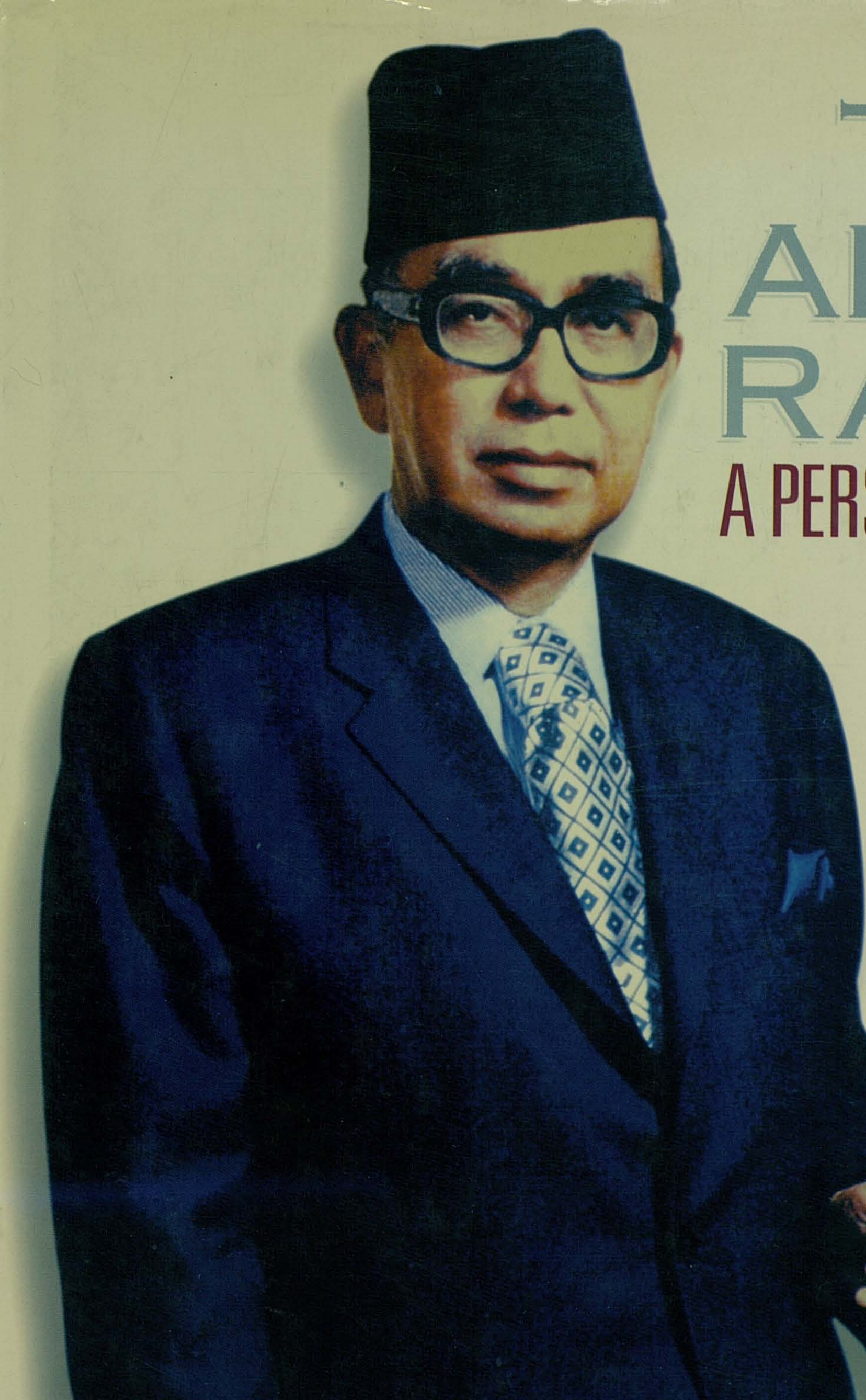

TUN ABDUL RAZAK

A PERSONAL PORTRAIT

Compiled by
Yayasan Tun Razak

تون عبد الرزاق بن حسين

Born on March 11, 1922, Tun Abdul Razak bin Dato' Hussein was the eldest son of a Pahang territorial chief. He was brought up by his grandparents at a riverine village and spent his early years walking to the Sekolah Langgar, Pahang. He distinguished himself at the Malay College Kuala Kangsar, Perak, and the Raffles College, Singapore, until the Japanese Occupation interrupted his studies and he took an enforced break—joining the Wataniah resistance movement. After the war, Razak won a scholarship to read law at the Lincoln's Inn in London.

Tun Razak was among the learned elite being groomed to take over from the British. Rural Development was very close to his heart. But he was equally conscientious in his other portfolios: Education, Defence, Home and Finance among others. He was only 48 when he became Prime Minister.

Tun Razak was a prime mover in the formation of Malaysia and bringing about the end to Konfrontasi. In 1969, he headed the National Operations Council which returned the country to parliamentary rule. He made history by being the first Southeast Asian leader to visit China and he formed the Barisan Nasional —the coalition that pulled together the diverse views and interests of a multicultural land.

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Chairman
Tun Abdullah bin Mohd Salleh

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Foreword

browse

HE was a relentless worker—I would say a workaholic. The quiet discipline he brought to his studies and early working years grew with the passage of time. By the time he was Prime Minister, even his senior officers held him in awe.

This was the late Tun Abdul Razak bin Dato' Hussein.

He was mentor to many, and an example held up by proud parents to even many more. But he was a friend, in the true sense of friendship, to perhaps only a small circle of fellow-travellers who had shared his dreams as a youth. Among them I would certainly count the late Tan Sri Taib Andak and Tan Sri Maurice Baker, whom today we term friends for life.

He was not a chatty person, the sort of empty barrel that Malaysian dramatic caricatures are made of. He had substance. And few could rival his ability to size up a person or grasp a situation faster than he. This was an innate talent honed through the years. Tun Razak understood just how much he could expect of a person. He set high standards. He expected them to be met.

It was a mark of Tun Razak's deference and sense of propriety that he served the late Tunku Abdul Rahman loyally and without complaint for 15 years.

Every Malay came from the *kampung* in those days. Despite his years in office, the *kampung* never left the man. He still enjoyed simple fare—fish and *pucuk ulam*. Most of all, the Malayness in him never deserted him. He was firm but always polite. He did not raise his voice. He accepted whatever simple accommodations were given to him. He trudged through mud and he made visits on a *rakit*. The *kampung* folk embraced him as one of their own.

He lived in a period of grace. His peers took holidays in the cool air of the hill resorts. They danced among friends. They spoke English better than they did their mother tongue. But despite all these vestiges of "Englishness" they were more nationalistic than today's nationalists. They represented that generation that sought—and struggled for—independence. Merdeka was more than a catchy word to be shouted out every August 31. It was in their spirit. It was a way of life.

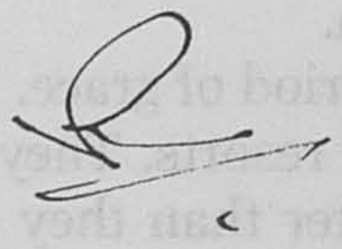
And thus in laying the country's foundation stones for self-government, Tun Abdul Razak and indeed his peers, brought to bear those aspects of British administrative law most familiar to them, modifying and adapting as they went along.

Constitutional Monarchy, Parliamentary Democracy, Electoral Representation, the Malayan Cabinet and later the Declaration and Abolition of Emergency after the May 13 race riots were all evolved from the British system of governance. Malaya's monetary system, the initial dependence on cash crops and the eventual weaning thereof, the setting up of banks, cooperatives, professional associations and trade unions were also British by-products. I should also note here that the entire Malaysian constitution was written by one man—the late Tun Mohammed Suffian Hashim—and despite several amendments through the years, it remains at its core, the blueprint for what the country deems its foundation for our Rule of Law.

Tun Abdul Razak was also a trailblazer when it came to foreign policy. He worked hard—and silently—at ending *Konfrontasi* with Indonesia. Asean was created under his stewardship. He built the bridges that were the precursor to today's South-South dialogue. And he is perhaps best remembered for his reaching out the hand of friendship to China when the rest of the world gave it the cold shoulder.

At home he was responsible for bringing together the Barisan Nasional—an extension of the original Alliance coalition—by drawing in the opposition parties in the spirit of Malaysia. This was Tun Razak's quick-fix answer to the May 13 riots. But it had longer-term ramifications. Today his successors enjoy the fruits, and a few electoral complications, of his endeavours.

For all that Tun Abdul Razak offered the people of Malaya in his day, he was unique. He was a selfless man who put the nation before himself. And when the leukaemia finally caught up with him, he marched on even harder, unwilling to let go. In his last years, he personified the spirit of giving. Today, on behalf of his colleagues, his friends and his family, I give you, Tun Abdul Razak.



Tun Abdullah bin Mohd Salleh
Chairman
Yayasan Tun Razak

A Word from the Editor

A Word from the Editor

THIS book is a collection of essays that the late Tun Razak would have written himself—had he had the time. These memoirs are therefore belatedly written by those who knew him best—his friends, colleagues and family, who have such diverse and warm memories of the special man.

The book took an inordinately long time to complete. Seven long years, although in truth, actual work probably took half that time for there were long periods of hiatus in between. Identifying contributors, persuading them to write, chasing them up, editing their articles, and going through up to three rounds of corrections all took time. In addition, there were the usual editor's tasks of photo selection, writing up biographies, some initial proof-reading and one unusual task—translating about a dozen Malay articles into English.

In that time some of the better known contributors passed away, notably the spirited Tan Sri Lee Siew Yee, the ever courteous Datuk K Pathmanaban, Tan Sri Ong Kee Hui and Tun Ismail Ali. Fortunately all four had had time to either write their articles themselves or, in the case of one, allow a writer to interview him.

Regretfully, a few esteemed contributors who were ailing—and I must humbly apologise for not knowing sooner of their ailments—did not have that luxury of time. They passed on without writing down their memoirs of a very important period in this nation's development. Prominent among them are the late Tun Mohamed Suffian Hashim and Tan Sri Zain Azraai. Their passing is a loss which I feel deeply.

A few others had been asked but declined. Several more had actually agreed but had not quite got round to writing their articles. By that time, the deadline had come and gone. We could not wait any more.

Of those who did write, I must thank them for doing so with alacrity. They made life so much easier for an overworked editor. Readers will, I think, appreciate the diverse styles of those who spoke from their hearts. But I also understand that not all of us are natural writers and in the end, a small group did get a little help.

I must also thank those who assisted me with contributions of photographs. Among them, Datin Kalsom Taib and Tan Sri

Maurice Baker deserve mention for submitting photographs that fitted in superbly with their articles. The bulk of the photographs, however, came from weeks of painstaking research at the Memorial Tun Abdul Razak and subsequently obtained from the Arkib Negara. I wish to record my special gratitude to Encik Yusri Alhadi at the Memorial Tun Abdul Razak for his invaluable assistance in the selection and ordering of photographs.

As for the biographies, I hope I have done everyone justice. Since the collection of essays is about the late Tun Razak, I hope the contributors will understand I had to keep their accounts brief and precise. Some assisted by sending me their biographies; others I had to search from the relevant Who's Who. In either case I hope the accounts have been accurate and fair. Late in the day, Datin Shajaratuddur Sh. Abdul Halim rescued the project when she agreed not only to edit the Malay version of the book but also to translate the English text. To her, many thanks.

Nor can I say my piece without acknowledging my appreciation to the committee members of the Yayasan Tun Razak who were so patient in waiting for this project to come to fruition. The editorial committee deserves special thanks, in particular Puan Azah Aziz who went out of her way to see this project off to a fine start. My thanks also to the chairman of the Yayasan Tun Razak, Tun Abdullah Mohd Salleh, and to Tun Mohamad Hanif Omar, Tan Sri Aishah Ghani, Tan Sri Rama Iyer and to Dato' V.C. George for their diligent reading and valuable advice. My deepest thanks also to Dato' Ahmad Johari Tun Abdul Razak, who in representing the family, gave so generously of his time and thoughtful suggestions.

Without wanting to sound as if I were absolving myself of responsibility, I would like to note here that the views expressed are the writers' own. In addition, while I have taken the usual care to cross-check the more widely known facts, given their historical circumstance, their contextual delicacy and the 'sensitive position' held by each contributor, some are beyond the scope of this editor. The accuracy of quotes in particular will probably be lost in the mists of time. I therefore apologise for any errors of fact, and do not mind if any reader were to point out such shortcomings to the writers concerned or to me directly so that we may all benefit from learning of their true context.

I have learnt a lot from working on this project. The late Tun Abdul Razak's contemporaries will probably enjoy reminiscing about the 'old days' when they built the nation with sincere esprit de corps. Those who followed will no doubt better appreciate his efforts for the nation.

Suhaini Aznam
Editor

Carefree Days

By DYMM Tuanku Jaafar ibni al-Marhum Tuanku Abdul Rahman

TUN Abdul Razak was my best friend at school. And I was one of his admirers when he was Prime Minister. Once, during one of our parties I asked him jokingly whether I could serve him in any capacity. He replied: "Jeff, there is no need for you to be involved."

On another occasion, also at a party, I gave my opinion on something or other about the government. "Let's enjoy ourselves and not talk about work," he responded.

I soon discovered that he preferred not to discuss his way of governing the country with anyone, least of all with those outside the government. Maybe this is a trait of all leaders. I suppose they have to be a bit dictatorial sometimes. It would, of course, have been very difficult to rule if he had to listen to this person and that.

Sporting Spirit

He joined the Malay College in 1934. Although he was only a little bit older than I was, I had been there a year earlier. For some strange reason, we took a liking to each other almost immediately. I called him Razak and he called me Jeff. We had many things in common. For instance, his father was a civil servant as was mine.

We also loved games. Perhaps it was this common love of sports that drew us closer together. We enjoyed the same games—football, cricket, hockey, tennis and squash. We played for the school and we practised together regularly. Both of us were good at tennis and squash but in the finals I often beat him, perhaps because I spent more time on sports. I used to bully him a little and called him 'kongsai' or 'Razak Kongsai' because he looked Chinese then. It became a nickname which fortunately very few remembered. But he never once retaliated by calling me, or anyone else for that matter, names.

He never cheated at games. During football matches, I never once saw him play foul. When someone rushed him and knocked him down, he never so much as complained or even hit back. He simply got up and rushed back into the game. We were in the college cadet corps, both of us sergeants. When he was college head boy, I was deputy head boy. I was later to succeed him. As

prefect and head boy, I never saw him scold anyone. In fact he was helpful to everyone. And although he laughed very little and hardly joined in the telling of bawdy jokes, everyone liked him, including the headmaster and teachers. Though quiet, Razak was a formidable debater. He was a member of the Malay College Literary, Dramatic and Debating Society. Unlike me, he was a serious fellow, reserved and studious. He cracked jokes once in a while, but even in doing so, he kept a straight face.

He was very bright and topped our class most of the time. He passed his Junior Cambridge Examination in 1937 with flying colours and a year later obtained his School Certificate.

On May 31, 1940 Razak left the Malay College armed with a scholarship to take a 3-year course in economics, law and history at Raffles College, Singapore—the nearest thing we had to a university then. I joined him a few months later.

As Undercover Agent

At the end of 1941, the college was closed because of the Japanese invasion and all of us were told to return to our respective states.

The Ethiopian Prime Minister The Hon. Tsehafi Taezaz Akhlou Habtewolde (left) receives the Malaysian Ambassador to Egypt, Tuanku Jaafar (right), during Tun Razak's visit. (1965)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Some of us went home by train, others by car. Razak told me later that he had to squeeze into a slow, blacked-out train to Kuala Lumpur and from there continue by road to Bentong where his father was serving as District Officer.

That journey home and the haste with which he saw the British abandon their 'protected people' left a deep impression on Razak. "They deserted us. Do we want them back?" he later said to me.

We met only occasionally during the Japanese Occupation as travelling was difficult and hazardous. We managed to write to each other and so stayed in touch. A year before leaving the Malay College, we had each been appointed student-probationer in the Malay Administrative Service. And so we were absorbed into the administrative service in our respective states during the occupation—he in Pahang and I in Negeri Sembilan.

Razak joined the Wataniah (the Malay anti-Japanese resistance movement) but remained in the Japanese administration as an undercover agent. The task of the Malay guerillas was to prevent the Japanese from moving reinforcements across to the west from their east coast garrisons. They were aided in this by information smuggled out to them from their undercover counterparts in the Japanese administration.

After the Japanese surrender in 1945, the Wataniah and Gurkha paratroops of Force 136 took over the protection of the civil population in much of Pahang, until a detachment of regular troops was landed from destroyers at Kuantan. The Wataniah itself was disbanded on December 1, 1945 at a parade in Kuala Lipis, at which the Sultan of Pahang took the salute. Among those who proudly paraded before their ruler was one Captain Abdul Razak.

All this Razak related to me as we drove from Seri Menanti to Kuala Lipis shortly after the war ended and the British Military Administration had restored order throughout the country. He had come to stay with me for a few days just before he was appointed acting Assistant District Officer, Raub. One morning he suggested that we drive up to Kuala Lipis to see someone.

I drove my father's Hillman. There was not much traffic then and for most of the way, we were the only ones on the road. At the end of the long drive Razak introduced me to Mr DJ Ambler, the headmaster of Clifford School before the war. During the war he had been the Pahang affairs adviser to Force 136 based in Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka). He had been in constant touch with Wataniah agents in the Japanese government in Pahang. He later became the headmaster of our alma mater, the Malay College.

First Sparks of Nationalism

Meanwhile, the Malays throughout the peninsula, especially the youths, were agitated by the British decision to amalgamate all the Malay states and the Straits Settlements into a Malayan Union. I joined Pemanas (Pemuda Negeri Sembilan) which, after UMNO was formed, became a component of UMNO Youth.

In March 1946, the Persatuan Melayu of all the states and various other associations met at a congress in Kuala Lumpur during which the formation of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) was proposed. Razak attended this congress as a representative of the Raub branch of the Persatuan Melayu Pahang. UMNO actually came into existence only on May 11, after its charter was adopted. The Malayan Union did not last long and after it was abolished the British government inaugurated the Federation of Malaya on February 1, 1948.

Meanwhile, Razak had applied to the government for a scholarship to read law at the University of London. He was successful and on August 27, set sail for London aboard the troop-ship *Scythia*. En route, the ship stopped for a few days in Bombay. Here he and other London-bound students were able to savour the joy and pride of a newly independent nation. India became a sovereign nation on August 15, 1947. But Razak also learnt of the disturbing Hindu-Muslim clashes that had taken place as a result of the partition. It reminded him of the potential dangers of communal clashes in our own country and the need to eliminate this danger in the interest of peace and development.

It had obviously continued to haunt him. Stories of the bloody communal clashes were among the first few things that he related to me after I arrived in London in 1948 to read law at Nottingham University. And he mentioned it again several times as he showed me around London.

London Days

After a few days in London he accompanied me by train to Nottingham. It was only after I had been officially admitted to the university and had assured him that I was all right that he left me. But I was in London almost every month and every time I was there, I stayed at his flat. In fact, many students stayed at his flat whenever they were in London. They could drop in at any time of the day or night. It was like a club. Among the frequent visitors were Tengku Ahmad Shah, the Tengku Mahkota of Pahang, Mimi Shahrir, the daughter of Indonesian prime minister, Sutan Shahrir, and Sutan Shahrir's adopted son, Des Alwi. One student, Ghazali Shafie, was close to the Indonesians.

Razak shared the two-room flat with another law student, (Tan Sri) Taib Andak. He was one of the 'gang'—which included

Datuk Harun Idris and 'Coco' Majid (nickname given to former Health Ministry Director-General Tan Sri Abdul Majid Ismail)—that held regular get-togethers with Razak until his demise. Taib, who had arrived much earlier than the rest of us, soon completed his studies and returned home. Razak's new housemate was the Raja Muda of Perak, Raja Idris.

We were all members of the Malay Society of Great Britain, of which Tunku Abdul Rahman was president and Razak secretary. Razak was also involved in all sorts of other organisations. His main concern was to get all the races to participate in their activities to promote inter-racial harmony. This became almost an obsession with him. He was disappointed when he was not so successful in getting the Malays to be involved in multi-racial activities. To promote this, he called a meeting of the various races at his flat and formed what came to be called the Malayan Forum, where even students from Singapore were invited to participate. In later years other Malay members of note include Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah and Lorraine Osman.

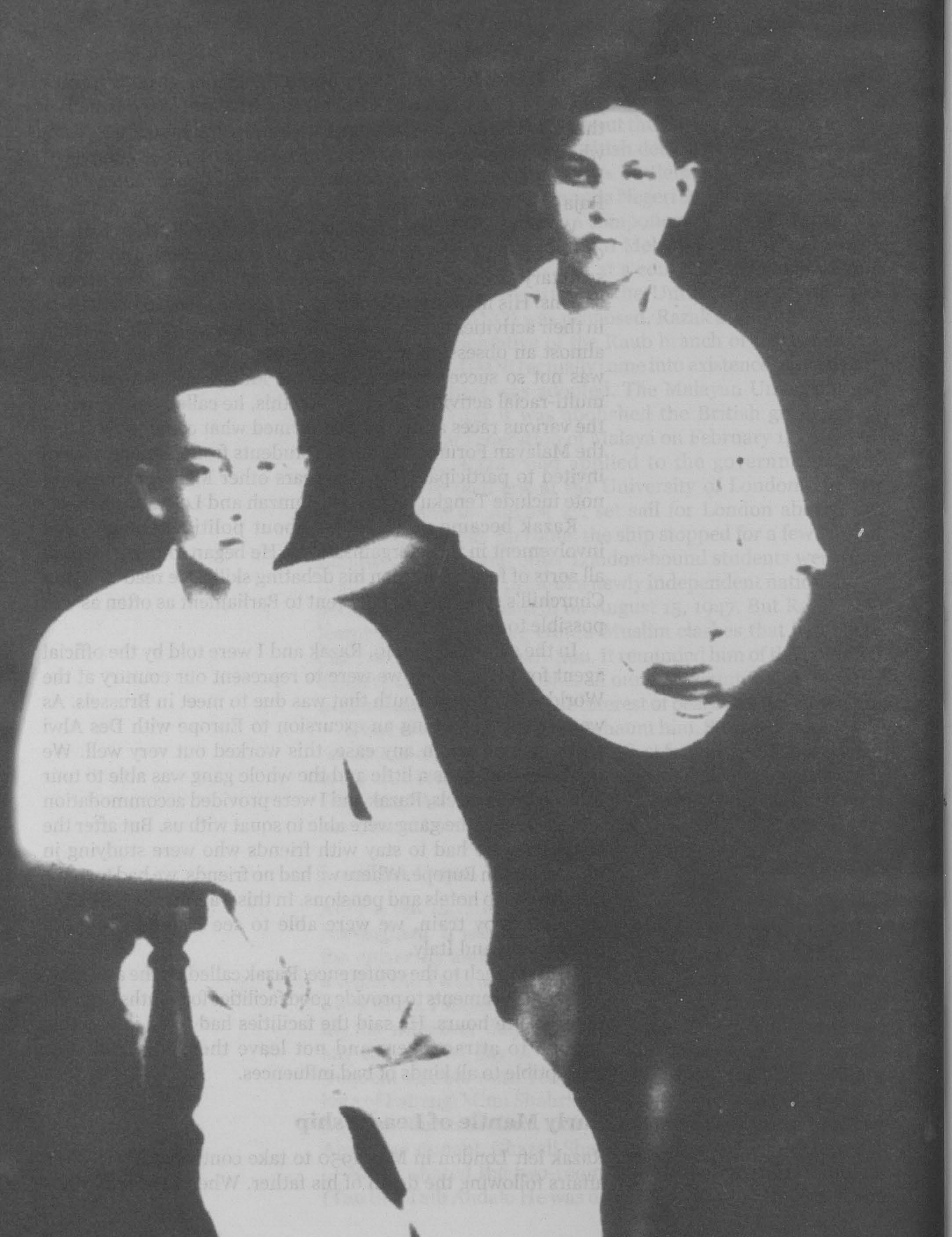
Razak became very serious about politics following his involvement in these organisations. He began to participate in all sorts of fora to sharpen his debating skills. He read Winston Churchill's speeches and he went to Parliament as often as was possible to see it in action.

In the summer of 1949, Razak and I were told by the official agent for Malaya that we were to represent our country at the World Assembly of Youth that was due to meet in Brussels. As we were just planning an excursion to Europe with Des Alwi and a few others in any case, this worked out very well. We modified our plans a little and the whole gang was able to tour Europe. In Brussels, Razak and I were provided accommodation and the rest of the gang were able to squat with us. But after the conference we had to stay with friends who were studying in universities in Europe. Where we had no friends, we had to make do with cheap hotels and pensions. In this way, and by travelling third class by train, we were able to see France, Holland, Switzerland and Italy.

In his speech to the conference, Razak called on the assembly to urge governments to provide good facilities for youths to spend their leisure hours. He said the facilities had to be interesting enough to attract them and not leave them idle and thus susceptible to all kinds of bad influences.

Early Mantle of Leadership

Razak left London in May 1950 to take control of his family's affairs following the death of his father. When he reported for



duty to the Pahang state government, he was appointed as Assistant State Secretary. He later became State Secretary. He also took over his father's membership of the Federal Legislative Council, the country's embryonic parliament. It was a busy year for Razak. Later in the year he became Deputy President of UMNO with Tunku Abdul Rahman as president.

In 1952, Razak, then 30 married the 19-year-old Rahah, the daughter of (Tan Sri) Mohd Noah bin Omar, who was Chairman of UMNO Johore and a member of both the Johore State Council and Federal Legislative Council. I teased him about the difference in their ages. Shortly after their wedding the couple drove to Penang for their honeymoon. They stopped for a few hours in Ipoh where I was serving as Assistant State Secretary. We had lunch together and talked about what was going on in the country.

In later years, we would meet quite frequently in Kuala Lumpur. He was always in a rush, saying he had so much to do and so little time. He never took up games seriously again. It was only much later that he took up golf.

He was busier still when in 1955 he was nominated to contest in the general election. He won the Semantan constituency easily and was appointed Education Minister. It was in this capacity, while still a member of the pre-*merdeka* Cabinet that he produced the Razak Report, which recommended the establishment of "a national system of education acceptable to the people of the Federation as a whole".

It was largely due to the enduring traits of his character that he was so successful in initiating and implementing many of the government strategies, to ensure the security of the nation and to improve the people's livelihood. They were the qualities that I admired most in him: his honesty and sense of justice and fair play.

Because he was not an extrovert and always serious, it took a long time for people to notice these characteristics in him. The non-Malays, particularly the Chinese, at first thought he was biased against them because he was relentless in his championing of the cause of the Malay peasant. But they were reassured when he came out strongly for tolerance and moderation.

Thus when he called for the formation of a national coalition of parties—the enlargement of the ruling Alliance—as a means of reducing politicking and getting on with development, most of those with seats in Parliament flocked to his banner.

But he never influenced me to join active politics. When the country gained its independence, I remained in the civil service and was fortunate enough to be posted as ambassador to several

Moulding future leaders—the young Razak (seated) and the future Yang Dipertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan, Tuanku Jaafar, at the Malay College Kuala Kangsar. (1937)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

countries. When I was in Cairo, Razak, by then Deputy Prime Minister, came as part of his official visit to several countries in the region. I accompanied him to Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. He visited London a couple of times when I was posted there, as well as Nigeria, while I was there.

Thus from the time we first met in Malay College in 1934 until he died in 1976, we remained close friends. We met regularly even after he became an important national leader and I had become the Yang Dipertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan in 1967.

His death was therefore as much a personal loss to me as it was a tremendous loss to the nation. I remarked to him once, during one of our family get-togethers that he was losing weight and asked him whether anything was wrong with his health. He ignored my remark and question altogether.

As Prime Minister, and despite his busy schedule, he seldom failed to attend the gang's get-togethers either at Fraser's Hill or in Kuala Lumpur. There was only one rule at these gatherings—no talking shop. It was Razak's rule but it was a simple enough rule and everyone gladly adhered to it. Often there would be *joget*—almost a must at most gatherings in those days. For all the years we shared, we had a great time together.

Man of the Hour:

Statesman through the Years

By Prof. Tan Sri Maurice Baker

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

—Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*

WHEN Abdul Razak from Pahang enrolled as a scholar at the Raffles College in Singapore in 1940, I was in my third and final year. Very few of us knew him, as he was shy and unassuming. Then, overnight, he became a hero.

In scoring the winning goal in the annual football match against our bitter rivals, the Medical College, Razak instantly set himself up as one of the freshmen to be watched. It was a tense game. The board stood scoreless until the last five minutes of the game when Razak got the ball. He ran swiftly and unchecked down the left wing, dribbled past the advancing fullback and shot the ball from a difficult angle. The ball sailed over the goalkeeper's outstretched arms and floated into the net. It was the winning goal! We went wild! Razak was acclaimed the man of the hour!

Through the years, he was to prove that his skill and stamina would run well beyond the football field and one day serve Malaysia with distinction.

Three decades later in 1970, at a party at the Lake Club in Kuala Lumpur, I recalled that soccer game and teased Tun Razak, by then the Deputy Prime Minister, suggesting that a stiff breeze had blown the ball into the goal. He chuckled and quipped, "No, no, it was my famous banana kick!" He drew laughter all around.

At that time Tun Razak was trying to persuade the Malaysian civil servants to join the Lake Club so that they could exchange views and discuss common problems in an informal setting. He wanted to improve the civil service. His mind was ever active on

getting things done better and more quickly for the good of the country. His people and his country stood first in his thoughts and plans.

Raffles College was, apart from the rival Medical College, the only tertiary educational set-up for the whole of Malaya and Singapore under the British. But the Japanese invasion and occupation prevented Razak from completing his studies at Raffles. Instead, he went back to Pahang.

The Student Leader

In 1947 we met again, this time on the troop-ship *Scythia* on its way to the United Kingdom. Razak had been awarded a scholarship to read law in England. I was taking up the Queen's Scholarship which I had won at Raffles in 1941.

In 1948 Razak was elected president of the Malay Society of Great Britain, founded by Tunku Abdul Rahman. I was elected president of the Malayan Students' Union in the same year. We were both re-elected for the next three years. We co-operated closely on the running of Malaya Hall, at 44 Bryanston Square. We met all new student arrivals, encouraged them and even lectured them on what was expected of them as Malayan student

ambassadors in the United Kingdom. Razak was keen that no one should let down his country by misbehaving or wasting the opportunity to study and do well. Razak himself passed his Bar finals in 18 months but had to mark time until May 1950 to be called to the Bar. While waiting, he decided to study economics at the London School of Economics.

We organised socials and dances to give our fellow students the chance to relax and feel more at home in a foreign country. Most of us took our studies seriously but there were a few who had too much money and tended to be irresponsible. We were all in our mid-twenties.

Despite our sufferings for three and a half years under Japanese rule, not many students were politically minded. The British had let us down badly. Razak felt very strongly that we should have learnt our lesson and that we should want to be independent and to defend ourselves. So one day, Goh Keng Swee (later to become Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore), Razak and I met in Razak's Cromwell Road flat, only a five minute walk from my digs in 39 Bramham Gardens in Earls Court.

We decided that we had to make our fellow students more politically conscious so that they would work towards independence for Malaya. Razak suggested that we should have another body apart from the two student organisations. Thus the Malayan Forum was born.

The Malayan Forum would invite speakers, including British MPs from both the Labour and Conservative Parties, to address its meetings as well as our own people like Dato' Onn bin Jaafar on their visits to London. We decided that Goh Keng Swee should be the Chairman as Razak and I had already headed the other student bodies. We also decided to enlarge our committee by inviting the late FC Arulanandom and Philip Hoalim Jr to join us. We co-opted the slim and energetic Mohamed Sopiee to be the Forum's secretary.

Sopiee was a live wire and an enthusiastic supporter of the Labour Party of the United Kingdom. We produced a bulletin of cyclostyled sheets which we boldly entitled *Suara Merdeka*, of which Razak made me the editor. We wrote articles critical of the British colonial administration and argued for the independence of Malaya and Singapore. We did not, at that time, think of Singapore as a separate entity although the British made it part of the Straits Settlements along with Penang. The British Intelligence Service, of course, closely watched us and, according to my landlord, searched my room.

Anecdotes and laughter bonded these two—one a national leader, the other a respected ambassador from a neighbouring country.

(Courtesy of Tan Sri Maurice Baker)

I suspect Razak and the others involved in the publication of *Suara Merdeka* were under suspicion too but as none of us had communist leanings, there was really nothing to hold against us. After the Second World War, inspired by India's example, all colonies whether ruled by Britain, France or Holland were demanding independence. So we Malayan students were not doing anything rebellious or unusual in wanting to be free.

In pursuing our goal, Razak proved a natural leader in his own quiet and effective way. All of us loved and respected him. The sudden death of his father in May 1950 made it necessary for Razak to return home to Pahang. There he became the State Secretary at the relatively young age of 30 and soon afterwards the *Menteri Besar*.

Making Time for Old Friends

Eighteen years passed. Tun Razak was then Deputy Prime Minister, more than meeting the promise of his early years. In May 1968 Tun Razak made a 24-hour stopover at New Delhi on his way home from Europe, where he had called on several presidents and prime ministers to obtain economic aid for Malaysia. I was then Singapore's first High Commissioner to India. Looking forward to meeting an old friend, I joined my counterpart, Raja Tan Sri Aznam bin Raja Ahmad, the Malaysian High Commissioner to India, at Palam Airport.

Despite his elevated rank, Tun Razak never forgot an old friend. He was pleased to see me and informed the Indian protocol, much to their surprise, that he was having tea with me between the courtesy calls of Indian ministers. It was in his lovable nature always to have time for a friend. Would another man in his position so readily set aside protocol on an official visit overseas? Another example of how much he cared for his friends was his decision to save a brilliant lawyer who drank too much—by making him a judge and posting him to Kelantan, which even in the early seventies was an abstemious state. The experiment worked and Tun's friend turned out to be a good, wise judge.

When the May 13 tragedy befell Malaysia in 1969, the Singapore government quickly transferred me from New Delhi to Kuala Lumpur. Singapore anticipated that Tunku Abdul Rahman would retire as Prime Minister, leaving the reins of power in Tun Razak's capable hands. Knowing of my friendship with Tun Razak, Singapore's leaders thought that perhaps as the Malaysian crisis had its repercussions on Singapore, I would be able to alert Singapore quickly on likely developments.

Within two days of my arrival, Tun Razak invited my wife and me to tea at Sri Taman, his residence. Only the beautiful

Toh Puan Rahah was present. Tun Razak recollected our happy London days and our friends with some nostalgia. He told me that he had gathered the Raffles Collegians to work in the federal capital, as there was much to be done. He wanted to raise the living standards, especially of the Malays, and he trusted them to work hard to achieve this. One of them was the late Tan Sri Taib Haji Andak, a very close friend who had been with us in London.

Tun Razak felt that the worst of the May 13 tragedy was over but the racial bitterness would take years to overcome. The Tun himself was more cheerful than I had expected as I knew he must have been very depressed by the racial riots—a fact confirmed by several diplomats I called on later. He and Tun Ismail had brought the situation under control with great difficulty.

Tun Razak was very fond of Taib and when Taib took unto himself a second wife and happened to land in hospital with a mild heart attack, Tun worried about him and visited him frequently, advising him with his usual sense of humour to take it easy. The irony of fate is that Taib long survived Tun Razak.

Tun Razak became Prime Minister in late 1970. In 1971, he gave a radio talk in conjunction with his birthday and in the course of his speech, mentioned that his three best friends were Taib, Maurice Baker and FC Arulanandom, later a judge—all from his Raffles College and London student days. I was deeply touched by the compliment.

Touch and Go

My first term as Singapore's High Commissioner to Malaysia spanned August 1969 to June 1971. Tun Razak had by then decided that the only way to prevent a recurrence of disasters like the May 13 racial explosion was to ensure that the economic standard of the Malays was gradually raised so that they did not remain mainly a poor agricultural community. They had to be given a share of business and industrial opportunities. They had to be given university education to uplift themselves.

He was keen that Parliament be restored as soon as possible in place of the National Operations Council. It was essential that the Alliance should have a two-thirds majority in Parliament so that the necessary laws to ensure economic reforms could be passed. But the Alliance had done so badly in the 1969 elections that Tun Razak had to hope that the Sabah and Sarawak elections, which had been postponed for a year. would provide the necessary majority.

As it turned out, it was touch and go. Tun Razak had to use all his persuasive powers to gain the support of the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), which had won five seats, to

ensure that the Alliance had the 96 seats it needed for its two-thirds majority. The SUPP originally had been against the Alliance, so it was truly a triumph for Tun Razak. And it ensured the return of parliamentary government.

I met Tun Razak on his return from Sarawak. He explained to me how he had convinced Tan Sri Ong Kee Hui and others of the SUPP to support the Alliance in Parliament.

Informal Evenings

There were times when Tun Razak sought a little relief from the constant pressures of work by inviting a few close friends to Sri Taman in the evenings. I used to organise informal buffet dinners for his contemporaries at Raffles College and London. He loved these parties at my residence near the entrance to the Royal Selangor Golf Course. I noticed though that some of the civil servants present sometimes avoided getting too near Tun Razak. When I asked why they said that they were afraid that he would question them about their work!

Tun Razak himself used to hold an annual birthday party at the Lake Club. On one occasion Tunku Abdul Rahman, in his speech, joked that whereas he himself worked only a few hours a day, Razak slaved away the whole day and as a result was looking older than himself, despite his being very much Razak's senior in years. Later when Tun Razak in turn became Prime Minister, he remarked that it made no difference to his work schedule as he had been doing all the Prime Minister's work even as a Deputy Prime Minister anyway! Only his title had changed.

Tun Razak continued to hold his birthday celebrations at the Lake Club every year but with his usual touch of humour he celebrated the occasion on April 1. I used to come over from Singapore to attend his birthday party. Despite high office, his wit and sense of humour did not wane. He once recounted an incident when he was on an inspection tour to check on the civil service in one of the states. He noticed that the flag in the administration building was flying at half-mast. He wondered who had died. Later, he said, he discovered the reason. The staff was all half-dead anyway so it was appropriate that the flag should be at half-mast!

Malayan-Singaporean students enjoy a formal dinner together in London. The young Abdul Razak is seated across from the camera (extreme left) while his future counterpart, Lee Kuan Yew, is seated extreme right.

(Courtesy of Tan Sri Maurice Baker)

Stoic to the Last

I knew he could be stoic in the face of adversity but I never knew how much until he was gone. Throughout his last seven years he had known that he was suffering from leukaemia but Tun Razak never spared himself in the service of his country. His

death in January 1976 in London at the age of 53, was a great loss to Malaysia. And his achievements, especially in education, rural development and economic reform will be long remembered by his grateful countrymen. Almost every town in Malaysia has named a major road after him.

On a more personal note, for as long as they live, Tun Abdul Razak's friends will cherish his memory. He was the best of men.

I Rowed, He Held the Helm

By Tan Sri Mohd Ghazali bin Shafie

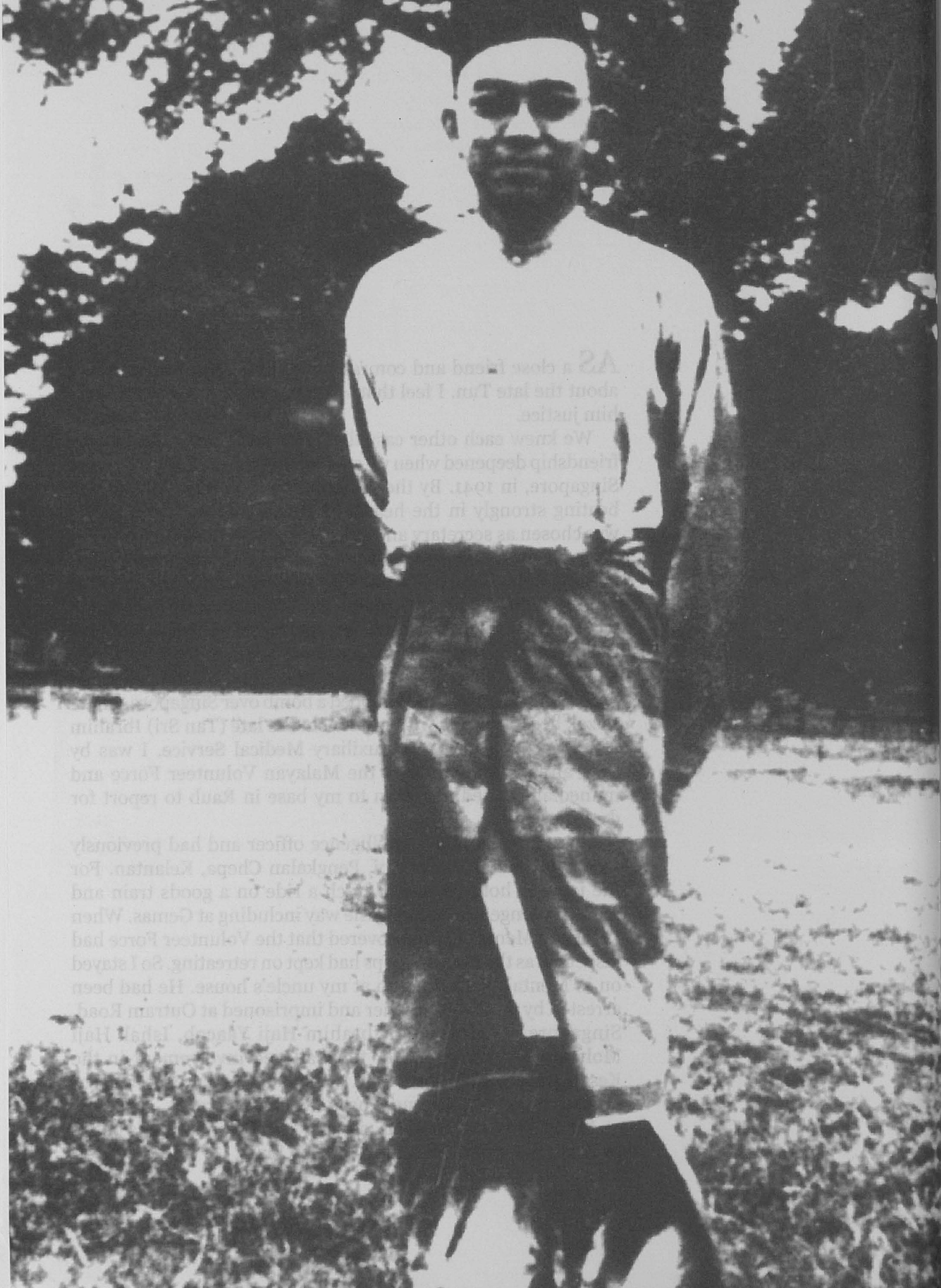
AS a close friend and comrade, it is difficult for me to write about the late Tun. I feel that whatever I pen down will not do him justice.

We knew each other casually as far back as our teens. Our friendship deepened when we studied together at Raffles College, Singapore, in 1941. By then, the nationalist spirit was already beating strongly in the hearts of Malay youths. Abdul Razak was chosen as secretary and I as representative of the first-year students of the Anggota Jawatankuasa Penuntut Islam, comprising Malays and a few non-Malay Muslim students. At that time I could already see Abdul Razak's skill in formulating a strategy to free Ungku Abdul Aziz, the secretary to the students' union, from allegations aimed at removing him from office.

When the Japanese succeeded in landing on the peninsula on December 8, 1941 and dropped a bomb over Singapore, Abdul Razak began serving with my cousin the late (Tan Sri) Ibrahim Ali, a nationalist, in the Auxiliary Medical Service. I was by then already a member of the Malayan Volunteer Force and immediately tried to return to my base in Raub to report for duty.

I was also a trained intelligence officer and had previously served in Pantai Semut Api, Pengkalan Chepa, Kelantan. For the journey home, I had to hitch a ride on a goods train and make prolonged stops along the way including at Gemas. When I reached Mentakab, I discovered that the Volunteer Force had dispersed as the British troops had kept on retreating. So I stayed on in Mentakab, putting up at my uncle's house. He had been arrested by the British earlier and imprisoned at Outram Road, Singapore, together with Ibrahim Haji Yaacob, Ishak Haji Mohammad and others for their alleged involvement in the Kesatuan Melayu Muda (KMM), which had been accused of co-operating with the Japanese headed by Fujiwara.

I then fled to Kuala Lipis, staying at my grandfather's house in Penjum, a small village just outside Lipis.



Meanwhile, I scrabbled around for news of Abdul Razak and Ibrahim Ali's whereabouts. Not long thereafter, Ibrahim Ali surfaced right in Penjum, bringing the news of Abdul Razak's safe return to Bentong. So I cycled the 150 km to Bentong to meet Abdul Razak, to discuss our best course of action under the circumstances.

We conferred and decided that for the moment, it was best to lie low and watch the shifting winds while planning our next step. I therefore returned to Lipis and led the quiet life of a farmer, growing *padi*. At the same time, I learnt to read Japanese books.

I was a farmer throughout 1942 and into early 1943. Razak, I heard, was similarly unemployed. Finally I heard that he had landed a job as a clerk at the district office where his father, Dato' Hussein bin Mohd Taib, was the District Officer. Not long thereafter he was sent by the Japanese administration to the Kua Kunrensho, the Japanese government officers training centre, to learn the Japanese language and *seishin* (spirit) in Singapore. Soon after that, I too was sought out by the Japanese and sent to the Kua Kunrensho in Malacca. I suspected that Abdul Razak had given my name to the Japanese government, intending that I too be sent to Singapore. Instead I landed up in Malacca. There I was indoctrinated in the Japanese spirit (*Nippon Seishin*) probably to change my nationalist spirit. The course was supposed to last six months but I was ordered back to Lipis after only four. While in Malacca I became friends with one Ghafar Baba and forged a strong bond with him. We promised to fight for our country.

