THE POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION OF PRIMORDIAL PARTIES:
DMK (India) and PAS (Malaysia)

by

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ABSTRACT

This study is rooted in a theoretical interest in the development of parties that appeal mainly to primordial ties. The claims of social relationships based on tribe, race, language or religion have the capacity to rival the civil order of the state for the loyalty of its citizens, thus threatening to undermine its political authority. This phenomenon is endemic to most Asian and African states.

Most previous research has argued that political competition in such contexts encourages the formation of primordially based parties whose activities threaten the integrity of these states. This study of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) of India and the Parti Islam (PAS) of Malaysia examines an alternative pattern of primordial party development.

The DMK and the PAS both sought to define nationality in terms of primordial ties. The DMK's objective was to create an independent Dravidian state by redrawing India's boundaries. The PAS wanted the restoration of Malay sovereignty which involved the elevation of the Malay "community" to the position of a Malay "nation-state".

In both India and Malaysia, competitive politics in a federal structure provided arenas in which diverse political forces such as the DMK and the PAS could mobilize primordial identities and make bids for power. The involvement of the DMK and the PAS in the contest for electoral support set in motion a process that led them initially to abandon their goals and then to align with the national ruling parties. Their primordial urges gave way to pragmatic accommodation in the quest for power. This study describes, compares and explains the accommodative outcome in each context.
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<tr>
<td>AICC</td>
<td>All India Congress Committee</td>
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<td>BN</td>
<td>Barisan Nasional</td>
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<td>CPI</td>
<td>Communist Party of India</td>
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<td>DAP</td>
<td>Democratic Action Party</td>
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<td>DK</td>
<td>Dravidar Kazhagam</td>
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<td>INC</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
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<td>KMM</td>
<td>Kesatuan Melayu Muda</td>
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<td>MCA</td>
<td>Malaysian Chinese Association</td>
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<td>MCP</td>
<td>Malayan Communist Party</td>
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<td>Malaysian Indian Congress</td>
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<td>PAP</td>
<td>People's Action Party</td>
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<td>PN</td>
<td>Parti Negara</td>
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<td>PPP</td>
<td>People's Progressive Party</td>
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<td>TNC</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Congress</td>
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<td>TNP</td>
<td>Tamil Nationalist Party</td>
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<td>UMNO</td>
<td>United Malays National Organization</td>
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CHAPTER 1

What is the Thesis About?

This study seeks to explain the political accommodation of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) of India and the Parti Islam (PAS)\(^1\) of Malaysia, which can be divided into two stages: first, their acceptance of the legitimacy of their nation-states which they initially opposed; and second, the subsequent alignment with central governments they had previously accused of allegedly neglecting Tamil and Malay interests respectively.

This study has its roots in a theoretical interest in the development of parties that appeal mainly to what Clifford Geertz has collectively labelled "primordial ties";\(^2\) these include identifications based on tribe, race, region, language or religion which rival the civil order of the state for ultimate political authority and loyalty. This phenomenon is "literally pandemic" to most Asian and African states.\(^3\)

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1. The original name of the party was Persatuan Islam Se-Malaya or PAS, which is its Malay-Arabic acronym. In 1973, its name was changed to Parti Islam but it is still referred to as PAS by party members and others.


Primordial groups differ from groups based on economic or class interests. The latter are rarely "considered as possible self-standing, maximal social units, as candidates for nationhood." Conflicts between social classes "occur only within a more or less fully accepted terminal community whose integrity they do not, as a rule, put into question."

Since primordial groups may in fact be considered as "candidates for nationhood", primordial conflict, unlike class conflict, may bring into question the very definition of the nation-state. Such conflict situations arise when primordial groups see the solution to their problems either in secession or in a redefinition of the qualifications for citizenship so as to include or exclude certain segments of the population.

In Asian and African states, such demands have often been articulated by primordially based political parties. Most

5. Ibid.
8. It should be noted, however, that not all primordially based parties articulate such demands. Some are part of ruling governments and therefore have a vested interest in upholding the present definition of the nation-state; and others function as opposition parties but aim only to advance the interests of their respective groups within the context of the present nation-state (for example, the present Muslim League in India).
governments in these states have repressed such parties in part because they are perceived as threats to "the very foundations of the nation-state, the limits of the political community." Further, these governments have frequently disallowed competitive party politics conducted largely along primordial lines on the ground that they endanger national unity.

Most references to the effects of a system of party competition in primordially divided societies assert that it inevitably leads to the emergence of primordially based parties which will increasingly adopt more extreme and uncompromising postures in order to make their bids for popular support successful. Little systematic research has been done on alternative patterns of primordial party development - for example, the conditions under which competitive politics may have a moderating effect on these parties. This neglect has occurred in


part because the dissolution of competitive politics a few years after independence has made such a possibility largely a hypothetical one in most of these states.

Two polities, where competitive politics until recently have had relatively uninterrupted existence and where such competition has had a moderating effect on primordial parties, are India and Malaysia.12 This study examines one primordial party in each of these two states: the DMK and the PAS. They were both founded about two decades ago and championed Tamil and Malay interests respectively. They were both opposed to their nation-states as defined by the ruling parties. This opposition was initially the most crucial aspect of their political platforms.

The DMK's principal objective at its inception was the creation of a Dravidanadu consisting of the present states of Andhra, Kerala, Mysore and Tamil Nadu which would be independent of allegedly Aryan India.13 In the case of the PAS, the dominant aspiration from its early years was the restoration of Malay sovereignty which, it alleged, had been surrendered by the policy of extending citizenship to large numbers of aliens in Malaya.14

12. Parliamentary democracy was suspended in Malaysia after the outbreak of communal riots in May, 1969 and it was restored in February, 1971. A National Operations Council (NOC) led by Tun Abdul Razak governed the country in the interim. In India, "Emergency" rule was promulgated in June, 1975 and this was followed by, among other things, repression of opposition parties' activities.


14. Memorandum Persatuan Islam Sa-Malaya (PAS) kepada Surohanjaya Bebas (PAS Memorandum to the Independence Commission) (no date).
While the DMK's demand required the redrawing of the territorial boundaries of India, the PAS's involved the elevation of the Malay "community" to the position of a Malay "nation-state". The latter implied that non-Malays in the country would be regarded "as aliens enjoying only those rights and privileges which the Malays themselves might see fit to give".  

