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Ideals without heat

Indonesia Raya and the struggle for independence in Malaya, 1920 – 1948¹

BYUNGKUK SOH

ABSTRACT

Kajian ini ditujukan untuk menemukan pemahaman perkembangan kesadaran nasional bangsa Melayu dalam mencapai kemerdekaan bangsa Melayu. Di dalamnya dikaji muncul dan berkembangnya kelompok-kelompok intelektual baru Melayu yang memiliki daya desak di balik perkembangan pergerakan kemerdekaan Melayu. Tahun 1920-an dianggap sebagai awal perkembangan kesadaran nasional bangsa Melayu. Dalam periode itu kelompok sosial baru, yaitu kaum agamawan terdidik, intelektual terdidik Melayu, dan intelektual terdidik Inggris, muncul di luar hierarki Melayu tradisional dan mulai menampilkan cita-cita sosiopolitis yang berdampak besar pada pembentukan bangsa Malaya, yang kemudian menjadi Malaysia, hingga bergerak terus ke tahun 1948.

KATA KUNCI

National awareness, independence, independent movement, young people, old people.

This study attempts to understand the development of Malay national awareness toward the attainment of Malaya's independence. In my view, if one is to reasonably understand the struggle for independent Malaya, it is necessary to chart the emergence and growth of new Malay intellectual

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groups as the driving force behind the development of the Malay independent movement. This study views the 1920s as the watershed in the development of Malay national awareness. It was during this period that the new social groups – the religious-educated intellectuals, the Malay-educated intellectuals and the English-educated intellectuals – emerged outside the traditional Malay hierarchies and began to visualize socio-political ideals that had the greatest impact upon the nation-building of Malaya, later Malaysia.

By and large, the English-educated intellectuals were aristocratic in their social origins and pro-British oriented. They enjoyed favorable treatments from the British colonial authorities. They are the backbone of the United Malays National Organization or UMNO, a party which played the most prominent role for achieving the independence of Malaya and which consequently has been in power since then. On the contrary, the other intellectual groups were non-aristocratic, pro-Indonesian and anti-British oriented. They suffered various setbacks due to British colonial suppressions. When Malaya became independent, these intellectual groups made up political opposition forces to the newly formed national government but with many lingering disadvantages.

No doubt, the stark different paths of the two intellectual camps have influenced the study of Malay nationalism. Until recently, historians have somehow neglected the struggle for independence of the anti-British and pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists. As a result of this oversight, efforts to better understand the development of Malay national awareness have been hampered. Indeed, since the 1920s, they exerted great efforts to organize the Malay mass into their political vision for *Malaya-Indonesia Raya* or *Melayu Raya* (independence of Malaya within Greater Indonesia or Malaya). To the aim, they vigorously vied with the pro-British Malay nationalists, forming two major intellectual streams toward independence.

In my view, it is not possible to reasonably understand the making of independent Malaya without fully examining the struggle for *Indonesia Raya* of the anti-British and pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists. This work focuses on political ideals and the struggle for independence of the nationalists from the 1920s until 1948 when the British colonial government declared the Emergency Regulations under which they were subsequently paralyzed. This study is not a political history. It is principally to seek what lay behind the political activity of the nationalists, using a historical approach sensitive to social and intellectual changes. As yet there is no single piece of scholarship on the development of the anti-British and pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists and their struggle for *Indonesia Raya*, which covers the period between the 1920s and 1948. Existing studies are limited to one of the three distinctive time periods: prewar, interwar or postwar. This study is important in that it will be the first attempt to explore in this direction. This study will also contribute to a better understanding of Malay political opposition groups of post-independence Malaysia.

THE STRUGGLE FOR INDONESIA RAYA BEFORE THE WAR

The emergence of the first group of new Malay intellectuals in prewar Malaya had close connections with the religious and political developments in the Middle East, Indonesia and India. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the reformist movement in Islam spread widely throughout the Middle East as a reaction to Western colonialism. Two preeminent Egyptian intellectuals, Jamaluddin al-Afghani (1838–1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) played dynamic roles in the movement. To face the challenge of the West, Jamaluddin emphasized the unity among Muslim communities through their return to the teachings of the two basic texts of Islam-Koran and *hadith* (Abdul Aziz 1972: 9). Muhammad Abduh contributed to the more intellectual development of the reformist movement. In his view, one of the main causes of the general backwardness in Muslim communities all over the world was due to their misunderstanding of Islamic religion, especially regarding modern progressive ideas (Radin 1959: 12).

From the first decade of the twentieth century, Malay students returning from the Middle East introduced reformist ideas to Malaya. In order to enlighten the Malays in the sweeping changes of the times, the religious-educated intellectuals made efforts to disseminate the reformist ideas to Malay society through the journals *Al-Iman*, *Neracha*, *Al-Ikhwān* and *Saudara*. Among the famous intellectuals were Syed Sheikh bin Ahmad al-Hadi, Haji Abbas bin Mohammad Taha and Sheikh Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin al-Falaki. Among the religious-educated intellectuals in prewar Malay society, there were those Malay students who were involved in socio-political organizations in the Middle East. Under the influence of the general anti-colonial climate in the Middle East, the student organizations bore a strong tint of anti-colonialism. In addition to that, they also expressed the sense of unity between Indonesians and Malays (Roff 1970: 75–77).

The religious and political development in Indonesia also was partially responsible for the emergence of the religious-educated Malay intellectuals. In Kelantan, the educational development took place without any direct relation to the British administration during the early years of the century. The *Majlis Ugama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu* (the Council of Religion and Malay Customs), which was formed in 1915, founded several schools in Kota Bahru, Pasir Mas, Pasir Puteh and Kutan between 1917 and 1920. The *Madrasah Muhammadiyah* was one of them. With a modern educational system, this *madrasah* handled three types of education—Malay, English and Arabic (Khoo 1974: 187). This school produced some outstanding religious-educated intellectuals in the 1920s. Among them were Abdul Kadir Adabi, Assad Shukri bin Haji Muda and Haji Nik Yusuf bin Haji Ismail. While studying at the school, they easily contacted Indonesian reformist journals *Pedoman Masyarakat*, *Chenderawasih* and *Pewartu Deli*, which were introduced by sales agents for Indonesian newspapers and magazines in Kota Bahru. After graduation, the intellectuals devoted themselves to the dissemination of the reformist thought through the journals *Pengasuh*, *Al-Hidayah*, *Kenchana*

and *Putera* (Mas 1983/1984: 28–29).

Another influence on the emergence of the religious-educated Malay intellectuals was from India. Some of the intellectuals were Malay students who had gone to India for continued religious study. One of them was Dr. Burhanuddin al-Helmy who became one of the most preeminent pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists during the postwar period. There were some other intellectuals who were influenced by the literary works of Indian reformists in Islam, though they had never been to India. One of them was Haji Nik Abdullah bin Haji Wan Musa who was an active religious reformist in Kota Bahru. He was deeply influenced by Maluana Ubaidillah al-Sindhi, one of the famous Indian religious reformists (Azali 1985/1986: 8).

With Penang, Malacca, Singapore and other big cities like Kuala Lumpur and Kota Bahru at the center of their activities, the reformists questioned and criticized the socio-economic as well as religious problems in Malay society under colonial rule. In particular, on religious matters, they attacked the traditional religious syncretism and advocated the return to the Koran and the *hadith* by practicing *ijtihad* (informed independent investigation) rather than *taklid buta* (blind acceptance of intermediate authority). As a result of the theological dispute, they were labeled the *Kaum Muda* (Young Generation) by the traditional religious establishment that called itself the *Kaum Tua* (Old Generation) (Roff 1962).

Since the British colonial government introduced Malay secular education in the second half of the nineteenth century, the growing number of vernacular schools required the training of Malay schoolteachers. Toward this end, in 1878 the first Malay Training College was established in Singapore. This college operated only for 17 years until it was closed in 1895. The British effort to train Malay schoolteachers was continued by the establishment of the Malay Training College at Malacca in 1900. Before 1922, the colonial government formed two other Training Colleges at Matang, Perak in 1923 and Johor Bahru in 1919 (Awang 1974: 30).

