa clarified that the government's rejection of private universities was only within the context of the application to set up the Merdeka University. New Straits Times, 11th October, 1978.

118. See K.Das,"The Shadow of '69 passes again", Far Eastern Economic

that the problems of the Chinese in relation to culture, language and education, which were all tied up with the Merdeka University, were also national problems and therefore merited national solutions. It felt that if it did not raise them, they would never be resolved. This was to hit at the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. for not daring to speak forcefully on behalf of the Chinese in the government. In fact the D.A.P. alleged that the M.C.A. had encouraged Malay extremists to be vociferous by giving the impression that the Chinese had the habit of demeaning themselves. A D.A.P. M.P. stated that the M.C.A. Deputy Minister of Education, Chan Siang Sun, showed ignorance of the dignity of his position as No. 2 man in the Education Ministry hierarchy when he led a M.C.A. delegation to see a Malay bureaucrat who was perhaps 12 or 25 in the same hierarchy to clear up an administrative matter.[120] Whatever the Deputy Minister's reasons for leading the delegation, they certainly could not negate the fact that the M.C.A. had brought this indignity upon itself. The D.A.P.believed that this was the very reason that Malay extremists in U.M.N.O. never hesitated to attack the M.C.A. each time a controversial issue like Merdeka University cropped up. The D.A.P. continued that if there was any politicization of the proposed university issue, the government had been responsible in the first place, since the Education

Review, 3rd November, 1978 and New Straits Times, 20th October, 1978. In banning the proposed meeting, Ghazali said:"Of course I can control the meeting. But how do you control the overflow from the meeting? I mean how do you control the ideas, the words that flow out of the meeting and into society at large, and how do you say no to a counter-meeting after the damage is done?" F.E.E.R., 3rd November, 1978, op. cit. For details of the sponsors' intention to sue the government, see Asian Almanac, 17th March, 1979. B.Levin and Holger Jensen,"Malaysian Apartheid", Newsweek, 20th November, 1978.

119. K. Das, "The Shadow of '69 passes again", F.E.E.R., 3rd November, 1978.

120. New Straits Times, 22nd November, 1978. The same M.P., Chan Teck Chan, also accused the M.C.A. for adopting double standards as regards the Merdeka University proposal. The M.C.A., according to him, protested against the government's decision outside Parliament, but voted with it in Parliament. New Straits Times, 18th October, 1978.

Minister chose to make the government's rejection at a political meeting - the U.M.N.O. General Assembly.[121] The party maintained that Merdeka University was in accordance with the letter and spirit of clause 152(1) of the Constitution which called for the protection and sustenance of ethnic languages.[122] It interpreted protection and sustenance as the right to have the ethnic languages used as media of instruction in schools and universities. By using the Constitution as a yardstick and by showing that Merdeka University conformed to the Constitution, the D.A.P. attacked U.M.N.O.'s insistence that Merdeka University had contradicted the New Education Policy and therefore should be banned. The D.A.P. contended that by opposing Merdeka University, the New Education Policy had in fact conflicted with the Constitution. Since the Constitution was sacred, the D.A.P. suggested that the New Education policy should be amended accordingly to conform to it. Lim Kit Siang held that the main problem contributing to the build-up of racial tension was the tendency of the Malays to perceive the Merdeka University issue as a threat to their existence.[123] As such, the government should explain to them that this was not. Instead the government chose to appease them by banning the proposed legitimate meeting of the Merdeka University sponsors on 22nd October. The government should have allowed the meeting to carry on as scheduled; if the government intended to ban any so-called disruptive meetings, then it should contain the Malay extremists who had no legitimate grounds to organize counter-demonstrations.[124] Sensing that the polemics

121. Rahman Adnan, op. cit., pp. 7-10.

122. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 273.

123. See interview with Lim Kit Siang, Asiaweek, 30th June, 1978.

124. The D.A.P. and the Merdeka University sponsors viewed the ban as a blatant interference with the freedom of assembly. Kit Siang stated: "The Minister said that though the conference could be smoothly held, it might trigger off counter-meetings, leading to a threat to public order and national security. If this is the case, it is these counter-meetings which must be banned..." Far Eastern Economic Review, 3rd November, 1978, op. cit.

between the D.A.P. and the government over the Merdeka University issue was generating an explosive situation if they continued unabated, the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, decided to postpone the full-scale debate on the Merdeka University to December. This was to allow tempers to cool off and enable the parties concerned to reassess their strategy. In this way Hussein Onn hoped that a final sane and rational solution to the controversy would be brought about. The move to have the full-scale debate in December was at the D.A.P.'s request following the defeat of its October motion to amend the U.U.C.A.[125]

Meanwhile the heat on the Merdeka University controversy shifted to the unresolved problems of Chinese culture and language. This was brought about by a series of incidents in the last quarter of 1978.

(i) The Desecrations of Hindu Temples

Moslem vandals from a breakaway 'dakwah' or missionary group destroyed idols in some Hindu temples in remote areas of the countryside.[126] Although the desecrations took place in August, the full implications were only revealed when 8 Hindu guards of the Sri Subramaniam Temple at Kerling in Selangor were charged with manslaughter resulting in the deaths of 4 of the 5 intruders.[127] The guards had been asked by the police to protect their temple from desecrations in view of inadequate police patrols, but in the event, the

125. The motion read:"That this House expresses support for the Merdeka University project proposed by the Merdeka University Sdn. Bhd". New Straits Times, 11th October, 1978, op. cit.

126. For details of the 'dakwah' groups and their origins, see Ismail Kassim,"Dakwah Dilemma", New Nation, 24th October, 1978 and M.L.Lyon, "The Dakwah Movement in Malaysia", Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs, Vol. XIII No. 2, 1979, pp. 34-45.

127. For details of the temple desecrations, see K.Das,"Extremism rears its Head", Far Eastern Economic Review, 1st September, 1978 and "Spectre at Kerling", Asiaweek, 8th June, 1979. The 8 Hindu guards were subquently found guilty of the charge and given reduced jail sentences. Asiaweek, 18th January, 1980.

fatal fight ensued. The dakwah movement which was aimed at guiding Moslems to the correct Islamic life-style, brought about extremist splinter groups fanatical about rejecting material affluence and interpreting the destruction of idols as a passport to Heaven. Apparently they sought out Hindu temples as targets, possibly because Hindu temple idols were very conspicuous and also that Hindus were a minority in Malaysia's multi-racial and multi-religious population. The desecrations were religion-inspired, but as religion was tied up with race, they assumed racial overtones. Although there had been no reported incidents on the desecration of Chinese and Buddhist temples, fears of such a possibility were entertained by the Chinese. These fears were justified on the grounds that there had been inadequate police patrols, forcing the temples concerned to protect themselves.

(ii) The Convocation Attire of the University of Technology Malaysia(U.T.M.)

The U.T.M. authorities decided that all graduands, irrespective of race, should wear the Malay costume, symbolised by the 'songkok'(cap) for males to ensure homogeneity in its graduation ceremony for 1978.[128] As dress was associated with culture, the non-Malay graduands of the U.T.M. saw this as a move to impose Malay culture on them, and they decided to boycott the convocation ceremony. An earlier parallel to this incident was the preference of some Malay judges to discard the traditional wig and courtroom decorum and put on the songkok.[129]

128. For further details, see article,"Of Attire and Merdeka", Asiaweek, 20th October, 1978 and Lim Say Boon,"Merdeka U: Chinese Hopes fade", The Asian, Vol. II No. 6, February 1979.

129. See Utusan Melayu editorial,"Wig or Songkok", Mirror of Opinion, Highlights of Malay, Chinese and Tamil Press, Ministry of Culture, Singapore, No. 119/1978, 26th May, 1978. Malaysia's Lord President, Tun Mohamed Suffian, obviously displeased, stated:"Some of the members of the public concern themselves with what judges put on their heads. I should have thought they should worry more about what's inside our judges' heads - whether our judges are qualified, whether they are honest, men of integrity, impartial and capable of doing justice". Asiaweek, 3rd August, 1979, op. cit.

(iii) Speech to abolish Chinese and Tamil schools

In the Parliamentary session in October 1978, the newly-elected M.P. for Kinabalu, Sabah, Mark Koding, allegely made a seditious speech, calling for the abolition of Chinese and Tamil schools and the prohibition of Chinese and Tamil characters on sign-boards.[130] In the aftermath of the heated debate to amend the U.U.C.A. in early October, Koding's outburst against Chinese and Tamil schools was apparently his desire to court the favour of Malay extremists in U.M.N.O., since it had been public knowledge that he, an independent(but Bersatu Rakyat Jelata Sabah(BERJAYA) backed) M.P. would soon join the N.F.[131]

(iv) Use of Chinese and Tamil over R.T.M.

Non-Malay viewers had complained that the time allocated for Chinese and Tamil television programmes over R.T.M. was insufficient, while that for Malay programmes was excessive. The same complaint applied to radio programmes.

The above series of incidents tend to give the Chinese the impression that a wave of Malay racial, religious and linguistic fanaticism was underway and tacitly sanctioned by the government.[132] This could be interpreted as a move to wipe out Chinese and Indian culture and to impose Malay culture. In their anxiety, fears and suspicions, the Chinese regarded this possibility as more real than apparent.

The D.A.P.'s move was to make use of the above-mentioned incidents to strengthen its case for Merdeka University. It tried to show that they justified the struggle for Merdeka University. In linking the issue of lack

130. See article,"Hot Potatoes in Parliament", Asiaweek, 3rd November, 1978 for further details.

131. Ibid. Koding defeated former Federal Minister, Ghani Gilong, in the Parliamentary constituency of Kinabalu in the 1978 general elections.

132. See Lim Say Boon, op. cit.

of higher educational opportunities with the linguistic and cultural fears of the Chinese, the D.A.P. held the government solely responsible. At the same time it sought to show the Chinese what it could have done for them. On the Hindu temple desecrations, the D.A.P. held that they were "just mere tips of the iceberg" and that there must have been prolonged fanatic indoctrination before the acts of desecration were carried out.[133] The party implied that the government had been indirectly responsible for this by not discouraging this fanatic indoctrination in the first place, and was now trying to cover up a serious situation. It held that if the 8 Hindu guards had not taken the law into their own hands, the desecrations might still have continued. To be fair to the government, it was trying its best to play down a highly volatile situation as far as possible to prevent religious violence and fear among the people.[134] The government felt that if it publicised the desecrations, this might trigger off reprisals and counter-reprisals, thus engulfing the whole nation in religious conflict. However once the desecrations became publicised, the government took a strong stand in condemning them and pledged that religious extremism had no place in the country. Dr. Mahathir warned Moslem extremists not to cause religious strife in the country, while Ghazali Shafie stressed that stern action would be taken against those caught desecrating temples.[135] In intending to calm the fears of the Hindus and to reassure the Chinese, Hussein Onn even went to the extent of attending Hindu and Christian religious festivals in public in

133. See Lim Kit Siang's press statement, New Straits Times, 4th August, 1979, op. cit.

134. If the government was guilty of the D.A.P. charge of not discouraging the fanatic indoctrination, then its main reason appeared to be to prevent P.A.S. and other extreme Malays from accusing it of not being "true Moslems".

135. For details, see article,"Spectre at Kerling", Asiaweek, 8th June, 1979.

Kuala Lumpur. The D.A.P. tried to associate itself with the government's actions on the temple desecrations by declaring publicly the need to have a firm, clear and unequivocal stand against all forms of religious extremism and fanaticism.[136] It went a step further to suggest the establishment of an inter-religious council, comprising of representatives from the various religions in the country to promote tolerance and goodwill.[137] If the government had taken a firm stand against temple desecrations, it appeared to attempt to strike a balance regarding the convocation dress of the U.T.M. Initially Musa ordered the U.T.M. administration to dispense with the songkok ruling, but when the Malay graduands of the U.T.M. protested, the government decided to come to a compromise. It could not afford to antagonise the Chinese if it intended to pacify them that it had no intention of doing away with their culture. Yet at the same time if it made the songkok ruling not mandatory, it might be accused by Malay extremists of pandering to the Chinese, thereby losing its support among the Malays. The government finally decided to let everyone wear the songkok which would be embroidered with motifs and tassels. In this way it hoped that the Malays would interpret the headgear as a songkok while the non-Malays would interpret it as otherwise, so that no one would be displeased. In the event, both Malays and non-Malays appeared offended with only 4 out of the 23 non-Malay graduands attending the ceremony. The government's handling of this issue thus made it very vulnerable to D.A.P. insinuations that it was discriminating against Chinese culture. On the allegedly seditious speech by the M.P. for Kinabalu, Mark Koding, the D.A.P. began to press for seditious charges against him.[138]

136. New Straits Times, 12th June, 1979.

137. New Straits Times, 4th August, 1979.

138. See article "Hot Potatoes in Parliament", Asiaweek, 3rd November, 1978. A year later, when the Attorney-General's chambers was still studying Koding's case, the D.A.P. continued to press for action against him. New Straits Times, 1st December, 1979.

Having as background its resentment over the alleged alteration of the character of Chinese and Tamil primary schools by the government, the D.A.P. showed that it was committed to defending Chinese schools and Chinese characters on sign-boards, and thereby Chinese culture. It was also to show U.M.N.O. that just as it had been quick to press seditious charges against the Chinese, the D.A.P. would do likewise against Malays or North Bornean natives when such cases arose. Regarding the allegedly inadequate use of Chinese and Tamil over R.T.M., the D.A.P. drew the Information Minister's attention that Chinese and Tamil viewers wanted more time to be allocated to Chinese and Tamil programmes, and that their quality should be improved.[139] The party's complaint was that R.T.M. was giving excessive prominence to Malay programmes at the expense of Chinese and Tamil programmes. R.T.M., as the government's propagating machinery, had contended that its task was to implement the government's objective of a Malay-based national culture. As such, the heavily-biased Malay programmes were imperative. To appease U.M.N.O. backbenchers, the Information Minister, Mohamed Rahmat, had indicated that the use of Chinese and Tamil over R.T.M. was only a temporary measure to facilitate communication.[140] The implication was that once the national objectives were attained, Chinese and Tamil would be dispensed altogether. The D.A.P.'s response was to query whether such a motive contravened the Constitution, especially clause 152(1) which guaranteed the protection and sustenance of ethnic languages.[141] It then suggested that the government should consider screening more Chinese and Tamil programmes so that R.T.M. would reflect

139. See queries by P.Patto, M.P. for Menglembu(Perak), New Straits Times, 25th November, 1978.

140. Asiaweek, 3rd November, 1978.

141. Ibid.

the multi-racial and multi-cultural population of the country.[142] Thus by making a firm and consistent pro-Chinese stand on the above incidents, the D.A.P. was drumming up Chinese support for the proposed full-scale debate on the Merdeka University in early December. It engaged in a drive to collect a million signatures from the Chinese in a move that would be interpreted to save Chinese culture. By appealing to the Chinese to donate generously to the Merdeka University fund set up by the sponsors, the D.A.P. gave the impression that it was determined to put heavy pressure on the government to get the proposed university started.

However whatever plans the party might have in making the Merdeka University controversy an issue to boost its prestige, they received a setback. The Merdeka University sponsors felt that the D.A.P. was pushing the issue too hard and too far by its measures in working up Chinese passions and thus calling for the full-scale debate.[143] As the scheduled debate would result in certain defeat in view of the massive N.F. Parliamentary majority, the sponsors, who were waiting for the outcome of the debate to decide their next move, felt that it would jeopardize whatever measures they intended to take to sue the government. In fact government sources had strongly hinted that after the debate, no more would be heard on the Merdeka University issue as there was an intention to amend the Constitution to that effect.[144] Under these circumstances the sponsors were reluctant to let the debate carry on as scheduled. After a 7-hour meeting with the sponsors, the D.A.P.

142. New Straits Times, 25th November, 1978.

143. For details, see Ismail Kassim,"Merdeka U debate worries backers", New Nation, 27th November, 1978.

144. Ibid.

was persuaded to withdraw its motion.[145] This was to enable the sponsors to take legal action against the government without unnecessary obstacles. In withdrawing his motion, Kit Siang stated that it was only a temporary measure to enable the sponsors' lawyers to consult legal experts in England regarding the intention to sue the government.[146] He stated that the motion would be re-introduced at a more appropriate time in the future.[147] The government felt that it had beaten the D.A.P. at its own game by allowing the full-scale debate. Nevertheless Musa Hitam delivered the statement he was to have made had the debate carried on as scheduled, amidst protests from the D.A.P. Musa announced that there would be more places for non-Malay students at the local universities without specifying details as to how this was going to be effected.[148] He stressed that the government sympathised with non-Malay parents for being unable to find university places for their children owing to circumstances beyond their control, such as the protectionist trend of overseas universities. In announcing the increase, the government hoped that it would reduce the sense of frustration in the non-Malays and be accepted in good faith by the Malays.[149] The government's announcement hinted to the non-Malays the possibility of a Malay backlash.

In response to the announcement, the D.A.P. retreated from its agitation for the establishment of the Merdeka University to concentrate

145. See article,"Retreat at the eleventh hour", Asiaweek, 22nd December, 1978. See also New Straits Times, 12th December, 1978.

146. Lim Kit Siang stated that the D.A.P. did not want to complicate the legal action being planned by the sponsors. Asian Almanac, 17th March, 1979.

147. New Straits Times, 12th December, 1978.

148. Ibid. See also Malaysia, February 1979, and Asiaweek, 22nd December, 1978.

149. New Straits Times, 12th December, 1978.

on a call to the Education Minister asking how this was to be implemented to the satisfaction of the non-Malays. It felt that this move was more expedient pending consultations between the sponsors' lawyers and experts in England on the action to be taken against the government. The D.A.P. therefore called for a white paper setting out the government's intention on university student enrolment to admit more non-Malays.[150] Lim Kit Siang wanted the white paper to consider how the government could fulfil the aspirations of the non-Malays for higher education opportunities locally without depriving the Malays of their existing opportunities.[151] The white paper should also consider how the government proposed to ensure that the 5 local universities live up to the N.E.P.'s objective of reflecting the country's multi-racial composition.[152] The D.A.P.'s suggestion of a white paper was intended to pressure the government to clearly detail the measures it would adopt in the same way that Malay aspirations were satisfied in the T.M.P. From the experience of the government's alleged non-fulfilment of land allocation to the non-Malays according to the T.M.P.'s recommendations(this is to be discussed in the next chapter), the D.A.P. rationalised that unless pressure was turned on the government, the Education Minister's pledge was liable to be empty. The reference to the necessity of the 5 local universities living up to the N.E.P.'s objective of reflecting the country's multi-racial composition was to challenge Musa's earlier contention that during the implementation of the N.E.P., the enrolment in the 3 predominantly Malay universities,

150. New Straits Times, 13th December,1978, 22nd April,1979. It also urged Musa to ask for Cabinet approval for increased expenditure to fulfil the government's pledge to increase the non-Malay intake. New Straits Times, 9th April, 1979.

151. New Straits Times, 22nd April, 1979.

152. Ibid.

the National University, the Agricultural University and the University of Technology, need not have to reflect the racial composition of the country.[153] The D.A.P. stressed that its call for a white paper was urgent in the sense that more than 25,000 H.S.C./S.T.P. students were anxiously awaiting the result of their application to enter the local universities.[154] It called on the government to release the white paper without delay to allay the anxieties of the affected students. If the government had any intention of delaying the implementation of its pledge, it found that it was under considerable pressure not only from the D.A.P., but also from its non-Malay partners, the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. not to do so. In its General Assembly in November, one of the resolutions adopted by the M.C.A. was to urge the government to expand facilities in the country's universities so that a more balanced distribution of opportunities for non-Malay students would be ensured.[155] Following Musa's announcement of increased non-Malay university enrolment, the M.C.A. Brickfields/Bungsar ward had asked what the actual increase in the intake would be.[156] The G.R.M.'s Political Bureau chairman, Dr. Goh Cheng Teik, said Musa's announcement had given fresh hope to the non-Malays and implied that the government should implement his pledge in a fair manner.[157] Having made this pledge, the government found that it was concerned about the Malay reaction. As it needed the solid Malay support to maintain its power base, the government always had to ensure that the Malays

153. New Straits Times, 23rd March, 1979. The G.R.M. M.P., Dr. Tan Tiong Hong, had earlier expressed concern over Musa's statement which was endorsed by the pro-Chancellor of the U.T.M., Rahman Yaakub at its convocation ceremony. Malaysia, February, 1979.

154. New Straits Times, 22nd April, 1979.

155. New Straits Times, 20th November, 1978.

156. New Straits Times, 13th December, 1978.

157. Ibid.

must not interpret its measures as pro-Chinese. Once this happened, the position of the extremists, either within U.M.N.O. or in P.A.S., would be strengthened. In the event, the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership, the only hope of the non-Malays to deliver the goods,could be endangered. Although the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. were aware of this danger, the anxiety of the Chinese and the fear of losing out to the D.A.P. forced them to make these demands once they found that the government proved amenable. After some hesitation, Musa reluctantly announced that the non-Malay intake would be increased by 2% for the 1979/80 session from the previous session.[158] The government stated that it had used the combined overall enrolment of Malay and non-Malay students in both local and overseas universities as the main criterion.[159] The increase was at best marginal and there was hardly any change in terms of absolute numbers to show that there was a marked non-Malay increase followed by a corresponding Malay decrease, which was what the non-Malays expected. They predictably attacked it as inadequate. The D.A.P. found that it was overshadowed by the criticisms levelled by certain G.R.M. and M.C.A. wards in Penang and Perak. The Datuk Keramat(Penang) branch of the G.R.M. stated that it was wrong and unfair of the government to consider the number

158. New Straits Times,10th June,1979. The enrolment for all 5 local universities would be raised from 34% in 1978 to 36% in 1979. Musa later clarified that the 2% increase was a result of comparisons between the percentage of non-Malay students who entered the university in the 1978/79 session(33.6%) and that of the 1979/80 session(35.7%). If however an evaluation was made on the basis of numbers, it would be evident that there was actually an increase of 21.3% or 330 non-Malay students entering university, from 1,551 in the 1978/79 session to 1,881 in the present session. The same could be applied to the intake of Malay students into the 2 sessions. From the % point of view, there was a decrease in the intake of Malays from the previous session to the present one. But there was an increase of 315 Malay students or 10.3% from the 3,069 students in the 1978/79 session to the 3,384 students in the present session. New Straits Times, 24th October, 1979.

159. New Straits Times, 10th June, 1979. By mid-1980, Malay students in local universities numbered 11,425(64%) compared to 6,373(36%) non-Malay students. For overseas universities, there were 8,407(21%) Malay students and 32,171(79%)non-Malay students respectively for the same period. New Straits Times, 24th June, 1980.

of non-Malay students in foreign universities when allocating places in local universities.[160] Terming the increase as "grossly insufficient and negligible", the branch held that since local universities were supported by tax-payers, the majority of whom were non-Malays, it was only fair that the government allocate places to commensurate with the tax-payers' contribution and not depend too much on foreign universities.[161] There was a dearth for university expansion and the government should apportion the larger increase to non-Malays. The branch further stated that as the correct move towards national unity, the government should stop using terms like "bumiputra" and "non-bumiputra" which had caused so much division among the people. It should instead use the term "Malaysian" for all.[162] The Padu (Ipoh) ward of the M.C.A. described the increase as "misleading" and accused Musa of using a wrong strategy which negated the government's pledge.[163] The ward's complaint was that despite the so-called increase, some 4,879 non-Malay students with high entrance qualifications had been rejected.[164] Obviously the expectation was that those non-Malays with good results who had been turned down previously could get admission if the increase in the non-Malay intake was to be meaningful. If the non-Malays considered the increase negligible, the Malays regarded it as excessive. At the U.M.N.O. General Assembly for 1979 in July, U.M.N.O. Youth was vociferous in demanding that the government stop making further concessions to the non-Malays.[165]

160. New Straits Times, 16th June, 1979. 161. Ibid.

162. Ibid. 163. Ibid. 164. Ibid.

165. For the reaction of the Malays, New Straits Times, 7th/8th July, 1979. See also Malaysia, August 1979, articles, "Business amid laughter" and "The Ethnic Entry Dilemma", Asiaweek, 20th July, 1979, and K.Das, "A Tiger refuses to be ridden", Far Eastern Economic Review, 20th July, 1979.

While its president, Suhaimi Kamaruddin, accused the non-Malays of not accepting the 2% increase in good faith, there were extreme calls to curb the non-Malay enrolment overseas and to strip the citizenship of the Merdeka University sponsors.[166] Veiled attacks of disloyalty were also made on the M.C.A. and G.R.M. Musa had to pacify the angry mood of U.M.N.O. Youth by pledging that the government would not compromise on the 2% intake and the N.E.P.[167] However following the dissatisfaction of both Malays and non-Malays over the 2% increase intake, U.M.N.O. and M.C.A. leaders met to deliberate on a formula that would be acceptable to both sides. It was obvious that this issue was urgent, and after some 4 hours of discussion, an agreement appeared to have been reached between the leaders of both parties. The government intended to keep the contents of the formula a secret and to implement it quietly so as not to allow it to be turned into a controversy like the 2% increase intake, either by its members or the opposition.[168] The D.A.P. unsuccessfully pressed the government to disclose the details of the formula agreed upon by U.M.N.O. and M.C.A.[169] Based on its suspicions of U.M.N.O.'s consistent one up-manship and the M.C.A.'s weak bargaining position, the D.A.P. was skeptical over the formula. As there were many ways to arrive at a solution such as the formula, the D.A.P. felt that U.M.N.O. might, in conceding to the M.C.A., one aspect of the problem, make encroach-

166. New Straits Times, 7th July, 1979.

167. Ibid. U.M.N.O. Youth viewed education, and thereby university enrolment, as within the scope of the N.E.P.

168 See New Straits Times, 29th June, 1979 and Malaysia, August 1979, and article,"University Balancing Act", Asiaweek, 13th July, 1979. While the formula is still officially a secret, it is generally believed that the agreement was that by 1982, the proportion of Malay to non-Malay entrants would decrease gradually from the present 64-36 to a more satisfactory 55-45 split. The agreement is expected to help the M.C.A. in the 1983 general elections. Far Eastern Economic Review Asia Yearbook 1980, p. 228.

169. New Straits Times, 4th August, 1979.

ments on another aspect, so that the net effect would be no effect at all. Lim Kit Siang was worried that the next proposal by the government might be that racial entry not be based on the the total intake, but on the numbers who actually graduated.[170] Then U.M.N.O. would add up all the figures of the different races since the first Malaysian graduate and use that as its yardstick.[171] On these grounds, the D.A.P. speculated that the formula would be "most unsatisfactory" where the non-Malays were concerned.[172] In the absence of the formula's details being publicised, it is difficult to affirm or disprove the D.A.P.'s contention.

In retrospect, the Merdeka University controversy arose when a technical and administrative problem, i.e. the lack of higher educational opportunities for non-Malays, which had racial implications, became entangled with the fear of what was perceived as the erosion of Chinese culture and language. The D.A.P.'s strategy was to pressure the government to resolve both the issues of the shortage of university places and Chinese fear of cultural and linguistic loss. It believed that these problems which had been suppressed but never resolved in the past, had become very serious and complex, and unless they were tackled immediately and at the roots, it was likely that they would become even worse in the future. The D.A.P. justified its contention by pointing to the increasing apprehensions of the Chinese over the series of events ranging from the desecration of Hindu temples to the allegedly seditious speech by the M.P. for Kinabalu, Mark Koding. The government's response to these events appeared to the D.A.P. as tactical

170. See Hugh Lunn, op. cit. It's rationale was that since more non-Malays had graduated, more Malays should be admitted.

171. Ibid.

172. See article,"University Balancing Act", Asiaweek, 13th July, 1979, op. cit.

balancing and never resolving the issues at all. Thus while the government condemned temple desecrations, ~~it impliedly~~ by implication it gave in to Malay extremists over the U.T.M. convocation attire and the use of ethnic languages over R.T.M. In the case of the allegedly seditious speech by the M.P. for Kinabalu, the government appeared passive and the D.A.P. had to press the seditious charges. In all fairness to the D.A.P., had there been a similar outcry against Malay schools and Malay sign-boards, the government would not have hesitated to take immediate action to prosecute the offender. The government's actions over these issues served to confuse the Chinese as they interpreted them as double standards. The D.A.P. believed that the government was only paying lip service to the Chinese by its actions. Far from re-assuring the Chinese, the D.A.P. charged that the government's actions over 2 subsequent incidents in fact aggravated Chinese apprehensions.

