

TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN PUTRA AL-HAJ

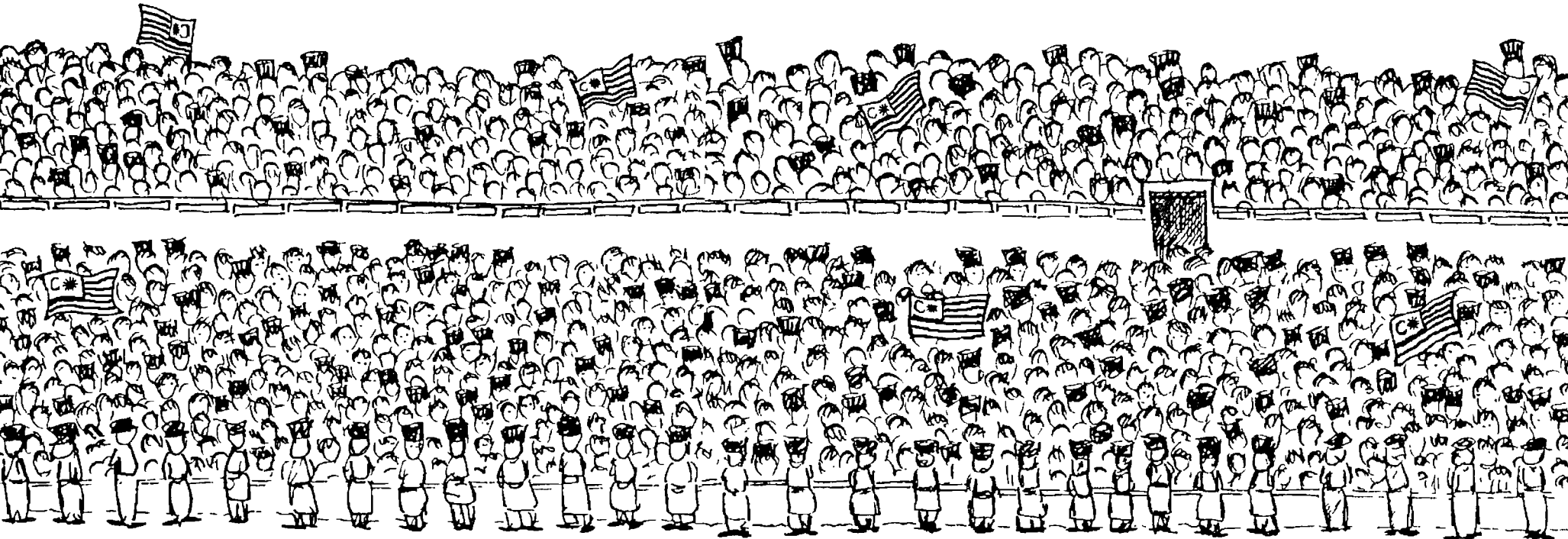
his life journey leading to the declaration of Independence (1903 - 1957)

