

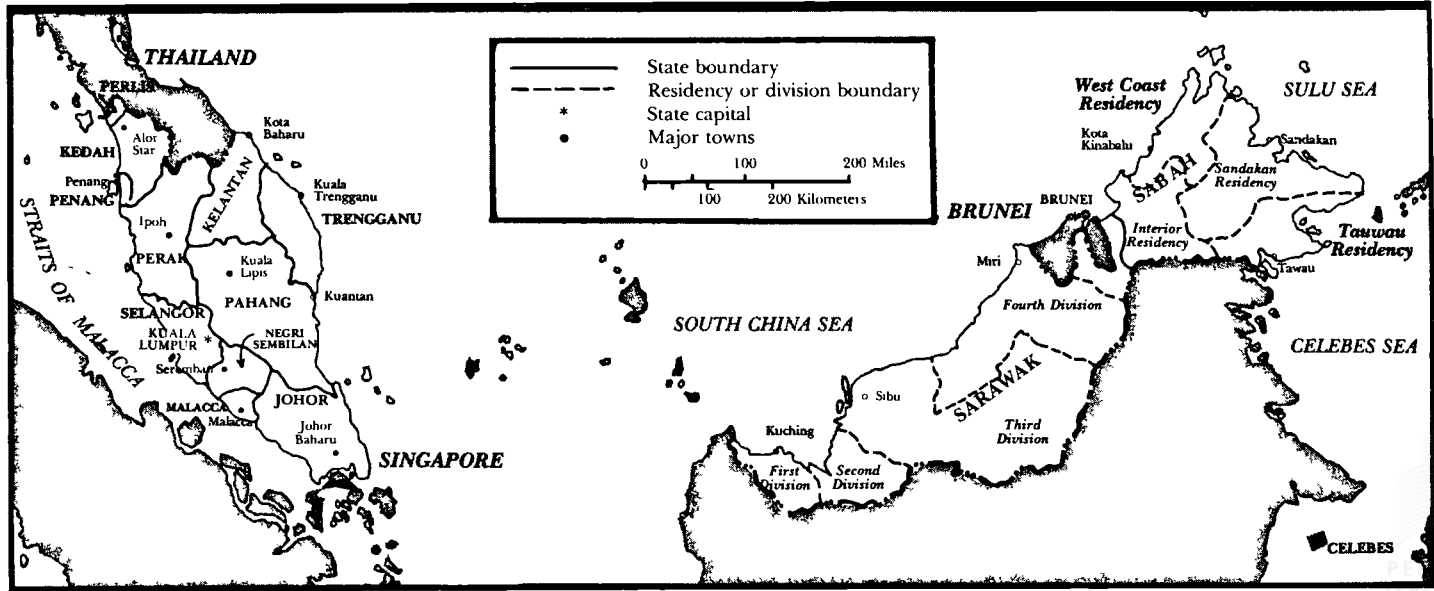
GOVERNMENT & SOCIETY IN MALAYSIA



LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION

HAROLD CROUCH

Government and Society in Malaysia



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GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY IN MALAYSIA

HAROLD CROUCH



Talisman

PUSTAKA PERDANA



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PERDANA
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Preface

DURING THE LAST DECADE or so political scientists have given much attention to the process of democratization. Earlier they had been challenged by the need to explain why democracies failed and were replaced by authoritarian rule. The challenge today is to explain why democracies have emerged or re-emerged in regions as diverse as Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. But not all countries are part of this process. In some, the sharp dichotomy between “democracy” and “authoritarianism” does not seem to apply. Instead, the political system seems to be an amalgam of both democratic and authoritarian features, which together form a cohesive, coherent political structure that is neither democratic nor authoritarian. Although such systems are by no means unchanging, the changes do not seem to add up to a clear movement toward either democracy or authoritarianism. One such case is Malaysia.

The Malaysian case is also relevant to another worldwide political phenomenon—the prevalence of ethnic politics. Malaysian society is ethnically divided, and its politics have always revolved around ethnic issues. In the late 1960s the nation seemed on the brink of collapse, and the prognoses of many observers were extremely pessimistic. Yet despite the continuing centrality of ethnic divisions, the Malaysian polity has not only held together but achieved a degree of coherence that has provided the foundation for a remarkably stable political order. On the basis of that stability the Malaysian economy was growing at one of the fastest rates in the world during the first half of the 1990s.

