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More than just a piece of paper

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TO an illiterate individual, a historical document or object is valueless because it is neither edible nor an item of wealth like gold or precious stones.

But to a scholar, it can be priceless or worth a substantial fortune. The historian values them because they are passages to the past, opening doors and unlocking secrets to events that impacted on and determined our present situation.

This extremely rare Malayan bond (*pic*); possibly the only one in the world now, played a very significant role in assuring the survival of Malaya when it was issued in 1951.

At that time, Malaya was still under British administration and facing a communist threat. World War Two had just ended and the British administration was definitely not in a good financial position to fight a new war with the communists here. Thus, the bond was issued to raise monies to pay for the men and materials needed to fight this war. Without the necessary funds to fight the communist threat, we can only speculate on how our country would be today. A defeat would have meant Malaya would become a Marxist state. If the war was prolonged due to lack of funds, independence could have been delayed by about five years.

A unique feature of this bond is that two different



governments were involved from its beginning to the end. The British sold it in 1951 but when it matured in 1961, it was the Malayan government that paid for it. So it can definitely be said that this bond contributed to the birth of our nation. It is the biological link between our British parent and the new country of Malaya.

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