Abdul Razak, upon completing his course at the Kua Kunrensho in Singapore, returned as an officer in the Japanese administration. I returned to Lipis, at first as a teacher. But bored by that, I managed to get a transfer to the information, or propaganda, department in Pahang (Pahang *Shu Senden Han*). At that department, I was free to roam all over Pahang and Abdul Razak and I often met to exchange thoughts on current affairs and politics.

At that time we were very angry with the British for assuming that all Malays were anti-British and pro-Japanese. In fact, the Malays were nationalists and anti-colonialists. We felt that since we had known the British much longer and understood the language, it was easier to stand up to them than to the Japanese, whom we had not got a full measure of yet and whose language we had not fully mastered. Therefore, we decided that we had to master Japanese and at the same time, we had to look for channels to contact the British and to correct their misconceptions so as to obtain assistance in fighting the Japanese.

At 28, Pahang's youngest Assistant State Secretary. (1950)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Because I could move about more freely, I was able to make contact with the British underground network. Abdul Razak had been transferred to the district office in Raub. I was 60 km away in Kuala Lipis. Yet we met happily and often and formed the Wataniah movement headed by Yeop Mahidin in Ulu Sungai Lipis, which later became the base for Colonel Richardson from the Southeast Asia Command, subsequently headed by Lord Mountbatten.

Only One at the Helm

It was at that time, while stretching out on the floor of my house in Kuala Lipis that my late mother, who dearly loved Abdul Razak, gave us a piece of advice that became our guiding philosophy: "Between the two of you, only one can hold the helm." And we made a pact that day that was to last us a lifetime. I pledged that I would row and would not aspire to be at the helm. And we promised to readily share whatever fate might bring us. My mother understood our characters only too well and feared that if unchecked, they might give rise to conflict with tragic consequences. Her words became our guide as we fought shoulder to shoulder.

While we were students in the United Kingdom, we led various movements including the Malayan Forum, many of whose members later became major political figures in Malaysia and Singapore. Abdul Razak had a very quick mind and completed his law studies at Lincoln's Inn in record time. While marking time to fulfil the required three years—a waste of time for him—his father, Dato' Hussein, passed away. I was in London at the time, having come down from Aberyswyth, Wales, where I studied. We talked and I urged him to return immediately as we did not know at that time what outside forces might prevent him from succeeding his father as *datuk shahbandar*. Now I recall that when Tun died, I in turn asked the Sultan of Pahang to speedily appoint his son Najib as *shahbandar* to avoid any obstruction. God alone knows the future.

Upon his return, Abdul Razak became the Pahang State Secretary based in Kuala Lipis, the state capital at the time. Since my mother was also in Kuala Lipis, we often met there. I was working at the Selangor state secretariat before being transferred to Seremban.

There is one incident I will never forget. One day, Abdul Razak phoned, asking me to return post-haste to Kuala Lipis. So that very afternoon I motored down directly to his house, without even stopping first to greet my mother. He looked extremely perturbed, like someone pushed into a corner.

It turned out that the late Sultan of Pahang, father to the present sultan, had requested funds from the government to go on holiday in England. But the state coffers were bare and the Sultan probably did not know of the state's financial predicament. We discussed the delicate problem late into the night. I jokingly suggested that the Sultan himself be invited to look at the state ledgers, or better still, to inspect the state coffers. Apparently my suggestion, made completely in jest, had some effect. Tun asked for the huge key to the strong-room from the office assistant.

At dawn the next day, we left for Pekan. Tuanku Pahang was waiting for us and we were granted an audience. The Sultan seemed in good spirits, so after refreshments I expressed my delight in hearing of his plans to holiday abroad.

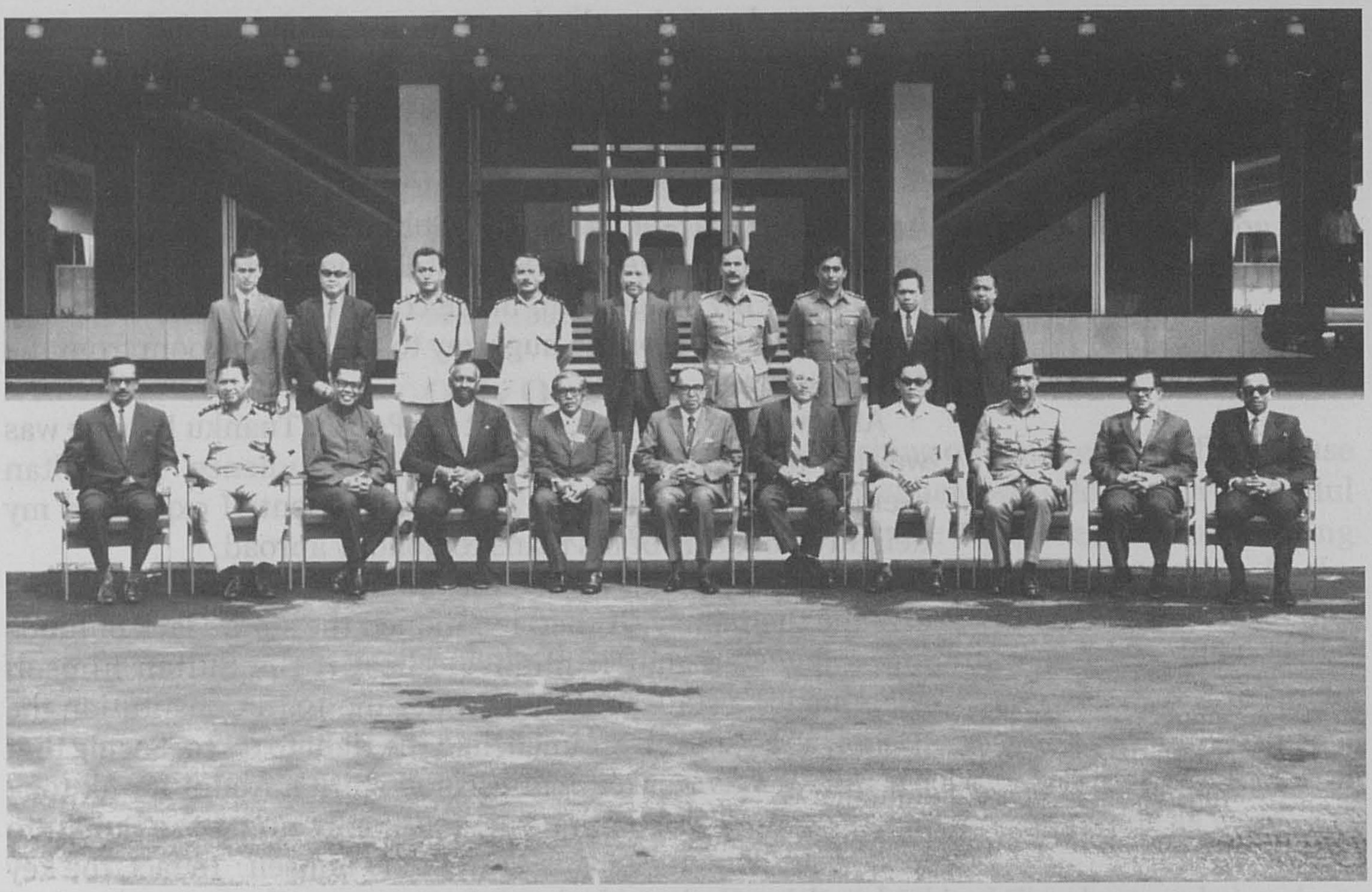
"That is my plan," agreed the Sultan, "but Razak here won't give me the money." I then mentioned the state's lack of funds and suggested that it might be best if the Sultan himself examined the state accounts. Under the 1948 Constitution the Sultan, as a Ruler-in-Council, had the right to do so. Seeing that the Sultan was relaxed and in good spirits, Abdul Razak took out the long key from his bag and boldly urged the Sultan to look at the contents of the state coffers himself. In fact, the key had nothing to do with the state treasury. The Sultan laughed and replied, "Surely not to that extent." The Sultan was wise and was not in the least bit offended. Thus that chapter closed and Abdul Razak and I happily returned to Kuala Lipis.

Politics of Accommodation

During the Emergency following May 13, Tun Abdul Razak invited me to assist him in the National Operations Council. I was reluctant but Tun reminded me of my promise to help him always and to share our fate. Later he appointed me as minister after Tunku Abdul Rahman had agreed to my being made a senator.

At that time there were no vacancies in the Senate. But because Tun Abdul Razak was very keen on my joining the government, the late senator Saidon Kecut offered to retire. I would not have accepted the post if Tun Abdul Razak had not agreed to appoint Saidon Kecut my political secretary. That is the story of Saidon Kecut—a true nationalist who was willing to sacrifice his own position in the Senate.

Tunku Abdul Rahman was at the time very angry with Dr Mahathir and Musa Hitam. Tun Razak and I discussed how Tunku's action as party president (to expel them from UMNO) would complicate matters in future. Thus we decided that the two young stalwarts should be nurtured so that they could one



day be excellent successors. To that end, I made efforts to find a place in a university and a scholarship for Musa Hitam, and he of his own accord, went to continue his studies in the United Kingdom. Dr Mahathir, meanwhile, was asked to help campaign in Lipis in one election. Tun Razak needed the contributions of young leaders like Dr Mahathir and Musa Hitam whom he hoped would one day carry on our struggle.

That was the way Tun Razak sized up a situation. During the Datuk Harun crisis, he called me to discuss the matter. Since Datuk Harun was my wife's uncle and his nephew, Abu Bakar, was married to my younger sister, he could not find it in his heart to see Harun sentenced. This was all the more so as Harun was deemed a promising political figure who was expected to rank among the next generation of leaders.

Tun Razak was willing, with my full support, to offer Datuk Harun the post of ambassador to the United Nations or anywhere abroad for a while to ease the situation. That, at first hand, was Tun Razak's caring character. If two political figures were in conflict, he would find an amicable solution so much so that both parties respected and loved him all the more for it.

The late Tun was known as a leader of exceptional calibre. The way he carried himself was special. Whenever he came up with an idea, he would call up all his advisers and friends to

The National Operations Council (NOC) set up after the May 13 race riots was chaired by Tun Abdul Razak (centre). Tun Dr Ismail bin Dato' Abdul Rahman sits to his immediate right, while the writer, Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, is seated third from left. The country's current Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (standing, extreme left) was quietly making his mark as Personal Assistant to the NOC.

(Courtesy of Jabatan Penerangan Malaysia)

discuss it in great depth, including coming up with a working paper and study if necessary. If the idea was found to benefit the nation then the matter would be brought before the UMNO Supreme Council and then the Barisan Nasional Council. Only after getting their agreement would the matter be brought before the Cabinet and announced. By then all the relevant senior officers would have been briefed on the aim and manner of its implementation and not be caught by surprise, still scrambling around for clarification. In this way, his proposals did not derail and were never half-baked.

Tun Abdul Razak had one extraordinary characteristic. He would know all the administrative and development officers nation-wide and he could quickly measure the abilities and character of each. During the great floods of the early 1970s, I was tasked with distributing aid while also studying what should be done to avoid a repetition of the problems should a flood recur.

The late Tun once called me up to tell me that there was one faint-hearted district officer who would not be able to cope with the flood situation in his district. I wanted to talk to the officer myself but the telephone lines were down. So I flew to the district by helicopter. True enough, I discovered that the officer was no longer there and the people of that district were without a leader in a time of natural disaster. The District Officer was immediately transferred to another area and replaced with someone who very successfully managed the administration in an emergency.

The previous District Officer was apparently excellent at bringing development but incapable during an emergency. The late Tun advised me not to vent my anger on the officer in question as "we humans are not equipped with everything. See the good in them and admire it and praise it. An officer would not be productive in a situation unsuited to his abilities." That was Tun Razak's own special quality in managing the country's development with success.

The Hand of Friendship

In taking care of the nation's and people's interests, his philosophy was simple and to the point: "Making enemies is easy, making friends is hard. Choose the hard path." This was his instruction to me when I was tasked with resolving the Confrontation with Indonesia. Not only did we extinguish Sukarno's Confrontation, we wanted to be close friends with all our neighbours so that conflict between neighbours would not again arise. From this emerged ASEAN as a mechanism to ensure that we in Southeast Asia would not be in conflict among ourselves. It was Tun Razak who initiated informal meetings with his counterparts from ASEAN, as well as a few from outside

ASEAN such as Myanmar's Ne Win. At the same time, he instructed Malaysian officers to often meet their counterparts from other ASEAN countries.

To diffuse the communists who had taken up arms and to calm the people of Chinese origin in the country, he suggested that we establish diplomatic relations with China. His idea did not get the blessings of Tunku Abdul Rahman, who by then had retired. Nevertheless, Tun held firm to his policy to befriend China and any other country, except Israel and South Africa.

For a whole year at the United Nations in New York, the Malaysian and Chinese representatives discussed the matter without coming to a solution. China refused to give its assurance that it would not assist the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) because, it claimed, it had never aided the CPM in the first place.

We had ample proof that the CPM was a product of the setting up of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) when it fought against Chiang Kai-shek, and subsequently the Japanese and British occupation troops. We also had ample evidence that the CCP had given aid to the CPM. I was tasked by Tun to help resolve the problem, even though as the Home Affairs Minister at the time, I was trying to wipe out the CPM.

Tun Razak and I discussed ways out of the muddy swamp that hampered our progress. Tun agreed with my suggestion of having diplomatic relations without people-to-people contact. This was a very unusual formula, unprecedented at the time. I immediately went to Hong Kong, after asking a representative of the Chinese Communist government to go there secretly to meet me. The meeting was productive. Tun visited China and met Mao Zedong, after which an agreement was reached and diplomatic relations established with China and sealed with an exchange of ambassadors between the two countries.

Many years later, by which time Dr Mahathir had become Prime Minister and I had returned to the Foreign Ministry, I was asked to lead an official trade delegation to China. I met the late Hu Yaobang, the then Secretary-General of the CCP, to officially abolish what I termed the double-standard policy of China supporting the CPM on a party-to-party basis. Thus we received an assurance from the Secretary-General of the CCP that it would not get involved in Malaysia's domestic affairs, meaning that the CPM would not receive any more assistance from China. Only after that were the people of the two nations allowed to visit each other freely and unconditionally. Trade and investment were stepped up. And now the CPM is no more.

The late Tun Razak was a very special leader. His thoughts were consistently sound and he was firm in his convictions when discussing with his colleagues, policies that he felt would benefit the nation and people. His manner of serving was exceptional, natural, neither an imitation, nor can it be imitated. For those reasons I feel deeply content and honoured to have been the rower while he held the helm.

A position of trust: Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie (right), often acted as Tun Razak's proxy.

(Courtesy of Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie)

That Familiar Bush Jacket

By Tan Sri Dato' Michael Chen

LIKE most great leaders, Tun Razak was basically a self-made man. His father was a District Officer, a government post that was considered quite respectable during British rule, but they were by no means wealthy. His humble background and his intelligence motivated him to set high standards for himself. In the end, he became one of the most respected political leaders in Malaysia and the region during that 1954-76 era of nation building.

Under the British regime, not many students were privileged to have tertiary education and those who happened to be clever and fortunate enough to get a scholarship, inevitably would be sent to the United Kingdom. London thus became the cradle for politicians from Commonwealth countries. It was under these circumstances that young Abdul Razak was registered to read law at Lincoln's Inn. There he met Tunku Abdul Rahman who was also pursuing the same course. The two had similar political interests. They later became comrades and leaders in UMNO, standing shoulder to shoulder in fighting for Malaya's independence.

Malaya achieved independence on August 31, 1957. Tunku Abdul Rahman became the country's first Prime Minister and Tun Razak his deputy. He was only 35.

If intelligence can be measured by performance, then Tun Razak was an excellent student, having completed his law studies within 18 months, probably the shortest time required. It was quite a record. Obviously, he loved the law. Had he not been destined to hold the highest office in government, he would have been made Attorney-General or Lord President of the Supreme Court. And even though he had no opportunity to set foot in the legal profession, he got himself admitted to the Bar in 1973 when he was already Prime Minister.

Malaysia has evolved tremendously. Originally, it was an agriculture-based country, a prime producer of rubber, palm oil and tin. The economy was stable but not dynamic. There was great disparity of wealth between the urban and rural areas, and between the racial communities. These problems could, and did, pose a serious threat to the nation's stability and had to be addressed soon after independence.

Tun Razak was entrusted with this job, first in his capacity as Minister of Education and then as Minister of Rural Development. The two portfolios were very close to his heart. He had never forgotten his boyhood days when he had had to walk barefoot to school. This made him extremely sympathetic to the rural folk. Unless his duties took him overseas, half his time would be spent visiting *kampung*, normally between Thursday and Sunday, to feel the pulse at the grassroots level and to ensure the proper implementation of rural projects.

Unlike today, one of the worries in the 1960s and 1970s was to prevent the rural people from flocking to the cities in search of jobs. Priority and emphasis were therefore given to rural development. Thousands upon thousands of acres of new land had to be opened up. Groups of villagers were resettled into FELDA schemes. Many landless people were transformed into smallholders and given renewed hope in life. Today, some of those same smallholders have become millionaires through the sale of their land for industrial development.

Malaysia is today a model of racial harmony. This has not been achieved without some effort and sweat. One of the root causes of the May 13 race riots in 1969 was the disparity of wealth among the races. Obviously some corrective measures and a sensible approach were needed to redress the situation. In 1973, Tun Razak tabled the New Economic Policy (NEP), aimed at assisting the bumiputeras to get a fair share of our national wealth. It was a calculated risk. The NEP could have had serious political repercussions. The non-bumiputeras were not, at the time, mentally prepared to accept such a move. The May 13 tragedy had left indelible scars on all Malaysians. Tun Razak had very limited time and room for manoeuvre. He had to find a quick but lasting solution. This he did.

Tun Razak realised that in order to implement the NEP successfully he required understanding and co-operation from the non-bumiputera communities. Political stability thus had first to be ensured. The Alliance was expanded into the Barisan Nasional so that its political base was bigger to accommodate the Parti Islam (PAS), Gerakan, PPP and other, smaller coalition partners.

Whenever trouble occurs, subversive elements would always capitalise on the situation. In the early 1970s, the communists were still active. The government could not afford to be complacent or worse, could not permit any community to be subverted. When China was opening up and looking for friends, Tun Razak took the opportunity to normalise diplomatic ties with China. China had a different political system from that of Malaysia. But both nations agreed to co-exist.

Tun Razak visited China in 1974 and was warmly received by Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai.

Premier Zhou personally hosted an official banquet for Tun Razak and his entourage despite his own serious illness. Having sought special permission from his doctor, he checked himself out of hospital to welcome Tun Razak. "I have been waiting for Your Excellency to come. I am glad Your Excellency finally turned up," he told Tun Razak. It was indeed the last official function attended by Premier Zhou who died just a few days before Tun Razak himself in 1976.

Tun Razak's meeting with Chairman Mao was also very cordial. Among other things, Tun Razak sought Chairman Mao's views on dealing with the communists in Malaysia. Chairman Mao said, "You (the government) are legal, they (the communists) are illegal. They dare not come out into the open. If your military men do not go near them, they cannot hurt you. After some time, they will disappear."

Tun Razak and entourage are given an elaborate welcome upon arrival at the Peking Airport. Here Vice Prime Minister Li Hsien-nien escorts his illustrious guests. (1974)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

Tun Razak (second from left) toasts Chinese Deputy Prime Minister Li Hsien-nien (extreme right) during his official visit to China. At centre is Ma Tien-shui, the Vice-Chairman of the Shanghai Urban Revolutionary Committee. (1974)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

What effect Mao's statement had on the Malaysian communist movement, we are unable to assess, although the communists have since finally come to terms with both the Malaysian and Thai governments and given up their armed struggle.

Later that year, after his visit to China, Tun Razak called for general elections to be held. This time the Barisan Nasional had the solid support of the voters and won handsomely.

A new, post-May 13, era had begun. Tun Razak's political strategy had proved to be effective, bringing the desired results.

Another political hurdle, however, still required Tun Razak's efforts. The general impression at that time was that the Malays were not capable of handling financial affairs. The finance portfolio since independence had been in the hands of a Chinese minister. It was not a question of whether a Chinese or a Malay should be the Minister of Finance. The point was to correct the false assumption and to give the Malays the self-confidence in managing money, if they were really to improve themselves economically.

In 1974, Tun Razak himself took over the finance portfolio and became the first Malay Minister of Finance with the retirement of Tun Tan Siew Sin. He managed it quite competently even though he was not a graduate in economics or finance.

It is generally held that every man has three characters—that which he exhibits, that which he actually is and that which he thinks he is. But Tun Razak was just himself. As a politician, he was straightforward and honest. Even in a small matter like the way he shook hands, some people thought he was not warm and demonstrative enough. But he could not change, maintaining that warmth and sincerity were internal and not external. Some of his political aides felt that his speeches were not dramatic enough, that the words lacked punch and so they prepared different drafts for him. He often said, "It does not sound like me." And of course he redrafted them himself.

Tun Razak was certainly not a fatalist. But he fully subscribed to the philosophy that "Man proposes, God disposes." Being the longest serving Deputy Prime Minister in the world at that time—13 years—naturally led to some of his supporters instigating him. But he remained loyal to the Tunku, standing firm, unmoved and continuing to play second fiddle until the Tunku relinquished his post in 1970 following the May 13 tragedy. Tun Razak was sworn in as Prime Minister in 1959 when Tunku Abdul Rahman had to concentrate on the country's first federal election campaigns. He relinquished the post back a few months later. The Tunku in turn stepped down one day before his nephew,

Tun Razak and entourage taking a stroll along the Great Wall of China. (Tan Sri) Michael Chen is fourth from left. (1974)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

the Sultan of Kedah, ascended the federal throne on September 22, 1970.

Reasoning and judgement are important leadership qualities. Apart from formulating effective policies, a good leader must also marshal suitable people to the right job so that his policies can bring results. When Tun Razak became Prime Minister, he also automatically took over the helm of the Barisan Nasional and UMNO.

One of the items on his agenda was to scout for capable, younger leaders and to cultivate them for the future. Among those he picked were (Datuk Seri) Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah and (Tan Sri) Musa Hitam. All three have proved themselves to be outstanding, although only one can reach the pinnacle at any one time.

Incidentally, Tun Razak was also something of a fashion leader, at least when it came to bush jackets. It was he who adopted the bush jacket as appropriate working attire, for use both in the office and when visiting rural areas. The traditional bush jacket, used by westerners when hunting, suited the Malaysian climate. A modified design with either long or short sleeves, while never quite becoming official attire, was soon acceptable at most daytime functions. Cabinet ministers and government officers quickly followed suit. Even members of the public liked it and it is still popular today.

Tun Razak was a keen golfer, with a handicap of 16—quite good for one who could only play at weekends. Apart from giving him some exercise and relaxation, he also obtained feedback on government policies and performance from his golfing friends. In fact to popularise Fraser's Hill, he often brought a group of golfers to play there whenever he paid an official visit to the hill-station. Some of his children, especially (Datuk Seri) Najib, became addicted to golf and play well.

With the help of Toh Puan Rahah (now Tun) to look after everything at home, he could practically pay full attention to his work. As the old Chinese saying goes, "Everything will be well if one has a harmonious home." Tun Razak certainly had a wonderful family. His only little disappointment in life, perhaps, was that he did not have a daughter, although he had five sons. All of them are doing well. The Buddhists believe, "If one does a lot of good deeds, the next generation will be benefited."

Tun Razak has been gone for more than two decades. Those who had the good fortune to know him, and those who had never met him but today have benefited from his good deeds, will remember him.

May God bless his soul.

Time out with Friends

By Tan Sri Robert Kuok

Time out with friends

IT was in May or June of 1941 that I first met Tun Abdul Razak at Raffles College, Singapore. Abdul Razak, as he was then, was the honorary secretary of the Historical Society. I was a freshie and was being ragged rather severely by the seniors. One day, I heard a knock at the door and with trepidation opened it, thinking it was going to be yet another bout of ragging. Instead, I saw a serious young man at the door. As it turned out, Abdul Razak was recruiting members for the Historical Society. I found him to be correct and polite. And I, of course, immediately joined his Historical Society.

In the intervening months before the outbreak of the Japanese War (sic), I did not have that many chances of meeting Tun Razak, who was a sportsman representing his college in hockey and other games. He was also very scholarly and a refined gentleman, soft spoken, never confrontational, the quintessential gentleman. He could look kind and also stern, almost at the same time, a trait that persisted throughout his political career.

In December 1941, when war broke out, the college was shut down. After the Japanese had surrendered in August 1945, many students went overseas to continue their education, Tun Razak among them. He went to read law in England and passed within a record 18 months. In England he was very active in the Malay Society, of which Tunku Abdul Rahman was the president and he the secretary. This relationship was to form the basis of a long and fruitful partnership in years to come.

After his graduation Tun Razak came back to join the then British Malayan government. During this time, he often came to Johore to woo a young girl whom he later married. This girl was introduced to him by the late Tan Sri Taib Andak, his good friend from his student days in England.

It was about one or two years later, at a reception hosted by the late Datuk Wan Rahim, the private secretary to the then Tengku Mahkota Johor (later to ascend the throne as Sultan Ismail) that I renewed my acquaintance with Tun Razak.

The independence movement for Malaya had by then started to gather momentum. When Malaya achieved self-government, Tun Razak became a minister in Tunku Abdul Rahman's first Cabinet, staying in a government house at Bellamy Road.

Despite his killing work pace, Tun Razak took brief breaks for his favourite game.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

In the 1950s, I was based in Singapore but would visit Tun Razak whenever I came up to Kuala Lumpur. Sometimes I would stay with him, maybe four to six times a year, at his home in Bellamy Road. When I did not, and he found out about it, he would always ask, "Robert, what are you doing staying at the Majestic Hotel? You know I always have room for you in my house." His hospitality was precious and he always made his friends feel special.

Tun Razak would make monthly trips with his wife, (now Tun) Rahah, to visit her family in Johore. During these trips Tun Razak and Tun Rahah, Datuk Wan Rahim, Mansor Bakri and I, together with our respective wives, would travel in a group to Singapore for dinner at the Chicken Inn restaurant at the Seaview Hotel in Singapore. The restaurant was built over the sea and the cool evening breeze provided just the right ambience for a relaxing evening. There we would dine and dance to music from a live band. My friendship with Razak was always warm and apolitical.

When the country won independence, Tun Razak became Deputy Prime Minister and his visits to Johore, of necessity, became less frequent. Around that time, a rising star was emerging in Singapore in the form of Lee Kuan Yew, co-incidentally Tun Razak's fellow student at the Raffles College. It was Tun Razak who introduced Lee Kuan Yew to Tunku, or in today's parlance, 'sold' Lee Kuan Yew to Tunku.

Singapore already had self-government. And when Singapore held full elections, Lee Kuan Yew won with a clean sweep. Malaysia was born in 1963 after Tunku negotiated with the British government to bring in Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak. Britain felt that it was a more cohesive arrangement. Two years later, Singapore broke away.

By early 1965, tension was mounting and acrimonious debates were flying back and forth; hot-headed UMNO leaders wanted to put Lee Kuan Yew in prison. Both Tunku and Tun Razak opposed this. Tun Razak himself made many trips to Singapore. One day, together with Tan Sri Jamal Latiff, then Malaysian High Commissioner to Singapore, the three of us played a round of early morning golf at the Singapore Golf Club. For this, I had to make special arrangements with the golf club, which did not allow tee off before 8.00 a.m.

Tun Razak took me as his confidante and I believe I was a good listener. He was a lonely man, on whom the affairs of state weighed heavily. I suppose every man has to have someone to talk to and I, being totally outside the political arena, could simply listen without factional or partisan interests coming into play.

In true team spirit—Abdul Razak's hockey buddies in England. The young Taib Andak, who goes on to be his friend for life, kneels in front row (right).

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

In early May 1969, I played a round of golf with Tunku and Tun Razak, both of whom were extremely concerned about the political sentiments in the country. When May 13 erupted, I was in Kuala Lumpur, literally marooned in a house at Jalan Delima. I got in touch with the late Tun Dr Ismail who went to Tun Razak for assistance for me. Tun Dr Ismail was then not yet a member of the government. Tun Razak despatched some armed police personnel who brought me to his residence and from there, escorted me to the airport for my flight back to Singapore.

Tun Razak had invited me a few times to serve in one official capacity or another, not directly in government but indirectly, supporting government efforts. Once, I accepted. Twice I had to regretfully turn him down.

In the aftermath of the 1969 race riots, Tun Razak had asked me to be on the National Consultative Council, the 65-member appointed body tasked with hammering out the shape of the nation's political and socio-economic equation, paving the way for its return to parliamentary democracy. I declined for two reasons. One, I was extremely busy trying to build up my businesses and two, I have always felt that business and politics should not mix, that it was either one or the other, and for me the choice was business.

At one time, soon after May 13, 1969, Tun Razak wanted me to restructure and redevelop Kuala Lumpur and turn it around. Kuala Lumpur was Malaysia's capital city but in terms of amenities, housing and urban planning, seemed more like a sprawling town. I felt I could not achieve much as there were powerful vested interests which I foresaw would give me enormous problems and block my efforts. The late Tun Dr Ismail, who was by then Deputy Prime Minister, concurred with my decision not to take up the job. The restructuring of Kuala Lumpur, albeit somewhat scaled down, was subsequently given to the newly established Urban Development Authority.

I did, however, accept the post of Chairman of Malaysia Singapore Airlines (MSA) in 1969, with the agreement of both the Singapore and Malaysian governments. In the airline industry, the MSA provided an interesting case study to see if jointly owned national carriers could operate successfully. Later, however, both governments felt it was more expedient for each to have its own carrier, and today's Malaysia Airlines and Singapore Airlines replace the original MSA.

In 1973, while Tun Razak was attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Canada, his right-hand man, Tun Dr Ismail, passed away. Promptly flying home, Tun Razak made sure that the late Tun Dr Ismail was buried with full

Tunku Abdul Rahman (right) with Sharifah Rodziah, Datuk Razak (left) with Datin Rahah and TH Tan (back to camera) taking tea in the cool air of Cameron Highlands, Pahang.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

honours in the national mausoleum as he had died, in Tun Razak's own words, serving as Prime Minister of the country.

Two years plus later, Tun Razak himself succumbed to his illness. Not many knew that he was suffering from leukaemia, although Tun Dr Ismail certainly did. Apparently, sometime around 1969/70, if memory serves me right, while seeking leave for medical treatment, Tun Dr Ismail had to confide in Tun Razak that he was suffering from cancer of the throat.

Tun Razak was apparently shocked. "You too, Ismail?" he had exclaimed. It was only then that Tun Dr Ismail discovered that Tun Razak himself was suffering from a terminal illness. Given the dedication of both men to Malaysia and Malaysians, the personal sorrow for my two friends was intensified by the knowledge that neither would be alive to carry on much longer after the other had gone.

More Loved than Feared

By Tan Sri Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad

ALLAH gave Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussein a wealth of gifts at his birth on March 11, 1922. He was a shy, courteous and reticent man—a nice politician-statesman.

Tun Razak might have been diffident but he was sharp. He never lacked humour, a dry ironic wit which only added to his old-word charm. Tun Razak dressed correctly if not elegantly. He popularised the bush jacket and made long-sleeved batik shirts semi-official attire for evening receptions. His favourite dress was the long-sleeved bush jacket, fashioned like a coat, and he would always carry a walking-stick, never missing it when he visited rural districts. Occasionally he would use the seat-rest a cricket umpire uses that acts both as a walking-stick as well as a chair of sorts!

Tun Razak was soft-spoken; a well-spoken man and very indirect in speech and manner. Like Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, he spoke English better than he did his mother tongue, for he, like his peers at the Malay College Kuala Kangsar, Raffles College in Singapore, fellow students in London, in the civil service and politics, was the product of his age.

Although self-effacing, he loved life and parties. He was an all-rounder at sports, head boy at the Malay College and very smart in school. He was a good golfer, playing a handicap varying between 12 and 16. He was not a voracious reader but he read the right books—mainly memoirs, biographies and newspapers and magazines: *The Economist, Far Eastern Economic Review, Time* and *Newsweek*, the *New Straits Times, The Star, Utusan Malaysia* and *Berita Harian*. He hardly read the *Utusan Melayu* although he could read *jawi*. It was part of my job to brief him on what was said in all *jawi* publications. His favourites were the *New Straits Times* and *Utusan Malaysia*.

He spent most of his life in the civil service and politics. He loved to say, "I've been long enough in the civil service to know what's going on but not long enough to acquire its bad habits!" His minutes, comments and speeches were simple, short and to the point, reflecting his reticence. To work intimately with him for 14 years as I did, was to undergo a journey of constant discovery: it was clear he had no shortage of ideas of the 'vision' kind for Malaysia and Malaysians. His importance to and impact on Malaysian history are plain.

I first met Tun Razak in December 1954 in Kuala Lipis. I was introduced to him by his brother, Abdul Latiff, a schoolmate who had invited me to stay at his brother's house during the school holidays. Tun Razak took me under his patronage when I joined *The Straits Times* in 1957. We became good friends. He sent me to the United States for training in 1960 and chose me to work with him when I returned two years later.

There were times when I acted as his private secretary, press and political assistant rolled into one, and perhaps this was one reason I came to know the man better than many others. In that sense, I was very fortunate; it provided me with excellent training. He was at once a good mentor, a big brother and a friend.

Tun Razak was highly regarded by the British even before he became a politician because he was a member of the then elitist British-dominated Malayan Civil Service. He was one of the brightest and the most well-connected Malays in the administration. The British tried to entice him away from politics with a tempting offer but he declined. He reckoned being Deputy Prime Minister would be better than Chief Secretary to the colonial government or even self-government. He spurned a definite British offer for an uncertain future in politics—to fight for independence.

When the founding president of UMNO, Dato' Onn bin Jaafar, left UMNO in 1951, it was the young Razak, aged 29, who persuaded a reluctant Tunku to take over the leadership. Tun Razak was then State Secretary of Pahang, his home state, and Tunku a public prosecutor whom he had befriended in London while reading law together in the late 1940s. Theirs was a special relationship. Tun Razak looked to Tunku as an elder brother and called him Ayah Tam. The former would read law cases to the elder for a treat or small fee. Tunku, in turn, took Tun Razak, who was UMNO Youth leader, as his deputy, forming a partnership that ended only when Tun Razak succeeded the 69-year-old Tunku as Prime Minister as well as President of UMNO in 1970.

It was, at that time, a very uncertain period in Malay politics. The Malays were poor, weak and hopelessly disunited. The revolt by the Chinese-led Malayan Communist Party appeared to have succeeded whilst the British colonial government seemed insensitive to Malay rights, impassive to their aspirations and uncaring about their future. It was portentous. I was 14, in Form 3 at the Malay College Kuala Kangsar.

Tunku, then better known for being a playboy than for his leadership capabilities, and Tun Razak, just married, were

virtually unknown at the national level. Both, though, worked hard to obtain the support of the Malays against the British-Onn machinations, power, media and money.

In the end, a brand new name—the Tunku—even though unknown and untested, won the respect, esteem and support of the deprived Malays. UMNO, in alliance with the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC), won stunningly in the first general election in 1955 and formed the government. Subsequently, the UMNO-led Perikatan or Alliance became the Barisan Nasional.

Tun Razak quickly made his mark in the first Cabinet, partly because most of the other ministers had little or no experience in government, but due more to his ability which set him out as a man apart. Unhampered by inexperience, he became more credible than the rest, except for the Tunku who was Prime Minister. Tun Razak was the nation's first Minister of Education and at 35, he went on to become the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Minister, Minister of Rural Development and a sometime Foreign Minister.

Tun Razak was an intelligent man although it was seldom acknowledged. Almost everything he did in his short life was crowned with success except for two or three, of which Kelantan was one.

He unnecessarily staked his own reputation—although Tunku Abdul Rahman was the leader—to lead the campaign to wrest power from PAS in Kelantan during the 1964 and 1969 general elections. It was political folly because PAS then enjoyed unprecedented support in the state following its stunning victory in 1959.

He took the risk because he loved Kelantan. He wanted to free the Kelantanese from obscurantism and was devastated and saddened when UMNO failed. He told me: "Dollah, your state is bent on being outside the mainstream of the Malay body politic. I only want to help because you all (sic) are industrious and the Kelantanese could have helped accelerate development and set an example for the rest of our people."

Astounded and tormented, Tun Razak changed his strategy. In 1973, after only two years in office as Prime Minister, he forged coalition governments in Sarawak, Penang, Perak, Kedah, Terengganu and Kelantan, and in 1974 formed the Barisan Nasional to reduce politicking and concentrate instead on development and nation building.

In the process, he laid the foundation for UMNO'S return to power in Kelantan in 1978—after 19 years in opposition hands. PAS regained power in 1990, with the help of Semangat 46, formed by UMNO dissenters led by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah.

Now dissolved, the members have by and large returned to the UMNO fold.

Following the 1974 general elections, he outmanoeuvred the wily Datuk Asri Haji Muda, the PAS president, with the willing and strong support of the Sultan of Kelantan, Tuanku Yahya Petra, who later became the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. In place of Asri's PAS administration, he installed a pro-federal government PAS-UMNO state coalition, headed by the mild-mannered and almost apolitical Datuk Mohamad Nasir. All looked well for Kelantan at last in spite of latent opposition by Asri who wanted Wan Ismail Wan Ibrahim to be the *Menteri Besar*. Instead, he became the deputy.

Then God intervened. Politicking returned with a vengeance. Tun Razak's plan for Kelantan's development was scaled down and reappraised following his sudden death on January 14, 1976. In less than two years, Asri angrily marched PAS out of the Barisan Nasional.

The Kelantanese who were already steadily coming over to UMNO through Tun Razak's special programme of building religious schools, new mosques, refurbishing or renovating old or existing mosques, *surau* and *madrasah*, providing electricity,

piped water, tarred roads and other amenities, mourned Tun Razak's passing with unprecedented sorrow.

Tuanku Sultan Yahya, tears in his eyes and taking off his thick glasses to wipe them, told me: "Dollah, the bright light for *negeri kita* (our state) is extinguished." My own constituents in Machang have, as do Malays elsewhere, lost the leader who represented their deep sentiments.

He was the embodiment of a Malay gentleman and good leader. His legacy was enlarged (beyond his own vision) and implemented vigorously by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the fourth Prime Minister.

Had Tun Razak lived, PAS would have remained in Barisan Nasional and the history of the nation and that of Kelantan would have been greatly altered. I am certain of this because I played no small part in the confidence building and the formation of the coalition governments and of Barisan Nasional.

Tun Razak was a Prime Minister and Malay leader who spoke for the villagers and rural folk whose political and socio-economic needs should have been taken more seriously than the urban dwellers'. Tun Razak raised hopes, and created new expectations and pride in them. He delivered. They believed in him.

Besides Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Razak was the best Malay diplomat in the early years of Malaysian diplomacy. Of the pair, Tun Razak was less prone to speechifying and committing diplomatic or political *faux pas*. This was one reason why Tunku trusted him. After the May 13, 1969 incident, however, their relationship suffered a bit although they maintained their friendship even if it lacked the warmth that had marked the earlier years.

Tun Razak and Suharto were credited as the men who brought about the reconciliation which ended Indonesia's Confrontation against Malaysia in 1966. It was Tun Razak who ended Malaysia's isolation in foreign affairs when he went to Beijing to personally usher in Sino-Malay diplomatic relations in the spring of 1974.

I accompanied him to both Jakarta and Beijing as his political secretary. When he went to Africa, the Middle East, around Asia, Europe and the United States, and to other corners that did not much appeal to Tunku, I travelled with him. Tun Razak had gone to all these countries to 'win friends' for Malaysia during the Indonesian Confrontation and when the hostility was over, to build new bridges for new relationships and co-operation—the forerunner to today's South-South fraternity.

Tun Razak trotted the world to explain Malaysian government policies, as he covered every inch of Malaysia to bring the

Tun Razak was an avid sports fan. Here at his birthday party, he catches snippets of the live transmission of the qualifying round game in which Malaysia made it to the hockey semi-finals in 1974. Raja Tun Mohar (third from left) chats with Tan Sri Abdullah to his left in background.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

government closer to the people. His forte, however, was domestic politics. In rural Malaysia, in particular, he excelled and was held in awe and reverence. At the same time, his diplomatic record was remarkable for he was as cosmopolitan as any Asian Prime Minister of his time.

Dr Mahathir, then soon to be made Deputy Prime Minister, wrote under the pseudonym 'A Colleague', a moving obituary in the *New Straits Times* in which he noted that "like every mortal Razak was not perfect; he had his faults but there is no man, no leader of his people who was more selfless in his devotion to his people, country and religion." Tun Razak was the man who embraced Dr Mahathir when others spurned him. This was the man whom we lost and mourned 29 years ago. He formulated the New Economic Policy that in turn created today's 'Melayu Baru'.

In my description I have tried to conjure up an image of an educated Malay aristocrat with foresight, and a leader who was diplomatic, intriguing, pragmatic and polite in the manner of Zhou Enlai.

The wise, soft-spoken Tun Razak gave Malaysia ambition, power, grace and credence by virtue of his integrity and commitment towards a united, prosperous, peaceful and democratic Malaysia. He did more than anyone else to set a new level of understanding and mutual respect amongst Malaysian Chinese and the bumiputeras in the aftermath of the vicious race riots of 1969.

The tragedy of Tun Razak's sudden death, if anything, pushed the cause of racial equality and nationhood further and

Cheers all round when Malaysia makes it to the hockey semi-finals. Tun Razak (extreme right) stands beside the young Nazir with Tan Sri Abdullah clapping (centre).

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

consecrated the mission to which he had dedicated his life—that of equality for all Malaysians in the Malaysian context.

Tun Razak, despite his serious expression, was not ill-humoured and because of that he did not have to be more Machiavellian than absolutely necessary. In his personal habits he was frugal but generous to anyone who was in need, without the least showiness. And he found displays of extravagance and ostentatious living, distasteful. He died a relatively poor man because he did not succumb to the temptations of money.

He was a good strategist and fought his battles with sophistication. By this I mean Tun Razak, between being loved and being feared, was always loved rather than feared.

Matchmaking Uncle Razak

By Datin Kalsom bt Tan Sri Taib

I was only nine when I met Uncle Razak for the first time in 1951. I remember that day clearly as he came with my father, the late Tan Sri Taib Andak, to fetch me home after school. Usually, I walked home, as home was not too far away from the Convent Holy Infant Jesus, Johor Bahru, where I studied.

But that day was special. I was excited because Ayah had come to fetch me in his car—something he rarely had the opportunity to do as he was usually busy at work. Little did I know of the hidden agenda. Only later did I find out that Ayah, on the pretext of fetching me, had brought along Uncle Razak to catch a glimpse of Chu, my name for Tun Rahah, a fifth former at my school. No wonder I saw Uncle Razak grinning from ear to ear all the way back to our house at Jalan Dato' Menteri.

I later discovered that Uncle Razak's late father had expressly written to Ayah to help him find a suitable bride, preferably a Johorean. Rahah was no stranger to us as her eldest sister, Fakhariah, was married to my uncle, Abdullah. It must have been love at first sight for Uncle Razak because soon after that my parents paid a visit to Rahah's parents' house to *merisik*—in Malay society, the initial step taken by friends or family before a formal proposal of marriage is made. In short my parents, acting on Uncle Razak's behalf, were to gently find out whether Rahah's parents were agreeable to his asking for her hand in marriage.

My mother confided to me that Uncle Razak dated Rahah only once after their formal engagement, and even so, they were chaperoned by my parents as well as by Fakhariah and her husband.

Tun Razak and my parents knew each other well as they had stayed together in London between 1947 and 1949 when Tun was studying at Lincoln's Inn and Ayah was a student at the Middle Temple. Despite the obvious differences in personalities between Tun and Ayah, they were really the best of friends.

Tun was quiet and quite a private person, as compared to Ayah who at 35 was gregarious and enjoyed the company of many friends. The six year age difference did not seem to matter either and, despite the fact that Tun was a bachelor then and Ayah already a father of four, they shared many interests and enjoyed each other's company immensely.

(Tan Sri) Taib Andak (left) and Tun Razak shared a flat in London and remained the best of friends. In 1952 Taib was posted to Kuala Lipis as District Officer where Razak was Pahang State Secretary. (1953)

(Courtesy of Datin Kalsom Taib)

Decades-old family ties—'Uncle Razak' (second from right) teases Datin Kalsom Taib gently on her wedding day. The late Sultan Ismail of Johore sits between bride and groom, Datuk Shafee Yahaya. Tun Razak subsequently appoints Shafee as his private secretary. Toh Puan Lim Cheng Neo, wife of former Finance Minister, the late Tun Tan Siew Sin graces the bridal high table (extreme right). (1966)

(Courtesy of Datin Kalsom Taib)

When my mother, Puan Sri Zainab Ahmad, subsequently joined Ayah in London, Tun warmed up to her almost immediately and called her Mummy as well. Mummy would cook for Tun and Ayah and Tun would help out with the washing up and other daily chores. He also accompanied her to shop for groceries and would insist on carrying all those bulky shopping bags right up to their flat at 61, Courtfield Garden, London.

Mummy remembers Tun being a smart dresser, always in his suit and hat, and he would often admire himself in the mirror and remark, "Mummy, one day I will be the Prime Minister of Malaya." At the youthful age of 25, Tun already had a vision of what he could do for his country and was determined to pursue it.

When Tun returned home to Malaya in 1950, he served first as Assistant State Secretary of Pahang and subsequently was promoted to State Secretary. Coincidentally, Ayah was transferred to Kuala Lipis in 1952 as District Officer and their friendship strengthened.

I used to look forward to our many visits to Uncle Razak's home, as unlike Ayah's other friends, he paid great attention to us children and was constantly teasing us. He had the ability to communicate with people of all levels and at a time when children were mainly 'to be seen and not heard', he took the trouble to talk to us and showed great interest in our activities. Although he was quite a reserved person, he had this distinctive aura about him and we admired and respected him very much. He had the ability to make everyone around him feel special.

When I married Shafee in 1966, I had the honour of Tun sitting beside me at the bride's main table. And despite the fact that I had grown from that gawky nine year-old schoolgirl to a 24-year-old blushing bride, he did not spare me any teasing. Tun was already the Deputy Prime Minister by then, but he was still the same old Uncle Razak to us–warm, caring and without airs.