The first concerned the influx of Vietnamese refugees in the last quarter of 1978, continuing throughout 1979. The predominantly ethnic Chinese Vietnamese refugees landed in the ~~wholly~~ largely Malay east coast states of Peninsular Malaysia. The Malays there regarded them as essentially Chinese rather than Vietnamese, and given the background of Sino-Malay hostility, engaged in hostile acts, such as stoning them and pushing their boats back to sea.[173] Government official policy was also hostile, applying the term "illegal immigrants" on them.[174] As the refugee waves thickened, the government threatened to chase all refugees in existing camps out and even to shoot those, who out of desperation, persisted to reach Malaysian shores.[175] While

173. For details, see Hugh Lunn, op. cit., and Bruce Grant, The Boat People: An Age Investigation, Penguin, Melbourne, 1979, Chapter VI.

174. The term "illegal immigrants" was used on the boat people because the government felt that they were escaping not from the ravages of war, but harsh living conditions under the communists, and were seeking greener pastures in developed countries by illegally entering Malaysia first.

175. This threat was made by the Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir, out

these allegations were difficult to substantiate, they nevertheless created the feeling in the Chinese that government assurances of goodwill were empty. They could point to the comparatively favourable treatment that the government accorded to the Moslem refugees from Cambodia and the Southern Philippines as implications of Chinese antagonism.[176] The D.A.P. called on the government to adopt a more humanitarian approach towards the refugees.[177] In case the government showed any signs of branding Chinese showing sympathy to the Vietnamese refugees as fifth columnists, Kit Siang maintained that the fact that there was no public Chinese outcry against the pushing back of Vietnamese boats out to sea, showed that they were committed to Malaysia.[178] Kit Siang's statement reflected the wariness of the Malays, particularly U.M.N.O. Youth, to watch for any possible Chinese reaction over the government's moves towards the refugees, and then to brand them as fifth columnists. It is difficult to gauge the impact of the Vietnamese refugees on the Chinese against the government in the sense that they increased Chinese fears and apprehensions. But one source has indicated the government's treatment of the refugees reinforced its opposition to the Merdeka University and gave the D.A.P. its first by-election victory in the predominantly Chinese constituency of Kampong Kolam for the Penang state assembly since Dr. Chen Man

of exasperation rather than intent. Asiaweek, 27th July, 1979.

176. See for instance Pertubohan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (PERKIM) plan to take in 500 Cambodian Moslem refugees for resettlement in Malaysia, New Straits Times, 13th June, 1979, and the government's reference to to the Moslem victims of the Christian-Moslem conflict in the Southern Philippines who fled to Sabah as "refugees". A letter to Asiaweek, 17th August, 1979, candidly asked if the 70,000 Vietnamese refugees in Malaysia converted to Islam, would Tunku Abdul Rahman, the President of PERKIM, accept them for resettlement in Malaysia as in the case of the Cambodian Moslem refugees. For further details on alleged hostile attitude towards the Vietnamese refugees on grounds of religion, see Hugh Lunn, op. cit.

177. On Dr. Mahathir's harsh attitude towards the refugees, Lim Kit Siang called on the government not to follow Vietnam's barbaric and irresponsible attitude, but to take all steps to bring international pres-

Hin's victory in the Rahang state constituency of Negri Sembilan in 1965.[179]

The second incident involved the allegedly provocative speech by the Home Affairs Minister, Ghazali Shafie, on the lion dance. Opening a seminar on Malaysian culture at the National University in May 1979, Ghazali was reported as saying that the Chinese lion dance could not be accepted as part of Malaysian culture.[180] The minister held that as it was already extinct in China, its country of origin, it could not be developed further and be accepted by all. Ghazali added that the lion dance was not only incongruous in the Malaysian environment, but that it hindered the emergence of a Malay-based national culture. It might perhaps be acceptable if it was modified to a tiger dance, accompanied by Malay and Indian music. Ghazali later claimed that he was misquoted and the Prime Minister, Hussein Onn, had to clarify his speech to show that no offence was meant to the Chinese.[181]

sure on Vietnam to be more humane. New Straits Times, 17th June, 1979. The D.A.P. also unsuccessfully tabled a motion in Parliament to effect a more humanitarian attitude to the refugee problem. New Straits Times, 19th June, 1979.

178. Hugh Lunn, op. cit.

179. See K.Das,"Victory for the wrong reasons", Far Eastern Economic Review, 29th December, 1978 and Lim Say Boon, op. cit. Kampong Kolam had an electorate of 17,638 made up of 14,522(82.3%) Chinese, 2,032(11.5%) Malays and 1,064(6%) Indians. The D.A.P. had won this constituency in the 1978 general elections but an application against the disqualification of the N.F.(G.R.M.) candidate was successful. In the by-election, the D.A.P. polled 8,063 to beat the G.R.M. by a majority of 3,665 votes. Appendix C. The D.A.P. however denied that it made an issue of the Vietnamese refugees in the by-election. See Karpal Singh's letter to the Far Eastern Economic Review, 26th January, 1979.

180. For details, see article,"Spectre of Kerling", Asiaweek, 8th June, 1979 and Thaung Myine,"Malays worried by Chinese Lion Dance", The Asian, Vol. III No. 2, June/July, 1979.

181. Datuk Hussein Onn denied that the government had openly suggested that the lion dance be changed to a tiger dance and claimed that Ghazali's speech had not aroused ill-feelings between the races. Ghazali, according to Datuk Hussein Onn, only referred to the dance as an example in explaining the process by which cultural elements from other

Whatever Ghazali's intention in making that speech, it stirred up Chinese dissatisfactions from the numerous Chinese cultural organizations in the country. The Home Affairs Minister was regarded as unnecessarily provocative in his previous utterances on government policy towards the Chinese. In the past he had been alleged to have suggested a multi-racial "kompang" (Malay drum) group, wearing Malay dress taking part in a National Day parade. The significance of this to many Chinese appeared to be assimilation towards Malay culture, which they resented. The fact that Ghazali had a strong influence in determining the N.E.P. and his hostile attitude towards the Vietnamese refugees helped to create the "ultra" image in him as far as the Chinese were concerned. It was pointed out that if he had shown any inclination towards fair play, it was never recalled that he had made a similar suggestion as regards any Malay dance being accompanied by Chinese and Indian music to be considered as part of national culture. Predictably the D.A.P. attacked Ghazali's speech as being blind to the realities of a multi-racial, multi-cultural society.[182] At the same time the party justified the need for the lion dance to be part of Malaysian culture.

countries could be absorbed and fully accepted in its new environment. Excerpts of the speech were as follows:"As an example, the presentation and accompanying music of the lion dance would not possibly be accepted as a dance movement and melody in Malaysia. The dance had originated in Mainland China and its environment; nevertheless the lion dance was no longer in existence there. As such how then could it be developed and be accepted widely by all? In the future, through the process of reorientation and restructuring, an interaction of all the various cultures would take place. Maybe then we will have elements of a national culture, one of which would adopt the movements of a "tiger" dance accompanied by various types of drums of the gamelan or the barong dance as in Bali". New Straits Times, 9th November, 1979, op. cit.

182. Lim Kit Siang described Ghazali's speech as "shocking" and showing "surprisingly little perception of the basis of a plural society". He added that the fact that the dance was extinct in China was all the more reason it should be accepted as part of Malaysian culture. This would, in his opinion, show that Malaysian Chinese cultural expressions were distinctly Malaysian, and not subject to the contemporary influences of China. Asiaweek, 8th June, 1979, op. cit.

Thus as far as the D.A.P. was concerned, so long as the Chinese feel insecure about their culture and language, they would strive for the establishment of Merdeka University, trying to link it to any related problem that became available, such as the lack of higher educational opportunities. As their major representative in Parliament and the state assemblies, the D.A.P. felt it had every right to speak on their behalf. U.M.N.O. on the other hand regarded the proposed university as agitation for Chinese chauvinism which was unrelated to the predictable consequences of the N.E.P. and the New Education Policy on the Chinese. It felt that since the 1969 racial riot and the promulgation of the N.E.P., the majority of the Chinese were reorientating themselves to a new order in which the superiority of the Malays as the country's indigenous people was acknowledged in all fields - social, cultural, economic, political and educational. Given time, national unity was slowly but steadily being achieved. It therefore accused the Chinese Guilds and Associations and the D.A.P. of trying to disrupt the slow and painful efforts that it had built up in what was perceived as harmony between the races , by agitating for Merdeka University. U.M.N.O. was also displeased with the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. over their initial undecided stand on the issue. It had felt that its non-Malay allies were not firm enough to reject outright the proposed university on the grounds that it compromised the New Education Policy. U.M.N.O. tend to judge the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. by its own standards without realizing that while it had some 90% of the Malay support in terms of Parliamentary seats in the 1978 general elections, the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. could not claim to be supported by the majority of the Chinese. On their part the non-Malay partners of the N.F. found that they were under pressure from both their Chinese constituents and U.M.N.O. The agitation of the D.A.P. tend to weaken their support among the Chinese. If they had any intention of supporting the Merdeka University, they felt that the time was not yet appropriate, and the D.A.P. by pushing the issue

irresponsibly and prematurely, had left the U.M.N.O. leadership no alternative but to reject it altogether.[183] At the same time they held the government responsible for creating educational, cultural and linguistic insecurity among the Chinese. This was manifested by their pressure on the government to effect its pledge of more places in local universities for non-Malays following Musa's announcement and the resolutions urging national leaders not to make derogatory comments on the customs and practices of any race in the country, an obvious reference to Ghazali's remarks on the lion dance.[184] However to maintain stability in the government which they felt to be in the long-term interests of the Chinese, they eventually had to reject the Merdeka University. Hence the Merdeka University proposal which started in 1968 and was revived some 10 years later, is far from being resolved.

183. This view was expressed by Dr. Lim Chong Eu while campaigning for the N.F.(G.R.M.) candidate in the Kampong Kolam by-election in December 1978. See foot-note 179.

184. New Straits Times, 30th July, 1979.

CHAPTER V

The New Economic Policy.

(a) Poverty eradication, Unemployment and Landlessness

The New Economic Policy (N.E.P.) was launched in 1971 and basically its implementation involved a series of 5-year development plans until 1990. It bore the imprint of the late Prime Minister, Tun Razak, but reflected the thought of Ghazali Shafie, the brilliant senior civil servant who had turned politician and become a full-fledged minister after the 1969 racial riots.[1] The N.E.P. was basically guided by 2 major objectives, i.e. the eradication of poverty among all Malaysians irrespective of race, and the restructuring of society to eliminate economic function with racial identification.[2] The rationale behind the N.E.P., according to one source, was that the primary sources of conflict in Malaysia, as manifested by the 1969 riots, were racial.[3] It felt that the Malays resented their economic backwardness which they attributed to increasing Chinese affluence as a result of the 1957 "quid pro quo" arrangement of the Alliance under the leadership of Tunku Abdul Rahman.[4] The Malay resentment which had been simmering, spilled over into rioting as a result of what they perceived as threats to their position as the country's definitive peoples, by the post-poll exuberance of the non-Malay opposition

1. R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia, Federal Publications, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, 1978, p.326. Ghazali Shafie had been the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was a member of the N.O.C. when the country was placed under emergency rule after the 1969 riots. He was appointed a senator and made the Information Minister. He nevertheless resigned from his position as senator to contest in the Kuala Lipis(Pahang) Parliamentary by-election to test his appeal. On winning the by-election, he continued to retain his Information Ministership.

2. Ibid.

3. Michael Stenson,"Class and Race in West Malaysia", Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, Part II, Vol. VIII No. 2, April-June 1976, pp. 45-54.

4. See Chapter I, foot-note 5.

parties. To prevent a recurrence of racial rioting in the future, the N.E.P. decided to establish broad racial parity for the Malays with the non-Malays in the economic field. It stated that the Malays must stake at least 30% ownership of the commercial and industrial activities in the country by 1990 in all categories and at all levels of operation.[5] Ghazali Shafie, the N.E.P.'s main architect, stated that the Malays and other indigenous peoples must become full partners in all aspects of the economic life of the nation.[6] He envisaged the creation of a Malay commercial and industrial community which would be conspicuous and indentifiable with the Chinese-predominated urban environment of the country, not "alien" to it as many Malays were inclined to feel.[7] To re-assure the non-Malays against the threat of nationalisation and ex-propriation, the government stated that the N.E.P. would be premised on a rapidly expanding economy through increasing investment opportunities. In its implementation, the N.E.P. pledged that no particular racial group need experience any loss or feel any sense of deprivation.

As the N.E.P.'s primary concern was poverty eradication irrespective of race, the D.A.P.'s first criticisms were directed at the manner in which the incidence of poverty among the various racial groups and between the rural and urban sectors was determined. The importance of this was its inter-relation with the subsequent poverty eradication measures which the government would implement accordingly. It held that if the incidence of poverty was inaccurately determined, either by the use of wrong criteria or the omission of certain important criteria, or both, the measures meted out

5. For full details, see Ghazali Shafie,"The Key to Unity", Malaysian Digest, 15th March, 1971.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

would not bring about their desired effects. The D.A.P. drew an analogy with the wrong diagnosis of a problem not responding to what may be regarded as the correct remedies administered or vice versa. Under these circumstances, it concerned itself with the breakdown and analysis of the incidence of poverty among the various racial groups and between the rural and urban sectors.[8] It felt that this was not a fair interpretation of the incidence of poverty where the non-Malays were concerned, for the incidence of poverty among the Malays was unusually high (64.8%) while that of the Chinese (26%) was unusually low.[9] These figures were the Third Malaysia Plan's (T.M.P.'s) statistics for the incidence of poverty in Peninsular Malaysia for the year 1970, which was used as the starting point for the N.E.P. The D.A.P. had reasonable grounds to believe that the government had deliberately exaggerated the incidence of Malay poverty while at the same time playing down that of the Chinese. The party accused the government of deliberately conveying the mistaken impression that all the Chinese were the "haves" as against the Malays who were the "have-nots". The D.A.P. alleged that the government had used the rich in the M.C.A. to typify the average Chinese to the Malay masses. Lim Kit Siang attempted to disprove this contention by quoting

8. The Households in Poverty by Race for 1970 for Peninsular Malaysia were as follows:

	All Households (000's)	Poor Households (000's)	Poverty Incidence (%)	Percentage of Total Poor Households
Malay	901.5	584.2	64.8	73.8
Chinese	525.2	136.3	26.0	17.2
Indian	160.5	62.6	39.2	7.9
Others	18.8	8.4	44.8	1.1
	1,606.0	791.8	49.3	100.0
All rural	1,166.7	683.7	58.6	86.3
All urban	439.3	108.1	24.6	13.7

Source: Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980, Government Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1976, p. 180.

the less publicised government official statistics.[10] In this way, the D.A.P. hoped to show that the country's wealth was actually controlled by foreigners - the British, American, West German and Japanese companies - and not the local Chinese, the majority of whom were petty traders, artisans, hawkers, labourers, etc. This was to negate the N.E.P.'s rationale that the Malays being the nations's largest poverty group, were entitled to the major portion of developmental aid to the exclusion of the other communities. The D.A.P. justified its contention by the fact that targets for the Malays were specified, such as the increase in their workforce in the manufacturing and industrial sectors by a certain date, they were to own certain percentages of the share market solely by certain datelines and efforts to train them for technical and managerial roles in the universities and colleges by certain datelines, not to mention new land to be allocated to them at specified periods.[11] In contrast, whatever measures to aid the non-Malays appeared by comparison, vague and devoid of targets. The D.A.P.'s objective here was to stress to the government that these excessively pro-Malay measures would increase the resentment of the Chinese and Indians.

In criticising the government's unfair interpretation of the incidence of poverty among the non-Malays and the urban areas,(the urban areas are usually predominantly Chinese whereas the rural areas are mainly Malay)

9. Ibid. See comparison of figures in foot-note 8.

10. The statistics were taken from The Second Malaysia Plan (S.M.P.) 1970-1975. Lim Kit Siang stated that in 1969, out of a total share capital of $4,678 million, 62.1% was held by foreigners compared to 22.8% for the Chinese, 1.5% for the Malays and 0.9% for the Indians. Foreign interests accounted for $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the share capital of limited companies in agriculture, mining, manufacturing, wholesale trade and finance, one-third in construction, retail trade and other industries and $\frac{3}{4}$ of oil palm and coconut acreages on estates in Peninsular Malaysia. See Parliamentary speech,"The Second Malaysia Plan, 1970-1975" on 14th July, 1971 in Lim Kit Siang, Time Bombs in Malaysia, 2nd ed., D.A.P., Kuala Lumpur, 1978, p. 55.

11. Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980, p. 49.

the D.A.P. accused the government of omitting certain important criteria in arriving at the incidence of poverty. The omission of such criteria had brought about the understatement of the incidence of Chinese poverty; consequently the incidence of Malay poverty became overstated. In determining the incidence of poverty in the country, the D.A.P. claimed that the government had made use of a poverty income line as a yardstick.[12] According to the T.M.P., this was the minimum income required to sustain a decent standard of living. It considered the minimum nutritional and other non-food requirements of each household. Households whose income fell below the poverty income line were considered poor and their total number determined the incidence of poverty in the country. For 1970, out of 1,606,000 households, 791,800 had incomes below the poverty income line, constituting a poverty incidence of 49.3%.[13] A breakdown of the 791,800 poor households revealed that Malay households comprised 584,200, Chinese households 136,300 and Indian households 62,900.[14] On this basis, the percentage of Malay households to total households was 73.8% compared to 17.2% for the Chinese and 7.9% for the Indians.[15] Lim Kit Siang listed 2 important criteria that the government had deliberately left out in arriving at the incidence of poverty for the various racial groups. They were the variation in sizes of households and the difference in the cost of living between the rural and urban areas.[16] Dealing with the first, he

12. Ibid, p.160.

13. Foot-note 8.

14. Foot-note 8.

15. Foot-note 8.

16. See Parliamentary speech,"The Third Malaysia and the Time-Bombs in Malaysia", on 20th July, 1976 in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 146, for further details.

maintained that the government had falsely conveyed the impression that all households were of a standard size in arriving at the total number of households in Peninsular Malaysia for 1970. Lim Kit Siang pointed out that in actual fact, they were not. In referring to the T.M.P., he held that the average size of Malay families was 5.070 members per household compared to 5.819 for Chinese and 5.420 for Indian households.[17] The government's logical implication was that there was no difference between the needs of large-sized and small-sized households with the same total income. The lower average household size of Malay families against the comparatively higher average household size for Chinese and Indian families had inflated the total number of Malay rural households to 901,500. By extension, the incidence of Malay poverty also became unrealistically exaggerated. Thus the D.A.P. charged the government with deliberately ignoring the variations in the sizes of households by giving greater weighting to Malay households in the same way that electoral constituencies were gerrymandered to favour the Malay vote. This was a prelude to Kit Siang's allegation of the distortion of living standards between Malay and non-Malay households. Since living standards were reliable indicators of the incidence of poverty, he held that Malay households, owing to their comparatively smaller size, were not as poor as the government made them out to be. Kit Siang based his argument on a per capita basis. With the same total household income, he argued that larger families tend to have comparatively lower living standards per individual than smaller ones.[18] Therefore if there was to be a common poverty income

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid. Kit Siang pointed out that even if large families had comparatively higher incomes, it did not mean that there would be a corresponding increase in living standards. For instance, if a 10-member household had a monthly income of $400, its standard of living would be lower than, say, a 2-member household with a monthly income of $200. This was because the per capita income per month would be $40 in the first case compared to $100 in the second.

line to accurately and meaningfully determine the incidence of poverty, Kit Siang held that the size of households(to arrive at a figure on a per capita basis)must be considered.[19] Concerning the difference in the costs of living between the rural and urban areas, the D.A.P. held that, as in the case of the variation in the sizes of households, the government had also deliberately ignored this. The cost of living in the urban areas would always be higher than that in the rural areas. Thus on the basis of the same amount of monthly income, allowing for higher costs, the D.A.P. maintained that the incidence of poverty would always be higher in the urban areas. Kit Siang pointed out that the urban poor were at a disadvantage compared to their rural counterparts, because unlike the latter, they had no land base to fall back and work on if their skills were not in demand. Inflation would always hit the urban areas harder than the rural areas according to the D.A.P. The party's reference to the government's disregard for the difference in the cost of living between the rural and urban areas was to strengthen its earlier argument that large-sized families should not be unfavourably compared to smaller-sized ones to determine the incidence of poverty. Thus the D.A.P. argued that the true disparity ratios in levels of living between the Malays and the non-Malays were in fact lower than they had been made out to be in official government publications and pronouncements.[20]

19. Kit Siang held that the Malayan Trade Union Conggress(M.T.U.C.) had devised its own method of determining a poverty income line for its members. A minimum family budget for a worker with a wife and 3 children was worked out. It provided figures of the everyday expenses of the family to procure its basic needs. Two of the children were attending school; food and rent made up the bulk of the expenditure but only the barest needs(the diet based on hospital standards)were provided for. No provision was made for festivals, emergencies and medical expenses. The budget for 1970 was worked out as follows:

Food	$ 94.11
Rent(including water, electricity, etc.)	86.13
Education	25.20
Other	24.13
Total	$229.57

Having thus charged the government with giving a biased incidence of poverty figure in so far as the non-Malays were concerned, the D.A.P. proceeded to point out that the government's poverty eradication and restructuring of society measures would also be, logically, to the disadvantage of the non-Malays. The D.A.P. criticised the objectives of the N.E.P. in that although poverty eradication, irrespective of race, was given the main emphasis, in practice it only became incidental to the second objective, i.e. the restructuring of society to eliminate race identification with economic function. This meant that the government had been more concerned with placing as many Malays as possible in the commercial and manufacturing sectors than doing away with poverty among Malaysians of all races. Despite the T.M.P.'s reiteration that poverty was a Malaysian rather than a Malay phenomenon, that poor Chinese and Indians were also to be included in the poverty eradication programmes, the D.A.P. remained skeptical.[21] The D.A.P.'s skepticism was that even if the government had honourable intentions to be fair to the non-Malays, there was nothing to stop Malay bureaucrats from implementing them in a manner biased against the non-Malays.

A case in point concerned the problem of unemployment. Unemployment was one of the causes of poverty in that unemployed people found it ve-

Kit Siang thus showed that the M.T.U.C. method was more comprehensive and reliable than the T.M.P.'s, as it had bearing to actual facts in the prevailing situation. If the Post Enumeration Survey of the 1970 Population Census figure of 58.5% of households having incomes below $200 per month indicated roughly the incidence of poverty in Peninsular Malaysia, then the M.T.U.C.'s minimum budget of $229.57 had reflected it fairly. Kit Siang held that the M.T.U.C.'s own method was tantamount to showing that it had no confidence in the T.M.P.'s determination of the incidence of poverty.. Ibid, p.147.

20. Ibid, p. 146

21. For the T.M.P.'s reiteration that poverty was a Malaysian phenomenon, see its foreword, pp. v -vii, by the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn.

ry difficult to procure the basic necessities of living. Although unemployment was a national problem, the D.A.P. held that its incidence was particularly high among the Chinese and Indians in the urban areas. This was due to the average-sized urban household(5.8 members per family)being larger compared to its rural counterpart(5.4 members per family).[22] The T.M.P. appeared to recognize the gravity of the unemployment problem in the urban areas. To deal with this effectively so as to reduce the incidence of poverty, the T.M.P. advocated the expansion of employment opportunities in the urban areas, including the promotion of small-scale industries.[23] Emphasis was to be placed on manufacturing and construction since their labour-intensive characteristics would help to make available employment opportunities. In addition, the T.M.P. advocated adequate access to basic public services, including low-cost housing, water supply, sewerage and transportation to the poor.[24] On the surface, it appeared that the T.M.P. had pledged to alleviate the incidence of poverty among the non-Malays, as they constituted the majority in the urban areas. The D.A.P. pointed out that on closer analysis, however, the prime beneficiaries of the T.M.P.'s poverty redressal programmes appeared to be the Malays, and if the non-Malays received any benefits in this process, they appeared to be incidental rather than intentional. The S.M.P. had spearheaded the large influx of rural Malays to the urban areas in search of employment in the commercial and industrial sectors. This was in response to the N.E.P.'s aims of creating a viable and visible Malay commercial and business community in the urban areas.[25] With

22. The Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980, p. 167. The T.M.P. had stated that that unemployment was the major reason of poverty in the urban areas.

23. Ibid, p. 49.

24. Ibid, p. 167.

25. See Ghazali Shafie, op. cit.

the T.M.P.'s emphasis to ensure that the S.M.P.'s objectives in relation to Malay economic advancement be invigorated, the migration of Malays to the urban areas in search of employment continued unabated. This appeared to be the government's measures to restructure society by a greater urbanisation rate among the Malays. It was premised on a predicted high annual rate of economic growth(10%) for 1977 because the government anticipated much private investment from both foreign and local investors. When the high growth rate did not ~~materialize~~ materialize for a variety of reasons, the large numbers of Malays who had migrated to the urban areas, found that they were faced with unemployment. Given the government's partiality towards the Malays, it was easy for the D.A.P. to point out that the T.M.P.'s measures to provide employment opportunities to reduce the incidence of poverty, were meant for the Malays rather than the Chinese and Indians. The typical non-Malay complaint was that they were being displaced in the competition for jobs in the urban areas by the Malays due to the government's restructuring of society measures.[26] At the risk of repetition, it may be held that this practice, sanctioned by the S.M.P. and invigorated by the T.M.P., continued to be implemented harshly against the non-Malays by over-zealous Malay bureaucrats, much to their resentment. A case in point was the Industrial Co-ordination Act (I.C.A.) in which firms with at least $250,000 capital were required to have at least 50% of Malay representation in their workforce. This new regulation, instigated by the younger Malays in U.M.N.O., manifested the government's urgency to see that its restructuring measures at greater Malay urbanization attain the required target,i.e. 30% by 1990.(This is to be discussed fully in the next section). It may also be to re-assure any

26. For details, see R.S.Milne,"The Politics of Malaysia's New Economic Policy", Pacific Affairs, Vol. XXXXIX No. 2, Summer 1976, pp. 235-62.

possible anxiety among the Malays who had expected to find ample employment opportunities in the urban areas and then realized that their expectations did not materialize. The non-Malays viewed this as a further manifestation of racial discrimination. In the first place, they had felt alienated and discriminated by Malay special privileges, which, when implemented, barred them from employment in the public sector even though they were qualified. Their only means of employment with their own kind appeared threatened by this 50% Malay workforce insistence. Thus the general impression that the non-Malays had and which the government was unable to refute was that, not only would they be prohibited from finding employment in the public sector, the enclave of the Malays, but that their own enclave, the private sector, was being increasingly invaded to provide for the Malays at their expense. The D.A.P. felt that this would aggravate the already bad feelings between the Malays and non-Malays if it continued unabated. It therefore joined the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry(A.C.C.C.I.) in calling the government to repeal this regulation. The D.A.P.'s stand demonstrated its belief that the T.M.P. had reneged on its pledge that no group need feel any sense of deprivation as a result of the government's poverty eradication and restructuring of society measures.[27] In this case, it pointed out that the non-Malays felt deprived of their rightful share of employment

27. In arguing the case of the non-Malays, Lee Lam Thye, the M.P. for Kuala Lumpur Bandar, stated that many non-Malay squatters in Kuala Lumpur depended on their squatting accommodation for self-employment such as carpentry, handicraft or producing greens and rearing poultry for local consumption. The demolition of these squatter huts as a result of resettlement in low-cost flats, deprived these squatters of their means of livelihood. The government did not successfully find them alternative employment. It was also unsympathetic towards issuing licences for hawkers and petty traders to do business in certain areas of Kuala Lumpur because of traffic obstruction. Lam Thye thus argued that this aggravated the unemployment problems of the non-Malays. Speech by Lee Lam Thye during the Debate on the 1975 allocations for the Ministry of General Planning and Socio-Economic Research during Committee Stage.(Copy with the writer).

opportunities. Lim Kit Siang further stated that contrary to reducing the incidence of poverty, the T.M.P. had acttally planned an increase (in absolute terms) of poor urban households from 85,900 in 1970 to 125,000 by 1990.[28] This increase was attributed to the influx of rural Malays to the towns. What Kit Siang aimed to show was that, contrary to having their incidence of poverty reduced, the urban poor were humiliated further by the swelling of their ranks of some 40,000 rural migrants. The other consequence was that while the rate of unemployment among the Malays declined, that of the non-Malays had increased.[29] This had been caused by the reduction of the non-Malay share in employment in the secondary and tertiary industries to make way for the Malays, while at the same time they were not compensated by an increase in agricultural(primary) employment as the T.M.P. had pledged.