My close association with Malaysia began in 1974 when I accompanied my wife back to her homeland. After teaching briefly at the University of Malaya, I joined the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM or National University of Malaysia) in 1976 as the first lecturer in its newly established

Department of Political Science. It was from that vantage point that I observed political developments in Malaysia for the next fifteen years. My research on Malaysian politics, therefore, did not follow a preconceived plan but gradually developed along with its subject. My understanding of Malaysian politics increased as much through osmosis as through conscious research. Countless casual conversations were as important as formal interviews.

My debt is large, therefore, to my colleagues and students at UKM who provided me with many insights into the way they understood politics. I am particularly indebted to students in my courses on Western political philosophy whose reactions to the questions posed by the great Western thinkers illuminated distinctive Malaysian approaches to the same issues. I also benefited greatly from the friendship of colleagues at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur and the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in Penang.

I also had the opportunity to interview many politicians. It is only through face-to-face discussion that an observer can get a feel for the political process. In my experience the politicians I met were frank and forthright, although occasionally what they said had to be taken with the proverbial grain of salt. Although I have not usually mentioned them as sources by name, I here acknowledge that this book could not have been written without their cooperation. I also enjoyed the company of many other political observers, particularly journalists.

I thank the publishers and editors listed below for granting permission to draw on material published earlier in the following articles:

“The Politics of Islam in the ASEAN Countries,” in Ralph H. C. Hayburn, ed., *New Zealand and the ASEAN Countries: The Papers of the Twenty-third Foreign Policy School*. Dunedin: University Extension, University of Otago, 1988.

“The Politics of Islam in the ASEAN Countries,” in Alison Broinowski, ed., *ASEAN into the 1990s*. London: Macmillan, 1990.

“The Military in Malaysia,” in Viberto Selochan, ed., *The Military, the State, and Development in Asia and the Pacific*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991.

“Authoritarian Trends, the UMNO Split and the Limits of State Power,” in Joel S. Kahn and Francis Loh Kok Wah, eds., *Fragmented Vision: Culture and Politics in Contemporary Malaysia*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1992.

“Malaysia: Neither Authoritarian nor Democratic,” in Kevin Hewison, Richard Robison, and Garry Rodan, eds., *Southeast Asia in the 1990s: Authoritarianism, Democracy and Capitalism*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1993.

“Industrialization and Political Change,” in Harold Brookfield, ed.,

Transformation with Industrialization in Peninsular Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Friends and colleagues read and commented on versions of this manuscript at various stages. Among those who read one or another version of the full manuscript were George Kahin, Jomo K. S., and Ben Kerkvliet. Lee Poh Ping, Lee Kam Hing, and Peter Searle provided suggestions for improving individual chapters. The anonymous readers for Cornell University Press also provided valuable criticism.

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Canberra

Glossary/Abbreviations

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| ABIM | Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement) |
| APU | Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah (Muslim Unity Movement) |
| ASN | Amanah Saham Nasional (National Trust Fund) |
| <i>AWSJ</i> | <i>Asian Wall Street Journal</i> |
| Berjasa | Barisan Jamaah Islamiah Se-Malaysia (Malaysian Islamic Council Front) |
| Berjaya | Bersatu Rakyat Jelata Sabah (United Common People of Sabah) |
| Bhd./Berhad | Ltd./Limited |
| BN | Barisan Nasional (National Front) |
| <i>bumiputera, bumiputra</i> | indigenous person (lit. son of the soil) |
| CPM | Communist Party of Malaya |
| CUEPACS | Congress of Unions of Employees in the Public and Civil Services |
| <i>dakwah</i> | Islamic revival (lit. call) |
| DAP | Democratic Action Party |
| Dato' | alternative spelling of Datuk |
| Datuk | Malaysian title (below Tan Sri) |
| Datuk Paduka | Malaysian title (equivalent to Datuk) |
| Datuk Seri | Malaysian title (equivalent to Datuk) |
| <i>FEER</i> | <i>Far Eastern Economic Review</i> |
| FELDA | Federal Land Development Authority |
| FOA | Farmers' Organization Authority |
| Gagasan Rakyat | People's Concept |
| GDP | gross domestic product |
| Gerakan | Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (Malaysian People's Movement) |