In 1969-75, Shafee had the opportunity to serve Tun as his private secretary. Whenever Tun went on his many trips overseas, he never failed to bring back chocolates or exotic fruit for our children. His thoughtfulness would always remain with us, especially so because even after Shafee was transferred to the Majlis Keselamatan Negara, Tun continued to remember to buy gifts for the children or us whenever he travelled.

Hands-on Prime Minister—FELDA chairman Tan Sri Taib Andak explaining highlights of the Taib Andak settlement scheme in Kulai, Johore. (1968)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Shafee also recalls Tun's high sense of integrity and accountability. He remembers one incident when Tun did not allow Toh Puan Rahah to change the curtains and re-upholster the furniture in the living area of their official residence, Sri Taman,

26th August '69.

My dear mummy,

Just a short note to remember our stay in England. Wherever you are, you will always remain a charming mummy to me.

Yours affectionately

Rahmah

61, Carlingford Gardens,
London N.W 5

Tun Razak accompanied by FELDA Chairman Tan Sri Taib Andak (right) upon arrival at the Gedangsa football field to visit a FELDA scheme in Selangor. (1966)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

even though the curtains and furniture were showing signs of wear and tear. The simple furnishings in Sri Taman reflected Tun's thrift and respect for public funds.

When Tun died in London, we were overwhelmed with grief. Malaysia had lost a great leader and our family a dear friend.

Mummy still keeps with pride her yellowing, dog-eared autograph book where Tun had expressed his appreciation.

Shafee too recalls with sadness that exactly two weeks after Tun's death, he received a gift from Tun through his aide-de-camp—a shirt which Tun had purchased in London while he was undergoing treatment. To the end, Tun was selfless and remembered others.

And even though 29 years have elapsed since his passing, we still remember him with the utmost respect as a man with a strict sense of conduct, discipline and humility. His tireless efforts in developing the country, his pursuit of ways to improve the lives of the rural poor, and his selflessness and belief in the principles of accountability, transparency and fairness will remain with us. His professionalism and moral philosophy will continue to inspire us and serve as a benchmark by which we can measure ourselves.

A page from history—Tun Razak penned this fond remembrance in 'Mummy's' autograph book.(1949)

(Courtesy of Datin Kalsom Taib)

A Heart Easily Won

By Tun Hajah Rahah bte Tan Sri Haji Noah

I was only 19 when we first met. I was just out of school, young and not so self-confident. I was very nervous and shy at our first meeting. He, by contrast, looked calm and self-assured.

It was the late Tan Sri Taib Andak, his good friend, who brought us together, with my parents' knowledge and consent of course. My father was then Chairman of UMNO in Johore and Tun had come over to visit the UMNO office there. Taib introduced us. He was very close to Tun; they had been together in London studying law.

In those days, girls were not free to choose their own partners. Marriages between people of different states were also rare. But it seemed his father had for some reason advised him to look for a Johore girl when the time came for him to marry. My mother showed me his photograph. I thought he looked quite handsome–young and slim. My two elder sisters, Suhaila and Cik Teh, had been paired off in this way too and their marriages had worked out well. I trusted my parents, although my mother did worry about my going away to live in Pahang, which to her was a "strange place". My father, however, was confident that I would be fine. And I felt they knew best. So I thought, why not.

We were engaged for nine months. During that time we were allowed to go out together only three times, mostly to dine out in Singapore. Even then, we had to be chaperoned, usually by Cik Teh. I never dreamt that he was going to be a leader of a nation. I did not know then that my life was going to take such a dramatic turn.

We were married on September 4, 1952. Up until then, I had not known of the world outside Johore. I had never been anywhere away from home. I had led a sheltered life. As a young bride, I had to adapt to so many things. And I was afraid. He made it easy for me.

For one thing, I was not used to the Pahang ways—the place was new, the food was different and the dialect sounded alien to me at first. And before I had properly settled down, I had already conceived our first child. Najib was born on July 23, 1953 and Johari the following year. Later we had three more boys: Nizam, Nazim and Nazir.

With his blushing bride, the young Rahah bt (Tan Sri) Haji Noah at their bersanding *ceremony. (1952)*

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

A year after we were married, just after I had Najib, Razak was awarded the Leader Grant. We travelled around the world. It was the first time for me. We visited Switzerland, England and several other countries in Europe, Russia, the United States and Japan. We made stopovers in several cities. At one point, we put up in a flat in London for a few months. That was the closest we ever came to being an ordinary couple. I cooked and kept house for him. It was the best time for us. Our untouched happiness, however, was short-lived. The country was struggling for independence and he was recalled for his services.

When we married, I was 19 and he was 30. The age gap was rather wide but perhaps that helped, for he was mature and understanding. He was always kind and so calm, very seldom ruffled. There was a lot of give-and-take between us. He hardly ever raised his voice—not to me, not to his children and certainly not to the household staff. He would advise rather than reprimand, showing us where we went wrong. He won our hearts and it was easy to win his.

We hardly quarrelled and when we did, he was always the first to make up. Actually, it was not easy to get angry with him or to stay annoyed. He was never the one to start an argument. I admired him for his quiet strength.

We had only boys. He had wished very much for daughters but God chose to give us only sons. And we were blessed for they are very fine sons. We did adopt three girls. All the children have grown up now and are successful in their careers—Najib chose politics and seems to be faring well as a Cabinet minister. Johari is a qualified lawyer, Nizam and Nazir are into finance and Nazim is an architect. All have families of their own, except for Nazim, who is still looking for that 'perfect' someone.

Tun was very close to the children and very particular about their education. We were a happy family. On those nights when we had a break from formal functions, we truly enjoyed our family meals at home. Though serious in public, he loved to have fun and frolic with the children. The house would ring with their laughter.

And there were the holidays we shared as a family. He loved the sea and enjoyed water sports very much, perhaps because he himself grew up by the river. We went to Tioman, Langkawi and Pangkor where we spent the time boating and fishing, while he also water-skied. In his younger days, he used to play tennis but acquired a passion for golf as he grew older. He found golf very relaxing. Although our time with him was so precious to the family, we never minded his hours on the golf course because he enjoyed it so much.

He liked all kinds of seafood; his favourite fish was the *ikan patin*. But he was never fussy about food. He preferred simple dishes. After all, he was always a '*kampung* boy' at heart. He loved to eat like the *orang kampung*—vegetables grown in the wild and cooked in coconut milk, *tempoyak, cemperai, keledek,* those kinds of foods.

Throughout our life together, he never expected me to cook for him or to undertake household chores. He was easy to please. He merely wanted me to supervise the household and to ensure that things were organised around the house. Anyway, I did the smart thing by hiring a most reliable cook who could prepare the food just as he liked it.

To him, it was more important that I gave time to the children and played the role of the wife of a politician. And as a politician's wife, I did have an equally hectic schedule. He understood that very well.

Tun loved having his friends around him. He loved company. He believed keenly in *mesyuarat*, so they often got together to discuss issues and brainstorm ideas. These sessions were not always at the office; often he had breakfast discussions at home. During these sessions, there were times when he would like me to be present, at other times not. Sometimes the men would bring

Tun Razak hid his ailment even from his cherished wife Rahah.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

along their wives, and then I would be required to be around. We used to entertain quite a lot at Sri Taman.

His schedule was usually very tight. He was always on the move but in the rare free times he had, he loved to read. He never tired of reading. He collected a lot of books, some of which have been donated to the Tun Abdul Razak Memorial. He would read all kinds of books but his favourites were the more serious stuff, such as autobiographies and biographies of famous statesmen.

Although he neither sang nor played any musical instrument, he did have a passion for music. He liked traditional Malay music, not so much the sentimental ballads but more upbeat *ronggeng* numbers like *Enjit-enjit Semut, Yang Ditunggu Tidak Tiba* and *Joget Pahang*. He also liked the traditional *Selendang Mak Inang*. Of the English songs, *Autumn Leaves* was a particular favourite. He truly enjoyed going to the Lake Club and having the band strike up these numbers for him. Occasionally, he did indulge in a little bit of *ronggeng*. Times were different then, and couples danced among friends.

In his personal habits, he was equally unassuming. He loved simplicity in clothing. He did not believe in being overdressed, not for himself, not for me. For some reason, he disliked green and could not stand striped clothes. He said they looked like pyjamas. He just wanted me to dress simply yet elegantly.

He was a thoughtful husband. On those occasions when he went on overseas trips without me, he would always remember to bring back gifts for me—usually dress material. We travelled quite a lot together too—there were the working trips and the rare holidays abroad.

I did enjoy shopping then but like most men, he had no patience to go from shop to shop to look for that particular item, be it a pair of shoes or handbag. I recall him asking if we really needed to go to 11 shops—an exaggerated figure of course–just to get a pair of shoes. One shop was more than enough, just go in and buy whatever it is you want, he would say. But like most women, I like to look around first before making a choice.

Those trips abroad, however, were the exceptions rather than the norm. He would regularly go to the rural areas, sometimes accompanied by me. Most times, he had the *kampung* folk on his mind and in his heart. He was always thinking of ways to improve their livelihood and to provide them with opportunities to upgrade themselves. He would persevere, just giving all he could. He was truly committed to the cause of the rural sector. He was a *kampung* boy from the start right up to the end.

He never liked to make things difficult for others. Wherever he could, he always tried to bear any hardship himself without

A rare family holiday in Lugano, Switzerland with Toh Puan Rahah by his side. (1970)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

inconveniencing others. Towards the end, he had kept his illness even from me. He lived his days and did his work as if he had forever. It was only the week before he died that his doctors told me how critical his condition was. I knew he was ailing but I never knew it was terminal. He had instructed the doctors to keep it a secret even from me, just to spare me the worry.

I am now 71 years old. I have 12 grandchildren: five girls and seven boys. It would have been nice if he had lived to see how the children turned out, that they are all doing well and how the nation has developed. In our times together, he did share with me his hopes and dreams for the children and for us. But fate decided otherwise. At the time of his death in 1976, we had been happily married for 24 years.

Those years were precious. I was only 44, hardly ready for widowhood. But the boys have been wonderful. And the family remains close-knit as always.

My Friend through All Seasons

By Des Alwi Abu Bakar

IT began as just another early autumn's evening in London. It was to lead to a lifetime of friendship.

That night, I had accompanied Sutan Shahrir to his suite at the Claridges Hotel in Bond Street, London. We were awaiting the arrival of a group from the Malay Society, a social organisation from peninsular Malaya that largely comprised Malay students studying in England. They wanted to meet Sutan Shahrir after hearing he was in town.

By then, Bung Shahrir was already an Indonesian leader of some repute in Asian circles. He was at the time President Sukarno's special envoy to raise international awareness of and sympathy for Indonesia's protest against Dutch military action in Indonesia and had, in fact, just returned from a security council meeting in Lake Success, United States, in August/September 1947.

I opened the door to a polite knock. Four youths stood before me. "Come in," Shahrir greeted them. The four introduced themselves: Tunku Abdul Rahman was the chairman, Abdul Razak its vice-chairman, accompanied by Sofyan and Zulkifli Ahmad. Tunku began by explaining that they had come to meet Sutan Shahrir to convey their empathy and support for the Indonesian independence struggle.

The conversation grew lively as we discussed the situation in Southeast Asia since the war in the Pacific. Sutan Shahrir was drawn to Abdul Razak's description of the situation on the peninsula. Razak explained that the anti-British guerilla activities were not a Malay struggle. It was in fact undertaken by communists of Chinese origin who were trying to spread communism in Malaya.

Bung Shahrir found this interesting because in Indonesia too, activists of the extreme left were trying to destroy the Partai Sosialis which he led. During the independence revolution, the socialist extremists wanted to grab power. Later they formed the communist front and staged a rebellion in Madiun in September 1948, which was quashed by Mohammad Hatta's government.

The meeting with the four Malay youths left an impression on Sutan Shahrir. We felt very much at one with our shared Malay roots, in our quest to imbue an independent people of Southeast Asia with a new-found nationalist spirit.

"We should stay in regular contact," suggested Sutan Shahrir. "While awaiting Subandrio's arrival as the head of the Indonesian delegation to the United Kingdom, it is best just to go through Des Alwi," he added as he turned to me. Aside from my studies, I was also on the staff of the Republic of Indonesia representative office, in the information section at Knightsbridge, London.

Razak approached me and handed me his calling card: "Abdul Razak, Vice-Chairman Malay Society". From that moment on our acquaintance with our peninsular friends in England blossomed. Apart from becoming close friends with Razak and Tunku Abdul Rahman, I also came to know Ghazali Shafie, Wan Daud, Taib Andak, Raja Muda Idris (later the Sultan of Perak), Tengku Mahkota Ahmad (later the Sultan of Pahang), Mohamed Sopiee, Kadir Samsudin and many others.

Four Musketeers

Shahrir-Hatta, as my adoptive parents, had sent me to London to study, after the signing of the Linggarjati agreement in March 1947. My sisters, Mimi and Taty Suwandi, followed a year later.

As a student, I truly enjoyed myself with my friends from peninsular Malaya. Indeed we were the four musketeers—Razak,

Despite Konfrontasi, *Malaysian-Indonesian relations were probably at their best during the Razak years. Then Foreign Minister Tun Adam Malik (left) made it a point to personally welcome Tun Razak and Toh Puan Rahah at the start of a week's vacation in Bali. (1974)*

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Wan Daud, Taib Andak and myself. We often got together and lived in an atmosphere of true camaraderie away from home. We visited each other all the time and took turns to cook. Each had a speciality and I was famous for my vegetable *gado-gado* with peanut butter and shrimp paste sauce, enhanced by the addition of ground chillies to whet the appetite.

As the four musketeers, we were rarely apart and often went places together. I was a frequent visitor at the apartment shared by Razak, Taib Andak and Raja Muda Idris on the ground floor of the Court Field Garden. Because my boisterous presence often made their flat noisy, I was nicknamed 'Ribut' or 'The Storm'. Whenever I turned up, Razak would greet me with the announcement: "Ribut is here!" The atmosphere brightened up with our stories and jokes.

Our closeness in England became a tradition for the four musketeers and often enhanced the merry-making whenever and wherever we gathered. Tunku Abdul Rahman often became the target of our jokes as the chairman of the Malay Society in England. The custom was carried on through the years, for instance when we gathered to celebrate Tunku Abdul Rahman's birthday in Kuala Lumpur in 1968. Tun Razak, Tan Sri Taib and I jointly handed Tunku a birthday present. Tunku was already suspicious but being a good sport, opened the package. As soon as he did so, he exclaimed, "Hah!" He burst into laughter when he saw its contents—the 'Barrel Man' from the Philippines. His laughter drew the attention of the other guests. The hall rang out in even more laughter when Tunku opened the barrel. Taib promptly said, "Still the same Ribut."

A Flair for Leadership

As students, we were part of a large group who attended the official opening of the 1948 Olympic Games. We also often watched the games at the Arsenal stadium, or joined the other Malayan students at tennis and hockey matches. Through them, I made friends with fellow students from Singapore as well: 'Harry' Lee Kuan Yew, Goh Keng Swee, Toh Chin Chye, Lee Kun Choy and Maurice Baker.

Even then, Razak's leadership qualities were already obvious. He was captain of the Malayan hockey team in London. He led various Malayan student organisations. When Razak addressed a students' meeting, those present would listen with rapt attention, earning him much respect from his friends, especially in the Malayan Forum. The way he carried himself identified Razak as a future statesman for his people.

Razak was descended from the commander of the Sultan's forces at the court of Sultan Jalil of Goa, in Makassar, grandson of Sultan Hassanudin, who fought valiantly against the Dutch. This commander later married the Sultan's stepsister and left for Pekan in Pahang.

The South Sulawesi Bugis warrior spirit at once inspired Abdul Razak to revive the Malay identity. Moreover, Razak's aim in supporting Indonesia's independence struggle was also to achieve independence for Malaya from the British. He was sure that the British would grant Malaya independence if the western powers also recognised Indonesia's independence.

Sharing the Independence Dream

Razak's support for Indonesia's independence struggle was obvious when the Malay Society helped the Indonesian students put up cultural shows on several British campuses to raise funds for Indonesia's independence efforts and to introduce Indonesia to the British.

At the time, the Dutch had imposed trade restrictions against Indonesia, including banning the export of raw produce such as rubber, coffee, tea and pepper. The Dutch blockade to stop the Indonesian exports had received international criticism.

Indonesian students in the Netherlands such as Hanna Nimpuno and Oke Jelantik, as well as others studying elsewhere in Europe, assisted in these fund-raising cultural dance performances. Members of the Malay Society provided the musical accompaniment. Certainly, they attracted the attention of the English public.

Once, an incident occurred which gave rise to some tension after one such show. A representative of the Labour Party spiritedly invited the audience to support the cause. "Please comrades, let us donate to help the Indonesian struggle for independence," he called out. As it turned out, among the audience that night were Sir Richard Winstedt, the English academician and expert on the Malay language, and his wife.

Lady Winstedt objected to the term 'comrades' and immediately stood up. "Richard, let's go back, we have nothing to do with the Commies," she declared while hastily making her way to the door. Sizing up the situation, Razak immediately approached her to calm the situation. "Please, Lady Winstedt, you should not be angry with us," he said. "This is not a communist gathering. If the guest speaker from the Labour Party greets the audience with 'comrades', it does not mean we are communists."

A well-deserved break—Tun Razak teeing off with Pak Suharto in Jakarta. (1970)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Razak managed to persuade Lady Winstedt to resume her seat. She soon forgot the 'minor incident' and thoroughly enjoyed the cultural dance performance, a joint-effort between Indonesia and Malaya. The proceeds were very useful, especially in purchasing medicine which was subsequently sent to the Indonesian Red Cross.

Touring Europe

In the summer of 1948, Razak, Wan Daud and I devised ways to bring a delegation of students from Malaya to the continent to visit France, Belgium, Holland and other western nations, as part of our efforts to establish contacts for our independence struggle, while visiting fellow students. At that time, it was not easy for Malay students to visit Europe. The British colonial government, under the Finance Secretary, Sir Stafford Cripps, had set out specific monetary restrictions. Every citizen leaving England was forbidden from bringing out more than five pounds sterling. For that reason, students from Malaya were hindered from visiting other countries in Europe.

Speaking of peace with the exuberant (Tun) Adam Malik (centre) in Bangkok. (1966)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

But Razak and I overcame that problem. We left in a group of eight. The others would follow later and meet up in Paris, together with Mimi and other students there. In addition, I taught them how to bring out more than five pounds sterling. The pound was very strong and could be exchanged anywhere to pay our way.

Our group left by train and headed for Harwich. From there, we took a ferry to Hoek van Holland. The Indonesian students in Amsterdam welcomed us and showed us true hospitality. We were served the Rijstafel, comprising various Indonesian dishes, and invited to join in other student activities.

Our journey continued to Belgium to attend the World Youth Congress in Brussels. Even though the invitation was only for three, Abdul Razak, Tunku Jaafar (now DYMM Tuanku Jaafar, the Yang Dipertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan) and Wan Daud, all eight of us squeezed together in three rooms at the Ecole Normal hostel provided by the congress secretariat for the participants. Our aim was to save money as our ultimate destination was Paris.

For Razak, the congress was a new experience as it was the first time he had attended an international forum with representatives from 30 countries present. In addressing the gathering, Razak spoke of the importance of facilities for youths to enhance their productive creativity so as to improve the future of their people. In this way, youths would not fall by the wayside and end up as colonialist puppets.

The very day the congress ended, the hostel where we stayed was closed, so we had to leave immediately for Antwerp. The following day we headed for Paris, staying at the Fontain Bleu Hotel, an inexpensive establishment in the Latin Quarter near the City University and the Sorbonne University campuses. We did not have much money so we had to watch our expenses, eating either at student cafeterias or at cheaper restaurants.

Paris Escapade

One night, Tengku Eddy and I went out with two French female students who acted as our guides to the romantic Paris nightlife. We watched an erotic performance by the famous Follies Berger dancers, after which we bade our guides goodnight and entered the Naturist night-club. There we met two dancers and invited them for supper at a nearby restaurant. But before that, we counted what money we had on us.

I had five pounds, Tengku Ahmad five pounds. We calculated that at most the meal would cost us six pounds. As it happened,

the two dancers ordered wine and the meal stretched to dessert. I began to grow anxious and approached a waiter to ask how much we had run up. Sure enough our bill came to 11 pounds. I then whispered to Tengku Ahmad, "Tengku, we're short of cash. The expensive item was the wine the dancers guzzled down." As a result, Tengku had to stay at the restaurant while I went back for help.

As soon as I reached the hotel, I woke Razak up. It was 3.00 a.m. He woke up scolding for being left out. I pleaded with him, "Can I borrow five pounds from you, please?" while explaining that Tengku Eddy was now a hostage at the restaurant.

"I don't care," replied Razak, grumbling. "Bad enough that you sneak out quietly without inviting me along. Now that you are in difficulties, I have to bail you out."

"Take pity on Tengku Eddy," I said. "Or else he will surely have to enter the kitchens and wash the dishes."

"Let him," Razak responded. "I will tell him to return to London tomorrow."

"Don't be like that," I went on pleading, "otherwise we will spend the night in jail."

In the end, Razak took out the five precious pounds from his wallet. "Remember, Ribut, you owe me five pounds," he reminded me.

The governor of South Sulawesi presents the Putera Makasar, *a sailing ship, in tribute to Tun Razak at Port Klang. (1975)*

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

By the time I returned to the restaurant, Tengku Ahmad had ordered coffee, as he had had to wait so long. The bill shot up even more.

Our adventure of the previous night became the talk of the group, especially as we were the youngest there. That very afternoon, Tengku Eddy and Raja Idris were sent back to London. It was quite sad to see them go, as Raja Muda Idris was usually our financial backer.

Our travels in Europe had their ups and downs. The best part was the sense of togetherness. Mimi and her friends joined us and our group grew in France.

The low point occurred while returning to Britain from Holland via Belgium.

Our plan in the Netherlands was to meet Mohammad Hatta, the then Prime Minister of Indonesia, and a well-known figure among the people of Malaya. But when the Belgian immigration officer checked our passports at the French-Belgian border, our delegation was not allowed to enter as the visa for Belgium had already been used once. Since the Malayan students held British Protectorate passports, as opposed to British passports, they needed a transit visa. Razak was furious and argued that we were only transiting and not getting off in Belgium. But Razak's explanation was rejected and we had to disembark from the train. Even though the Indonesians in the group were not affected, we empathised with our friends from Malaya and together got off at the border.

The atmosphere was very sad while we were heading to catch the ferry at Calais, France, as our money was ever shrinking. The only notably rich person among us was Wan Daud, who had five whole pounds on him. Daud's money immediately became communal property to pay for the ferry tickets and we sailed back to England, landing in Dover.

Years later, Razak would often say in jest, "Des, you still owe me five pounds." The debt was repaid only in 1974 in Bali. Razak needed Rp.300.000—to buy a piece of Balinese cloth. As I handed him the amount he asked for, I said with satisfaction, "Now I have repaid in full the five pounds I owed you."

"Plus 30 years of interest," he replied. And he and his wife, Rahah, broke out in peals of laughter.

Kindred Spirits

In August 1949, Razak and I left for the Netherlands again, staying at a student hostel in Amsterdam. He wanted to meet Mohammad Hatta, then Vice-President and Prime Minister of Indonesia, who would be participating at the negotiating table at The Hague.

Razak was delighted at meeting Bung Hatta face to face. Razak described how the activities of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), founded by Dato' Onn Jaafar, had shaped political developments and the growth of nationalism on the peninsula. Bung Hatta was impressed with Razak's narration, so much so that the cordial atmosphere between them became that of an elder brother and a younger brother.

Hatta then mentioned that many Malay youths from the peninsula, especially those from Johore and Pahang, were in Sumatra and were actively helping in Indonesia's revolutionary struggle for independence.

Bung Hatta also recounted his days of travelling and studying in Europe in the 1920s. He analysed the rise of nationalism among Indonesian students in Europe. As an elder brother, Bung Hatta urged the Malayan students in the United Kingdom not to delve only into the social sciences but also to take up medicine and science and technology in preparation for Southeast Asia's future.

His meeting with Hatta, whom he greatly admired, left a lasting impression on Razak. After the meeting, Razak returned to London alone since I, as the aide-de-camp to the Chief of the Military Commission, Dr Leimena, representing the Republic of Indonesia, at the roundtable conference in The Hague was busy taking care of the delegation while they were in the Netherlands.

Upon my return to London in early December 1949, Razak invited me to occupy Taib Andak's room as he had completed his studies. Razak himself returned to Pahang when he received a cable informing him that his father was seriously ill. He came back to London in January to collect his belongings. While in London, he received news that his father had passed away. Even though we had only known each other for three years, Razak and I had become firm friends. Mimi too felt this way and we were saddened to hear of his bereavement.

Razak returned to Malaya in 1950. Before leaving, he told us of his family situation. By his own mother, he had only one sister. But his father left many younger brothers and sisters by another mother.

So close were we that Razak often poured his heart out to me about his personal life and family. When his sister died in 1971, he told me sadly, "Des, now I am truly lonely after losing my sister." My own sister, Mimi, who has also passed away, had the opportunity to look in on Razak in Johore while on her way back to Indonesia in 1951.

Early Seeds of Confrontation

At the end of December 1949, the peninsular students shared our joy upon hearing of Queen Juliana's handing over of Dutch rule of Indonesia to the Prime Minister, Mohammad Hatta. But they were disappointed that Subandrio had sent invitations for only five to attend the declaration of independence ceremony at the Republic of Indonesia representative office in London, even though the students from Malaya had helped tremendously in raising funds for the independence effort. The reason for this snub was the Malay Society's invitation earlier for Dr Darma Setiawan to address the KMGB conference. This had infuriated Subandrio, all the more so when he heard rumours that Darma Setiawan was to be made the Republic of Indonesia's ambassador to the United Kingdom.

I could just imagine how angry Razak was in London. Subandrio's vengeance sowed the seeds for an early confrontation within the greater Malay world of Southeast Asia, on which I will elaborate later.

In 1952, I became a diplomat at Deplu, the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, and served as information attache in Switzerland, and subsequently in Hungary and Austria. I was transferred to Manila in 1957. The Indonesian political climate was warming up when Mohammad Hatta withdrew from government, prompted by Sukarno's neglect of economic development. Meanwhile, the nationalisation of all Dutch enterprises in Indonesia had not improved the economy.

Following this, Sukarno made a grab for power, expelling all his political rivals including our adoptive father, Sutan Shahrir. The Partai Sosialis Indonesia (PSI) and Masyumi parties were dissolved. Several newspapers, most prominently the *Indonesia Raya, Pedoman* and *Keng Po,* were closed down for opposing Sukarno's political regime.

Sometime in 1957, while on leave in Jakarta, I met the foreign Ministry Secretary-General, Suwito Kusumowidagdo, to inform him of my intended visit to Kuala Lumpur to attend the Federation of Malaya independence celebrations to which I had been invited. Suwito was furious because I had returned to Jakarta without permission and ordered me back to my post.

I tried to meet Subandrio to gain support for my visit to Kuala Lumpur but he did not want to see me. Subandrio himself was angry with the leaders of the Federation of Malaya for abstaining in the West Irian dispute at the United Nations. Tunku Abdul Rahman's government at the time was completely unaware of

the problem owing to a communication gap with Jakarta, which resulted in its abstention from the vote. But Jakarta did not approach Kuala Lumpur to clarify its position on the issue. Instead it taunted Malaya for being "puppets of the British".

Sukarno's Battle Cry

The situation might have been different had Jakarta posted me to Kuala Lumpur. I had in fact offered myself for the post in 1956. Even prior to that, Abdullah Kamil had suggested that I take his place in Kuala Lumpur and that he fill my post in Manila. In fact, Subandrio had approved of Kamil's proposal. Obviously Subandrio had changed his mind. The situation became more chaotic when Sukarno drove the Indonesian people to take up arms against the Malay peninsula with his call to "Crush Malaysia!".

Sukarno's attitude was all the more perplexing as the Malays admired Hatta, Sukarno and Shahrir and held them up as Malay leaders. Their photographs adorned the walls of Malay homes. They were puzzled as to why Sukarno should oppose Malaysia, which shared the same ethnic roots.

Long before that, relations had been established between Sukarno-Hatta and some of the Malay leaders. For instance, they had met Dr Burhanuddin Helmi and other Malay leaders in Taiping while en route to Saigon to meet the Japanese commander in chief of the armed forces for Southeast Asia, 'Marshall' Hisaichi Terauchi in early August 1945, to discuss preparations for Indonesia's independence. At the meeting in Taiping, they had suggested independence for the Malay peninsula as well, plus Sarawak and North Borneo, together to form the Kesatuan Melayu Raya with Indonesia.

The next meeting took place after Sukarno-Hatta returned from Saigon and were met by prominent Malay leaders such as Dr Burhanuddin, Onan Haji Siraj and Ibrahim Yaakob. The idea mooted in Taiping, which had discussed preparations to integrate Melayu Raya, was supported by the Kesatuan Rakyat Indonesia Semenanjung (KRIS). But the situation changed with Japan's unconditional surrender to the Allied Forces on August 15, 1945.

A Friend in Need

I was crushed by Sutan Shahrir's arrest by the Sukarno regime. At the same time, Suwito reprimanded me for bringing the late Ninoy Aquino—husband of former Philippine President Corazon Aquino—who was then a journalist with *The Manila Times*, together with three other Filipino journalists to visit Manado in the run-up to the Permesta riots in north Sulawesi.

I went in person to Jakarta to submit my resignation since the Indonesian Foreign Ministry had allowed me to be attacked by the communist media. The *Warta Bhakti*, *Bintang Timur* and *Harian Rakyat* had accused me of disloyalty to the Indonesian people and had launched personal attacks against me.

I then returned to Manila to fetch my family. But upon arriving in Manila, I discovered that my wife Anne and our children had left for Jakarta on hearing of my resignation. I myself could not return to Jakarta, as I would face certain arrest. I then headed for Kuala Lumpur and was temporarily accommodated by Abdul Razak at Federal Hill. Razak asked the Federation of Malaya ambassador in Jakarta to assist my family in obtaining visas.

Meanwhile, Anne and the two children had obtained passports thanks to the assistance of friends in the immigration department who were sympathetic to my plight. On the pretext of collecting our furniture from Manila, they left for Singapore. After joining them, the entire family left for Europe and later settled in Hong Kong.

The United Kingdom served as a training ground for future leaders of former colonies—Malaya, Singapore and Indonesia. Abdul Razak (left) stands near his good friend Des Alwi (standing second from right). Also present are Taib Andak (sitting extreme right) and his wife (Puan Sri) Zainab Ahmad (in white, with glasses). (1949)
(Courtesy of Datin Kalsom Taib)

In early 1961 I sent a greeting card to Razak wishing him a happy *Aidil Fitri*. Since there were no greeting cards specifically for the Muslim celebration of *Aidil Fitri*, marking the end of Ramadan, I bought a card wishing him a Happy Chinese New Year instead. The card, printed in Mandarin, was only one of a hundred greeting cards he received. Yet Razak was drawn to it and picked it up. He was surprised to discover that 'Ribut' and his whole family were in Hong Kong.

He was worried for me and I was deeply touched by his concern. He had heard that the Sukarno regime had wiped out those who had participated in the PRRI-Permesta and should I have returned from abroad, I would certainly have been denounced and arrested. Razak instructed Taib Andak, together with his private doctor, Dr McPherson, to track me down while they were in Hong Kong, and to bring me back to Malaysia. My family and I truly felt the full measure of his empathy and caring, characteristics so intrinsic to Razak.

Neighbours Cross Swords

The confrontational politics initiated by Sukarno against Malaysia broke the peace in Southeast Asia, turning it into an area of conflict. Sutan Shahrir and the other anti-communist leaders were imprisoned in 1961.

Sukarno bitterly opposed the formation of Malaysia, with the joining up of North Borneo with the Federation of Malaya, and accused it of spreading the influence of 'the British neo-colonialists'.

Many descendants of former sultans were attacked during Sukarno's Anti-Old Order Campaign. The descendants of the former Bulungan sultanate, from the northern province of East Kalimantan for instance, were accused of forging ties with Malaysia. As a result, all the sultan's descendants were jailed or killed in 1963 and the palaces in Bulungan and Kutai razed to the ground.

Sukarno's radical approach destabilised Southeast Asia, enabling the Partai Komunis Indonesia to launch a *coup d'etat* on September 30, 1965. But backed by the Indonesian Armed Forces, Major-General Suharto, at the time the Panglima Kostrad, managed to put down the coup. Regional peace was restored and the Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation came to an end.

Peace Restored

Razak found the change in leadership from President Sukarno to General Suharto particularly meaningful because the government decree was issued on March 11, 1966. For Razak it was like a birthday present, as it fell exactly on his 44th birthday. "It's like a piece of personal good fortune," said Razak to me at the time.

Razak held Indonesia in high regard and he was overcome by a feeling of kinship with people of the same ethnic roots. He thought highly of Indonesia's young fighters, such as Lieutenant-Colonel Benny Moerdani who was the *charge d'affaires* at the Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur after Confrontation ended. Razak felt proud when he discovered that the Indonesian Air Force Hercules plane bringing in the Indonesian friendship delegation in 1966 were piloted by 'Malay-Indonesian' pilots. He then vowed to put Malaysian pilots on all Malaysian flights around the world.

I had previously joined Ali Moertopo and Benny Moerdani in frank discussions with Tun Razak and Tan Sri Ghazali, where Razak had sounded out the idea of forming an association between Malaysia and Indonesia so that the two neighbours could progress side by side. "It does not feel right if we, as two countries with shared roots, develop on our own," he said. That body would consolidate Indonesian and Malaysian efforts to develop Southeast Asia.

Ali had asked, "What about Singapore?"

Des Alwi (left) never missed Tun Razak's birthday celebrations. At centre is (Tan Sri) Taib Andak.

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

"All right, and include Thailand. Also the Philippines to form a Southeast Asian association. As long as it's not another Maphilindo-*lah*," Razak had quipped amidst much laughter, as everyone recalled that Maphilindo had been Sukarno's idea.

The germ of an idea from that meeting took root until ASEAN was born in August 1967 in Bangkok, as the second regional organisation in east Asia after the Association of SEA States (ASA) which died with confrontation and Maphilindo which never quite took off the ground.

Bugis Legacy

Razak was a friend to Indonesia and close to President Suharto. There is an amusing story about the time when Tun Razak went to Jakarta to meet Bapak Suharto upon his assuming the office of Prime Minister, succeeding Tunku Abdul Rahman. The plane bringing the official delegation had already landed at the Kemayoran airport. Obviously, the state visit was an hour too early. Someone had remembered the one hour time difference between Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta just before landing. Meanwhile the airport was still not ready and the hosts had yet to arrive. As a result, the plane had to fly to the Halim Perdana Kusumah air base and Razak and his delegation had to mark time until the appointed hour for the welcoming ceremony.

When we arrived in Palembang, I took Razak and (Tun) Rahah shopping and we very casually entered a market. The vendors and shoppers at the market were amazed as Tun Razak was not guarded yet rode a state guest car.

Our stay at the Kuta beach, Bali, in November of 1974 was also interesting. At one point, Razak was riding a motorbike with Rahah as his pillion passenger. Suddenly a policeman stopped him. His security guards and I anxiously ran towards them as Razak could easily have been arrested for not having a driving licence. The policeman scratched his head and said, "You look familiar, Bapak. But I can't remember where I've seen your face." He only realised it was Razak when we revealed his identity.

Tun Razak also visited the land of his ancestors in south Sulawesi in 1972. The journey, made by sea from Tawau to Makassar (now Ujung Pandang), took almost three days.

The navy frigate *Hang Tuah* that brought our delegation, guarded by two corvettes from the Royal Malaysian Navy, sailed in to Makassar and Razak was accorded a Bugis ceremonial welcome. He was deeply touched by the Bugis custom, reserved for its dignitaries, of arranging the *pinisi* boats in a tight row alongside each other, enabling him to cross easily from one boat to the other.

The *pinisi* boats are the pride of the people of south Sulawesi. In the old days, the *pinisi* were the vital trading fleet for the Hassanudin sultanate. The *pinisi* not only sailed the archipelago but also around southeast Asia, thereby making Makassar known even in Indochina, Thailand and the Malay peninsula. Moreover, they contributed to active trading in the Malay Straits. It was on a *pinisi* that Tun Razak's ancestors had come to the Malay peninsula in the 18 century and now, as a descendant of Sultan Jalil of Goa, he was returning to the land of his ancestors two centuries later.

Unswerving Friendship

Eventually, my close relations with Tun Abdul Razak was raised as an issue in the Malaysian Parliament, especially by the opposition Parti Islam (PAS). In fact, I was accused of being a 'foreign spy'. This was in the early 1970s, long after the end of Confrontation. Perhaps they did not know that my friendship with Tun Abdul Razak went way back to 1947.

Initially Razak had replied shortly: "Des Alwi is a businessman." He did not want to elaborate. "It will take me 1001 days to explain about you, Des," he reflected later. But (Tan Sri) Khir Johari from UMNO had countered: "If I had been asked in Parliament regarding Des Alwi, I would have told the honourable Members of Parliament that Des Alwi was one of the architects in ending the Confrontation."

On the strength of this, Razak eventually gave details of my role. Apart from being the liaison between Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, Razak described the important role I played in ending the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. During the Confrontation, the government had spent heavily to pay for 50 000 British troops to defend Malaysia from external threat.

Razak explained that I had greatly helped in forging relations with the Indonesian government. I was described as having assisted in Malaysia's development, by helping bring in mathematics teachers from Indonesia for Malaysian rural schools. This had contributed greatly to Malaysia's progress, as was Prof Soemitro Djoyohadikusumo's assistance in drawing up the concept for MARA's development.

I had another memorable experience with Tun Abdul Razak in Bali in November 1974. At the time I was accompanying him for an important meeting with President Suharto. The Pertamina Cottage in Kuta served as official guest house but I was not given a room there on grounds that I was not a member of Tun Razak's delegation. I had to stay at a hotel elsewhere.

Apparently Tun Razak had asked the Malaysian ambassador to Indonesia, "Where is Des? Why is he not with us? Find out!"

Soon thereafter, (Tan Sri) Zainal Sulong returned and explained that, "According to the committee, Des is not on the guest list."

Tun Razak was irritated and replied, "Make sure he gets a room here."

The following day, Tun Abdul Razak brought to General Benny Moerdani's attention the striking out of my name by Yudo Sumbono from Pertamina, who perhaps did not know of my relationship with the Malaysian Prime Minister. While playing golf with Benny, the matter finally became grist for a joke when Tun Razak remarked that Pertamina probably thought Des would not pay his hotel bills. Des likes to borrow first, he had quipped. His sense of camaraderie and solidarity was unwavering.

Since the early 1970s, I had begun to involve myself in various enterprises in Indonesia, including the film industry. I had produced several commercial films, such as *Cucu, Gubernur Sehari, Tanah Gersang* and others. Tun Razak continued to take an interest in and to support my activities. He watched the preview of *Cucu*, the product of joint efforts with Malaysian actors.

Following that I produced documentary films and later films about the independence struggle such as *Riwayat Hidup Bung Hatta, Perjuangan 11 Maret* and others, which were well received by the Indonesian government. I became known as the hunter of documentary films about the Indonesian independence struggle, doing my own research and gathering documentation from various film archives around the world.

Nowadays, I am rarely in Jakarta and can be found more often on the Banda islands, concentrating on developing the land of my birth. Moreover, the government has directed me to develop the outlying areas. A large portion of my capital is tied up in developing the Banda islands, which are steeped in history, including being the place to which pioneers of the Indonesian independence movement and European colonialists of the past were exiled.

I am also trying to promote the natural beauty and seafaring life of the Banda islands to the world. I have built two good hotels in Banda. As a result, Banda has started to develop, especially the tourism sector, and has begun to gain recognition among international visitors, particularly those who enjoy scuba diving and admire the beauty of ocean parks. All these activities benefit the local population, improving their socio-economic life.

The Last Nine Holes

Since early 1973, I had focussed my business efforts more in Indonesia. My busy schedule meant I was rarely with Tun Razak. Once, he asked me why I had not attended his birthday celebrations in 1975. I replied in astonishment: "Usually, I always get an invitation but not this year, and I don't know why."

In 1975, I had met Tun Razak at the boxing match between Muhammad Ali and Britain's Joe Bugner in Kuala Lumpur. Tun Razak took the time to tease me, "Des, you are in a thousand dollar seat. Are you a rich man now?"

"No, actually I bought a 50-dollar ticket," I replied.

"Very smart," he shot back with a smile.

Tun Razak's smile and voice at that time were clearly dry and he was not his usual bright, cheerful self whenever we met. I could see from his physical condition that he was unwell and he seemed to be holding back the pain when he spoke or walked. I had heard from Dr McPherson that Tun Razak was anaemic; McPherson never mentioned that it was leukaemia.

But Tun Razak himself never talked about the disease which had held him in its grip for so long. And I did not want to ask. The one who knew about his condition was his personal physician, Dr McPherson, who also knew about Tun Ismail's weak heart. But he kept it a secret, so that it would not provoke clashes especially within political circles, which were so easily prone to jealousy, and risk giving rise to chaos on the Malaysian political scene.

I had often noticed Tun Razak and Tun Ismail holding whispered conversations together. At first, I thought the two were engaged in discussions over some political or national issue. Apparently, each was talking about what time he had left, as both realised that their illnesses were incurable and that it was only a matter of time. I only understood this much later, after both were no more. For that reason, neither Tun Razak nor Tun Ismail were able to properly prepare the cadres who would lead Malaysia in the future.

When we met in Brastagi, grey spots that I had never seen before were already visible on Tun Razak's face. After the closed meeting between the leaders of Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, Tun Razak did not join President Suharto and Thai prime minister, Kukrit Pramoj, on their stroll through some vegetable farms and orchards around Brastagi, the cool hill resort in north Sumatra. Tun Razak wanted to rest so that he could play a round of golf later that afternoon.

Tun Razak was also close to Pak Harto and as they enjoyed playing golf whenever they met, golf was often included in their itinerary.

That afternoon in November 1975, Tun Razak and Pak Harto played only nine holes. Benny Moerdani was also present. Tun

Razak walked slowly, almost hesitantly. Pak Harto also noticed this and it saddened him. On the sixth hole, Pak Harto called me aside and whispered, "Des, please ask Tun Razak if he is still able to carry on with the game. Otherwise, we can just stop here. He shouldn't force himself; maybe Tun would like to rest."

So I approached Tun and asked, "Tun, are you all right? Pak Harto said we can stop here and rest a while if you want to."

"No, no, I'm all right. Let's continue," replied Tun. Glancing at me, he added, "Don't forget to make me a shandy." Usually I would fix him his preferred drink of three parts Seven-Up and one part beer.

To allay President Suharto's fears, Tun Razak said that he would be going to London the following month for a medical check-up. Nevertheless, I truly feared for Tun Razak's health.

Not for a moment did I suspect that that fateful golf game in Brastagi would be the last time I saw Tun Razak. It was also his last visit to Indonesia. Not long after returning home from Brastagi, he left for London for medical treatment.

On the morning of January 16, 1976, I was in my car driving to my studio in Cempaka Putih. As usual, I turned on the radio to catch the morning news. I involuntarily jumped when I heard the headlines—Tun Razak had passed away in London after suffering from a prolonged illness. I immediately stopped the car at the side of the Jakarta bypass. I then listened to the rest of the broadcast. The newsreader read the news in full, the details underscoring that Tun Razak was gone. I was so shocked to hear the tragic news that my heart beat hard in my chest. For a long time I remained silent to calm myself. I did not care when the tears flowed, wetting my cheeks. I cancelled all my activities that day and gave my full attention to my friend, Tun Abdul Razak, who was no more.

That afternoon I joined Harry Kawilarang, a journalist with the *Sinar Harapan*, on a flight to Kuala Lumpur. Harry too knew Tun Razak and had previously worked as a correspondent for the *Utusan Malaysia* in 1968-71.

From Subang Airport, we went directly to Sri Taman where his other friends were already waiting. Tun Razak's body arrived that night, accompanied by Toh Puan Rahah. Those present did not try to stop the tears when his body was brought into the hall and laid to rest in the middle. They could still glimpse Tun Razak's face, covered by the glass on the coffin.

At first, it was very difficult for me to accept the fact that Tun Abdul Razak was gone forever. What I gained from Tun Abdul Razak—not just a friend for all time—was his deep idealism to create a feeling of togetherness and solidarity for the continuation of the Malay people now and forever.

Attention! The Man at Work

By Dato' K. Pathmanaban

Attention! The Mans at Work

FOR those who worked with him, he was the master and guide. For those who were inefficient or crossed his path, he was a tough man who saw through people and cracked the whip without hesitation.

Commander-in-Chief of the Civil Service

Of all the four Prime Ministers Malaysia has had, it is Tun Razak who knew and understood the civil service best. He knew almost all the seniors like the back of his hand. He knew their strengths and weaknesses. Those who could not perform the tasks of management and development would soon find him an un-announced visitor in their district or ministry, demanding a briefing, army style, with maps, progress charts and comments on delays and inaction.

It was clear that the years he served in Pahang as a civil servant and later as State Secretary, had given him a firm grasp of the problems of management. And he understood deeply the problems of the poor and their lack of opportunities for a decent life. Independence and Tun Razak's own role as second-in-command to the Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman—with tremendous latitude to function in government—gave him the unique opportunity to serve their cause and build the nation.

He was a man of uncommon vision and boundless energy. He attended to matters of state in his office, but always made it a point to go out to the field—where one saw the thrust of development programmes—to ensure that their progress matched his vision and set targets. He was almost shy of large public gatherings but had a keen eye for, and a firm capacity to address, problems and bottle-necks nation-wide. The Red Book planning and monitoring system, adapted from the military, served him well in this tireless task.