Having highlighted the disillusionment of the non-Malays in the urban areas, the D.A.P. next directed its appeal to the poor non-Malays in the rural areas - the Chinese new village residents and the Indian estate workers. Taking advantage of the T.M.P.'s stress on eradicating poverty in the rural areas, the D.A.P. insisted that the new village residents and the estate workers, being rural poverty groups as acknowledged by the T.M.P., should receive the same benefits as the rural Malays.[30] The T.M.P. had stated that shortage of land was the major cause of the poverty of new village residents. This was aggravated by the lack of security of tenure. Thus

28. Lim Kit Siang, op.cit., p.148. This showed a drop from 21% in 1970 to 9% in 1990. In contrast, the incidence of rural poverty was expected to fall from 59%(706,000) to 23%(390,000) for the same period.

29. Lim Kit Siang, op.cit., p.152. Kit Siang pointed to the changes in the unemployment rate of all races from 1971 to 1975. Malays - decline from 8.1% to 6.9%; Chinese - increase from 7% to 7.2%; Indians - increase from 11% to 12.2%.

30. According to the T.M.P., on the basis of the 1970 Population Census, 85,000 of the 146,000 households(58%) of just over 1 million people wholly Chinese, were considered poor according to the poverty income line. About half of the new village residents in urbanized villages

most new village residents who were farmers had been trapped in poverty owing to their uneconomically small pieces of land. Most operated on the basis of temporary occupational licences because they were much cheaper than payments for permanent land licences. This arrangement often discouraged new village farmers from expanding their production, even in the case of economic-sized land, because of the possibility of eviction at any time. The T.M.P. thus recommended that land be allocated to new village residents to facilitate their involvement in agricultural employment. Apart from stressing that non-Malays should also participate in Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) schemes, the T.M.P. did not specify any figures and targets as to how land should be given to the landless non-Malay new village residents. The D.A.P. considered the absence of targets and figures as the government's insincerity and lack of commitment towards the non-Malay poor. It suspected that in view of the vague pronouncements by the T.M.P. on this highly important matter in which the non-Malay farmers were concerned, the government was prepared to pay lip service only. If the government had been sincere in alleviating the plight of the non-Malay poor, it would surely have specified what, when and how land should be allocated as in the case of all forms of developmental aid to the Malays. Instead the government had resorted to the tactic of shelving responsibility. To the D.A.P.'s appeals for definite and concrete measures to allocate land to new village farmers, the Central

> or accessible villages located near urban areas were employed as contract labourers in nearby estates or self-employed in market gardening, padi, rubber and livestock. The other half had businesses of their own or found wage employment in nearby towns. About 50% - 60% of the households in urbanized new villages had a monthly cash income of $200 or less while more than 80% of those residents in small remote villages earned incomes below $200 per month. Indians comprised some 45% of the 250,000 estate workers in 150,000 households. About 60% of these workers earned monthly cash incomes between $100 -$120 with 20% earning below these figures and 20% above.
> The Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980, pp. 165-7.

Government had always replied that these were state matters to be meted out by the respective state governments concerned. The party was aware that the Malay-controlled state governments in Perak and Selangor where the majority of the new villages were located, had always been reluctant to allocate land to the new villagers for a variety of reasons, but mainly because the new villagers were Chinese. This had been the case in the 1950s during the communist emergency with regard to the resettlement of Chinese squatters.[31] Only the gravity of the communist threat and the severe pressure exerted by the Colonial Administration had succeeded in persuading the Malay Sultans to grudgingly allocate state land for the new villages. From this example the D.A.P. was convinced that state governments would always see to it that as far as possible, non-Malays would not be entitled to land. It attributed this inertia on the part of state governments to the lack of pressure from the Central Government. If the latter was sincere, it could always direct the former to allocate land to Chinese farmers in accordance to the T.M.P.'s pledge(as the Colonial Administration had done during the emergency) instead of shelving responsibility and passing the buck. Being aware that the only manner in which land could possibly be allocated to non-Malay farmers was through FELDA, the D.A.P. repeatedly called on the government to admit more non-Malays to this scheme. It pointed out the glaring disparity in land ownership via FELDA among the racial groups for 1973. Of the 526,900 acres allocated, 96.2% were Malay as compared to 2.1% Chinese and 1.6% Indian.[32] Calling for a redressal of this gross imbalance, the D.A.P. stated that the government should review the FELDA programme in such a way as to reflect

31. See John W. Humphrey,"Emergency Resettlement and the Chinese in Malaya", Journal of Asian Affairs, Vol. I No. 2, 1977, pp. 33-7.

32. See article,"A Persistent Pressure Point", Asiaweek, 28th April, 1978, pp. 12-4.

the racial composition of the country.[33] In this way the D.A.P. argued that the poverty eradication and restructuring of society measures undertaken would be in line with the T.M.P.'s objectives.

In retrospect, the D.A.P.'s criticisms of the manner in which the government handled the issues of poverty eradication, unemployment among the non-Malays and land allocation, seemed to suggest to the government that despite the Prime Minister's pledge of fair treatment,(to the underprivileged of all communities by the T.M.P.)in practice, this was hardly the case where the non-Malays were concerned. The D.A.P. had shown that the Malays were still getting more than their fair share of the T.M.P.'s benefits and the position of the non-Malays had not improved significantly. Their unemployment rate was still high and they were still eagerly awaiting the land pledged by the T.M.P. to them.[34] The D.A.P.'s arguments on behalf of the non-Malays stressed that rectifying imbalances should be drawn across the board and not merely confined to Malay disadvantages. This was evident in the call for more state land for non-Malays. Just as in the case of the government's recommendations in certain areas, the D.A.P.'s arguments also tend to overlook certain impracticalities concerning certain problems. For example, in suggesting that more Chinese should be admitted into the FELDA programme, it failed to consider that just as the rural Malays would face difficulties in adjusting to a Chinese-predominated commercial and industrial environment, the Chinese new village farmer, long accustomed to a Chinese-predominated environment, would also encounter difficulties in settling into

33. For details, see Parliamentary speech,"Twenty-year Neglect of the 750,000 New Villagers", in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., pp. 66-70.

34. The main reason that land allocation targets were not specified for non-Malays appeared to be the government's wariness in monitoring the reaction of the Malays. Targets in this aspect were conditional on the Malays not having the feeling that too much was being done for the non-Malays.

a new, completely Malay-predominated agricultural environment. The lack of freedom to grow and market whatever crops he may want to cultivate was also another possible deterrent to the Chinese new villager to join FELDA.[35] The government was inclined to regard the D.A.P.'s criticisms as manifestations of its opposition to the N.E.P. In the event, it felt that they confused the Chinese by distorting the N.E.P.'s rationale, and thus antagonise the Malays. However the government failed to realise that it had made the situation conducive for the D.A.P. to exploit Chinese dissatisfactions. The government's other weakness also appeared to be either its inability or reluctance to restrain over-zealous Malay bureaucrats from implementing the T.M.P.'s objectives to the detriment to the non-Malays.

35. These difficulties were stated by the Land and Regional Development Minister, Tan Sri Kadir Yusof, when he commented on the low intake of non-Malay FELDA settlers. New Sunday Times, 2nd September, 1979 and New Straits Times, 23rd November, 1979.

(b) The Industrial Co-ordination Act

The Industrial Co-ordination Act (I.C.A.) was a piece of legislation instigated by the younger Malays within U.M.N.O. in 1975 to regulate economic development in the country to the benefit of the Malays in line with the objectives of the N.E.P. However the I.C.A. made Chinese business enterprises, which formed the majority of domestic investors, reluctant to invest because they felt that the returns were not commensurate with their investments. This was because of the I.C.A.'s insistence that a large proportion of the returns be given to the Malays. The reluctance of domestic businessmen to invest had a negative effect on foreign investors. As a result, the T.M.P.'s objectives of encouraging private investment, both domestic and foreign, appeared to suffer a set-back. The A.C.C.C.I., which represented a cross-section of the Chinese business community, strongly criticised the I.C.A. The D.A.P. was quick to associate itself with criticisms of the I.C.A. and added its own. This marked its attempts to strike rapport with the Chinese business community to widen its base and support. The D.A.P.'s strategy was to agree with the A.C.C.C.I. in pointing out that the I.C.A. was a deterrent to the T.M.P.'s objectives of encouraging private investment, besides disrupting the existing activities in business, industrial and manufacturing circles. As such, it called for the repeal of the I.C.A. in its entirety.

The I.C.A.'s major provisions were that firms with a capital of at least $250,000 must have a workforce reflecting the racial composition of the country, indicating that at least 50% must be Malays; land acquired for industry was to be granted only if the payroll of the factory to be sited included a varying but high percentage of Malays; businesses with a paid-up capital of $500,000 must reserve at least 30% of their shares for Malays;

Malay professional services must be used wherever possible.[36] U.M.N.O. regarded the I.C.A. as the driving force of the N.E.P. to play a controlling role in the country's commercial life. It rationalized that the T.M.P.'s vast investment drives to encourage domestic and foreign investment to the country would enable non-Malay business ventures, both Chinese and foreign, to reap huge profits if economic growth were to be exploited fully as in the situation during the colonial days and pre-1969 Malaysia.[37] Under these circumstances, it felt that attempts to restructure society to enable the Malays to control at least 30% of the corporate sector would be negated. There was also a strong belief among the younger Malays in U.M.N.O. that Chinese firms were merely paying lip service to the N.E.P., their efforts to support the N.E.P. being merely window dressing.[38] It was also felt that Chinese businessmen in one way or another, managed to find loop-holes in the N.E.P. whether in the "Ali-Baba" practice or buying shares meant for Malays through Malays.[39] Thus the I.C.A. appeared a perfect piece of legislation in plug-

36. For details, see article,"Calling for a fair share", Asiaweek, 17th March, 1978, pp.39-40.

37. The T.M.P.'s encouragement of private investment was manifested by the Prime Minister's assurance to the private sector in outlining the highlights of the T.M.P. in July 1976. Datuk Hussein Onn said:"I give the categoric assurance that every effort will be made to ensure the maintenance of a favourable investment climate which is so necessary for the private sector to make full use of the many opportunities for productive investment in the country", See Malaysian Digest, 15th July, 1976, p.2,

38. The Finance Minister, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, criticized the private sector for tokenism in helping Malays in business. He cited the case of large scale Malay recruitment only in the outer periphery of the management circle, such as public relations. Tengku Razaleigh's criticisms were that non-Malay business firms were not interested in training Malays for managerial roles. See Yong Mun Cheong ed., Trends in in Malaysia(2), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1974, p. 26.

39. The "Ali-Baba" system of business indicates a partnership between the Malay(Ali) and the Chinese(Baba) in which the Malay becomes a sleeping partner, using his name for the business. The business is then operated by the Chinese under efficient business principles. The Malay gets a cut of the profits when the yields come in. The top U.M.N.O. leader-

ging all existing loop-holes in the N.E.P. to ensure that growth was controlled so that restructuring of society would be achieved without hindrance.[40] The 50% Malay workforce regulation would ensure that large firms promote mass employment opportunities for Malays. As many of these firms were in the construction and manufacturing fields, the government felt that the I.C.A. would serve an additional purpose in getting large numbers of Malays to work in the tertiary industries in line with the T.M.P.'s objectives.[41] The increasing use of Malay professional services would also ensure that Malays were adequately represented in all levels of employment, particularly the managerial and technical levels. The 30% share reservations for Malays in companies with $500,000 share capital would ensure that by 1990, they owned at least 30% of the corporate sector. This was to supplement the objectives of the Securities Investment Act of 1973 which sought to transfer share ownership from non-Malay(Chinese and foreign) to Malay hands via the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange.[42]

The unfavourable reaction from the Chinese business community was predictable, and through the A.C.C.C.I., it made an open protest to the government. The common complaints of Chinese business firms were that the I.C.A.'s measures to bring Malays into the mainstream of development had left

ship has tried unsuccessfully to stem this arrangement because the returns to both Malays and Chinese have been lucrative. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Trade and Industry Ministry has stated that about two-thirds of the 1,255 Malay rice wholesalers were doing the "Ali-Baba" system of business in 1979. New Sunday Times, 27th January, 1980. For details of the "Ali-Baba" system, see Gordon P. Means,"Special Rights as a Strategy for Development: The Case of Malaysia", Comparative Politics, Vol. V No.1, 1972-73, pp. 29-61.

40. See article,"The New Malay Dilemma", Asiaweek, 15th September, 1978, pp. 31-6.

41. In 1970, the Malays comprised between 16 to 28% in the manufacturing, commerce and construction sectors. In the manufacturing sector management, their representation was even lower,i.e. 7% compared to 68% for Chinese, 4% Indian and 18% foreign. The government intended to raise

investors frustrated and unwilling to invest. To them, the I.C.A. hindered the expansion of existing businesses, reduced the possibility of licences in a wide range of areas where the Chinese were already operating, and it raised the spectre of mass unemployment among the Chinese.[43] The D.A.P. which had been monitoring the dissatisfactions of the Chinese business community for some time, decided to capitalize on the situation to facilitate its expansion plans, particularly in terms of finance.[44] The party's initial criticism of the I.C.A. was that it was a controversial piece of legislation that would disrupt the activities of business and manufacturing circles.[45] This seemed to concur with the A.C.C.C.I.'s argument that investors had become frustrated, dissatisfied and reluctant to invest because too much was being done for the Malays at their expense. Local investors had encountered a dilemma when the I.C.A. was thrust upon them after assurances by the government that their efforts to create economic growth would not be unnecessarily hindered. On the one hand, they felt that they were exhorted by the government to create growth. The target for the non-Malay investment by 1990 was to be 40%. In 1970, the Chinese ownership of share capital in limited companies was 22.5%.[46] On that basis, the non-Malay ownership of share capi-

Malay representation in manufacturing, commerce and construction from 160,000 out of 1,432,000 in 1970 to 1,088,000 out of 2,765,000 by 1990 in line with the 50% Malay workforce requirement. For details, see Fred R.von der Mehden,"Communalism, Industrial Policy and Income Distribution in Malaysia", Asian Survey, Vol. XV No. 3, March 1975, pp. 247-61.

42. For the reasons behind the Securities Investment Act of 1973, see Andrew Davenport,"Tightening up in Malaysia", Far Eastern Economic Review, 26th December, 1975, pp. 47-8.

43. See article,"Calling for a fair share", Asiaweek, 17th March, 1978, pp. 39-40.

44. Finance has always been one of the D.A.P.'s major weaknesses in view of its small membership(compared to the N.F.) and limited donations from the public. This has severely constrained envisaged expansion plans. Thus if Chinese business firms could be persuaded to support the D.A.P. financially, its expansion plans would be facilitated.

45. New Straits Times, 13th December, 1978.

46. Sevinc Carlson, Malaysia: Search for National Unity and Economic

tal was targeted to rise 9 times above the 1970 mark or a 15.1% annual growth rate between 1971-75, which would raise it to 37.3% and ultimately a 15.5% annual growth rate between 1976-80 to arrive at the targeted percentage of 40%.[47] On the other, they were not being given any incentives to realize this. As one source puts it, the major increase in Chinese and Indian ownership was expected to take place as a natural development arising out of the growth of the economy and no special programmes had been prepared to aid their activities.[48] Most Chinese manufacturing firms were small concerns, and were thus greatly handicapped in the face of massive competition from giant government-backed corporations such as Perbadanan Nasional(PERNAS), Majlis Amanah Rakyat(MARA), the Urban Development Authority(U.D.A.), etc., aiding the Malays.[49] In addition they also had to face competition from large, foreign limited liability companies. Chinese firms thus laboured under the grave threat of ex-propriation and confiscation to help create the

Growth, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, London, 1975, p. 22.

47. See The Third Malaysia Plan,1976-1980, p. 86. Even the foreign section which would be cut in half in terms of percentage(63.3% in 1970 to 30.0% in 1990) was expected to increase 8% annually due to the growth in the economy. Fred R.von der Mehden, op. cit., p. 252.

48. Ibid. Fred R.von der Mehden attributed this to the apparent acceptance by Malaysian planners of the belief in the omnipotence of Chinese economic power and their lack of understanding of the character of Chinese business patterns.

49. Small Chinese firms in Southeast Asia tend to display the same characteristics. On this basis, it may be assumed that a study of the characteristics of small Chinese firms in Indonesia fairly reflected those in Malaysia. In his study on this, Donald Willmott observed that small Chinese firms in Semarang in the early 1950s showed the following characteristics: (i) the majority were small enough for the family to handle without employing outsiders above clerks and workers;(ii) the tendency to diversify activities; (iii) there was high instability with numerous bankruptcies, failures,etc.; (iv) they had familistic personnel structure;(v) familistic ownership and (vi) informal structure, preferring partnerships to corporations. Donald Willmott, The Chinese of Semarang, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1960, pp. 47-58. Also Fred R.von der Mehden, op. cit., p. 253. Though a considerable period of time has lapsed since Willmott last made his study, nevertheless these characteristics are still very prominent today.

necessary growth for restructuring to benefit the Malays.[50] To make matters worse, the I.C.A. appeared to the Chinese as yet another instrument to strengthen the already favourable position of the Malays. Although the I.C.A. was primarily geared to affect the large companies, both large and small Chinese firms could not help feeling apprehensive about the ex-propriation threat materialising in the near future. This was due to their precarious position of having to exhibit defensive tendencies against massive competition from government-backed corporations, while at the same time thinking of constructive proposals to improve their own position.[51] To be fair to the Chinese, this state of affairs was liable to make them unable to create the extra portion of the pie meant for someone else. The D.A.P. was thus able to point out that the government, contrary to resolving the dilemma of the Chinese businessmen by its double standards of giving with the right hand and taking back with the left, had instead aggravated it by introducing the I.C.A. As such the D.A.P. justified its contention that local investors were reluctant to invest because they felt restricted and frustrated.

The D.A.P. next added fuel to the A.C.C.C.I.'s complaints that the I.C.A. had hindered the expansion of existing businesses while reducing the possibility of licences in wide areas where the Chinese were already opera-

50. Alex Lee made this warning very clearly in 1971 during the Chinese Unity Movement drive. He stressed that the Chinese must help to create a bigger economic cake and that extra portion would have to go to someone else(i.e. the Malays). Failure to do so would mean that the existing cake would have to be cut into smaller pieces. It was also possible that should the worst happened, the Chinese might have to be forced to give up their own portion of the cake. See round table discussion on Alex Lee,"Trends in Politics: A Malaysian-Chinese View"in Patrick Low ed., Trends in Southeast Asia No. 2, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1971, p.86.

51. For full details, see R.S.Milne, op. cit., pp. 235-62.

ting. In this it dealt with the mandatory 50% Malay workforce regulation and the 30% share reservations for Malays. It affirmed the complaint that the 50% Malay workforce regulation placed severe difficulties on firms which had difficulty in recruiting Malays to their workforce. The demographical pattern of the country with the Malays predominating in the rural areas and the non-Malays in the towns, accentuated this difficulty. Since most of the industries were located in the urban areas, firms had no difficulty in getting non-Malay labour prior to the I.C.A. With the I.C.A. legislated, it became extremely difficult to recruit Malay labour in the towns and also in states where Malays formed a minority(e.g.Penang).[52] Even if firms should succeed in getting adequate Malay labour, increased expenditure of commuting between the towns where the industries were located and the homes of the Malays in the rural areas would reduce the take-home pay of Malay workers and thus discourage them from working in such places to try to find jobs nearer their homes. Another factor which made the recruitment of Malay labour to industries difficult was the predominantly Chinese cultural environment in the towns. The operations of most Chinese firms and clientele were based on social and cultural values.[53] Their smooth functioning would be dislocated by a large influx of Malays whose values and traditions were different. In any case the Malay workers would have felt alienated in a Chinese-predominated cultural environment and thus encountered grave socio-economic problems.[54] It was thus pointed out that owing to the above factors

52. For full details of the difficulties of recruiting Malay labour, see Fred R.von der Mehden, op. cit., pp. 254-6.

53. This was more so in the case of small Chinese firms, but to an increasing extent in large ones.

54. Some of these could be difficulties in adjusting to an entirely different lifestyle altogether. For instance, some Malays, long used to the serenity of rural living, may find the hustle and bustle of urban living not to their liking.

large industries had grave difficulties in recruiting such a large proportion (50%) of Malay labour. According to the I.C.A., if large firms could not meet the 50% Malay mandatory stipulation, business licences would not be issued to them. Also existing businesses might have to close down on the non-renewal of their licences. This possibility, though remote, was nevertheless real, being subjected to the discretions of the Malay bureaucrats. Although there were assurances from the government that the I.C.A. would be implemented flexibly and pragmatically, it appeared that investors could not help feeling apprehensive. This, the D.A.P. held, was due to the abuse and misuse of the wide arbitrary and discretionary powers vested in Malay bureaucrats who were responsible for the I.C.A.'s implementation. The D.A.P. stated that these bureaucrats, many of them sympathetic to the younger Malays in U.M.N.O., used as their criteria for approving plans, licences and applications, the need to comply with existing economic and social objectives in the national interest. As this criteria was very vague, the D.A.P. stated that it was very easy for the bureaucrats concerned to interpret it according to their whims and fancies. As such, the non-Malay firms felt insecure, helpless and completely at the mercy of the more than often unsympathetic Malay bureaucrats.[55]

Regarding the 30% Malay share reservations, the D.A.P. agreed with the A.C.C.C.I. that it was extremely unfair to Chinese business concerns. The general feeling among the Chinese was that it had taken them years of hard work and struggle just to build up their business concerns from scratch to their present positions.[56] They felt that legislation to force them to share 30% of what they had painfully acquired with others who did not have to experience any suffering at all was not only unfair but illogical. The

55. New Straits Times, 13th December, 1978.

56. Article,"Calling for a fair share", Asiaweek, 17th March, 1978, p.40.

principle of private enterprise, which the T.M.P. upheld, would be infringed if industries were compelled to take in 30% Malay equity partnership and therefore 30% of all board members.[57] Added to this was the extreme difficulty of the industries concerned to find suitable Malay business partners, especially those who would be compatible, sincere and had the cash to invest.[58] The D.A.P. stressed that even former U.M.N.O. leaders considered the legislation unfair. It cited the former Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, who commented that the implementation and thereby implication, of the I.C.A. was wrong, with privileges being forced on the Malays and disregarding the intricacies and complexities of how businesses were run.[59] As such, the Tunku held that the "incubation" of Malay businessmen through legislation would deprive them of the experience of years of entrepreneurship that Chinese businessmen had acquired. As a result, the Tunku concluded that incompetent and passive Malay business partners would be created who would be a liability rather than an asset to the business community.

Taking the theme of the 30% Malay share reservations further, the D.A.P. alleged that it was a ploy to cover up the false hope and consequent despair created for the Malays in harping on too ambitious a target on share ownership in the first place. The T.M.P. had stated that Malay ownership of the share capital, being only 2.4% in 1970, was targeted to rise at an

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. Dr. Chen Man Hin, the D.A.P. Chairman, quoted the Tunku's comments fully:"The way in which it(i.e. the I.C.A.) is being implemented is wrong. We have to help the bumiputras get a fair share in the economic life of the country which is the main aim of the policy. But it is wrong to force upon the bumiputras a load they cannot shoulder. Not only does this interrupt orderly growth of industries but the system creates men of straw - people who participate without investing a single cent, or having the competence to contribute to the company's development". New Straits Times, 13th December, 1978, op. cit.

average annual growth rate of 43.6% from 1971-75 and from 25.8% from 1976-80.[60] This had assumed that corporate assets grew at a constant rate of 10% per annum. The D.A.P. considered these targets to be too high, calculated to pacify Malay extremists at the commencement of the N.E.P. In a fervour of economic nationalism and realizing that much was needed to be done to raise the low Malay percentage of share capital within a comparatively short time, the U.M.N.O. leaders who initiated the I.C.A. were either blind, chose to ignore, or seriously underestimated the adverse consequences from certain unforeseen circumstances beyond their control. The D.A.P.'s contention could be justified by the uncertain economic growth rate, the fluctuations of the share market, the value systems of the Malays and the exploitation tendencies of some Chinese businessmen. To be fair to the D.A.P., it was unlikely that corporate assets would grow at a constant rate of 10% per annum as this would have to depend on a constant economic growth. In reality, economic recessions and inflation, which were becoming more often, slowed down the economic growth rate. The technicalities of the stock exchange are complex and due to constant fluctuations of the laws of supply and demand, the market value of shares are likely to change frequently. Thus to reap the full benefits of participation in the share market, a sound knowledge of the technicalities of the laws of supply and demand and the trend of how share prices move, is necessary. The traditional values of the Malays, based on Islam, were likely to make them attach less importance to the workings of the share market, which could be interpreted as some form of gambling.[61] Lastly, it had always been

60. The Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980, p. 86.

61. For full details of the value systems of the Malays, see Brien K. Parkinson, "Non-Economic Factors in the Economic Retardation of the Rural Malays", Modern Asian Studies, Vol. I No.1, 1967, pp. 31-46.

the tendency of some unscrupulous Chinese businessmen to make use of certain loop-holes in the I.C.A. by getting Malays to buy shares reserved for Malays at a nominal price on their behalf, and to sell them later at a higher price with a cut of the profits going to the Malays concerned. This practice was similar to the "Ali-Baba" system of business. All these circumstances, either individually or in some form of combination, produced a situation in which the target of 30% Malay ownership of the corporate sector by 1990 was likely to appear unattainable. The D.A.P. justified this contention by referring to the pessimistic comments of Othman Ahmad, the Malay Chairman of the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange.[62] It attempted to corroborate Othman Ahmad's remarks by alleging that of the $704 million worth of shares reserved for the Malays between 1971 and 1975, only $268 million were taken up, mostly by the government on behalf of the Malays, leaving $436 million worth of stock idle.[63] The party then pointed out that the government needed a fast and convenient remedy to cover up its own shortcomings so as not to lose its credibility among the Malays. Hence it alleged that the government predictably instituted a series of measures in a bid to arrest shares slipping out of Malay hands. Thus the 30% share reservation for Malays ruling was a logical follow-up to the Securities Investment Act and the Bumiputra Investment Foundation.[64] In instituting these measures, the government, according

62. See Anthony Rowley,"The Economic Realities of Pulling together", Far Eastern Economic Review, 10th June, 1977, pp. 29-30. Othman Ahmad had stated that if by 1990, the Malays were to own 30% of the share capital of all joint-stock public limited companies, then the Malay share must rise from the $100 million in 1970 to $14,000 million in 1990, given an annual growth rate of 25.8%. To attain this, Kit Siang held that the Malay ownership must rise by $650 million each year.($6\frac{1}{2}$ times what it was in 1970). The $14,000 million figure was revised to $24,000 million by Ghafar Baba, Secretary-General of the N.F., in a statement in January 1980. See New Sunday Times, 27th January, 1980.