Initial opposition to ruling party definitions of the nation-state is not the only similarity between the DMK and PAS. Both (1) have won governmental power in states that are relatively homogeneous, ethnically and linguistically; (2) attributed the economic backwardness of their respective communities to domination of their economy by "aliens", that is, by the Marwaris of northern India and the Chinese in Malaysia; (3) are mainly regionally based parties; (5) operate in federal political systems; and (6) show a concern for members of their community living in other political systems.

Some important differences also exist between these two parties. Unlike the DMK, the PAS did not originate as a secessionist movement. It wanted the entire Malayan nation to be defined in ethnic Malay terms. Secondly, the roots of their primordialisms differ. As displayed in the party's name, PAS's appeal to Malay sentiments is blended with


16. The term "secession" carries derogatory connotations and is often not used by those who seek a separate state. The separatists "call it the right of national self-determination and crown the term with an aura of sanctity". Duchacek, op. cit., p. 69.
Islamic beliefs. In contrast, DMK's appeal to Tamil loyalties does not have any theological overtones and, in fact, in its early phase, it had a distinctively atheistic orientation. Thirdly, they are dissimilar with regard to the size and spatial distribution of their potential supporters; Tamils, found mostly in the state of Tamil Nadu, constitute less than ten percent of the Indian population whereas Malays, found throughout the country, are politically the most important group. Fourthly, following from the above, the DMK's activities are confined mostly to one state, Tamil Nadu, whereas PAS activities extend to several, especially the northern, Malay dominated, states.

Other differences between the DMK and PAS stem from the differences in their national political environments. Although both India and Malaysia are ex-British colonies and highly centralised federations, the heterogeneity and complexity of Indian society and the presence of numerous cross-cutting cleavages, political and others, contrast sharply with the bimodal structure of (peninsular) Malaysian society. In the latter, the dominant cleavage is the one between the bumiputra ("sons of the soil") who are predominantly Malays and the kaum mendatang (immigrant communities) consisting of Chinese, Indians and others.

The above difference in cleavage patterns influenced greatly the nature of the coalition building process by the two "dominant" parties in these countries. While in India, the Indian National Congress (INC) emerged as an "umbrella" party incorporating diverse social forces, in peninsular Malaysia, an inter-communal coalition was forged in the form of the "Alliance" party (consisting of the United Malays National Organisation, the Malayan
Chinese Association and the Malayan Indian Congress). The UMNO-MCA-MIC alliance was based on an unspoken symbiotic bargain in which political and economic powers were to be in Malay and non-Malay, particularly Chinese, hands, respectively. Thus, political power in peninsular Malaysia came to be wielded by the leadership of UMNO. As a result, the Malay-based PAS had to contend with a federal government which was controlled by Malays belonging to another political party. In India, although Tamils such as Kamaraj Nadar, Subramaniam and Venkatraman rose to prominent positions in the hierarchy of the ruling INC, political control of the INC was never in the hands of Tamils for reasons too obvious to warrant mention here. Thus, the nature of the federal governments with which the DMK and PAS had to contend were somewhat different.

Finally, their power positions in relation to the national ruling parties also differed. As an exclusively Tamil Nadu-based party, the DMK did not pose a threat to the all-India based INC. Also, the INC initially enjoyed a dominant position in Tamil Nadu as well. PAS, in contrast, was the principal rival to the dominant component of the Alliance party, the UMNO. Both competed for Malay political allegiances. PAS succeeded in replacing UMNO as the governing party in two predominantly Malay states: Kelantan (from 1959 onwards) and Trengganu (from 1959 to 1961).

Despite these differences between the DMK and the PAS, there were partly similar outcomes in that in both cases, political accommodation occurred. Both parties no longer seek their initial goals.
The DMK formally dropped its secessionist demand in 1963 and now accepts the legitimacy of the larger "terminal community" of India. The PAS formally abandoned its goal of the Malay "nation-state" in 1971 and now accepts as legitimate the multi-ethnic character of the present nation-state. The acceptance of the legitimacy of their nation-states represents the first stage in the political accommodation of these parties.

The second stage occurred when they aligned themselves with the ruling parties at the national level. DMK extended its parliamentary support to Indira Gandhi's New Congress which was then fighting for political survival after the factional split in the INC in 1969. The DMK Members of Parliament justified such support on the grounds that "the DMK is a responsible party" and places "national interests above sectional ones." PAS became a member of the ruling Barisan Nasional (National Front) in 1973. Entry into the BN, according to PAS leaders, was dictated by national security and development considerations.

The fundamental shift in the political orientations of these two primordial parties challenges the widely held view that political competition will necessarily lead such parties to undermine the integrity of newly independent Asian and African states where primordial

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19. For a discussion of what I consider to be the "real" reasons, see Ch. 6 of this dissertation.
loyalties are paramount. It suggests in fact just the opposite. That is, competitive politics may have a moderating effect on these parties, given the presence of certain conditions. This study seeks to explain both stages in the political accommodation of these parties and to identify the conditions under which these have taken place.

Power Ambition and Political Accommodation

Many students of parties have emphasized that the primary objective of a party is the satisfaction of its own power ambition: to Michels, "the raison d'être of the political party is the push for power"; to Weber, parties are "structures struggling for domination"; and to Duverger, the objective of the party is to "win political power and exercise it". More recently, Sindler, who stresses that he does "not overlook the policy orientations of party", considers it "one of the several means to the power end of party: the control of government through the pursuit of election victories". The "material drives of party", he continues, "tend to be more enduring than any commitment in


the abstract to ideology or to any particular policy position".  

This study relates the political accommodation of the DMK and PAS primarily to power ambitions, ambitions not only of these two parties but also those of the ruling parties in these countries. Specifically, it is argued that the actual exercise of, or the increasing likelihood of obtaining governmental power at the state level led the PAS and DMK respectively to accept ruling party definitions of the nation-state. Their accommodation was 'aided', in turn, by concessions from ruling parties to some of the primordially inspired demands which forced these parties to concentrate on specific economic frustrations to win votes, thus pushing their basic goal into the background. Such concessions were made by ruling parties primarily to remove some of the force in the rhetoric of these parties in the hope that this would undermine their growth.

The motivation for the subsequent alignment of the DMK and PAS with the ruling parties at the national level lay in the opportunities the former saw in such an alignment for consolidating their political power. Specifically, they hoped to achieve this through the acquisition of political and economic rewards from the ruling parties. From the perspective of the latter, the likelihood of removing actual or potential threats to their security through an alignment with these parties has been the main motivation behind their willingness to extend such rewards.