In dealing with paperwork, development programmes and his own speeches, contrary to popular belief, he was no perfectionist. He wanted the broad scope and thrust defined, the resources needed for implementation set out and the time frame for their execution estimated in detail. Problems and bottle-necks that could lead to delays and failures, particularly

those stemming from poor co-ordination and lack of financial and human resources, had to be identified.

His speciality was to resolve these problems and smooth out these bottle-necks. He believed and often declared that preparations and implementation should be done as well as possible, but if any weaknesses arose or changes were required during execution, they could always be rectified or amended later. Things need not be delayed to achieve perfection. This applied to his approach to parliamentary bills as well as to programmes contained in the five year development plans. Commitment on the part of ministers, heads of departments and civil servants, however, was imperative and had always to be demonstrated.

The 'A Team'

In the years I worked in the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Prime Minister's Department (1968-74), we were often summoned to prepare papers, comments and reviews on matters that came up before the Wednesday Cabinet meetings, as well as controversial matters or important public issues. Our chief, (now Tan Sri) Thong Yaw Hong and his deputy, Dr CL Robless, were often called directly and the EPU 'A Team' would be

Rural projects were his forte. Tun Razak tests out a new RM16 000 suspension bridge at Kampung Sengkola, Raub. (1961)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

assembled hurriedly at all hours of the day or night. In view of this, all of us had male secretaries who could be kept in the office for long hours or be called upon to come to the office often late at night or on holidays. Our wives missed us but kept the peace knowing that we were no further than in our own offices.

This 'A Team' had to deal with a wide variety of subjects far beyond the tasks laid down for the EPU. We set up the Urban Development Authority. We reviewed proposals to launch the 4-Digit Pools and Toto, in order to eradicate illegal gambling syndicates. We wrote the papers for the New Economic Policy, as well as came up with—in a single night—the system of special relief allowance for civil servants in Malaysia's first attempt to deal with inflation, caused by petroleum price increases in 1974. Prior to that, Malaysia had enjoyed an inflation rate of less than one percent per annum.

The then Minister of Finance, Tun Tan Siew Sin, was reportedly quite shocked that the Treasury Paper to Cabinet on the matter had been supplanted by one from the Prime Minister himself. Tun Razak wanted to provide relief for civil servants but at the same time did not wish to create an "inflationary attitude" among the public. We regularly rewrote Cabinet submissions from other ministries or provided private notes to the Tun. Tan Sri Thong took the view that we had to do all that to retain the Prime Minister's confidence in our ability to carry out our fundamental tasks.

With such a workload it was not surprising to see Tun Razak's eyebrows always knitted in a frown. He worked all the time. So the civil servants too had to keep pace. What we did not know at the time was that he was seriously ill. Nevertheless, the more ill he became, the more work he seemed to elicit out of us. He did not and could not sleep well himself.

Young Blood

The general elections of May 1969 had proved disastrous for the Alliance Party. Many Alliance MPs had fallen at the ballot box. The Alliance had also lost ground at state level. Both the Penang and Kelantan legislative assemblies were now in opposition hands. Selangor, Perak and Terengganu came through with only slender margins of victory, leading to difficulties in forming a government in Selangor.

Among the causes for this defeat was the economic recession of the late 1960s, with record unemployment rates of above 8%. But another significant factor was that the country had reached a watershed; the euphoria of *merdeka* was wearing down and 12 years after independence, the electorate was getting younger. Both Malays and non-Malays were beginning to feel that the

government, comprising the first generation nationalists, had not adequately grasped the situation and therefore were not addressing the realities of a modern multi-racial society. The years of 'sacrifice' of the pre- and immediate post-independence era were over. Now the young people wanted jobs and a 'fair share' of the nation's pie.

The late Tun Razak and his deputy from 1971, Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman, were sharp politicians who saw these problems and appreciated their urgency. Tun Dr Ismail was fond of saying of the MCA and MIC that they "were unwilling to live yet refused to die", quoting an old Malay saying, *hidup segan mati tak mahu*, connoting a state of mere existence, in this case showing neither political enthusiasm nor ability. Unfortunately, he passed away in 1973, even before Tun Razak.

It was in this context that Tun Razak began a process of infusing new blood into the Alliance component parties. He actively began looking out for younger, well-educated people, preferably those who were trilingual. The administration could gain from their expertise and training. Their ability to communicate in their own native language, English and Bahasa Malaysia, facilitated understanding of the people's problems nation-wide at various levels. The ensuing discussions would be more constructive; the proposed solutions more effective. The people would then gain confidence in their leaders and this would help surmount the problems that arose from time to time.

Thus some 40% of UMNO'S candidates for the 1974 parliamentary elections were new faces, mostly young professionals. The MCA and MIC were urged to do likewise. Of its 12 candidates for state and federal elections, the MIC fielded eight first-timers, again mostly young professionals.

So it was that I was 'nudged' into politics, standing for the Telok Kemang (Port Dickson) parliamentary seat. As a civil servant, I had worked with Tan Sri V Manickavasagam from 1960 and knew him in that capacity. He became MIC president in 1971, taking over from Tun VT Sambanthan.

I had also worked with Tun Razak on various matters even before joining the Economic Planning Unit in 1968. Both of them concluded that I should resign from the civil service and contest as a candidate for the Barisan Nasional—a larger coalition succeeding the Alliance, created by Tun Razak.

The opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP) had won Telok Kemang in 1969. Now a new Barisan Nasional partner, the People's Progressive Party (PPP), was also keenly eyeing the seat. The PPP candidate was a lawyer and the brother-in-law of the PPP president, SP Seenivasagam. He had already spent extensively from his vast family fortunes setting up his campaign in the constituency.

In May 1974 I agreed to run for elections. Tun Razak was delighted. Two months later, however, he summoned me to his office and Tunku Shahriman, his special assistant at the time, was asked to advise me of the difficulties I would face in the Telok Kemang constituency. The PPP candidate was already active; the DAP was fighting as an incumbent; the Negeri Sembilan MIC itself had a candidate of its own, etc.

Tun Razak advised me to consider standing in Sungei Siput instead, a constituency held by the former MIC president, Tun Sambanthan, since 1957, relayed Tunku Shahriman. Tun Razak felt that Tun Sambanthan might be better disposed towards me over any other MIC candidate, as he was still upset at the manner in which he had been ousted from the MIC top post. Tun Razak himself had played mediator in that tussle and it was he who had strongly advised Tun Sambanthan to step down, giving way to the younger Tan Sri Manickavasagam.

I had immediately responded that I was quite confident of winning Telok Kemang. Telok Kemang was my hometown and I had numerous friends and relatives there who would strongly support me. My roots there ran deep and my father enjoyed considerable respect in most of the estates and villages, having lived and worked in an estate near Linggi since 1921. I pointed out that conversely, I would be an 'import' into Sungei Siput and would for a long time have to depend on Tun Sambanthan

Abdul Razak enjoying the fresh air with Rahah while on holiday in the island of Bali, Indonesia. (1974)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Quashing rumours on the eve of the May 13 anniversary—Tun Razak assuring Majlis Muhibbah members and residents that no disturbances would erupt in the following days. (1970)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

and others, with whom I had no previous ties. In that situation, I would rather continue in the civil service, I said.

Tun Razak subsequently saw me and agreed with me. But he was anxious that I, as well as a number of other new candidates he had personally inducted into the Barisan Nasional, should win. He told me that in the two week campaign, he would spend at least one day in Port Dickson to personally assist in the campaign. In fact he stayed for a day and a half and besides addressing a 15,000-strong rally, personally called on the *Menteri Besar* and others to sort out specific problems that had arisen. He was more than happy with the campaigns and my involvement as a candidate, although some of my 'friends' in the MIC had sent him a pile of telegrams alleging that I was sleeping and not moving the campaign.

This aspect of Tun Razak's character remains indelibly in my mind—he had vision and when he had worked out a plan of action he would do everything necessary to see that it was successfully implemented.

His passing was as marked as his life and work. His death marked a long 25 years of his life's work for the nation. He was a worthy deputy to the beloved Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, for a full 15 years and merely served at the helm of the nation himself for a brief five years. But his memory lives on as a great leader and nation-builder for all the years he was in office.

A Balance of Interests

By Dato' P.G. Lim

I first met Tun Razak in London when he was studying for the Bar in the post-war years of the 1940s and the early 1950s. They were exciting times. After the Second World War, many students had gone abroad to further their studies. Malaya had not yet achieved independence. But the end of the war marked the beginning of a new world freed from tyranny and bondage, dedicated to the end of colonialism through self-government and independence.

The students had lived through the Japanese occupation of 1942-45 and were now imbued with the spirit of anti-colonialism. Many were inspired by the example set by India, the first country to have gained independence in 1947. Some Malayans who had lived in India during the Japanese occupation—men like (Tun) Hussein Onn and (Tun) Tan Siew Sin—were to lead Malaya into independence in 1957.

Student Days

Most of the Malays were on scholarships. Students, both Malays and non-Malays, took up the study of law, medicine and engineering—professions which would open the door to self-employment as job opportunities in government and the private sector were limited. Many had also been sent for further studies to the two teacher training colleges of Kirby and Brinsford which had been set up to fill the projected demand for teachers in the new Malaya. On their return, these teachers would help to lay the foundations of the new education policy that was being formulated.

Against this background, the future leaders of an independent Malaya and Singapore would emerge from among the more active student leaders. Prominent among them was one Abdul Razak bin Hussein.

During those years, the students from the Straits Settlements and the Malay states formed the nucleus of the Malayan Students Union which Tun Razak was instrumental in setting up in London. There was also the Malay Society of Great Britain, established in 1927 but which had languished over the years until its resuscitation in 1949 by Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Razak.

RADIO MALAYSIA

All rally round—Thai monk, Phra (Rev) Sri Sajayarnmuni, hands over a cheque on behalf of Thai Buddhists for the National Disaster Fund. (1971)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

In the Malayan Students Union and the Malayan Forum, another organisation formed by Tun Razak, the talk was to end colonialism and to achieve independence for Malaya and Singapore. I was chairperson of the Malayan Forum and editor of its newsletter in 1953. I succeeded Mohamed Sopiee and Goh Keng Swee as chairperson and Toh Chin Chye later succeeded me. Both Goh Keng Swee and Toh Chin Chye were later to hold—at different times—the post of Deputy Prime Minister in the Singapore government.

In 1949, the Labour government had, in a surprise victory, taken over the reins of government from the Conservative government led by Winston Churchill. The Labour government was sympathetic to the granting of independence to Malaya if all the races were united in this endeavour. After all, it was the Labour government headed by Clement Attlee that had given India its independence.

Tun Razak himself was committed to the idea of uniting all the races to achieve this objective. In setting up the Malayan Forum, he provided a platform for overseas students to air their views in the fight for independence. One could not predict if independence could be achieved without bloodshed but in this 'struggle' all of us would work as one.

I met Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Razak and people like Taib Haji Andak, Wan Hamid and Mohamed Sopiee during these eventful years, and formed lasting friendships with them.

Early Politics

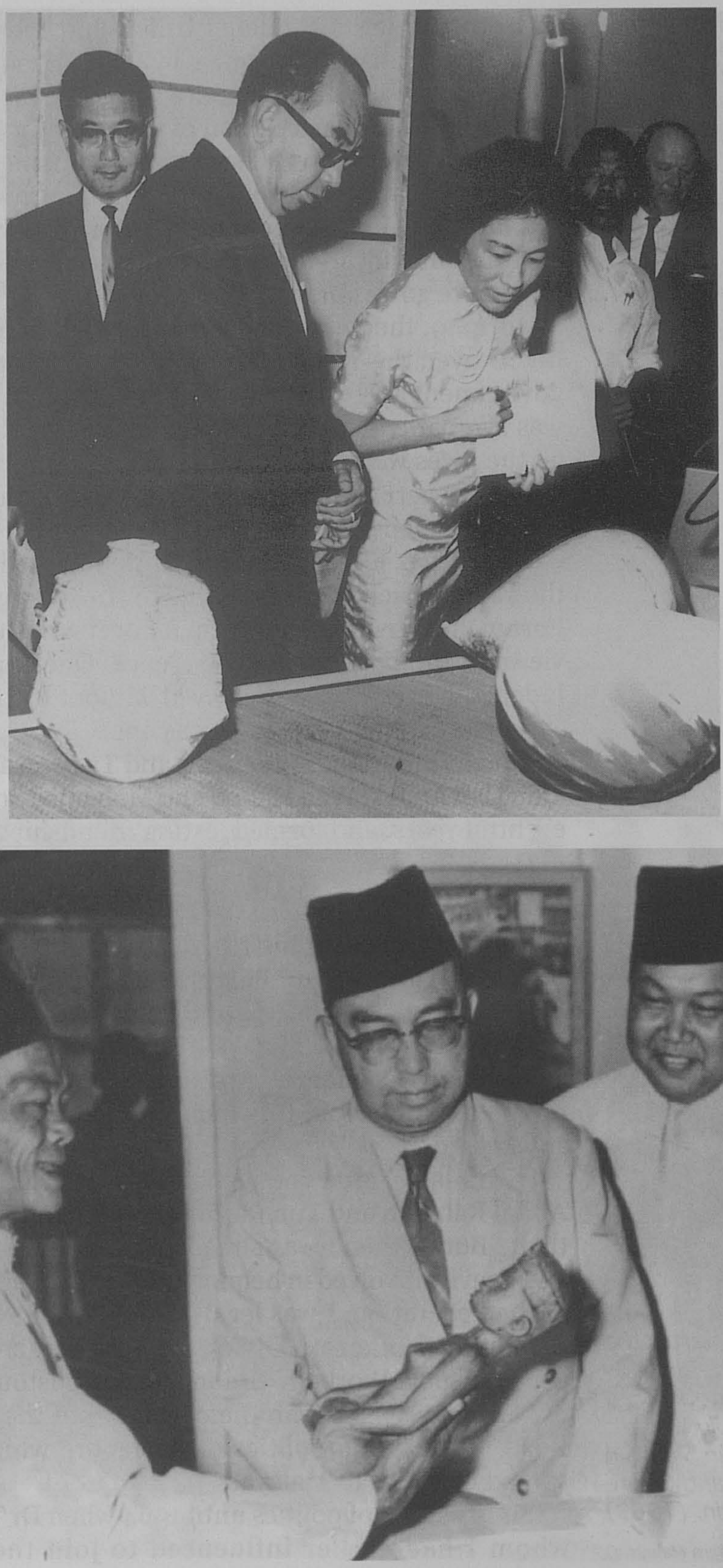
Mohamed Sopiee on his return in the early 1950s formed the Pan Malayan Labour Party to unite the labour parties of Selangor, Malacca, Penang and Singapore. It was later renamed the Labour Party of Malaya and served both as an organ for achieving independence and as a counter weight to the communists, a principle to which the colonial office apparently subscribed.

Years later, after independence was achieved, both Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Razak urged me to go into politics with them. But by then I was already a member of the Labour Party and heavily involved in helping to establish several trade unions in the Federation. I was legal adviser to the National Union of Plantation Workers (NUPW), the Railwaymen's Union (RUM), the Transport Workers' Union and the Customs Union. Part of my agenda was to wean them away from the militant 'Middle Road' trade union politics of Singapore which threatened to spread its wings to Malaya.

So I kept out of politics until 1964 when Dr Tan Chee Khoon, whom I had earlier influenced to join the Labour Party,

Rebuilding peace—after the May 13 riots, Tun Razak leads Cabinet ministers at a durian muhibbah *feast in Ulu Langat. Flanking him, Tun Tan Siew Sin (left) and Tun Sambanthan are happily tucking in. (1969)*

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)



Tun Razak admiring a ceramic vase at the launch of the Japanese Modern Arts exhibition, accompanied by Ms P.G. Lim, the deputy chairman of the National Art Gallery (right) and Japanese Ambassador Dato' Fumihiko Kai. (1965)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

persuaded me to stand in the state elections in Sentul. It was a three-cornered fight between the Alliance, the PAP—which had just declared itself to be in opposition—led by Lee Kuan Yew, and the Socialist Front. In the event, the Alliance won. In Sentul there was Dr Arasu for the Alliance, G Thaver for the PAP, and myself for the Socialist Front composed of the Labour Party and Parti Rakyat. In the fight, I lost to Dr Arasu by about 1700 votes which went to the PAP candidate. Had it been a straight fight, I think I might have won a seat and my life would have taken a different direction.

At that time, being in the opposition was not considered a heretical act, and the fact that I was an opposition candidate at the height of the Indonesian campaign to 'crush' Malaysia, did not militate against me. During these years, despite the fact that we were politically speaking on different sides of the fence, I found both Tunku and Tun Razak very willing to listen to views that were at variance with theirs and they were usually accessible to members of the public.

Suspension of Parliament

Tun Razak was not given to ebullience but he was a good listener. As a result of the race riots in May 1969, Parliament was suspended and a National Operations Council (NOC) was set up headed by Tun Razak as the Director of Operations. In January 1970, the National Consultative Council (NCC) was established under the chairmanship of the Director of Operations.

I was one of two women—the other being Aishah Ghani—who were nominated by Tun Razak to sit on the NCC. This came about when the *Straits Times* editorial queried why there were no women in the all-male membership of 63. With our inclusion, the NCC grew to 65 members. The *Straits Times* editorial, in extolling the appointment, then wondered if two women were enough.

The first meeting of the NCC was held on January 27, 1970 and was opened by Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, who gave an assurance that the country would return to parliamentary democracy. Tun Razak described it as "an historic and solemn occasion". He appealed to the people to rededicate themselves to certain ideals which would transcend race, religion, culture, class and political affiliations. The meetings were held in camera. Tun Razak assured the NCC members that they had the right to say what they thought. The government would not disregard their views. There would be times when

Batin Hitam Orang Asli *Jerantut, Pahang, explains the significance of an* Orang Asli *carved figure at the 2nd National Art Exhibition, Kuala Lumpur. (1959)*

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

their views might not be accepted, being contrary to government policy, but this should be no reason for frustration or disappointment.

Members of the NCC represented the professions, trade unions, religious leaders, politicians and members of the public. The NCC met in several sessions in the course of a year. Tun Razak was very often in the chair. If not, his deputy, Tun Dr Ismail, would take over. Cabinet ministers were present at all sessions. The debates were carried out in candour and many spoke their minds freely.

The NCC split into two groups: the economic and the political committees. The conclusions reached by the committees were debated at length and resulted in the formulation of a New Economic Policy and the *Rukun Negara*. I remember that Tun Razak himself took over the chair during these debates and participated in the discussions, particularly the *Rukun Negara* which was scrutinised almost line by line and word for word. The NCC completed its task in one year and parliamentary government was resumed immediately thereafter.

En Poste to New York

When in 1971 Tun Razak asked me to serve as deputy permanent representative of Malaysia, with the rank of ambassador, to the United Nations, this surprised a lot of people both inside and outside the country. The foreign press in the United States viewed it as a ploy to get me out of Malaysian domestic politics, but I think they had got it wrong.

The women of Malaysia, however, got it right. Wanita UMNO, for example, threw a tea party for me to celebrate the occasion. Ungku Aziz's wife, Azah Aziz, got me fitted out in Malay costume and I had a veritable wardrobe of *kain songket, baju kurung, cekak musang* plus accompanying jewellery when I set out for New York.

Both Tun Razak and Tunku Abdul Rahman, trained in the law, showed by their actions and policies their belief in the Rule of the Law and Freedom of Speech and the checks and balances inherent in a parliamentary democracy. Having been trained as civil servants under the British Raj, they were good administrators and succeeded in large measure in maintaining a balance of interests between the various communities that make up Malaysia.

Tun Razak passed away while I was still *en poste* abroad—in fact my last, in Brussels. I was looking forward to serving under his premiership after leaving the diplomatic service but alas, that opportunity was not to be realised.

From Chillies to China

By Tan Sri Lee Siew Yee

From Chillies to China

By Tan Sri Lee Siew Hoe

AN Eye for Detail

"CHILLIES," said the Tun as I walked into the room. He was quite clearly thinking aloud since there was no one with him. "Chillies to go with your *nasi lemak*?" I asked. "Don't be silly," he replied, a grin softening the rebuke. "No one eats *nasi lemak* with chillies. *Sambal*, yes, never chillies. It's uncivilised."

"I was thinking of the parade next week," he went on musing. "Chillies and onions will be needed, you know, to keep the rain away. Or so they say."

That was all very well but it struck me that surely prime ministers did not bother about such trifles. It was a trivial incident but it sits in my memory as a reminder of the Tun's meticulous regard for detail in any matter that engaged his interest. There was room in his ample mind for the large events as for the commonplace, little nothings of every day.

Rural Schools

I first met the Tun (then still a Dato') in the mid-fifties, when he held the education portfolio in the first Cabinet. One of his first decisions was to revise the entrance qualification for the teacher training colleges. "School Certificate (Form Five today) is too high," he said. "We wouldn't find Malay boys in sufficient numbers for training if that barrier is maintained. The Lower Certificate of Education (three years of secondary school) will have to do, and even then it represents a rise in standards in the rural areas."

He paused and asked me, "You've read Walden?" As I nodded, he said, "Then you'll know the bit about men leading lives of quiet desperation. That's a very good description of a certain state of mind and you'll find that desperation in some parts of our country, particularly among the poverty-stricken in the kampungs and villages, and in the farms and fields. Rural projects will help, but in the long run it is education that will open the future.

"Do you know, it isn't only that standards must be raised, and the school system expanded. Better schools have to be built. In many villages the schools are very flimsy buildings, not much better than outsized shacks. I went to one the other week. The headmaster tried to hang up a calendar. He hammered a nail

History in the making: Tun Razak meets Chairman Mao Zedong during his landmark visit to China. (1974)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

into the plank wall and tore a great big hole in it. So we have to find the money to build schools and pay the teachers and also find the money to fight the Emergency."

Integrity in the Civil Service

It was the year of the Ibrahim Ali report on civil service pay. I forget the year—1970 or thereabouts. The report itself was unexceptional, but it gave new life to an old subject: civil service pay vis-a-vis private sector pay.

Each day a flood of letters poured into the *Straits Times*. Two opposing views were represented: in the one corner, the contention that civil servants were well treated and should not expect much more; in the other corner, the claim that their terms should match business levels.

Tun had no sympathy with the latter view. (The Ibrahim Ali report did not espouse the principle either.) The civil servant, Tun held, was not badly off at all, not by any means. "He gets a reasonable wage, he has quarters, paid annual leave, sick leave, regular increments and a pension. Above all, he has security of tenure. Unless he is caught fiddling with the accounts or otherwise commits a criminal offence, he is virtually unsackable. Dismissal is not the penalty for inefficiency, as it is in the private sector."

As for the argument that paying generous salaries to civil servants so as to be on a par with the private sector would discourage corruption, the Tun asked: "At what point, in dollars and cents, does corruption lose its temptation? So how much should we give in order to buy honesty? Moreover," he drily remarked, "it is not just a question of money but morality as well, and morality must count."

Restoring Power to Parliament

It was a few days after May 13. The National Consultative Council (NCC) was in session. The NCC was the surrogate Parliament created by the Tun on the suspension of the constitution, to act as the sounding board of public opinion in the absence of an elected legislature. "Its main job," said the Tun, "is to work itself out of a job, just as my job is to put myself out of business."

"As Director of Operations, I am charged with the duty of getting the country back on its feet and to do this I have plenary powers," he continued. "I am a dictator. I rule by decree. It's an unpleasant business and it's best to get it quickly over and done with. Unless we restore power to where it properly belongs, to the people through Parliament, all the struggle for independence, the struggle against communism, all that will have been in vain."

The act of diplomacy that opened China to the world. Tun Razak and Premier Zhou Enlai sign an accord that wins the Barisan Nasional the 1974 polls and brings China to centre stage. (1974)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

Tun Razak (in light suit, centre) visits a trade and industrial exhibition in Shanghai. (1974)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

The China Visit

It was April 1974 when Tun led a delegation to China to initiate diplomatic relations, a bold step given the political climate in Southeast Asia at the time. We were in Shanghai after four days during which Tun had met Zhou Enlai and his Chinese government colleagues and Chairman Mao Zedong. Tun was in good spirits. Everything else apart, he had satisfied himself that the Chinese leadership acknowledged and accepted that the Chinese in Malaysia were Malaysians, and China neither sought nor would seek to claim any influence over them.

"I shall serve one more term," Tun said the day we were returning home. "Then I shall retire to Pahang."

Tun did not live to serve that one more term. Even as he spoke, he knew—as we were to learn later—that he was under medical sentence of death. When he went to his last rest, Malaysians lost a great man, a good man, a kind man.

Motherland for All Malaysians

By Tun Datuk Seri Dr Lim Chong Eu

WE were both quite young when we first met. As its state secretary, Tun Razak was representing Pahang at the 1954 conference on the allocation of federal funds to the various states. I attended the meeting as a member of the Penang Executive Council, representing the resident commissioner, Mr AV Aston. There we had to learn quickly from the other state dignitaries who were much older and more experienced with the British colonial manner of holding such discussions. I was deeply impressed by his quick, firm and clear-cut appreciation of cogent issues, and even more so by his kind, gentle and respectful disposition.

Throughout his life as I knew him, Tun Razak always displayed this innate respect for the views and opinions of others. This, combined with his insight on how different and oftentimes confusing points of views can be orchestrated into a consonance of ideas, enabled him to introduce some of the bold policies that have moulded our nation to what it is today.

Throughout his political career Tun Razak steadfastly and consistently played important leadership roles. Thus he was devotedly involved in uniting the aspirations of the Malays through UMNO. He was a prime mover in broadening the base of partisan co-operation by forming first the Alliance and later the Barisan Nasional.

When we were drawing up the constitutional framework for a free and independent Malaysia, he clearly showed his commitment to integrate the diverse ethnic, linguistic and religious sectors of our people into a new nation. He instilled life and spirit to the written words of the Malaysian constitution.

He cherished an independent, democratic way of life. In joining forces with Tunku Abdul Rahman in fighting for Malaya's independence, in fighting against the communist insurgency, and later in restructuring a fragmented nation under the National Operations Council and then restoring parliamentary democracy, he was always consistent in his political beliefs.

He helped forge our national identity by establishing a National Education Policy and the New Economic Policy. The former was the blueprint for a unified policy on education. The

An enduring partnership based on trust—Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman (left) with his right-hand man, Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

latter achieved a more equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities for all ethnic groups and between those living in the rural and urban areas. Both were intrinsic to resolving the root problems of racial tensions and strife.

It was during the formulation of the National Education Policy that I came to appreciate his infinite capacity for work, his tenacity of purpose and his firm insistence on fairness. He would carefully, patiently and respectfully listen to the diverse arguments presented. Then he would painstakingly analyse and examine them before he set out to establish an acceptable pattern of priorities for future discussions and consultations.

The preparation and subsequent review for implementation of the Second Malaya Five Year Plan saw the full measure of Tun Razak's strength of leadership by example. He demonstrated total personal commitment to ensure that the people actually benefited from the innumerable programmes that he launched. He would work tirelessly with the large numbers of *rakyat* whom he met on his field trips and with the officers supporting him.

Smilingly, he would display his flair for meticulous follow-up appraisals of the tasks accomplished. His own example inspired all those who worked with him to walk that extra mile. The special quality of his leadership was that he could make one feel that one was not just working under or with him but also that all one's efforts were directed for the benefit of the nation.

Although he would work himself very hard, he was at the same time able to delegate authority to those whom he had very carefully chosen to assist him. To these trusted officers, he was an overwhelming inspiration.

Tun Razak's understanding of people was tremendous. It was through this mutually reinforcing interaction between Tun Razak and those who worked with him that we were able, after the restoration of Parliament, to establish the strong co-operation between the state government of Penang and the federal government. The people and the government officials and staff rallied whole-heartedly behind his national leadership.

Everyone in Penang now knows how this critical balance of state and federal powers ensured social peace and stability and produced the development of the Free Trade Zones for export orientated industries. The remarkable growth of the manufacturing sector, especially of semiconductors and related electronics, reflected the economic surge which further united the people in the spirit of national commitment under the Barisan Nasional.

Only a very few knew that in the last few years of his life Tun Razak was pushing himself very hard in his work, in spite of the dire medical prognosis on his health. At times he persisted with

what he had to do in spite of the pain. His deep sense of loyalty to the nation and the people drove him to go on working with utter devotion and dedication.

During the discussions of the National Consultative Council (NCC) in 1970, I learnt to appreciate that the word *setia* is unique in its meaning and implications. Thereby, for us who are Malaysians, there can only be completely undivided loyalty. It is this essence of *setia*—or absolute loyalty—that makes the tenets of the *Rukun Negara* the spiritual testament for all Malaysians to uphold.

In many ways I think that this innate sense of respect and unswerving loyalty that Tun Razak maintained for Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra explains his total commitment to serve our first Prime Minister. In the history of Malaysian politics, this factor of commitment may well determine the continuity and strength of successive national leadership. Through this sense of loyalty, Tun Razak developed his profound foresight to select Tun Hussein Onn as his successor and to prepare the way for Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in turn to succeed Hussein.

In 1960, I had not understood this fundamental characteristic of partisan political loyalty. The strength of UMNO as the core of the Alliance is founded on this sense of absolute loyalty. It is the continuing concurrence of diverse partisan loyalties in serving the interests of the nation that will determine the endurance of the system of consensus that now prevails within the Barisan Nasional.

For Malaysians of Chinese ethnic origin, the *hua yu* word that most approximates the word *setia* is *zhong xiao*. The reference is its use as attributed by the Sung Emperor to BiGan, who wrote that the highest form of loyalty is to serve a leader or a nation "even unto death itself".

Throughout his life until the day he passed on in January 1976, Tun Abdul Razak bin Dato' Hussein devoted himself to working selflessly for the benefit of all social sectors and economic levels of the people in the Malaysian nation. Truly, through the life work of Tun Razak, Malaysia has become the motherland for all Malaysians.

Winning over the SUPP

By Tan Sri Datuk Amar Ling Beng Siew

Winning Over the UMNO

I did not meet Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussein until after Tunku Abdul Rahman's famous 'Malaysia speech' at the Singapore Foreign Correspondents' Club in July 1961. Thereafter, as a member of the Supreme Council of Sarawak, I was invited to also sit as a member of the Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee. At these meetings, Tun Razak in his own way always obtained the views of all parties concerned. He listened sympathetically to our insistence that the Borneo states be allowed to retain some autonomy over state immigration, land, mining, forestry and education.

He was a quiet and unassuming man and his speeches gave the impression of being carefully written lectures rather than spontaneous remarks. But his truthfulness and humanity always came shining through. These qualities no doubt explained his rapid rise within UMNO and the high regard in which the public held him.

During the formation of Malaysia, I often discussed political developments in Sarawak with him. He had a detailed understanding of Sarawak affairs. He knew very well that the pattern of political organisation that had developed in Malaya was not necessarily applicable to Sarawak. He also knew that the people in Sarawak had their own way of doing things and would not take kindly to being told what to do.

Tun Razak came into the picture again in 1970 when he was in Sarawak for the state elections that year. I had for some time even prior to 1969, been in favour of bringing the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) into the Alliance in order to strengthen the state government's hand in dealing with and eventually solving the communist problem. I had put this idea to Tunku several times before 1969 but he was not in favour. Tunku always believed that you should never get near the communists. No doubt he was disillusioned after his own experience with Chin Peng at the Baling Talks in 1955. Tun himself was reluctant at first but he was more receptive on the second occasion. He asked me to work on the idea with (Tan Sri) Ghazali Shafie.

In the state election of 1970, it was clear that the Sarawak Chinese Association had not done well and that the SUPP was

Social evenings provided excellent opportunities for keeping abreast of local news. Here Tun Razak catches up on the latest in Sarawak politics with Tan Sri Ling Beng Siew (left) and his brother Ling Beng Siong.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

in a very strong position. I began in earnest to implement my plan. I asked to see SUPP's leaders.

(Tan Sri) Ong Kee Hui and (Tan Sri) Sim Kheng Hong came to my office at the Aurora Hotel in Kuching. I urged them to take the initiative to form the next government in coalition with the Alliance, with Ong Kee Hui offering himself for the post of Chief Minister.

Needless to say, they were surprised but they could see the plan made sense. Then I rushed to the Kuching airport only to find that Tun had just boarded his plane for Kuala Lumpur. Knocking on the cabin door, I managed to get the crew to open it and let me in for a few minutes to explain to Tun what had transpired. Typically, he did not commit himself but I knew that he would give the matter full consideration. In the end, although the plan did not work out as discussed, the SUPP did join the Alliance to form the next state government and slowly, it shed its old image as an extreme left-wing party.

Tun Razak's grasp of what would work in politics and what would not, went beyond domestic affairs. Despite my having been an outspoken critic of the Sarawak communists—who had gone so far as to threaten my life—Tun Razak persuaded me to be part of the delegation to China, led by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, to lay the groundwork for trade relations with China. Premier Zhou Enlai met us at the airport and Chairman Mao Zedong entertained us to tea.

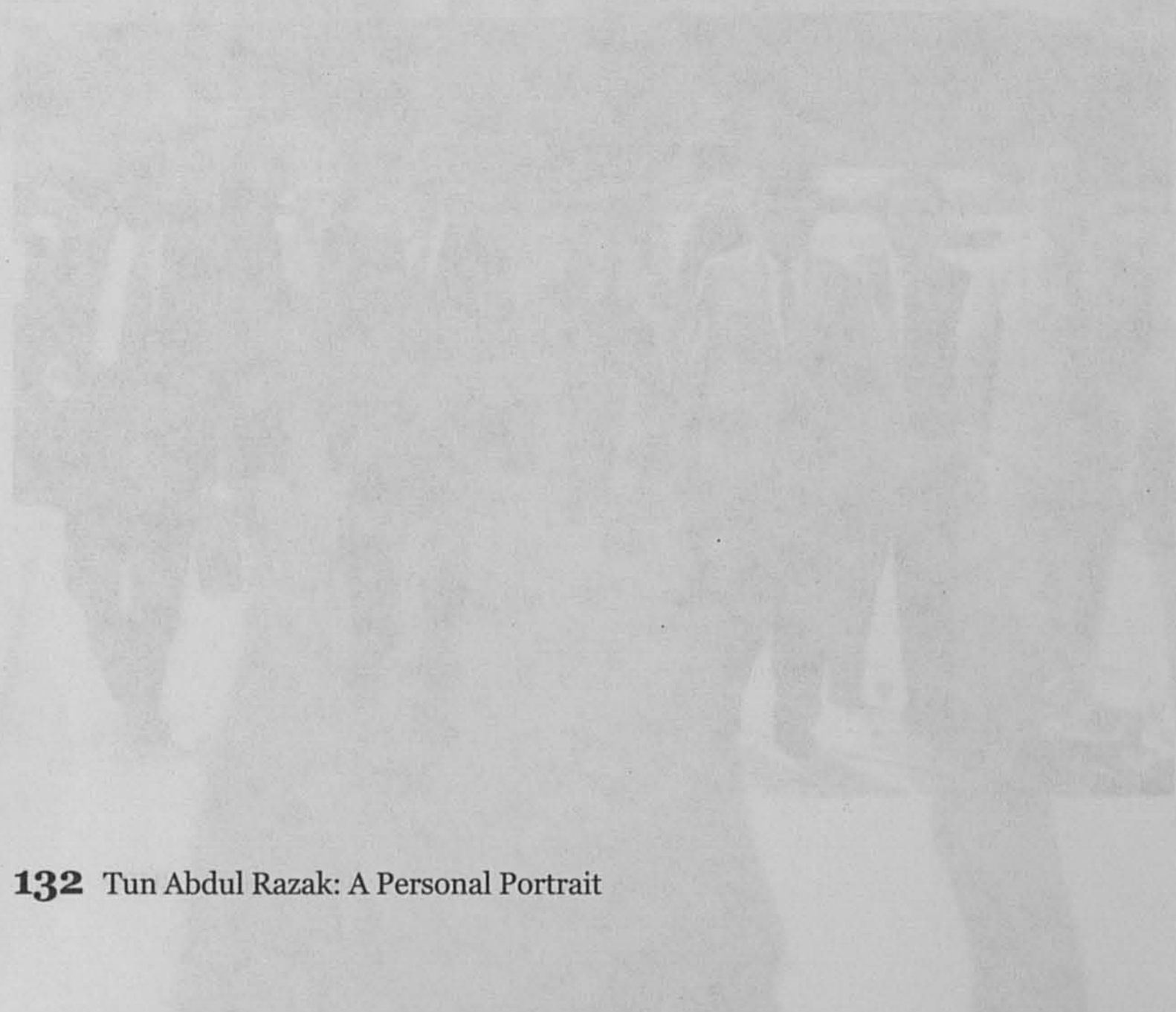
Tun Razak was a very disciplined man. When he was working under the Tunku, he carried out all his duties with dedication and total loyalty. The Tunku never had to worry about the administration of either the party or government.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Razak (third from left), accompanying the British delegation led by the British Minister of State for Colonial Affairs (1962-64), Lord Landsdowne (front row, fourth from left), on his arrival in Sarawak for the Malaysia talks. (1962)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Tun Razak was a careful man who did not like to upset anyone. He was also very patient—he would let you do the talking and he would do the listening. Even if you demanded an answer, he would always reserve his judgement. If you needed his advice on anything, he would do his best for you. And he was very diplomatic—if someone had passed unkind remarks about you, he would use other words to convey the point. He disliked hurting others. To top it all, he could always be trusted to keep a secret—a rare quality in political life.

I count it as a special honour that I was a personal friend of Tun Razak in that important period during the formation and early history of Malaysia. Tunku Abdul Rahman was a much loved, charismatic figure but he always depended on the sure judgement of Tun Razak in running the country. Tun Razak was outstanding for his sincerity, modesty, humanity, willingness to work hard and underneath it all, a determination to achieve his aims. He was a true Malaysian statesman.



In Service to the Nation

By Tengku Tan Sri Razaleigh Hamzah

In Service to the Nation

THE news of Tun Abdul Razak's passing in London in January 1976 shocked millions of people. The nation mourned. Spontaneously, hundreds of thousands converged on the capital to pay their final respects to a beloved leader. Tun Abdul Razak was a national legend. He gave profound meaning to the definition of leadership and courage in modern times.

Tun figured even in my childhood days. I used to accompany my father to Kuala Lipis, which at that time was the state capital of Pahang. Tun, who was then the assistant State Secretary of Pahang, would usually come to fetch us in his car from the Kuala Lipis train station.

Our relationship became closer still when in 1964 Tun headed the Kelantan UMNO liaison committee of which I was then Secretary. Tun appointed me his deputy. In 1973, I was voted to the post of UMNO Vice-President. Tun offered me a Cabinet post but I could not accept it at the time as I felt I could best serve outside the government. Several prime projects initiated by Tun in the interests of the Malays and the nation, such as Bank Bumiputra, Petronas and Pernas, had been entrusted to me to manage. All these required my full attention.

While Tun was undergoing treatment in London, he called me over. Even though he was already visibly weak, Tun still managed to hold warm conversations with me and invited me for walks outside the hotel where we stayed in London. We did this daily for several days. Tun was bored staying in hospital; he needed friends to talk with. It was at this time that Tun once again urged me to accept a Cabinet post. He said he would be returning to Malaysia shortly and wanted to announce a Cabinet reshuffle.

A few days later Tun breathed his last, before being able to return to Malaysia. The late Tunku Abdul Rahman advised me to accept Tun's suggestion, as it was his last request to me. Tunku felt it was best if I fulfilled his wish even though Tun was no longer with us and Tun Hussein Onn was heading the government.

Tun Abdul Razak was my political mentor. He taught me the meaning of struggle, sacrifice and determination. For Tun, nationalism was not just a spirited slogan; it had to have

meaning. One's position in high office was not a matter of idle pride but an instrument to serve the people. If leadership meant the ability to make clever speeches with catchy phrases, Tun must be deemed a failure, as he was no orator. But if leadership meant the ability to realise the hopes for a nation's future, as well as the ability to overcome a variety of crises, then he was an exceptional leader.

This was what he proved. The history of 25 years of his leadership from 1951 to 1976 does not merely document the various positions he held in government and party, but also shows Tun Abdul Razak as the backbone behind efforts to solve various crises faced by the nation, the Malays and UMNO.

The Early Years

Tun's leadership encompassed three main periods. The first is pre-independence, the second post-independence and the third period covers the years after 1970 when Tun himself was Prime Minister. Each stage saw a growth in national character, each had its own set of problems: poverty, communalism, the communist threat and general backwardness as a result of 400 years of colonial rule. Tun was a firm leader but he was certainly no power-crazed dictator.

In 1951 when he was 29 years old, Tun quit the post of Pahang State Secretary to become active in UMNO. This was a great sacrifice. UMNO then was not a powerful organisation and if anything, held regular activities opposing the colonial government. Not many prominent Malays were willing to join UMNO at the time since its future was still unclear. Not long thereafter, Dato' Onn Jaafar left the party he had founded in 1946. In those days, Dato' Onn and UMNO were synonymous. Dato' Onn was UMNO and UMNO was Dato' Onn. Without him, many assumed UMNO would wither and die.

The next echelon of younger leaders had still to prove itself able to run a party that was challenging colonial rule. It was at this juncture that Tun persuaded Tunku Abdul Rahman to lead UMNO. Tun was prepared to serve as Tunku's number two. Nevertheless, he was clearly the backbone behind various important developments, and greatly assisted Tunku in founding the Alliance coalition, in the independence negotiations and in facing the communist threat.

It was based on that record of unswerving loyalty that Tunku entrusted him to hold the post of Prime Minister in 1959, while Tunku took leave to campaign in the country's first federal elections. Tun relinquished the post back to Tunku a few months later. To him, position was unimportant. The nation's future was everything.

A huge part of Tun's 19 years in leadership can be measured from his role as a loyal second in command. From that position, Tun left an unparalleled contribution in education, rural development, security and foreign policy. The Tun Razak Education Plan continues to be the blueprint of our national education system. Today's schooling system, the recognition of Islamic studies as a subject and the use of Malay are a part of the plan.

Meanwhile, his Rural Development Plan drew world-wide acclaim. The Magsaysay Award, considered Asia's equivalent of the Nobel Prize, was bestowed on Tun in recognition of his efforts in rural development. His military style approach, by setting up an operations room at every administrative level to combat poverty and rural backwardness, was copied by several other countries. The Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA) and the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) were among the institutions Tun built up to achieve these goals. His rural development initiatives also served as a drawcard in persuading Sabah and Sarawak to join Malaysia in 1963—in the formation of which Tun played a tremendous role.

Tengku Razaleigh welcomes Tun Razak to his Kota Bharu home for a meeting with UMNO Kelantan members. (1973)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Nation Building

There are those who accuse Tun of being a communal leader. This view stems from his resoluteness on the question of being Malay. In fact Tun was one who truly understood the concept of nation building. To him, language and cultural policies, and steps to raise the living standards of Malays were not communal chauvinism but efforts to unite all the people of the nation. His experience while studying in the United Kingdom sharpened this view. The United Kingdom was also made up of various ethnic groups, yet they were united upon the twin pivots of a shared language and culture.

This was our weakness. Among ourselves, each community wanted to preserve its own identity. Each glorified its own language and culture. Communal suspicion became the source of arguments and the root of various political and economic crises at the time.

The difficulty facing most newly emerging countries is to build a nation-state. Malaya, and thereafter Malaysia, was a nation but not a nationality. This was because each ethnic group wanted to move in a different direction. For Tun, it was language that was the spirit and soul of any race. To be united as one Malaysian nationality, all citizens had to accept the Malaysian language as their lingua franca in all areas including administration, education and commerce.

Acceptance of the Malay language and culture was not easy. It was linked to the very position of the Malays. Class differences in society took on an ethnic perspective. The nation's wealth pyramid saw foreigners at the top, the Chinese in the middle and the indigenous bumiputera at the bottom. Thus the Malays had to be freed from the shackles of poverty and backwardness so that the practice of its language and culture would not be looked down upon. The Malay language and culture would never be respected if the majority of its users were poor, uneducated and itinerant. The migrants to America or France did not oppose the English or French systems of education, as the use of those languages as the medium of instruction were associated with successful, prosperous races of high standing.

The first Bumiputera Economic Congress in 1965 was Tun's inspiration. It sparked off the idea that Malays had to compete in business. At that time, the Malay perception of the commercial world was still negative. Moreover, several basic factors such as the lack of capital and experience made the world of business a thick jungle, one which they found difficult to hack through. The majority of Malays had never set foot inside a bank. In fact, there were those who forbade Malay youths from working in banks.

It was from here that the idea of Bank Bumiputra was first mooted. The primary objective was to bring banking as an institution into the lives of Malays. This included setting up bank branches all over the country, encouraging savings and recruiting Malay youths to work and manage banks. Tun's keenness to see this bank succeed became the prime impetus why until today, this bank continues to come under the Prime Minister's Department, unlike do the other banks which come under the Finance Ministry.

In line with this same commitment, the role of MARA was enlarged to provide technical assistance, training and financial aid to increase the number of bumiputera entrepreneurs. In the early 1960s the devaluation of the nation's currency sparked off a general strike among non-Malay shopkeepers. It was the Malays who suffered most by this widespread closure of shops as they were very dependent on these shopkeepers for their daily needs. Stemming from this Tun set up Pernas, which was initially aimed at establishing a chain of sundry shops across the nation to be managed by Malays. Later Pernas's role was enlarged until it produced Malay contractors and corporate leaders who were able to compete with their counterparts of other races.

Charting the Nation's Future

The economic and social inequality climaxed in the May 13, 1969 event–a black day for the country. The racial conflict following general elections that year forced the government to declare a national state of emergency. Parliament and Cabinet were suspended and the nation was administered by the National Operations Council (NOC). This was the most tense moment in the history of Malaysia's development. The crisis placed Malaysia at a crossroads. It could destroy the nation in an ongoing civil war or give rise to a new system of government thereafter. As the Director of the NOC, Tun again proved his effectiveness in managing the crisis. Within only 20 months, parliamentary rule was restored when peace was re-established.

Not long thereafter, Tun took over the helm of government following Tunku Abdul Rahman's retirement as Prime Minister. Many challenges lay before him. He bore the responsibility for introducing all aspects of reform.