63. See Parliamentary speech,"The Weakened Ringgit" on 10th November, 1975 in Lim Kit Siang,op.cit.,p.139. See also Louis Kraar and Stephen Blank,"Malaysia: The High Cost of Affirmative Action", Asia, March/April 1980, pp. 6-9. The authors stated that the government's measures

to the D.A.P.'s implications, preferred to overlook the other unforeseen circumstances (discussed above) and tend to lay the entire blame on unscrupulous Chinese businessmen, making them a convenient scapegoat since they were the most easily identifiable and thus likely to make the Malays forget that the other circumstances existed. While the Securities Investment Act tightened up the controls of the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange(with the aim of transferring assets from foreign and Chinese investors into Malay hands), the Bumiputra Investment Foundation sought to buy up shares in the larger and more profitable manufacturing industries to keep in trust for the Malays.[65] As the more profitable manufacturing industries were predominantly non-Malay owned and showed no inclination to sell their shares to the Malays for a variety of reasons, the I.C.A. thus compelled them(those with $500,000 share capital) to reserve 30% of their equity for the Malays.[66] The government's reasons appeared to most Chinese(from previous experience) as a punitive measure on the whole Chinese business community for the sins of an unscrupulous few. Thus it could be held that the government was indifferent to the legitimate grievances of large Chinese firms that they had taken years to build up big manufacturing concerns from scratch, only to see a large proportion of the fruits of their labour being unfairly channelled to Malays, simply because they were bumiputras.[67] The A.C.C.C.I. charged the government

in the I.C.A. advocated state capitalism and concluded that by 1990, 23% of the corporate sector would be owned by the state, either directly or indirectly. Only 7% of the corporate sector was likely to be owned by Malays individually.

64. For details of the Securities Investment Act, see Anthony Rowley, op. cit. For the establishment of the Bumiputra Investment Foundation and its reasons, see article,"Plugging the Bumi Loop-hole", Asiaweek, 28th April, 1978, p. 13.

65. See Susan Lim,"Propping up the Bumiputras", Insight, August 1978, pp. 45-6.

66. Though the reasons are not explicit, it may be surmised that the Chinese preferred to deal with members of their own community, given their bigotry that the Malays were incompetent in business.

67. Article,"Calling for a fair share", Asiaweek, 17th March, 1978, p. 40.

with racial discrimination in the sense that there was no legislation requiring bumiputra companies to part with 30% of their share capital to the Chinese.[68] Under these circumstances, it was easy for the D.A.P. to make political capital out of the A.C.C.C.I.'s charges that the I.C.A. 30% share reservations for Malays was a racial discriminatory measure on the part of the government.

In criticising the government on the above-mentioned grounds, the D.A.P. tried to show that its earlier warnings of the I.C.A. proving a deterrent to the investment drives of the T.M.P. were justifiable. Thus Lim Kit Siang pointed to the fact that the rate of economic growth was actually below the 10% T.M.P. stipulation for the year 1977.[69] His charge was corroborated by the fact that the Federal Industrial Development Authority (F.I.D.A.) which monitored all investments in the country had conceded that local capital investment for 1977 was only 25% of the proposed target.[70] The logical explanation for the low rate of local investment, according to the D.A.P., was the I.C.A. This had a chain effect on foreign investors who suspected that if local investors hesitated to invest in their own country, something must be wrong with the investment climate. Understandably they adopted a "wait and see" attitude before making any pertinent moves. Apparently impatient with the local investors whom the government claimed had misunderstood the rationale of the I.C.A., Dr. Mahathir, the Trade and Primary Industries Minister, had to embark on overseas missions in a bid to convince foreign investors that the investment climate in Malaysia was sound, and the I.C.A. would not affect them harshly. The D.A.P. was inclined to lay

68. Ibid.

69. See Parliamentary speech,"The Industrial Co-ordination Act" in Lim Kit Siang, op.cit., p.168. He stated that the Finance Minister's forecast for private investment for 1977, which was originally 9%, was revised to 8.2%.

70. Article,"The New Malay Dilemma", Asiaweek, 15th September, 1978, p. 31.

the blame on both the M.C.A. and U.M.N.O. for the dilemma the I.C.A. had brought upon the Chinese business community. As the D.A.P. was competing for the support of the Chinese business community with the M.C.A., its attacks were directed more at the latter than U.M.N.O. It suggested that if the extremists in U.M.N.O. had been able to force the I.C.A. on the Chinese business community, thus reneging on the 1957 "quid pro quo" implied contract in which there was a division between the Malays and Chinese of political and economic power, the M.C.A. was chiefly to blame for encouraging them to do so. The weakness of the M.C.A. in the N.F. coalition had made it possible for the Malays to want to dominate both political and economic power in the country. The D.A.P. tend to agree with Chinese business circles(apparently angry at the invasion of their traditional enclave)that the M.C.A. could have blocked the I.C.A. during its early stages before it became law but for reasons which were not clearly explained, the M.C.A. President, Lee San Choon, could not or would not do so.[71] As usual when any controversy erupted which affected the Chinese, the M.C.A. itself was caught in a dilemma. As a partner of U.M.N.O. in the N.F., it had to support the I.C.A., yet at the same time it had to be sensitive to the feelings of the Chinese business community from which much of its support came. When these conflicted, the M.C.A. tried to steer a middle path. It conceded that the I.C.A. was a "fait accompli" as in the case of the other anti-Chinese government policies

71. Observers recalled that former Finance Minister and M.C.A. President, Tun Tan Siew Sin(who resigned in 1974 before the general elections) had used his powers to block a legislation similar to the I.C.A. a decade earlier. Tun Tan was able to do this because he was the Finance Minister and also the then Alliance government under Tunku Abdul Rahman faithfully adhered to the "quid pro quo" principle. It may be argued that the M.C.A. which conceded the Finance Minister's portfolio to U.M.N.O., was no more in a position to block I.C.A.-type legislations after Tunku Abdul Rahman resigned as Prime Minister in 1970. The fact that the Finance Minister's portfolio was given to Tengku Razaleigh, a prominent member of the younger Malays within U.M.N.O., greatly strengthened the latter's position. They were thus able to legislate the I.C.A. in late 1975. Articles,"Calling for a fair share", Asiaweek,

in the aftermath of the 1969 racial riot. It urged the Chinese to make the best of a deteriorating situation and on its part pledged that it would do its best to ensure a fair implementation of the I.C.A. Chinese business firms facing difficulties as a result of the I.C.A.'s implementation were advised to consult M.C.A. ministers who would channel their problems for remedial action by the proper authorities. The M.C.A. tried to explain the necessity of supporting the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership by co-operating fully with the government to ensure the success of the N.E.P. and the I.C.A.[72] It echoed the government's contention that the I.C.A. which was the N.E.P.'s driving force to restructure to ensure an equitable distribution of the nation's wealth, was not meant to benefit any particular community(i.e. the Malays)at the expense of others(i.e. the Chinese).[73] The I.C.A.'s implementation, the M.C.A. repeated, would be flexible and pragmatic. The moderate U.M.N.O. leadership, in rallying to the M.C.A., explained that the rationale behind the N.E.P. and the I.C.A. had been distorted by communalists and chauvinists, in a reference to the A.C.C.C.I. and the D.A.P. Dr. Mahathir reiterated that the I.C.A. was legislated to ensure the success of the N.E.P. which was premised on bumiputraism.[74] He contended that bumiputraism, being a necessity for political stability, was a pre-condition of economic growth, the alternative being national disunity and racial violence. According to him, every country had its N.E.P. and I.C.A., and Malaysia's N.E.P. and I.C.A.

17th March, 1978, pp. 39-40 and "Tough Times for the M.C.A.", Asiaweek, 15th September, 1978, pp. 34-6.

72. See speeches by M.C.A. President Lee San Choon, New Straits Times, 27th November, 1978 and M.C.A. Secretary-General Neo Yee Pan, New Straits Times, 19th June, 1979. Both warned that if the moderates fell from power, the extremists would take over, thus jeopardizing the position of the Chinese further.

73. See speech by M.C.A. Deputy Trade and Industry Minister, Lew Sip Hon, New Straits Times, 13th December, 1978.

74. See interviews with Dr. Mahathir, Malaysian Business, March 1979 and Far Eastern Economic Review, 13th April, 1979.

were comparatively less harsh than those of many adjacent countries in South-east Asia.[75] To win the support of the Chinese business community, Dr. Mahathir stated that if businessmen sought to co-operate with the government to ensure the success of the N.E.P. and the I.C.A.(as some had already done so), not only would they keep their existing share of the nation's economic cake, but would actually be able to expand it. In fact government expenditure in conjunction with the N.E.P. brought large spin-off advantages to Chinese contractors.[76] The gist of Dr. Mahathir's message was that it was more profitable for the Chinese business community to co-operate with the government in supporting the N.E.P. and the I.C.A. so that they too would benefit personally. The M.C.A.'s position and Dr. Mahathir's message gave the D.A.P. added fuel to charge that the M.C.A. was colluding with U.M.N.O. to use the N.E.P. and the I.C.A. to produce Malay millionaires(this is to be discussed fully in the next section) since the majority of those Malays who benefitted were from U.M.N.O. In return for this favour, U.M.N.O. allowed the M.C.A. to help itself to the spin-off advantages that were incidentally created. It was obvious to the D.A.P. that those Chinese contractors who benefitted were M.C.A. members who had access to the government. The D.A.P. pointed out that the M.C.A. had been very self-centred in this aspect instead of concerning itself with the interests of the Chinese business community in general, which wanted a repeal of the I.C.A. The I.C.A., the D.A.P. concluded, was just one in a series of pro-Malay measures which seemed to hint that the extremists in U.M.N.O. would not stop once economic parity with the Chinese was reached by 1990. Judging from previous experience that Malay

75. New Straits Times, 21st November, 1978.

76. Dr. Mahathir was referring to Chinese contractors making millions of dollars in government projects sponsored by U.D.A. in both Kuala Lumpur and Alor Star, Kedah. See Malaysia, June 1978.

special privileges which were originally intended to be transitory being made permanent (this is to be discussed fully in the next section), the Chinese had reasonable grounds to believe that once the extremists achieved economic parity, they would demand economic superiority.[77] The D.A.P. thus called for a complete repeal of the I.C.A. It refuted suggestions by the extremists that local(i.e. Chinese) investors were deliberately maintaining an economic squeeze on the country in order to sabotage the N.E.P. as a protest against the I.C.A., insisting that the reluctance of the Chinese investors was due to apprehensions and fears of the I.C.A.'s implications. At the same time, it also called for a curb on the wide discretionary powers vested in Malay bureaucrats who implemented the N.E.P. and the I.C.A., stressing that this would restore the confidence investors once had in the investment climate of the country.

Thus the D.A.P.'s strong and consistent stand against the I.C.A. was to highlight the difficulties and frustrations faced by the business community as a result of the I.C.A.'s implications. It was to instigate the Chinese business community to stand up to prevent the further erosion of their legitimate interests. The D.A.P. felt that the Chinese business

77. See New Straits Times, 2nd June, 1980. At a U.M.N.O. Economic Convention to review the N.E.P. at its mid-term stage, there were suggestions by U.M.N.O. extremists to increase the 30% Malay ownership of the corporate sector by 1990 target to 51% without specifying details as to how and when this was going to be achieved. This appeared to be a reaction out of fear that Chinese economic development in the country was going at a faster rate than that of the Malays. Although no figures were available to substantiate this, there were indications that the Chinese were successfully striving towards their 40% ownership of the corporate sector by 1990 target, given their thrift and entrepreneurial skills and also the political stability facilitating economic development provided by the government. While cautioning against the impracticality of the high target(51%), U.M.N.O. moderates went all out to explain the reasons behind the demand. To the Chinese, this did not appear as a restraint on the extremists by the moderates. Thus they concluded that if this target was to be achieved, it would have to be at their expense. Whether the fears of the Chinese are justified or not would have to depend on how successful the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership could restrain the extremists.

community, up to the point of the I.C.A.'s promulgation in late 1975, still appeared unconcerned and indecisive over what action to take to arrest the slide towards Malay economic nationalism with all its adverse implications on the Chinese. In doing so, the D.A.P. associated itself with the A.C.C.C.I. to launch a scathing attack on the M.C.A. By implication, the D.A.P. attempted to show the Chinese business community that it was a viable alternative to the M.C.A. as far as it(i.e. the business community) was concerned. The D.A.P. was aware that the government's problem in relation to the N.E.P. and the I.C.A. appeared to be to attempt to balance the conflicting demands of Malay economic nationalism strongly urging for a restructuring of society and the conducive conditions(i.e. minimal legislation)necessary for private investment. By consistently calling for the I.C.A.'s entire repeal(which it knew the government would ignore), the D.A.P. was in fact prepared to settle for something less, like its amendments in those sections of it where businessmen were adversely affected.[78] The party's main reason for this course of action appeared to be its inability to deliver the goods to the Chinese business community, since unlike the M.C.A., it had no access to the government.

78. For the government's moves to amend the I.C.A., see New Straits Times, 13th October, 1978 and 15th June, 1979. The amendments, for example, provided for a special Industrial Advisory Council to consider appeals from businessmen affected by the I.C.A.'s implementation.

(c) Special Privileges, Exploitation and Corruption

The issues of exploitation and corruption have been a common phenomenon in many third world countries practising the free enterprise system, but in Malaysia, their incidence is likely to appear as a by-product of the special rights syndrome. From a historical point of view, the Malaysian Constitution guaranteed special privileges to the Malays in view of their status as the country's indigenous peoples. It was also to compensate them for their economic backwardness vis-a-vis the non-Malays. Their manner of implementation had however generated a lot of controversy. Common allegations by critics, both Malays and non-Malays, were that U.M.N.O., in whose care special privileges were placed, had abused and misused them. They, especially the D.A.P., argued that special privileges did not uplift the poor Malays as originally intended, but instead enriched a few already rich and influential Malays in U.M.N.O. or closely associated with it. Exploitation and corruption were thus implied in these allegations. U.M.N.O. on its part denied that it had abused and misused special privileges, but could not hide the fact that many of its leaders were becoming rich by allegedly acquiring wealth disproportionate to their known sources of income without giving satisfactory explanations. The N.E.P. re-affirmed and widened the scope of special privileges, thereby accentuating their controversy further.

Special Privileges

The special privileges of the Malays have always been a fundamental issue in Malaysian politics. This problem could be dated back to the period immediately following the end of the Japanese occupation in Malaya.[79]

79. For a discussion of this problem, see K.J.Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1965, Ch. IV.

The Malayan Union concept in 1946 made the Malays realize how weak they were economically vis-a-vis the Chinese and Indians. Thus the proposal under the Malayan Union to give equal citizenship rights to the non-Malays threatened their status as the country's indigenous peoples.[80] They had taken for granted that this had been guaranteed by the Colonial Administration. The fear that the British had broken this pledge led to the formation of U.M.N.O. With the solid support of the Malays, U.M.N.O. strongly agitated for the abolition of the Malayan Union proposals. This was successful and the Federation of Malaya Agreement was promulgated in 1948.[81] This restored the position of the Malays as the country's indigenous peoples. With the citizenship requirements for the non-Malays becoming more stringent and restrictive, special privileges came to symbolise the pre-eminent position of the Malays in the country. The British High Commissioner was thus made responsible for their care under the Federation of Malaya Agreement. When Malaya and later Malaysia came into being, the responsibility of special privileges was transferred to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong(King). Briefly the scope of special privileges under Articles 153 and 89 of the Constitution covered a system of quotas applied to recruitment to the public service, scholarships, licences for any trade or business and land reservations for Malays.[82] Special privi-

80. For details see James de V. Allen, The Malayan Union, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1967 and Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation: Political Unification in the Malaysian Region 1945-1965, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, Ch. II.

81. Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, (1974) op. cit., Ch. III.

82. Article 153 states:"It shall be the responsibility of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong to safeguard the special position of the Malays and the legitimate interests of other communities..." Article 89 sanctions the system of Malay(land)Reservations. Gordon P. Means, op. cit., p. 40. Means argues that the purpose of Article 153 was to ensure that the operation of the democratic process would not erode or terminate Malay special rights and that while the Constitution defines specific Malay special rights, it provides no guidance as to the legitimate interests of other communities. He contends that the latter phrase has acquired no meaning in practice, since the rulers have never recognized any specific"legitimate interests of other communities".

leges were originally intended to be transitory.[83] They were supposed to be abolished eventually when the Malays reached economic parity with the non-Malays at some future date.

The D.A.P.'s pre-1969 attitude towards special privileges was identical to that of its predecessor, the P.A.P. When Singapore was in Malaysia, Lee Kuan Yew's rationale of special privileges stemmed from his analysis of the causes of Malay poverty.[84] He held that these were attributable to traditional Islamic conservatism in the value systems of the Malays and concluded that special privileges(which could only be helpful on a short-term basis) was not the long-term solution to Malay poverty. Instead rational economic policies, delving into the root causes of Malay poverty, and a mental revolution were advocated. These arguments were summed up in the P.A.P.'s doctrine, democratic socialism. Although the D.A.P. came to accept the principle of special privileges, it nevertheless doubted their relevance and validity within the context of Malaysia's multi-racial population. At best, like the P.A.P., the D.A.P. might have held that they were a necessary temporary measure. The D.A.P.'s negative attitude towards special privileges reflected its deep commitment to the doctrine of democratic socialism inherited from the P.A.P.[85] It claimed that democratic socialism

83. They were originally meant to be for 15 years from Merdeka(1957) whereby they would be reviewed. See R.K.Vasil, Politics in a Plural Society: A Study of Non-communal Political Parties in West Malaysia, East Asian Historical Monographs, Oxford University Press, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, 1972, p. 18. The 15-year period was however given up and left to the discretion of the King. The M.C.A. and M.I.C. had agreed to this in the belief that the period of special privileges would be less than 15 years. See also K.J.Ratnam, op. cit., p. 111.

84. See Alex Josey, Lee Kuan Yew, Donald Moore, Singapore, 1968, p. 59.

85. See Michael Ong, The D.A.P.: Case for a Malaysian Malaysia Re-stated, M.A. Thesis, La Trobe University, 1969, Ch. IV. Lim Kit Siang defined democratic socialism as "an ideology and movement committed to the enlargement of individual freedom by collective or social action to provide for all an equal right to happiness, dignity and the fulfilment of life". Op. cit.

was the only "sane and rational" solution to the problem of the unequal distribution of wealth in Malaysia, manifested by Malay poverty. As an ideological party, the D.A.P. intended the practice of democratic socialism on a non-communal approach to cut across all racial barriers. Under these circumstances, it held that the racist approach of special privileges would not solve the problem of Malay poverty because its causes were economic and not racial, as allegedly claimed by U.M.N.O. The D.A.P. held that special privileges would only create resentment among the non-Malays, the majority of whom were also poor like the Malays. The party suggested that special privileges were on the contrary, likely to enrich only a few Malays who were already rich and influential; in all cases, these would be U.M.N.O. members or persons closely associated with U.M.N.O. The implication was that U.M.N.O. under the pretext of claiming special privileges for the Malays in general to uplift them economically, would tend to channel these privileges to enrich itself. This had been manifested by the alleged preferential treatment accorded to U.M.N.O. politicians and their relatives in the allocation of transport licences, timber and mining concessions, government aid in agriculture and scholarships, to mention a few. Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. held that U.M.N.O. had abused and misused special privileges which were meant to alleviate the incidence of poverty among the Malay peasants, farmers, rubber small-holders and fishermen.

Following the 1969 racial riot, the controversy over special privileges became more intense. The escalation of the controversy appeared to be the over-reaction of the Malays towards the perceived threat to abolish special privileges altogether on the part of the non-Malay opposition parties, especially the D.A.P., during the long campaign of the 1969 general elections. The D.A.P. had harped on the abolition of special privileges because it wanted to win the mass support of the Chinese. Thus special

privileges, which had not been officially permanent, ~~was~~ were guaranteed in the Constitution. First indications of this were revealed by the then Attorney-General, Tan Sri Kadir Yusof in late 1970 when he stated that special privileges would be for "hundreds of years".[86] The Constitutional Amendment Bill in February 1971 considered special privileges one of the "sensitive issues" and prohibited their discussion in public. The N.E.P. with its first phase, the S.M.P.(1971-75), extended the scope of special privileges to include education and encroachment into the traditional economic enclaves of the non-Malays in the private sector, thus doing away with the "quid pro quo" policy of Tunku Abdul Rahman. Thus special privileges were to include new employment opportunities for Malays in the urban areas in new and existing industries, shares in private companies, directorships for Malays, etc., to mention a few. The 30% Malay ownership of all sectors of the economy and at all levels by 1990 as stipulated by the N.E.P., made special privileges a more than ever important means to the Malays to achieve this objective, given the short time available(20 years) and the extremely low Malay ownership (below 5%) percentage at the starting point of the N.E.P. in 1970.

The D.A.P. regarded U.M.N.O.'s renewed vigour to perpetuate special privileges by the N.E.P. as a blatant attempt to build up its financial base at all costs. It believed that U.M.N.O. intended to wrest control of economic power from the Chinese by using its new unchallenged political power to this effect. Under these circumstances, the party was skeptical that the government would actually realise the N.E.P.'s first aim, i.e. eradica-

86. See Asian Almanac, Vol. VIII No. 43, 24th October, 1970, op. cit. Contrast this with foot-note 83. In R.K.Vasil, op.cit., p.18, Tun Razak had allegedly told the M.C.A. and M.I.C. prior to the Constitution being drafted in 1957 that special rights would not be necessary for more than 15 years. This was to persuade them to drop the 15-year limit insistence on special privileges.

tion of poverty even though the majority poverty group,(according to the T.M.P.) ~~were~~ was Malays. It felt that U.M.N.O. was more concerned in carrying out the N.E.P.'s second aim, i.e. the restructuring of society to eliminate identification of race with economic function. The D.A.P.'s rationalizations were premised on the "Revolusi Mental"(Mental Revolution)concept of U.M.N.O. in 1971 and the "economic nationalism" call by U.M.N.O. Youth underlying the N.E.P.[87] A team of 14 U.M.N.O. intellectuals led by Senu Abdul Rahman, the Secretary-General of U.M.N.O., studied in depth and analyzed the various causes of Malay poverty and economic backwardness. They concluded that if the Malays wanted to progress economically to be on par with the non-Malays, they should follow the acquisitive spirit and thrift of J.P. Getty and other successful entrepreneurs.[88] The Malays were therefore exhorted to modify their attitude and philosophy as regards striving for material affluence through business activities in the private sector. They were persuaded that this would not conflict with traditional Islamic values. The younger Malays in U.M.N.O. with high expectations of what the government should do to uplift the Malays economically, found the Mental Revolution exhortation very much in line with their call for economic nationalism. This call reflected their deep resentment towards Chinese economic domination of the country which they blamed on the previous "quid pro quo" policy of Tunku Abdul Rahman. In its most extreme form, economic nationalism made the idea of downright confiscation of Chinese and foreign property(as in Indonesia during the Sukarno era as a short cut to wealth)very attractive. However in view of the wide measures of control exercised by Chinese and foreigners in the economy, such

87. For full details of U.M.N.O.'s "Revolusi Mental", see Syed Hussein Alatas, The Myth of the Lazy Native, Frank Cass, London, 1977, Ch. X.

88. Ibid.

confiscation would be tantamount to killing the goose which lay the golden eggs. In this case, private investment would leave the country, resulting in economic chaos(as in Indonesia prior to the 1965 abortive communist coup) and the group most disadvantaged would be the Malays. Thus the most effective alternative to confiscation would be to seek out the co-operation of the successful non-Malay entrepreneurs(Chinese and foreign)to create a viable Malay middle class. The D.A.P. believed that its pre-1969 contention that special privileges were likely to enrich the Malay elite rather than benefit the majority of the poor Malays was vindicated. As few Malays were then engaged in the commercial and industrial activities of the country, it was obvious that U.M.N.O. intended to place as many Malays as possible in these sectors by way of special privileges and the N.E.P. Given the deep-rooted traditional and Islam-based value systems of the rural Malays, the group to be re-structured, the D.A.P. rationalized that this was unlikely to be effected, considering the difficulties of adjustment to new attitudes (which may at times appear conflicting) and a new, urban, Chinese-predominated cultural environment to be faced by the Malays. Moreover the party felt that the target set(30%) was too high and the time factor (20 years) too short. Thus the D.A.P. believed that any restructuring process would only involve the entrenchment of U.M.N.O. elites, members and close associates into comfortable positions, resulting in the creation of Malay "haves". Under these circumstances, it expected the poor Malays to feel deprived at the deviation of special privileges towards the U.M.N.O. elite and then resentful as the latter grew rich. The D.A.P. thus began to harp on Malay poverty, attributing its causes to the abuse and misuse of special privileges by U.M.N.O. The party felt that just as many non-Malays were drawn to it because they were fed up with the racial discriminatory policies of the government, the poor and deprived rural Malays would similarly find its appeal attractive in view

of their dissatisfaction towards the class-discriminatory practices of U.M.N.O.[89] A national rural organisation sub-committee to monitor the dissatisfactions of the poor Malays in the rural areas with a view to recruit them as members was formed in mid-1971.[90] Every effort was made to fan the frustrations of the poor Malays by citing numerous instances of the alleged abuse and misuse of special privileges by U.M.N.O., sometimes to the point of exaggeration. Lim Kit Siang alleged that the granting of land, timber and mining concessions and taxi and other transport licences were given to influential Malays(in most cases defeated Alliance candidates in the 1969 general elections)instead of to poor, bona fide Malays who intended to make use of these opportunities for business.[91] He added that the beneficiaries did not make use of the licences, concessions, etc., directly as what was expected of them, but instead sub-let them to others, usually Chinese businessmen, and received a portion of the profits. It was also common for each beneficiary to possess several licences as in the case of taxis and other transport means to justify the practice of sub-letting. In the case of scholarships and other awards, the D.A.P. alleged that they were in many cases given to the children of well-to-do Malays in U.M.N.O. who did not deserve them, instead of to the deserving children of poor Malays.[92] To give

89. See interview with Fadzlan Yahaya, Chairman of the D.A.P.'s Rural Development Bureau, Asiaweek, 18th January, 1980.

90. For details, see Asia Research Bulletin, Vol. I No. 1, June 1971. The party's then Organising Secretary, Lee Lam Thye, claimed that the D.A.P. had a membership of 3,000 of which 45% were Chinese, 20% Malays with Indians and others making up the rest. In view of the party's conspicuous Chinese image, the Malay membership appeared inflated. Lam Thye also held that the D.A.P. had established some 87 branches in Penang, Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang. It planned to expand to Kelantan and Trengganu. See also Kit Siang's press statement on the D.A.P.'s rural recruitment drive, Malay Mail, 9th August, 1971.

91. See Parliamentary speech,"Mid-Term Review: Second Malaysia Plan", in Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 97.

92. Ibid.

legitimacy to its charges of the abuse and misuse of special privileges, the D.A.P. ensured that they could be corroborated by the arguments of anti-U.M.N.O. Malay intellectuals. Syed Hussein Alatas, Professor of Malay Studies at the University of Singapore and former Chairman of the G.R.M., had on several occasions, criticised the S.M.P. on the grounds that the government through its corporations like MARA and PERNAS, had created and developed profitable business ventures and then passed them on to influential(but inexperienced)Malays to take charge of them.[93] His contention was that this group of Malays(from U.M.N.O. or closely associated with it)was unlikely to keep the business ventures functioning effectively and efficiently. They were rather likely to enrich themselves by the opportunities provided by the government. This, in Professor Alatas' view, was therefore irrelevant to eradicating poverty among the Malays through eliminating identification of race with economic function. Dr. Chandra Muzaffar, a political science lecturer at University Sains (Science University of Malaysia),Penang, stated that the problem of Malay poverty would not be resolved in the 1990s since the rural development programmes such as land schemes and the introduction of technology in agriculture would benefit only a small elite of rural dwellers.[94] This argument was basically similar to that of Professor Alatas mentioned above. Anwar Ibrahim, the President of Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia(A.B.I.M.), also made a similar allegation in addition to stressing that scholarships at the University of Malaya were in most cases given to the children of government ministers instead of poor, deserving Malay students.[95] As regards sub-letting transport and other business licences, the D.A.P. hoped

93. Syed Hussein Alatas, The Second Malaysia Plan 1971-75: A Critique, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1972. See also his criticisms in relation to this in Patrick Low ed., op. cit., pp. 41-8, and Yong Mun Cheong ed., op. cit., pp. 106-13.

94. New Straits Times, 29th October, 1979. He was speaking at a forum on Malaysia in the 1990s organized by the Selangor branch of the Australian and New Zealand Graduates Association of Malaysia.