Although these Training Colleges produced in all about 60 teachers every year, they failed to supply sufficient school teachers for the 30,968 pupils attending 556 Malay vernacular schools in the Straits Settlements or SS and the Federated Malay States or FMS in 1916 (Awang 1970: 116). Under the leading role of R. O. Winstedt who was appointed Assistant Director of Education for the SS and the FMS in 1916, thus, a Central Training College, named after the late Sultan Idris Marshid al-'adzam Shah of Perak was opened with "a teaching staff of three Europeans, seven Malay teachers, and one Filipino Basketry Instructor" and 120 students in November, 1922 (Awang 1974: 117).

Prior to the designation of the Sultan Idris Training College or SITC as a "cradle of Malay nationalism," it is necessary to examine its general environment in order to more precisely understand the emergence of progressive Malay-educated intellectuals. Regarding the principal aim of the college, George Maxwell, the Chief Secretary of the FMS said: "We really wanted to give the best possible education to the Malays of the village, and

that would be the principal aim of this College, namely, to give the best possible education to the Malays of the agricultural class and fisher folk" (Awang 1974: 118).

This "rural bias" showed that the British colonial government did not deliberately create *semangat perjuangan* (the spirit or will-power of struggle) among Malay-educated intellectuals. This argument will be more clearly substantiated by discussing the general environment of the college.

The curriculum of the college was never designed to produce progressive intellectuals. Originally, R. O. Winstedt recommended teaching English to the college students. However, his recommendation was ignored on the ground that learning English might instigate the Malay students to admire urban life. As a consequence, this colonialist consideration led the curriculum of the college to be predominantly rural-oriented. Among total periods per week, Agriculture, Gardening and Basketry occupied one fourth. These three subjects were more emphasized than pedagogy in the Teacher Training College (Awang 1974: 120 – 121).

If so, then what factors contributed to the designation of the SITC as "a cradle of Malay nationalism"? The first factor was the role of graduates of the Malacca Training College. The college was opened on March 1, 1900 with an enrollment of twenty-four students who passed a highly competitive entrance examination among sons of peasants and fishermen throughout Malaya. When the college was amalgamated into the SITC in 1922, it produced about eighty graduates. Some of them became teachers in the SITC. Among them, Muhammad bin Datuk Muda Linggi, Abdul Hadi bin Haji Hassan, Ahmad bin Abdullah and Harun Muhammad Amin were known as influential mentors for the enhancement of *semangat perjuangan* in the students in the SITC by way of literary activities in various Malay journals and historical novels (Ahmad 1956: 23 – 24; Allahy 1980: 133; Khoo 1974: 127).

A second factor in establishing the SITC as a nationalist breeding ground was its socialization process. In the Malacca Training College, the provincial feelings among the students were very common. When the SITC was opened in 1922, their provincial feelings were transferred to the college. However, these soon began to decrease in the new environment of the SITC. In the Malacca Training College, whereas the students were accommodated according to their home state, in the SITC they were intermingled in six blocks regardless of their hometown (Awang 1974: 165). This common mixed accommodation in the SITC gave birth to a sense of oneness among the students from all over the peninsula, who shared a common social background as the children of peasants and fishermen (Radcliffe 1970: 170). These acquaintances helped him understand the Malays of other states.

Some other factors to encourage *semangat perjuangan* in the students in the SITC were Indonesian literary and political influences. Given the lack of reading materials for the Malay schools at that time, it seemed that the teaching staff and the students in the SITC were impressed by Indonesian literary activities. In 1931, O. T. Dussek, the Principal of the SITC (1922-36) and

Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad, better known as Za'ba suggested that the colonial government enlarge the Translation Bureau along the line of Dutch Indonesia's Balai Poestaka. But this proposal was rejected "on the ground that the British were more efficient than the Dutch" (Awang 1970: 129). Meanwhile, journals from Indonesia were widely read among the students and the faculties in the SITC. Among them were *Seruan Rakyat*, *Pedoman Masyarakat*, *Pandji Islam*, *Bintang Islam* and *Bintang Hindia* (Awang 1974: 168). Through these journals, the college students recognized a sense of *semangat perjuangan* against Dutch colonialism among the Indonesians.

Apart from the literary influence, Indonesian political influence was also clear in the SITC. When Soekarno founded the Partai National Indonesia or PNI (Indonesian Nationalist Party) in 1927, some of the students like Ibrahim Yaacob, Hassan Manan, Abdul Karim Rashid and Isa Mohd. bin Mahmud joined the party as overseas members. In 1929, while Soekarno was under arrest, Haji Kassim Bakri contacted the teachers and the students of the SITC for the purpose of delivering of Soekarno's message of struggle against colonial rule (Ibrahim 1957: 20-21). These political influences led to the appearance in 1929 and 1930 of three political organizations at the SITC. They were the Ikatan Pemuda Pelajar (Alliance of the Young Student), the Ikatan Semenanjung-Borneo (Alliance of the Peninsula-Borneo) and the Belia Malaya (Youth of Malaya) (Kamaruzzaman 1985: 7).

From the beginning of the twentieth century, the new Malay intellectuals gradually emerged principally as a result of the Malay response to the new social, political and educational circumstances created by the British colonial rule. As a distinctive new social group outside the traditional religious-political hierarchy, they were inculcated with certain modern Western values that were subversive of certain traditional values. The religious-educated intellectuals known as *Kaum Muda* were distinctive from traditional religious intellectuals known as *Kaum Tua* mainly because the former advocated the Islamic Modernist Movement, which attempted to find modern values in Islamic doctrines, and rejected traditional Islamic syncretism as unfit for modern progressive ideas. Most of the Malay-educated intellectuals came from peasant backgrounds. Largely as journalists or teachers of modern vernacular schools, together with many religious-educated intellectuals who were imbued with anti-colonialism in the Middle East, they vociferously reacted to colonial rule and traditional authority.

As sons of peasants and fishermen or recent Indonesian immigrants, the new intellectual groups, who were located in lower social strata and possessed shallow organizational roots in the society, were relatively excluded from various privileges or benefits by traditional authority and colonial rule. Despite their different educational backgrounds, based upon the social origins, they were grouped into "non-aristocratic" new intellectuals, whereas as sons of higher social strata, English-educated intellectuals who secured their special privileges with deep organizational roots in the society were categorized into "aristocratic" new intellectuals.

While both intellectual groups commonly regarded non-Malays, the Chinese in particular, as one of the prime culprits responsible for the backwardness of Malay society, under these distinctive conditions, they envisioned different political ideals for the future of Malaya. The aristocratic new intellectuals were willing to compromise with British colonial rule. They believed that given the maintenance of their special privileges and the threat from the non-Malays, a close cooperation with the British who protected their special privileges and implemented pro-Malay policies would be the best alternative. In a later political period, this intellectual trend was connected to their hope of obtaining independence within the British Commonwealth of Nations. In the meantime, the non-aristocratic new intellectuals viewed the traditional authority and British colonial rule as major obstacles to their upward social mobility. Accordingly, they showed uncompromising attitudes toward these establishments. In the wake of the attainment of political freedom, they attempted to reconstruct Malay society with a revolutionary ideal—*Indonesia Raya*. They were convinced that within the greater politico-cultural entity, the non-Malays would never swamp the Malays and the traditional authority as well as British colonial rule would not be dominant. In the prewar period, this intellectual trend became more apparent after the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (Young Malay Union) or KMM was formed in 1937.

The KMM was pioneered mainly by the effort of a vociferous Malay-educated activist, Ibrahim Yaacob who was born to a family of Bugis descent in 1911. After finishing his elementary education at a Malay vernacular school in his *kampung* (village), Ibrahim entered the SITC in 1928. While he studied in the college, Ibrahim was deeply imbued with the concept of *Indonesia Raya* and *semangat perjuangan*, partly by his mentors, Abdul Hadi bin Haji Hassan and Hassan Manan and partly by nationalist movements in Indonesia. Subsequently, he sharpened his political ideas while contributing many pieces to Malay journals *Warta Negeri* and *Chenderamata* (Serikonah 1988/1989: 2–3). In addition, at the SITC, Ibrahim organized and led some student associations, such as the *Ikatan Pemuda Pelajar*, the *Ikatan Semenanjung-Borneo* and the *Belia Malaya*. Right after graduation, he worked for three years as a schoolteacher in a Malay vernacular school at Bentong, Pahang (Serikonah 1988/1989: 3).