Unfortunately at that time Tun was diagnosed as suffering from leukaemia. Tun knew that time was not on his side. Yet before him lay so much that had yet to be achieved. Tun's decision to keep silent about his illness proves the depth of his resolve to shoulder the entire burden himself.

Tun poured his heart and soul into the nation. He focussed his mind on creating new ideas. Political problems were solved

through political means. This included holding a series of negotiations and exhausting discussions with almost all political parties in the country. The result was the Barisan Nasional—Tun's brainchild to reduce inter-party politicking so that all energies and resources could be chanelled to national development.

Economic problems were resolved through economic planning. Tun's New Economic Policy (NEP) was a unique social engineering programme to overcome social inequality. The NEP was both lauded and criticised by various quarters. Its supporters saw it as the best formula to remove the identification of social class with race. Conversely, its detractors likened it to racial discrimination along the lines of apartheid. At the same time, another group accused the policy of contravening Islamic teachings because it was allegedly based on communal precepts.

The NEP's proven success silenced all criticisms. This was most visible in the field of education. Under the policy, several new universities and institutions of higher learning were set up, with the largest placements given to Malay youths. Science schools were established in each state. The MARA Junior Science College emerged to provide a higher level of education for rural children. The most inspiring was the success of the Universiti

Kebangsaan Malaysia, which conducted all its courses in Malay, including science and technology.

Hundreds of thousands of Malay students were sent abroad to overcome the shortage of local institutions. Various types of scholarships were issued to assist the less privileged. Today's economic growth would probably not have been achieved if not propelled by the educated children of the NEP. What is more, through the NEP, Tun laid the foundation for our national industrialisation.

Economic Nationalism

The early 1970s was a period of lively debate in Malaysia. Two decades earlier neo-colonialist theories, dependency theories and other approaches were integral to Tun's early exposure while in the United Kingdom, including voluntarily attending extra-curricular lectures at the London School of Economics, as well as his involvement in the Fabian Society and Labour Party there.

The third world countries were independent merely from the political aspect but their economies were still dominated by foreign capital. In our country, the estate sector had made big gains but it was monopolised by Sime Darby and other big companies. London Tin controlled Malaysia's tin market, while oil concessions had been parcelled out to Esso and Shell. All these were giant foreign corporations.

To him, for as long as the nation's wealth was still owned by foreigners, independence was meaningless and national pride was still being held to ransom. Nationalism did not just refer to politics. It had also to be seen in economic terms. Tun did not want to take the route adopted by many other third world leaders, that of nationalising that wealth. For Tun, nationalisation was only a short term measure, not a final solution.

Tun entrusted me to draw up the best strategy and tactic to win back the national wealth. With his blessings and through a complex process, Sime Darby was successfully taken over by a local company, and similarly London Tin.

The greatest challenge involved the issues of gas and petroleum. This was because it was the British who had sealed the contracts giving the concessions to the relevant companies. Worse still, the concessions had no time limit. Tun boldly used parliamentary powers to cancel those contracts. At the same time Petronas was set up, even though we did not have any expertise and not much capital. Nevertheless, through Tun's determination, and despite drawing criticism from the major powers, these companies were successfully persuaded to sign production-sharing agreements with Petronas. Today the Petronas flag flies proudly. This is also the corporation that has served as the largest

Tun Razak (seated, third from left) listening to Tengku Razaleigh's speech at the official opening of the Bumiputera Advisory Service, Hotel Merlin, Kuala Lumpur. Tun Tan Siew Sin sits to his left.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

financier of the nation's economic growth today, thanks to Tun's courage.

Meanwhile, Tun ordered hundreds of thousands of hectares of rubber and oil palm estates to be opened up under FELDA. They were opened up in thick jungle, part of which formed communist terrorist hideouts. These estates, worked by our own people's hands, succeeded in bringing in more than 80% of the foreign exchange earnings at the time, while overcoming the problems of unemployment and land shortage among Malays.

A True Patriot

Tun taught me about two types of leadership. The first was that of the populist leader, the second a patriot. Populist leaders were those who used their positions to continue to stay in power. Their politics was the politics of patronage, that is taking care of their supporters' interests, so that they in turn would be retained. They had no policies or programmes for the people and nation. The populist leader would condone corruption if it profited himself and those around him. The patriot despises corruption as the people's number one enemy. Populism often destroyed third world countries, while patriotism saved nations.

Tun perceived a weakness of Malay society was that leadership was often measured by a person's ability to mix and win the hearts of others. For Tun, such abilities were an important tool for understanding the people's problems. But they were not *the* objective of leadership. More crucial was the leader's ability to spark off constructive ideas in resolving problems, not one who merely looked into problems.

As a true patriot, Tun had demonstrated his firmness in combating corruption. Under Tun, the Biro Siasatan Negara (BSN) was revived. Additional powers and freedom were given to investigate and take action against corrupt officials and leaders, irrespective of their position. In a short time, Tun had inspired a new culture among civil servants and leaders—one that made them fear corruption and serve only the nation.

Tun himself was seen not to use his position to enrich himself, his family or those around him. His modest life-style and that of his family attested to this. This criterion continued to be an important basis in determining the UMNO leadership of the time. Party members looked up to those who served the party and were patriotic. Leaders were chosen not because of the money, licences or contracts that they handed out, but for their contributions, ideas and Malay spirit. For that reason the term money politics did not exist then.

All this intensified the love of serving under Tun. His diligence and sincerity in working for the nation inspired all officials and

national leaders. It is not surprising that Tun's bush jacket was widely copied. His friendliness and warmth wherever he went became widely talked about. His extraordinary memory of people, even after only one meeting, made Tun an exceptional person. As a political guru, he left a lasting impression.

The Passing of a Statesman

Tun passed away without leaving much wealth behind. The heritage he left behind was his loyal service and devotion to the nation, the benefits of which will pass on to future generations. No development today can be separated from Tun: Petronas, FELDA, MARA, Pernas, the NEP, Bank Bumiputra, the Industrial Masterplan, the Education Policy, the Rural Development Policy, most local universities today and many more stand as Tun Razak's unforgettable bequests to us. A large number of these were created while Tun himself was terminally ill. Tun died serving the Malay community and the nation.

Tun was buried as a statesman of incomparable experience, even though his hopes and dreams had not been fully realised. Wiping out corruption, increasing Malay equity to at least 30%, making the Malay language first in all fields, eradicating poverty, raising rural living standards and forging true unity were among Tun's agenda which we must follow through. It is our responsibility to study everything inscribed in Tun's mind, while sowing high political ideals to fulfil his dreams.

May Allah bless him in the hereafter. *Al-Fatihah* for the soul of Tun Haji Abdul Razak.

At One with the People

By Tunku Tan Sri Dato' Shahriman bin Tunku Sulaiman

THE very first time I met Tun Razak, I was struck by the depth of his caring for the rural poor. It was 1959. I was Assistant District Officer in charge of Rompin sub-district and Tun, in his capacity as Minister of Rural Development, had come to visit the area. At that time, access to Rompin was via Endau, which meant crossing the Endau River on a log raft as there was no bridge, and travelling over bumpy terrain because there was no proper road.

But that did not deter Tun. That morning, he had arrived in a Land Rover, looking unruffled by the rough ride. He was used to going cross-country in this manner to monitor the living conditions and state of development in the rural districts. It was a measure of his dedication that he did this regularly.

I welcomed him and briefed him on the progress of development projects in the area. He listened keenly and asked some pointed questions. Then we took a tour of the area during which he met some of Rompin's residents, mostly fisherfolk eking out a simple living. He readily entertained their queries and I could see that he related well to the people. Tun himself had been brought up in humble surroundings when, at the age of two, he was left in the care of his grandparents. In the ricegrowing village of Jambu Langgar, he had helped look after his grandfather's buffaloes and walked barefoot to school every day. It was no wonder the Rompin folk took to him.

At lunch-time I invited him home for a simple meal. My two-bedroom quarters represented the best dwelling in the entire shanty town still lacking in basic amenities. We had no electricity, no piped water. Tun talked about his plans for rural development. He was convinced that upgrading the living standards of the rural population was central to our young nation's well being. Being fresh out of university, I too was fired to do something to redress this rural neglect.

A few months earlier, I had stood up against the District Officer of Pekan when he had decided to transfer a large tract of agricultural land in Endau-Rompin to a businessman from Johore. I had received orders from him to file a report recommending the transfer of land title. But I had resisted. I knew the 3000-acre piece of land well and thought it would be fairer to

Humble roots—the young Razak grew up in this now abandoned house belonging to his late grandfather, Haji Taib, in Kampung Benta, Pekan, Pahang. (1978)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

give it to the people living there instead. So I took the liberty of subdividing the land and of issuing temporary occupation licences to them. Almost everyone got a share. It was against his orders but I was sure I had done the right thing.

Some years later, in 1965, when I was appointed State Secretary of Pahang, I was told that Tun had proposed me for the post based in part on the initiative I had taken on this piece of land. I never discovered how he came to know about it but at the age of 33, I became the youngest State Secretary in the country—after the late Tun himself who became the State Secretary of Pahang in 1952 at the age of 30.

We became close from then on, even closer after I was made the first Director-General of the Implementation, Co-ordination. and Development Unit in 1970 and he was already Prime Minister. I would travel in the same car with him on official duties and on holidays, and he would talk to me about political and personal matters, possibly because I was a good listener and not much of a talker myself. Sometimes he would ring me and call me over to his home at Sri Taman for breakfast, usually a simple affair of *kuih* or bread or *roti canai*.

Tun might have looked like a serious person but he enjoyed a joke as much as the next man. A typical example of Tun's humour is the pet name he gave one of his Chinese friends—'Tetek'—a deliberate mispronunciation of the man's name. No offence was taken though, as the seeming insult was obviously tempered by Tun's affection for him.

Tun was also not above engaging in some harmless gossip. I remember Tun telling me about an incident involving a member of the royalty who was about to take a new wife. His first wife was so upset by it that she went to Sri Taman and asked Tun to stop the marriage. Declaring herself still an attractive woman, she threatened to strip in front of Tun to prove her point. Tun told her, "You can do that but I don't want to see." I have no idea what happened after that!

Tun was friendly to a lot of people. On his holiday trips to Fraser's Hill, which he liked to visit especially during Christmas, he would invite some of his friends along. We stayed in the state bungalow and played poker for small stakes—something like 20 cents per hand.

On numerous occasions, we made excursions to Penang on the naval ship *Hang Tuah*, with a stopover at Pangkor where Tun would go water-skiing. We played poker as usual. In Penang, (Tun) Dr Lim Chong Eu would often come on board and join us, bringing along rambutans.

Glory to the victor—supporters chair Tun Razak out of the election counting centre in Pekan, Pahang. (1969)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Tun liked to play poker but he was not very good at it. He used to say, in good humour, "Shahriman always wins." Golf

was his favourite game and he used to play at least twice a week to ease the pressures of work.

Burdens of the Nation

His life was constantly highly stressed because of the many tasks he had to see to as a national leader. One of the most difficult times of his life was the period between the night of the 1969 general elections and the aftermath of May 13.

Tun knew that the 1969 elections would be a tough one but he did not expect the results to turn out the way they did. We were in Pekan, in the old rest house, throughout the night of May 10 and into the morning of May 11 waiting anxiously for the results to come in. Initially Tun was relaxed enough to crack a few jokes. Then the first result was announced. The state constituency of Cameron Highlands had fallen to the opposition. Tun was visibly stunned. It jolted him all the more because Cameron Highlands was in his own home state of Pahang, which he knew to be an Alliance stronghold.

The bad news turned out to be the harbinger of further defeats for the Alliance. Hour after hour, Penang looked increasingly in danger of becoming an opposition state. So did Perak and Selangor.

The one moment I remember of Tun expressing obvious relief on that ominous night was when he learned that (Tan Sri) Khir Johari had been returned in Kedah. Some time back talk had been going around that Khir might be the one to succeed Tunku Abdul Rahman as Prime Minister instead of Tun. But Tun's heartfelt relief at hearing of Khir's victory dispelled any notion that he might have resented the implications of the rumour. Besides, it was reassuring that Khir had won despite the pre-election smear campaign against him, in the form of a picture being circulated by the opposition, showing him and his wife wearing traditional Chinese dress.

Close to dawn, with most of the results in, it was clear that the Alliance would still continue to be in government by at least a simple majority. Victory champagne was brought in compliments of Tengku Arif Bendahara Tengku Ibrahim to celebrate. But when the glasses were passed around, Tun refused to take one. I could see that he was very disappointed by the overall results. The Alliance had won on the whole but it had lost Penang, and in Perak and Selangor, there was uncertainty as to which side would form the state government.

I had never seen Tun so dejected. I sent him to the airport in Kuantan for his flight back to Kuala Lumpur and he did not seem his usual self. He was quiet the whole time. It was as if he had a

premonition that something dreadful was going to happen. Sure enough, two days later, the riots broke out.

I next saw him on May 15 at a meeting in Parliament House, attended by the Menteris Besar and army generals, to discuss the tragedy that had erupted and to find ways of restoring order and security. He looked very solemn. He chaired the meeting but said very little. He listened as the generals expressed their concern over the state of the country. One of them remarked that some of the younger officers were getting impatient and urging strong action. The precariousness of the situation meant Tun had to negotiate carefully to avoid an army takeover of the administration. As it turned out, he handled it exceptionally well.

Tun was a man who preferred compromise to conflict. He also believed in being fair to people and avoiding extreme action. It was in the spirit of compromise and moderation that he had helped bring independence to our country. It was in the same spirit that he restored normalcy and order after the riots. Over the next few years, he spared no effort to win back the people's faith in the Barisan Nasional and to ensure that what happened on May 13 would not recur.

Winning Uncontested

By the time the next general elections came round in 1974, he could count on victory for the coalition but he still harboured personal anxiety about the outcome because he was facing the polls for the first time as Prime Minister. Nothing short of a strong mandate would indicate that the people approved of his leadership.

On that score, he was particularly concerned about how he would fare in his own Pekan parliamentary constituency. On August 8, nomination day, I went to look for him at the District Office where nomination papers were to be submitted. There were about a thousand people gathered there. I asked one of them if Tun had already submitted his papers. He replied in the affirmative, adding that Tun had gone back to the Pekan UMNO headquarters.

I then asked him whether any other candidate had challenged Tun up till then. His reply seemed to sum up the sentiment of the people of Pekan: "Who would dare challenge the Father of Development?" using the nickname his supporters had bestowed on Tun.

Shortly after, I found Tun at the Pekan UMNO headquarters where about 500 people had turned up in a show of support. Tun and his entourage were waiting inside his office to find out

if anyone would contest him. We were half-expecting one Zulkifli Ahmad to do so because he had made a press statement a few days earlier saying that he would challenge 'Giant Tun'.

Then at about 10.30 a.m. Tun's political secretary, Annuar Jusoh, walked in looking anxious and whispered something to Tun. Some of us thought that this was news that someone would stand against the Prime Minister. To our relief, it was something else. The nomination papers of the Barisan Nasional candidate for Bukit Ibam, Rashid Mohd Aris—which was under the then Pekan parliamentary constituency but now under the Rompin parliamentary constituency following a delineation exercise—had apparently been deemed to be incorrectly filed, raising the possibility of his being disqualified as a candidate.

Annuar received a phone call on the matter from Khalil Akasah, Barisan Nasional executive Secretary from UMNO headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. Tun checked the duplicate copy and showed it to the Pahang Deputy *Menteri Besar*, Datuk Mohamad Jusoh, who then passed it on to me. Just then Annuar came back into the room and told Tun that everything had been sorted out; the state supervisor of elections in Kuantan, Mr Singhe, had decided that the papers were in order. In fact, the opposition candidate had filed the same way.

When Annuar left the room, Tun had everyone breaking out in laughter when he cheerfully remarked, "Our Annuar is an excitable fellow. Best to get him married off quickly."

By 11.00 a.m. it was clear that no one would be opposing Tun. We were told that Zulkifli did rush to the nomination centre about 15 minutes before the deadline but it was to submit his papers to contest the state seat of Pekan—against his own cousin, Shamsiah. Tun was in high spirits. With no one standing against him, it meant he had the people's undivided support on his home turf. It was a great boost to his morale. He turned to me and said jokingly, "I won uncontested, Shahriman, because you came along."

The Last Call

I wish I had also gone along with Tun when he went on leave to the south of France in December 1975. I was supposed to have, but I had to postpone my departure because of urgent matters that needed attending to. Later, I received an ominous telegram from his ADC telling me not to join them in France because Tun was leaving for London for medical treatment.

I had sensed that all was not well with Tun some time before that. My office in the Prime Minister's Department was just a few doors down from his. In fact, it was so close that ministers

Performing the haj with (Tan Sri) Mohd Khir Johari (right) in ehram in Mecca.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

who came to see him often used my office as a waiting station. I saw him practically every day and once I noticed some spots on his hands when I asked him to sign some documents. I asked him how he got them. He said, "It's probably because I've been in the sun too much, playing golf." I did not believe that was the cause even then.

Still, it never occurred to me that the treatment in London would not restore him to us. The news of his death on January 16, 1976 was so unexpected, it was like a stone shattering glass. I received a call in the evening informing me of it, and it was not the gathering darkness that suddenly blurred my vision. I remained motionless for some time, not knowing what to do, what to think, as my tears flowed. For two or three days afterwards, I lost interest in virtually everything.

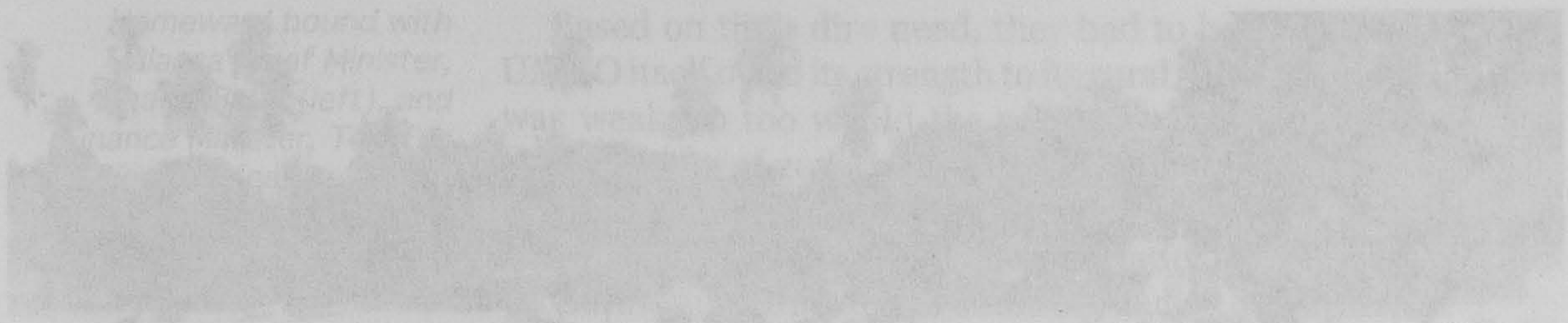
In retrospect, I regret not having seen him just before he died. But in a way it was just as well that I had not. In the last few days of his life, it was said, his body had shrunk considerably. I want to remember him as the Tun I used to know, healthy and energetic.

For me, Tun will always be a great leader and a good friend. My respect and affection for Tun was not just because he was my boss, my mentor. It went deeper than that. Even now I think of him as the greatest influence on my life.

Into the Rural Heartland

By Tun Abdul Ghafar bin Baba

Into the Rural Heartland



WE were more than political friends. More like family. He was always advising me and teaching me, especially in political matters, and UMNO in particular. Tun Razak was generous with his knowledge.

I first came to know him in the 1950s. In the 1955 election, Tun Razak had asked me to contest in Malacca. At first I turned him down as I was unsure that I could make a contribution to the nation. That year I was elected as Division Chief of UMNO Malacca, which at that time comprised all of one division. Tun Razak was persistent. And finally I agreed. I stood on the Alliance ticket in the Melaka Luar constituency against Jaafar Mohd Tan from Parti Negara. Thank God I won with a 23 969—vote majority.

In 1959, I again stood for elections, this time in the state seat of Tanjung Keling. I beat Mohd Nor Nordin from the Parti Islam (PAS) by 2,742 votes.

That year, Tunku Abdul Rahman asked me to become the Chief Minister of Malacca. I declined but Tunku was insistent. Tun Razak too asked me to just accept the post. He would help, he said. Finally, I accepted.

It was after that that I grew closer to Tun Razak. We contacted each other often, especially about UMNO and the problems faced by the nation.

From those conversations I discovered Tun Razak to be a leader who was feared, not only by government staff but also by party members. Tun Razak was not one to take things lightly. He was serious in carrying out his work and duties. Oddly enough, even though he was feared as a leader, many loved him. Usually, leaders who are feared are also hated. But in Tun Razak's case, people feared him, and were in awe of him, yet they also loved him.

He was always of serious demeanour. He rarely smiled—a no-nonsense kind of guy. And he certainly could not tolerate lies, either from civil servants or politicians. He looked for sincerity and expected the truth. Anyone caught lying to him faced dire consequences.

Once a government official tried to lie to him. When Tun asked if a certain project under his jurisdiction had been completed yet, the official said that it had, when in fact it was still in progress. When Tun Razak decided to visit the site, he discovered the true state of affairs. He was furious. He did not like being trifled with. The official was sent packing and promptly replaced.

Tun Razak himself was very dedicated in carrying out his duties. He was always checking up on rural projects, and on these visits he accepted whatever food and lodgings were available. He was not fussy. Whatever the people ate, that was what he too would eat.

His mission was to develop the country and to improve the economic standing of the Malays, especially the rural people.

Because his focus was weighted towards helping the Malays in the villages, there were those who mistook his concern and labelled him as an 'ultra' and 'anti-Chinese'. Such accusations had begun to be heard even when he was Deputy Prime Minister. The fact was that since the Malays were so economically backward, Tun Razak thought it made sense that the Malays, especially those living in rural areas, be given special attention in all aspects, particularly education.

Homeward bound with Malacca Chief Minister, Ghafar Baba (left), and Finance Minister, Tun Tan Siew Sin (centre), after handing over 10 boats to Tanjong Keling fishermen. (1967)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Based on their dire need, they had to be helped. Moreover, UMNO itself owed its strength to its rural roots. If the rural Malay was weak, so too would the party be. And as UMNO formed the mainstay of government, it was imperative that the party's position be strong. To achieve this, the Malays had to be fortified. For that reason Tun Razak was emphatic that the Malays' weak economic and educational standing had to be improved.

These questions had been mulled over even in Tunku's era and when Tun Razak became Prime Minister, their planning and implementation were accelerated. Tun Razak always maintained good relations with Tunku. They were very close. There was mutual respect. There were no differences between the two. If Tunku made a mistake, Tun Razak would point it out to him, and vice versa. Between them there was this reciprocity, an ability to be frank in the interests of the people and the nation.

When Tunku resigned and Tun Razak became Prime Minister, the allegations made against him of being an 'ultra' and 'anti-other races', were proved to be totally false. Tun Razak carried on by holding true to the Alliance principle agreed to by all the races. Malaysia was for all races. The only difference was perhaps his approach and leadership style. In fact, the concept of the Alliance as only a confederation between UMNO, MCA and the MIC, was expanded and opened up to form what came to be known as the Barisan Nasional. Tun Razak recognised the danger of inflammatory communal feelings. So he invited other parties which had previously stood outside the Alliance into the Barisan Nasional, making it a giant movement uniting all the peoples.

The concept of co-operation in the formation of the Barisan Nasional clearly proved that Tun Razak was a leader of all Malaysians, and not an 'ultra' or 'anti-other ethnic groups' as alleged by the chauvinists.

Alongside this, the Malays had to be helped. The establishment of the Rural Development Ministry bore testimony to the government's silent vow to assist the rural Malays. Institutions such as FELDA, FELCRA, MARA, FAMA, BBMB, Kompleks Kewangan and Insuran MNI were initiated to help the bumiputeras.

In those days, special attention was paid to the agriculture sector. This led to the introduction of double cropping of *padi* and the planting of oil palm and other cash crops to increase rural incomes. While waiting for the oil palms to bear fruit, opportunities for alternative sources of income presented themselves. There were those who had said that oil palm was inappropriate for Malaysia. Tun Razak persevered. The weather was suitable. History has proved him correct and today palm oil is among the country's major revenue earners.

The early settlers on the FELDA schemes never anticipated that they would, one day, become millionaires. Today, this has become a reality. When their land was acquired for industrial development, they became millionaires. All this is a blessing. Their patience and diligence has borne fruit.

In the field of education, hundreds of rural schools were built. The number of colleges and universities grew. The establishment of the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) has opened up many opportunities for rural children to further their education. As a result of the well-designed education policy, hundreds of thousands of students, including Malays, have received proper education.

Education was not only targeted at the young. Tun Razak also launched an adult literacy programme, especially among rural people. This was very well received as another means of raising their standard of living.

Tun Razak also saw how far behind the Malays were in economic terms compared to the other races. He therefore asked me to organise the Bumiputera Economic Congress to find a

way to help improve the economic position of the Malays. That congress resulted in the formation of MARA, Bank Bumiputra Malaysia Berhad (BBMB), Kompleks Kewangan and other agencies, specifically aimed at encouraging Malay participation in business.

When the country was in a state of turbulence in 1969, Malaysia was ruled by the National Operations Council, with Tun Razak as its Chairman. Tunku had handed over that important duty to Tun Razak. Fortunately the unrest did not last long. When peace was restored, the New Economic Policy (NEP) was introduced to restructure the nation's economy. Where previously the Chinese had dominated almost all business opportunities, the NEP would have to break that monopoly.

No more could one community be replete while another remained hungry. The economic cake had to be divided up. The Chinese share would not be taken away but they had to give at least 30% equity to the bumiputera.

At first, of course, it was difficult for the Chinese to share the cake as they had worked hard in that sector but on the basis of mutual understanding and in the interests of lasting friendship, the nation's wealth had to be shared out. It is not proper if only one community monopolises the wealth. This attitude of giving and receiving, while sharing in the wealth, is also a factor in achieving peace and unity.

Through Tun's wisdom and the New Economic Policy, the Malay economic position has been raised and their life slowly improved. Uplifting the Malays was always on his mind. In his speeches, he was always urging the Malays to change their attitudes and to dare to accept change. Because many Malays were involved in jobs associated with farming, fisheries and so on, agencies related to such occupations were set up: FAMA, farmers' associations and co-operatives, the Lembaga Kemajuan Ikan Malaysia and others.

He never grew weary of going to the villages. And when discussing rural projects, I was his reference point. He saw me as a person with rural roots, who understood the villagers' problems. Whenever a problem concerning rural matters cropped up, my views were sought.

At UMNO meetings, or any other meeting for that matter, Tun Razak liked to hear the thoughts of others first. These views must of course be productive, as he was not one to trifle with issues. If useful, he would accept them. People were free to offer their opinions and he was always prepared to listen.

Tun Razak had vision. Previously, our relations with China were not very good because China was found to be aiding the communist terrorists operating in our jungles. Tun Razak said

(Tun) Abdul Ghafar Baba (right) escorts Tun Razak into the Dewan Hang Tuah to officiate at the UMNO Malacca division annual general meeting. Malacca Chief Minister, Datuk Haji Talib Karim, is to Tun Razak's right.

(Courtesy of Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd.)

that if we wanted to weaken and eventually wipe out the communist movement in our country, we would have to offer the hand of friendship to China. We would have to establish diplomatic relations with them. We would have to make a pact. We would hold them to a promise that they would not assist the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM). By and by, the CPM would surely weaken.

Tun Razak's view on this was not very widely accepted, not even by Tunku Abdul Rahman himself. But in the end, he prevailed.

Tun Razak visited China and bilateral relations were established. China subsequently gave the assurance that it would not assist the communist movement in Malaya any more. That assurance indirectly weakened the CPM. When they did not receive any more aid, they were emasculated. Today the movement has been disbanded. This proves that Tun Razak was correct in his assessment. The CPM has been destroyed and its leaders dispersed.

Tun Razak's philosophy for leadership was simple: "Talk less, work more." Those who talked a lot would naturally have less time for work. He also urged that there be "not too much politicking", and this applied to UMNO members as well.

His own dedication and work ethics, to which he himself strictly adhered, made many people fear him. Civil servants as well as politicians were very afraid of him. Thus every project embarked upon for the people had to be carried out properly.

Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman bows his head listening to the views aired at a meeting of the UMNO Women's wing and Youth movement. To his right Tun Abdul Razak holds his head in dismay while UMNO Secretary-General (Tun) Abdul Ghafar Baba (extreme left) keeps a stoic face. (1968)

(Courtesy of Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd.)

Nevertheless, these same civil servants and politicians were always pleased to have Tun Razak come to visit their projects. Tun's visit was like a bonus to them, especially if Tun smiled. He made their day.

Even though Tun was always serious and rarely smiled, he was actually a very good-hearted person. He was very gentle. He spoke politely. He rarely became angry, and even when he did, he would not show it. He merely fell silent. He could be considered the perfect gentleman.

When civil servants or politicians made mistakes, he would point these out to them in the gentlest manner but one that would hit home deeply. Once reprimanded, they would not repeat the mistake. Tun Razak never raised his voice.

He had an excellent memory. He could easily recall people's names and faces, even after only one meeting. What impressed me was his ability not only to recognise and call civil servants and UMNO political staff by name but also to recall their backgrounds. This made people feel that he was paying them special attention and they in turn respected him all the more.

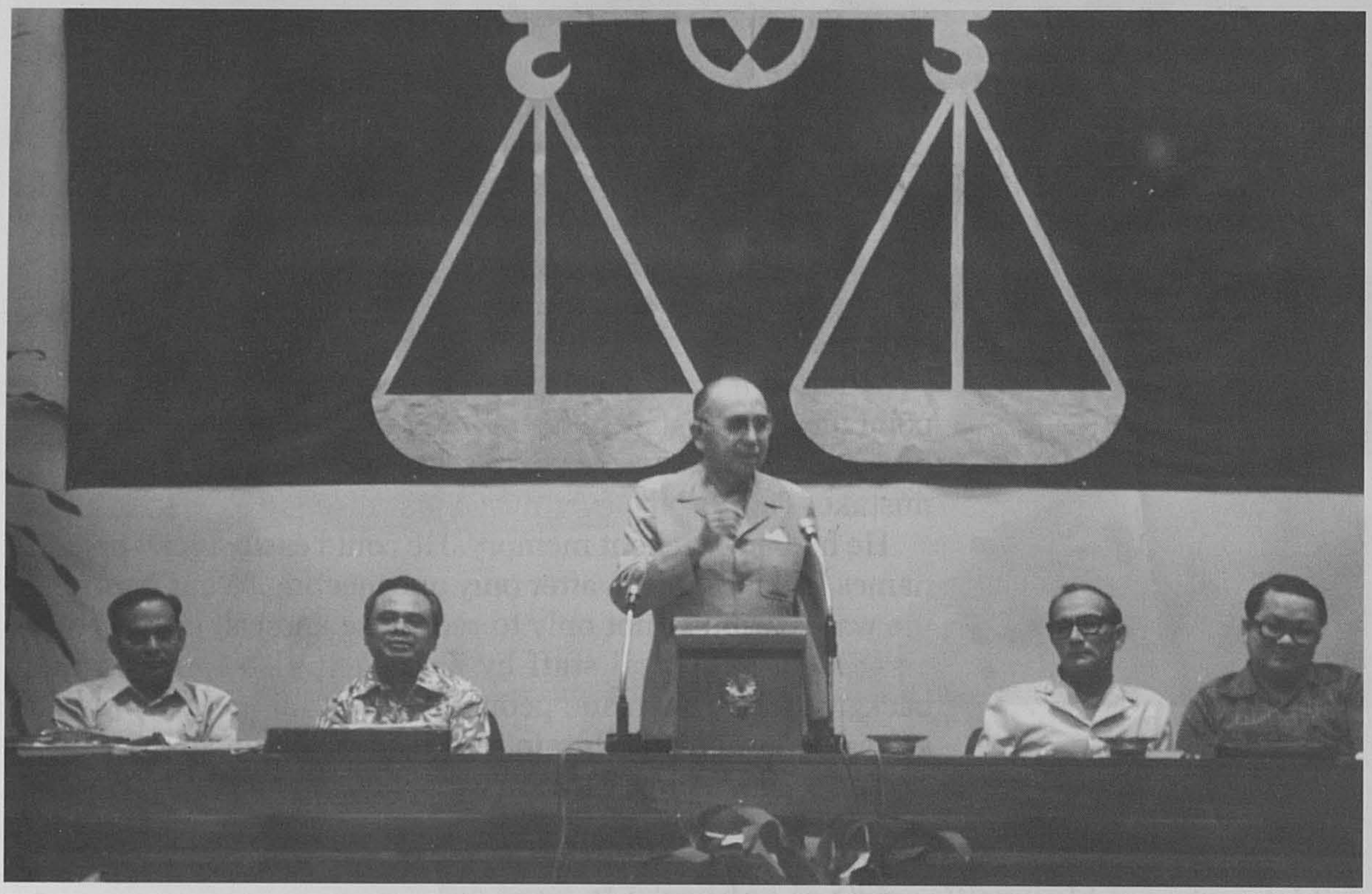
Tun Razak was easy to deal with and not at all fussy. He often asked me along on his visits to rural areas. Once, while I was still Chief Minister of Malacca, he invited me to Terengganu.

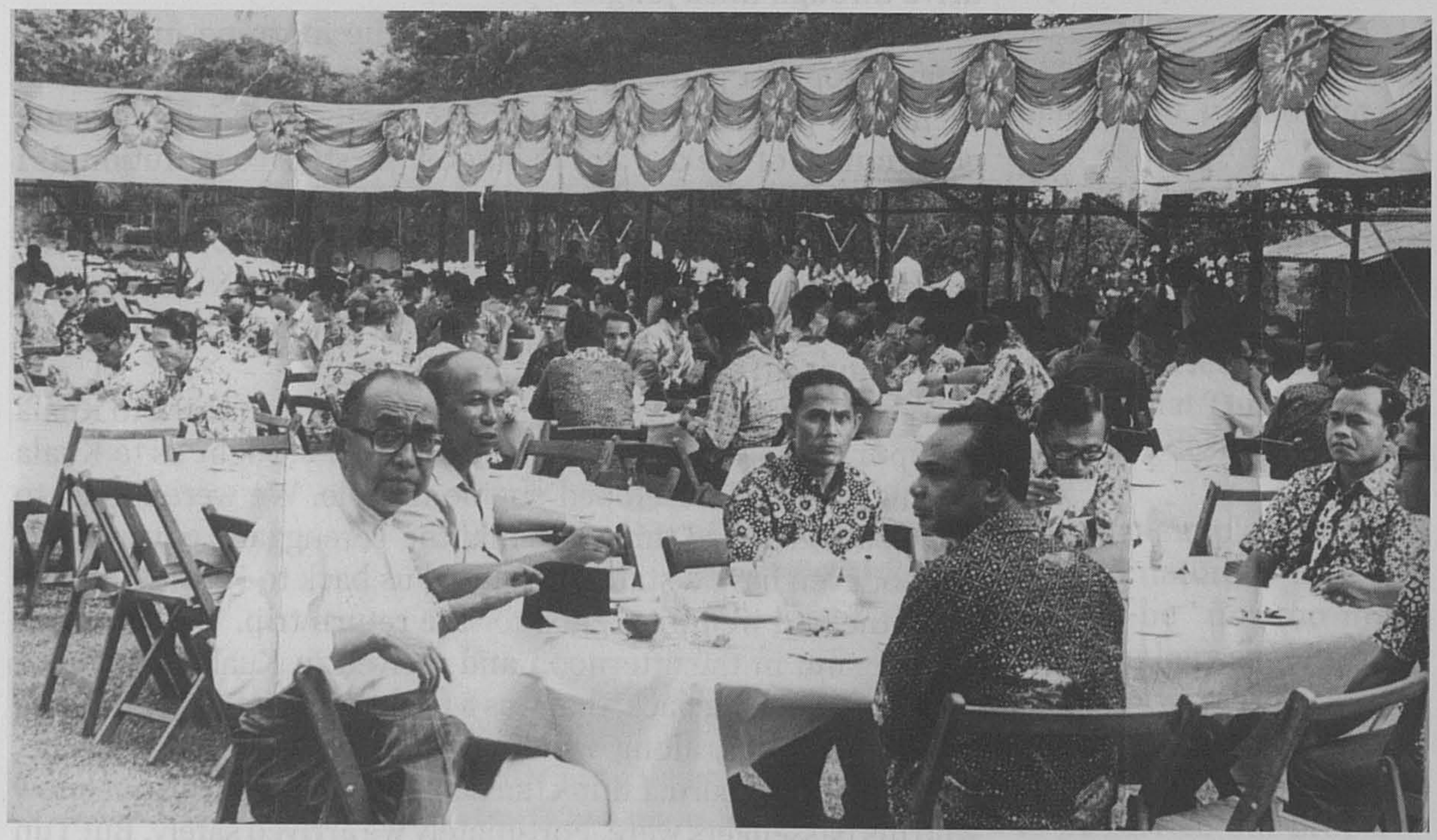
In those days, the trip to Terengganu was not an easy one. By land one would have to cross the many rivers by ferry. There were no bridges then. The roads were narrow and one had to drive through thick jungle.

We flew out of Kuala Lumpur in the morning in a small, single-propeller plane called the Viva. There were no big planes then. The purpose of our visit was to advise the Terengganu government of the day not to amend the state constitution. If I am not mistaken, Terengganu wanted to introduce amendments to provide for the post of Deputy *Menteri Besar*. Tun Razak advised them against it. Unfortunately the UMNO state government in Terengganu at the time did not heed his advice. It was facing stiff competition from PAS.

When our advice was rejected, we decided to return to Kuala Lumpur. Unfortunately the plane that had brought us to Kuala Terengganu had developed engine trouble. We were forced to drive back. The sad thing was that the Terengganu government did not even have a state car to send us back to Kuala Lumpur.

In the end we hired a taxi for the return trip. We left Kuala Terengganu in the afternoon and arrived in Kuala Lumpur at 3.00 a.m. Looking back, that was a frightening journey. Imagine driving at night, along winding roads through thick jungle, without a bodyguard. I think the taxi driver himself did not know who his passengers were. Fortunately we arrived safely. But Tun





Tun Razak addresses a Barisan Nasional assembly flanked by the Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Hussein Onn, to his left and (Tun) Abdul Ghafar Baba.

(Courtesy of Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd.)

Razak was prepared to go through such experiences without a murmur.

Then there was the time we visited a district in the Sarawak interior. If I am not mistaken, it was Rejang. There were no hotels there. We were forced to stay at the District Officer's home. And his house did not have enough beds. So we had to sleep together on one bed. But Tun Razak did not mind.

Before sleeping I said to Tun, "Tun, you sleep first, because I snore when I sleep." Tun said he too snored. We both laughed. So that night we competed to see who could snore louder, right up until morning.

I relate these two incidents out of so many others, to show how simple a person Tun Razak was. He did not pull rank or stand on ceremony. He could adapt himself to any situation. He was a leader and he was also one of the people.

He was generous and always remembered his friends' good deeds. He would always take care of his friends who had shared in his struggle. He would never neglect a friend who had once rendered his services to the nation. Those who were out of office would be given a suitable position.

Sometimes, he would ignore his own health. He did not talk about his illness. Even when he was sick, he would carry out his duties.

For that, the people loved him. People feared him but loved him. When his body arrived at the airport, tens of thousands of tearful people came to receive it. So was it at his house. Tens of thousands of people from all races came to pay their last respects, including youths who, with sorrowful faces, recited prayers for him.

When I think back to his final moments as a leader, I am filled with grief. He died in a foreign land. He kept his suffering a secret. He did not want to trouble others. He suffered alone and in silence. Even in pain, he carried on with his duties, working for the people and the nation day and night.

On the day he died, I had a premonition. I dreamt that an old man in a white robe came and told me that my friend was dead.

I woke up in shock. The old man's words preyed on my mind. I wondered who among my friends could have died. Then I remembered Tun Razak had gone to England for medical treatment. My heart pounded. I was worried and restless and could bear it no more. What had happened to Tun Razak?

Soon thereafter, I received a phone call from (Tun) Hussein Onn's house, asking me to come over. My heart beat even faster. My anxiety grew. When I arrived, Hussein Onn told me that Tun Razak was seriously ill in London. I was shocked and sad. Tun

Tun Razak (extreme left) hosting tea to mark the 25 anniversary of UMNO at Sri Taman. To his right is (Tun) Abdul Ghafar Baba.

(Courtesy of Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd.)

so far away in London, while we were here. Surely in moments like these, he would need his friends by his side but we could do nothing. We could only pray to Allah.

In our helplessness and worry, (Tan Sri) Ghazali Shafie turned up and informed us that Tun Razak was no more. I felt a tightening in my chest. Hussein Onn's eyes were red and I, speechless and weak, ran to the bathroom and cried my heart out. When I recovered, I emerged. But upon seeing the sorrowful faces around me, I went back in and cried some more.

I have never cried that much for anyone before, not even for family. I felt that I had lost my guide and mentor. He was a beloved leader. A leader hard to replace.

Spearheading the Administration

By Tun Ismail bin Mohamed Ali

THE late Tun Razak was a man who got things done. History will show him to be one of the most important personalities in the building of our nation. He was an excellent administrator and he had, as his prime concern, the political, economic and social development of the people, especially the Malays.

When I first met him, he was reading law in London. The Second World War had just ended and I was waiting to return home, having completed my studies. Our first Prime Minister, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman, and Tun Razak were in London then to resume their studies and to become Barristers-at-Law. It was a very tough exam, especially the final part. But Tun Razak was an outstanding student and passed without any difficulty.

The Malayan students used to meet regularly in London and Cambridge. We had formed the Malay Society of Great Britain. I was the secretary and he was a member. The members often met to discuss the independence of our country and its future, forwarding our comments to the Colonial Office.

At that time too, a group of Indonesian students in Holland shared the same sentiment of wanting independence from the Dutch for their country. They came over to London to meet us and to discuss the same issues.

Tun Razak, together with Tunku of course, were among the leading personalities in the fight against the Malayan Union and afterwards for independence. While Tunku was the man who brought the peoples of the country together, Tun Razak complemented his efforts by setting up a remarkable administrative system. He himself had joined the Malayan Civil Service upon his return to Malaya. He was therefore in an eminent position to help build it up because he knew that the strength of the country depended largely on sound administration, all the more so after the war.

Although the advancement of the Malays in particular was closest to his heart, Tun Razak, just like Tunku, got on well with all the races. When the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) was being formed with the late Datuk Tan Cheng Lock and the late Tun Tan Siew Sin, we worked together to draft the constitution. According citizenship status to the non-Malays of this country

Malaysia's Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Sultan Abdul Halim Muadzam Shah confers the letter of appointment making Tun Abdul Razak the country's second Prime Minister.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

was a very sensitive issue. It was a major exercise for all of us in our effort to create a united Malaysian nation.

After the 1970s, uniting the various races of Malaysia was difficult mainly because each race was linked to one economic function. The Malays were mostly fishermen and farmers, the Chinese worked in the business sector and the Indians on the plantations. The fundamental problem was to erase this identification of race by economic function. The challenge was to give the Malays especially, a share in the corporate sector.

A significant landmark in our history was the establishment of the Bumiputera Economic Congress. It was Tun Razak who convened the first meeting of the congress. He made me chairman of the economic working group and we proceeded to set up Bank Bumiputra, Majlis Amanah Rakyat and the training institutions.

The New Economic Policy (NEP) was developed and the man who played a key role in its formulation was the nation's second Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman.

On September 22, 1970, Tun Razak became the nation's second Prime Minister. Tun launched the NEP which was designed to eradicate poverty and to unite the various races of Malaysia. The NEP also aimed at upgrading the living standards of the people in the rural areas.

I remember Parliament voting for some monies then to finance initial Malay participation in the private sector and business. The government had shares in major companies and we sold these shares to individual Malays.

As an administrator, Tun had his own men who were very close to him. He worked cohesively with them and guided them to set up development bodies. He pushed for rural development and created land development schemes such as FELCRA and FELDA. He opened up lands in Pahang and Johore and drove people to settle on these schemes. He encouraged the Malays to venture into the private sector. He strove hard to upgrade their economic status and he succeeded, to a certain extent. These were among his achievements.

Though his disposition seemed serious, Tun Razak was actually a very friendly man. He enjoyed life. He liked gathering people at his house to discuss and suggest ideas on a wide range of subjects. He loved to talk of course. But at the same time, he was a very good listener.

The Intricacies of Domestic Politics

By Tan Sri Abdul Samad Idris

THE Fifth UMNO General Assembly held at the Istana Iskandariah in Kuala Kangsar, Perak, in August 1950 could be considered somewhat historic in shaping my personal political career. Not only did I propose, in the winding up speech, that the UMNO slogan *'Hidup Melayu'* (Long Live the Malays) be changed to *'Merdeka'* (Independence), but that night I met Tun Razak (then Dato' Razak) up close for the first time.

I was the only delegate from Kuala Pilah, which meant making new friends from outside my division. One of them was Datuk Yahya Mohd Seth, head of the UMNO Temerloh division, who told me that Dato' Razak had invited me to join them for dinner that night. Dato' Razak was then a leading figure in UMNO, being head of the UMNO Youth wing and one of the party vice-presidents. So I was flattered to get that unexpected invitation. As a district level leader I saw this as a golden opportunity to meet a national level leader like him, all the more so since he was a ranking government official who was held in high esteem.

It was at dinner that night that I first observed Dato' Razak up close. His habitual serious expression did not reflect a hard character. Once in a while he smiled and laughed—but never loudly. He made friends easily with everyone. At dinner, there were several other friends of his whom I did not know, probably from his student days at the Malay College Kuala Kangsar. That was my introduction to Dato' Razak.

In those days, when Dato' Onn was leading UMNO, government officers were allowed to be active in politics. Thus Dato' Razak was politically active even while he was State Secretary of Pahang. I would meet him at every UMNO general assembly, which was held biannually then, but we had not become close yet. That was to come later.