95. Yong Mun Cheong ed., op. cit., p. 131.

to show that U.M.N.O. was a hypocrite in approving of the "Ali-Baba" system of business among its members in private in contrast to its (i.e. U.M.N.O.'s) public opposition to it. By implicating Chinese businessmen in the above-mentioned kind of business practice, the D.A.P. was trying to show that it was a non-communal party to the poor Malays. However it was careful to point out that the Chinese businessmen involved were not representative of the whole Chinese community. This was to dispel the belief of the poor Malays that the Chinese were a group of exploitative businessmen. This belief had gained acceptance in view of the visible role of Chinese middlemen in rural areas since the colonial days and had been re-inforced by mutual Sino-Malay antagonism. The D.A.P. went all out to stress that the majority of the Chinese were poor petty traders, hawkers, labourers, peasants, etc., just like the poor Malays, and the middlemen who formed a minority of the Chinese population were likely to be M.C.A. members. This was an attempt to unite the the two major races together along the lines of class like what the S.F. had done previously. By bringing in the M.C.A., the D.A.P. charged that U.M.N.O. was creating Malay capitalists who would collude with Chinese capitalists, and by implication, exploit the poor of all races. In arguing along the lines of class, the D.A.P. hoped to convince the poor Malays that its doctrine of democratic socialism was non-racial in that it was as much against Chinese capitalism as it was against Malay capitalism. Democratic socialism was thus portrayed as the anti-thesis of the capitalistic philosophy of U.M.N.O.'s "Revolusi Mental" to win over the poor rural Malays. U.M.N.O., on the other hand, denied that it had abused and misused special privileges as alleged by its critics, including the D.A.P. The late Tun Razak had stressed that the N.E.P. aimed to create a Malay middle class, not a privileged elite.[96] Simi-

96. See R.S.Milne, op. cit., p. 259.

larly, the Finance Minister, Tengku Razaleigh, denied that MARA, PERNAS and other similar organizations served a small coterie or exist to foster "an elitist group whose sole claim to the prospect of wealth rests on their capacity to manipulate political power in their real interests".[97] As regards the allocation of scholarships, both Musa Hitam and Ghazali Shafie denied that they were solely for the sons of Ministers, Datuks, etc.[98] U.M.N.O. justified its contention that many poor Malays remained backward because they had not heeded its exhortations in the Mental Revolution, that the Malays "should show more enterprise and initiative and be motivated more by achievement criteria and less by ascriptive criteria".[99] It could point to the success of those Malay businessmen who became rich by making full use of the opportunities provided by special privileges and attributed this to a positive response to the Mental Revolution by the Malays concerned.[100] Under these circumstances, U.M.N.O. accused the D.A.P. of going against the N.E.P. by opposing special privileges for the Malays. It regarded the D.A.P.'s democratic socialism doctrine as a device to split the Malays along the lines of class, given its primary approach to politics that all Malays must be united and that it must dominate political power in the country.

Exploitation

The D.A.P. attempted to show that exploitation by Malay middlemen was one of the major causes of Malay poverty, which was basically tied to

97. Ibid, op. cit.

98. See Yong Mun Cheong, ed., op.cit., p.134 and Ghazali Shafie, op. cit.

99. R.S.Milne, op. cit., p. 258.

100. See interview with Tengku Razaleigh, Malaysian Business, July 1976.

landlessness among Malay peasants and farmers. Land was the most important asset to the peasants and farmers, since it formed the base in which their farming activities - predominantly rice cultivation and rubber small-holdings - could be carried out. Without land, whatever skills or agricultural implements the peasants and farmers possessed, would not be utilized. The problem of landlessness may be said to be a legacy of feudalism, the social and cultural norm of pre-colonial Malay society.[101] Land ownership was concentrated into the hands of the elite ruling class, a few landlords and some peasants, while the majority of the peasantry were likely to operate as tenant farmers. They hired the land from the landlords to farm and paid their rent in the form of a proportion of their agricultural produce. As regards the peasants who owned land, in the majority of cases, such land tend to be small and uneconomic in terms of crop yield. Over the years, it had been the tendency of the owner-farmers to have the already small size of their land diminished or fragmented further, and in some cases, foreclosed or sold altogether. Various factors, either individually or in some form of combination, helped to bring about such a situation, which reflected the economic backwardness of the Malays. Scholars have attributed this backwardness to the deep-rooted Islamic-based social and cultural values of the Malays.[102] These values, based on conservatism, happened to be diametrically opposed to radical change and innovation to adjust to environmental pressures, the criteria generally regarded as the Western standards of success.[103] In at-

101. For details, see Brien K. Parkinson, op. cit., pp. 31-46, and Michael Stenson, op. cit., pp. 45-54.

102. Ibid.

103. B. Parkinson, op.cit.,p.43 In comparing the value systems of the Malays with those of the Chinese, he stated that because they possessed different cultures, attitudes, values and motivations, both Chinese and Malays maximised different things. Neither one was necessarily superior to the other, but the maximizing postulates of the Chinese were likely to lead to economic development in the Western sense than the maximizing postulates of the Malays.

tempting to analyze these values, Parkinson has maintained that the Malays were not only not intolerant of radical changes to the status quo of the structure of their society, but actually discouraged such changes.[104] He added that the Malays would only accept any new ideas or methods on the condition that old existing ideas and methods, to which they were familiar, would not be discarded irrespective of whether they had become outmoded or not.[105] Parkinson's analysis revealed the basic Malay attitude of a liking for the familiar and a fear of the unfamiliar. His analysis was corroborated by the S.M.P.(Mid-Term Review)contention that the low incomes of Malay peasants had been attributed to uneconomic-sized holdings, agronomically poor or unsuitable plots of cultivation, traditional methods of farming and lack of access to modern agricultural inputs.[106] To aggravate this poverty, Malay cultural and social customs further decreed that they had to spend lavishly on festive occasions. This meant spending beyond their means, which led them to borrow extensively and thus caused indebtedness. As a result, they either had their land diminished in size, fragmented, foreclosed or sold to stave off financial difficulties. Since these practices in most cases involved the Malay landlords(who were U.M.N.O. members) as the other party who appeared to benefit, the latter were very vulnerable to charges of exploitation whether they were guilty or not. Another cause of peasant poverty, attributable to the government and the landlords, appeared to be high land taxes, and in the case of tenant farmers, heavy exactions in the form of their produce.[107]

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid.

106. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 79.

107. See P.S.R.M. document,Plight of Federal Land Development Authority Settlers in Malaya, Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol. III, 1973, p. 369.

U.M.N.O. as the party in power had attempted to solve the problem of poverty among the peasants in such a manner as to ensure that the status quo was not ruffled as far as possible, and also that its power base among the landlords was not threatened.[108] Being traditional and conservative themselves, U.M.N.O. leaders ~~tend~~ tended to adopt ideas and methods that were expansionary rather than reformationary and revolutionary.[109] They believed that the Malay peasant was basically conservative and more concerned with short-term benefits and the symbolic and psychological assurances from special privileges with regard to preferential land development policies.[110] Hence U.M.N.O.'s solution appeared to be double-cropping, agricultural extension programmes, agriculture credits, subsidized fertilisers, free seedlings, farm implements, improved market outlets for produce, co-operatives, etc., in the case of owner-farmers whose crop yields were low. In the case of landless peasants, U.M.N.O. advocated their re-settlement in land schemes such as FELDA, where the peasants would engage in the cultivation of more lucrative crops such as palm oil, pineapple and high yield rice.[111] U.M.N.O.'s policies tend to re-inforce and strengthen the traditional and conservative Islamic-based social and cultural values of the Malays. Even the underlying philosophy behind its Mental Revolution was not meant to involve radical changes that would upset the whole gamut of Islamic traditions. Rather it

108. In relation to this, Professor Esman stated that"...none of the traditional institutions of Malay society are to be impaired in this process. The authority, privileges and status of the traditional rulers who are far from exemplars of modern achieving man, are to be fully respected. The conservative and ritualistic form of Islam in Malaysia is to be protected and encouraged. The Malay, particularly the peasant, is to be made more efficient and more productive within the existing social system. The revolution(silent)...will be orderly and controlled from above. There will be no social revolution and no change in the power structure". Milton J. Esman, Administration and Development in Malaysia: Institution Building and Reform in a Plural Society, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1972, op.cit pp. 54-5.

109. Michael Stenson, op. cit., p. 49.

110. Gordon P. Means, op. cit., p. 51.

111. Ibid.

was tailored to strengthen the status quo in which its power base was firmly entrenched.

Given its strong opposition to the government, the D.A.P. was understandably disinclined to accept the precarious position U.M.N.O. was in, having to deal with the poverty of peasants, partly caused by the traditional Islamic-based Malay social and cultural values, and the necessity of maintaining its power base, which if eroded, would lead, in its view, to instability in the country. The D.A.P. intended to show that landlessness, the major cause of peasant poverty, was caused by the exploitative tendencies of Malay landlords in U.M.N.O. This strategy was not a new one; as early as 1966, Lim Kit Siang, in his capacity as the then Organising Secretary of the party, had attacked U.M.N.O. landlords for allegedly exploiting tenant padi farmers of their labour.[112] The D.A.P. now felt that its earlier criticisms regarding exploitation by landlords, had been vindicated by subsequent events, such as the defiance of the peasant leader, Hamid Tuah to seize state land without permission for cultivation, the eviction of Tasek Utara squatters in Johore Baru, the hunger march in Baling and the demonstrations of Malay students against the government.[113] Whatever the underlying assumptions behind these incidents, the D.A.P. believed them to be associated with peasant poverty, and by implication, exploitation by U.M.N.O.-backed landlords.

112. See Lim Kit Siang,"Revolution Betrayed", Who Lives if Malaysia Dies? D.A.P.'s Case for a Multi-racial Society, D.A.P., Petaling Jaya, 1969, pp. 170-4. See also the Alliance's reply,"A Rocket for the (D.A.P.)Rocket", Suara Malaysia,Vol. II No. 53, 29th December, 1966.

113. Hamid Tuah was detained under the I.S.A. for illegally seizing government land at Telok Gong in Selangor in September 1969. For details of the eviction of squatters in Tasek Utara, see article,"Cutting short the life of a village", Far Eastern Economic Review, 4th October, 1974. For details of the Baling hunger march and the student demonstrations, see Denzil Peiris,"The Emerging Rural Revolution", F.E.E.R., 10th January, 1975 and "Student Rumbles", F.E.E.R., 13th December, 1974.

Regarding the measures meted out by the government to improve the crop yields of owner-farmers, such as double-cropping, agricultural extension programmes, agriculture credits, subsidized fertilisers, free seedlings, farm implements, improved market outlets for produce, co-operatives, etc., the D.A.P. doubted very much that these benefits would actually go to the poor owner-farmers concerned as originally intended. It alleged that the financially superior and influential landlords with connections to U.M.N.O. would in one way or another, procure these benefits for themselves by way of unfair competition, thus denying them to the poor owner-farmers.[114] Without access to these facilities, it was hardly surprising to the D.A.P. that the already small and uneconomic pieces of land belonging to the owner-farmers showed any improvement with respect to better and higher crop yields. Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. rationalised that the forced fragmentation, foreclosure and sale of their land was inevitable. As for the tenant-farmers, the D.A.P. maintained that they were forced to terminate their tenancies on their failure to pay the heavy rents exacted in the form of their produce. It added that double-cropping was likely to cost the tenant-farmers the loss of their tenancies and push them further into poverty and indebtedness.[115] Lim Kit Siang cited the case of the Muda Irrigation Scheme(Kedah) where with regard to double-cropping of the rice yields, landlords preferred to pool their resources, bought modern machinery, hired farm hands and thereby dispensed with the tenant-farmers.[116]

Turning to the FELDA schemes for the re-settlement of landless peasants in new agricultural land where they would cultivate cash crops such as palm oil, pineapple and high yield rice to raise their incomes, the party's intention was to show that they were just other surreptitious means of exploitation of the labour of the peasants.[117] The government's main objec-

114. Lim Kit Siang, op.cit., p. 61.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid.
117. Ibid, pp. 57-61.

tive of the FELDA schemes was to provide land and the costs of resettling peasants in a new agricultural environment. The costs would be recouped by monthly deductions from the incomes of the settlers through the sale of the cash crops they had cultivated. The government would also provide facilities to market the produce of the peasants and also to meet their daily necessities. Its intention behind the FELDA schemes was to create a new breed of farmers who would not be so much subjected to poverty as the ordinary rice cultivator and rubber small-holder, both of whom were affected by seasonal changes amd price fluctuations of an international market. The D.A.P. alleged that the government had deliberately suppressed the conditions of the FELDA schemes that prospective settlers must fulfil as their part of the bargain while at the same time publicising the benefits to be derived. It held that these conditions when properly examined, would reveal that the prospective settlers would not be having such a good deal as they were made to expect by the government. In trying to show that these conditions in fact worked to the disadvantage of the settlers, the D.A.P. alleged that the government had exploited the peasants after deceiving them by vague promises. The D.A.P.'s allegations were corroborated to a large extent by the P.S.R.M., the former Malay wing of the defunct S.F.[118] The P.S.R.M.'s leaders, Syed Husin Ali and Kassim Ahmad, were well-known Malay intellectuals with leftist tendencies, bitterly opposed to the capitalist policies of the government.[119] The P.S.R.M. claimed to have significant support from Malay

118. See P.S.R.M. document, Plight of Federal Land Development Authority Settlers in Malaya, Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol. III, 1973, pp. 367-71, for full details.

119. Both Syed Husin Ali and Kassim Ahmad are at present detained under the I.S.A. The former was detained in 1974 following the eviction of Tasek Utara squatters and the hunger march by peasants in Baling. The latter was detained in 1976 with other politicians from both the government and the opposition following the confession of Samad Ismail in relation to C.U.F. activities.

university students who took an active part in opposing government actions over the detention of Hamid Tuah under the I.S.A., the eviction of squatters in Tasek Utara and the hunger march of peasants in Baling.

The D.A.P.'s main allegation regarding the FELDA schemes was the perpetual state of indebtedness that the government had brought upon the settlers through not making to them clearly the conditions of their re-settlement.[120] In concurring with the P.S.R.M., the D.A.P. held that the government had taken advantage of the eagerness of the peasants to participate in the schemes owing to their being landless for a long time. On accepting the conditions of participation, it was held that the settler family was given a loan of $15,000 to $25,000.[121] This was to meet the costs of re-settlement and incidental expenses prior to the scheme becoming fully operational when the settlers could harvest their crops. The settler family was given to understand that the loan would have to be repaid by deductions from their monthly income from the sale of the crops, estimated to be between $300 and $400, when the scheme became fully operational.[122] In the intervening period, the settler would be given a monthly allowance of $70 to meet his daily needs in respect of food, etc., and also to pay the compulsory developmental tax and co-operative dues.[123] Both the D.A.P. and the P.S.R.M. claimed that the settlers were deceived into believing that once the loan was repaid, they could keep the whole portion of their monthly income and also that they could own the land on which they farmed. The

120. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 58.

121. P.S.R.M., Plight of the Federal Land Development Settlers in Malaya, p. 367.

122. Ibid.

123. Ibid.

D.A.P. and P.S.R.M. further accused the government of not distinguishing between an allowance and an income to the simple peasants. Thus it was held that when the schemes became fully operational and the settlers were in fact earning between $300 and $400 per month as envisaged, their take-home income continued to be limited to $70 monthly, much to their frustration. The government, it was alleged, could determine the actual income due to the settlers because it was virtually in charge of marketing their produce and providing them with the basic necessities such as food, etc. The D.A.P. thus claimed that irrespective of how much the settler earned, the government could always manipulate the figures in such a way that his monthly income would be limited to only $70. The government was also accused of not revealing the rate of interest charged on the loan.[124] In the absence of this, the D.A.P. suggested that they were higher than the normal rates charged. The absence of an up-to-date statement of the debts of the settlers was interpreted by the D.A.P. as the government's intention to keep them permanently in debt. Thus the D.A.P. held that the major part of the income of the settlers in fact went to the government who was making use of their cheap labour to enrich itself. To aggravate the plight of the settlers, both the D.A.P. and the P.S.R.M. claimed that purchases from the government in respect of necessities like food, etc., were at higher costs than those normally charged, and that the settlers were not entitled to any labour benefits like pensions, paid holidays, injury benefits, sick or hospital benefits.[125] The real beneficiaries of the FELDA schemes, according to the D.A.P., were the middlemen and contractors who supplied the facilities for the projects.

124. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 58.

125. P.S.R.M., Plight of the Federal Land Development Settlers in Malaya, p. 368.

Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. held that the government was actually aggravating the poverty of the peasants instead of eradicating it through the FELDA schemes. FELDA was not the solution to the problem of landlessness among the peasants, since too many restrictive conditions were imposed on them, which in the long run, worked to their disadvantage. Also the high incomes and the eventual ownership of the land which they had been made to expect often did not materialize.

Having criticised the government freely on the alleged exploitation of the poor peasants, the D.A.P. attempted to make its own suggestions as towards a solution of the problem as attractive as possible to the peasants concerned. The D.A.P. argued that if the government was sincere in solving the problem of landlessness among the peasants, it should give land freely to the peasants with the only condition that they cultivated it.[126] In this way, the party held that only bona fide landless peasants (not absentee landlords) should be allowed to till the land given to them.[127] To remove the root causes of poverty among peasants, which the D.A.P. had blamed the government for deliberately avoiding, the party suggested that the government should institute radical and structural agrarian reforms.[128] This particular suggestion was not a new one, having been advocated by Ahmad Boestamam in the early days of Malay nationalism in 1946.[129] The P.S.R.M. and the P.A.P. had also called for similar land reforms. The D.A.P.'s ra-

126. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 80.

127. This suggestion was made by Lee Lam Thye. See Ian Gill,"PERNAS Octopus: Facing Digestive Problems", Insight, April, 1979, p. 24.

128. For details of this, see Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., pp. 61,71-2, 80.

129. See Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, (1974) op. cit., p. 224. See also similar calls by Anwar Ibrahim, Asiaweek, 24th August, 1979, and Dr. Chandra Muzaffar, New Straits Times, 29th October, 1979.

tionale behind agrarian reforms was to break the hold that the landlords allegedly had on the peasants, which had been responsible for the fragmentation, foreclosure and sale of land belonging to the owner-farmers. The D.A.P. called on the government to allocate land whose sizes were at least economically feasible to the peasants.[130] The government should also encourage the diversification of crops through double-cropping and even multiple cropping.[131] It should ensure that the peasant eventually owned the land he tilled and not be left to the mercy of vague regulations which served to perpetuate his indebtedness. The marketing of the produce of the peasants, credit facilities and co-operatives should also be prohibited from operating in such a way as to enable middlemen to exploit the peasants.

The D.A.P.'s suggestions to resolve the problem of landlessness among the peasants were designed to erode the power base of U.M.N.O. On the surface, the D.A.P.'s advocacy of agrarian reforms appeared reasonable in intending to increase the incomes of the peasants. What the D.A.P. carefully avoided and what U.M.N.O. certainly found precarious, were the difficulties brought about by a complex situation involving the social, cultural and religious values of the Malays. Agrarian reforms along radical and structural lines pierced through the very core of Islamic traditional conservatism. They would necessitate the conservative Malay peasants to discard outmoded values and adopt new ones. According to Parkinson's earlier analysis of how the Malays preferred the familiar and feared the unfamiliar, they were likely to reject these reforms if they felt that their religion and culture were compromised. Even the P.S.R.M. with its conspicuous Malay leadership had

130. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 80.

131. Ibid, p. 72.

found it difficult to convince the Malay peasants about the necessity of agrarian reforms. In the case of the D.A.P. with its predominant Chinese leadership, the task would be even more difficult. U.M.N.O. on its part feared that if any agrarian reforms were carried out, it would upset the feudal traditional monarchial system of government, symbolic of Malay sovereignty in the country, which it was trying so hard to preserve. A situation similar to the rise of the Communist Party of Indonesia before 1965 would be imminent if peasants were organized along the lines of class. But what U.M.N.O. feared even more was the erosion of its power base, a significant part of it being made up of the landlords. Whatever the defects of the status quo, such as the alleged exploitation in which much economic affluence was vested in the hands of the few landlords as against the alleged mass poverty of the peasants, they certainly upheld Malay tradition, culture and religion. Most important of all, according to U.M.N.O., they preserved its power base. On these grounds, U.M.N.O. considered agrarian reforms advocated by the D.A.P. as diametrically opposed to its vested interests. Knowing fully well that its suggestions would never be accepted by U.M.N.O., the D.A.P.'s intention was nevertheless to discredit the latter in the eyes of the peasants. The D.A.P. associated exploitative landlords with U.M.N.O.'s power base and attempted to make them unpopular to the peasants. In this way the peasants were indirectly drawn to resent U.M.N.O., their resentment being directly channelled towards the landlords. By calling for the removal of the landlords, the D.A.P. was implying that U.M.N.O. erode its own power base. This left U.M.N.O. in a precarious position, having to choose between preserving its power base and its credibility among the peasants. In the event U.M.N.O. was unlikely to adopt measures which would jeopardize its power base even if it meant that its credibility was impugned.

Corruption

The D.A.P.'s next move was to highlight the wealth acquired by the Malay elite and allude it to corruption. In this, it aimed to show that the wealth acquired by the Malay elite was disproportionate to their known sources of income as Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Mentri-mentri Besar, M.P.'s, state assemblymen and senior civil servants.[132] The material affluence of the Malay elite was manifested by politicians, senior bureaucrats and royalty holding several directorships in private companies, monopolising government contracts and new industries and acquiring shares.[133] The D.A.P. held that the wealth of the Malay elite was acquired by their domination of politics and the bureaucracy since almost all rich Malays were once political leaders or senior civil servants.[134] Lim Kit Siang alleged that these Malay politicians in power and civil servants were likely to make money out of their office and thereby were corrupted.[135] He cited several cases to show that the Malay elite had corruptly enriched itself itself through numerous opportunities in private and public investments crea-

132. See Parliamentary speeches,"Why N.B.I. must be an independent agency", pp. 38-42, and "Corruption in High Political Circles", pp. 43-9, Lim Kit Siang,op.cit. See also article,"Is Nepotism government backed?", Far Eastern Economic Review, 2nd September, 1977, for Lim Kit Siang's allegations.

133. Although there were no statistics of Malay millionaires, there was speculation that there were probably a few hundred Malay millionaires and about 50,000 Malays who constituted the rising Malay middle class in the bureaucracy, business, professions and the military. See Brewster Grace,"The Politics of Income Distribution", American Universities Field Staff Inc. Southeast Asian Series, Vol. XXIV No.9, September 1976, p. 5.

134. Article,"Is Nepotism government backed?", F.E.E.R., 2nd September, 1977.

135. Ibid.

ted by the N.E.P., under the pretext of restructuring society. MARA had built shop-houses in the towns for bona fide Malay traders in line with the N.E.P.'s objective of creating a Malay urban and industrial community. The D.A.P. alleged that U.M.N.O. members had instead acquired these shop-houses, not to trade, but to rent them out(in some cases to Chinese businessmen) at exhorbitant charges to make huge profits.[136] In Malacca, some 3,300 acres of state land which had originally been allocated to peasants to grow food crops by way of FELDA, were allegedly retracted and given to a Malay company, the Syarikat Sri Lingga Berhad, to develop into an oil palm estate.[137] According to Lim Kit Siang, the men behind the oil palm project were close associates of the Chief Minister of Malacca. Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. alleged that the Malacca Chief Minister was corrupted in engaging in secret business deals with private companies at public expense. Other cases of corruption through the use of political power alleged by the D.A.P. were the alienation of 1,000 acres of oil palm land in Hutan Melintang(Perak) worth some $100,000 to a P.P.P. state assemblyman in 1973 when the P.P.P. joined the N.F.coalition(see Ch.III), a newspaper editor who became a millionaire after becoming Chief Minister of a state and investing $1.5 million in a newspaper in Singapore, and another Chief Minister who paid $200,000 annual premiums for an insurance policy worth $5 million.[138] The D.A.P. alleged further that corruption was also through mismanagement and failure to follow the principle of public accountability with regard to public enterprises. Lim Kit Siang cited the case of the mismanage-

136. See Parliamentary speech,"Security and Development", Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 162.

137. See Parliamentary speech,"The Weakened Ringgit", Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 138.

138. Ibid, p. 45. In the latter 2 cases, Kit Siang was probably referring to Donald Stephens and Tun Mustapha, former Chief Ministers of Sabah.

ment of Bank Rakyat in which privileged Malays had unscrupulously enriched themselves through excessive loans to engage in land purchases or business deals.[139] The non-payment of these loans at the time the white paper on Bank Rakyat was tabled in Parliament would have liquidated the bank if not for government intervention at the last minute.[140]

In citing the many cases of corruption, the D.A.P. attempted to show that it had been indirectly encouraged(or at least not discouraged)by the government's failure to check the abuse and misuse of special privileges and also exploitation through vast opportunities for the Malays provided by the N.E.P. The D.A.P. depicted corruption as a social evil, with most of its victims being the poor Malays since they were supposed to be the beneficiaries of the N.E.P.'s vast opportunities.[141] Lim Kit Siang claimed that corruption had deviated from the aims of the N.E.P. in this aspect. The D.A.P. believed that the government, despite the incorruptibility of the Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, did not appear serious in checking the incidence of corruption in high political circles. This was manifested in either the reluctance or inability of the National Bureau of Investigations(N.B.I.)to crack down on corruption among government politicians in spite of wide publicity to the contrary.[142] As a result, the D.A.P. claimed that the public had alluded corruption to being a norm of the government with bureaucrats in the lower rungs of the hierarchy following the example of their superiors.[143]

139. For full details, see K. Das,"Calling Debtors to account", Far Eastern Economic Review, 13th July, 1979. Bank Rakyat's sources of funds were built up from the income of poor fishermen and farmers. About 6,520 people had borrowed amounts ranging from $1,000 to $1 million. More than 2,000 loan defaulters had been served with notices to recover nearly $25 million. Op. cit.

140. For details of the white paper on Bank Rakyat, see Malaysia, August 1979.

141. See "Kit Siang on the N.E.P. saboteurs", ibid.

142. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 45. 143. Ibid, p. 46

The D.A.P. appeared more interested to highlight the fact that the government was likely to take action against corruption only to the extent that its power base was threatened. This was evident in the case against Dato Harun, the former Mentri Besar of Selangor, who had several charges of corruption involving millions of dollars in several deals levelled against him in 1976.[144] The D.A.P. held that it was common knowledge to the public that Dato Harun threatened the power base of the late Prime Minister, Tun Razak, and was quietly persuaded to accept the post of Malaysia's permanent representative at the United Nations. Had Dato Harun accepted Tun Razak's offer, the D.A.P. maintained that the corruption charges might not have been made or quietly dropped. The party added that this had explained why politicians who toed the government's line obediently and assiduously had no fear of being charged with corruption.[145] In fact the D.A.P. held that the government would even go to the extent of shielding its staunch supporters and members from corruption charges. Lim Kit Siang cited the case of several open letters in circulation in 1975, accusing Abdullah Ahmad, the former Political Secretary to Tun Razak, of being a millionaire in acquiring wealth not proportionate to his known sources of income and demanding an investigation by the N.B.I.[146] Kit Siang alleged that the Home Affairs Ministry, far from instituting an investigation by the N.B.I., had in fact banned the circulation of the open letters under the I.S.A. on the grounds that they were subversive.[147]

144. The case against Dato Harun began in early 1974 when the late Prime Minister, Tun Razak, ordered the N.B.I. to look into allegations of corruption in the Banggi Timber concession deal involving the former Mentri Besar, by students of the National University. Datuk Hussein continued the case after Tun Razak died in early 1976. See R.S.Milne and D.K.Mauzy, op.cit.,pp.205-7. Dato Harun was eventually found guilty and jailed for a total of 6 years.

145. For details, see Fan Yew Teng,"Malaysia: Growing Insurgency and Increasing Repression", Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol. VI, 1976, pp. 371-5.

146. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. 40. 147. Ibid.

The D.A.P. added that the government also did not take action against Tun Mustapha, although it was evident that the ex-Chief Minister of Sabah was corrupted, a fact he did not deny.[148] This was because Tun Mustapha had countered a BERJAYA suggestion that the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the alleged corrupt practices of his government with the demand that such an inquiry should have its scope broadened to cover the whole of Malaysia.[149] In calling for the N.B.I. to be made accountable to Parliament rather than merely to the Prime Minister's department, the D.A.P. charged that it was being used as a political weapon to strike down the Prime Minister's opponents or protect its own disciples, instead of it being used to conduct impartial investigations on all alleged corruption cases.