25. Ibid., p. 9.
Structure of the Study

The remainder of this study is divided into six chapters. In Chapter 2, the forces that led to the founding of the DMK and PAS respectively are examined within the broader context of emerging Dravidian and Malay nationalisms in the colonial era. In the next chapter, the challenges to ruling party definitions of the nation-state as manifested in the calls for the creation of a "Dravidanadu" and a "Tanah Melayu" by these two parties are discussed. The political mobilizational strategies pursued to generate support for these alternative conceptions are analysed in Chapter 4. The DMK's strategy is characterised as "identity-building", while that of PAS as "out-bidding".

The acceptance of ruling party definitions of the nation-state by these two parties - the first stage in the process of political accommodation - is analysed within the broader context of their involvement in competitive politics (Chapter 5). The next chapter examines their subsequent alignment with the ruling parties which is related to the responses and power positions of the ruling parties. The final chapter presents a summary whereby the findings are linked to relevant theoretical insights in the comparative politics literature.

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected over a period of sixteen months. The initial three months' work in Tamil Nadu (April to June, 1972) and in Malaysia (December, 1972 to February, 1973) respectively
was confined to library research - to the examination of census reports, historical studies, Election Commission reports, records of legislative assembly debates, press clippings, party documents and files, local journals, newspapers, unpublished theses and other documents. During these periods, I also talked to local academics who were familiar with the political processes in these areas.

In addition to the documentary sources, I drew heavily upon personal interviews in tracing the evolution of these parties. I endeavoured to keep complete field notes of casual observations, and conducted approximately one hundred and forty formal interviews with party members and others about specialised knowledge they had of the history, organisation, objectives, membership, leadership, electoral participation and other political activities of these two parties respectively. Civil servants were also interviewed for information on the public policies of the respective state governments led by these parties. A list of those who did not impose the anonymity rule is appended.

In these interviews, which were conducted in the respective state capitals and districts, I generally avoided taking notes. After the first few interviews, it became clear that, with pen and pad out of sight, a politician is likely to be more frank than he might otherwise be. It was only after the meeting that I made notes of the interview and, with practice, lost little detail in recording it. In addition to the interviews, I was also a regular observer of the state legislatures when in session, attended party conferences in the state and district capitals, and travelled with politicians to various parts of the state to observe organisational activities.
CHAPTER 2

Politicisation of Primordial Identities: Emergence of the DMK and the PAS

Not all political activities in colonial Asia and Africa were directed chiefly against foreign overlordship. Many primordial groups were at least as concerned with organising themselves in order to protect or advance their own interests vis-à-vis other social groupings within the framework of colonial rule. In turn, as independence approached, their concern shifted to securing an equitable share of political power and other benefits for their respective groups in the post-independence era.¹

Both the DMK and the PAS have their origins in such political ambitions. The former has its roots in Dravidian nationalism, the latter in a variant of Malay nationalism. As both parties are conditioned by the circumstances of their birth, an analysis of these circumstances is a necessary starting point for the present study.

Dravidian Nationalism and the DMK

The DMK, founded on September 17, 1949, grew out of the Non-Brahmin Movement which emerged in the second half of the last century in the Madras Presidency.² This movement arose as a reaction to the

¹ Walker Connor, "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?", World Politics, 24:3 (April 1972), pp. 348-50.
² Before Independence, Madras Presidency consisted of Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu speaking regions. Together these four language groups constitute the Dravidian language family. The early movement was called interchangeably a "non-Brahmin (or, anti-Brahmin) movement" and a "Dravian movement". Later, the "non-Brahmin" label was dropped from usage.
numercially unwarranted dominance of Brahmins in the administrative, cultural, educational, political and religious spheres. The principal objective of the Non-Brahmin Movement was initially confined to the reduction of Brahmin power. Later, the Movement's objective was broadened to include the creation of an independent Dravidian state and after 1949 the DMK became the principal exponent of this objective.

Brahmin dominance in the Madras Presidency has been adequately described elsewhere. Thus, only a few illustrations of its extent will be given here. Constituting about three percent of the population, the Brahmins comprised 69 percent of the student population in arts colleges in Madras Presidency, in 1890/91. They comprised: 69 percent of those who graduated from the University of Madras, between 1858 and 1894; 55 percent of the Deputy Collectors in 1912; 73 percent of the District munsifs in 1913; 42 percent of the "higher" civil service posts which were open to Indians, in 1886; the majority of the official members of the Morley-Minto legislative council, from 1909 to 1920;


4. Mohan Ram, Hindi Against India (New Delhi, 1968), p. 70.


percent of the Madras Standing Congress Committee in 1890;\textsuperscript{10} and 61 percent of the committee members of the Madras Mahajana Sabha in 1909.\textsuperscript{11}

The position of Brahmins in the administrative, educational and political life of South India became established in the nineteenth century. Before this their position was "important but not dominant in society. They were regarded as superior ritually, provided some leadership in religion, were comfortably off in regard to land, held political and administrative positions from time to time."\textsuperscript{12}

The Brahmin rise to a position of dominance has been attributed partly to the rapid expansion of western education in the nineteenth century in Madras Presidency and partly to the opportunities especially in the civil service and other patronage appointments offered under the British raj to those who acquired this education.\textsuperscript{13} The literary tradition of the Brahmin community gave them an advantage over other communities in adapting themselves to western education. Thus Brahmin youths entered schools and colleges in disproportionately large numbers

\textsuperscript{10} Hindu, January 25, 1890. This committee was formed in 1888 to manage Congress affairs in South India. In 1896, it was dissolved and its duties were transferred to the Madras Mahajana Sabha.

\textsuperscript{11} Proceedings of the Madras Mahajana Sabha, 1907-12, MMS Office, Mount Road, Madras.


\textsuperscript{13} Seal, op. cit., and B.T. McCully, English Education and Origins of Indian Nationalism (Gloucester, Mass., 1966).
and went on to enjoy the benefits provided under colonial administra-
tion. In contrast, the members of other communities lagged behind in
the acquisition of western education. Consequently their share of
administrative and political appointments was comparatively low.

