



FEDERATION OF MALAYA
ANNUAL REPORT
1953

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Introduction

The year 1953 can best be described as one of steady progress and consolidation, with a background of increasing security and faith in the future.

Many of the specific problems which the administration had to face in earlier years, and for some of which solutions had been evolved in 1952, were tackled with real success. At the same time long-term projects, though the pace of their completion slowed down as the result of falling revenue, were pursued with vigour.

Although large sums of money had still to be spent on the operations against the Communist terrorists, and were thus not available for the planned expansion of the Social Services and important development schemes, there was a growing feeling among the people that the forces of law and order, after some years of grim struggle, had the enemy by the throat. If release from fear is a true gauge, then the year can be properly described as a notable one. By September, when the first "White Area" was declared in Malacca, the peoples of the Federation found themselves able to go about their lawful business with a new freedom of movement and a sense of security which had been denied to them for some years. As the fortunes of the Communist terrorists declined owing to the relentless pressure of the Security Forces and the improved morale and confidence of the people, the will to win became more manifest and with it a growing confidence in the future of the Federation and the objective—the establishment of a united Malayan Nation.

One of the most happy and impressive events of the year was the Coronation of Her Majesty the Queen. Illustrations of the celebrations which took place in Kuala Lumpur, the Federal capital, will be found elsewhere in this Report, but the people's celebrations were not confined to the capital—they were evident in every State, Settlement and District and they were everywhere both spontaneous and imposing. It is not improbable that the colour and pageantry of the Coronation encouraged the people, while saluting and doing honour to a young Queen, to express their relief over the real improvement in the Emergency situation. If the event provided the stimulus, the people of all communities made the event, and in so doing, demonstrated the desire of all men of goodwill to live in amity.

Unfortunately, however, the economy of the Federation during the year under review suffered as the result of the decline in the prices of rubber and tin—the two primary raw materials produced. The fall in the demand for these two commodities, which started in 1952, continued during the year and by its end the market price had reached a level which caused Government revenue to fall considerably. This meant that the Government found it increasingly difficult to find the necessary capital and recurrent supply to finance and service the many developments which have taken place since the war. Despite this, steady progress has been made and the expanded Social Services have been maintained and will continue to be so in the future.

In this connection, the generosity of the Government of the United Kingdom and the Governments of Brunei and Singapore must be recorded here: they have, by their spontaneous help in the way of gift or loan of some 120 million dollars, in large measure guaranteed the future of important and essential developments in the Federation, and we are most grateful to them. Their actions have been that of true friends conscious of our determined efforts to combat the menace of Communism.

In reviewing the progress made in the Federation during the year 1953 however, it is necessary to relate it to the events of the past few years and to the declared policy of Her Majesty's Government. It will be recalled that Her Majesty's Government issued a clear Directive to General Sir Gerald Templer when he assumed duty as High Commissioner in February, 1952, and charged him with the following responsibilities:

- (i) To restore law and order.
- (ii) To weld the communities into one Malayan nation.
- (iii) To promote political progress to further democratic aims.
- (iv) To ensure that these ideals would not be attained at the sacrifice by any community of its traditions, culture and customs.
- (v) To assist the Malays to play a full part in the economic life of the country.

Although the first item in this Directive was given overriding priority, especially during 1952, it was soon evident that none of the other items could in fact be considered or implemented in isolation: each depended on the others. All were important factors if the full support of the people was to be secured and it had long been recognised that Government and the people must march together if Communist terrorism was to be completely eliminated and a free and united nation built. Progress in implementing the five items in General Templer's