When Dato' Onn decided to leave UMNO, Dato' Razak was unswerving in continuing with UMNO. In fact, it was he together with Bahaman Shamsuddin who took the initiative to persuade Tunku Abdul Rahman to lead UMNO. At the Sixth UMNO General Assembly in 1951, held at the Majestic Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, both of them voiced their solid support for Tunku, even though Bahaman spoke only a few words. "I support Tunku because he is my friend," he said.

Before Tunku accepted the nomination, he himself proposed that Dato' Razak take over from Dato' Onn as UMNO President. Dato' Razak declined saying that he was too young to lead UMNO nation-wide, although he was ready to lead UMNO in Pahang. Finally, after several other delegates had also given their support, Tunku accepted the nomination. Tunku Abdul Rahman won the election for the post of UMNO President, defeating CM Yusof and Haji Ahmad Fuad Hassan, while Dato' Razak won uncontested the post of Deputy President. CM Yusof won the post of Vice-President.

As Deputy president, Dato' Razak would often travel the length and breadth of the country to restore unity within UMNO, which had been seriously damaged by Dato' Onn's departure. Whenever he visited Negeri Sembilan, I would be the one to arrange his schedule and to accompany him.

The *Menteri Besar* Dilemma

The first post-independence general elections in 1959 was the first time all 104 Members of Parliament, and the state assemblymen for all 11 states, were chosen entirely through the ballot box in accordance with parliamentary democracy. In Negeri Sembilan, the Alliance Party won 20 of the 24 state assembly seats. But despite this clear majority, there arose the problem of choosing a state leader to become the *Menteri Besar*.

Tun Razak often phoned (Datuk) Mohd Idris Matsil, the then UMNO chief for Negeri Sembilan and assemblyman for Pilah, and me to find out the names of the UMNO election candidates. At that time I did not realise what he had in mind. It was only after a full-blown crisis had erupted over the choice of *Menteri Besar* that I understood. In my discussions with Tun, he had asked if Dr Mohd Said Mohamad was contesting, as he had stood in the 1955 elections but had later resigned. Tun suggested that Dr Said's name be included once more.

After the 1959 elections, Tun Razak instructed that all the Negeri Sembilan UMNO leaders hold a meeting at the Seremban Rest House. There Tun Razak proposed that Dr Said of Linggi be made *Menteri Besar*, saying that Tunku Abdul Rahman and the Yang Dipertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan had endorsed his appointment.

But the state UMNO leaders opposed the idea. Dr Said was not an active member of UMNO and, in fact, had resigned his post as state assemblyman after serving only two years following the 1955 elections.

They were adamant in wanting Idris Matsil as *Menteri Besar*. In all the other states except Selangor, the UMNO state chief

had been appointed *Menteri Besar* and Negri Sembilan wanted the same practice to apply there. Tun Razak was forced to return to Kuala Lumpur with the issue unresolved.

Exactly one week later, Tunku himself met the state UMNO leaders in Seremban. He too proposed that Dr Said be made *Menteri Besar*. The Negeri Sembilan UMNO stood its ground, so the discussion with Tunku too came to a dead end.

The following Sunday, Tun Razak again called the state UMNO leadership together.

Prior to that Tun Razak had sought an audience with Tuanku Munawir who was acting Yang Dipertuan Besar while his father, Tuanku Abdul Rahman, was serving as the country's first Yang di-Pertuan Agong in the federal capital. At that meeting at the Istana Hinggap, Tun Razak took the middle path, proposing neither Dr Said nor Mohd Idris Matsil. Instead he put forward my name. I was then Negeri Sembilan UMNO Youth chief and the assemblyman for Seri Menanti, the constituency encompassing the royal town of the same name.

Tuanku Munawir himself told me sometime later that Tun Razak had suggested my name. He also admitted that he had rejected my candidature, despite it having been endorsed by Tunku and Tun Razak himself. The Yang di-Pertuan Agong too had given his blessings. Tuanku Munawir explained that I had been rejected because some members of the royal family were unhappy with me on personal grounds.

When Tun Razak met us for the second time, he informed us that the decision to appoint Dr Mohd Said had been agreed to by Tunku and Tuanku Munawir. This decision was final and came as a party directive, seeing that Negeri Sembilan had yet to form a government three weeks after the elections.

The state UMNO had to acquiesce. Before returning to Kuala Lumpur, Tun Razak called me aside and said, "Mad, don't bring up this matter again as it is based on consensus." I obediently accepted Tun Razak's decision to avoid a leadership crisis.

In calling me aside, he was trying to avert any prolonged debate over the issue. At all three meetings on this matter, I had been particularly vociferous in my criticism and as a reporter for the *Utusan Melayu*, had urged that the news item be given proper coverage.

Thus the Negeri Sembilan government was formed with Mohd Said as the first *Menteri Besar* appointed from the majority party after an election. At Tun Razak's directive, three state assemblymen from Kuala Pilah were appointed as executive councillors: Mohd Idris Matsil who remained as UMNO state chief, Ariffin Ali of Hulu Muar and I.

Reining in State Powers

That episode over the choice of *Menteri Besar* led Tunku and Tun Razak to realise that the state UMNO bodies had grown too strong since decision-making powers were now in their hands. Tun Razak therefore proposed to the UMNO Supreme Council that the party constitution be amended and reverted to the pre-1957 system of having state liaison committees, with nominations coming from divisions, and decisions being made at the party centre. This proposal was adopted at the next UMNO general assembly in 1960.

Because of my close relationship with Tun Razak, he appointed me to sit on the UMNO information subcommittee and the politics and elections subcommittee of which he was chairman. This subcommittee held its meetings every two or three months at Sri Taman, usually over dinner, with discussions continuing late into the night.

I became even closer to Tun Razak in the run-up to the 1964 elections. At that time, Tun Razak had already hinted to me that I would be taking over as *Menteri Besar*. But Dr Mohd Said wanted to remain for another term and his supporters, including representatives from the MCA and MIC, had met Tunku in Kuala Lumpur to ask that he be retained.

Because of the tense political atmosphere at the time due to the Indonesian Confrontation, UMNO was forced to contain its own domestic problems. So Tun Razak called me aside and said, "Mad, let Dr Said hold office for another term. You will be appointed Deputy *Menteri Besar* and in the 1969 elections, you can take over as *Menteri Besar*."

Micro-Managing Domestic Politics

As the 1969 elections drew near, the question of the appointment of a *Menteri Besar* again cropped up. Everyone knew that I was the deputy and normally the deputy fills the post should there be a change at the top, all the more so since Tun Razak had promised it to me. But then no one else knew about that–it was strictly between Tun Razak and me.

Three weeks before the list of election candidates was due to be released, Tun Razak asked (Datuk) Senu Abdul Rahman, the chairman of the UMNO Liaison Committee for Negeri Sembilan, and me to see him in his office. I knew that Senu backed my appointment as *Menteri Besar* and had previously discussed it with Tunku and Tun Razak.

But when we met that afternoon, Tun Razak asked me to agree to stand in a parliamentary constituency instead and to join the Cabinet as an assistant minister. At first Tun Razak found it hard to mouth the words which would renege his earlier promise in 1964. Finally he asked, "So what do you think?"

"Tun, never mind running for Parliament, what more becoming an assistant minister. Even if you said don't stand for elections at all, I would not oppose you and am prepared to accept it," I replied simply. Tun Razak smiled, as did Senu.

That settled, we then discussed who would be chosen as *Menteri Besar* as it had been decided that Dr Said would not be contesting again.

I named several veteran leaders: Idris Matsil, Mohd Ujang, Ariffin Ali and Taha Talib. Tun Razak was brief and firm in his response: "There are no seasoned leaders other than you."

"If not one of the old guards, then who, Tun?" I asked.

"Look for new blood," he said. "Come back to see me next week. Meanwhile, try and think of fresh names who would meet our requirements." Tun Razak had obviously made up his mind.

By the following week, I had come up with two names: Tunku Mohamad bin Tunku Besar Burhanuddin and Mohd Din bin Ali, the former Municipal Secretary.

"What about Mansur Othman?" countered Tun Razak. Mansur was then the MARA Director of Education, appointed by Tun Razak himself.

Giving kampung folk a hand hauling fish at a meet the people session in Kemendor, Malacca. (1966)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

"If Tun already has faith in him I have no objections," I replied.

"In that case, Mansur will stand in Kuala Pilah as he is from Pilah. Idris Matsil will stand in your constituency, Seri Menanti, as he is from Tanjung Ipoh himself," said Tun. Tun Razak knew us all well. He knew all the state assemblymen and the constituencies we represented in Negeri Sembilan, so he could immediately suggest where each person should stand.

"I think Pilah poses a slight problem as there are many Chinese voters," I countered. "Based on the previous election results, many Chinese do not support the Alliance. If Mansur loses, who will be *Menteri Besar*?"

"So what do you propose?" he interjected.

"I suggest Idris Matsil for Pilah; it was his seat in 1959," I replied. "Anyway, he lives in Kuala Pilah and many of his acquaintances are Chinese. Mansur should stand in Seri Menanti, my present seat. I feel he has a good chance of winning there. I will take responsibility for everything," I assured him.

"If you agree, that's fine," responded Tun, sealing the matter. "So Idris Matsil for Pilah and Mansur in Seri Menanti. I will tell Mansur myself." Senu just smiled and nodded.

I asked Tun for the rest of the candidates and he passed me a confidential list. He also appointed me Director of Elections for Negeri Sembilan.

No stranger to rural life, Tun Razak taps rubber at Bukit Kuan, Jasin, Malacca. (1968)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

On my way back to Seremban, my head was swimming, wondering how to tell my supporters of the outcome of this meeting. Nevertheless, I managed.

The next day I received a phone call from Mansur asking to meet me. I invited him to my house the following evening. I had also invited all the UMNO Youth and Women's wing committee members from the Seri Menanti constituency, numbering about a hundred in all. I told them about Tun Razak's decision that I should run for Parliament, thereby disqualifying me from becoming *Menteri Besar*. Not one agreed but all accepted the decision made by the top leadership. Many, however, were so disappointed they did not even want to *salam* me on the way out.

Hosting Johnson

Another occasion worthy of note was the visit of US President Lyndon Baines Johnson in 1966. Arrangements had been made for Johnson to visit the FELDA scheme at Labu Jaya, Negeri Sembilan.

Two days before the visit, Tun Razak briefed me on the necessary preparations for receiving a President of a large and developed country. I was then acting *Menteri Besar*.

Preparations were in place, particularly from the security aspect, even though there was nothing to fear. The reception he was to receive would portray the land scheme as a successful government effort at providing economic development for the people, unparalleled in any other newly independent nation.

Tun Razak wanted to see the arrangements himself, and to ensure that the officers responsible were doing their jobs properly. Tun Razak instructed us on the correct form of address and manner of showing a visiting president round a place that would certainly be alien to him.

While pausing for refreshments, it occurred to Tun Razak that we should rename the land scheme after Johnson to commemorate the presidential visit. By a happy coincidence, the name Labu Jaya matched the President's initials. All of us applauded the suggestion.

Two days later, on October 30, 1966, Tun Razak and Johnson arrived by helicopter, the latter sporting a bush jacket like his host and carrying a small, battery-operated fan which he held close to his face. At the close of the tour, the land scheme was renamed Kampung LBJ, and so is it known to this day.

Last Parliamentary Session

The year 1975 marked the end of Tun Razak's era. His health had obviously deteriorated but he seemed not to care and

continued to attend parliamentary sittings. We Members of Parliament had discussed this among ourselves, especially since he had not taken any leave to rest. At the last session for 1975, he was seen climbing the Parliament steps clutching his files, a frail, hunched figure. He had grown thin and his face was pale. He tried to hide it but all of us could see the change in his physical well-being.

As soon as question time was over at 3.30 p.m. that day, I signalled to a few friends to adjourn as usual to the canteen at the back. We filled two tables. Among ourselves, we decided that whenever any Member of Parliament got up to speak, he should address his speech to Tun Razak and end with a request that he should go on long leave to rest.

From that time on, every backbencher who spoke, inserted that plea to Tun Razak. He must have taken note because he smiled and a few days after Parliament was adjourned, he announced his plans to take long leave and to go to London for a medical check-up and some rest.

A few days later he was admitted to the Specialist Hospital in London. His condition had grown more serious and only then did we know that he was suffering from leukaemia. Many of us probably suspected that recovery would be difficult—his illness was at the terminal stage but we prayed for his recovery and safe return.

But as we know, his time had come. We grieved upon hearing of his passing, at the young age of 53, while his services were still so badly needed.

On the night he died, I had contacted several friends when the television began airing the recitation of verses from the Quran. At the time, the news of his death had not been broadcast yet but the grapevine was working overtime. Soon thereafter, Datuk Hussein Onn, then the deputy Prime Minister, appeared on screen and made the formal announcement, his own grief written all over his face.

Tun Razak was buried in the Heroes' Mausoleum on the grounds of the National Mosque, next to his old friend and colleague, Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman. Tun Razak was in Canada when Tun Ismail died and Tun Razak had flown back immediately to supervise the funeral arrangements, insisting that Tun Ismail be given a hero's burial. Now it was his turn.

One final note I must include here: to the best of my knowledge, Tun Razak died without leaving much wealth. If he had wanted anything, thousands of acres of timber land in Pahang, for instance, would any *Menteri Besar* or executive councillor have denied him this? But Tun Razak served in politics and government not for his personal gain but in the interests of the people and nation. In this, he should be an example to us all.

No one suspected then that this, his 53 birthday, was to be his last. (1975)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

First Impressions, Lasting Trust

By Tan Sri Gen. (R) Benny Moerdani

OUR first meeting was brief, only 20 minutes. But in that short time, Tun Razak made a deep impression on me. Here was a statesman of a nation in confrontation with my own country. I felt sympathy towards him. Tun Razak had an attractive character. His was a calm face, projecting an open attitude ready to hear what others had to say. The impression from that first meeting was vital, because that in itself was one of the goals for the start of conciliatory efforts to resolve the confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia.

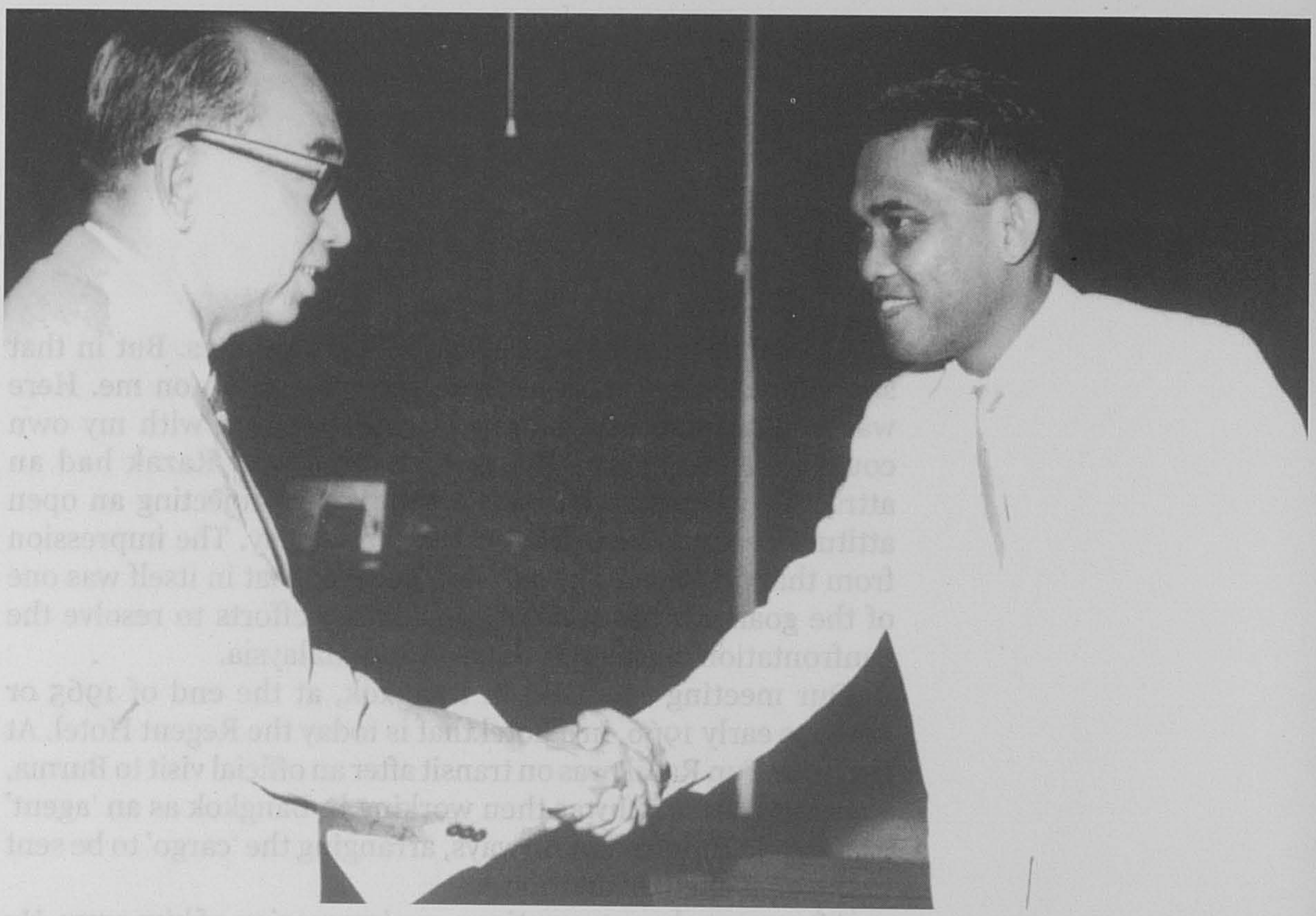
Our meeting was held in Bangkok, at the end of 1965 or perhaps early 1966, in a hotel that is today the Regent Hotel. At that time Tun Razak was on transit after an official visit to Burma, today's Myanmar. I was then working in Bangkok as an 'agent' for Garuda Indonesian Airways, arranging the 'cargo' to be sent to the area of confrontation.

After several more meetings, my impression of him grew. He was gentle and soft-spoken, with refined manners. I can attest to the truth of what others described as his firmness, especially in matters relating to Indonesian-Malaysian relations. Tun Razak radiated authority, a statesman who stood out assured and clear in facing national issues.

In retrospect our positions at that meeting could be described as a "positive irony". Its outcome as well as long-term effects obviously created peace in this region, where confrontation between two peoples and nations eventually ended and personal friendships could later be forged.

After working in Bangkok and becoming the primary contact with Tun Razak, I was later made liaison officer and transferred to Kuala Lumpur. Obviously my work laid the foundations for the establishment of an Indonesian embassy after the end of Confrontation. My relations with Tun Razak became even closer. Thus my observations of him grew deeper, reaffirming and strengthening my first impressions.

I could delve deeper into Tun Razak's views and attitude towards the Confrontation. He was very keen to resolve the Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation speedily and with finality. He himself was conscientious in furthering the reconciliation efforts, and he was determined to resolve the Confrontation



The hand of friendship—Indonesian liaison officer to Malaysia, Colonel Benny Moerdani, donates 50 piculs of coffee to the National Disaster Relief Fund, Kuala Lumpur. (1967)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

directly between the two parties. He rejected efforts by third parties to get involved, or to act as peace brokers. One thing that remains clearly in my mind was his frequent insistence that each step in the peace efforts should first get the agreement of Pak Harto (President Suharto), as should any progress also be reported to Pak Harto.

With regard to Malaysian-Indonesian relations, Tun Razak's sincerity and single-mindedness in building the bonds of friendship between the two nations and people were clearly visible. His genuine efforts quickly became a model to be followed through by the succeeding generation. I think it would not be too much to say that because there was Pak Harto in Indonesia and Tun Razak in Malaysia, an atmosphere of peace and friendship grew in our region. The creation of such an atmosphere went a long way towards the formation of ASEAN with its unique and friendly spirit.

My personal friendship with him held firm. Even though I had been transferred to Korea and then in 1974 was posted back to Jakarta, our relationship was built on strong foundations. Officially we met as government representatives, but in executing our duties our close personal ties served as a background, smoothing our dealings with each other. I feel this bond truly helped us in carrying out our various duties. I remember this with gratitude and give silent thanks for his sympathetic attitude during his lifetime.

When I heard the sad news that Tun Razak had left us forever, I felt shock and deep sorrow as I had never heard of any symptoms of his illness. We can plan, we can hope but it is God who is omnipotent. As the saying goes, "An elephant dies leaving its tusks, a tiger dies leaving its stripes." And I might add here, "A noble man dies leaving his good name."

The way to peace—Deputy Prime Minister and concurrently Foreign Minister, Tun Razak, signing the peace agreement with his counterpart, (Tun) Adam Malik, at the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, Jakarta. (1966)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Peace achieved—Tun Razak and an animated (Tun) Adam Malik discuss the end of Konfrontasi, *while President Sukarno (centre), a one-time advocate of Konfrontasi, maintains a diplomatic silence.*

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

With an Ear to the Women

By Tan Sri Dato' Aishah Ghani bt Abdul Ghani

With an Eye to the Victory

By Ian Strachan, Pacific Chronicle Sports Columnist

Peace achieved—Tom Kozak and an unnamed (I say) Aden Hoyt discuss the use of kyoketsus, while President Sakuma (centre), a one-time advocate of Konfrontasi, maintains a diplomatic silence.

(Courtesy of Hangzou Sun Evening News)

I first came to know Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussein in 1952, when I represented the Kaum Ibu UMNO Selangor movement at the party general assembly in Penang. About 200 delegates were present. At that time UMNO Penang was considered something of a force to be reckoned with for having its own party headquarters.

At the congress, I put forward a proposal from the Kaum Ibu Selangor, requesting the assembly to authorise the UMNO women's movement to select and field its own candidates in any forthcoming general elections. The assembly fiercely opposed this proposal, as they felt that the Kaum Ibu was part of UMNO and the selection of any candidate, women included, should be made by the main party. I can still recall how vociferously the members spoke up. Several members of the UMNO Supreme Council joined in the debate and suggested that my proposal be amended with the addition of the proviso "with the concurrence of the UMNO Supreme Council".

At that time, Khatijah Sidek was the newly elected Chairperson of the Kaum Ibu, succeeding Ibu Zain Sulaiman. Kaum Ibu Selangor had made the proposal, at Khatijah's directive, at a special meeting in Kuala Lumpur and had asked me to bring it up before the party in Penang. She did not agree to the suggested amendment and immediately signalled me to reject it.

After seeing the widespread dissent and the ensuing chaos, I took matters into my own hands and ignored Khatijah Sidek's signals.

As a delegate, it was incumbent upon me to weigh whether or not to accept any amendments. In fact, right from the start, I knew that such a proposal would not be adopted as it contravened the party constitution, and not because the party would not field women candidates. Therefore in winding up my speech, I unhesitatingly conceded that "I will lose but as UMNO would win, I accept the amendments suggested." The assembly broke out in thunderous applause as I had diffused a tense situation.

Later, both Tun Razak and Tun Dr Ismail came to meet me and conveyed their appreciation for having saved UMNO from internal dissent. Tun Razak then assured me that UMNO would

The first UMNO Supreme Council meeting after Tun Dr Ismail's untimely passing. Tan Sri Aishah Ghani is the new Wanita UMNO chief. (1973)

(Courtesy of Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd.)

give women the chance to stand in elections in appropriate constituencies.

I had more opportunities to meet Tun from 1956 onwards, when the team negotiating Malaya's independence came several times to London where I was furthering my studies. The Malay Society of Great Britain had organised several meetings and conventions for the Malay students in the United Kingdom, and this was one forum where the top national leaders of the day could update us on the progress achieved in their negotiations with the British government.

On a personal note, I will forever remember Tun's concern for me, as I was struggling to study at my own expense. During one visit to London, he mentioned that he would try to obtain a scholarship for me. I realised that scholarships were very difficult to come by in those days—there were so few of them and moreover, I had difficulty fulfilling the criteria set out.

Women at the Polls

Upon my return in 1959, I waited eagerly for the country's first parliamentary elections. I wanted to see whether women would really be given the chance to contest, at either federal or state level, as Tun had promised earlier. Prior to that, there had been an election in 1955 to choose representatives to the Federal Legislative Assembly. The late Datin Paduka Halimaton Abdul Majid had been successful in the Kuala Kubu constituency. Women had also won in municipal council elections: Hajah Enchom Zainuddin, for instance, had won in Sentul.

In the 1959 parliamentary elections, three women ran for Parliament and 10 more at state level. Unfortunately, only five won. To me, however, the participation of women in itself proved that UMNO and Tun, who headed the election machinery at the time, had given women the promised chance, no matter if many of them had lost, especially in the east coast.

The performance of women candidates in the 1959, 1964 and 1969 elections, even if somewhat discouraging, did not at all affect Tun's faith in women. A greater challenge came when Tun himself became Prime Minister prior to the 1974 elections. Women were no longer limited to three parliamentary seats; their allocation was raised to five. Similar increases were made at state level.

Senator (Tan Sri) Aishah Ghani (right) helps Tun Rahah pack Hari Raya cookies for the Malaysian soldiers serving in the jungles of Sabah and Sarawak.

(Courtesy of Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd.)

My position as UMNO Supreme Council member and Vice-Chairperson of the UMNO Women's Movement since 1960 enabled me to bring up various women's issues more easily to Tun's attention. I still remember Tun once chastised me in jest for bringing up the problem of broken homes and various social injustices too frequently. At one point, he told me to raise these

matters before Tuanku (the Yang di-Pertuan Agong) for speedier action.

Nevertheless, by his reaction, I believed that Tun would give it his serious attention, especially the ill treatment and injustice faced by most Muslim women after divorce. Their children were neglected and unmanageable because the husbands no longer provided child support. A great number sought shelter at my house while trying to arrange alternative accommodation or to return to their kampungs.

Muslim Family Law

I still remember the poor state of the Syariah Courts at the time, not just in terms of their physical condition but more so the inadequate staff to handle the cases before them. The result was that the prosecution and the judge were often one and the same person. The outcome often created hardships for the wife, while the husband got away scot-free from burden and responsibility.

What was even more unfortunate, and complicated things then was society's attitude, including that of the Syariah Court itself, which seemingly implied that in questions of divorce, it was the women who should take the blame for opposing or being disloyal to their husbands. No wonder then that year after year, the UMNO Women's Movement debated and passed resolutions urging the government to promulgate specific Muslim family laws which would extend beyond just the one or two chapters in the Muslim Enactment of 1951, adopted by each state.

When I was made head of the UMNO Women's Movement in 1972, we submitted a special memorandum to Tun Razak urging the enactment of a Muslim Family Law in the interest of controlling to some degree the unjust practices in Muslim society. At that time, I had brought a delegation from the UMNO Women's Movement to each state, including Sabah and Sarawak, to meet the respective state religious committees, including the various *mufti* and *kadi*.

In 1973, thanks to our collective demands and efforts, Tun appointed two special committees to develop the Muslim Family Law bill. One committee was to tighten the laws regarding polygamy and divorce, chaired by the late Datuk Wan Kadir Ismail, and the other committee was to study and improve the administration of the Syariah Courts, chaired by the late Tun Syed Nasir Ismail. The Islamic Centre served as the secretariat for both committees. I thank God that a majority of the committee members appointed to both panels were progressive Muslim scholars.

Tun saw how relentless and highly motivated the UMNO Women's Movement was in championing the creation of an all-

encompassing and exhaustive Muslim Family Law, so that the Syariah Courts could then ensure social justice to Muslims in every state. Nevertheless, its acceptance and implementation in each state was a tortuous process taking a long time—what more the improvement and streamlining of the administration of the Syariah Courts.

In fact, at one point, the two committees were almost emasculated. This was because matters relating to Islam and Malay custom came under the purview of state authorities, whose views and opinions differed by state.

Nevertheless, the Islamic leaders respected Tun and in the end, the Islamic Centre managed to bring the matter up before the Conference of Rulers, which reviews the conclusions of the Fatwa Committee. The Conference of Rulers then decided that the matter deserved more detailed study and referred it to the Sultan of Terengganu and the relevant state officers, who at the time were studying possible amendments to the Terengganu administrative laws in accordance with *syarak* rulings.

At a meeting chaired by the then Sultan of Terengganu, DYMM Tengku Ismail Nasiruddin Shah, on May 17 and 18, 1975 at the Istana Maziah, Kuala Terengganu, the Sultan agreed that the scope of the law be extended to cover all aspects of Muslim family law. He also agreed to the proposal from the committee regarding polygamy that contravened Islamic teachings.

Even then there were more delays. I again appealed to Tun to hold a meeting between the Muslim Family Law committee and the Religious Councils and the Islamic Affairs Department of each state. It was difficult to break through the barriers of some of the State Religious Councils since some groups were still opposed to aspects of the proposed law.

Eventually, our perseverance paid off. Today, more than 25 years later, the Muslim community can see that every state has a Muslim Family Law based on the federal law initially promulgated by the Prime Minister's Department. And even though the implementation of the Muslim Family Law is still ambiguous today, and the status of the Syariah Courts in many states still requires upgrading and improvement, the existence of the law in itself was a result of Tun's support.

Women Power

I also recall an incident in early 1975 when Sri Taman was flooded by women leaders from various organisations and women's groups. While our presence at Sri Taman was not by invitation, neither were we stopped by the security guards.

We came with one goal: to declare our strongest opposition to a rumoured marriage between a leading national figure and a young beauty whom he wanted to take as a second wife. I was not sure whether or not Tun had been briefed on the matter at hand. After a while, Tun emerged and met us in his living-room. My colleagues had already asked me to be their spokesperson in my capacity as a minister and Wanita UMNO Chairperson. I told myself to be brave in facing such a situation, as there was every possibility that Tun would be annoyed with us for touching on such a sensitive subject. In fact, Tun was not angry and jokingly told us not to listen to rumours.

I gathered my courage and drew from my handbag a card from the young lady inviting her friend to the planned wedding reception. I showed the invitation card to Tun as proof of our claims. My colleagues from the other women's groups also spoke up and asked that the wedding be postponed, if it could not be cancelled. Even then, Tun showed no anger. Conversely, smiling widely and finally laughing, he asked us to have some refreshments and then to take our leave.

From the start, I had said that Tun, as a caring national leader, did not belittle any manner of problem brought up by women. I believe that the opposition voiced by the women leaders at Sri Taman that day was given his full attention and a few months later, the grapevine whispered that the intended marriage was no longer an issue.

A Fresh Image

I should also record here how the name Kaum Ibu UMNO was changed to Wanita UMNO. In fact, UMNO's women members had asked for the name change since 1947. But Tunku Abdul Rahman, as President of UMNO, had stood firm and disagreed to the name change for sentimental reasons. He treasured the role of the Kaum Ibu and its contribution to UMNO during the opposition to the Malayan Union, right up until the formation of UMNO in 1946.

I first sought out Tun Razak's own stand on the proposed name change. Once I knew that he himself supported it, at a special UMNO general assembly on May 8 and 9, 1971 convened to discuss amendments to the UMNO constitution, the Kaum Ibu UMNO succeeded in again putting forward its resolution to change its name to Wanita UMNO. After the resolution was tabled and discussed, it was immediately put to a vote. I felt most relieved as the then Kaum Ibu Chairperson, Tan Sri Fatimah Hashim, Tun Razak and even Tunku Abdul Rahman himself, now voted in favour of the name change.

The vote saw 141 ayes and 99 nays. That day saw the end of 25 years of struggle. And with it, ended too the name Kaum Ibu UMNO, which until today remains as Wanita UMNO. I whole-heartedly believe that such resolutions were successfully passed by the UMNO general assembly only with Tun Razak's blessings, because he truly understood and was conscientious about the problems brought forward by women.

Sighting of the New Moon

I still remember how he admonished me every time I came to his office solely to convey some heart-rending incident largely ignored by others. One such involved an eight year-old girl from Kampung Cheras Baru who was lying in the Kuala Lumpur General Hospital with a bleeding head, caused by severe beating by her stepmother—all because the child had drunk several bottles of Coca-Cola reserved for the Hari Raya Puasa celebrations. Apparently, her stepmother had bought the drinks and cakes for the festival which was expected to fall on the following day. But when it was broadcast thats it would be delayed by

Face to face with the women of Sarawak. (1966)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

another day as no new moon had been sighted, the child became the victim of the stepmother's ire for spoiling her *Hari Raya* preparations.

I explained to him that the question of setting the beginning of the Ramadan and celebrating the Aidil Fitri at the end, was no small matter. They had to be reconciled as they affected the lives of all Muslims. The religious experts had to find a way of determining the two dates without causing so much confusion to the ordinary people. My view was apparently well received because in the succeeding years, these two dates became far more predictable.

Ramadan Working Hours

I also plucked up the courage to voice my opposition to the working hours imposed during Ramadan, which even since Tunku Abdul Rahman's time as Prime Minister, had been shortened to 1.30 p.m. I asked Tun to study this flexibility in hours accorded to all government servants, including non-Muslims, given that the public was greatly inconvenienced when government offices closed so early.

I felt that all civil servants, including the women staff, should work as usual during Ramadan because nothing was to be gained by going home early. On the other hand, those who fasted should instead strengthen their resolve, self-discipline and faith in Allah. In subsequent years, the government changed its ruling on this matter and all government staff worked normal hours even during the fasting month.

This was one of Tun's unique characteristics. Despite his irritation, he still cared. On the surface, it appeared as if he did not like to hear about the problems faced by women, as they seemed trivial and boring but by his actions, Tun proved that he was genuinely sympathetic.

Facing the *Kiblat*

Apart from the social injustice faced by women, I also brought up the need to indicate the direction of the *kiblat* in Malaysian hotels. The religious bureau of Wanita UMNO had in 1974 decided that the government should require, as a policy, that every hotel room in the country show the direction of the *kiblat* by placing an arrow on the ceiling. When this proposal was brought up at an UMNO Supreme Council meeting, many of the members laughed; maybe they thought it funny. Fortunately, Tun did not belittle the proposal. Not long thereafter, every hotel of all grades had a *kiblat* directional sign, either pasted on the ceiling or in the dresser drawers.

Equal Pay

This account would not be complete if I did not also mention the demand for equal wages for women in the civil service. In fact, the demands to wipe out all manner of discrimination against women began as far back as 1946, when voices were already heard opposing the unfair practices towards married women staff.

This was obvious in the Benham committee report of 1950, which clearly set out lower wages for women in all categories in the government service. In 1961, a ruling was issued for women teachers. They could teach in fully aided government schools and could not be terminated without cause, and they could be promoted and be eligible for pensions. But when a woman teacher married, she was required to quit her post and thereafter would be rehired for the same post–but this time on a temporary basis, i.e. without a pension because she was already married. This was a major sore point which festered year by year among teachers and women leaders, myself included.

The government's sources of funding at that time depended largely on the sale of primary commodities, causing the late Tun Tan Siew Sin, the then Minister of Finance, to clearly state that he would not agree to pay the same wages to women teachers even though others might condone it. In the end, when facing the precarious 1969 elections, Tun Razak himself announced in Kuala Krai, Kelantan, that the Alliance government had agreed to implement the same pay scale for women as for men in the public service beginning August 1969.

For me personally, Tun will always be remembered as a highly respected and beloved national leader. He had accepted me as the new Wanita UMNO chief on June 23, 1972. He had also appointed me as a minister in his Cabinet not long thereafter. These two important posts were the peak of political achievement for a woman like me. I thank him and am grateful to God that so many matters that I brought to his attention bore fruit.

He gave 25 years of his life in service to the nation. My grief at his passing knew no bounds. May Allah forgive him and bless his soul.

Enticing Sarawak

By Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ong Kee Hui

I first met the late Tun Abdul Razak on August 31, 1957—Independence day of the Federation of Malaya. I came to know him better after the formation of Malaysia—as an MP in the second Malaysian Parliament—on the opposition benches with Lee Kuan Yew and others in the Malaysian Malaysia movement until the secession of Singapore in August 1965.

My party, the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), was struggling for survival up to the general elections in 1969. Before that, an electoral pact of opposition parties had been forged among the Gerakan (merger of the Socialist Front and the United Democratic Party), the DAP (Democratic Action Party) and PAS (Parti Islam), with the SUPP assuming the role of moderator in all negotiations.

The 1969 elections were a definite setback for the Alliance coalition which, in effect, had lost its two-thirds majority in Parliament. Close scrutiny showed that the Alliance's component parties had lost almost directly to their racial counterparts in the opposition.

The Alliance losses were even more devastating in the state elections. It lost control of Kelantan to PAS, which was held by that party, although it won back Terengganu. The Alliance lost control of Penang to Gerakan; all the MCA and MIC candidates lost and only UMNO retained four seats. In Perak, the Alliance won a total of 19 seats against a total of 21 seats won by the opposition parties (PPP 12 seats, DAP six seats, Gerakan two seats and PAS one seat).

Selangor was a problem for the Alliance as it won a total of 14 seats (UMNO 12, MCA one and MIC one) compared with a total of 13 seats won by the opposition (DAP nine and Gerakan four). Although the Alliance had a majority of one seat, there was a constant demand by the DAP Secretary-General on the Selangor *Menteri Besar* to resign and call for fresh polls.

The opposition parties were also surprised and elated by their unexpected success. The late Tan Sri Dr Tan Chee Khoon, regarded as leader of the opposition, applied for police permission to hold a victory procession to thank voters for their support. The permit was granted on condition that it took a certain route, starting from the Gerakan headquarters on Monday, May 12, 1969. The time was moved from 4.30 p.m. to

an hour later to avoid the possibility of a traffic jam due to office workers going home. It was to end at 7.00 p.m.

The DAP also wanted to have a victory procession the next day but decided to join Dr Tan's procession. An estimated 500 participants were expected but this swelled to a large and unprecedented one that spilled over into Jalan Campbell and Jalan Hale on the fringe of Kampung Baru, where more than 3000 Malays lived, as did the Selangor *Menteri Besar*, Datuk Harun Idris. Some of the crowd became rude and rowdy, hurling insults at any Malay they met. This caused alarm, fear and then anger among the Malays, especially when some called out loudly to the *Menteri Besar* to resign as the Malays had lost and the Chinese were taking over the government. The supporters of two of Dr Tan Chee Khoon's colleagues took advantage of the situation and carried out separate processions in other areas of Kuala Lumpur without police permission.

Datuk Harun Idris's UMNO supporters decided to hold their own procession the following afternoon. Datuk Harun had to agree and the police could not deny them permission. Tunku Abdul Rahman, who was at home in Kedah and worried by the rowdy acts caused by the earlier march, hastily returned to Kuala Lumpur as he foresaw the possibility of trouble. He went directly

to the police headquarters at Jalan Bandar. But it was too late to withdraw the permit and the Tunku could only pray for the best.

As it turned out the UMNO-sponsored procession turned into the tragic race riots between Malays and Chinese on the evening of May 13. It cost our young, independent and otherwise happy country 184 lives, with 356 wounded, 733 cases of arson and 211 vehicles destroyed or damaged.

This was a blood-bath. It was a tragedy that could have been avoided if our political leaders were more enlightened then and blessed with foresight.

The police were unable to cope with the sudden outbreak of violence. The security forces had to be called up to restore law and order. On the Prime Minister's advice, a state of emergency was proclaimed throughout the country on May 20, 1969 by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Tunku Abdul Rahman recommended the appointment of his Deputy Prime Minister and defence minister, Tun Abdul Razak, as Director of Operations. Tunku described Razak as "a nationalist and a patriot, and a person who is both dedicated and fair minded". Tunku had known Abdul Razak as a friend and colleague since their student days in London.

The National Operations Council (NOC), modelled on an organisation with a similar name which operated during the Emergency in Malaya from 1948 to 1960, was created to co-ordinate the work of the army and police. Nevertheless, Tun was conferred almost absolute powers and emerged as the focal point of decision-making in government.

The NOC under Tun was able to quickly restore the people's confidence and peace prevailed except for a few outbreaks of violence here and there, and a few skirmishes along the Thai border by communist subversives.

Leaders of all political parties in Sarawak, except Parti Bumiputera, demanded that the federal government resume and complete the state and parliamentary elections that had been interrupted by the declaration of emergency. Those who were for the resumption of elections were the Parti Pesaka Sarawak and the Sarawak Chinese Association (SCA) in the Sarawak Alliance, the Sarawak National Party (SNAP) and the SUPP. The unrest that followed the 1969 elections had not occurred in Sarawak and it was unnecessary to suspend the elections.

Tun Razak and Toh Puan Rahah (right) welcoming guests to their Hari Raya open house at Sri Taman. (1974)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Both the Tunku and Tun, in the light of the election results in the peninsula, were uncertain of the outcome of the Sabah and Sarawak elections. Only Tun Dr Ismail was responsive and prepared to resume the elections under certain specified considerations to which he had given serious thought. He felt

that only by banning the opposition from raising issues sensitive to the Malays such as their special rights and position, the national language, religion, and the position of the sultans, would it be safe to resume polling. This would require imposing restraints by emergency laws by the NOC and later by constitutional amendments if the Alliance could regain a two-thirds majority.

In the meantime, a split had begun in UMNO itself with one faction in favour of maintaining the emergency led by racialist Malays and what was known as 'ultras' against the UMNO leadership under Tunku Abdul Rahman. The other faction comprised the Tunku's moderate supporters, who declared in February 1970 that polling in Sabah and Sarawak would be resumed in two months in response to a petition from Pesaka, SNAP and SUPP.

Tunku Abdul Rahman himself visited those peninsular states that were opposed to him and won over many. Much was owing to the firm action of Tun who, as NOC Director, was expected by the 'ultras' to lead a political *coup d'etat* against the Tunku. But this did not transpire. In fact, he declared his support for the Tunku. This played a decisive role in the restoration of parliamentary democracy in Malaysia when fresh elections were held from June 6–27 in Sabah and July 6–24 in Sarawak.

The Alliance headquarters sent a high-powered team to Kuching to advise the Sarawak Alliance and to make its own independent assessment of the prospects at the polls. When the team paid me a courtesy call at my house in Kuching, I told them that any federal government intervention and taking sides in the constitutional crisis over Stephen Kalong Ningkan did not go down well with the people of Sarawak. It turned the ground politically sour against parties in the Alliance and strengthened SNAP which was now in the opposition. They agreed with my assessment and I advised them to tell their leaders accordingly.

The top UMNO leaders were not optimistic as they expected the loss of a few parliamentary seats in Sabah and a possible defeat in Sarawak. Both SNAP, under Stephen Kalong Ningkan who emerged a hero to the Ibans following his removal as Sarawak Chief Minister in a constitutional crisis in 1966, and SUPP, which had demonstrated its hold on the Sarawak Chinese, were expected to perform even better than before.

Meanwhile, Tun Razak who was in Kuching in the run-up to polling, proposed changing SUPP's anti-Malaysia stand and wooing it into the state government. He obviously had been advised of SUPP's possible victory at state level. Tun assured party leaders that SUPP's participation would be good for Sarawak's future. Tun, accompanied by Senu Abdul Rahman,

dropped in at my house and asked me to see him immediately after polling day with SUPP's reaction to his proposal.

On July 4, the final day of campaiging in Kuching, I was surprised to see Tun Razak accompanying my rival at state level, actively wooing votes for him. In view of our conversation for co-operation with the Alliance, Tun's last minute, personal campaign against me caught me off guard. I could not help feeling hurt at what I considered his insincerity and what I wrongly saw as 'double dealing'. Consequently, I lost the state seat but retained my seat in Parliament.

The Sabah and Sarawak election results were a heartening surprise to the Alliance and boosted its sagging morale. It speeded the ultimate return of democracy. The United Sabah National Organisation (USNO) and the Sabah Chinese Association (SCA) alliance won all the 16 parliamentary seats.

In Sarawak, the Alliance partners managed to win 10 out of the 24 parliamentary seats: five won by Parti Bumiputera, three by Pesaka and two by SCA. The rest of the 14 seats went to the opposition (SUPP five seats and SNAP nine seats).

The Alliance also created an impact by winning a total of 24 seats out of the 48 in Council Negeri (the State Legislature), with Parti Bumiputera winning 12 seats, Pesaka nine seats and SCA three seats. Balloting in an up-country seat was postponed, and the result of this seat (Bengoh) could create a stalemate if it went to the opposition.

It was, however, expected that with 24 seats the Alliance was assured of a coalition government comprising Parti Bumiputera, Pesaka and SCA. Parti Bumiputera nominated Abdul Rahman Ya'akub, who was federal Minister of Education in the previous Cabinet, as Chief Minister since they had the most seats. But Pesaka insisted that the Chief Minister had to be an Iban as the present Governor was a Malay. Temenggong Jugah was not happy and thus a move was initiated to forge a coalition between Pesaka, SNAP, SCA and SUPP.

At the federal secretary's house at Reservoir Road the following morning, Tun Razak proposed that the Sarawak state government be formed of Parti Bumiputera, SUPP, Pesaka and SCA. Details could be worked out later if we agreed in principle. Upon regrouping at Stephen's house, at least one person objected strongly to the inclusion of SCA, our natural rival, as representatives of the Sarawak Chinese. The consensus was that we could only join as an equal partner of Parti Bumiputera.

Within hours, Stephen Yong received a telephone call from James Wong of SNAP inviting him to attend a meeting at Temenggong Jugah's house with representatives of Pesaka and SNAP that evening. As Pesaka was a member of the Alliance,

Stephen Yong found the meeting between these two Iban parties puzzling.

Stephen Kalong Ningkan started the meeting with a demand that he become the Chief Minister, with several important portfolios going to SNAP members. Parti Bumiputera was to be excluded. This was against the SUPP leaders' earlier decision at its own party meeting. Stephen Yong also pointed out that Malaysia was still under NOC rule and the exclusion of Malays from the state government would not be acceptable.

On the morning of July 6, 1970 when SUPP leaders were due to meet Tun Razak, Stephen Kalong Ningkan called at Stephen Yong's house proposing that SUPP join SNAP to form the government. All that Stephen Yong could do was to prevaricate. I asked the SUPP leaders clearly their conditions for participation, which they outlined as follows:

1. Parti Bumiputera would nominate the Chief Minister and SUPP the Deputy Chief Minister. There was to be an equal number of Cabinet Ministers from each party and equal partnership within the government.
2. There had to be an Iban representative in the government to represent Pesaka if possible.
3. SCA had to be excluded from the government.