The D.A.P.'s charges that the government had indirectly condoned corruption where its own power base was not threatened could be corroborated by previous incidents, the allegations by Malay intellectuals and even the implementation of some of its legislations, especially with regard to share ownership. In the early 1960s, government funds were used to pay the legal costs of a minister after he had unsuccessfully sued an opposition M.P. for libel and slander.[150] In that suit, the P.P.P. leader, D.R.Seenivasagam, had accused the then Minister of Education, Rahman Talib, of corruption.[151] Syed Hussein Alatas had at various stages alleged that certain U.M.N.O. leaders were corrupted, a fact that Musa Hitam did not directly deny, but attempted

148. Ibid, p. 46. 149. Ibid.

150. See Mahathir b. Mohamad, The Malay Dilemma, Asia Pacific Press, Singapore, 1970, Ch. I.

151. For details, see Karl Von Vorys, Democracy without Consensus, Communalism and Political Stability in Malaysia, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1975, pp. 183-8.

to explain away that it was the privilege of the party in power, as in the case of many countries, to procure facilities to enable the party to discharge its mandate effectively to the people.[152] Similarly, Anwar Ibrahim had stated that Datuk Huessein Onn's reputation as an incorruptible politician would only be meaningful if he started to weed out the corrupted members of his own cabinet first before dealing with other allegedly corrupted cases.[153] The D.A.P. concluded that corruption was becoming increasingly rampant and more open, inspired by greed. For instance, it was alleged that U.M.N.O. members had taken advantage of the new ruling in the Securities Investment Act and the I.C.A. in respect of share quotas for Malays to enrich themselves excessively.[154] Two big private companies, the East Asiatic Company and the Kuala Lumpur Kepong, had "as a gesture of goodwill towards the bumiputra people" issued to U.M.N.O. members and other influential Malays, shares at prices far below those currently quoted on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange.[155] As these two companies were established, the prices of their shares naturally rose, thereby creating substantial profits(more than $70 million) for the holders. The government, on its part, tried to rationalise in its reaction to the allegations of corruption. The typical U.M.N.O. justification was that the Malays(as represented by its members)were showing signs of success at striving for the N.E.P.'s 30% Malay ownership target by 1990. Among the

152. See Yong Mun Cheong ed., op. cit., p. 153.

153. See interview with Anwar Ibrahim, Asiaweek, 24th August, 1979, pp. 30-1.

154. For full details, see Guy Sacerdoti and Paul Wilson,"Stockmarket Spoils for Sons of the Soil", Far Eastern Economic Review, 6th October, 1978, pp. 72-4, and article,"Alleged Discrimination in Malaysian Share Issues", Asia Research Bulletin, Vol. VIII No. 6, November 1978.

155. Guy Sacerdoti and Paul Wilson, op. cit. A broker in Kuala Lumpur, however, denied that the low-priced shares issued were a gesture of goodwill. He claimed that both the companies concerned were indirectly ordered by the government to do so.

moderates, there were attempts to explain away a situation in which corruption was alleged to the detriment of the poor Malays. While there was a willingness to concede that a difference existed between what was intended and what had actually been implemented, U.M.N.O. denied that the N.E.P.'s aims were being deviated, as alleged by the D.A.P. Dr. Mahathir stated that economic privilege was not being translated into political advantage for U.M.N.O.[156] He justified the allocation of N.E.P.-created opportunities to U.M.N.O. members since they too were Malays. Dr. Mahathir did not make a point-by-point reply to the D.A.P. regarding the numerous charges of corruption, but stressed that the backwardness of the Malay peasants, the alleged victims of corruption, was their incapability to absorb government aid and to utilize it properly. As for the issue of shares, he contended that the best way to keep them within the hands of the Malays was to give them to those Malays capable of retaining them, i.e. the already successful Malay businessmen, who were likely to be U.M.N.O. members. If, as he suggested, shares were given to the poor Malay peasant unfamiliar with the mechanics of how their prices moved, he might be used by others(presumably Chinese businessmen)by financing him and using his name, so that although the poor Malay peasant might make a small fortune, he would not ultimately hold the shares. What the government did not explain, and what appeared to be the rationale behind its indirect condonation of corruption, was to pacify the extremists who had massive support at grass-roots level.[157] Granted that

156. See interviews with Dr. Mahathir, Malaysian Business, March 1979 and Far Eastern Economic Review, 13th April, 1979.

157. See article,"Is Nepotism government backed?", Far Eastern Economic Review,2nd September,1977. A U.M.N.O. backbencher from Ulu Trengganu, in referring to the fears expressed by the D.A.P. that the N.E.P. had created Malay millionaires rather than helping the poor Malays, was reported to have said in Parliament that the creation of Malay millionaires was justifiable on the grounds that there were non-Malay millionaires. He held that the more Malay millionaires the N.E.P. created, the greater its success would be.

they were responsible for the 1969 racial riot and the economic nationalism behind the N.E.P., the inclination of the top U.M.N.O. leadership to overlook these allegations of corruption among them was regarded as the necessary price to pay to maintain stability within the party.

In retrospect, the D.A.P. attempted to show that exploitation and corruption were linked to special privileges. In fact it suggested that they were the manifestations of the excessive abuse and misuse of special privileges. The D.A.P. went out of its way to depict the poor Malays as the victims and the U.M.N.O. elite as the oppressors by citing numerous incidents of alleged exploitation and corruption by U.M.N.O., some of which were corroborated by the anti-U.M.N.O. Malay intellectuals. By suggesting that the allegedly U.M.N.O.-perpetrated exploitative and corrupted practices were contrary to the aims of the N.E.P., the D.A.P. hoped to convince the poor Malays that poverty, their main problem, was due to class expolitation rather than racial antagonisms, as U.M.N.O. was likely to advocate. The D.A.P.'s purpose in this aspect was to sell its doctrine of democratic socialism to the poor Malays to play down its conspicuous Chinese image.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion.

The D.A.P.'s post-1969 strategy of highlighting issues consequential on the government's policies did not depart significantly from its pre-1969 strategy, except that the overt "Malaysian Malaysia"call was played down, and its criticisms with regard to sensitive issues were couched in insinuations.[1] The usual style of the D.A.P. was to regard a particular standard or yardstick as an acceptable norm, and to point to the fact that government policies, either in principle or implementation, deviated from this norm. For instance, the party suggested that the Constitution was sacred and that the New Education Policy, stressing on Malay as the sole medium of instruction, thereby leading to the neglect of the other languages, had conflicted with Article 152(1) of the Constitution which guaranteed the use and sustenance of other languages. Having made this suggestion, the D.A.P. would then give its own proposals, which ignoring all the possible constraints and problems of a multi-racial society faced by the government, appeared to comply with the required standard. This implied a call to the government to modify its policies accordingly to comply with the D.A.P.-proposed acceptable norms. For instance, if the New Education Policy conflicted with the Constitution, then it should be amended to follow the latter. The D.A.P. then ensured that its criticisms of the government could be corroborated by well-known persons or bodies. It either echoed the arguments of the government's critics or placed its arguments in such a way that they could be identical with those of other critics. Thus criticisms of government exploitation of poor Malays and corruption were vindicated by

1. The D.A.P. also assumed for itself the role of a watchdog by highlighting other issues in relation to government inefficiency, which it criticised freely and openly. See for instance, Lim Kit Siang's criticisms of the inefficiency of the immigration department in issuing passports, Far Eastern Economic Review, 7th September, 1979.

Professor Syed Hussein Alatas' criticisms of the S.M.P. Similarly it echoed the A.C.C.C.I.'s and the Bar Council's condemnation of the I.C.A. and the E.S.R. respectively. It also justified its criticisms of the I.C.A.'s implementation by referring to Tunku Abdul Rahman's displeasure towards it. The D.A.P. followed the government with regard to claims for national solutions to communal problems, but from the opposite end of the spectrum. Just as the government stressed that Malay problems were national problems, the D.A.P. similarly argued that non-Malay problems also qualified as national problems, thereby meriting national rather than sectional solutions. By adopting the above-mentioned measures, the D.A.P. was boosting its image as a fearless, principled party while at the same time denigrating that of the government.

The D.A.P.'s strategy must be viewed within the context of its perception of national unity in Malaysia as interpreted by the government. The government's approach to national unity was based on historical grounds, that Malaysia was first and foremost, a Malay country. The Malays were the indigenous or definitive peoples. The National Language, special privileges, the sovereignty of the rulers and Islam as the official religion were imperative. After the 1971 Constitutional Amendment Bill, they were firmly entrenched in the Constitution and could not be questioned any more. U.M.N.O. believed that racial discrimination in favour of the Malays was necessary to correct the adverse legacies of British colonial rule: while the country as a whole prospered through economic development, the Malays as a race became economically backward compared to the Chinese and Indians who had worked hard to acquire their wealth. The D.A.P. rejected the government's approach to national unity based on history as impracticable, on the grounds that Malaysia, unlike the other adjacent countries of Southeast Asia(where the Chinese were a minority) was a multi-racial country with the Malays forming

barely half of the total population.[2] Its main contention was that the equally numerous non-Malays, who had as much right to regard Malaysia as their homeland by virtue of their birth in the country, should not be treated as second-class citizens.[3] The D.A.P. held that the post-1969 policies of the government, far from resolving the longstanding political, economic, social, cultural and educational problems, had in fact made them more acute and complex. As a result, several "time bombs" with the potential for bigger May 13 racial riots had been created. To simplify a complex situation, the D.A.P. re-classified the above-mentioned problems into time bombs of race and class. As regards the first, it maintained that the government's division of the people into "bumiputras" and "non-bumiputras" and then openly discriminating in favour of the former at the latter's expense, made them more conscious of their race(Malays, Chinese, Indians, etc.,) rather than their nationality (Malaysian). An even bigger and more serious problem was the mutual antagonism which appeared to be gaining momentum between the races, with the non-Malays increasingly growing resentful towards the government-created privileged bumiputras and the Malays being quick to feel offended by the unjustifiable resentment of the "immigrant races". In the second case, the party claimed that special privileges and the N.E.P. had created a rising Malay

2. The population of Malaysia(1970) was as follows:

Malays	4,859,716	47.1
Chinese	3,495,977	33.9
Indians	933,250	9.0
Ibans	357,202	3.5
Kadazans	183,574	1.8
Other Borneo Natives	337,758	3.3
Others	151,847	1.4
Total	10,319,324	100.0%

Source: Goh Cheng Teik, Integration in a Plural Society: The Chinese in Malaysia, The Straits Echo Press, Penang, 1978, p. 19.

3. The percentage of local-born Chinese in Malaysia had been steadily increasing from 31.2% in 1931, 62.5% in 1947, 74.5% in 1957, 86.9% in 1970 to virtually 100% in 1977 in the case of those aged 35 years and below. Goh Cheng Teik, op. cit., p. 21. The situation of the Indians and other races could be assumed to be broadly similar.

middle class comprising of the already rich and privileged in U.M.N.O. growing richer while the majority of the rural Malays remained as poor and backward as ever.[4] Thus the D.A.P. concluded that although the country had been independent since 1957, the government was still not working towards national unity. Instead it had aggravated racial and created class polarization to consolidate its power base on a communal basis and to preserve its capitalist class interests. National unity, according to the D.A.P., should be the integration of all races - Malays, Chinese, Indians and others - into a single Malaysian nation, placing nationality ahead of ethnicity as in the case of Switzerland or Singapore. Political equality should be accorded to the non-Malays while special privileges should be properly utilized to uplift the Malays economically in general to bring them at par with the non-Malays. Non-Malay culture should also be accepted as part of national culture. While accepting Malay as the national language, the D.A.P. called for iron-clad guarantees that the use and sustenance of the Chinese, Tamil and English languages should not be rendered sterile, especially in education.[5] Although the D.A.P. conceded that there were great difficulties in the task of creating national unity in view of the apparently irreconciliable differences between the races, it nevertheless charged that the government's policies were in the wrong direction altogether.[6] It therefore saw its task as to arrest the slide towards racial and class divisiveness, for which it held the government responsible.

4. For details of the rising Malay middle class, see article,"Sons of the Soil: Outgrowing their proverbs - the Bumis can do it", Far Eastern Economic Review, 2nd September, 1977. Fadzlan Yahaya, Chairman of the D.A.P.'s Rural Development Bureau, claimed that a bumiputra economic convention at the National University in 1977 put the poverty rate among the rural Malays as high as 83%. Asiaweek, 18th January, 1980.

5. For details, see Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., pp. xviii-xix.

6. See interview with Lee Lam Thye, Malaysian Business, September 1978 and Personality Profile on Lim Kit Siang, Malaysian Business, December 1979. See also Lam Thye's press statement, New Straits Times, 26th March, 1979.

The D.A.P. was not so naive as to believe that its consistent articulation of the defects of the government's policies would lead to their abrogation. With only 16 M.P.'s out of a total of 154, it was aware that whatever motions it sought to introduce to challenge the government would be defeated. Therefore the D.A.P.'s strategy, manifested by image-destruction of the government and image-building of itself, aimed more at drawing the government's attention to the unsavoury aspects of its policies. By harping consistently on certain issues and stressing their gravity, sometimes to the point of exaggeration, the D.A.P. hoped that the government would be made to review its policies; it would either have to retract those which were unjustifiable, make their implementation less harsh, or come up with acceptable alternative solutions.[7] Manifestations of this were the D.A.P.'s severe criticisms on the S.M.P., the I.C.A. and the government's rejection of the Merdeka University proposal. The S.M.P., reflecting the zeal of U.M.N.O. Youth's economic nationalism, had in the D.A.P.'s view, completely ignored the aspirations and welfare of the non-Malays, despite its non-racial approach in principle. The D.A.P.'s criticisms, regarded as chauvinistic by U.M.N.O. Youth, were nevertheless quietly considered in the T.M.P. which acknowledged the poverty of some non-Malays and the necessity for remedial action among them. In relation to the I.C.A., the D.A.P.'s consistent calls for its complete repeal, reflecting the frustration of the Chinese business community, led to several amendments which lessened the harshness of its implementation. With regard to the Merdeka University proposal rejection, the D.A.P.'s criticisms highlighted not only the grave shortage of local university places for qualified non-Malays, but also the apprehensions concerning Chinese language and culture. This led the government to allocate more places for non-Malay stu-

7. See Personality Profile on Lim Kit Siang, Malaysian Business, December 1979. He claimed that the D.A.P. had a good record in this area. Kit Siang also regarded power as the ability to prevent unacceptable government policies by consistently criticising the government.

dents in local university enrolment although non-Malay apprehensions over their language and culture have yet to be allayed. Provocative as they might appear to be, it would be fair to suggest that in the absence of the D.A.P.'s consistent criticisms and agitation, the government would be less inclined to take the appropriate remedial action to the problems of the non-Malays. This could be due to its belief that Malay problems were more urgent and its inclination to take for granted the fact that, as in the past, non-Malays appeared to resign themselves to their problems rather than to seek solutions which might antagonise the Malays. It could also be surmised that if the non-Malay partners in the N.F., the M.C.A. and the G.R.M., either remained unconcerned or helpless over the urgency of non-Malay problems, the D.A.P.'s criticisms certainly jolted them into action, if not for anything, at least to prevent their support from being eroded by the D.A.P.

The extent of democracy practised by the government seemed to determine the course of the D.A.P.'s post-1969 strategy. It could be suggested that had the country not reverted to Parliamentary rule in February 1971, restricted as it might seem to the D.A.P., the party's strategy would not have been allowed to exist after 1969, as in the period during N.O.C. rule. Despite the loud public protests of the D.A.P. that the government had made a mockery of democracy especially during the period of general elections, it could be surmised that privately, the party was inclined to accept the fact that the government under Datuk Hussein Onn, had done its best to uphold democracy within acceptable constraints.[8] This appeared to be a departure

8. In this, the D.A.P. charged the government with being intolerant of dissent and opposition, and working towards a one-party state. New Straits Times, 1st July, 1978. Kit Siang argued that it wanted to keep the facade of democracy but emptied of all its contents. Lim Kit Siang, op. cit., p. xii. Perhaps the D.A.P.'s most effective allegation of the government trying to undermine democracy was through political cartoons showing the party personified by Lim Kit Siang with his hands tied behind his back and mouth sealed being attacked by the government and

from its previous belief which was based on the adverse effects experienced by it, due to a series of government measures such as the ban on local council elections, the gerrymandering of constituencies to favour the Malay vote, the promulgation of the E.S.R. to strengthen the I.S.A. and the tight control of the mass media, to mention a few.[9] The D.A.P.'s apparent belief in the viability of democracy(within the constraints of Malaysia's multi-racial society) reflected its trust in the leadership of Datuk Hussein Onn. The party's confidence in the Prime Minister manifested its belief that Datuk Hussein, like his father, Dato Onn, the founder of the I.M.P., was sincerely dedicated to the achievement of a multi-racial Malaysia.[10] This confidence had been strengthened by the manner in which Datuk Hussein had been able to topple Malay extremist strongmen like Dato Harun(ex-Mentri Besar of Selangor) and Tun Mustapha(ex-Chief Minister of Sabah) without losing his support. Under these circumstances, the D.A.P. was encouraged to attempt to bring about change to effect its aims through peaceful and constitutional means.[11] These attempts, which at times tend to be too optimistic, envisaged long-term ex-

the mass media. Ibid, p. xxxxxii. This was during the campaign for the 1978 general elections.

9. For details on the ban on local council elections and the gerrymandering of constituencies, see Ch. III, sections (b) and (c). The newspapers, especially the English language New Straits Times and the Malay language Utusan Melayu, were extremely biased against the D.A.P. These government-controlled papers deliberately published news harmful to the D.A.P.'s morale, together with government attacks against the D.A.P. in their headlines and in the front pages. Often D.A.P. replies were blacked out, scantily treated in a few sentences and relegated to some obscure corners of the newspapers where they were likely to be missed. See John A. Lent,"Mass Media in Malaysia", Asian Profile, Vol. VI No. 2, April 1978, pp. 153-61.

10. Lim Kit Siang expressed the hope that just as Dato Onn had tried to bring non-Malays into U.M.N.O. prior to his formation of the I.M.P. in 1951, Datuk Hussein would ensure that the N.F. would become a genuinely multi-racial party.

11. Lim Kit Siang stated:"There may be those who say that the democratic process is a charade. They aren't exactly wrong given the experience of D.A.P. leaders. But at the end of it all you feel that so long as there is a chance to try the democratic peaceful process to bring about

pansion plans of the party to states where its influence and support were minimal or non-existent, e.g. Kelantan and Trengganu, and states where its support could be substantial if conditions were favourable to it, e.g. Sarawak and Sabah, with their large Chinese and non-Moslem indigenous peoples. As regards states where its influence was significant, the party even embarked on over-ambitious plans to take control of a state government, e.g. Penang.[12] The D.A.P. also never hesitated to repeat its call, especially at general or by-elections, of the need for a strong and articulate opposition to keep the government on its toes.[13]

To be fair to the D.A.P., the government's commitment to democracy was conditional on the strength of its power base. The aftermath of the 1969 general elections, which saw a marked reduction of U.M.N.O.'s strength in Parliament and the various state assemblies, resulted in the suspension of Parliamentary rule following the racial riots. Tun Razak had pledged that there would be no return to Parliamentary democracy unless the government could muster a two-thirds majority in Parliament. Since the Constitutional

change, one shouldn't miss the opportunity". See Barry Wain,"Determined Dissent: Opposition battles near-impossible odds in Malaysia Elections", The Asian Wall Street Journal, 7th July, 1978, op. cit.

12. For the D.A.P.'s expansion plans in Kelantan and Trengganu, see New Straits Times, 21st/22nd October, 1979 and 3rd March, 1980. The party had already opened up a branch in Kota Bahru, while plans were made to open up branches in Pasir Mas, Pasir Puteh, Tumpat(all in Kelantan) and Kuala Trengganu(Trengganu). The party was also encouraged to open up branches in Sarawak and Sabah following its sole electoral victory in the Parliamentary constituency of Sandakan. New Straits Times, 17th July, 1978. It however failed to win a single seat in the Sarawak state elections in September 1979. New Straits Times, various issues, September 1979. For the D.A.P.'s plans to control a state government, see New Straits Times, 4th June, 1979, to capture the Penang State government, see New Straits Times, 13th November, 1979.

13. This was especially evident at the campaign for the Port Klang Parliamentary by-election in late 1979, the call being made by Lee Lam Thye. See New Straits Times, 19th November, 1979.

Amendment Bill of 1971, U.M.N.O.'s representation in Parliament and the state assemblies had increased to the point that it did not feel threatened any longer. The N.E.P. and other pro-Malay policies, especially in relation to language, education and culture, had succeeded in winning the overwhelming support of the Malays as indicated by the 1974 and 1978 general elections which resulted in the decimation of U.M.N.O.'s traditional rival, P.A.S. U.M.N.O. also felt that the N.E.P.'s aims of creating a viable Malay commercial community and capitalist class were slowly being achieved.[14] With that the sense of political and economic security among the Malays seemed assured. U.M.N.O. could thus afford to give some semblance of political power to the non-Malays in the M.C.A., G.R.M. and M.I.C. As in the past, the status quo is enforced with the stratification of the country's political structure into a strong Malay core, enclosed by an outer layer of Malay, Chinese and Indian partnership which was extended to the Ibans and Kadazans.[15] This would pave the way for the government's approach to national unity based on conditional integration. In this process, the diverse cultural and social traits of all communities - the Malays, Chinese and Indians - would have free interplay, so that by mutually adjusting to one another, an end-product representing the best of the contributions from all communities and acceptable to all of them, would eventually emerge. This end-product would be the new Malaysian identity. However the principal condition in this process would be that integration assumed a "native"or Malay base with Islam, Malay language and Malay culture being dominant.[16] Thus what the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership

14. See interviews with Dr. Mahathir, Malaysian Business, March 1979, and Far Eastern Economic Review, 13th April, 1979.

15. See Wang Gungwu,"Malayan Nationalism", Royal Central Asian Journal, Parts 3 & 4, July-October 1962, pp. 317-28.

16. See Tun Razak's press statement, Straits Times, 16th May, 1972.

probably had in mind was the emergence of a new generation of Malaysians of all races, all speaking Malay as the first language and practising Malay customs in the same way that Europeans of all nationalities adopted the Anglo-Saxon cultural base and spoke the English language to become Americans, Australians or New Zealanders. An even ideal situation in this aspect to the U.M.N.O. leadership would be the adoption of the Islamic religion by the non-Malays. They could still retain their cultures and languages in the same way that non-Anglo-Saxon Europeans(e.g. the Greeks and Italians) retained theirs in the United States, Australia or New Zealand. Indeed they could even be allowed to develop and flourish to complement Malay culture provided they did not threaten its dominance in Malaysia. The advocacy of conditional integration reflected the compromising spirit of the moderate U.M.N.O leadership to concede the fact that although Malaysia is basically a Malay country, the other races also have their rightful place there so long as they do not challenge the supremacy of the Malays. The previous policy of assimilation (advocated when the Malays felt threatened as such) with its complete and unquestioning submergence to Malay culture(e.g. like the Negroes in America), is considered unfeasible in view of the large Chinese and Indian minorities and their deep-rooted cultures.[17] The U.M.N.O. moderates have come to realize that even in adjacent countries of Southeast Asia(where the Chinese minorities are smaller, and in the case of Thailand, certain similarities between the Thais and the Chinese, e.g. the Buddhist religion), assimilation has only

17. See Tun Razak's rejection of assimilation, ibid. The most common means to assimilation was a formal political link with Indonesia advocated by the Malay extremists in the 1960s, such as the Maphilindo concept. In this instance, the Chinese would be reduced to an insignificant minority. For the advocacy of assimilation, see Mahathir b. Mohamad, The Malay Dilemma, Asia Pacific Press, Singapore, 1970, pp. 98-102, K.J.Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1965, p. 29, and Gordon P. Means, Malaysian Politics, 2nd Ed., Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1976, p. 13.

been partially successful. The process of conditional integration is perhaps synonymous with the moderate U.M.N.O. leadership's belief that the development of a national identity, in the case of Malaysia with its numerous and deep cleavages between the races, can only come about through accommodation and a policy of give and take with more advantages to the Malays and more sacrifices on the part of the other races. Once the foundation of this stratification is laid, its consequent evolution through time would bring about what U.M.N.O. would consider a truly Malaysian identity. The obvious difficulty to this approach would be the drawing of the line between assimilation and conditional integration on the part of the non-Malays. At present, this line appears to be blurred. They tend to regard conditional integration as assimilation in view of the government's insistence on the supremacy of Malay culture, Malay language and the Islamic religion.[18] Government policies in relation to these suggested their non-negotiability under whatever circumstances. Also what could be considered the best product from the synthesis of the various cultures from the non-Malay point of view might not be acceptable to the Malays, and vice-versa. This has led the D.A.P. to suggest that as in the past, the government appeared to be working towards a Malay rather than a Malaysian Malaysia. U.M.N.O. nevertheless appeared optimistic about the success of conditional integration in nation building in the long run.[19] To counter the demands of the Chinese, it had to constantly remind

18. See for instance the U.T.M. convocation ceremony(Ch.IV, section(d)) in which the songkok was the mandatory attire for male students. The government's compromise in having the songkok modified with motifs and tassels could be regarded as a conditional integration measure, though in what way the motifs and tassels represented any semblance of non-Malay culture remained unclear.

19. Musa Hitam contended that emotional and psychological factors were the main obstacles to the non-Malays accepting Malay culture. He was convinced that through persuasion and education, non-Malays, especially the younger generation, could be won over. See Yong Mun Cheong ed., Trends in Malaysia(2), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1974, p. 142. See also interview with Musa Hitam, Malaysian Business, May 1980.

them that elsewhere in Southeast Asia(except Singapore), their lot would never be as good as it is in Malaysia. For instance, in Indonesia, they would have their property confiscated, forced to change their names and riots would be conducted against them. Thus if they are practical, they should accept conditional integration willingly and unquestioningly. Any changes to the status quo to effect a better deal for them would have to be incremental and conditional only on the Malays not having the feeling of being threatened.

The government's attitude towards the D.A.P is also determined by the extent of its strength. In the past, the government harrassed and prosecuted D.A.P. leaders. They were either charged with sedition as in the case of Fan Yew Teng and Oh Keng Seng, detained under the I.S.A. as in the case of Lim Kit Siang, Chan Kok Kit and Chian Heng Kai or charged with the leakage of official secrets as in the case of Lim Kit Siang and P. Patto.[20] These harrassments and prosecutions were at a time when the government was still consolidating its power base and needed to take no chances against all forms of potential threat or irritants. As the government appeared stronger, its harrassment and prosecutions of D.A.P. leaders were toned down as manifested by the reduction of Kit Siang's fines to enable him to continue to discharge his duties as a M.P. and state assemblyman.[21] The government's

20. Barry Wain, op. cit.

21. Lim Kit Siang was arrested in April 1978 and charged with 5 counts under the Official Secrets Act which carried a maximum of 31 years imprisonment for highlighting the purchase of 4 Swedish-made craft by the Royal Malaysian Navy and questioning their price and suitability, both inside and outside Parliament. Charged together with him was P.Patto, who, as editor, printed Kit Siang's accusations in the party's journal, "The Rocket". After a long trial, Kit Siang was found guilty and fined a total of $15,000 on all the charges. The D.A.P. viewed this as the government's attempt to cripple its leadership since Kit Siang was the party's main strategist in the 1978 general elections. Kit Siang subsequently appealed against the decision of the lower court to the Federal Court. His appeal against the sentence was dismissed, but his fines were reduced substantially from $15,000 to $6,500 on all charges. A cross appeal by the Public Prosecutor on the inadequacy of the sentence was dismissed. P. Patto was given a discharge not amounting to an acqui-

attitude towards the D.A.P. demonstrated its grudging recognition of the party's dedication to national unity on the one hand and deep resentment of its penchant for arousing Chinese emotions on the other. Firstly, the government was convinced that the D.A.P. was unlikely, perhaps unable, to pursue its struggle unconstitutionally, like the M.C.P or even the L.P.M. The D.A.P.'s leadership and rank and file were made up of the English and Chinese educated lower middle class who had no previous record of communist militancy. The government, especially Datuk Hussein Onn, probably felt that the D.A.P., despite its abrasive Chinese image, was performing a useful function as an opposition, constructive or otherwise, to keep it on its toes.[22] The plethora of problems on almost about every kind of issue affecting the public, highlighted by the D.A.P., especially Lim Kit Siang, indicated to the government that the party was concerned about the welfare of the people. D.A.P. elected representatives were in most cases, full-time politicians who were dedicated to their work.[23] Some,like Lim Kit Siang, had even given up well-paid, secure jobs to enter full-time politics. Further manifestations of the D.A.P.'s dedication were the willingness of its leaders to make personal sacrifices and endure harrassments and prosecutions. In contrast to

tal when the prosecution tended an amended charge against him following the reduction of Kit Siang's fines. He was however re-arrested a few days later to face the earlier charges. For details of Kit Siang's alleged leakage of official secrets, see his letter to the Far Eastern Economic Review, 24th September, 1976. His arrest, M.G.G.Pillai,"The Nabbing of Lim Kit Siang",Asiaweek, 5th May, 1978 and Mirror of Opinion, Highlights of Malay, Chinese and Tamil Press, Publicity Division, Ministry of Culture, Singapore, issues 93 & 96/1978. The 5 Official Secrets Act charges against him are published in Lim Kit Siang,op.cit.,p.xxxxxv. For a full account of his trial, see New Straits Times,various issues, October and November, 1978. For details of the reduction of his fines, see New Straits Times, 15th September, 1979. For details of P. Patto's discharge and re-arrest, see New Straits Times, 18th and 30th March, 1980.