The earliest adverse reaction to Brâhmin dominance came from
among the educated members of the elite non-Brahmin castes, from per-
sons who had left the occupations traditionally associated with their
castes and migrated to urban areas in the hope of entering the colonial
administration or other urban professions. Not only were such people
reacting to the Brahmin domination of these professions; they were
reacting also to their comparative loss of status in the urban areas.
In rural areas they had often enjoyed high economic and social status
and had been respected by Brahmans, most of whom were poorer than
they. Barnett has summarised non-Brahmin elites' degradation in
status in the urban areas: "The lack of generalized (that is, through-
out Madras Presidency) ranking and even of general knowledge of the
position of various non-Brahmin castes meant that some castes pre-
viously ranked above and apart from other non-Brahmins were now
'lumped' with the non-Brahmin masses in cities and towns. In urban
areas non-Brahmins from highly orthodox, orthoprax castes were treated

14. For historical explanations of their backwardness, see
Subramaniam, op. cit.; p. 1134.
as part of the undifferentiated category - Suddhra."\(^{15}\)

The non-Brahmin elites reacted to their loss of status by re-defining "Brahmin" as a negative symbol, and they eventually came to allege that Sanskrit, Hinduism and the caste system were imposed by Aryan Brahmin colonists on a Dravidian India which had had its own cultural traditions and been free of caste. The liberation of the Dravidian peoples, it was therefore argued, lay not only in ending the dominance of the alien Brahmins and their cultural traditions (which were perceived as providing the basis for the domination), but also in reviving earlier Dravidian traditions. The intellectual basis for this argument was found in a largely mythologised Dravidian past which had been given an aura of historical reality in the writings of a few European scholars.\(^{16}\) Social egalitarianism and Dravidian identity became the key slogans of the non-Brahmin elites in their struggle against Brahmin domination. As the struggle became more intense and began to involve larger sections of the population, these slogans were further elaborated to provide the basis for a

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separatist ideology.

The Justice Party

Despite the fact that there were a few organisations which had championed non-Brahmin causes prior to 1916, the beginning of the Non-Brahmin Movement has usually been traced from the issuing of the famous "Non-Brahmin Manifesto" towards the end of that year and the subsequent formation of the Justice Party. The manifesto called for the greater representation of non-Brahmins in educational institutions, governmental bureaucracy, and legislative councils. It also opposed the Brahmin demand for Home Rule ("We are deeply devoted and loyally attached to British rule") and emphasised the urgent need for non-Brahmins "to educate their boys and girls in far greater numbers" than had so far been possible and to organise themselves for the more effective articulation of their interests.

The Justice Party was formed in 1917 to promote the objectives

17. Two well-known ones were "The Dravidian Association" and "The South India People's Association". The latter, a joint stock company, was formed for the purpose of publishing newspapers to voice non-Brahmin grievances. The three prominent newspapers published by this association were Justice (English), Dravidian (Tamil) and Aanthira Prakasini (Telugu).

18. For a brief discussion of the "Home Rule" movement, which was led by Annie Besant in Madras, see Irshick, op. cit., ch. 2. Also, see Hugh Owen, "Towards Nation-Wide Agitation and Organization: The Home Rule Leagues, 1915-18", in D.A. Low, ed., Soundings in Modern South Asian History (London, 1968), pp. 159-95.

19. Published in the Hindu, December 20, 1916.
set out in the manifesto. Committed to constitutional methods, this party contested the Legislative Council elections held under the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme of 1919 and managed to form ministries in 1920, 1923 and 1930. In the 1934 elections, however, the Justice Party was routed by the Congress Party and lost every seat it contested. It never recovered from this electoral thrashing. It had failed to obtain the support of lower caste Hindus and Untouchables. Justice ministries had paid only lip service to the advancement of the latter groups; they were concerned instead with being "a broker for government jobs for a few select Non-Brahmin caste Hindus".

Also, Justice Party support for the British raj led to alienation of the former from the rising tide of Indian nationalism. Congress leaders, many of whom in Madras were Brahmins, castigated it as a lackey of the colonialists. Finally, elite rivalry within the party, especially between Tamil and Telugu elements, further undermined its effectiveness.

20. Although its actual name was the "South India Liberal Federation", it was popularly known as the "Justice Party", after the name of its official organ, the Justice.

21. For a discussion of this scheme, see R.C. Majumdar, et al.; An Advanced History of India (New York, 1951) Part III.

22. The victory of the Justice Party in these elections was greatly facilitated by the Congress boycott of these elections which was part of the larger "Non-cooperation" movement led by Gandhi. See Irschick, op. cit., ch. 6.

23. Ibid., pp. 192-3.


Periyar and the Self-Respect Movement

While the Justice Party was exerting pressure at the governmental level for greater concessions for elite non-Brahmin castes, another Non-Brahmin Movement was more concerned with spreading social reforms among the lower caste Hindus and the Untouchables. This was the famous Suya Mariyaathai Yiyakkam (the Self-Respect Movement) led by E.V. Ramasamy Naicker. Popularly referred to as "Periyar" (Elder), he was without doubt the most important figure in the entire history of the Non-Brahmin Movement and was instrumental in transforming the Movement from an elitist to a mass based one.

Periyar's political career began not in the Justice Party but in the Congress in 1919. In 1920 he participated in Gandhi's "non-cooperation" movement. The extent of his commitment to this movement and to Congress can be seen in his resignation from no less than twenty-nine public offices that he had held, giving up business activities that had brought him a yearly income of twenty thousand rupees in favour of political work.26

Periyar's support for Gandhi and Congress, however, lasted for only six years. While Periyar shared Gandhi's nationalist aspirations, he was more concerned with uplifting the lower caste Hindus and the Untouchables. In this Periyar and Gandhi held conflicting views. While Gandhi argued that social mobility was possible within the Hindu caste

system, Periyar viewed the latter as a Brahmin device for the suppression of the lower castes. Periyar's actions and statements on this issue aroused the anger and opposition of the Brahmin leadership of the Congress. Among other things, he organised a satyagraha at Vaikom (Travancore State), for the right of the Untouchables to enter Hindu temples and ridiculed Hindu religious epics, calling them fairy tales. Periyar's break with the Congress came in 1925, after his various attempts to get the Congress to accept communal representation as a method for uplifting the Dravidian people had failed. From 1925 on Periyar attacked the Congress as an organisation that was controlled by and served primarily the interests of the Brahmins.