by E.YU



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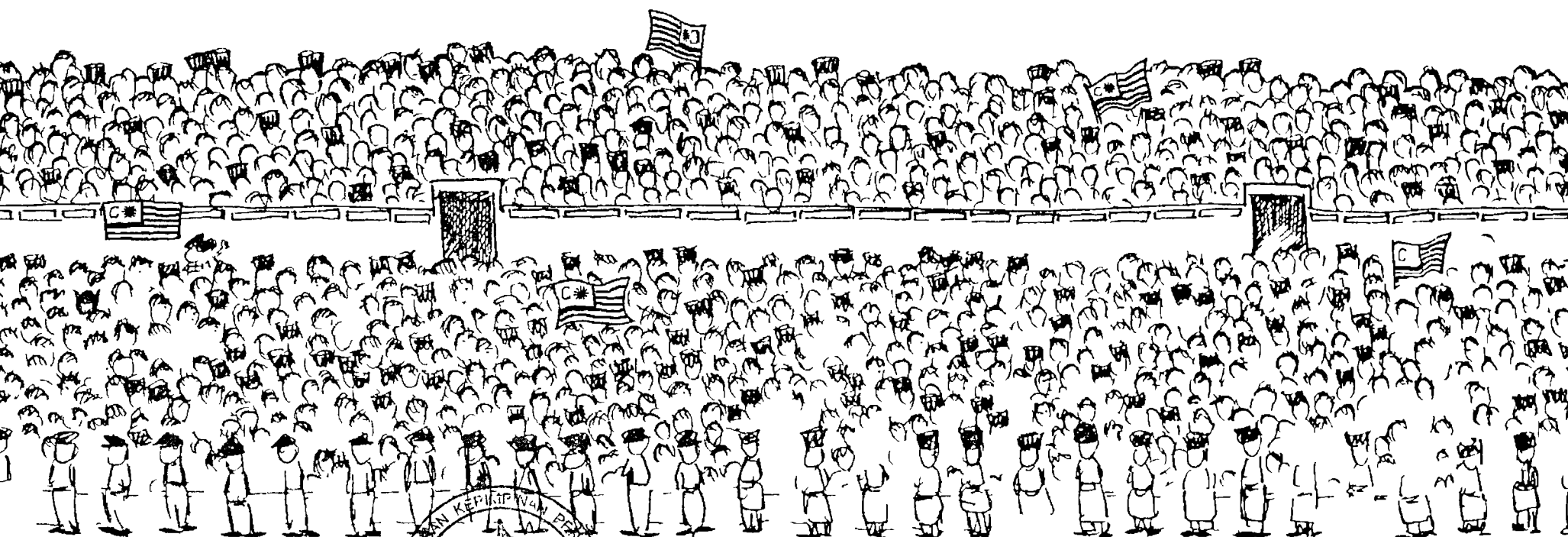




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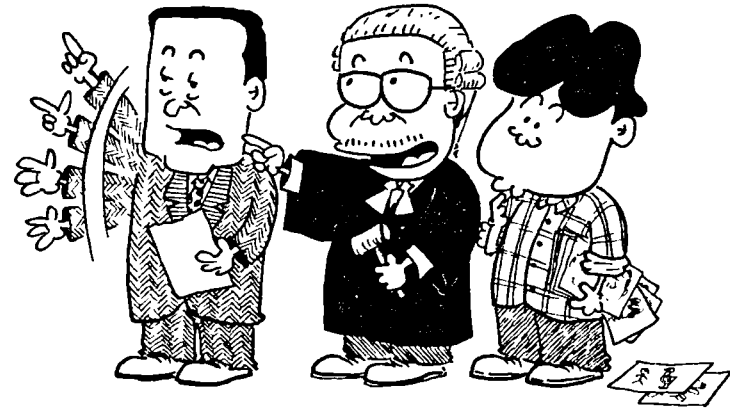
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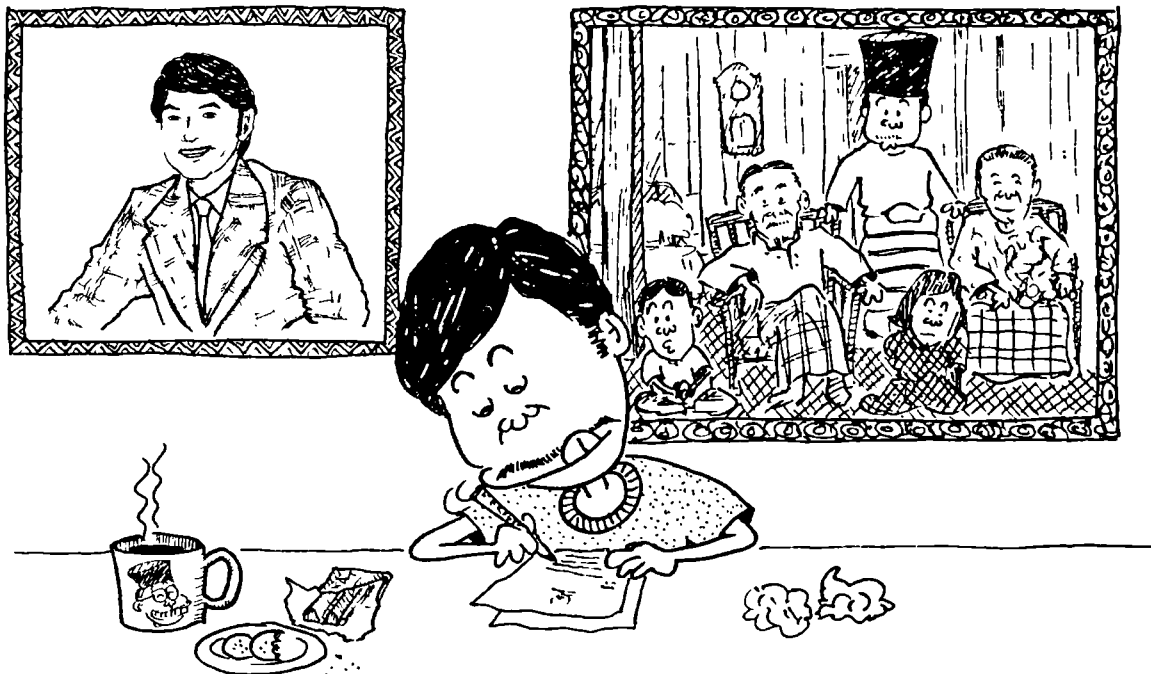
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FOREWORD