In 1934, Ibrahim moved to Kuala Lumpur and was hired as a Malay instructor by the *Pusat Latihan Polis Depoh* (Center for Depoh Police Training) for the FMS. Unlike his *kampung* life, Ibrahim's new life in the federal city was a stimulating one in several ways. Through various newspapers, in particular the *Fikiran Rakyat*, which was an official organ of the PNI, Ibrahim had opportunities to become familiar with various social, political and economic issues. In addition, he also frequently met his former friends from the SITC and other progressive young Malays and discussed various Malay problems in Malay society (Serikonah 1988/1989: 3). Ibrahim and his peers soon made their meetings a regular event by the beginning of 1937, holding one every weekend (Serikonah 1988/1989: 29).

While they held the regular meetings at the houses of Othman Muhamad Nor, Abdul Aziz and Hassan Manan, the young Malays decided to form a youth organization called the Persatuan Belia Malaya (Malay Youth Association). In a general meeting held at Malay Hostel in Kampung Bahru in March 1937, the assembly declared the inauguration of the Persatuan Belia Malaya and Ibrahim was elected Chairman. In a speech, Ibrahim announced that he would invite all former students of the SITC throughout the peninsula and North Borneo to join this new organization (Serikonah 1988/1989: 29). In another general meeting of the young Malays held at Gombak Lane Malay School in Kuala Lumpur in May 1937, Abdul Samad Ahmad suggested that the assembly replace the name Persatuan Belia Malaya with the Kesatuan Melayu Muda. His suggestion was adopted and the first peninsula-wide Malay political organization with the following officials came into being.

Ibrahim Yaacob, President; Onan bin Haji Siraj and Dr. Burhanuddin, Vice-President; Hassan Manan and Othaman Mohd. Nor, Secretary; Abdul Karim Rashid, Treasurer; Ishak Haji Muhammad, Propoganda; Ramil Haji Tahir, Abdullah Kamel, Bahar Abit, Pak Cik Ahmad, Zubir Salam and Thaheruddin Ahmad, Special Advisors. (Serikonah 1988/1989: 29)

The formation of the KMM marked a significant moment in modern Malay political history in that the non-aristocratic, anti-British and pro-Indonesian Malay groups within Malay community began to express themselves in a more organized form through a peninsula-wide political organization. From this time onward, together with the aristocratic, pro-British groups, the new Malay intellectuals' various opinions for the future of Malaya began to divide into two different political camps.

The KMM as a bulwark of the struggle for *Indonesia Raya* declared Malay unity and non-cooperation with the British as the touchstones of its political activity. For the basis of his struggle for *Indonesia Raya*, Ibrahim Yaacob sketched the historical background.

In fact, I can give a view with regard to the feeling of Greater Malaya [Indonesia] in the recent period. Almost 500 years passed since they [Malay race] had experienced civil wars, which resulted in the divisions of the Malay Peninsula into various states owned by some clans who were in rivalry with one another. Therefore, nowadays, the desire to unite all the Malay race of 2.5 million in the Malay land as well as 65 million in Indonesia began to emerge. They already showed the desire to unite themselves through various cooperation... (Ibrahim 1941: 7). [Author's translation]

Toward this ultimate aim, Ibrahim and other KMM leaders thought that all Malays in the peninsula should abandon their strong provincial feelings and unite under one nation and one country against British colonial rule. For this task, the KMM took the slogan, *satu untuk semua dan semua untuk satu* (one for all and all for one) (Agastja 1951: 73). Furthermore, they attacked the strong provincial feelings within the state boundaries of the traditional Malay aristocracy as "narrow nationalism." In particular, Ibrahim pinpointed "their tendency to exacerbate the cultural and ethnic differences between the

local-born Malays (*anak negeri*) and the recently arrived immigrant Malays (referred to as *anak dagang* – traders, or, more precisely, aliens)” (Cheah 1979: 89). He also criticized “the Malay’s habit of classifying themselves provincially as *orang Kelantan*, *orang Perak*, or ethnically as *orang Bugis*, *orang Minangkabau* and *orang Jawa*” (Cheah 1979: 89).

Simultaneously, pursuing the policy of non-cooperation with British colonial rule, the KMM leaders did not fail to condemn the British. They stressed that Malay “backwardness” was not due to their intrinsic “laziness” but due to British colonialism. They also attacked all pro-British elements within Malay society. In particular, the KMM leaders criticized the traditional Malay aristocrats, including the sultans and the English-educated bureaucrats, for leading self-indulgent lives, by cooperating with the British instead of leading Malay society forward (Cheah 1979: 89).

THE STRUGGLE FOR INDONESIA RAYA DURING THE WAR

It seemed to the KMM leaders that the Japanese invasion of Malaya was a good opportunity to strengthen their shallow organizational roots in prewar Malay society. To this aim, they tried to contact the Japanese invading forces through fifth column activities. The British soon discovered their activities and arrested most of the KMM leaders and many of its supporters shortly after the Japanese invasion. However, this did not lead to the termination of the KMM’s anti-British underground movement. KMM leaders like Onan Haji Siraj and Mustapha Hussein who managed to evade arrest quickly reorganized the KMM members into the Barisan Pemuda and played an important role in the military and social upheaval during the Japanese invasion and the initial months of the occupation. In Perak, Perlis, Kedah and Kelantan, KMM members voluntarily served as Japanese Army guides or interpreters, protecting lives and property of the Malays who were in trouble with the invading forces (Agastja 1951: 92–96).

The Japanese recognition of the KMM in the first few weeks of the invasion bestowed upon the KMM considerable socio-political power. Cheah Boon Kheng explains how the KMM gained many advantages.

During this period [between February and June 1942] KMM members emerged as the new privileged political elite, whose prestige superseded that of the Malay aristocracy and the British-trained Malay bureaucratic elite. With easy access to Japanese officers, political influence, special food rations, and allowances, they could extend protection and help to the Malay peasant masses and so become their new patrons. (Cheah 1979: 103)

However, the initial dominance of the KMM did not last long. In the first place, the subsequent decline of the KMM was partly related to a general political circumstance within Malay society. Before the war, politics in Malay society had been regarded as the prerogative of the sultan and his royal relatives, together with their representatives in the districts. By and large, Malays thus believed that it was not the business of ordinary people.

Furthermore, the war came before the KMM had sunk its firm organizational roots within Malay society. Accordingly, the ascendancy of the KMM in early 1942, from the outset, did not rest on inherent support among Malays. Indeed, enjoying Japanese recognition, the KMM played a buffer role between the Malays and the Japanese military in the confusion and fear of the initial months of the occupation. In this situation, it is not surprising that more than 4,000 members joined the KMM in a very short period (Bamadhaj 1975: 78). However, as various hardships set in under Japanese rule and the KMM could not provide effective protection from these privations, many opportunistic Malays, who had joined the KMM membership just for their own safety, began to quit the KMM.

A more decisive blow to the KMM as a political group came from the Japanese. In June 1942, the Malayan Military Administration or MMA suddenly informed Ibrahim Yaacob of its decision to ban the KMM. The exact reason why the MMA disbanded the KMM is still a matter of controversy among some scholars. A. J. Stockwell argues that the Japanese moved out of disappointment in the KMM's performance, rather than out of worry over its popularity.

Those KMM members who were released from Changi [gaol] in the fall of Singapore, were dispersed throughout the peninsula to further Japanese rather than nationalist aims. Moreover, the KMM, which was received by the Japanese, differed from the body that the British had proscribed. The influence of hard-core nationalists was reduced by an influx of weaker brethren, while the movements of radicals were closely supervised and there were obstacles in the way of free access across state boundaries. Some members of the pre-war KMM became so disillusioned with their new role of *claqueurs* for Nippon that they withdrew from activity. Indeed, it was perhaps more because of its futility than because of its potential danger that the Japanese disbanded the KMM in June 1942. (Stockwell 1979: 5)

In some respects, this argument seems accurate. When the Japanese invaded Malaya, the KMM was useful to the campaign of the Japanese Army because of its anti-British stance and propaganda activity for attaining support among the Malays. However, as soon as the MMA realized that Malay support for the KMM was mainly opportunistic and that even this support was undermined by the arrogance of some of its members, the MMA probably no longer treat the KMM as representative of the whole Malay community.