After his exit from the Congress, Periyar started the Self-Respect Movement. The objectives of the Movement, as summed up by its founder, included the "abolition of God, religion, Congress, Gandhi, and Brahmin." Periyar and his followers simultaneously attempted to inculcate a rationalist outlook among the masses. Mohan Ram emphasises this aspect in his description of the Self-Respect Movement, calling it a "rationalism of the Robert Ingersoll type in revolt against the thraldom of ritualistic religion in general and the caste system.

30. Interview with Periyar, August 26, 1972.
which Hinduism had sanctified in particular."  

Periyar and his followers left no one in doubt that the Self-Respect Movement was essentially anti-Brahmin; the Brahmin priest who conducted religious ceremonies became a principal target of ridicule and denunciation.

Realising that his social reform campaigns would not be successful without political support, Periyar formulated a 15-point programme in 1932. This programme was essentially an outline of the objectives of the Self-Respect Movement. He submitted this to both the Congress and the Justice parties with the offer that he and his followers would join whichever party supported it. The Congress rejected it but the Justice Party, which was rapidly declining as a political force and was riddled with factionalism, accepted the programme in the hope that with the assistance of his dynamic leadership it might become revitalised.

In fact, Periyar's entry into the Justice Party helped neither the Justice Party nor Periyar. While the Justice Party was accused of accepting atheism, Periyar was criticised for abandoning the social reform programme. In the course of time, however, Periyar was able to build up political support for himself quite independent of the Justice Party. The issue that brought Periyar to the forefront of Madras politics was C. Rajagopalachari's (leader of Madras Congress ministry and

31. Ram, op. cit., p. 76. Also, see Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll's 44 Complete Lectures (Chicago: M.A. Donohue & Co., n.d.).

32. The programme is printed in full in Samy Sithamparanar, op. cit., pp. 151-4.

33. Ibid., p. 150.
a Brahmin) plan to introduce Hindi as a compulsory subject in schools in 1938. ³⁴ This was interpreted by many Tamils as a calculated affront to Tamil culture and its great literary heritage. ³⁵ Widespread public protests occurred against this policy and Periyar, a leading agitator in the anti-Hindi campaign, was jailed. The government was eventually forced to abandon its policy and for the time being at least Hindi became only an optional subject in schools.

Periyar's active role in the anti-Hindi campaign enhanced his political standing. He was elected President of the Justice Party while in jail. And the party accepted Periyar's slogan, "Tamil Nadu for Tamils", as a party objective in 1938. This was done partly in order to harness for its own purposes the local enthusiasm generated by the anti-Hindi campaign but mostly out of the fear that swaraj (by then, not far off) would lead to "the rule of Brahmins and Northerners" in the South as well as the North. ³⁶ The Justice Party wanted a Tamil Nadu that would be directly under the Secretary of State for India, in London, and not under the Viceroy in Delhi.

Two years later (1940), at a Justice Party convention where some Karnataka and Andhra delegates were present, the Party objective was broadened to include all of Dravidanadu (the region comprising the four southern areas in which Dravidian languages are spoken), and not only Tamil Nadu.³⁷ The following explanation was given for the change: "the

³⁴. Ibid., p. 171.
³⁷. Ibid.
reasons for demanding a separate Tamil Nadu apply equally well to the other southern regions; as they are culturally similar and differ fundamentally from the Aryan North, they should be politically separated and organised on a federal basis to accommodate regional variations.  

Through numerous mass rallies, newspaper articles and a wide variety of other methods, Periyar and his supporters attempted to mobilise public support for the Dravidanadu demand. The political battle line was now drawn between the Dravidian South and the Aryan North; the Madras Congress and Brahmins in Dravidanadu were identified as the representatives of the Aryan North.

The Dravidar Kazhagam

When the Dravidanadu movement was getting under way, factional rivalry between the "radicals" led by Periyar, and the "conservatives" began to manifest itself within the Justice Party. This reached a climax in a party conference at Salem in 1944. The factional conflict centred around the resolutions introduced by C.N. Annadurai, then Secretary-General of the party, which urged the following: (a) the immediate renunciation of all honorary titles conferred by the British; (b) the immediate resignation from all honorary appointments and honorary magistrates; (c) the dropping of caste suffixes to personal names; and (d) the adoption of a new name, the Dravidar Kazhagam (DK) or the Dravidian Association, for the Justice Party. The resolutions reflected the desire of the "radicals" to demonstrate that they were not lackeys of the colonials, to achieve a "casteless" society, and generally to rid the

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39. See Ch. 3 of this dissertation.
Justice Party of its reputation as a "job-hunting" organisation. In the "subjects committee" meeting of the Justice Party, the "conservatives" strongly opposed these resolutions, partly because they would lose many of the benefits accruing to them from patronage appointments in the colonial administration. But in the actual conference the resolutions were passed unanimously. Annadurai played a decisive role in countering the opposition from the "conservatives".

The most immediate consequence of the Salem conference was that it split the Justice Party. The conservative faction led by Sir P.T. Rajan left the party. The radicals reorganised under the new name, Dravidar Kazhagam. The formation of the DK was the culmination of Periyar's attempts to give the Self-Respect Movement a political base. At its first party conference at Tiruchirappalli in 1945, the DK adopted a black flag with a red circle in the centre as its symbol - black to symbolise the subjugation of the Dravidian peoples and the red circle their hopes for liberation.

The DK launched a "cultural offensive" against the influence of the Aryan North and Brahmanical Hinduism. Widow re-marriage and inter-caste marriage, both considered heresies by orthodox Hindus, were encouraged. Simple "reform marriage" ceremonies without priests or religious rituals and consisting only of an exchange of garlands by the

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40. It continued to call itself the "Justice Party". It supported the Dravidanadu demand and the principle of communal representation. The party increasingly became irrelevant in Tamil Nadu politics. It won only one seat (Sir P.T. Rajan's) in the 1952 local legislative elections and lost even that in 1957.
couples involved were popularised. Hindu religious deities were either destroyed or ridiculed. And religious epics became the targets of denunciation at public rallies. For example, the Kamba Ramayanam, a classic in Tamil literature and sacred to Tamil Vaishnavites, was described as an attempt to glorify the Aryan, his culture, his superiority, his ideas, and also as an attempt to undermine the Dravidian South and its hero, Ravana. By way of protest against this, the burning of the Kamba Ramayanam in public was advocated. A conscious attempt was also made by both DK members and other Tamil intellectuals to revive the Tamil literary classics, to popularise a new literary style, and to remove Sanskrit influences in the Tamil language.