**YTM TENGGU DATO' AHMAD NERANG IBNI ALMARHUM
TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN PUTRA AL-HAJ**

I would like to congratulate Mr E. Yu for his efforts in undertaking the detailed and thorough work to publish this book in the form of graphic art on the life of Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, my father, who was also known by various names: "The Father of Independence," "Bapak Malaysia," "Prince among Men" or just simply "Tunku." It was a brilliant idea of his to publish this book in illustrated form as it provides easy and interesting reading, especially for the children of today and tomorrow, who may only be interested in the history of their country at an older age. This book was written in the spirit of the kind of person Tunku was – a man with a great sense of humour.

This book depicts in detail the life of a man who fought for Independence for the nation in 1957, from British colonial rule of over 200 years, without shedding one single drop of blood. In history, independence from the British colonial master had never been achieved through such peaceful means by any other leaders of Tunku's time. This was also the man responsible for the formation of Malaysia in 1963, by bringing in Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore to join the then Federation of Malaya. Tunku was able to achieve all this due to his sheer charismatic and diplomatic personality.

It seems to me that even in those younger days when Tunku went through hardship, all his struggles and sacrifices for the country and the people, he knew what his future was destined to be.

As you read this book, you will note that in his earlier life Tunku was a man full of adventures, so much so that both my sister Tunku Datin Khadijah and I were always anxious for his safe return. We did not want to be left without a parent since our mother had died when my sister was a year old and I was only a month old.

In his earlier days, Tunku had done a lot for Kedah, his home state, and its people, but in return, what he incurred was the jealousy of his seniors, who had not done much for the State and who were afraid to venture to save the State and the people against the very many catastrophies at the time. For all his efforts, Tunku was victimised by the very same seniors. Our family had to go through a very hard time. I envy my children today by comparison.

I would like to mention here Violet Coulson (Muslim name Puteh Bte Abdullah) whom Tunku married after my mother's death. I will always remember her with great fondness, and we had a very happy family life when she was with us but sadly she had to return to England when World War II broke out. I was only five years old at that time. She left and never returned, and our family life was never the same after that.

Someone once mentioned in his book that Tunku entered politics very much richer than when he left. We, his family, wholeheartedly agree. He entered politics to serve the country and people, and not for personal gain. He was sincere and honest and very careful when it came to spending public funds as opposed to when it came to spending his own money. His taste was simple; his residences both when he was Prime Minister and when he stepped down were old buildings and very simply furnished. He used only one official car, a Cadillac, during his 13 years as Prime Minister, and that car is now on display at the Tunku Abdul Rahman Memorial in Kuala Lumpur. For the next 20 years from 1970 when he stepped down as Prime Minister until his death in 1990, he also used only one official car, a Mercedes, currently now on display at the Melaka Stadium in Melaka. As the

Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tunku was also described by those who had worked for him and those who really knew him as a simple man who made simple decisions which were very easy to follow.

When Tunku died on December 6, 1990 at almost 88 years of age, a religious person was heard saying, "Tunku ni dengan sebulat-bulatnya masuk syurga bersama-sama dengan orang-orang yang soleh." This sums up what most people think about him.

Finally I would say that Tunku was not much of a family man. He was more a man of the people, destined to serve the country and the people regardless of race, creed or religion, rich or poor though he concentrated more on the poor. He loved people and made everyone feel at ease with him. He served but did not expect to be served and he always believed in and hoped for peace, prosperity, racial harmony and religious tolerance among all the races in Malaysia. I pray that this belief and hope of his will always be practised in Malaysia.