22. For details, see Far Eastern Economic Review, 8th December, 1978.

23. Lim Kit Siang has been a full-time politician since 1966 when the D.A.P. was first registered. Lee Lam Thye stated that he joined politics not for personal gain but to make a firm political commitment towards the political process in the country and "help bring about a more just and equal society for all". New Straits Times, 12th July, 1978, op. cit.

the pre-1969 situation, D.A.P. leaders in many cases, had grown with experience, were less likely to rabble-rouse and likely to offer constructive criticisms in pointing out government inefficiencies in implementing policies, though the inclination to insinuate was not lost. In this aspect, the role of Lee Lam Thye, recently elevated to the Deputy Secretary-Generalship of the party, was very prominent.[24] As an elected representative, either at Parliamentary or state level, Lam Thye had discharged his duties very well and had maintained close rapport with the government, especially in relation to the hawkers, squatters and other dispossessed elements in the Federal Territory.[25] The government would more than anything else, however, regard the D.A.P. as a useful outlet where the frustrations of the Chinese community over its pro-Malay policies could be voiced constitutionally. As regards the second, the government considered the D.A.P. irresponsible in whipping up Chinese fears and dissatisfactions for political gain. Though Datuk Hussein Onn admitted that the D.A.P.'s arguments on behalf of the Chinese were sometimes justifiable, they were nevertheless not rational within the context of Malaysia's political environment in which the Malays perceived racial discrimination in their favour as corrective measures to the defects of British colonial rule where they had been placed at a disadvantage, economically, compared to the other races. In this aspect, Datuk Hussein chided the D.A.P. with being interested in scoring points among the Chinese rather than working towards national unity, which according to the government's implications, necessitated the Chinese-based political parties to discipline

24. Lam Thye was elected as one of the 2 Deputy Secretary-Generals of the D.A.P. at the party's 5th Triennial Conggress. New Straits Times, 17th December, 1979.

25. For details, see interview with Lam Thye, Malaysian Business, September 1978. He was even included in a Parliamentary delegation to London and Moscow(the only opposition M.P.) led by the Speaker in late September 1978. Ibid.

the Chinese on their need to make sacrifices in the overall interests of the nation, after explaining to them the rationale behind it.[26] The D.A.P.'s persistence to articulate non-Malay grievances consequent on the implementation of the government's policies was interpreted by Datuk Hussein as attempts to stir up Chinese dissatisfaction and thus undermine the M.C.A.'s and G.R.M.'s approach of continuous dialogue with U.M.N.O. in the spirit of give and take to effect acceptable solutions to all communities.[27] While the M.C.A. accused the D.A.P. of splitting Chinese unity, the G.R.M. warned that the D.A.P.'s provocative brand of politics would lead to inter-racial strife.[28] Apparently exasperated at the D.A.P.'s persistence to stir up Chinese dissatisfactions, Dr. Mahathir charged Kit Siang with being the "biggest obstacle" to national unity. The latter's indignant reply was to challenge the government to ban the party and put its leaders behind bars, and see if all the unresolved issues pertaining to race and class discrimination would simply disappear.[29] The government rationalized that it could afford to ignore the D.A.P.'s taunt, as it was in a strong position to control the party in view of its massive majority in Parliament and the State Assemblies and its tight control of the media. Whatever motions the D.A.P. proposed to challenge the government would be rejected. The government-controlled media would also ensure that the D.A.P.'s activities would not be fully publicised to deny it access

26. See interview with Datuk Hussein Onn, Far Eastern Economic Review, 26th January, 1979.

27. Ibid. Musa Hitam stated that the D.A.P. interpreted issues in isolation (and thus out of context)instead of from the whole general perspective. Malaysian Business, May, 1980. For the G.R.M.'s approach to national unity, see Goh Cheng Teik, op. cit., Ch. IV.

28. Goh Cheng Teik, op. cit., p. 34. See also press statement of Paul Leong, the Secretary-General of the G.R.M,, New Straits Times, 4th December, 1978 for the G.R.M.'s warning to this effect.

29. For details, see article,"Angry Words in Parliament", Asiaweek, 20th April, 1979 and Personality Profile on Lim Kit Siang, Malaysian Business, December 1979.

to putting its message across to the people. To U.M.N.O., the D.A.P. would always be a Chinese chauvinist party, just like its mentor, the P.A.P. The D.A.P. could sever its emotional links with the P.A.P., but U.M.N.O. felt that their policies would always be identical.[30] Being a party which had existed to fight solely for the rights of the Malays(beginning with the overthrow of the Malayan Union)since 1946, U.M.N.O. was convinced that the D.A.P.'s major policies, which opposed the very core of bumiputraism, would never be acceptable to the majority of the Malays. In the first place, the D.A.P.'s insistence that Malaysia is a multi-racial country in principle conflicted with the basic cardinal principle of the Malays that Malaysia is a Malay country. The intricacies of this basic conflict were manifested by the D.A.P.'s advocacy of multi-lingualism and an end to special privileges, which are considered anathema, even to moderate Malays. Thus no matter how hard the D.A.P. tried to preach multi-racialism, the Malays at large would always interpret it as another way of expressing Chinese chauvinism. At the present moment, they appeared politically and economically secure, and could thus afford to regard the D.A.P.'s challenge as mere pin-pricks at best. Unlike the P.A.P., the D.A.P. was likely to be a nuisance at its best rather than a threat. Compared to Lee Kuan Yew who could offer an alternative attractive government as in the case of Singapore, Lim Kit Siang could not hope to deliver the goods, although he had been highly critical of the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. of merely obtaining for the Chinese half a loaf. He could at best make constructive criticisms about the bad implementation of government policies or at worst, snipe harmlessly from the sidelines. Therefore U.M.N.O. could afford

30. At its 5th Triennial Conggress in December 1979, the D.A.P. adopted the unprecedented step of amending its constitutional objective of the re-unification of Singapore with Malaysia on equal terms to one of promoting goodwill among ASEAN countries. New Straits Times, 17th December, 1979. This marked the official severance of the D.A.P.'s emotional links with the P.A.P. which began with the return of Devan Nair to Singapore shortly before the 1969 general elections.

to allow the D.A.P. to carry on with its political activities under the present circumstances. However once the D.A.P. challenge appears to be a threat like the P.A.P. challenge in late 1964 and early 1965, or the significant non-Malay opposition electoral gains in the 1969 general elections, the chances are that the Malays would react emotionally and irrationally, to fight to the last if necessary, to ensure that Malaysia remains a Malay country at all times.

The D.A.P. was aware of its failure to win significant Malay support under the present circumstances, owing to its conspicuous abrasive Chinese image and the multi-racial(to the Malays, pro-Chinese)policies it advocated. Believing that its success as a genuinely multi-racial movement lay in having significant Malay support, the D.A.P. embarked on a long-term plan of mass recruitment of Malays to its ranks. Like the P.A.P., it gave up hope of winning over the Malays on a short-term basis to concentrate on making them respond to its ideology based on class and economics in the long run, though it would not know how long it would take them to respond positively and in significant numbers. Nevertheless it was determined to persist in this difficult task. The obvious answer appeared to be to convince the Malays that U.M.N.O.'s approach to resolving poverty(their main problem)was wrong and was bound to fail to the detriment of the poor Malays in the long run.[31] The party's task in this aspect was to assure the Malays that it had a sane and rational approach(i.e. democratic socialism)of tackling poverty effectively. In this it aimed for the rising Malay middle class and Malay intellectuals in the sense that these 2 groups were educated and could dis-

31. See interview with Fadzlan Yahaya, Asiaweek, 18th January, 1980, for more details.

cern the real causes of the economic backwardness of the Malays.[32] Moreover these 2 groups were highly respected by the masses and thus held much political influence over them.[33] The party had realized the futility of appealing directly to the Malay masses because of a communication gap. Firstly, it rationalized that rural Malays might not fully understand its advocacy of democratic socialism, and secondly, much time was lost and very little achieved in commuting within the vast rural areas. To ensure that its message would be receptive to the Malays, the D.A.P. had to play down the role of its conspicuous Chinese leadership and make its few Malay leaders the torchbearers. It thus elevated them to prominent positions in the party so as to give them as much publicity as possible to facilitate their task of recruiting significant numbers of Malays on the party's behalf, especially the middle class and the intellectuals.[34] The D.A.P.'s previous approach of merely issuing pamphlets and "The Rocket" on its ideology would be supplemented by the speeches of its Malay leaders, especially on the government's alleged failure to eradicate poverty among the Malays. By this it hoped to attract Malay intellectuals as a first step, who could in turn conduct "ceramahs" (or dialogue sessions) with the masses on the party's behalf, and thus enlighten them on its aims and objectives, which it felt, had been distorted by U.M.N.O.[35]

U.M.N.O. did not appear perturbed by the steps taken by the D.A.P. to challenge its power base. The sense of Malay communal solidarity, reinforced by religious exclusiveness and facilitated by the government's pro-

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Mohd. Zalleh Nakhoda Itam, the Perak state assemblyman for Guntong for 1974 and 1978, was elected one of the 2 Deputy Secretary-Generals of the party, giving him the same status as Lee Lam Thye. Fadzlan Yahaya, the unsuccessful D.A.P. candidate for the Perak state assembly in both the 1974 and 1978 general elections, was made the Chairman of the party's Rural Development Bureau. Asiaweek, 18th January, 1980.

35. Ibid.

Malay policies, was unlikely to be even dented. Given its bigotry that the D.A.P. would always be a Chinese chauvinist party, U.M.N.O. was skeptical of the latter's intention to recruit Malays in significant numbers to play down its conspicuous Chinese image and put up a multi-racial facade. Just as it had nominal non-Malay representation(by the D.A.P.'s standards)in the N.F., U.M.N.O. was inclined to charge that the few(by its own standards)Malays that the D.A.P. recruited to its leadership ranks would not be given important positions that would influence the party's policy-making significantly. Thus U.M.N.O. was not impressed by the elevation of the few Malay leaders into the D.A.P.'s C.E.C. on the grounds that the majority of the C.E.C.members were still Chinese.(See Appendix B). At best, U.M.N.O. rationalized that the D.A.P.'s efforts to recruit Malays into its ranks had negligible impact. In most cases, the Malays who joined the D.A.P. were disgruntled former U.M.N.O., P.A.S. or PEKEMAS members. According to one source, they did so for a variety of reasons, some personal.[36] It was quite common for former U.M.N.O./P.A.S. incumbents who were not selected for re-election to join the D.A.P. as a sign of protest to their own former parties, so that they could contest in their former constituencies under the D.A.P. banner. Once they lost in the elections, they usually left the party. Others might have joined the D.A.P. after being taken in by the party's propaganda that it was confident of taking control over certain states(e.g.Perak). They hoped that they would be appointed to top positions(e.g. Mentri Besar) should the party win control of a state government. Thus political opportunism appeared to be the main reason for the Malays to join the D.A.P. Owing to

36. See Ismail Kassim,"D.A.P.'s Elusive Goal in Perak", New Nation, 9th September, 1977. The writer held that the Malays concerned were "no hopers who ran over to the D.A.P. because they felt they were not making any headway up the U.M.N.O. or P.A.S. hierarchy". Op. cit.

the dearth of Malay members,(which was contrary to its claim) the D.A.P. could not afford to be discriminatory(as in the case of non-Malay members) in recruiting Malays. In one case, it even admitted an ex-U.M.N.O. member who allegedly absconded with Bank Rakyat loans.[37] This is not to suggest that all the Malays who joined the D.A.P. were political opportunists, lacking conviction in the party's principles. In fact some of its Malay leaders, either present or past, had shown themselves to be more loyal than some of its non-Malay leaders.[38] Their number is however small compared to the many who lacked conviction. Under these circumstances, U.M.N.O. dismissed the D.A.P.'s claims that it had penetrated certain U.M.N.O. strongholds as wistful thinking. U.M.N.O.'s assessment is vindicated by the fact that since the D.A.P.'s inception in 1966, it has yet to have a Malay M.P. or state assemblyman representing the Malay areas. The D.A.P.'s one or two Malay state assemblymen had been returned from Chinese rather than Malay-predominated constituencies.[39] If on the other hand they were elected from Malay predominated constituencies like in the case of the P.A.P.'s victories in the 1963 Singapore elections, then U.M.N.O. might have grounds to worry.[40] U.M.N.O. also felt that it could induce/threaten D.A.P. Malay members to resign/defect faster than the D.A.P. could recruit them, especially during

37. See K.Das,"Calling Debtors to account",Far Eastern Economic Review, 13th July, 1979. The person concerned, took up loans totalling $32,000 in 1970 and 1971 when he was a member of U.M.N.O. He joined the D.A.P. just before the 1978 general elections, but resigned after he lost his contest. He was then liable to repay $197,133.

38. Examples of present D.A.P. Malay leaders who appeared loyal to the party are Ibrahim Singgeh, Deputy Chairman, and Fadzlan Yahaya. Despite losing in the 1974 and 1978 general elections, both have not resigned from the party.

39. Mohd. Zalleh Nakhoda Itam,for instance, was elected from the Chinese-predominated state constituency of Guntong in Perak.

40. In the 1963 Singapore elections, the P.A.P. wrested the 3 former U.M.N.O. strongholds of Geylang Serai, Kampong Kembangan and Southern Islands.

general elections.[41] U.M.N.O.'s advantage in this was that it had the full support of the mass media to effect this, since it controlled it. Also prominent Malay D.A.P. leaders had been known to succumb to threats/inducements to resign from the party.[42] To aggravate this matter, the D.A.P.'s handling of certain issues in relation to the sensitivities of the Malays, have made it very vulnerable to Malay desertions from its already depleting Malay membership. Following the 1978 general elections, 6 D.A.P. non-Malay state assemblymen inadvertently missed the oath-taking ceremony in the Perak State Assembly, thus incurring the wrath of the Perak Sultan, who accused them of disloyalty under Malay custom.[43] The government-controlled press gave a biased coverage of the incident to discredit the D.A.P., especially among the Malays. D.A.P. leaders, particularly Lim Kit Siang, did their very best to salvage the situation by publicly apologizing to the sultan.[44] The inci-

41. For a sample of the numerous reports of D.A.P. resignations/defections, particularly among Malay members, see Straits Times, 3rd & 5th July, 1978, and Mirror of Opinion, Highlights of Malay, Chinese and Tamil Press, Publicity Division, Ministry of Culture, Singapore, issues 127, 128, 135, & 138/1978 respectively. In the latter publication, most of the defections were reported by Utusan Melayu.

42. A good example of this was Daing Ibrahim Othman. He had been one of the top D.A.P. Malay leaders(Vice-Chairman) and was with the party when it was still known as P.A.P.(Malaya). Daing's loyalty to the party appeared strong after he had unsuccessfully contested in a series of by-elections and general elections in Malay areas, particularly in Johore, his home state. Apparently in acknowledgement of his loyalty, the party put him up as a candidate in the Chinese-predominated constituency of Pasir Puteh in Perak against P.P.P. incumbent Foo Kuan Tze in the 1974 general elections. In a swing against the P.P.P., Daing won by a huge majority. In the 1978 general elections, Daing was however piqued at being transferred to contest in the relatively "unsafe" state seat of Chemor in Perak. This was to make way for Chian Heng Kai who was under detention, since Pasir Puteh was considered a "safe" constituency. New Straits Times, 23rd June, 1978. U.M.N.O. exploited this and induced him to resign so as to encourage more Malay defections/resignations from the D.A.P. Daing subsequently joined U.M.N.O. in March 1980. New Straits Times, 5th March, 1980.

43. See New Straits Times, various issues, 6th to 11th August, 1978. and article,"Boobing in Perak", Asiaweek, 18th August, 1978.

44. In apologizing to the Perak Sultan, Kit Siang made it very clear that the 6 assemblymen had made a serious mistake and that the D.A.P. meant

dent could always be used by the D.A.P.'s oppononents, in particular U.M.N.O., to accuse the D.A.P. of being anti-Malay rulers as an additional weapon to make its Malay recruitment drive difficult. U.M.N.O. also appeared to have no fears over the Malays responding in significant numbers to the D.A.P.'s call for agrarian reforms and democratic socialism. U.M.N.O.'s contention was justified to the extent that the average Malay peasant was so deep-rooted to Islamic conservatism and tradition that the form of redress he expected against any injustice perpetrated had to be Islam-based.[45] Under these circumstances, the D.A.P.'s agrarian reforms and democratic socialism appeared irrelevant. This is vindicated by the fact that even the P.S.R.M., with its conspicuous Malay leadership, and which advocated similar policies, had also failed in the past. On the contrary, the resurgence of traditional Islam, manifested by the proliferation of dakwah movements and inspired by the recent upheavals in Iran, would tend to make the D.A.P.'s task in this aspect, virtually impossible. As regards the party's intentions to recruit Malay intellectuals and the Malay middle class, the situation also appeared bleak for the D.A.P. Although anti-U.M.N.O. Malay intellectuals like Anwar Ibrahim and Dr. Chandra Muzaffar shared practically the same views as the D.A.P. in relation to agrarian reform and the abuse and misuse of special privileges, they still distrusted it as a Chinese chauvinist party, despite

no disrespect to him in particular and the Malay royalty in general. His request for an audience with the sultan over this matter was not granted. Ibid. The Chairman of the Perak D.A.P., Lim Cho Hock, one of the 6, in accepting full responsibility over the incident, claimed that it was a misunderstanding and offered to resign both his position as Perak D.A.P. Chairman and his state assembly seat. Lam Thye stressed that the party had taken a serious view of the incident and would ensure that such mistakes, even if made inadvertently, would not happen again. Interview with Lam Thye, Malaysian Business, September, 1978.

45. For full details, see Michael Stenson,"Class and Race in West Malaysia", Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, Part II, Vol. VIII No. 2, April-June 1976, pp. 45-54.

the elevation of its few Malay leaders and the severance of emotional ~~links~~ ties with the P.A.P. To make matters harder for the D.A.P. in this aspect, some of them decided to oppose U.M.N.O. by joining P.A.S., either directly or indirectly.[46] The D.A.P.'s attempts to woo the Malay middle class would also appear to be unsuccessful in the majority of circumstances. Any possible success in this direction would have to involve the Malay middle class to come out strongly in favour of non-communalism, multi-lingualism, multi-culturalism, an end to Malay special privileges, and to place nationality ahead of race.[47] This is premised on the belief that the Malays have regarded Malaysia as a Malaysian rather than a Malay country, a remote possibility to say the least. Granted that the Malay middle class would be able to discern the root-causes of Malay poverty as economic and not racial, it may be surmised that middle class Malays would not associate themselves with the D.A.P. for the simple reason that they, like the Malay intellectuals, regarded it as a Chinese chauvinist party. If the Malay middle class had any political inclinations, it was likely that it would associate itself with U.M.N.O., since the latter, through the N.E.P., had been responsible for its creation and rise.

If U.M.N.O. appeared unperturbed by the D.A.P. challenge to its Malay base for the reasons discussed above, the non-Malay partners of the N.F., particularly the M.C.A., felt otherwise. The D.A.P.'s articulation

46. A.B.I.M. was the ally of P.A.S. in the 1978 general elections when many of its leaders campaigned for P.A.S. Subky Latiff, a Malay intellectual who was once close to the U.M.N.O. leadership, particularly Tun Razak, contested unsuccessfully in the Port Klang by-election in December 1979 on a P.A.S. ticket. New Straits Times, 3rd December, 1979.

47. This contention was the conclusion R.K.Vasil derived for the possible success of non-communal parties on a long term basis in Malaysia. See R.K.Vasil, Politics in a Plural Society: A Study of Non-communal Political Parties in West Malaysia, East Asian Historical Monographs, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1971, Conclusion.

of the issues consequential on the pro-Malay policies of the government drew the Chinese to their disadvantageous position in the country vis-a-vis the Malays. The consistent arguments of the D.A.P. heightened the awareness of the Chinese that their rights - political, social, cultural, economic and educational - were steadily being eroded by the Malay-led government. The D.A.P.'s arguments went along predictable lines: In the pre-1969 situation, their political power was negligible, but they still controlled the economy and their children could still go to the university if they were qualified. After 1969, not only did their semblance of political power decline, but their pre-eminence in the economy was being eroded by the N.E.P. and the I.C.A. In addition, the character of Chinese schools was being insidiously altered, qualified Chinese students with good H.S.C. results could not find places in the local universities, Chinese cultural traditions were discouraged and on some instances, ridiculed, and finally, the pleas to set up a Chinese(Merdeka)University had been rejected. The sum of the D.A.P.'s arguments pointed to a bleak future for the Chinese community in the country. Although they were framed in such a way to avoid being penalised by the Seditions Act and to appear constructive in many cases, the insinuations could not hide the D.A.P.'s anti-Malay bias, especially in relation to language, culture and education. The D.A.P. also appeared to the Chinese as a party which was not afraid to confront the Malay-led government when necessary to speak forcefully on their behalf, even at the risk of persecution.[48] Under these circumstances, it was able to substantially increase its support in the urban areas. In the 1978 general elections, the D.A.P. polled some 652,000 votes, mostly from the Chinese.[49] This was almost double that of the

48. The role of Lim Kit Siang has been very prominent in this case.

49. For further details, see D.K.Mauzy,"A Vote for Continuity: The 1978 General Elections in Malaysia", Asian Survey, Vol. XIX No. 3, March 1979, pp. 281-96.

M.C.A.'s poll of slightly over 300,000 votes. If there had been no gerrymandering of the electoral constituencies, it might have been possible that the D.A.P. would have won more than the 16 Parliamentary seats and the 25 state assembly seats compared to the M.C.A.'s 17 and 43 respectively. On this basis, the D.A.P. felt that it had as much claim to represent the Chinese as the M.C.A. The M.C.A.'s main worry was that the pro-Malay policies of the government had in fact strengthened the D.A.P. with Chinese protest votes. Unlike the D.A.P., the M.C.A. was constrained by its commitment to the government's pro-Malay policies as a partner in the N.F., even if these policies were unpopular to its constituents. The M.C.A. was expected by U.M.N.O. to fully endorse the government's pro-Malay policies and at the same time retain the support of the Chinese. Caught between these 2 opposing forces, the M.C.A.'s lack of a firm commitment either way caused it to lose Chinese support to the D.A.P. on the one hand and to incur the displeasure of U.M.N.O. on the other. To the restless and frustrated Chinese, the M.C.A.'s strategy of attempting to effect a less harsh implementation of the government's pro-Malay policies through behind-the-scenes bargaining appeared less attractive than the D.A.P.'s publicly calling for their repeal altogether, either directly or indirectly. To refer to an earlier section of this conclusion, it was held that in terms of effecting a less harsh implementation of the government's policies or to seek other more palatable alternatives, the D.A.P.'s consistent highlighting of the unsavoury aspects of the policies appeared successful, as in the case of the recognition of the poverty of some non-Malays in the T.M.P. and the allocation of more local university places for qualified non-Malay students. This would make the M.C.A.'s approach seem less effective to the Chinese.

Thus the D.A.P.'s post-1969 strategy was born out of necessity rather than choice, firstly to ensure its survival, and secondly to effect

possible expansion plans in an atmosphere of U.M.N.O.-dictated communal politics. To be fair to the D.A.P., the party did attempt to seek alternative strategies, albeit unsuccessfully. Before the consolidation of Lim Kit Siang's leadership, the D.A.P. attempted to merge with the M.C.A. and thus join the government to ensure its survival in the early 1970s. If the party's attempted merger could be considered the infusion of new blood into the M.C.A., the failure of the attempted merger was interpreted as a blessing in disguise for it, for the demise of the "Young Turks", either in the Chinese Unity Movement or the Perak Task Force, indicated that a similar fate could befall the D.A.P. In the unlikely event of the government seeking to co-operate with the D.A.P. along the same lines of the P.P.P. and G.R.M. coalitions, the D.A.P. would also be disinclined to accept.[50] The apparent loss of electoral support for the P.P.P. in Perak and the declining support for the G.R.M. in Penang among the Chinese owing to the overtly pro-Malay policies of the N.F., is a lesson the D.A.P. cannot forget.[51] By remaining outside the government, the D.A.P. felt itself free to articulate Chinese grievances each time they cropped up. Thus ironical as it may seem, the pro-Malay policies of the N.F. have been largely responsible for the increasing Chinese support for the D.A.P. and a corresponding decline for the N.F. non-

50. This possibility was suggested in interviews with Lee Lam Thye, Malaysian Business, September 1978, and Datuk Hussein Onn, Far Eastern Economic Review, 26th January, 1979. Both have categorically rejected proposals of the D.A.P. merging with the N.F. on the grounds of conflicting and irreconciliable core policies.

51. For the P.P.P.'s demise, see A.Sri Nayagam,"Decline of the P.P.P. after the death of the Seeni Brothers", New Sunday Times, 30th July, 1978. As for the G.R.M., its representation in the Penang State Assembly, its stronghold, declined from 11 in 1974 to 8 in 1978. At Parliamentary level, 4 G.R.M. M.P.'s were returned in 1978 compared to 5 in 1974. Of even greater significance was the loss of the G.R.M.'s predominantly Chinese constituencies at both State and Parliamentary levels, including Tanjong(Parliament) previously held by Dr. Lim Chong Eu from 1964 to 1974.(Dr. Lim did not contest any Parliamentary seat in 1978). It would appear that the G.R.M. was not voted out of Penang at state level in 1978 partly out of fear of U.M.N.O. becoming the dominant party there.

Malay parties. The only effective way for the N.F. to contain and ultimately defeat the D.A.P. is to play down the pro-Malay emphasis of its policies, get the Chinese to view their problems rationally in an attempt to defuse and ultimately resolve the issues(that have made the D.A.P. popular) to the satisfaction of the Chinese. The argument in favour of this strategy is that it is synonymous with delivering the goods to the Chinese, the main weakness of the D.A.P. Datuk Hussein Onn might have adopted it partially in accepting the D.A.P.'s call for a full-scale debate on the Merdeka University controversy, and then defusing it by announcing more places for non-Malay students in local universities. The N.F. has lately come to realize that prosecuting and harrassing D.A.P. leaders would not contain the party; on the contrary, these measures would give the party a sympathy boost and actually increase its support among the Chinese as the results of the 1978 general elections had shown. However U.M.N.O. is unlikely to adopt this strategy fully and on a permanent basis as it considers the costs too high. U.M.N.O.'s major fear in this aspect is P.A.S.' accusations that it had sold out fundamental Malay rights to the Chinese. Under these circumstances, it would lose its support to its traditional rival. Neither are the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. likely to press this strategy too far for fear of jeopardizing the position of the moderates and strengthening that of the extremists in U.M.N.O. In fact the restraint of both the M.C.A. and the G.R.M. could be due to their belief that the moderates had, in making important concessions to the non-Malays, done more than what was expected of them and risking their political future. Thus the D.A.P.'s consistency in articulating Chinese grievances, if carried too far, would accelerate the existing racial polarization in the country. With its support increasing among the Chinese and its evident failure to make any significant headway among the Malays, it is likely that the party will eventually degenerate into a bigger replica of either the P.P.P., the U.D.P. or the L.P.M. if present trends remain unchanged.