The glorification of the political and cultural traditions of the Tamils by the DK, the radical political and anti-Brahmin activities of Periyar, the oratorical abilities of Annadurai (and the felicity of his prose style), together with the forceful writings of other party members and sympathisers proved to be strong magnets for attracting mass support. The DK was particularly successful in securing the support of many Tamil youths in high schools and colleges. Many of these youths, however, became increasingly dissatisfied with Periyar's leadership of the DK. Periyar's chief lieutenant, Annadurai, emerged as the leader

41. Balasundaram, op. cit., p. 172. The Kamba Ramayanam is a mythical recreation of the historical encounter between the invading Aryans and the native Dravidians.

42. Among the active youth members who later went on to play important roles in the political life of Tamil Nadu were Anbazhagan, Karunanithi, Mathiazhagan, Nedunchezhiyan and Sampath.
and spokesman of an anti-Periyar faction which began to take shape almost immediately after the formation of the DK.

Most DK youths were alienated by Periyar's authoritarian decision-making style. They were even more alienated by fundamental disagreements with him on substantive issues. Two of the most important were the DK's interpretation of India's "Independence Day" (August 15, 1947) and the issue of electoral participation.

For Periyar, "August 15, 1947" signified the replacement of British imperialism by Aryan imperialism in Dravidian India. Hence he declared it a "day of mourning" for Dravidians. In contrast, Annadurai saw it as the success of a long national struggle in which Periyar himself had played a significant role in the South. The DK, he argued, should therefore, participate in the celebrations.

On the subject of electoral participation in independent India, Periyar was fundamentally opposed to DK participation for fear that this would cause the degeneration of the DK into primarily a power-seeking organisation. Annadurai and his followers, on the other hand, viewed such participation favourably. They saw the possibility of fulfilling their objectives through the eventual capture of constitutional power and the concomitant danger of being replaced as the champions of Dravidian interests by some other election-oriented party which appealed along the same lines as the DK, in the event of their non-participation.

The occasion for the formal split between Periyar and Annadurai and their respective followers came in 1949 when Periyar, then seventy-one years old, decided to marry a party worker, only twenty-six years
old. Arguing that this was inconsistent with the rationalist ideals of the Self-Respectors, Annadurai and his followers protested against the decision but were ignored by Periyar. This provided the pretext for their resignation from the DK and their subsequent formation of the DMK in 1949 (coincidentally on Periyar's birthday, September 17). Both the DK and DMK had the same political goal, secession of Dravidanadu from the Indian Union. The DK, however, began to concentrate more on spreading social reforms among the lower castes whereas the DMK made propagation of Dravidian secession its principal concern.

Malay Nationalism and the PAS

The PAS, founded on August 23, 1951, had its roots in three different developments: first, in the radical nationalism of the late 1940s which opposed colonial rule and the conservative UMNO leadership; second, in the UMNO itself as a religious wing; and finally, in the crisis within UMNO over concessions to non-Malay demands. Of these, the last-mentioned was the most crucial development which led to the founding of PAS as a political party.

Malay nationalism was largely a response to the patterns of change.

43. For a fuller discussion of the events that led to the split in the DK, see Y.M. Marican, "The Genesis of the DMK", Asian Studies, 9:3 (December, 1971), pp. 357-64.

in British colonial policies, and to the growing political demands of
the non-Malay communities.\textsuperscript{45} Compared to the forms of nationalism that
emerged in many South and Southeast Asian countries, Malay nationalism
developed rather slowly, gaining real momentum only after World War II.

"British Malaya" in the pre-war era consisted of the Straits
Settlements (SS), the Federated Malay States (FMS) and the Unfederated
Malay States (UMS).\textsuperscript{46} Formed in 1826, the SS consisted of Malacca,
Penang and Singapore. They came under the direct responsibility of the
Colonial office in 1867. The FMS was formed in 1896 "to provide adminis­
trative uniformity". It included Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan
and Pahang, all states in which the British, beginning in Perak in 1874,
had established \textit{de facto} political control through a device contempor­
aneously known as "the residential system". The other five states in
peninsular Malaya - Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu and Johore\textsuperscript{47} -
were referred to as the UMS. Although they refused to join the FMS,
they did accept British Advisors and aid. British hegemony in the Malay
states rested largely on the collaboration of the Rulers and the tradi­
tional Malay aristocracy which provided the manpower for the middle and

\textsuperscript{45} K.J. Ratnam, \textit{Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya}

\textsuperscript{46} For detailed accounts of these entities, see Rupert Emerson,
\textit{Malaysia: A Study in Direct and Indirect Rule} (New York, 1937);
Sir Frank Swettenham, \textit{British Malaya} (London, 1948); R.O. Winstedt,
\textit{A History of Malaya} (Singapore, 1962), chs. 11 and 12; and S.M.

\textsuperscript{47} Of these, the first four became administratively a part of British
Malaya when the Thais relinquished their sovereignty over them in
1909. See N. Annadale, "The Siamese Malay States", \textit{Scottish
Geographical Magazine}, vol. 16 (1900), pp. 502-23.
lower rungs of the administration. \(^48\)

The introduction of varying degrees of British rule in pre-war Malaya not only ushered in political stability but also a great deal of infra-structural development to service the tin mines and rubber plantations, especially those on the west coast. This period also witnessed the influx of Chinese and, to a lesser degree, Indian labourers on a large scale. By the beginning of the twentieth century Malays were barely a numerical majority in a geographic area in which they had been virtually the sole inhabitants since time immemorial. \(^49\) The demographic structure had been altered greatly. \(^50\)

Anti-colonial feelings amongst the Malays in the pre-war period were seldom articulated openly or strongly. This has been attributed to indirect British rule, active British intelligence work amongst the Malays, \(^51\) economic prosperity arising from the higher rubber and tin prices which naturally tended to subdue opposition voices, and the fear on the part of the educated Malay elite of jeopardizing scarce job opportunities in the civil service. \(^52\)

\(^48\) Roff, op. cit., ch. 4.

\(^49\) The statistics are given in Purcell, op. cit., Appendix III, p. 297.

\(^50\) See W.L. Blythe, Historical Sketch of Chinese Labour in Malaya (Singapore, 1953); Usha Mahajani, The Role of Indian Minorities in Burma and Malaya (Bombay, 1960); and Victor Purcell, The Chinese in Malaya (London, 1967).