Yet the principal reason for the dismantling of the KMM seems to be more closely linked to the official Japanese attitude toward Malay nationalist groups. Right after the fall of Singapore, Ibrahim Yaacob, who had been released from prison, made the following proposals in a conversation with Fujiwara Iwaichi (War Office hereafter WO 203/6314).

- I. The YMA (Young Malay Association) should be open to all MALAYAN youths and should be extended throughout MALAYA.
- II. The JAPANESE should accord special protection to the MALAYS and should acknowledge their political and social superiority over the

CHINESE and INDIANS.

- III. The newspaper *Warta Malaya* should be revived and should receive assistance from the JAPANESE.
- IV. The status of the SULTANS of the various states should be reconsidered.

To these proposals, Fujiwara replied that except for the third proposal, the other proposals were not in conformity with the policy of the Japanese Military Administration. He suggested that

... it would be better for the Association to act as a cultural organization encouraging thrift and diligence rather than to pursue unattainable political aims by holding windy political meetings signifying nothing but that the Association was a collection of windy young men who neither knew what they wanted or how to attain it. They would be a nuisance to the Government and the inhabitants of MALAYA. (WO 203/6314)

The official directive to invading forces was that “premature encouragement of native independence movements shall be avoided,” (Benda 1965: 2) and this continued to be the Japanese official policy throughout 1942. Based upon these sources, we might speculate that it seemed bothersome to the Japanese, who planned to incorporate Malaya into their empire as a permanent colony, that the KMM was gaining greater socio-political influence among Malays.

After its dissolution, 1943 was a year of discouragement for the KMM. The first source of frustration for the KMM came from the dispersal of its central leadership. After the KMM was disbanded, most of the leaders like Ishak Haji Muhammad, Abdullah Kamel, Taharuddin Ahmad and Muhammad Zallehudin were employed on *Berita Malai* and other Malay publications issuing propaganda under the *Sendenbu* (Propaganda Department). In the meantime, some other KMM leaders, such as Mustapha Hussein, Ahmad Boestamam, Idris Karim, Abdul Kadir Adabi and M. N. Othman left Singapore, mainly because they were dissatisfied with Ibrahim’s autocratic leadership and the role of Japan as a “liberator of Asia” (Cheah 1979: 104).

Another cause of the KMM’s decline occurred in August 1943, when the Japanese announced that the four northern Malay states, Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Trengganu would be returned to Thailand. All four states known as the Unfederated Malay States or UMS had a population that was mainly Malay in composition. Among the four states, in particular, Kelantan was the center of a flourishing Malay press and of Islamic education, showing strong political consciousness. Furthermore, in Kelantan, there was an active branch of the KMM (Abd. Hamid 1972/1973: 84–96).

As the fortunes of war turned against the Japanese, the Southern Army Staff prepared an “Outline for the Organization of Native Armies” in September 1943. Following the plan, the Japanese instructed Ibrahim Yaacob to form the *Giyu-gun* or *Pembela Tanahair* (PETA: Defenders of the Motherland) in December 1943, eighteen months after the ban on the KMM. The *Giyu-gun* was to be a fighting force to assist the Japanese Army in defence of all Malaya against the expected Allied attacks (Lebra 1977: 115, 119). As reflected in the

name, *Giyu-gun*, the Volunteer Army was not aimed at the independence of Malaya at all, but there was no doubt that its formation was viewed by the depressed leaders of the KMM as a good opportunity to restore Malay national dignity and prestige.

In order to arouse the interest of Malay *pemuda* (youth) in the new organization, the KMM leaders soon began to mount an aggressive publicity campaign through various Malay publications and personal contacts. The monthly magazine *Fajar Asia* appealed to Malay pride.

The *Giyu-gun* is a genuine Army which will consist only of Malays. The recruits must be those who genuinely wish to defend their motherland. The second unit has already been formed and only awaits the arrival of more dedicated youths who are prepared to carry out their responsibilities to the motherland. Malay *pemuda* must seize this excellent opportunity to show the world that within their breasts flows the blood of Hang Tuah [the Malay historic warrior] who once reminded us: "The Malays shall not vanish in this world." Mr. Ibrahim Yaacob who has been appointed commander of the Malay *Giyu-gun* says he wishes to see every male Malay enlist as a soldier and establish the Army. (*Fajar Asia*, December 1943)

In February 1944, Ibrahim, together with Onan Haji Siraj and Ishak Haji Muhammad, toured Johor and Malacca to recruit Malay *pemuda*. Through telegrams, Ibrahim Yaacob contacted the previous KMM leaders who had earlier left Singapore out of disgust with his leadership and the lack of Japanese backing for the independence of Malaya (Ahmad 1983: 36).

In spite of the original Japanese plan, which envisaged the *Giyu-gun* as a multi-racial army, the Volunteer Army largely consisted of Malay *pemuda* under the officers who had previously been leaders of the KMM. By April 1944, 2,000 Malay *pemuda* had been recruited into the *Giyu-gun* (Cheah 1979: 106). But the possibility of the *Giyu-gun* ever developing into a cohesive and effective military force, as the leaders of the KMM desired, was checked by the effective control exercised by the MMA (Bamadhaj 1975: 115-116). In addition, while the Malay nationalist leaders did not have any actual power over the new organization, the PETA was strictly indoctrinated with Nippon spirit under the watchful eyes of the Japanese. The five guiding principles that had to be memorized by every Malay *pemuda* in *Giyu-gun* pledged total adherence to the goals of *Dai Nippon* (Great Nippon).

1. We, the *Malai Giyugun* are to be loyal to the Empire of Nippon above all.
2. We, the *Malai Giyugun* are to assimilate and to display the spirit of Nippon soldiers.
3. We, the *Malai Giyugun* are to undergo training after the model of Nippon soldiers.
4. We, the *Malai Giyugun* are to complete the defense of the peninsula with the Imperial Forces as the nuclei.
5. We, the *Malai Giyugun* are to contribute to the attainment of the prosperity of *Malai* and the reconstruction of *Dai Toa* [Greater East Asia]. (Cheah 1985:86)

Furthermore, contrary to its primary function, the MMA employed the Malay *Giyu-gun* principally for anti-guerrilla operations, contributing to the worsening animosity between Malays and Chinese. The KMM leaders' disillusionment with the failure in organizing Malay *pemuda* into a strong military force for attaining their aspirations is well described in Samad Ismail novel, *Patah Sayab Terbang Jua*.

...People like us are no longer of any value. We are nationalists. So long as we remain so, we will be neglected. If we try to be active, we are obstructed. If we oppose, we lose our heads. Shamsuddin [Ibrahim Yaacob] knows. He wants an Army. The Japanese say, what's the problem? But Shamsuddin has no authority. His Army is not a political Army. It's an Army instilled with the *Bushido* [spirit of warrior] to serve only the Japanese... (Cited by Yahaya 1969: 26–27). [Author's translation]

In September 1944, the deteriorating war situation forced Koiso, the new Japanese Prime Minister, to arouse the Indonesian people through the bait of independence. While this political development in Indonesia influenced pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists in Malaya, who were demoralized by the weakness of *Giyu-gun*, the Japanese, who expected an imminent attack by the Allied Forces, began to heighten this political mood. They turned their attention back to the KMM, which was the only anti-British nationalist group in Malaya, for the same reason as in early 1942. Under these new circumstances, during the early months of 1945, the KMM leaders began to emphasize their paramount goal, *Indonesia Raya* in Malay publications.

In May 1945, the MMA encouraged the KMM leaders to organize a new volunteer force called *Kekuatan Rakyat Istimewa* or KRIS (Special People's Force) under Ibrahim's leadership and the supervision of two Japanese civilian officers, Itagaki and Akamatsu. On May 4 or 5, in a meeting held at Ibrahim's house in Singapore, Itagaki appealed to the KMM leaders.