THE SETAPAK DECLARATION

Introduction

We, the Chairman and Members of the Central Executive Committee of the Democratic Action Party, together with Members of Branch Committees of the Party, here assembled at Setapak, Kuala Lumpur, on 29th July 1967, hereby re-state and re-affirm the basic guiding policy and principles of the Democratic Action Party, as given hereunder.

We firmly resolve to continue to be governed in all our activities and in all our approaches to the social, political, economic and cultural problems in Malaysia, by the same basic guiding policy and principles.

2. Objectives

The D.A.P. is irrevocably committed to the ideal of a free, democratic and socialist Malaysia, based on the principles of racial equality, and social and economic justice, and founded on the institutions of parliamentary democracy.

We believe that it is possible to mobilise the support of the big majority of the multi-racial people of Malaysia in the pursuit of this aim, and we shall regard it as our primary objective to mobilise such support.

We are aware that in the pursuit of our aims, we shall meet with serious resistance, not only from the Alliance Party and Government, but also from political forces hostile to the Malaysian nation and inspired by foreign powers and ideologies.

We re-affirm that the D.A.P. intends to be guided by purely Malaysian perspectives and aspirations. We shall not allow ourselves to be deflected from our chosen path by either the reactionary and communal right wing, or by the foreign-inspired anti-Malaysia left. Neither shall we lend ourselves to manipulation by either of these two groups.

In order to achieve our primary objective, the most vital condition must be success in the process of nation-building in a multi-racial society. But it is precisely in the vital process of nation-building that the Alliance Government has been guilty of a gross and shameful betrayal of national trust.

3. The Correct Principles of Nation-building in a Multi-Racial Society

We uphold as incontestable the fact that success in the nation-building process must depend on the adoption and implementation of the principle of racial equality at all levels of national life and in all fields of national endeavour - political, social, economic, cultural and educational.

The first thing to do if we are to get our principles of nation-building in a multi-racial society correct is to completely eschew any idea of racial hegemony by one community. Such an endeavour must be doomed to failure, and must be discarded, on the grounds of both desirability and practicability.

Racial hegemony in a multi-racial society is certainly an undesirable

principle to be adopted anywhere in the world, but in Malaysia, the very composition of our population also makes it impracticable or realisation, for the good reason that in this country, no single racial group can claim to enjoy an overall majority.

The Malays do not constitute a national majority. Neither do the Chinese, nor the Indians, nor anybody else. In other words, any single community in Malaysia, by itself is outnumbered by the rest. And thereby hangs the obvious lesson that any attempt to violate the principle of racial equality in Malaysian society must lead to inevitable and catastrophic failure.

All movements aimed at the realisation of racial hegemony by one communal group or another, have failed in the past, and will continue to fail in the future.

For example, one of the major reasons for the failure of the armed insurrection initiated by the Malayan Communist Party in 1948 was the fact the communists committed the great mistake of thinking that success was possible on the basis of appealing to the susceptibilities of only one section of the community - the Chinese, while ignoring the susceptibilities or the aspirations of the other communities.

The communists discovered to their cost that in the absence of a multi-racial national base, they were inevitably denied national success.

We see the Alliance Government also failing, eventually, for the same reason - that they show a readiness to pander to the racialist gallery of a particular community, while ignoring, if not actively offending against the rights, susceptibilities and aspirations of other communities.

Classifying the citizens into "bumiputras" and "non-bumiputras", discriminating against citizens in matters of appointments and promotions, particularly in the public sector and now increasingly in the private sector, on grounds of race, are hardly calculated, in our view, to strengthen the sense of national consciousness and solidarity in our multi-racial nation.

Mere lip-service to the principles of racial equality, mutuality, tolerance and accommodation, will not realise the ideal of national solidarity. The principle must be seen to be clearly reflected in all national policies, and to be faithfully implemented in practice in all fields of national life.

Such implementation of the basic principles of racial equality, mutuality, tolerance and accommodation are clearly abesent for example, in the Alliance Government's policies on the sensitive but nonetheless vital questions of language, education and culture.

4. <u>On Language, Education and Culture</u>.

While the D.A.P. will uncompromisingly champion the acceptance, propagation and development of the national language, we cannot accept a language and education policy based on the erroneous premise that the propagation and the permanence of the national language can only be finally secured on the basis of the eventual deculturation of two major communities in Malaysia - the Chinese and the Indians.

This is precisely what significant sections of the Malaysian people

read into the National Language Act and the education policy of the Government, and in our view, with ample justification.

If linguistic and cultural homogeneity were the vital pre-condition of national existence and consolidation, then several multi-lingual and multi-cultural nations in the world, like Switzerland, Canada or India could never have come into being or succeeded, let alone survived.

The Malaysian Constitution does indeed recognise the multi-lingual and multi-cultural character of the nation, and guarantees the free use of the languages of the other major communities in the nation.

This constitutional guarantee is, however, rendered sterile by an educational policy which does not permit the free use of the Chinese and Tamil languages as media of instruction and of examination in national-type secondary schools. This restriction must lead to the steady deterioration of levels of attainment and of proficiency in these two languages, as well as to the inevitable decline in their usage and to their eventual elimination.

We re-affirm our contention that the Alliance Government's education policy has the effect of rendering null and void the constitutional guarantee with regard to the free use of the other languages in the country, and we shall deem it as one of our objectives to secure a correspondence between educational policy and constitutional guarantee.

We also reiterate our belief that while the national language should, by virtue of its status, become ultimately the chief language of administration in the country, this should not preclude the use for necessary official purposes, of the Chinese and Tamil languages, in addition to the English language. This would contribute to the fitness of things, as well as to the purposes of rational and intelligent administration.

5. <u>The Removal of Economic and Educational Imbalance as the Correct Means to Achieve National Integration in a Multi-racial Society</u>

Communal divisions and dissensions are, at bottom, engendered and aggravated by economic causes. The intelligent and effective way of dissolving communal barriers, and transcending communal sentiments in our multi-racial society, and to expedite the process of national integration, would be to implement a policy aimed at the eradication of the existing economic imbalance between the communities.

This imbalance reflects the slower pace of socio-economic processes in the rural areas, and the disparity as between rural incomes and productivity on the one hand, and urban incomes and productivity on the other.

These are phenomena which are not peculiar to Malaysia among the developing countries. Similar social, economic and cultural disparities as between rural and urban areas also confront other developing countries.

What renders the problem more acute and dangerous for Malaysia, however, is the fact that class divisions in our country appear very often to coincide with communal divisions.

The rural peasantry are largely Malays while the bourgeoisie in the towns and the professional classes are largely non-Malays. This fact has been effectively exploited in the past, and continues to be so exploited,

by communal-minded politicians who play on Malay sentiments of insecurity and backwardness in order to justify the political dominance which they exercise in the name of the Malays, but which in fact they really exercise for the minority social class which they represent - that sordid, selfish and curious amalgam of a social class, for whom the best description so far coined is - the "feudal-compradore" class, and their hangers-on, which constitute the Alliance leadership.

In point of fact, the coincidence of class divisions with communal divisions is not as straightforward and as general as it would appear at first sight. No doubt, certain communal politicians find it convenient to give the impression to the Malays that the "haves" are all non-Malays. This is simply not true, for the vast majority of Malaysians of Chinese and Indian origin are workers and wage-earners of various categories.

The truth is that the fraternity of Malaysian "have-nots" are to be found in the urban as well as rural areas, and embraces Malaysians of all communities and religions. This is the truth which the communal politicians deliberately ignore, for it upsets the neat and plausible theories which they habitually hawk as their stock-in-trade in order to justify themselves to their followers. But it is truth which national-minded democratic socialists must incessantly drive home, in order to help expedite the process of national integration on the basis of the common economic interests of the have-nots of all races.

However the economic and educational imbalance as between the urban and rural areas does lend itself rather easily to being clothed in a communal garb, and it must be part of any enlightened socio-economic policy to remove this imbalance.

The D.A.P. charges the Alliance Government with not doing anything significant towards this end. Indeed, one of the most striking commentaries on Alliance failure in this respect is the fact that the great majority of Malay students in our university do Malay language and religious studies, whereas the crying need is surely for more and more Malays to become qualified in the modern disciplines of science, medicine, technology, economics, etc., so that Malays may be able to compete on equal terms with their fellow Malaysians of Chinese and Indian origin, who are not in the habit of sending their offspring to centres of higher learning in order to become experts in Buddhism or the Bible or the Bhagavad Gita.

But apart from occasional lip-service, the Alliance leadership has been gravely delinquent in regard to the positive encouragement of Malay students to qualify themselves in the more productive and sophisticated disciplines of modern knowledge.

Again, with regard to the improvement of the rural economy, one would have thought that the primary end in view would be the raising of the per capita income of the Malay peasantry, while the means employed would have been radical land reform measures to eradicate crude exploitation of the peasantry by landowners and middlemen and the introduction of modern techniques of agricultural production.

Instead of this, the emphasis has been on the provision of an expensive and outwardly imposing infrastructure in the rural areas, which has largely succeeded thus far only in enriching a few entrepreneurs, middlemen and a favoured elite among the Malays.

The constitutional provision affording certain special rights to the Malays has been used, not with a view to raising the general standards of living in the rural areas, but for the creation of an elite Malay capitalist class who have proved just as rapacious than the 20th century expects of its entrepreneurs.

The crucial criticism, however, is that it is impossible to see how the per capita income and the standards of life of the Malay peasantry can be significantly raised by the creation of an elite group of Malay capitalists, who operate in conjunction with an elite group of Chinese compradores and tycoons.

Lest it be charged that we oppose Malay participation in business and commercial fields, we might declare categorically that we welcome the equalisation of opportunities for Malays to participate in all fields of national life.

Our contention is simply that no major onslaught can be made against peasant poverty in the rural areas by creating a few rich Malays, any more than the social and economic problems of the Chinese and Indian workers in the urban areas can be solved by enrolling a few more members in the "Compradores Club" or the even more restricted club of the big business tycoons, both presided over by the M.C.A.

Problems of general, social and economic development in urban as well as rural areas can only be tackled on the basis of the application of more meaningful economic policies, aimed at improving the lot of the many, and not of enhancing of the gains of the few.

6. International Perspective of Malaysia

The first thing for Malaysians to understand and appreciate, as we look at the rest of the world, and particularly at the rest of Asia, is that we are a very small nation, by any standards, with a population of about 9 million people.

Indeed, the only nation smaller than us in this part of the world is Singapore. For the rest, we are surrounded by larger countries with far bigger populations and resources.

One of our closest neighbours in South East Asia is Indonesia, with more than a hundred million people, whose recent political and military confrontation we managed to meet and survive, not on our own, but because of the protective British defence umbrella spread over us and Singapore.

A second stark and naked fact that we have to face is that this British defence umbrella, which we have taken all along for granted, and behind which we had confidently sheltered, is now in the process of rapid contraction, leading to eventual total withdrawal. The grim fact is that by the mid-seventies, present British plans envisage the complete withdrawal of the British military presence in Malaysia and Singapore.

This means that as a small nation, living in an extremely troubled and unsettled part of the world, surrounded by huge neighbours with far larger standing armies, Malaysia must increasingly depend on her own more slender resources, for both internal and external defence. We must swim alone in a hostile sea full of predatory sharks and man-eating piranhas.

The fact that both Malaysia and Singapore are relatively better off economically than any other country in Asia (apart from Japan), and provide a better living for their people, does not make our problems of survival small, but separate and distinct political entities in the years ahead, any easier.

It is dangerous to be small, defenceless, but relatively affluent if you are surrounded by larger countries with bigger and hungrier populations. Historically, such a situation has always provided the classic recipe for aggression.

One of the strongest indictments of the lack of foresight of the Alliance leadership has been its proved inability to envisage and prepare for the dangerous defence vacuum that would be created if and when the British do decide to effect a total military withdrawal, as they have already decided to do.

There was no appreciation over the last decade that the process of decolonisation in Asia and Africa had finally and irrevocably deprived Britain of her status and role as a world power, and left her as yet another small European nation, far more interested in her survival in Europe as a member of an European economic fraternity, than in any kind of presence in distant South East Asia.

In spite of this, British public opinion might have been persuaded into continuing British defence commitments in this part of the world over a longer period, at least until such time as Malaysia could have safely secured alternative defence arrangements, if the Alliance government had not gone about trying to twist the tail of the aged British lion in a fit of juvenile heroics.

Alliance backbenchers indulged in anti-British tirades in Parliament, while the Alliance government itself, obviously playing up to a thoughtless gallery, slapped down on a whole range of Commonwealth preferences.

The stupidities of the Alliance Government have finally come home to roost, in the shape of the recently published British defence White Paper, and we had to witness the humiliating spectacle of the two Alliance Government leaders visiting London, and appealing to the very same people they had only lately insulted and reviled, to retain their military presence in the country.

Be that as it may, Malaysia must now seek to survive in a rapidly changing world, and particularly in a South East Asia in which the potential dangers and threats to our national survival and territorial integrity are likely to be aggravated, rather than diminished, in the years ahead.

Since we are neither a super-power nor even a medium-sized one, it is clear that we are too small to defend ourselves, and that we must seek alternative defence arrangements for ourselves in conjunction with friendly powers, and look for whatever international guarantees and co-operation we can obtain to safeguard our national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

If public confidence, which has already been rudely shaken, is to be maintained, it is imperative that the government be seen to be working intelligently and diligently towards credible and dependable arrangements to ensure national defence and security.

It is in this new context that the D.A.P. hopes that the governments of Singapore and Malaysia will finally see it as the better part of wisdom, to cease their perpetual feuds and interminable squabbles, and to establish new relations of trust, confidence and co-operation to ensure their common economic democratic development and prosperity, defence and survival.

7. Certain Vital Conditions for Malaysian National Survival in an Unstable South East Asia

It is not always true that small nations cannot hold their own, either militarily or politically, in the international power game. Several small nations have distinguished themselves in history by showing a capacity for national survival and progress out of all proportion to their geographical size or to the size of their population.

They have done so, invariably, because they enjoyed three vital pre-requisites of survival: One, a firm sense of national unity, identity and solidarity; two: a highly skilled and dedicated population; and three: social and economic discipline.

We do not see any reason why, given the right political leadership, Malaysia cannot acquire all those attributes so clearly necessary to ensure our continuance and survival as a nation. It is our contention that the present policies of the Alliance government are gravely inimical to the national attainment of the vital attributes.

The first pre-requisite of a firm sense of national unity, identity and solidarity can only be established if the principle of racial equality is faithfully observed and implemented in all fields of national life. We shall struggle for this.

The second pre-requisite of a highly skilled and educated population can be obtained through the implementation of a modern and dynamic policy of education. The D.A.P. shall strive to achieve such an education policy.

The third pre-requisite of social and economic discipline in the national life can be secured by the following measures. One, the formulation and implementation of social and fiscal policies to ensure a fairer distribution of the national wealth. Two, a more scrupulous adherence to the principles and practice of social justice. Three, more realistic planning for economic diversification, and agricultural and industrial expansion, involving the enthusiastic involvement and participation of all sections of the population, and four, the creation of an incorruptible and efficient government administrative machinery. All these measures the D.A.P. shall persistently strive for.

8. On the Use and Abuse of the Internal Security Act

One of the unpleasant facts of life that we have to live with is that the general situation in South East Asia being what it is, Malaysia will continue to face grave threats to her security from the activities of the agents and instruments of foreign powers, hostile to our national existence.

The threat of subversion is very real, as the period of Indonesian confrontation so clearly showed, and as the existence of foreign-inspired communist activities in the country continues to show.

In the circumstances, the D.A.P. as a sober and realistic party, cannot share the enthusiasm of well-meaning but nevertheless starry-eyed and unrealistic persons, who call for the total repeal of the Internal Security Act.

We must recognise that it must be one of the paramount concerns of any Malaysian Government, even of a D.A.P. Government, to protect the security and integrity of the nation against the forces of foreign-inspired subversion.

We therefore support, in principle, the need for internal security legislation. We must nevertheless urge the utmost public vigilance in regard to the existence of the powers vested in the government by the Internal Security Act.

We cannot afford to be blind to the fact that it is not beyond the capacity of the Alliance Government to abuse the provisions of the Internal Security Act for partisan and other purposes, which have nothing to do with the legitimate concern for the maintenance of internal security.

Some examples which come to mind are, 1. The retention by the government of emergency labour laws promulgated in the name of meeting the dangers of Indonesian confrontation, long after that confrontation had ended, and 2. The continuance of the requirement for suitability certificates for admission to higher centres of learning, despite the fact that experience has shown that no real security need exists for such a requirement.

The D.A.P. therefore calls for the abolition of the requirements for suitability certificates as being both unnecessary and humiliating, and for the prevention of other abuses committed in the name of the maintenance of internal security.

9. Conclusion - A Choice of National Destiny

Regarded against a broad historical background and perspective, Malaysia must be seen as undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny.

For a stage has been reached in which intelligent Malaysians can discern, on the one hand, the possibility of integration of a multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-religious people in a wider, all-embracing Malaysia-centred identity and consciousness, and on the other hand, the equal possibility of the failure to effect such an integral transformation with the inevitable consequences of national discord, dissension and disintegration.

The choice is there, and it is imperative. In the final analysis, it must be the people as a whole who have to make this choice of destiny - either to take the road which leads to an integral national transformation, or the alternative road leading to eventual national decay and disintegration.

We have faith that if this choice of destiny is placed before them in frankness and honesty, Malaysians of all races and creeds will make the right choice.

All that the Alliance leaders have contributed in this direction so far have been a fungus of outdated and reactionary political, social and economic nostrums and notions, a medley of communal and contradictory

slogans and panaceas.

The politics of the Alliance have been the politics of communal segmentation and division. We see it as the primary duty of all Malaysians, who desire the survival of their country, to counter the segmenting and dividing politics of the Alliance with the politics of creative and dynamic multi-racial integration at all levels - political, social, economic and cultural.

Those who are communalists in mind and spirit can never hope to contribute to the nation-building process. Only those Malaysians can take up this process, who have effected the integral transformation in their own minds and spirits, and who therefore possess a creative and harmonising spirit of national construction. Otherwise, everything must welter in a general confusion and discord out of which it will be impossible to build a greater harmonic life of the nation.

It is to this sacred task of creative and constructive nation-building that we in the D.A.P. dedicate ourselves.

Source: Who Lives if Malaysia Dies? D.A.P.'s Case for a Multi-racial Society, D.A.P., Petaling Jaya, 1969, pp. 17-30.

APPENDIX B

COMPOSITION OF THE D.A.P.'S CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (AS AT DECEMBER 1979)

SECRETARY-GENERAL:	Lim Kit Siang
CHAIRMAN:	Dr. Chen Man Hin
DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERALS:	Lee Lam Thye
	Mohamad Zalleh b. Nakhoda Itam
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:	Ibrahim b. Singgeh
VICE-CHAIRMEN:	Karpal Singh
	Lim Cho Hock
ORGANISING SECRETARY:	P.Patto
ASSISTANT ORGANISING SECRETARIES:	Hu Se Peng
	Osman b. Tahar
TREASURER:	Lee Kaw
ASSISTANT TREASURER:	Chan Kok Kit (presently under detention)
DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL BUREAU:	Chan Teck Chan
PUBLICITY SECRETARY:	Chian Heng Kai (presently under detention)
-	Dr. Tan Seng Giaw
	Peter Paul Dason
	Chong Siew Chiang
	Lau Dak Kee

(N.B. Dr. Tan Seng Giaw is at present ACTING PUBLICITY SECRETARY for Chian Heng Kai.)

Source: New Straits Times, 17th December, 1979.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE D.A.P.'S PERFORMANCE IN THE 1978 GENERAL ELECTIONS.

The D.A.P. fielded 51 candidates for Parliament and 126 for the various State Assemblies for Peninsular Malaysia.

Distribution of D.A.P. candidates by race and racial majority of constituencies for Parliament and State Assemblies

Types of Constituency	Level \ Race		Malay	Chinese	Indians & Others
Malay majority	Parl.	21	8(0)	11(0)	2(0)
	State.	59	41(0)	15(0)	3(0)
Chinese majority	Parl.	20	-	17(11)	3(3)
	State.	46	2(1)	37(18)	7(5)
Mixed	Parl.	10	1(0)	5(0)	4(1)
	State.	21	4(0)	13(1)*	4(0)
Total	Parl.	51	9(0)	33(11)	9(4)
	State.	126	47(1)	65(19)	14(5)

Notes: Figures in brackets indicate number of seats won.
* The N.F. candidate for the constituency was disqualified.

D.A.P.Victories(Parliament)

PENANG

Bukit Mertajam (41,243)

Seow Hun Kim	(DAP)	13,051
Lee Jong Ki	(NF)	9,910
Shaik Adam	(PAS)	4,757
M.Hussein	(KITA)	350
Tan Cheng Bee	(I)	4,082

Bukit Bendera (55,860)

Peter Paul Dason	(DAP)	21,864
H'ng Hung Yong	(NF)	17,954
Oh Keng Seng	(SDP)	3,022

Tanjong (51,930)

Wong Hoong Keat	(DAP)	19,260
Dr. Ronnie Ooi	(NF)	13,412
Hoo Kee Ping	(I)	7,496

Jelutong (60,248)

Karpal Singh	(DAP)	23,606
Lee Him	(NF)	19,985
Yeap Ghim Guan	(SDP)	2,401

PERAK

Ipoh (63,408)

Lim Cho Hock	(DAP)	30,680
Kuan Peng Soon	(NF)	17,771

Menglembu (61,439)

P.Patto	(DAP)	29,573
Lee Chan Fai	(NF)	16,803

Beruas (27,109)

Ting Chek Ming (DAP)	9,611
Su Liang Yu (NF)	9,204
Zulkiflee b. Alias (PAS)	1,683

Batu Gajah (41,835)

Chian Heng Kai (DAP)	18,752
Chan Kit Chee (NF)	12,471

SELANGOR

Petaling (90,611)

Lim Kit Siang (DAP)	41,017
Yeoh Poh San (NF)	24,243

FEDERAL TERRITORY

Kuala Lumpur Bandar (51,726)

Lee Lam Thye (DAP)	29,567
Thian Oon Kin (NF)	7,853

Damansara (67,278)

V.David (DAP)	21,461
S.Subramaniam (NF)	18,239
Syed Ibrahim (PAS)	5,386
Thinakaran (KITA)	161

Sungei Besi (79,096)

Chan Kok Kit (DAP)	40,307
Osman Alias Seman Baba (PAS)	6,620
Ganga Nayar (WP)	1,731
Lim Heng Kiap (I)	3,098
Woo Hong Kong (I)	1,584

NEGRI SEMBILAN

Seremban (52,924)

Dr. Chen Man Hin (DAP)	23,057
Dr. Gan Kong Seng (NF)	14,984

MALACCA

Kota Melaka (60,086)

Chan Teck Chan (DAP)	28,044
Chew Hock Thye (NF)	17,844

JOHORE

Kluang (44,331)

Lee Kaw (DAP)	16,887
Datuk Loh Fook Yen (NF)	15,215
Abu Bakar Kathom (PAS)	679

SABAH

Sandakan

Fung Ket Wing (DAP)	8,933
Vincent Wong Foo Bin (NF)	6,294

D.A.P.Victories(State Assemblies)

PENANG

Pekan Bukit Mertajam (18,212)

Seow Hun Kim (DAP)	8,512
Oh Teik Aun (NF)	5,451
V.Apparoo(KITA)	181

Ayer Itam (18,903)

Peter Paul Dason (DAP)	7,643
Choong Ewe Leong (NF)	6,421
Oh Keng Seng (SDP)	517

Paya Terubong (17,803)

Chin Nyok Soo (DAP)	5,525
Lau Kok Chew (NF)	5,255
Lim Cheng Teik (SDP)	2,320
Khoo Huat Hin (I)	660

Bukit Gelugor (21,942)

Karpal Singh (DAP)	7,776
Tan Gim Hwa (NF)	7,202
Yeap Ghim Guan (SDP)	946
A.R.Karim (I)	848

Kampong Kolam (17,638)*

Ooi Ean Kwong (DAP)	10,239
Mah Cheok Tatt (I)	2,225
Lee Peik Hooi(I)	581

* This electoral victory was subsequently declared null and void on a successful application against disqualification by NF incumbent, Datuk Khoo Kay Por. A bye-election was held in December 1978. The D.A.P. retained the seat with the following result:

Ooi Ean Kwong (DAP)	8,063
Datuk Khoo Kay Por (NF)	4,398

PERAK

Kelian Pauh (30,799)

Lim Eng Chuan (DAP)	13,398
Dr. Ng Ah Thong (NF)	9,257
Mai b. Mat (PAS)	770

Gopeng (25,190)

P.Patto (DAP)	9,544
Chung Koy Fah (NF)	8,641
Raja Idris b. Raja Hassan (PAS)	1,053

Kepayang (32,951)

Lim Cho Hock (DAP)	17,848
R.Jegathesan (NF)	7,414
Ng Thor Fung (I)	228

Guntong (30,457)

Mohd. Zalleh Nakhoda Itam (DAP)	12,197
M.Singgaram (NF)	10,231

Pasir Puteh (34,542)

Chian Heng Kai (DAP)	16,086
Wu Lian Hwa (NF)	9,917

Pantai Remis (16,104)

Young Heow Choo (DAP)	7,338
Peramjik Singh (NF)	4,338
Mohamed b. Darus (PAS)	492

Pasir Bedamar (21,503)

Thee Ah Kow (DAP)	10,164
Chin Lik Sun (NF)	5,683

Kuala Pari (26,897)

Lim Nyit Sin (DAP)	12,787
Tan Tiew Bock (NF)	7,352

Kampar (22,299)

Lee Kak Hoi (DAP)	9,331
Lim Tong Kwai (NF)	4,320

SELANGOR

Serdang (16,049)

Lee Lam Thye (DAP)	6,554
Yap Pian Hon (NF)	5,813

Kajang (15,708)

Liew Ah Kim (DAP)	6,841
Kan Tong Fong (NF)	4,313
Datuk Kampo Radjo (PSRM)	550
Aman Khan (KITA)	308

Kuala Kubu Bahru (11,928)

Pan Su Peng (DAP)	3,202
Yap Hon Chu (I.)	647

NEGRI SEMBILAN

Rahang (17,293)

Dr. Chen Man Hin (DAP)	8,641
Cheah Yee Kooi (NF)	3,906

Rasah (12,415)

M. Kuppusamy (DAP)	5,981
Lew Thin Poh (NF)	2,900

Sungei Ujong (16,206)

Hu Se Peng (DAP)	6,572
Chin Chan Sung (NF)	4,771

MALACCA

Tranquerah (12,056)

Chan Teck Chan (DAP)	5,188
Yoong Yong Pow (NF)	4,049

Durian Daun (11,304)

Yong Wee Yook (DAP)	6,122
Hee Ah Pow (NF)	2,424

Kubu (12,739)

Lim Kit Siang (DAP)	7,239
S.K.R.M.Dorairaj (NF)	2,680

Bandar Hilir (11,134)

Bernard Sta Maria (DAP)	4,522
Gan Boon Leong (NF)	3,902

JOHORE

Bandar Kluang (29,014)

Lee Kaw (DAP) 12,255
Yau Kim Suan(NF) 8,518
Mohd. Abdol b.
Tulos (PAS) 409

The D.A.P. polled 664,433 votes (18.5%) nation wide.
In Peninsular Malaysia, its share of the votes was however 652,730 (21.56%) for Parliament and 502,286 (20.2%) for the State Assemblies.
In the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, the D.A.P. polled 101,306 votes (54.41%) for the 4 Parliamentary seats contested. The other seat (Setapak) was won uncontested by the N.F. (U.M.N.O.) when the opposition candidates were disqualified on nomination day.
7 D.A.P. Parliamentary and 15 State Assembly candidates lost their deposits.

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