| | |
|--|--|
| Hamim | Hizbullah Muslimin Malaysia (Malaysian Muslim Association) |
| Hicom | Heavy Industries Corporation of Malaysia |
| <i>hudud</i> | Koranic criminal punishment |
| Iban | Indigenous community in Sarawak |
| ISA | Internal Security Act |
| <i>jawi</i> | Arabic script |
| Kadazan | Indigenous community in Sabah |
| <i>kampung</i> | village |
| Kemas | Kemajuan Masyarakat (Community Development Program) |
| <i>konfrontasi</i> | Indonesia's confrontation campaign against the formation of Malaysia |
| LNG | liquified natural gas |
| MARA | Majlis Amanah Rakyat (People's Trust Council) |
| MCA | Malaysian Chinese Association |
| MCS | Malayan Civil Service |
| Menteri Besar | chief minister |
| Merdeka Day | Independence Day |
| Merdeka University | Freedom University |
| MIC | Malaysian Indian Congress |
| MNP | Malay Nationalist Party |
| MPH | Multipurpose Holdings |
| MTR ₃ MP (MTR ₄ MP etc.) | midterm review of the Third Malaysia Plan (and Fourth Malaysia Plan, etc.) |
| MTUC | Malaysian Trade Union Congress |
| NEP | New Economic Policy |
| NOC | National Operations Council |
| <i>NST</i> | <i>New Straits Times</i> |
| NUPW | National Union of Plantation Workers |
| <i>padi</i> | rice |
| PAP | People's Action Party |
| Parti Bumiputera | Bumiputera Party |
| PAS | Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (see PMIP) |
| PBB | Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (United Bumiputera Pesaka Party) |
| PBDS | Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (Sarawak Dayak Party) |
| PBS | Parti Bersatu Sabah (United Sabah Party) |
| Pekemas | Parti Keadilan Masyarakat Malaysia (Malaysian Social Justice Party) |
| <i>penggawa</i> | local official |
| <i>penghulu</i> | local official |
| Peremba | property development subsidiary of UDA |
| Pernas | Perbadanan Nasional (National Corporation) |
| Petronas | Petroleum Nasional Berhad (National Oil Corporation) |
| PFF | Police Field Force |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| PMIP | Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party |
| PNB | Permodalan Nasional Berhad (National Equity Corporation) |
| PPP | People's Progressive Party |
| PRM | Parti Rakyat Malaysia (Malaysian People's Party) |
| PSRM | Partai Sosialis Rakyat Malaya (Malayan People's Socialist Party) |
| PTD | Perkhidmatan Tadbir dan Diplomatik (Administrative and Diplomatic Service) |
| SCA | Sabah Chinese Association |
| SEDC | State Economic Development Corporation |
| Semangat '46 | Spirit of '46 |
| SNAP | Sarawak National Party |
| <i>syariah</i> | Islamic law |
| Tan Sri | Malaysian title (below Tun) |
| Tengku | prince |
| <i>towkay</i> | Chinese businessman or trader |
| Tun | highest nonhereditary Malaysian title |
| Tunku | prince |
| UDA | Urban Development Authority |
| UDP | United Democratic Party |
| UEM | United Engineers (M) Berhad |
| UM | <i>Utusan Malaysia</i> |
| UMNO | United Malays National Organisation |
| UMNO Baru | New UMNO |
| Ungku | prince |
| USNO | United Sabah National Organisation |
| <i>wakil rakyat</i> | member of parliament |
| Yang di-Pertuan Agong | king |
| 2MP | Second Malaysia Plan |
| 3MP | Third Malaysia Plan |
| 4MP | Fourth Malaysia Plan |
| 5MP | Fifth Malaysia Plan |
| 6MP | Sixth Malaysia Plan |