What I have to say tonight is unofficial, but I think the independence of Malaya is coming. To be ready for this, you should all start making preparations. Today I have secured the permission of the Chief of Staff, so that Ibrahim can function as leader of the Malay nationalist movement. I hope you will all think seriously about the idea. (Cited by Cheah 1979: 110)

Ibrahim and other KMM leaders, however, had to overcome many difficulties in reuniting former KMM members into the KRIS. First of all, they needed to persuade Mustapha Hussein, who had been greatly disillusioned with the Japanese, to mobilize his 800 followers into the new volunteer forces (Cheah 1979: 99–100). Secondly, they had to spend much time in their attempt to organize KRIS branches throughout Malaya, making use of former KMM branches as nuclei, since their officials were now scattered and disorganized. Ibrahim Yaacob, who was then released from the *Giyu-gun*, toured the peninsula and personally kept in touch with former KMM members. The other KMM leaders also canvassed various parts of the peninsula to recruit new members. In addition, they also contacted some English-educated bureaucrats

and the sultans of Perak, Pahang and Johor in order to convince them to the viability of independence of Malaya within Greater Indonesia (Arena 1980: 26). In this way, the KMM leaders managed to organize the KRIS in July 1945.

In an effort to achieve *Indonesia Raya*, Ibrahim Yaacob soon sent three representatives to meet with Soekarno and make known him the Malay people's wish. According to Itagaki's suggestion, he also planned an All-Malaya Pemuda Conference to be held on August 17 and 18 at the Station Hotel in Kuala Lumpur. At the meeting, KRIS was to announce its support for Indonesian independence and the Malay people's wish for *Indonesia Raya* (Cheah 1979: 112 – 113). In August when the Indonesian delegation headed by Soekarno and Hatta stopped in Taiping, Perak on their way back to Indonesia after their talks on Indonesian independence with Marshal Terauchi, the Supreme Commander of Japanese Forces in Southeast Asia, Ibrahim Yaacob met the two famous Indonesian nationalist figures and told them that the Malays hoped to gain independence in union with Indonesia. Ibrahim Yaacob described their brief talks.

In their talks, Soekarno who accompanied Hatta shook Ibrahim's hand and said: "Let's create one motherland for those of Indonesian stock," Ibrahim Yaacob replied: "We Malays will faithfully create the motherland by uniting Malaya with an independent Indonesia. (Ibrahim 1957: 65) [Author's translation]

However, while the conference scheduled for August was busily being prepared, the sudden surrender of the Japanese foreshadowed the failure of the KMM's struggle for *Indonesia Raya*. While the news of the unconditional surrender of the Japanese was reported on August 15, Ibrahim Yaacob convened the All-Malaya Pemuda Conference on August 16. At the session, the delegates discussed three major issues: "whether to push through Malayan independence within *Indonesia Raya*; how to prevent Chinese MPAJA [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army] domination of the country and safeguard Malay rights within the administration; how to revolve the stigma of collaboration which hung over the KRIS delegates" (Cheah 1979: 115).

In the meantime, Indonesians had already proclaimed their independence without including Malaya. It was time for the KMM leaders to make their own last bid for the independence of Malaya. However, at this critical moment, Ibrahim Yaacob, together with Onan Haji Siraj and Hassan Manan flew to Jakarta on August. Many disappointed KMM members once again dispersed throughout Malaya. The vociferous Malay nationalist figure's exit to Indonesia is still a matter of controversy. The returning colonial regime and later the government of Independent Malaya under Tunku Abdul Rahman did not allow him to return Malaya, labeling him "a dangerous political activist," and his life in Jakarta became a long exile (Cheah 1979: 120).

THE STRUGGLE FOR INDONESIA RAYA AFTER THE WAR

The paramount aim of the KMM did not die with Ibrahim Yaacob's exit to Jakarta. Its other key members who remained in Malaya like Dr. Burhanuddin

al-Helmy, Ishak Haji Muhammad and Ahmad Boestamam established the Partai Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya or PKMM (the Malay Nationalist Party or MNP) in October 17, 1945 and continued the struggle for *Indonesia Raya*. The MNP held its inaugural congress at Ipoh Town Hall in November 30. The congress, attended by more than 300 people including many former KMM members from all over the peninsula, passed the following eight resolutions and elected Dr. Burhanuddin as president, Ishak Haji Muhammad vice-president and Ahmad Boestamam acting secretary-general.

1. To unite the Malay nation and to inculcate national feelings in the hearts of the Malay people with the ultimate aim of making Malaya unite with the big family, namely, the Republic of Greater Indonesia (*Republik Indonesia Raya*).
2. To strive for freedom of speech, press, assembly and freedom to pursue knowledge.
3. To uplift the Malays' economic position by promoting industry, commerce agriculture.
4. To strive for freedom of agriculture in the sense that no tax should be imposed on agricultural land and farmers should reserve the freedom to market their products as they like.
5. To strive towards the granting of complete freedom for the Malays to establish their national schools using their language as the medium of instruction.
6. To encourage the publication of books which will promote democracy and at the same time enhance the Malay political position and the sense of nationalism.
7. MNP should foster friendly relations with other domiciled races in this country to create a united and prosperous Malaya as a component member of *Republik Indonesia Raya*.
8. To support the Indonesian nationalist movement for the achievement of independence. (Cited by Firdaus 1985: 79)

The MNP leaders, as reflected in the first paragraph of the eight resolutions, had as deep ethnic consideration in their political strategy. There was no doubt that unity among Malays was the stepping-stone for their political program. On the other hand, as the seventh point revealed, if necessary, they intended to obtain the cooperation of all anti-British political groups in Malaya to win full independence from British colonial rule as a preliminary step toward their paramount goal. They were evidently convinced that once they achieved the final goal, the non-Malays automatically would be demoted to minor ethnic groups within a larger political entity, *Indonesia Raya*.

On October 10, 1945, the British Government made the first announce of a Malayan Union scheme. The Union scheme, which involved a constitutional reform designed to replace the prewar constitutional structure of Malaya, was to merger the four Federated, the five Unfederated states and the Settlements

of Penang and Malacca into a united state with a strong central government under a governor and executive councils. The Malay sultans were to surrender their full sovereignty to the British Crown. As another principle of the new constitution, citizenship rights were to be extended to all non-Malays without discrimination (Lau 1991). In short, the Malayan Union scheme represented a complete departure from the whole trend of the British pro-Malay policy in prewar Malaya, which had always confirmed that Malaya was a Malay country.

The initial reaction of the MNP to the Malayan Union was positive. In particular, the MNP leaders who viewed strong provincial feelings within the state boundaries of the traditional Malay aristocracy as the prime obstacle to their ultimate political goal, *Indonesia Raya* supported the idea of a unitary state for the peninsula.

The idea of such a small country like Malaya having different and independent systems of internal administration would not be in keeping with the peculiar situation and needs of this post-war world anymore. (Cited by Khong 1984: 88)

It was on this basis that the Malayan Union scheme would be a cornerstone for self-government and full independence.

However, after recognizing that the new constitutional reform was a British attempt to re-colonize Malaya on the pretext of self-government, and widespread antagonism toward the Malayan Union in Malay society, the party discarded its early positive attitude toward the Union scheme. Dr. Burhanuddin and other MNP leaders who attended the Pan-Malayan Malay Congress on March 1, 1946 vehemently proclaimed their willingness to stand up to the British. Furthermore, they proposed that the congress pass a resolution for "the pursuance of a 'one hundred per cent Independent Malaya.'" When the proposal was not adopted, the MNP delegation decided to stage a one-day withdrawal from the congress (Firdaus 1985: 86).

It is interesting to understand the reason why the MNP leaders participated in the congress convened by pro-British Malay intellectuals including Dato Onn bin Jaafar and other conservative Malay delegations who intended to a much different from the ultimate goal of the MNP in the protest against the Malayan Union. While Malay anger at the new British proposals accelerated during the first few months of 1946, Dato Onn clarified the UMNO's aims.

1. To remain in the British Empire, with a democratic representative legislature from those of Malay race with Chinese and Indians representing commerce, etcetera. In other words, the Malays want to be the privileged race as in 1941, but with representatives elected by the people instead of being officially appointed. They do not want citizenship to be granted wholesale to the Chinese, as they realize that they cannot compete with them economically, but they would not object to selective naturalization.
2. If the above is not achieved they would prefer to be free partners in a Free Indonesia, rather than members of the Malayan Union. (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 3, 1946)

In spite of their different political visions for the replacement of the Malayan Union, Dr. Burhanuddin and other MNP leaders must have been very attracted by the second aim of the UMNO. In their view, as long as the British would not change their original stand, the alliance of the UMNO and the MNP in the campaign for full independence within *Indonesia Raya* seemed to be unavoidable.