I told the SUPP leaders that I needed a mandate. Time was short and we had to forestall any attempts by SNAP to sabotage this agreement.

The three of us met Tun Razak, Senu bin Abdul Rahman and Abdul Rahman Ya'akub that morning as arranged. I told Tun that we had some difficulty with his nomination of Abdul Rahman Ya'akub as the Chief Minister designate as both the Iban and the Chinese regarded him as a Malay racialist. But as he had no one else in mind, we were forced to accept him and hoped he would change his outlook.

The Tun asked me to tell Abdul Rahman Ya'akub myself and I turned to Rahman and said that we had agreed to accept him not because "we loved him but because we loved Sarawak more!"

Tun Razak agreed with the conditions laid down by SUPP except that concerning SCA's participation. He left that to be discussed further with Senu and Abdul Rahman Ya'akub as he had to return to Kuala Lumpur immediately. We told Senu and Abdul Rahman that the party would not agree to SCA's participation as they were too tricky for us and could only create instability. After some arguments, Abdul Rahman concluded the deal telling Senu that Abdul Rahman would be answerable to Tun Razak himself and assume full responsibility for it.

I then suggested that Stephen Yong and Abdul Rahman draft an agreement that Senu would witness on behalf of Tun Razak and the federal government, and I would witness on behalf of SUPP. Two Iban members elected to Council Negeri, Penghulu Abok ak Jalim and Simon Dembak, had defected from Pesaka and were joining the coalition government. We were going to the Astana to get the new state government members sworn in.

With the two Pesaka members, Parti Bumiputera with 12 members, SUPP with 12 members, there was a total of 26 seats, a majority of two in the Council Negeri of 48 members. SNAP, Pesaka and the SCA were outmanoeuvred and both Stephen Kalong Ningkan and Temenggong Jugah were furious. But faced with either joining the government by recognising Penghulu Abok and Simon Dembak or resigning from the federal government, Temenggong Jugah opted to stay in the government as federal minister.

The formation of the Sarawak state government with the Parti Bumiputera and SUPP as the two pillars of strength, and the participation of two Iban defectors from Parti Pesaka, was pivotal not only to SUPP's political future but also to the political stability of Sarawak. It was also the start of a more favourable relationship between Sarawak and Kuala Lumpur.

It was not an easy task for Stephen Yong as Secretary-General of SUPP and as Deputy Chief Minister to get on with Abdul Rahman Ya'akub as Chief Minister. At the same time, he had to overcome resistance by the more extreme elements in SUPP, as not all of them were reconciled to the changed role of being a member of the government instead of the opposition.

Tun Razak's understanding of the difficulties of SUPP'S moderate leaders and Tunku Abdul Rahman's conciliatory moves and action helped to smooth matters. In one of his visits to Sarawak, the Tunku surprised me one evening at a cocktail party at the Sarawak Club when he called me aside and told me that he had nominated me as a delegate to the 25th UN General Assembly. He would not take 'no' for an answer and Stephen Yong thought it a good idea if its chairman was one of the representatives from Malaysia.

Before this, in appreciation of my role in successfully forging the Sarawak state coalition government, the Alliance had recommended that I be conferred the Panglima Negeri Bintang Sarawak which carried the title Datuk. The Governor, His Excellency Tun Abang Haji Openg, was delighted. He had long ago wanted to confer me this honour but apparently, this was turned down by the Alliance and given to many others.

An official telegram was sent to me from Wisma Putra with an offer of a return passage from Malaysia to New York with a

daily allowance of US$35.00 for attending the 25th UN assembly. As it was not a permanent appointment, I accepted the offer.

I was not aware at that time that Tunku Abdul Rahman had decided to retire. He resigned on September 21, 1970, one day before his nephew, the Sultan of Kedah, ascended the throne as the fifth Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

The delay in the delivery of the Tunku's letter caused me much inconvenience. After my arrival in New York, I was aroused from sleep at midnight to answer an urgent telephone call from Kuching. Stephen Yong was on the line. He said he had received a letter marked secret, official and personal and would I please come home to handle it myself.

To cut a long story short, I obtained clearance to fly home. We saw Tun Razak and he agreed with me that Stephen Yong would consult the SUPP's central committee and give him a reply. Pending this I requested to be allowed to return to New York to continue with my mission there.

Towards late October, I was again urgently summoned home. Tun Razak was upset because he had not yet heard from Stephen Yong. Tun Razak decided that he would accompany me to Kuching where he reiterated his kind offer and asked for their comments. After a long and embarrassing silence, Khoo Peng Loong, an MP and a Vice-Chairman of SUPP said, "If Tun Razak wants Kee Hui in his Cabinet, we would not object."

As most of the others said nothing, Tun turned to Datuk Abdul Rahman and said that this had been agreed and accepted. He then told me to prepare to take up residence in Kuala Lumpur. I was angry with all my SUPP colleagues for not voicing their feelings or their objections if any, but most of them assured me of their support and congratulated and mollified me.

I will never forget the day I took my oath of office. It poured and Kuala Lumpur was flooded. I was the first to arrive at the Istana Negara, followed soon thereafter by Tun Razak and Tun Dr Ismail. We almost had to postpone my swearing in because the Attorney-General was late. Finally, the two Tuns decided that we should adjourn immediately to their office to discuss urgent measures to alleviate the serious flood situation in the city and to restore communication between the government and Istana Negara. This was the introduction to my first emergency Cabinet meeting.

Many other items cropped up as the years rolled by. I tried to introduce *tai chi* to the two Tuns, plus Tun Sambanthan, little realising that it was too late for any of them.

Tun Dr Ismail's sudden death on August 2, 1973 was a great loss. Tun Razak promptly flew back when he received the news. The Cabinet decided to have him buried in the compound of the National Mosque as a national hero. Tun Razak was unhappy at this Cabinet decision and wanted the late Tun Dr Ismail buried inside. As the solid marble floor had to be broken, this change of site delayed the burial by several hours but it was done.

Datuk Hussein Onn was appointed Deputy Prime Minister and also Minister of Trade and Industry. In a Cabinet reshuffle, I took over the portfolio of housing. Tun Razak took a personal interest in housing as owing to economic development and rural-urban migration, there was an acute housing shortage in Kuala Lumpur, resulting in the springing up of squatter houses in the capital.

Tun Dr Ismail was against local government as the Alliance had lost in most local council elections. My contention was that the Alliance lost because it did not look after the interests of the poor hawkers and the squatters. Tun Razak supported me. After all, I had plenty of experience as Mayor of Kuching for six years and Sarawak had, admittedly, a good system of local government.

The city officials were unhappy with my directive to regulate the petty traders by licensing everyone. I explained that the officials were wrong when they told me that the petty traders were causing traffic congestion. Only through licensing could we assign them to proper places. As it was, the city administration was losing half of the expected revenue. We would also forestall a protection racket by gangsters and avoid possible

An upriver welcome—Tan Sri Temenggong Jugah (second from right, foreground) welcomes Tun Razak (centre) to Kapit on a motor boat to begin a visit to Sarawak. (1967)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Razak)

racial clashes between them and the predominantly Malay policemen and city enforcement officials.

Tun Razak also discussed the solution to Kuala Lumpur's housing problem with me. The federal government must have control over land. And that would require the creation of a federal territory in Kuala Lumpur.

The federal government had tried a few years earlier to get the Sultan of Selangor to give up Kuala Lumpur as a federal territory but failed. But I had heard that the Sultan was planning to build a new palace in Shah Alam. The Sultan might be more receptive if the federal government were to offer to financially assist Selangor to build not only a new palace but also a new capital if he moved out and declared Kuala Lumpur a federal capital.

A few days later, Tun Razak told me that during a dinner with the Sultan of Selangor he casually broached the subject again. He found the Sultan quite receptive and sympathetic. The Sultan suggested that Tun Razak discuss the matter further with his *Menteri Besar*, Datuk Harun Idris. When I heard this, I laughed and said to Tun that as Harun was a member of UMNO, he should be able to get him to agree. He obtained that agreement and I was officially informed to proceed with making Kuala Lumpur a federal territory.

An instrument of transfer of sovereignty over an area of about 90 square miles of Kuala Lumpur was signed and a proclamation of this as federal territory by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong was read by the Prime Minister at an impressive ceremony at Parliament House.

The state of emergency came to an end on February 19, 1971. The Alliance was able to secure a two-thirds majority and Parliament was convened on May 17. A Constitution Amendment Bill was passed through all stages entrenching and putting beyond question all the emergency laws promulgated by the NOC. It was approved by 125 votes to 17, with DAP 13 and the PPP and SF against.

Tun Razak, knowing of my good relationship with the opposition leaders on the peninsula, asked me if it were possible to get any of them to co-operate with the federal government. I was quite friendly with (Tun) Dr Lim Chong Eu, chairman of Parti Gerakan and at that time Chief Minister of Penang, and also with DR and SP Seenivasagam who controlled the Ipoh Municipality and the PPP in Perak.

I was not so well known to PMIP and any approach had to be done by UMNO. Tun gave me the green light. I told Tun of their favourable reaction. As a result, the way was paved for a dialogue

between these opposition leaders and members of the Alliance government.

On February 13, 1972 Tun Razak and Dr Lim Chong Eu announced an agreement in principle on a coalition government in Penang. This was followed on April 15, 1972 by Tun Razak's announcement that an agreement in principle had been reached between the Alliance and the PPP to form a coalition government in Perak effective May 1, 1972.

The talks between UMNO and PMIP were more protracted and negotiations which started in April were not concluded until December 28, 1972, with a 13 point communique signed between Tun Razak and Datuk Mohamed Asri effective January 1, 1973. With this agreement, a Barisan Nasional government was formed in Malaysia.

The name National Front or Barisan Nasional was not at first acceptable to the more conservative Alliance leaders as the word 'front' was popular with the communists and leftists. However, Tun Razak thought it a good idea to go one better in the minds of the people as a patriotic movement. The question of a suitable symbol was then discussed. At a cocktail party of leaders of the new coalition one evening at Sri Taman, it was suggested that the concept of the NEP and the *Rukun Negara*–a more equal society between the various racial groups especially for the economically backward—would be appropriate.

This concept was best illustrated by the scale of justice. The idea was attractive. Tan Sri Manickavasagam promptly left Sri Taman and went to an Indian shop close by and borrowed its scale or *dacing*.

Finally a national government had come into being. Tun Razak announced in April 1974 that all Barisan Nasional component parties would share a common symbol in the next general elections that year. The 'scale of justice' would replace the Alliance's 'sailing boat'. There would be no individual party symbols.

In early May a massive Barisan rally was held in Alor Setar, Kedah. On June 1, 1974 the Barisan Nasional was given a certificate of registration with nine political parties as members, namely: UMNO, MCA, MIC,, PMIP, PPP, Gerakan, SUPP, Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) and the Sabah Alliance. Thus the Barisan Nasional became a legal political entity.

Throughout his tenure of office as Prime Minister, I found the late Tun Razak a fair-minded and progressive leader although he did not show the charm and friendliness of Tunku Abdul Rahman. His work as Minister of Rural Development brought him into close contact with the poor, hence his interest in squatters and petty traders.

I was touched by his concern for my health, when owing to the pressures of work and political life, I suffered a heart attack. He had a small lift installed at his office at Jalan Dato' Onn and instructed the policeman on duty that people like me should be ushered to the lift to get to his office or Cabinet room. We should not be allowed to climb the stairs from the ground floor.

Thus ran the story of my association with Tun until his death on January 14, 1976, after a month long in France and Britain for treatment of leukaemia. The nation mourned.

Footsteps in the Sand

By Dato' Mazlan Nordin

Footsteps in the Sand

TUN Abdul Razak walked barefoot to the Malay School at Langgar, Pahang, in the days of colonial rule. He was not poor since his father was Dato' Hussein, Orang Kaya Indra Shahbandar, one of the state's territorial chiefs. It was simply that others in his school were dirt poor and could not afford to buy even rubber shoes and out of respect for his schoolmates, Razak too went barefoot. It explains an early understanding and empathy with the problems that the ordinary Malays faced, their hopes and ideals. It also explains why, much later as Minister of Rural Development, he travelled more than 60 000 miles a year to all parts of the country to see for himself the successful implementation of his various rural projects.

JJ Raj, Chief Police Officer of Pahang at one time, recalls a particularly poignant incident. In 1962, just five years after Independence, Razak visited the police headquarters in Kuala Lipis. There was no proper police officers' mess then but standing at some distance was a large mansion, once the official residence of the British Resident. It was being used as a hostel by Malay students from surrounding villages. Raj suggested that it be converted into a police officers' mess and the students move elsewhere. Razak and Raj visited the mansion to meet some of the students. As Raj recalls, Razak gently remarked, "Even if 10% of these poor Malay students could one day become university graduates, their success would make me extremely happy." The suggestion was immediately dropped and Raj apologised to Razak.

Raj took note later of the thousands of Malay students graduating from local and foreign universities every year, and he remembered Razak's words which were "not only prophetic but also showed his keen sense of perception and foresight".

Inevitably, questions have been raised about Razak's relationship with the Tunku. Both were aristocrats. One, however, was the son of a sultan and it was a much easier life for him. He obtained his law degree the second time around. And if the Tunku was an easy-going dictator, Razak was not even that when appointed Director of the National Operations Council in the aftermath of the 1969 riots.

At the nation's helm.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Tunku had once said of Razak: "Tun Razak has not only been my friend and colleague but also my alter ego and my shadow. For all these momentous years we have worked together. In Tun Razak you have a man who is good, honest and impartial, absolutely tireless in his devotion to his country, a man with 15 years of experience as my deputy ... I say without any doubt at all that you could not have a better man than Tun Razak to follow me as Prime Minister."

Tun Razak himself was to pay tribute to Tunku on the latter's 63rd birthday on February 8, 1966. "Tunku is more than a leader. He has been my close friend since our student days in London. He has been a source of inspiration to me as indeed to all Malaysians. He obtained for us our independence and was the architect of Malaysia ... I also regard him as a father. Had my father been alive today, he would not have been much older than Tunku."

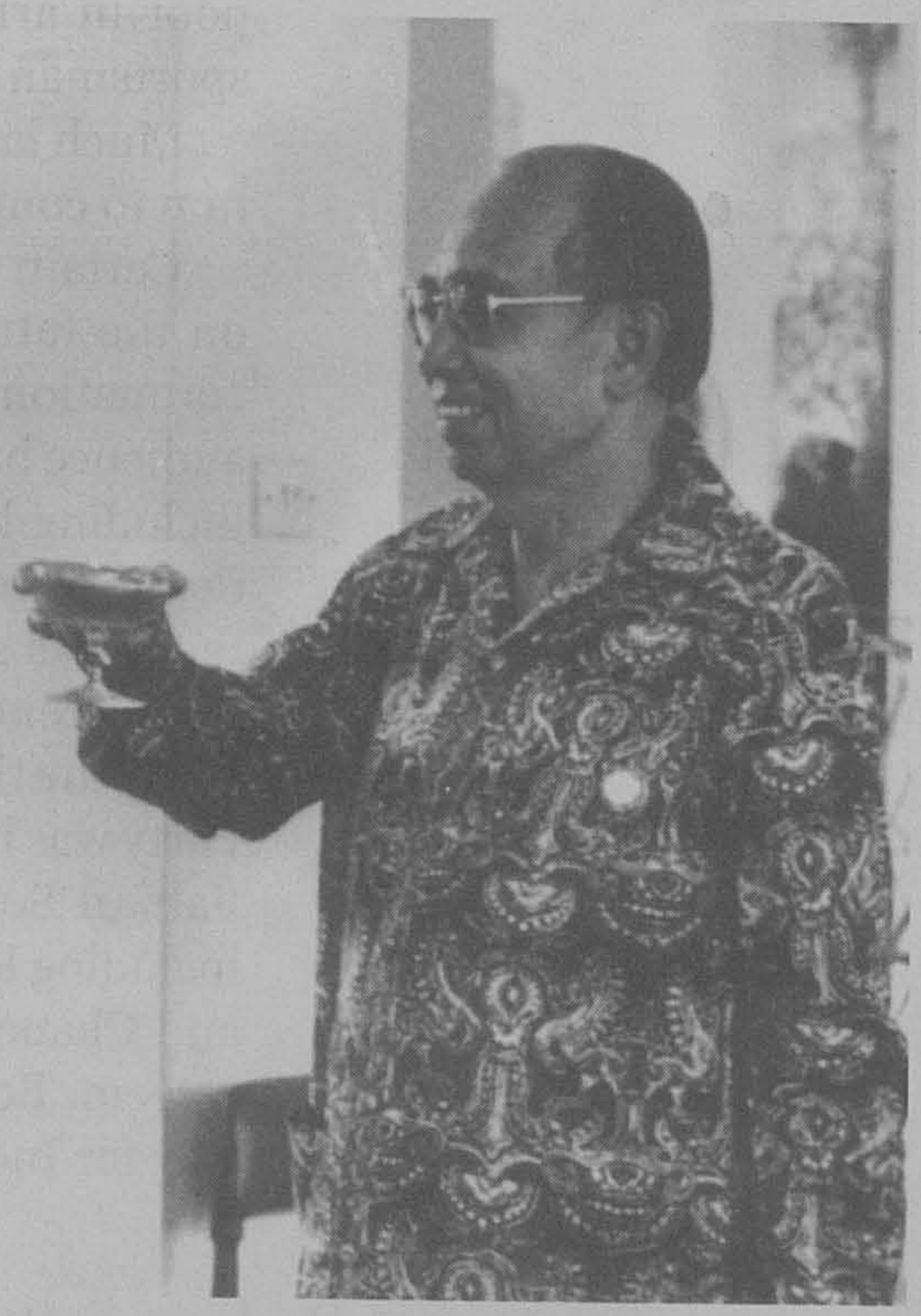
Without doubt, it was different for Razak. He walked four miles every day–two miles to and two miles from the primary school at Langgar, plus another two miles to the Quran class in the afternoon. In his pocket was *satu sen* for him to buy *nasi dagang*. Every day he bathed in the river.

In the Malay College Kuala Kangsar (MCKK), he studied hard and won double promotions: from Standard one to three to five and yet again to Standard seven. It explained why he was so poor in arithmetic. But he was an active student leader and sportsman and in his senior year, was MCKK head boy.

Much later he passed his Latin in just four months, enabling him to complete his law studies in just 18 months.

Certain events during his childhood influenced his outlook on the future. At the tender age of 10, he was present at the coronation of the Sultan of Pahang in Pekan. Gathered in the audience hall were all the Malay chiefs in their traditional dress, including his own father. All were standing. Also present was the governor accompanied by British Residents. Every one of them was seated while the Malay chiefs remained standing. It was a scene which remained engraved in Razak's young mind.

By the time he went for further studies in Britain, the Labour Party was in power. The works of Harold Laski and others in the Fabian Society greatly influenced the Malaysian students, including Razak. Razak held the Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps, in high esteem. Both Labour leaders were instrumental in paving the way for India's independence and the birth of Pakistan.



The Langgar primary school where the young Abdul Razak spent his formative years.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Early Politics

The Tunku and Razak's close association was forged in London, leading to their dominant roles in Malaysia's history. Thus Razak persuaded Tunku to become President of UMNO following the resignation of Dato' Onn Jaafar. At first reluctant, Tunku had even suggested that Razak himself contest the party presidency, an idea which the latter instantly rejected on grounds of his age. He was just 29 then. Tunku later managed to persuade Razak to contest the Deputy Presidency. Each won by a slim majority.

Fourteen years of water flowed under the bridge. An entire political generation grew up. By the time the May 13, 1969 riots broke out, a then senior minister recalls meeting Tunku and diplomatically suggesting that the Tunku retire while at the height of his premiership. Tunku took the suggestion well and promised to consider the matter but later told the minister that some of his friends were saying that Razak was a Malay chauvinist and he (Tunku) therefore had to stay on.

There is a fascinating story in the last chapter of (Tan Sri) Ghazali Shafie's *Memoir on the Formation of Malaysia* (Universiti Kebangsaan, 1998), revolving around the decision to postpone Malaysia Day from August 31 to September 16. Elections had earlier been held for the Sarawak Legislative Council with victory to the pro-Malaysia alliance. Stephen Kalong Ningkan, a Dayak, was Sarawak Chief Minister before Malaysia Day.

Suddenly it was made known that someone wanted "to recommend to the British government the appointment of Temenggong Jugah as the governor on Malaysia Day". This was contrary to the unwritten understanding that if a Dayak was Chief Minister, the Governor must be a Malay and vice versa.

Tunku was livid! After hearing of the British proposal, he had immediately called an emergency Cabinet meeting. He declared that Malaysia would be formed on September 16 with Singapore and North Borneo, but that it would be difficult for the country to survive if there was interference on the part of British colonial authorities. "He would rather not have Sarawak in Malaysia," noted Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie in his book.

His Cabinet colleagues egged him on the idea of "no Sarawak in Malaysia." Razak, however, was exasperated with the whole idea and was dead set against it. In the context of national events, Tunku and Razak needed each other. It was their destiny. And the country's too. The nation gained by their partnership.

"Here's to you, my old friend." First Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman (left), by now retired, extends his best wishes to his unswervingly loyal successor.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

Razak appointed Datuk Hussein Onn as his deputy following the death of Tun Dr Ismail bin Abdul Rahman in 1973. That had its consequences when Hussein became Prime Minister after Razak's own death on January 14, 1976. Suddenly, there was a

flurry of arrests under the Internal Security Act. Among those detained were (Tan Sri) Abdullah Ahmad, then a deputy minister, (Datuk) Abdullah Majid, also a deputy minister and (Tan Sri) Samad Ismail, senior editor in the New Straits Times Group. The Minister of Home Affairs then was Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie. All were the king's men and the mystery of their arrests remains unclear.

Razak is remembered for many things: that while the colonial government built 2000 schools in over a hundred years, he built 3000 schools in just 10 years; that some two million adult illiterates were taught to read and write; that he opened over 200 000 acres of land spread over 75 land schemes for thousands of landless families. Bank Bumiputra, MARA and the ITM (today UiTM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, RISDA, FELDA, Pernas, Petronas and MAS were among those established or expanded during his tenure.

On the larger canvas was Razak's role in reviving parliamentary democracy after just 21 months of emergency rule. Razak issued instruction to the effect that ministers could continue to receive their salaries but there was no work for them.

He also enlarged the Alliance to become the Barisan Nasional and persuaded PAS to join it. Datuk Asri Muda, then PAS President and *Menteri Besar* of Kelantan, recalls not having funds to build an ambitious bridge linking Kelantan from the east to the west at a cost of $5 million Malaysian dollars. In fact, resources were so tight in Kelantan that Asri had to seek the Tunku's assistance to pay its civil servants at the end of one fiscal year. The bridge project, however, was approved. Asri managed to obtain a commercial bank loan and the bridge, named the Sultan Yahya Petra Bridge, was ceremoniously opened on April 17, 1965. It was then South-east Asia's longest, spanning 2,757 ft., and had taken two years to build. It stands to today.

The coalition between the two parties, however, did not survive long after Razak's death. In 1977, an angry Asri marched PAS out of the Barisan Nasional. He was later to say, "The weather changes. At times it is hot and on other occasions heavy down-pour leads to floods."

Konfrontasi!

Razak's role in ending the Indonesian Confrontation was crucial. At its 30th anniversary, Des Alwi, a former senior official with the Indonesian Foreign Ministry held a special screening of his film showing scenes of the peace negotiations in Bangkok and later the signing of the Jakarta Accord on August 11, 1966

marking the end of hostilities. "Many of them are absent tonight–they have passed away," noted the then Foreign minister Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie to warm applause from the audience. "We are where we are now because of them. They would have wanted us to forever ensure the friendly ties and unity between our two countries."

The road to peace had been tortuous. In the early stages of Confrontation, the Indonesians claimed that more than 21 million Indonesian volunteers had registered in the campaign to crush Malaysia. Several factors contributed to the reconciliation: the abortive communist coup on September 30, 1965, the deepseated desire of many in both Indonesia and Malaysia to seek peace without third party mediation, President Suharto's will that it be ended and, not least, the separation of Singapore from Malaysia. Less obvious contributory factors included the necessity, in the face of open warfare against Malaysia and its allies, for the Indonesian Armed Forces, ABRI, to deploy its units "outside Java" thus leaving an irresistible vacuum in Jakarta. This would have posed grave dangers given the Partai Komunis Indonesia's strong political role.

Initial peace feelers were put out by Des Alwi. Razak responded promptly and positively when Des explained that the peace initiative came directly from General Suharto. Razak had met Suharto earlier in Jogjakarta when he had led a Malayan delegation and Suharto was with the Diponegoro Division.

Real contact subsequently took place at Hotel Erawan, Bangkok, where Major Benny Moerdani, under cover of a ticketing officer with the Garuda Indonesian Airways based in Bangkok, and Razak spent 45 minutes sizing each other up. Messages and a letter were passed on to Razak.

As part of the peace initiatives, a special delegation of the Indonesian Armed Forces was invited to join Razak for breakfast at Sri Taman and then on to Alor Setar to meet the Tunku. On the eve of the Hercules plane's arrival, a special Indonesian radio broadcast was heard in Kuala Lumpur: *"Dari keluarga Sumolang kepada keluarga Mogot, Bapak dan Ibu Sumolang esok akan menuju Menado."* Moerdani heard the broadcast and swiftly informed Ghazali Shafie of its imminent arrival and with it, the message to Malaysia that "apart from the civilian sector, the military too wanted peace."

The flight to Alor Setar was also fraught with danger for it necessitated flying over the Australian Air Force base in Butterworth. Ghazali issued the message, "At the time the plane flies over Butterworth, please be assured that I'll be on the plane. Shoot if you will."

Thousands, including the Tunku, warmly welcomed the Indonesian delegation. Each member, plus Razak and Ghazali,

was presented with a Rolex watch as a memento of thanks and promise of friendship.

Diplomacy with China

It was Razak who established diplomatic relations with communist China–the first ASEAN country to do so. Not long after taking over as Prime Minister on September 22, 1970, Razak called his old Malay College classmate, Raja (Tun) Mohar bin Raja Badiozaman, who by then was heading the Ministry of Trade. Raja Mohar's instructions were precise: "Go and meet Zhou Enlai and enquire about Malaysia's desire to establish diplomatic relations. We cannot ignore China with its 800 million people."

Raja Mohar met Zhou at his residence from 9.00 p.m. until well past midnight. Zhou was giving the Malaysian delegation all the time it needed. Inevitably, questions were raised about the position of the Chinese in Malaysia and their citizenship status. Regarding the delegation's request that China reject the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), Zhou explained that this could not be done. "It's like Islam. One cannot ask Muslims in one country to reject other Muslims in another country," Zhou said earnestly.

Zhou expressed appreciation that Malaysia had proposed, together with Albania, that China be accepted into the United Nations in 1971.

Upon arriving home, Raja Mohar was asked to Sri Taman to debrief Razak at 10.00 p.m. the same night.

In late May 1974, Razak led an official delegation to China to meet both Zhou and Chairman Mao Zedong. Zhou was in ill health at the time and upon his return, Razak said that he knew it was to be their last meeting. Razak was highly appreciative that Zhou had made it a point to greet him formally to discuss matters pertaining to the status of the Chinese in Malaysia. In effect, the visit neutralised the MCP.

Both governments also agreed on certain basic principles. Both did not recognise dual nationality. The Chinese in Malaysia made up about 30% of the population then. Anyone of Chinese origin who of his own free will had acquired Malaysian citizenship would thenceforth have forfeited his right to Chinese citizenship.

In return, Malaysia recognised only one China—the People's Republic of China, with Taiwan as an inalienable part of the Chinese motherland. The Malaysian consulate in Taipei was shut down.

As a direct result of this landmark visit, the Barisan Nasional scored a major victory in the 1974 general election. The Chinese votes helped.

Sabah Claim

The Philippine claim to Sabah complicated foreign relations for Razak. In 1962, President Diosdado Macapagal raised the subject based on earlier claims by heirs of the Sultans of Sulu. In January 1963, Macapagal declared that the inclusion of Sabah in Malaysia would pose a grave danger to the Philippines as it would pave the way for the spread of communism to his country. The speech soured relations between Kuala Lumpur and Manila.

It was ironic. The Hukbalahap communist movement in Luzon in the north had already been quelled by then President Ramon Magsaysay a decade earlier. More to the point, the Sulu sultanate itself had actually ceased to exist in 1936 and had not been a sovereign entity for more than half a century.

Maphilindo, as an organisation of three countries of Malay stock, received a lukewarm welcome. While Malaysia sought peace and stability, it could not be expected "to surrender nearly a quarter of her national territory for the sake of such peace and friendship," said Razak. Malaysia would not compromise its sovereignty and integrity.

In 1977, a relieved President Ferdinand Marcos proclaimed his readiness to renounce the Philippine claim on Sabah. "I honestly believe that if the claim to Sabah had not been filed, fighting in the south might not have started at all," he said.

Razak himself became Prime Minister at the age of 48, on September 22, 1970, after a 13 year wait. Throughout that time, he was a loyal deputy to the Tunku.

The consequences of Razak's decisions have been momentous for the nation. In any country, many seek power but Razak exercised it to mould the nation's future.

A Hard Act to Follow

By Dato' Seri Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak

A Hard Act to Follow

MY father never intended me to go into politics. The question of him grooming me to be a politician—unlike the scions of some powerful Asian dynasties, the Gandhis of India for instance—did not arise. In fact, come to think of it, he actually discouraged me from entering politics.

"I want you to do accountancy," he said as he packed me off to England. He was quite disappointed naturally when I decided to take up economics instead. He thought that going into the corporate world would have been the best thing for me.

But somewhere along the line, while I was in university, my political consciousness was heightened through my interactions with the other students and the various activities we got involved in.

In retrospect, it was not even a sudden awakening. I suppose a slow induction had begun with neither my father nor me realising it. It probably took root when, as a young boy, I followed my father on his visits to the *kampung* and other rural settlements and watched how he interacted with people on their home turf. He seemed to have a sense of mission in whatever he was doing. I realised how much I admired him. Gradually, without either of us being fully aware of it at first, there developed in me not only a kind of political consciousness but also a desire to continue the work he was doing.

My father did not try to impose his values on us. On hindsight, he shaped our characters more through his actions and deeds. But he never tired of reminding us of his humble background, how he had had to struggle against the odds in his early life and later of his work as leader and administrator.

He grew up in the *kampung*—which he never really left. He visited these areas often and took us along with him whenever he could to remind us of our roots. He saw the *kampung* people in a different light now that he was part of the country's leadership. He saw them as very poor and marginalised.

Thus it came as no surprise to us when he made it his purpose in life to try to transform their environment and improve their quality of life. He had his chance when he became Minister of National and Rural Development. His enthusiasm was

contagious. Even at an early age I remember telling myself to do whatever I could to help the rural people.

But my original plan was to do something else first and only later to go into politics. I never dreamt—not even in my wildest imagination—that I would be a Member of Parliament so early in life. But as our elders would say, we can only plan. In my case the opportunity was thrust upon me. Ultimately it is the Almighty who decides.

Thus shortly after my father died I had to make what I now think is the most crucial decision of my life. I was to decide whether I should accept the offer to contest in my father's constituency of Pekan when I was still a very young and idealistic 22.

I told myself, "Look, UMNO is a democratic party and we have general elections every four or five years. If you don't measure up, very soon you would get to know about it. Either someone will tell you to your face or you will be told at the ballot box, at national or party elections, that you have fallen short of expectations." And that would have been the signal for me to bow out.

I was more or less on my own at that time. Eventually, I decided to go for it. That done, I was faced with two options—to sink or to swim. So I have tried very hard to swim.

Many people at that time credited my family for nudging me into succeeding my father in his former constituency. It did not happen that way. I knew my mother was quite concerned for me at the time. She was unsure whether I could survive in a political world but she did not voice her fears to me. My brothers were too young at that time to offer any real advice. So I was quite on my own.

Personally, it was not so much the prospect of entering politics that excited and enticed me. A far stronger pull was the opportunity to continue what my father left behind–his plans and his vision. This meant much more to me. But he had never mentioned that it was my duty or destiny to pick up where he left off.

I had spent some time with him in London when he was being treated there shortly before he died. I was working in Petronas at that time and so could not take an indefinite leave of absence. He died a few days after I returned to my post.

During our time together he would talk of nothing else but what he wanted to do for the country. That was very much on his mind. He wished he would recover quickly so he could be back at his office to lead the country. He was concerned about the political uncertainty—that people would undermine the stability of the country and exploit his absence. That was his main concern.

Let's hear it for the boys! A family portrait with Nazim, Najib, Johari and Nizam, with Nazir standing in the centre.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

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A rare family holiday abroad on doctor's orders: taking in the cool air with Najib on Lake Lugano, Switzerland.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

His last words to me were that he wanted a bit more time; there were certain things he had to finish. He was not specific. He was working on a number of things, including, I believe, a Cabinet reshuffle which never materialised. "I need more time," he said.

Recalling all this helped me make up my mind. I thought that by becoming an MP I could, in my own small way at least, contribute towards the fulfilment of his vision. Whenever he had the opportunity to be with us, he would tell us how he had had to struggle within his limited means to educate himself and succeed in his career and in his life.

And he wanted us always to have our feet firmly on the ground. He did not want any special treatment for us. He wanted us to succeed and compete in a normal kind of environment–as normal as can possibly be expected for the children of the leader of the nation.

That was why he always cajoled us and demanded that we do our level best in school. For example, he wanted us to be among the top three in class all the time. Anything below the top three positions was to have fallen short of his expectations.

And he had his system of rewards. If we got first place, he would give us 30 dollars. It was a sliding scale. Second place was 20 dollars, third was 10 dollars. The reward scale went up slightly later. And he would be deeply disappointed if we were not among the top three in class.

He had himself been an outstanding student. He had excelled at games as well as in his studies. Because of his humble background he had had to push himself hard in order to be at the top. And he wanted us to push ourselves hard in our studies. To him it mattered a lot. And I think he did not want people to think that whatever we achieved later in life was because we were children of privilege.

In that sense he was driven. And we accepted it because we recognised what propelled him. He pushed himself even harder when he realised he was ill and did not have long to live. He knew as early as 1969 that he had leukaemia.

Fulfilling a personal dream—Tun Razak, upon being called to the Bar at the Federation of Malaya High Court, is flanked by Toh Puan Bunny Suffian and Tun Mohd Suffian Hashim. Toh Puan Rahah is on the right while Tengku Tan Sri Ahmad Rithauddeen Ismail stands in the centre, second row. Datuk Seri Mohd. Najib is in the background (far right). (1975)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

My mother was always there for us and she exerted a different, more subtle kind of influence. She was calm and serene. I have a great love and respect for her. She provided the balance that we needed.

Even though she was not involved in making that crucial decision in 1976, she gave me her blessings. And I still seek her blessings for any major undertaking. She would never say yes or no. To her, whatever decisions I had to make were entirely up to me. But I am always comforted knowing that at least I had her blessings. They mean a lot to me.

Having entered politics, I try to do things in a way that my father would have approved of. But one thing is certain: I do not like to see myself as a populist politician. I do not want to be seen as a politician who will do anything and everything possible to garner support and to propel his own ambition. Benefit to the country should ultimately be the decisive factor. One should have the courage of one's convictions.

Sometimes I do ask myself: "How would Tun Razak handle such a situation?" He made many tough decisions as Prime Minister and I would sometimes try to fathom his thoughts when he made them.

One thing I noted about him was that he tried very hard not to embarrass people or humiliate people openly. He would always try, if he had to remove someone from office, to give that person a cushion, a soft landing so to speak. It is a good principle and certainly appropriate for his time.

Another thing about Tun Razak was that he always had time for the small man, no matter how busy he was. I try to follow him in this. Even when he was home at Sri Taman but busy, he would still meet the group of *kampung* people waiting at the guardhouse to see him.

If a person turned up alone, he would invite that person to join him for lunch if it was near lunch-time, particularly if he came from Pekan. Sometimes he would request that the person be taken to the kitchen and be served before he talked to him.

I marvel that he would pay attention to little things like that while handling the affairs of the nation. With all the demands of office, he still had time for the ordinary person. And this has influenced me greatly. No matter how busy I am at the office, if there are people outside waiting to see me, I see them. Provided of course, I am not too tied up. As a result my hours in office are quite long but that is service and it is part of my life-style now.

To my father, a good public image was vital and public opinion mattered a great deal to him. Sometimes it is a very difficult act to follow. Whatever he did, he did not want it to be misinterpreted or to be seen that he was abusing his position. Of course I am talking in the context of his time.

I remember when as children, we wanted so much to have a swimming pool. But it took him a month of deliberating, rather agonisingly at that, before he turned us down. After looking at a few estimates submitted by the Jabatan Kerja Raya, he eventually said, "No, I don't want it. People might talk—*nanti apa orang kata?*"

He observed this precept to the extent that he gave up much of the things in life that he enjoyed and he gave up so much of what the family wanted just so that people would not talk. Thus people saw him as a man of simple wants and simple needs.

That was Tun Razak. He did not enjoy the trappings of power. The cigars he smoked were relatively cheap. He did not have expensive habits like acquiring cars. But he played golf and he was happy.

Even when I was studying in England, he did not want to visit me that often because *nanti apa orang kata*. Even as the son of the Prime Minister, I had to take chartered flights back, not commercial flights.

Taking chartered flights in those days meant you had to wait at the airport, wait for the gate to open and then you had to make a mad scramble to get the best seat on the plane. And that was the kind of thing that we had to endure. No commercial flights for us. Except for the first time I went to England, the rest of the time I had to take chartered flights until of course the services were discontinued.

Tun Razak is really a tough act to follow. It is therefore not surprising that he was so much respected. I have met so many people of his generation who remember him very fondly and hold him in such awe and respect, among them civil servants who felt that they were put there by my father. It did not matter to them that the transfer order came from the Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam. They were convinced that Tun Razak had had a hand in their being appointed to their posts. And they were grateful.

Many of the policies he initiated have endured long after his death. They are still our guiding principles, in particular the New Economic Policy. If anyone were to ask me to name one single policy of his that has stood the test of time, I would say without hesitation that it was the NEP. Even today, people still talk about the NEP. The formere Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, still cited the NEP in his speeches although we do not call it the NEP any more. The need for balance, balanced growth and the equitable distribution of wealth—all that was very much a part of Tun Razak's thinking when he formulated the NEP. This imperative for balance has been a guiding philosophy for interracial peace in this land.

I knew how much the fulfilment of his vision—his goals and his dreams for his countrymen—meant to him. Even though my father was busy with his work most of the time and we saw so little of him, he was a major influence on my life. For my siblings and me, losing him was traumatic. In our hearts, he would always be with us and none of us ever considered life without him. But life goes on. And those left behind must soldier on.

Finesse and Vision

By Tan Sri Dato' Musa Hitam

IT was 1959—two years after *merdeka*. For me, it was my first posting in the Johore Civil Service. I was assistant District Officer in Kluang and concurrently held several other positions.

The government of the day had seen it fit to duplicate its strategy in combating communist terrorism to its war against poverty. The entire government resources were converted to a war footing, complete with the 'National Operations Room' with plans, maps and 'situation reports', plus the 'Red Book' as a quick reference to any development progress at village, district or state level.

As secretary of the district rural development committee, one of many posts I held, I had the responsibility of ensuring that at the village and district levels, our set-ups were continuously updated and that all government officers were equally hands-on in their duties.

Their zeal was matched by Tun Razak's own. As Minister of Rural Development, he would himself ensure the implementation of all the UMNO-led Alliance government's promises to bring development to the masses. Tun Razak visited every district in the country. He inspected projects big and small and he would do all these by helicopter, by car, on bicycle, by boat and on foot!

This image of Tun Razak left an indelible mark on me. Later in my political career, it inspired me to always serve in the interest of the ordinary people. -

I did not know Tun Razak personally then. On his visit to Johore, however, he used Kluang as his base and I saw him operate. He was not only an ideas man but an implementor as well. Days before his scheduled visit I had to make doubly sure that everything was updated. Maps that contained coloured pins indicating different stages of development for each project, the Red Book, all these would have to be opened for Tun Razak's inspection, questions and scrutiny.

During one particular visit, after briefings by different department heads, Tun Razak scrutinised the report on the construction of a health centre that was reported to be nearing completion. Only after all the briefings were completed did he decide to visit the health centre site where he, and his entire entourage, discovered that work on the centre had hardly begun.

The officer concerned paled and trembled, not being able to account for the discrepancy between the situation report in the Red Book and his own briefing, against the actual situation on the ground.

That single incident was enough. With Tun Razak's surprise inspection of development projects anywhere at any time, government officers nation-wide had to ensure their efficient implementation in accordance with the national rural development plan.

My entry into politics was as political secretary to the then Minister of Transport, Datuk Sardon Jubir, in 1964. Thanks to the small number of political secretaries then and our close network—in particular my close relationship with Tun Razak's own political secretary, (Tan Sri) Abdullah Ahmad, I had the opportunity of serving Tun Razak on many occasions.

Tun Razak's consultative leadership style meant we were required to organise a lot of meetings with representatives of different strata of society. Generally once a month we would get together such varied groups as village leaders (*ketua kampung*), academics, top government officials, school teachers, UMNO activists, either separately or combined, to meet at Tun's residence and exchange views on a broad range of subjects. Tun would encourage them to express their views, with him most of the time listening and us taking notes.

Tun formulated his policies and strategies on health, education and land development that mostly affected the rural population, based on the results of such sessions. After the May 13 tragedy of 1969, when Tun took over the overall administration of the country as Director of the National Operations Council, it was not difficult for him through the National Consultative Council to achieve consensus to:

1. return government to the people after two years' suspension of parliamentary democracy;
2. restructure society and eradicate poverty; and
3. introduce a radically new idea of 'positive discrimination' through the newly formulated New Economic Policy.

Personally, in the aftermath of the May 13 tragedy I had to be sacrificed as one of the so-called 'young Turks' against the Tunku, our first Prime Minister, together with Dr Mahathir, the then so-called leader of the 'young Turks'. These incidents aside, it was the finesse with which Tun handled my case that deserves recording here.

Tun was literally the middleman. The way with which he handled me was indicative of his dilemma then vis-a-vis the Tunku. His loyalty to the Tunku was unflinching. For that I can vouch. A number of the top UMNO stalwarts were in favour of persuading the Tunku to step down. But Tun was pleading for patience and a chance to deal with the Tunku in his own way.

Thus, knowing that the Tunku wanted me out, he spent considerable time with me explaining the need to deal with the Tunku in the 'Malay way'. In order to resolve my problem, he asked me to see the Tunku and to ask for forgiveness: "*minta maaf*" and kiss his hands ... for what I still cannot figure out!

Still, Tun was convinced that Tunku would forgive and forget. Actually I immediately agreed to Tun's idea of my meeting Tunku. But my own idea was to talk to Tunku in the most respectful but frank way one-to-one. This, however, was contrary to Tun's plan, whose idea was simply for me to kiss his hand and ask for forgiveness. And Tun intended to accompany me to see Tunku! I was surprised and touched by his personal attention and concern but explained that I would rather have a one-to-one meeting with the Tunku and avoid any embarrassment or even responsibility falling on Tun over my intended remarks to Tunku.

It was in fact for the very same reason—to prevent me from saying my piece—that Tun wanted to accompany me to see Tunku. In the end, maybe because my insistence to see the Tunku alone was so forcefully put, Tun did not follow up to arrange the

Fitting tribute. (DYMM Sultan) Raja Azlan Shah as vice-president of the Malaysian Hockey Federation shows off the World Cup trophy to MHF president Tun Razak. To their right are FIH official Mr. A. Lathawors (in suit) and Tan Sri P. Alagendra (in uniform). (1975)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

When duty calls—Tun Razak walking in the downpour to Sekolah Kampung New Zealand. (1966)

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

meeting. I still wonder today, what would have happened if my meeting with Tunku had materialised—with or without Tun. The thing I remember most about this whole episode was Tun's sense of responsibility and serious concern towards me, a 'young Turk', and the personal attention he paid to my situation in the midst of the very heavy responsibilities entrusted to him in the aftermath of the May 13 turmoil.

Tun was always looking for new talent and preparing the young for future leadership. Once, he spent time with me explaining the need to "do your job and the party would spot you." Tun was also very good at deploying young potential and thus exposing them to the rough and tumble of politics and government.

I attribute so much of my own experiences to Tun's conscious wish to prepare me, and others, for more and more responsibilities. From political secretary to Datuk Sardon, I became Executive Secretary of UMNO, travelling the length and breadth of the country organising UMNO at the grassroots level. My participation in various university student fora—and students in those days were a much more aggressive lot—was also at Tun's directive.

He appointed me chairman of FELDA, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister of Primary Industries, all of which toughened me up. It was as Minister of Primary Industries that Tun called upon me to deal with the Baling and Sik demonstrations, as well as student gatherings at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang. He was quick to dismiss my doubts about my own abilities. "You *pandai cakap* (You can talk)," he assured me. "You know how to face students and demonstrations!" It was indeed with those words of encouragement and inspiring confidence that I dealt with my tasks successfully.

Tun Razak really was the man who first instilled a sense of pride in Malaysians to be Malaysian. Tun Razak turned Malays from the traditional, conservative and feudal society that they once were into the modern society that they are now. Fitting Malays into Malaysian society at large with confidence through education and development contributed so much to the prosperity and stability of Malaysia that we are enjoying today.

Sharing pulut kunyit *with friends and family to mark what turned out to be his last birthday. Tun turned 53 on March 11,1975.*

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

"So Much to Be Done"

By Datuk Harris bin Mohamed Salleh

ABOVE all, Tun Razak was a worker—and a workaholic. His approach to life was "there's so much to be done."

After he was told that he suffered from leukaemia and had only another six years to live, he drove himself even harder. Very few knew of his ailment. I myself only learnt about it much later.

In December 1975 he left for another of his periodic check-ups in London, confident that he would return soon to continue the killing pace he had set for himself. He was confident of being cured and told me before he left that he hoped to be back quickly as work was piling up.