\(^51\) Roff, op. cit., p. 218.

The two groups in Malay society that expressed anti-colonial views in the pre-war era were the Islamic reformers and the radical nationalists. Influenced by the Islamic renaissance in the Middle East, the former wanted to purify Islam in their own society. Their activities brought them into immediate conflict with well-entrenched elements in Malay society, in particular with the rulers and their religious establishments. In the early 1930s the Islamic reformers became more politically oriented, criticising, for example, the colonial education policy.\footnote{Soenarno, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 18-19.}

The radical nationalists, although influenced slightly by the earlier Islamic reformism, looked primarily to Indonesian secular nationalists for political inspiration. Drawing their membership predominantly from the peasant class, they founded the Kesatuan Melayu Muda (Union of Malay Youth) in May, 1937. In addition to criticising colonialism, the KMM also opposed feudalism, the "western-oriented Malay bureaucratic elite" and those Chinese, who, it was said, sought to "convert Malaya into the nineteenth province of China".\footnote{Abd. Malek Hj. Md. Hanafiah, \textit{Sejarah Perjuangan Kesatuan Melayu Muda, 1937-1945} (Graduate Exercise, National University of Malaya, December, 1974), pp. 26 and 104-14.} The long-term political objective of the KMM was the political unification of the Malay peoples into a greater Melayu Raya comprising the entire archipelago.

Although the Japanese outlawed the KMM in June, 1942, they
officially supported its pan-Malay political ambitions towards the closing months of the Japanese occupation. During these months the Japanese encouraged nationalist movements in Southeast Asia, hoping to turn these forces against their enemies. In Malaya, the Japanese-backed Kesatuan Raayat Indonesia Semenanjong (Union of Peninsular Indonesians), containing KMM elements, began to formulate plans for the political union of Indonesia and Malaya. However, the sudden surrender of the Japanese put a quick end to such plans.

The four-year period of Japanese occupation had a mixed impact on the Malay community. The administrative experience and political confidence that they had gained during this period convinced some that they could rule their country without assistance. For others the occupation revealed the political potential of the non-Malay communities in the country and that non-Malay cooperation would be vital in the future administration of the country. 55 Political differences within the Malay community on this and other issues were quickly submerged when the British introduced the controversial "Malayan Union" scheme on April 1, 1946. This act stirred up Malay nationalism on an unprecedented scale.

When the British re-occupied Malaya, after the period of Japanese occupation, they were still confronted with the three groups of states described earlier. They decided to bring these together to form a centralised Malayan Union. 56 Under this scheme the pre-

56. For discussions of why the British introduced this scheme, see James Allen, The Malayan Union (Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies, 1967); and Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation: Political Unification in the Malaysia Region 1945-65 (Kuala Lumpur, 1974), ch. 2.
war legal trappings of Malay supremacy were to be formally removed and
the functions of the Sultan were to be confined only to religion (and
even here, only under certain restrictions). Politically, the most
explosive aspect of the Malayan Union concerned "the introduction of a
Malayan citizenship that would admit, by operation of law, 83 percent
of the Chinese residents and 75 percent of the Indians under conditions
rejecting the previously accepted principle that Malaya was a Malay
country." 57

Fearing that Malaya would no longer be Tanah Melayu (literally,
"Land of the Malays") if the Malayan Union scheme was to be implemented,
Malays immediately began to mobilise opposition to the scheme. Malay
political organisations sprang up throughout the country to spearhead
local opposition. Lengthy editorials and articles in Utusan Melayu,
Warta Negara and Majlis criticised the sudden reversal in British policy
towards the Malays. Protest rallies were held in various parts of the
country; in Kota Bharu and Batu Pahat the rallies were attended by ap­
proximately 10,000 and 18,000 Malays, respectively, giving an indication
of the extent to which Malay sentiments were aroused. For the first time
in Malay political history an issue was being "taken to the people". The
protest against the British scheme saw Malay unity at its zenith; it
brought together the divergent strains in the previous Malay nationalist
movements of the twenties and thirties by including religious reformers,

57. Indorf, op. cit., p. 142.
the Malay-educated intelligentsia and the Malay civil servants.  

Malay solidarity on the Malayan Union issue was formally manifested in the Konggres Melayu Sa-Tanah Melayu (Pan-Malayan Malay Congress) held at Kuala Lumpur on March 1946 and attended by some three hundred delegates from forty-one political associations. Tens of thousands of Malays came to the vicinity of the meeting area which was itself surrounded by British troops. The speech by Dato Onn bin Ja'afar, leader of the one hundred thousand strong Pergerakan Melayu Semenanjong (Movement of the Peninsular Malays), did much to set the tone for the rest of the meeting. It called on fellow Malays to "protect the respect of our race" which was being threatened by the Union proposals. The Congress agreed in principle to form a "United Malays National Organisation" (UMNO) to fight for Malay interests, and appointed a committee of five to draft a constitution. The report of this committee was approved by the second Congress which met in May in Johore Bahru, and UMNO was formally launched after the election of Dato Onn as its first president. As the tactics adopted by UMNO to pursue its objectives have been described in detail elsewhere, they will not be repeated here.


Some of the individuals whom I interviewed alleged that PAS emerged out of the UMNO.63 This is, however, only partly true. The early PAS contained elements not only from UMNO but also from the radical Malay nationalist and Islamic reformist streams in Malay nationalism, streams which either had never been formally associated with UMNO or which had left it after only a brief period of association.64 PAS origins within UMNO have been traced to a UMNO-sponsored meeting of Islamic leaders at Johore Bharu in February, 1950. The streamlining of religious departments throughout the country, the problems faced by Malayan pilgrims bound for Mecca and the establishment of an Islamic College were among the issues discussed. One important outcome of the meeting was the decision by those attending to form themselves into a body which would exist within UMNO and be known as the Persatuan Ulama Sa-Malaya (literally, the Association of the Religiously Learned, Malaya). Its leader was Ahmad Fuad, a loyal friend of Dato Onn.65

One PAS leader claimed that the formation of this religious wing within UMNO was the result of "a plot by the British to take the mind of


64. Interview with Amaluddin Darus, Founder of PAS in Kelantan (April 10, 1973); and Straits Times, April 17, 1969.

UMNO members away from independence". 66 There is, however, hardly any evidence to support this allegation. There is in fact reason to doubt it because at the time when the idea of a religious wing within UMNO was mooted, UMNO was still committed to British "protection", with merdeka (independence) becoming its objective only in 1951. More plausibly, the religious wing probably was started to counter the rising popularity of a religious group outside UMNO called Hizbul Muslimin. A recent biography of Dato Onn notes that he did view the growth of the Hizbul Muslimin with some degree of seriousness. 67 His oft-quoted warning, "Hubaya-hubaya, Bahaya turun dari Gunong" (Careful, Danger descends from the Mountain) was aimed at this group; 68 "Gunong" in this phrase refers to Gunong Semanggol in Perak where the Hizbul Muslimin was centred.