However, their hope soon proved only a dream. Confronted by organized and constant protest in Malaya, the British considered to repeal the Union scheme and prepared to hold negotiations with pro-British Malay leaders on the Federation proposals during June 1946. Furthermore, the British accepted Dato Onn's suggestion by which all other representatives except the UMNO leaders and the Malay rulers had to be excluded from the negotiations. In a representative meeting of the UMNO held at Ipoh on June 29 and 30, the frustrated MNP leaders broke their uneasy alliance with the MNP when two disputes arose. There was "the decision that all affiliated organizations should pay subscriptions to UMNO at the rate of \$1 per capita of their membership, a decision which involved the payment of \$60,000 by the MNP," which had claimed a membership of 60,000 (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 6, 1946). "There was also disagreement over the question of a flag for UMNO. The MNP leaders wanted the plain red and white Indonesian flag but this proposal was rejected" (Colonial Office hereafter CO 537/1582). Subsequently, Ahmad Boestamam attacked the UMNO.

While the MNP believes in struggling against British Imperialism, the UMNO prefers to rely on British rule and has merely been dissatisfied with the British rulers for withdrawing from the Malay upper classes the privileges which they had enjoyed prior to war. (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 6, 1946)

From this time onward, ever conscious of the power struggle against the UMNO within Malay community and mindful of the need to convince the British of their principles in the struggle for independence, Dr. Burhanuddin and other MNP leaders actively sought to organize mass support for their program of anti-imperialism, anti-Federation and full independence within *Indonesia Raya*. Toward this goal, they toured the peninsula, disseminating their propaganda to the *rakyat* (Malay masses) in various meetings and rallies, setting up new branches, affiliating various pro-Indonesian political groups to the MNP as satellite organizations, organizing youths and religious groups into its three major political wings – the Angkatan Pemuda Insaf or API (Generation of Awakened Youth), the Angkatan Wanita Sedar or AWAS (Generation of Awakened Woman) and the Majlis Agama Tertinggi or MATA (Supreme Islamic Council) – and seeking the cooperation of all non-Malay political groups which advocated anti-imperialism.

In August 1946, Dr. Burhanuddin attempted to obtain the cooperation of Kiyai Salleh, who claimed 40,000 followers in Johor alone as the well-known expert of an invulnerability cult at Batu Pahat. When Kiyai Salleh asked the reason why the MNP was so interested in the cult movement, Dr. Burhanuddin

answered that Malays should be in a position to defend themselves in the face of the imminent Third World War (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 10, 1946). During his visit to Singapore in the same month, mindful of the exclusive negotiations for the Federation proposals, Dr. Burhanuddin made the MNP's stance clear.

...he and his party are in favour of a Malayan Union in accordance with the will of the people, and not in accordance with the terms of the White Paper, nor would his party be bound by any settlement that may be made between the U.M.N.O. and the Sultans on the one hand, and the British Government on the other (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 10, 1946).

On October 17, the MNP held a meeting at Benta, Pahang to celebrate its anniversary.

About 50 persons attended the meeting. On the same day, an MNP mass rally of about 1,000 people took place at Taiping (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 14, 1946).

During November, MNP leaders continued their drive to widen the influence of the party over the *rakyat*. They formed the Kesatuan Kaum Tani Melayu (Union of Malay peasants) in Selangor. In an effort to organize the peasant organization, contrary to their anti-imperialistic orientation, the MNP leaders issued a pamphlet that expressed pro-British sentiments. They felt compelled to temporarily disguise their true ideals in order to attract "the very conservative peasant community" (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 15, 1946). In Singapore, the MNP opened a new branch at Seletar. With this branch as the center, the MNP leaders planned to open sub-branches in the villages and set up a central committee that would consist of elected representatives from each of the branches (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 15, 1946). In order to attend the celebrations for the thirteenth monthly anniversary of the founding of the MNP, Dr. Burhanuddin arrived in Singapore on November 21. At the celebration, he announced that the MNP would publish the *Pelita Malaya* as its official organ with subscriptions raised from the members at the rate of \$1 per capita (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 15, 1946).

On December 25, the second congress of the MNP took place at the Royalty Hall in Malacca. Before the opening of the congress, there was a procession through the town. In the procession, three hundred men and about twenty women, mostly API youths and AWAS women, carried banners containing such slogans as "Down with the Imperialists" and "Malaya and Indonesia are One" (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 16, 1946). After some brief proceedings "to sing the Indonesian National Anthem and to observe one minute 'silence' to commemorate the Fall of Malacca and the Indonesian brethren who [had] fallen in battle against the Dutch" (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 16, 1946), Dr. Burhanuddin made an opening speech touching on topics such as the oneness of Malays and Indonesians, the awakening of a spirit of independence among Malays, and the prohibition in the Islamic religion on the subjugation of Muslims to any *kafir* (non-Muslim). Ishak Haji Muhammad suggested that the UMNO join the MNP in the demand for independence. Also, he reminded the

MNP to carefully examine the Federation proposals. Ishak Haji Muhammad finished his speech by claiming that the MNP possessed 70,000 members all over Malaya (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 16, 1946). At the congress, the following slate won the top officers for 1947.

President: Dr. Burhanuddin
 Vice-President: Ishak Haji Muhammad
 Secretary-General: Abdul Hamid bin Abdul
 Assistant Secretary-General: Mohamad bin Mustaffa
 Treasurer: Hashim bin Ali
 Assistant Treasurer: Yahaya bin Nasim (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 16, 1946).

At this juncture, it is necessary to mention that Abdul Hamid replaced Ahmad Boestamam as new Secretary-General of the party. In short, this was a result of a sharp ideological division within the MNP. From July 1946 onward, the API gradually revealed a militant nature in its activities and outlook particularly through its military drill, parade and violent public speeches. By November, the wearing of uniform by API members and the carrying out of military training in public became common. Concomitant with the militant outlook of API, Boestamam's public speeches became more violent. In a meeting held at Temerloh for inauguration of Angkatan Wanita Sedar, Boestamam declared, "Independence must be gained by bloodshed and not otherwise" (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 15, 1946).

Meanwhile, Dr. Burhanuddin and other moderate MNP leaders came to realize that its youth wing under the leadership of Boestamam was so violent that the API was not in conformity with the policy and the direction of the MNP. A split thus developed among the MNP leaders. Boestamam deliberately did not attend the MNP Central Committee scheduled to meet at Kuala Lumpur on November 10. Furthermore, when the Central Committee adopted a schedule for the second congress of MNP that would be held in Malacca December 25–27, Boestamam announced that the API would hold its own congress during the preceding three days (Ibid.). As promised, the first congress of the API Youth Corps was held at Malacca in December. In his speech, Boestamam mentioned that there were two ways to achieve independence – "Radical and Revolutionary" and "Diplomacy," but that the API felt more confident with the first method (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 16, 1946).

The ideological cleavage among MNP leaders was highlighted at the second congress of MNP following the congress of API when the moderate leaders firmly argued, "General-Secretary Boestamam should not be reelected to the Executive Committee" (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 16, 1946). Boestamam was very upset with the insulting implication behind their suggestion. Boestamam announced to the congress his resignation as Acting Secretary-General of the MNP as well as API's independent function (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 16, 1946).

At the monthly anniversary celebrations of MNP held in Kuala Lumpur in January 1947, Dr. Burhanuddin together with the new top officers reviewed

their tours throughout the peninsula in the attempt to set up new branches. Dr. Burhanuddin's speech focused on religious matters. In Balik Pulau, Penang, there was a parade attended by two hundred uniformed Malay youth. They shouted "Merdeka" and "Darah" and sang patriotic songs. In the procession, MNP leaders urged Malays to support their policy for independence and to reject the Federation proposals (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 2, 1947). On January 17, MNP leaders held a meeting to celebrate Indonesian Independence Day. After paying respects to the Indonesian flag and Indonesian war casualties, they elected a committee for an organized opposition to the Federation proposals. And the leadership declared, "if amicable negotiations with Government failed, violation would be adopted" (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 2, 1947).

During February, Dr. Burhanuddin published a pamphlet entitled "Perjuangan Kita" (Our Struggle), which justified the struggle principles of the MNP. In this document, he emphasized the following points.