It turned out to be his last visit.

I first met Tun Abdul Razak Hussein in 1961. He was already Deputy Prime Minister while I was a humble clerk of the Sabah Legislative Council. This was just shortly after Tunku Abdul Rahman had hit the headlines in Singapore that a Federation of Malaysia be set up to include the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei. Ever the loyal implementor, Tun Razak had come to Jesselton (the old name for Kota Kinabalu) as a member of the Malaysian Solidarity Consultative Committee tasked with promoting the idea of the larger federation. Among my duties was to serve as protocol officer to dignitaries from outside Sabah, which I was to the committee.

Tun Razak was already a great man by then and his presence added a lot of prestige to the work of the committee. But what drew me to him instantly was his humility. He talked to everyone, no matter how high or low a position that person held. Maybe it was part of his job as a member of the committee to talk to as many people as he could. But many of those he chatted with remarked on his sincerity.

Much of his work in national and rural development was accomplished during the long tenure of his immediate predecessor, Tunku Abdul Rahman, as the country's first Prime Minister. The bloody May 13 incident of 1969 convinced Tun Razak that the days of easy political co-existence were over. The problems had to be tackled head on. What followed were the New Economic Policy and the Barisan Nasional—a larger coalition extending beyond the core founders of the Alliance parties of UMNO, MCA and MIC to include other like-minded regional and national parties.

Different people knew different facets of the man but on some all would concur. Tun Abdul Razak was a great Malaysian patriot and a true nationalist. I found him to be a true Muslim as well, a passionate Malay and a committed Malaysian. There is no doubt that he was a dedicated civil servant and administrator. Through sheer hard work and dedication he laid the groundwork for the development of the country and also the basis on which Malaysian politics operates today.

We met many more times after I became Secretary-General of the United Sabah National Organisation (USNO), formed in December 1961. The meetings became even more frequent after USNO joined the Sabah Alliance which took over the state government from the British on Malaysia Day. In the Sabah Alliance Cabinet I was Minister for Local Government. As USNO became more dominant, so too was its leader, (Tun) Datu Mustapha Datu Harun. I left the government in 1968 and went into business.

By then I had become quite close to Tun Razak and we continued to meet even though I was no longer a government official. I was not a stranger at Sri Taman, Tun Razak's official residence. In fact by then, we were almost friends. I dare not

Praying with the people–Tun Razak (front row on mat) at Friday prayers in Masjid Kampung Sembilan, Sabah. (1964)

(Courtesy of Memorial Tun Abdul Razak)

claim outright friendship because I was always in awe of him. All his security men knew me and I was invariably admitted almost immediately whenever I turned up at Sri Taman's gate.

When he heard that Tun Mustapha wanted to pull Sabah out of Malaysia, he asked his trusted aide, (Tan Sri) Datuk Abdullah Ahmad, to call me to his house immediately. That was eventually to lead to the formation of Berjaya, which defeated USNO and formed the new government of Sabah in April 1976. But Tun Razak was not able to see the new government inaugurated. He died three months earlier on January 14 in a London clinic. He had dedicated his life to his country and its people from the time he joined the civil service as Pahang Assistant State Secretary at age 28 and had worked tirelessly until his death at the age of 53, after serving six years as Prime Minister.

I cried when I heard the news. He had been my mentor and adviser. My grief at his passing was mingled with disappointment. Berjaya was about to have an electoral showdown with the strongman of Sabah and its foremost supporter and inspirer was no longer around. But all the Berjaya stalwarts rallied round and decided that the best way to show our gratitude to Tun Razak was to win the upcoming election. By the grace of God we won. Tun Razak, who had been insulted several times by Tun Mustapha during their meetings, was vindicated.

The nation mourned the loss of a great national leader. Unbidden, thousands turned up at the Subang International Airport and the next day thousands more lined up to pay their last respects.

I shall always remember two of his other traits—he was persuasive and inspiring at the same time. Along with his tact and diplomacy, they served him well when he was cobbling together the Alliance and other diverse parties into one big national coalition—the Barisan Nasional. He was a great negotiator.

He was not, however, a politician. Many people would not agree with me but I am convinced he was not a politician. Maybe in those early days when life was much simpler, there was very little need for politicking. When I was Chief Minister of Sabah I tried to emulate Tun Razak—to work and not to play politics. I believe that had I played politics and not followed Tun Razak by being Malay-Muslim first, I would have remained Chief Minister for a much longer time. But I have not regretted emulating Tun Razak—no regrets at all!

While Tun Razak did not have to practise the art of a politician, he got things done just as successfully through tact and diplomacy. I saw, first hand, just how tactful he was when he was a member of the Malaysian Solidarity Consultative

Committee. I heard how tactful and diplomatic he was in his negotiations with other countries, especially during the talks that led to the end of *Konfrontasi.*

Other qualities that helped him immeasurably were his integrity, for which he was quite famous, and his sincerity. In short, he was trusted. Throughout my dealings with him, especially when planning the formation of Berjaya to be an opposition party to the USNO-led Sabah Alliance, I had absolute faith in him. Not for an instant did I doubt his motives.

But what awed me was his vision of Malay dominance. This came out during several private discussions with him and also small group discussions of which he was a part. To him, Malaysia was the only country the Malays have and so it must be a Malay-Muslim-majority country. He indulged in this kind of talk quite a lot before he became Prime Minister. Of course others came to know of his 'thoughts' but not knowing directly from him they got a distorted version of his vision. And hence he was seen as a radical Malay.

This accounted for many being apprehensive of him when he became Prime Minister. But such misgivings evaporated when he displayed a leadership that could only be described as true Malaysian statesmanship. He was far from being what he had been whispered to be. Once in office, it became patently clear that he was the leader of all Malaysians, irrespective of ethnic origin. And it was to their well-being that he dedicated his life.

While in his vision Malaysia was eventually to become a great Malay Muslim nation with the Malays forming at least 65% of the population, everyone was guaranteed a place under the Malaysian sun. The non-Malays or the non-bumiputeras would continue to share in the prosperity and development of the nation. According to him the non-bumiputeras should not feel threatened or insecure in a Malaysia where the bumiputeras are predominant. In fact they should feel more secure under the bigger majority than under the slim majority the Malays were on Merdeka Day and the bumiputeras were on Malaysia Day. "If we are not dominant numerically, how can we protect the minorities?" he told me.

When Tun Mustapha talked about taking Sabah out of Malaysia, Tun Razak told me this was neither feasible nor would it be the last attempt. Other Muslim leaders would also want to try in the future. He said it was wishful thinking to imagine Sabah and Sarawak in the federation forever but attempts at independence should only be made when the Muslims were a majority—perhaps in 30 to 50 years' time.

While Tun Mustapha was promoting his idea of an independent Sabah, the Muslims constituted only about 37% of the

state's population. His advice to me was for Muslims in Sabah to bide their time and meanwhile to develop themselves while they were in the federation. After all, one of the objectives of forming Malaysia was to develop the state and the people of the former British colony.

Tun Razak also talked of a federation of Muslim states of Borneo. In his vision in 30 to 50 years, Kalimantan would probably be an independent country. It would be natural then for Kalimantan, Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei to form a federation.

When Tun Razak told me in 1975 that he had heard that Tun Mustapha was promoting the idea of Sabah's withdrawal from Malaysia, he also confided that he was considering declaring a state of emergency in Sabah. I would be appointed administrator. I told myself *matilah saya kali ini.* I would surely be killed by Tun Mustapha.

Fortunately Tun Mustapha dropped the idea after he was persuaded and counselled by the only Malaysian he respected—Tunku Abdul Rahman, who was then Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Conference. But he was an angry man. He spoke out against Tun Razak during the meeting with Tunku, Tun Abdul Rahman Yaakob of Sarawak, (Tun) Abdul Ghafar Baba, Tun Fuad Stephens, who was Yang Dipertua Negeri, and me.

I remember that during the meeting only Datuk Zulkifly Hamid, one of USNO's ministers, supported the idea. I said the idea was good but its time had not yet come. When I got home at 3.00 a.m., Tun Razak, who was in London, telephoned me and asked me why I had not called him earlier. I told him that Tun Mustapha was not going to declare independence. I heard his sigh of relief at the other end.

Tun Mustapha's style of government was often at variance with the policies of the central government. That is to put it mildly. Tun Mustapha was a stubborn man and was used to getting his own way. Kuala Lumpur was beginning to be less tolerant of the antics of the Sabah strongman. And so after the 1974 general elections, it was decided to bring him to Kuala Lumpur as Defence Minister, then ranking third in the federal government hierarchy. It was hoped that collective responsibility would make him more amenable to discipline and the tension between Kuala Lumpur and Kota Kinabalu would evaporate. While he did not directly reject the offer, Tun Mustapha made no attempt to take up his new appointment. Nor did he resign as Chief Minister.

In January 1975, Tun Mustapha found himself in serious disagreement with Tun Razak, who was also Finance Minister,

and the central government over financial matters. Matters came to a head and he marched the Sabah Alliance out of the National Front. He then began speaking openly about pulling Sabah out of Malaysia. It was at that point that the suggestion was made for the formation of a strong opposition party in the state.

As a last word, Tun Razak was a man of high morals. He was also incorruptible. In those days, holding top jobs was not about accumulating wealth. It was about responsibility and dedication to a cause—the cause of Malaysia. Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Razak were the same in this. They cared little about wealth. This is because they grew up worrying little about money. They were from the country's aristocratic families of the time. And they had *chosen* to dedicate themselves to their people and country.

My Father's Last Days in London:

A Parting Gift

By Dato' Ahmad Johari bin Tun Abdul Razak

DECEMBER 1975: It was a cold winter morning, with overcast skies so typically London. I had woken up early, excited at the prospect of fetching my father at the Heathrow Airport and being able to spend some time together in London. I was 21 and in my final year at the Bar, preparing for my law exams. As far back as I could remember, I had always known my father to be constantly busy, and while I had grown used to his hectic schedule, I treasured all the more whatever time I could spend with him.

At that time, it seemed to be just another of his regular visits to London. I had no premonition that it would be his last trip, that the next three weeks would prove to be tumultuous not just for me, but for my family as well and indeed for the entire nation.

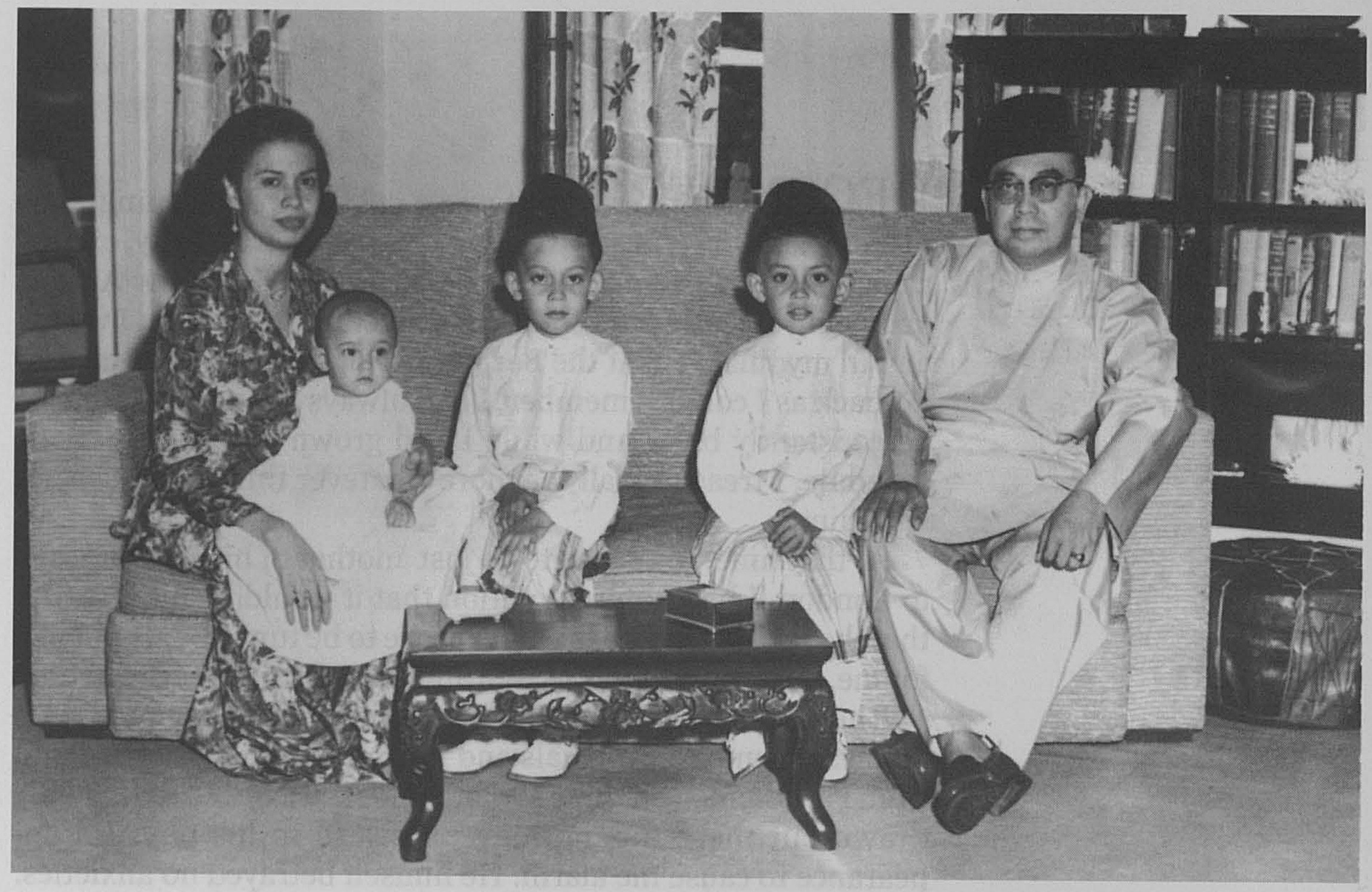
The VIP room at the Heathrow Airport was crowded with Malaysian embassy officials and my father's friends. The flight from Paris landed on time. My father looked a little tired, slightly drawn but there was nothing untoward in his physical appearance to cause me alarm. He himself betrayed no anxieties.

My brothers, Nizam and Nazim, had also turned up to meet him. We were all at various stages of our education, Nizam and Nazim at Oundle School, Najib, the eldest, was back in Kuala Lumpur, having completed his studies, as was the youngest, Nazir. My mother had stayed back in Kuala Lumpur with him.

After the normal exchange of greetings, to my surprise, we all headed for the London Clinic at Harley Street. I had no prior warning that we would be going straight to a private hospital. I remember thinking it very odd but thought nothing more of it. The London Hospital is located in a nondescript building in Harley Street, a street boasting some of the leading medical practitioners in London. I was told that my father would be undergoing a routine medical check-up.

My father passed it off as just a cold, playing down any suggestion of a more serious affliction, let alone a terminal illness. Since I had never known my father to be admitted to hospital before—he had always been strong and healthy—I had no inkling that he was seriously ill.

My memories of the first week are blurred. There were long waits at the hospital, tests being carried out by doctors and visits by his friends. The one occasion that remains vividly in my mind was spending Christmas day at the hospital. We sat around and ate turkey, trying to be cheerful for his sake. It was not easy, given the gloomy hospital atmosphere.



Soon after Christmas, my father was discharged. We went to stay at Park Towers Hotel, London, where we were joined by my mother and Najib, both of whom had flown in from Kuala Lumpur. I was happy that my father appeared to have recovered and that the whole family was reunited in London. This was the best period. We went shopping, had meals at nice restaurants and went for walks in the parks. My father had lost a lot of weight. When he wanted to buy a suit at a leading shop in London, they were reluctant to sell it to him because it would not fit him properly and would affect the shop's reputation.

We took many walks in Hyde Park. He would talk about his student days in London, clearly salad days for him, bringing back happy memories. This had been the only phase of his adult life when he was free from heavy responsibilities, for as soon as he returned home from his studies, he was appointed Pahang Assistant State Scretary. He was 28. Thereafter, his responsibilities mounted.

His friends and political associates formed a steady stream of visitors: Tun Omar Ong Yoke Lin, Tun Haniff Omar, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, Tan Sri Taib Andak, Khalil Akasah and many others. I remember my father receiving a warm message from Tun Hussein wishing him well and expressing the hope that he was resting. Tun Hussein told him not to worry about matters at

Family time was precious—from left: Rahah, Nizam, Najib, Johari and Razak.

(Courtesy of Arkib Negara Malaysia)

home as he, Tun Hussein, had everything under control—save for the weather.

Despite the outward calm and relaxed atmosphere, I detected a growing concern among his doctors. I sensed that something more serious was affecting my father, that a cold or medical check-up did not warrant the amount of medical attention he was receiving and could not explain his loss of weight.

It was around this time that my father's personal physician from Malaysia, Dr McPherson, called me to his hotel room. Dr McPherson was of Scottish origin, in his late fifties with a slightly balding pate. He spoke in a quietly controlled voice. What he had to tell me came as a shock. I sat dazed, almost in disbelief. My father, he said, was and had been for the last six years, suffering from a terminal form of leukaemia.

Despite the shock and the pain, I listened intently, trying to appear calm. Leukaemia is a form of cancer affecting the bone marrow, causing it to produce abnormal white cells. At the same time it produces less of the normal cells: red cells, normal white cells and platelets. A shortage of red cells could result in anaemia, while a shortage of normal white cells would make a person more prone to infections. A shortage of platelets often caused its sufferer to bleed more as the platelets normally assisted the blood to clot.

My father was diagnosed as having leukaemia in 1969, during a check-up in Malaysia. The doctors who diagnosed it were sworn to secrecy and further diagnosis was carried out only in London. My father had gone to London in 1970 for treatment and the illness was, as the doctors put it, in remission. That latent or 'slow growing' stage usually lasts two to four years before the disease enters its malignant stage and becomes terminal.

The most devastating news was that there is no known cure for leukaemia. Up to then I had assumed, rather naively, that all diseases had a cure. Now in London with all the leading experts around, I was told that there was no cure.

The doctors treating him had initially given him only two years to live. On hearing this, he had quickly replied, "I will live longer than that." He did live longer—but it would now seem that he was losing the battle.

It is ironic but sometimes one seeks consolation even in the most tragic news. My father had lived longer than the doctors had predicted. He could have died in 1969 or within two years thereafter. He might not even have managed to become Prime Minister as he only took office in September 1970.

I have always wondered why he had kept it a secret. Perhaps it was to spare our family the worry. Perhaps it was to prevent political instability caused by knowledge of his illness.

I have also wondered how he must have felt when he had first heard the results of the diagnosis back in 1969. After the initial shock, it must have been daunting to know that he had very little time to live. To be Prime Minister and thereby hold supreme power in the country while in the grip of a debilitating illness must have been hard to bear. He must have had super-human courage to cope with it. As he had never discussed the illness with me, it is difficult to know what went through his mind. But outwardly, he had confronted the possibility of the end of life by working as hard as possible for the country.

I remembered the happy times we had had together. I remember kicking a ball around with him in our garden, the day he proudly waved goodbye to me on my first day at boarding school—the same Malay College of his boyhood, his happiness when I passed my exams and the many other things that a father and son normally share. Then there were all the family holidays, playing by the sea at Port Dickson, golfing at Cameron Highlands and going for long walks along the beach at Pulau Tioman. How extremely precious all these memories had suddenly become.

He always talked about what he wanted to do when he returned. He would go back to his *kampung* in Pekan and fish

Tun Razak and Johari catch a rare 'father and son' holiday in Japan on Tun Razak's way to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Canada.

(Courtesy of Dato' Ahmad Johari bin Tun Abdul Razak)

and farm. He would be in charge of the development of Fraser's Hill where he could enjoy the mountain air and scenery. He would open a law firm with me and call it 'Razak & Razak'. Now I realise that he must have known in his heart of hearts that it might all be a dream. He was describing to me the life he would have liked to live had he had the years.

He was a wonderful father to all his sons. If he disapproved of anything one of us did, he would never raise his voice. A disapproving look from him was enough to stop us. He was warm and generous and always found time to listen and to talk to us. He was devoted to his sons but not to the point of indulgence. He taught us by example and we all tried to live up to the high standards he set.

Though by nature not disposed to displaying his emotions easily, my brothers and I knew that he was always very proud and happy whenever any of us passed our exams or otherwise excelled in school.

Dr McPherson swore me to secrecy on the grounds that my father had insisted that no one be told. If he knew that any of his sons had been told, he would have assumed that the doctors did not rate highly his chances of survival. Dr McPherson did not want him to lose hope. I did not breathe a word about it to anyone.

At this stage the doctors were confident that he could survive for a while longer. Najib had to fly home to work as he was then employed by Petronas and had urgent matters to attend to.

Around January 7, 1976, my father had a relapse. Whether or not he should be brought home, was urgently discussed. Dr McPherson was in favour of bringing him home as there was nothing more the London doctors could do to fight the leukaemia. My father refused. Unless he was well enough to arrive home and meet the people, he would not go home. He even teased the doctor saying, "It's all right for you, Doc. You can slip in quietly. I am a leader. I cannot just arrive quietly and slip into the country like you."

It was also at this time that the specialist treating my father was sick and another, much younger doctor, attended to my father at the hotel. After he had examined my father, I went up to speak to him. I asked him hopefully, and perhaps wistfully, whether my father could survive a few more years. The reply was blunt. "We are not talking about years or months here but only a matter of days." And he added, "I don't think your father can continue to be a Prime Minister." I was in a state of shock, not only at his words but the manner in which they were said. There were no soothing words, no attempt to comfort, just the cold facts.

Quite by chance, the then Malaysian High Commissioner to London, Datuk Abdullah Ali, was nearby. My face betrayed it all and when he asked me what the doctor had said, no doubt suspecting the worst, I told him what I knew. He was in tears but what was touching was his promise to do all he could to help my father and all our family. He and all the embassy officials had been immensely helpful to us.

As my father's health deteriorated, it was decided that he might be too ill to commute and so should be readmitted to the London Hospital. He had to be taken to hospital in an ambulance and I remember feeling very upset at the sight of him being wheeled in.

An air of gloom immediately set upon us with my father's readmission. I spoke to Tun Hussein on the phone and he sounded almost frantic with worry, asking me what was going on. I told him that my father had had a relapse. I was not quite sure what else I could say on the phone. He said he would be sending Tengku Rithauddeen, then Foreign Minister, and Tan

Sri Kadir Samsuddin, then Chief Secretary to the Cabinet, to assess the situation and report to him.

The DYMM Sultan of Pahang, Sultan Ahmad Shah, also called and as my father was unable to speak to him, I had to take the call. I remember him saying, "Tell your father that we are all praying for his recovery." His voice was almost breaking.

My last conversation with my father took place around January 12 or 13. I was in his room talking about my studies. He looked at me and said that I had to buy a new suit as I would soon become a lawyer and would need to dress smartly. He asked me to take his briefcase and gave me 40 pounds for the purpose. Sadly, this was to be his last gift to me. I purchased the suit a month later and wore it to all important occasions until it got too small for me.

On the night of January 13, I was feeling very tired and decided to go back to my flat to get some rest. My mother and Nizam would stay with my father. I called my friend Hashim Natt over to keep me company. With the possible imminent death of my father hovering in the background, I did not want to be alone. We talked late into the night and I fell asleep through sheer physical and emotional exhaustion. I was abruptly awoken by the ringing of the phone. It was some dark hour and it was with fear and reluctance that I picked up the receiver. It was my father's ADC, Nordin, saying that my father had taken a turn for the worse and could I go to the hospital immediately. I looked at my watch. It was 4.30 a.m.

It looked like the end was near. I remember getting dressed and walking out of the flat. It was dark, windy, damp and frosty. Despite a thick overcoat, I was very cold. I drove through the deserted streets to the hospital where Nizam and my mother were waiting. They had been reading the *Yassin* prayers. There was not much to say to each other. Our faces said it all.

Later in the morning, I went to the Malaysian High Commission to telephone Najib in Kuala Lumpur and asked him and Nazir to take the next available flight to London.

Then a call came through to say that I should hurry back to the hospital. I drove frantically through the traffic and without waiting for the lift, ran up the stairs to my father's room. When I got there, everyone was in tears. I knew then that my father was no longer alive. My mother and Nizam were by his bedside when he died at 11.00 a.m. on January 14, 1976. He slipped away without pain or anxiety.

Doctors put the cause of death as cerebral haemorrhage or simply, bleeding in the brain.

He had given his entire adult life sincerely and wholeheartedly to the nation. He had wanted very much to live longer. There

A winter's stroll in the park: (Seated from left) Tan Sri Taib Andak, Malaysian High Commissioner to Britain Datuk Abdullah Ali, the late Tun Abdul Razak. Standing (from left): A bodyguard provided by the British government and sons Nizam, Nazim and the writer.
(Courtesy of Datin Kalsom Taib)

was still so much he wanted to do. He wanted to launch the Third Five Year Economic Plan. He wanted to attend the ASEAN Prime Ministers' Summit in Bali. He wanted to resolve the communist insurgency, resolve the political conflicts caused by the prosecution of Datuk Harun Idris and the troubles with Tun Mustapha Datu Harun in Sabah. All these and more he had wanted to do.

Death is part of the natural order of the world. It is Allah's will. My father died at the age of 53, while still relatively young. I am thankful that he had lived his life to the full, had reached the highest political office and had managed to implement policies that brought much benefit to the people.

I was, of course, overwhelmed with grief when he died. I missed him then and I miss him still. Time diminishes the sense of loss but can never extinguish it.

Authors' Biographies

Author's Biographies

DYMM Tuanku Jaafar ibni al-Marhum Tuanku Abdul Rahman—was born on July 19, 1922 in Klang, Selangor. He was Abdul Razak's contemporary at the Malay College Kuala Kangsar between 1933-1940 and was appointed head boy in his senior year. When Malaya achieved independence in 1957, Tuanku Jaafar joined the diplomatic service and served in the United Kingdom, Egypt and Nigeria. He returned to the royal town of Sri Menanti upon the passing of his predecessor, almarhum Tuanku Munawir and was subsequently appointed the country's tenth Yang di-Pertuan Agong. Tuanku Jaafar's hobbies include golf and painting.

Prof. Tan Sri Maurice Baker—was born on March 24, 1920 in Alor Star, Kedah. He read English at Raffles College in 1938, obtained a First and was awarded the Queen's Scholarship. But the Second World War prevented him from proceeding to Cambridge and Baker spent much of that duration in the Cameron Highlands. By the time he took up his Queen's at the University of London, the nationalist tide was in full force. Maurice Baker was president of the Malayan Students' Union and was among half a dozen who co-founded the Malayan Forum. The *Suara Merdeka* was edited from Maurice Baker's bedroom. Maurice Baker remained jobless for a time upon his return to Singapore and it was only in 1955 that he joined the Department of English, which he headed from 1971-1977. He was subsequently appointed Singapore High Commissioner to India, Malaysia, Singapore Ambassador to the Philippines and again its High Commissioner to Malaysia. Prof. Tan Sri Maurice Baker was appointed Pro-Chancellor of the National University of Singapore from 1992-2002, a post from which he retired in July 2002.

Tan Sri Mohd Ghazali bin Shafie—was born on March 22, 1922. This Pahang son read law, political science and international studies in the United Kingdom. Upon his return to Malaya in 1955, he devoted himself to serving in various government posts, ultimately in the State Secretary's office and as Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But he will always be remembered as a major political influence behind the throne during Tun Razak's tenure and for several years thereafter. In Cabinet he served as Minister of Information,

Minister with Special Functions, Home Affairs and Foreign Affairs. He was MP for Lipis for at least four terms.

Tan Sri Dato' Michael Chen—72, is a lawyer by training but spent most of his adult years in politics. Son of Chen Hon, the *kepala* of a tin mine near Chenderiang, Perak, young Chen attended the Chung Ling High School before receiving his LLB from Lincoln's Inn. Chen was chairman of MCA's Cheras division. He served as Parliamentary Secretary from 1964-69. He was made Minister of Local Government and Rural Development from 1974-79. He was appointed senator in 1997 and elevated to president of the Dewan Negara in December 2000. He was also Chairman of the Port Klang Authority. Today he runs his own law firm in Kuala Lumpur.

Tan Sri Robert Kuok—was born Kuok Hock Nien in Johor Bahru in 1923. A tycoon today, his parents had emigrated from Fuzhou, China. His early education was in English language schools, followed by an 18-month stint at a Chinese primary school, also in Johor Bahru. He entered Raffles College, Singapore in early 1941 but the war interrupted his studies. Kuok and close relatives formed the Kuok Brothers Ltd in Johor Bahru in 1949, which today has mushroomed into the Kuok Group of Companies, a conglomerate with diverse business activities stretching from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, China, Thailand to the Philippines. In 1974, he established the Kerry Trading Co. Limited in Hong Kong, which evolved into the Kerry Group Ltd. of which Kuok became chairman.

Tan Sri Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad—was by turns a journalist, corporate figure, diplomat but at all times, consummate politician. He was born on July 4, 1937 in Machang, Kelantan, a state he represented for two terms as MP for Machang and Kok Lanas. He was chairman of Syarikat Permodalan Kebangsaan Bhd, Gadek and SPK Sentosa among others. Tun Razak took him on board as political secretary and advisor when he was only 25 years old, a post he held for 11 years (1963-1974). He is a graduate of Cambridge University. He was also Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department from 1974-1976 and UMNO Supreme Council member. In November 1976, he was detained under the Internal Security Act following a leadership struggle within UMNO. He was released in 1981. In 1996, he retired from politics and was appointed special envoy to the United Nations. Throughout those years, Tan Sri Abdullah continued as a prolific columnist. Upon his return, he was

appointed among other things, the Group Editor-in-Chief of the New Straits Times Press group until late 2003.

Datin Kalsom Taib—was born on August 18, 1942 in Muar, Johor. Her father, the late Tan Sri Taib Andak, counted among Tun Razak's best friends. They shared a flat as students in London, remained friends during Tun Razak's tenure in office and were together again in London during Tun Razak's last days. Tun Razak appointed Taib Chairman of FELDA from 1958-1971. The family ties were further enhanced when Tun Razak appointed Kalsom's husband, Datuk Shafee Yahaya, his private secretary immediately after May 13, a position of trust he held until just six months before Tun Razak's passing. Eldest in a family of five, Kalsom was a teacher by training and branched out into human resources working with Shell, the Malaysian Mining Corporation and retired as human resources director with Nestle. Today she heads Skysha Holdings Sdn Bhd, her own human resources training and consultancy. Kalsom recalls with deep appreciation being invited every year to the *tahlil* session for the late Tun Razak.

Tun Hajah Rahah bte Tan Sri Haji Noah—was born on June 11, 1933 in Muar, Johor. Her father was then chairman of UMNO Johor and her elder sister, (Tun) Suhaila, is the wife of the late Tun Hussein Onn. It was with those impeccable family credentials that Tun Razak's close friend, Tan Sri Taib Andak, brought the young Razak to catch his first glimpse of Rahah in her final year in school. The young Rahah was 19 when she married Datuk Abdul Razak. They have five sons and shared 24 happy years together.

Des Alwi Abu Bakar—was by turns nationalist, diplomat, filmmaker and businessman. The adopted son of one-time Indonesian Prime Minister Sutan Shahrir and Indonesia's first Vice-president Mohammad Hatta, he was born on November 17, 1927 in Banda Naira in the Banda Islands, Maluku, Indonesia. After spending his early education at the Europese Laghe School in Banda Naira, he went on to secondary school in Jakarta and then devoted his youth between ages 18-20 as a freedom fighter. In 1947, his adoptive parents sent him to the British Institute of Technology in London. Des Alwi joined the Indonesian Foreign Ministry in 1952 and was posted as information attaché to Switzerland, Hungary and Austria and in 1957 to Manila. When Konfrontasi broke out in the early 1960s, Des Alwi served as liaison between Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, thereby helping to

bring an end to bilateral tensions. Today he is involved in researching and making documentary films. He is Managing Director of PT Avisarti Films, Jakarta. He also manages a resort on his home islands of the Bandas, where he is dubbed "Nutmeg King" for his efforts in re-establishing Banda Naira as a major nutmeg producer. Des Alwi also chairs Banda's Culture and Heritage Foundation.

The late **Dato' K. Pathmanaban**—devoted his life to public service. Born on June 10, 1937 he rose to become Acting Secretary-General in the Ministry of Labour & Manpower. He entered politics in 1978 when he was elected MP for Teluk Kemang for 12 years. He was made Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry most familiar to him – Labour & Manpower. Subsequently he was appointed Deputy Minister of Health (1981-1989) and of Labour (1989-1990). He was also member of the National Economic Consultative Council.

Dato' P.G. Lim—born in London, read law at Lincoln's Inn. She spent her early career actively helping establish various trade unions in the then Federation of Malaya. She stood for elections once, in Sentul, in 1964 and lost. In 1970 she was invited to sit on the National Consultative Council chaired by the late Tun Abdul Razak. In 1971 she was appointed Malaysian Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, beginning an eight and a half-year diplomatic career, which took her to Yugoslavia and Austria (1973-1977), and to Belgium and the EEC (1977-1979). Upon her return, she was appointed Chairman of the Regional Court of Arbitration based in Kuala Lumpur. She is currently principal, PG Lim & Co.

The late **Tan Sri Lee Siew Yee**—was born to journalism. He started out in the *Pinang Gazette* in 1936 and later joined the *Straits Echo*. In 1952 he was made editor of the Singapore Free Press. By 1954, he was assistant editor and leader writer of the former *Straits Times*. In 1955 he was appointed its deputy editor-in-chief. In 1970 he became Editor-in-Chief and assumed overall editorial charge of the Malaysian and Singaporean editions of the *Straits Times*. In October 1972 when the Malaysian newspaper operations was transferred to Kuala Lumpur, Lee was appointed Group Editor and assumed responsibility for all editorial matters pertaining to the news group until his retirement. He was also a member of the Board of Financial Publishers, which produced the *Business Times*.

Tun Datuk Seri Dr Lim Chong Eu—spent his early years as a doctor. By the time he retired, he had made his mark as a veteran politician-statesman. Born on May 28, 1919 in Penang, he was a Queen's Scholar and took his MBCh at the University of Edinburgh Medical School in 1944. Later that year, Dr Lim went to China. He worked at the Shanghai Medical College and among other posts, was appointed personal physician to General Chen Cheng in the Chinese Army's fight against the Japanese. Upon his return to Malaya in 1947, he continued practising medicine at his father's family dispensary in Penang. He also served 16 years on the Malaysian Medical Council, held various posts in the Malayan Medical Association and was president of the Penang Medical Practitioners' Society. In 1951 he founded the Penang Radical Party; he joined the MCA in 1954 and was elected president in 1958. He resigned in 1961 to found the United Democratic Party. In 1968, the UDP extended itself to become the Party Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia. In 1969, the Gerakan won the Penang state elections. Tun Dr Lim stamped his indelible mark on Penang when he became its longest serving Chief Minister from 1969-1990.

The late **Tan Sri Datuk Amar Ling Beng Siew**—was one of Malaysia's earliest millionaires. From his hometown of Sibu, Sarawak, he made his mark in timber, banking and gold mining. He was chairman of the Hock Hua Bank, the Kong Thai Sdn Bhd and Bukit Young Goldmine Sdn Bhd. He also founded the Malaysia Daily News, a Chinese language daily. Ling was one of the nation's founding fathers. As a member of the Sarawak Legislative Council representing the Chinese community in the 1960s, he signed the Malaysia Agreement in London on July, 9, 1963. He was 86 when he died in California in December 2004.

Tengku Tan Sri Razaleigh Hamzah—better known as Ku Li in his home state of Kelantan, was born on April 13, 1937. He joined UMNO in 1962 but chose to remain in the banking and quasi-government sector until Tun Razak's demise. He formally held the finance portfolio from 1976-1984. Tengku Razaleigh is a familiar face in Parliament. He was elected Ulu Kelantan MP in the 1969, 1974, 1978, 1982 general elections and as MP for the redelineated constituency of Gua Musang in 1986. Within UMNO, he was supreme council member, party treasurer and vice-president. He lost his bid for the deputy president's post to his old political rival (Tan Sri) Musa Hitam in 1981 and 1984. He lost his bid for the party presidency to incumbent Tun Dr

Mahathir Mohamad by 43 votes in 1987. He then left UMNO to found the opposition Semangat '46, during which time he was twice elected to the Gua Musang constituency (1990 and 1995). He rejoined UMNO in 1996 and was re-elected to his Gua Musang stronghold, this time on an UMNO ticket, a seat he has held since.

Tunku Tan Sri Dato' Shahriman bin Tunku Sulaiman—was born on February 4, 1932, in Sri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan. He was a civil servant in the district office, who in 1968 rose to become Pahang State Secretary. He was also appointed Assistant Secretary (Cabinet Division) Prime Minister's Department in 1961-1963 and was the first Director General of ICDAU (now ICU) Prime Minister's Office in 1971-1974. More pertinently, he was Special Assistant to Tun Razak, a position of trust. In later years, he was appointed Chairman of United Malayan Banking Corporation Bhd. as well as Chairman and CEO of Perbadanan Nasional Bhd. (Pernas) for several years.

Tun Abdul Ghafar bin Baba—came from humble beginnings. Born on Feb. 18, 1925 in Negeri Sembilan, Abdul Ghafar was a teacher by training. During the Japanese occupation, he was one of the potential Malay officers selected for the Kua Kunrensho, the Japanese government officers training centre, which taught Japanese language and *seishin* (spirit). He subsequently held various posts in public office, including that of Chief Minister of Malacca from 1959-1967 and Cabinet Minister thereafter. He was Deputy Prime Minister from 1986 to 1993.

The late **Tun Ismail Mohamed Ali**—was born on September 16, 1918 in Port Klang, Selangor. He studied at the Batu Road Boy's School and the Victoria Institution in Kuala Lumpur. He took a degree in economics from Cambridge University in 1941, before going on to read law at the Middle Temple, Inns of Court in 1943. He was appointed minister in the Malayan Embassy in Washington in 1957 and was named executive director in the World Bank and its affiliates the following year. Returning home, he was appointed Deputy Governor of Bank Negara in 1960 and promoted to Governor from 1962-80, the longest serving of any Asian central bank chief. Upon retirement, he was appointed to the Sime Darby board of directors, before assuming the role of chairman in 1988. He was also chairman of the Permodalan Nasional Bhd stable of companies. He was 79 when he died on July, 6, 1998.

The late **Tan Sri Abdul Samad Idris**—began life as a reporter with the *Majlis* newspaper and then the *Utusan Melayu*. Born on October 13, 1923 in Seri Menanti, he showed an early interest in Malay politics. By 1955 he was UMNO Youth chief for Negeri Sembilan. He was elected assemblyman for Johol in 1955 and for Seri Menanti (1959-69), and was made state executive councillor. Despite being Deputy Menteri Besar in 1964, his lifelong ambition to be made Menteri Besar was thwarted. He was MP for Seri Menanti (1969-78) and in 1978 for Jelebu. His portfolios included Deputy Minister of Labour and Manpower (1969), National and Rural Development (1969), Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Land (1971) and Deputy Minister of Home Affairs (1973). He was Culture, Youth and Sports Minister in 1976. He quit politics in 1982. An UMNO veteran, he was appointed Pro-Chancellor of the (then) Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, Chairman of the National Film Development Corporation, Bank Pembangunan Malaysia, and MWE Holdings Bhd. He was also director of the Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd. He played golf and badminton and was an avid writer, having penned four books on Negeri Sembilan culture and history.

Tan Sri Gen. (R) Benny Moerdani—was born Leonardus Benjamin Moerdani on October 2, 1932. When he was 20, he was sent to the Army Officers Training Centre in Bandung and in the 1960s, attended various military courses in the United States. Much of his military experience was in the Special Forces and Strategic Reserve Command, with an emphasis on military intelligence. He carried the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel by the time he was appointed deputy chief of mission at the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur from 1967-71. He was subsequently posted to Seoul as consul general. From 1983-88 he was Commander in Chief of the Indonesian Armed Forces. He was appointed Minister of Defence and Security for the Republic in 1988-93.

Tan Sri Dato' Aishah bt Abdul Ghani—was born in Selangor in 1924. She began her foray into politics after her return from studies in the United Kingdom in 1959. Tan Sri Aishah worked her way up in Wanita UMNO. She was UMNO Supreme Council member and vice-chairman of the women's wing in 1972. She was appointed Welfare Minister in Tun Razak's first cabinet, a post she held until her retirement in 1984.

Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ong Kee Hui—born in 1914 to a privileged Hokkien family, he was great-grandson to Sarawak's first Kapitan Cina, Ong Ewe Hai. The young Ong started as an agricultural officer in 1936. He was appointed to the Kuching Municipal Council in 1953 and served on the Council Negeri from 1956-63. He was then elected MP from 1963-82, when he retired from politics. Ong was founder chairman of the Sarawak United People's Party, which initially, vehemently opposed the formation of Malaysia. It later came around. Ong led the English-educated professional wing of "moderates" in SUPP to counterbalance its "left wing". As Minister of Housing and Local Government, Ong oversaw the handing over of Kuala Lumpur from Selangor to the Federal Territory. He died in 2000 at age 86.

Veteran journalist **Dato' Mazlan Nordin**—was born on October 14, 1925 in Perak. He received his early education at the Malay College Kuala Kangsar. His journalistic career spanned half a century. He began in the early 1950s as a reporter in Utusan Melayu followed by a broadcasting stint in New York and then back to Utusan. In the 1970s he was news editor of Berita Harian, Chief Editor of Bernama, Editor-in-Chief and subsequently Managing Director of Utusan Melayu. Upon his retirement as Chairman of Bernama, he became a columnist with the *New Straits Times, Mingguan Malaysia* and *The Sun*. He is currently Chairman of the Malaysian Press Institute and Acting Chairman of the Press Foundation of Asia.

Dato' Seri Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak—was born on July 23, 1953, and appointed Orang Kaya Indera Shahbandar upon his father's death. He stood in his late father's Pekan constituency in an uncontested by-election in 1976, a seat he has since held for six terms. In 1978, he was appointed Deputy Minister of Energy, Telecommunications and Post, and two years later, Deputy Minister of Education. In 1981, he was appointed Deputy Finance Minister, a post he held for a year. In 1982, he contested the Pahang state seat of Bandar Pekan and was later appointed Menteri Besar of Pahang until 1986. Dato' Najib then contested the Pekan parliamentary seat and was appointed Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports in 1986. In 1990, he was appointed Defence Minister; Education (1995-1999) then reappointed Defence Minister after the 1999 general elections. He was also UMNO Youth chief in 1987-1993 and from 1993 to early 2004, was UMNO vice-president in his own right. He was

appointed the country's ninth Deputy Prime Minister on January 7, 2004.

Tan Sri Dato' Musa Hitam—was born on April 18, 1934 in Johore and entered government service in 1958. By 1968 he was MP for Segamat Utara. The very next year he had been made deputy minister. By 1974, he had been promoted to full Minister, first of Trade and Industry, Primary Industries, Education and then Home Affairs. Tan Sri Musa was elected UMNO vice-president in 1978. He quickly moved up when he defeated Tengku Razaleigh for the post of UMNO deputy president in 1981 and again in 1984. In 1987, however, Tan Sri Musa lost his party post to (Tun) Abdul Ghafar Baba by 40 votes. Tan Sri Musa then teamed up with Tengku Razaleigh in the opposition Semangat '46. The partnership floundered within a decade. After his withdrawal from politics he was appointed Malaysia's special envoy to the United Nations and later Malaysia's Chief Representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Among various other posts, he subsequently chaired the Malaysian Commission on Human Rights (Suhakam).

Datuk Harris bin Mohamed Salleh—was one of the founders of Berjaya, the party which ousted the United Sabah National Organisation in the 1976 general elections. Datuk Harris himself had been a member of the Sabah cabinet under Tun Mustapha but later resigned. He was Tenom state assemblyman and in a by-election was also made Keningau MP. Datuk Harris was deputy chief minister and a deputy president of Berjaya under Tun Fuad Stephens. He later became Berjaya president and Sabah chief minister—his last post in public office—until he was himself defeated in the 1985 elections.

Dato' Ahmad Johari bin Tun Abdul Razak—was born on November 29, 1954 in Kuala Lipis, Pahang, the second son in a family of five boys. A lawyer by training, Dato' Johari qualified with a Bachelor of Law (Hons.) from the University of Kent, UK and was called to the Bar of England and Wales in November 1976. He was admitted to the High Court of Malaya in July 1977 and practised as an advocate and solicitor with Messrs. Shearn Delamore & Co. from 1979. He became a partner with the firm from 1981 to 1994. He is presently Executive Chairman of Ancom Bhd.

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TUN ABDUL RAZAK
A PERSONAL PORTRAIT

This collection of essays is written by those who knew the late Tun Abdul Razak bin Dato' Hussein best: his friends, his collegues and his family. These are the people who cherish the warm, happy memories of a man who influenced their lives as he shaped the nation.

In retrospect, this book should perhaps have been written by the late Tun Razak himself, had he had the years to retire and pen his memoirs. But his life was cut short by leukemia. He died just two months shy of 54 on a cold, blustery day in London—the same London he had loved so much as a young law student in the decade before Malaya's independence.

This compilation is that tribute to the man who gave so selflessly of himself in an age where dedication to the nation defined patriotism. Tun Razak was a man of sharp contrasts. He was a workaholic; he loved golf; he had a serious mien; he had a wonderful, dry humour. His civil servants walked in trepidation of his criticism; they basked in his praise. To the rural poor, he was kindness personified and he gave his utmost to alleviate their painful lives. Among friends, he could relax, share seafood, laugh and reminisce.

He was the architect of Malaysia. In his final years, he pushed himself even harder. Keeping his illness to himself, he worked relentlesly for the formation of the Barisan Nasional.

Through all this, he had very little time for his family. But what time he did have, he made sure was quality time. And Tun Rahah and his five boys—now successful young professionals—remember and love him for it.

The vignettes offered here are mere brushstrokes, tempered by the distance of time. They do show the boy who walked barefoot to school to have grown into a man of deep intergrity. This then is his legacy.

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