May God bless Malaysia always.



A TRIBUTE

By Tun Ahmad Sarji bin Abdul Hamid

I am greatly honoured to be invited by the publisher to write a tribute to this cartoon book, which traces the Tunku's life journey leading to the declaration of independence (1903 - 1957).



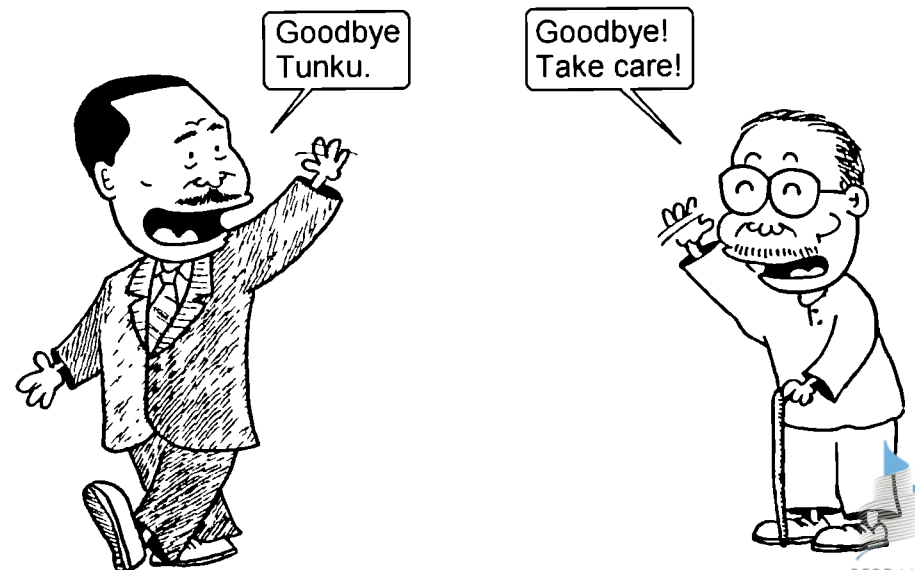
I started admiring the Tunku in 1953 when I was in Form Three. I took History as a subject. One particular event nourished this admiration, namely, the Baling talks in 1955 with Chin Peng, the Malayan Communist Party leader. Tunku stood his ground when he wrote: "The ideology of violence is in conflict with our ideology of peace. We cannot accept the Communist Party as lawful and legitimate after the damage they have done to the people and the country." I, of course, supported the Tunku's opinion as many of my relatives had been killed by the communists. I lived in Tapah, the capital of Batang Padang district, which had many 'black areas' during the Emergency.

In March 1990, when I was Chief Secretary to the Government, I called on the Tunku at his home in Penang. The Tunku proudly showed me the rare book entitled *Political and Commercial Considerations Relative to the Malayan Peninsula and the British*

Settlements in the Straits of Malacca by John Anderson which was published in 1824. The book bears a sketch of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin, one of the Tunku's ancestors. The book was purchased by Sime Darby at a Sotheby's auction in London. It was presented to the Tunku by Tun Tan Siew Sin, one of my predecessors as Chairman of the old Sime Darby.

After our cordial conversation, the Tunku led me to the door. Rudyard Kipling aptly describes people like the Tunku when he wrote: "If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, / Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch..." The Tunku's gesture in sending me off was totally unexpected given his stature, age and his failing health.

I was with Dr Mahathir and a few others who stood by the Tunku's bedside as the great man's life ebbed away, and witnessed the Tunku's last breath. He died peacefully on December 6th, 1990. My duty, as instructed by the Prime Minister, was to announce the Tunku's death to the nation and the world.



Stadium Merdeka and Stadium Negara, the Tunku's endearing legacy, are part of our history. The soul of the nation lies in our heritage. There was a plan to demolish both landmarks for commercial development. In 2001, Permodalan Nasional Berhad acquired both landmarks which have since been gazetted as 'national heritage.' It is a fitting tribute to the memory of Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra.

I hope that the cartoonist E. Yu will follow up this book with another cartoon book which will illustrate the Tunku's journey from Merdeka (Independence) in 1957 until his death in 1990. The publication of this book will entrench the place of the Tunku: that his throne lies in the hearts of all Malaysians.

Kuala Lumpur
December 31, 2008