1. the shaping of Malaya on the basis of democracy;
2. the Malay race is submerged by the immigrants; Burma, India, Indonesia and Vietnam are independent, why not Malaya; and
3. appeals to the Sultans, religious-leaders, and schoolteachers to co-operate and citing the co-operation of these persons in Indonesia. (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 3, 1947).

Based upon the pamphlet, which well explained the struggle principles of MNP, Dr. Burhanuddin and other MNP leaders continued to make propaganda toward the *rakyat* by emphasizing the non-Muslim aspect of the British government and the collaboration of the sultans and aristocratic intellectuals with the *kafir* government (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 3, 1947). At a meeting of the MNP held at Kuala Krai, Kelantan during the same month, Ibrahim bin Hussain, a Malacca born teacher, addressed the twenty-five participants. He urged them to unite in order to achieve independence, emphasizing the oppression of the Malays by non-Muslim Europeans. The schoolteacher finished his speech by recommending that they send their children to Arabic schools rather than to Malay schools (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 3, 1947).

Ishak Haji Muhammad visited a small village in Paya Guntang, Malacca on March 15, where most inhabitants were Javanese. He told the villagers that the fight for independence within *Indonesia Raya* was imminent and non-Malays would help the cause. Subsequently, Ishak visited various places in Trengganu. It was reported that his message was well received there, hitting the usual points.

1. Malayan youths should unite and follow the example of Indonesian youths.
2. Malaya should be independent like Indonesia.
3. Malaya should join with Indonesia (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 4, 1947).

A public reception for the Malay delegation, that included Dr. Burhanuddin, upon his return from the Pan-Asiatic Conference in New Delhi, was held at the Aljuneid Arabic School, Victoria Street on May 21. In a press conference following the reception, Dr. Burhanuddin announced his plan for an extensive lecture tour throughout Malaya for the purpose of sharing what he had learned at the conference with the *rakyat*. And he reaffirmed the struggle for self-government, independence and unity with Indonesia as fundamental MNP policy (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 8, 1947).

As the first visit of his extensive lecture tour, Dr. Burhanuddin toured Malacca on June 1 and held various meetings. Speaking about his experience in New Delhi, he explained that

his manners and dress evoked considerable interest among the delegates of the Inter-Asian Relations Conference ... he took every opportunity to tell everybody that Malaya was the country of the Malays ... the Malays had every right to the country ... Burma, while on the eve of her Independence, was suffering from other enslavements which were common to Malaya, namely, the economic control of the country was mainly in the hands of the Indians. Immigration problems were thrashed out... (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 9, 1947)

On June 18, he participated in a reception arranged by the Gopeng branch of the MNP. He made an interesting speech regarding the flags of the country delegations represented at the Pan-Asiatic Conference. He said that "his seat was marked with a flag bearing the head of a tiger, that this annoyed him, and that he tore it down, threw it away and replaced it with the red and white flag of Indonesia" (MSS/PIJ Serial No. 10, 1947).

During June, Dr. Burhanuddin continued to tour North Malaya. For ten days, he visited Taiping, Parit Buntar, Bukit Mertajam, Balik Pulau, Trong, the Dindings and Kuala Kangsar. In Balik Pulau, there was a procession of cars, lorries and motorcycles. Over three hundred men and women carrying the red and white Indonesian flag attended the procession to welcome their leaders. Dr. Burhanuddin and his party led the procession and arrived at the Balik Pulau football ground. On a notice board of the platform, "MALAYA HAK MELAYU" (Malaya belongs to the Malays), was written in white and "MERDEKA" written in red (MSS/PIJ Serial No. 10, 1947). On July 8, Dr. Burhanuddin and other MNP leaders visited Sungei Yen, Kedah. In a gathering of about 250 people mostly of Indonesian descent, Dr. Burhanuddin emphasized a bloody struggle for independence for the first time, mentioning the spilling of blood in the Indonesian revolution (MSS/PIJ Serial No. 10, 1947).

On July 21, Dr. Burhanuddin attended a party arranged by the Chinese Association at Pasir Mas, Kelantan. In his address, maintaining that there was no connection between the MNP and the Malayan Communist Party or MCP, he said that the MNP cooperated with non-Malays (MSS/PIJ Serial No. 10, 1947). In another meeting in Kelantan, Dr. Burhanuddin answered some questions with regard to independence. In reply to one question, he explained the three stages of MNP strategy in the struggle for independence: (1) Self-Government; (2) Full Independence; and (3) Amalgamation of Malaya and

Indonesia under the name of "*Indonesia Raya*." In replay to another question as to his belief in revolution, he answered "he did not desire a violent revolution but that he would work for independence in a peaceful manner" (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 13, 1947).

During October, the MNP mounted considerable activities in Kelantan, Pahang, Penang and Singapore. There was a meeting at the headquarters of MNP in Kota Bahru. At this meeting, Abdul Hamid Mahmud, President of the Kelantan branch, made the following report in its movements under the heading "Policy."

The downfall of the Malay race is not due to laziness, ignorance or lack of strength, but is mainly due to Imperialism. Malaya is the hereditary right of the Malays and, therefore, they should have freedom to discuss politics and the economy of this country. The prosperity and safety of Malaya will only be found if this country is given freedom. Freedom of Malaya will Malaya [Indonesia] (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 18, 1947).

Another meeting of the MNP took place at Bentong, Pahang on October 17. With about 150 representatives from each branch of the party in Pahang in attendance, Mahmud Baginda, President of the Bentong branch, pointed out that the UMNO showed sympathy toward the Indonesian revolution, accusing the Dutch for their aggression on Indonesian islands. He further mentioned, "the spirit of independence among Indonesians was manifested by their use of bamboo weapons against modern war weapons of the Dutch and other Powers." On the same day, there were meetings of the MNP in Penang and Singapore too. In the meetings, the MNP representatives vehemently attacked the British and the UMNO, mentioning the Federation proposals as "undemocratic" (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 18, 1947).

After finishing the scheduled nation-wide tours, the MNP hold its third congress at Queens Theater, Geylang, Singapore on December 28, 1947. At the congress attended by about 600 people, the MNP leaders opened the meeting with the usual proceedings – the saluting of the Indonesian national flag, the singing of the Indonesian anthem and the honoring of the Indonesian war casualties. A number of MNP leaders made the familiar speeches regarding anti-Imperialism, anti-Federation, and full independence within *Indonesia Raya* (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 22, 1947). The closed sessions of the congress elected new office holders for 1948. There was a conspicuous change among the new office bearers. Dr. Burhanuddin stepped down from the presidency and Ishak Haji Muhammad replaced him as new President of the MNP. The reason for Dr. Burhanuddin's sudden resignation was not clear. The most probable reason was the growing influence of Malay communist leaders within the party as their reaction to Dr. Burhanuddin's moderate leadership after the ideological division between moderate leaders and Ahmad Boestamam at the second congress of the MNP (MSS/PIJ, Serial No. 22, 1947).

In spite of the ideological cleavage among MNP leaders, the party continued to exert itself in order to further its support within the Malay community, hoping to overshadow the UMNO's negotiations with the British

on the Federation proposals. However, the MNP's desire turned out to be futile when the Federation of Malaya was inaugurated on February 1, 1948. Even worse, the MNP got into serious trouble when the British declared the Malayan Emergency to face the MCP's armed revolt on June 18, 1948. Under the Emergency Regulations, the British proscribed the MCP and other anti-British political organizations. Despite the arrest of its president, Ishak Haji Muhammad, and many other key leaders, the MNP itself was not proscribed immediately. The party continued to function under an acting president, Mohamed Taha Kalu in Singapore. Nevertheless, under the Emergency Regulations that stringently restricted anti-British political activities, the MNP was soon paralyzed and eventually faded into political oblivion after it was formally banned in May, 1950. With the MNP's dissolution, the prime ideal of the pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists, namely independence of Malaya within *Indonesia Raya* eventually died. Consequently, in the wake of the communist armed revolt, the UMNO's constitutional struggle became the only possible path toward the independence of Malaya.

EPILOGUE

Although the anti-British and pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists were deprived of their formal organization, they never gave up their *semangat perjuangan* against the British. Former MNP leaders continued to provide the Malay community with their *semangat perjuangan* through various indirect or seemingly apolitical means. The newspaper *Melayu Raya*, which became an only official channel for the manifestation of *semangat perjuangan* among the nationalists, raised various issues to protect the cause of Malays. With regard to social affairs, the paper concentrated on the various problems of the unfortunate Malays like housing shortage, high cost of living and unstable working conditions. The *Melayu Raya* also touched upon the "backward" Malay educational problems. In the newspaper, there were many references to the fate of present Malay schools, Malay teachers and the Malay national language (CO 537/7243).

When the *Melayu Raya* was banned in January, 1951 (CO 537/7243), a few remaining members of the MNP like Asraf, Keris Mas, Tongkat Warrant, Masuri SN and Awami Sarkam managed to maintain their *semangat perjuangan* in a literary organization known as the Angkatan Sasterawan 50 or ASAS 50 (The 1950 Literary Generation) which was formed on August 6, 1950 with the declared aim of "cultural nationalism" (Firdaus 1985: 121 – 122).

When two new political parties – the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party or PMIP and the Partai Rakyat (People's Party) – came into existence in 1955 under the leadership of two preeminent figures, Dr. Burhanuddin al-Helmy and Ahmad Boestamam, the diehard *semangat perjuangan* among the pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists, which had survived under the stringent Emergency Regulations, was encapsulated into the ideals of the two parties based principally upon anti-imperialism for "genuine independence and genuine sovereignty" of Malaya (Burhanuddin 1957).

When the Federation of Malaya became an independent nation on August 31, 1957, the anti-British and pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists, who had regrouped around the political ideals in the PMIP and the Partai Rakyat, made up the parliamentary and political opposition camp to the UMNO, the Malayan Chinese Association or MCA and the Malayan Indian Congress or MIC in the Alliance coalition.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the beginning of the twentieth century, new Malay intellectuals gradually emerged as a result of the Malay response to the new circumstances created by British colonial rule. By the end of the 1920s, they came into existence within Malay society as a distinctive new social group outside the traditional religious-political hierarchy. Deeply imbued with modern or Western values, the new Malay intellectuals envisioned socio-political ideals that had the greatest impact on the future of their society. In this context, the 1920s was the watershed for the nation building of Malaya. However, in spite of their common goals of social reform and the attainment of independence, the new Malay intellectuals were divided into two intellectual camps in line with their different social backgrounds – aristocratic and non-aristocratic. In consequence, their ways and means to secure them greatly differed.

By and large, quite contrary to the English-educated aristocratic new intellectuals, the religious and the Malay educated non-aristocratic new intellectuals who were located in lower social strata possessed shallow organizational roots in Malay community and were relatively excluded from various privileges and benefits by traditional hierarchy and colonial rule. Under these distinctive conditions, bearing a strong communal feeling in mind, they envisioned a revolutionary ideal for the future of Malaya – *Indonesia Raya*. They were convinced that within the greater politico-cultural entity, non-Malay threats as well as the traditional hierarchy and the colonial rule would be demoted. This political ideal became clearly visible after the Kesatuan Melayu Muda, which encapsulated anti-British and pro-Indonesian elements within Malay society, was set up in 1937.

To the pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists, the Japanese occupation seemed to be an opportunity to strengthen their weak prewar position. As the only anti-British Malay nationalist group, they hoped that the Japanese would treat their movement seriously. Indeed, through tactical collaboration with the Japanese, the KMM leaders intended to awaken *semangat perjuangan* among the Malays to the point where they could demand the independence of Malaya within *Indonesia Raya*. However, their attempts were doomed to fail. In the first place, in the general conservatism of Malay society, the ascendancy of the KMM in early 1942, from the outset did not rest on inherent support among the Malays. In the second place, the Japanese erratic policies toward the KMM greatly hampered its cause. Finally, in spite of its military trainings with the formations of the PETA and the KRIS, it was hardly possible for these organizations to be cohesive and effective military forces for Malay nationalist

aims under the strict supervision of the MMA. The combination of all these reasons led to the KMM's failure to further extend their organizational roots in the Malay community and to upgrade its actual strength as a nationalist force during the war period.

While the UMNO amicably pursued the negotiations with the British on the Federation proposals, the MNP made great efforts to further its relatively meager support within the Malay community, hoping to change the British constitutional policy. However, the MNP's desire turned out to be futile when the Federation of Malaya was inaugurated on February 1, 1948. There were several reasons preventing the MNP from further extending its political power in Malaya. First of all, the reason was closely linked to a general Malay attitude toward the British. Shortly after the war, most of Malays who had experienced various untold sufferings under the Japanese rule welcomed the returning British as a secure alternative. When the savior attempted to impose the Malayan Union, the Malays vigorously protested against the Union proposals. However, as far as most of the Malays were concerned, the protest basically was not against the British but against the Union scheme, which they believed, was intended to deprive the Malays of their birthright. While the UMNO leaders effectively tapped the predominant socio-political mood among the Malays for their successful negotiations with the British on the Federation proposals, the MNP leaders' anti-British campaign was not very convincing to the conservative *rakyat*.

Secondly, the MNP's coalition with non-Malay organizations was very vulnerable to the UMNO's criticism. As long as the UMNO continued to press its diplomacy with the British, it was indispensable for the MNP to obtain the cooperation of anti-British non-Malays. However, caught in the contradiction between its principle, "Malaya for the Malays" and non-Malay political demands, the MNP failed to find any adequate response to UMNO criticism. There was no doubt that this simple campaign was very convincing to the Malays who took seriously the non-Malay threat to their birthright in Malaya, impeding their attraction to the MNP.

Finally, there existed an obvious ideological cleavage among MNP leaders. Dr. Burhanuddin and other moderate MNP leaders thought that Malay youths in the API under the leadership of Ahmad Boestamam were too violent. Given the MNP's meager support in the generally conservative political atmosphere within the Malay community, Boestamam's approach to achieve independence through bloodshed seemed counterproductive. Nevertheless, given the revolutionary nature of MNP's political aims and the British stand on the constitutional policy, Boestamam's strategy would appear to be the only solution to achieve them. However, while the moderate leaders of MNP faulted Boestamam for his violent rhetoric, they could not afford to propose any other specific alternative methods to achieve their projected political ideals. In short, the political ideals themselves were revolutionary. But the heat to support them was too weak.

The ultimate goal of the pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists—*Indonesia*

Raya—that had been one of the major socio-political ideals for the future of Malaya since 1937 eventually died with the MNP's dissolution in May, 1950 in the wake of the communist armed revolt. In the meantime, the UMNO emerged as the most influential power center in the political scene of postwar Malaya, which molded Malay political life almost exclusively, while the former MNP leaders who regrouped around political ideals in the PMIP and the Partai Rakyat made up political opposition forces to the UMNO-MCA-MIC Alliance.

If so, how can we reasonably evaluate the contribution of the pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists to the nation-building of Malaya? Although the new Malay intellectuals were divided into two different socio-political ideals of the future of Malaya after 1937, their division did not mean unbridgeable gulfs in Malay society. Despite their different ultimate goals, the struggle of the two intellectual camps was intrinsically based upon *semangat kemelayuan* against non-Malay threats to the Malay special rights and privileges. Thus it is fairer to say that from the outset, their division was a manifestation of a political power game through the masses within the Malay community. The power game was highlighted during their protests against the Malayan Union. It was during this period that the Malay community witnessed the full bloom of *semangat kemelayuan*. However, indeed, the creation of the Malay national outlook was a crystallization of concerted efforts of the new Malay intellectuals since the 1920s. Furthermore, the anti-British and pro-Indonesian intellectuals were the only peninsula-wide nationalist forces before the war. In addition, it was the nationalists that most aggressively awakened *semangat perjuangan* among the Malays during the war period. They also vigorously vied with the pro-British intellectuals to politicize the Malays during the protest against the Malayan Union. In these ways, no doubt, they contributed to the full bloom for the *semangat kemelayuan* to a certain degree, which became a solid ground for the achievement of Malay's independence in 1957.

In conclusion, will it be improper to say that it is not possible to reasonably understand the making of independent Malaya without fully examining the struggle for *Indonesia Raya* of the anti-British and pro-Indonesian Malay nationalists?

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