Because elements from the Hizbul Muslimin and its predecessor, the Partai Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya (Malay Nationalist Party), did eventually combine with UMNO's religious wing to form the PAS, it is necessary to examine these two organisations to complete the historical background of PAS.

Formed in November 1945, the PKMM incorporated many former KMM

66. Interview with Zulkiflee Mohamed (August 16, 1963). The few references to interviews conducted in 1963 and 1964 in this study were obtained from the data cards of Professors K.J. Ratnam and R.S. Milne. The author wishes to thank them for making these cards available.


elements and was the first organisation in post-war Malaya to demand independence from colonial rule. Its first president was the Moscow-trained Indonesian guerilla leader, Moktaruddin Lasso. Its second president was Burhanuddin Al Halimy who hailed from the religious group within the party and who later became the second president of PAS. Communist elements also belonged to PKMM, one well-known member being Musa Ahmad, currently the chairman of the banned Malayan Communist Party (MCP). The strong influence of the Communist elements in the PKMM was reflected in its eight inaugural resolutions which "closely resembled the MCP program published in 1944, in which socialism became the sine qua non for national consciousness". 69

Together with other Malay associations the PKMM helped to establish UMNO during the struggle against the Malayan Union scheme. But only two years later it left UMNO because of basic political differences. For while the dominant leadership group within UMNO was still concerned mainly with ensuring Malay political supremacy within the framework of colonial rule, the PKMM had remained committed to its goal of merdeka. 70

The PKMM also sought non-Malay cooperation in pursuit of its basic objective, although without much success. 71

69. Indorf, op. cit., p. 131.

70. For other differences, see Abdul Rahim Ibrahim, "The Malay Left Wing", Straits Times, March 10, 1948, p. 4; A. Samad Ismail, "The MNP Platform: A Reply", Straits Times, March 23, 1948, p. 6; Ahmad Boestamam, Dr. Burhanuddin Putera Setia Melayu Raya (Kuala Lumpur, 1972); and Mohamed Yunus Hamidi, op. cit., pp. 66-68.

71. Means, op. cit., ch. 7.
The PKMM gave birth to a number of organisations which reflected its ideological diversity. Among these were the extremist Angkatan Pemuda Insaf (Organisation for Youth for Justice), the Angkatan Wanita Sedar (Organisation for Women's Uplift), the Barisan Tani Se-Malaya (Pan-Malayan Peasant Front), and the Majlis Islam Tertinggi (Supreme Islamic Council) or MATA. Though these organisations remained affiliated to the PKMM, the degree of autonomy they enjoyed varied considerably. The MATA was concerned primarily with Islamic administration in the country. One of its charges was that the Sultans were incompetent to decide on Islamic matters and it demanded the centralisation of Islamic administration.

For reasons not known, MATA was later referred to as Hizbul Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood). Its leader was Abu Bakar Al-Bakir and several of its members later went on to occupy important positions in the PAS. Very little is known about the objectives and activities of this organisation. According to one member, its aim was to create "political awareness among the Muslims", meaning amongst the Malays. An Islamic school headed by Abu Bakar Al-Bakir was set up in order to foster nationalist feelings amongst its students while teaching them Koran reading.

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72. Ibid., p. 92.
73. Interview with Khaidir Khatib, PAS theoretician (May 5, 1973).
74. Among these were Mohammed Asri, Khaidir Khatib, Othman Hamzah, and Yunos Hj. Yatimi.
75. Interview with Khaidir Khatib (May 5, 1973).
Although the PKMM and the Hizbul Muslimin were never formally banned, they were the targets of British repressive action partly because of their left-wing orientations. Abu Bakar and several other leaders were arrested. Faced with political repression, the communist elements went underground and joined forces with the banned MCP while the Hizbul Muslimin elements and sympathisers chose to withdraw entirely from politics. Consequently Hizbul Muslimin ceased to exist as an organised group.

While Malay left-wing politics were thus in disarray, important changes were taking place both within UMNO and its religious wing, the Persatuan Ulama Se-Malaya. The president of UMNO, Dato Onn, resigned from the organisation in June, 1951 when he sensed that the rank-and-file of UMNO would not endorse his proposal to change UMNO into a multi-racial organisation by admitting non-Malays into its fold. Shortly after his resignation the third meeting of UMNO's religious wing was held at Kepala Batas, Penang. Here its name was changed to Persatuan Islam Se-Malaya (Pan-Malayan Islamic Association) or PAS, which is its Malay-Arabic acronym. Here also the delegates decided that PAS should

76. Means, op. cit., p. 126.

77. At the 17th annual congress of the party in 1971, its name was changed to Partai Islam Se Malaysia (Islamic Party of Malaysia). According to Asri, the National President of PAS, the change was simply to make de jure what was already de facto: "Even now our party's name is popularly known as Partai Islam only". Two other reasons were given: first, "the change was to make it easy for the people to say it", and second, "the new name would also give the party a political outlook rather than a mere association". The debate on the change of name lasted an hour. Some delegates felt that the party's old name should be maintained. The Youth Section attempted to change the name to Partai Muslimin but did not receive enough support (Straits Times, June 21, 1971).
remain a purely religious movement without political ties. Consequently, PAS "did not cooperate with UMNO". Three years later, its leader, Ahmad Fuad, a loyal friend of Dato Onn, attempted to ally PAS with the Malayan National Conference, which included the Independence of Malaya Party (IMP) led by Dato Onn. When Ahmad Fuad failed to get the support of PAS for this move, he resigned and was replaced by Dr. Abbas bin Alias.

Initially, PAS functioned as an Islamic welfare organisation. Its desire to keep aloof from politics has been attributed largely to the influence of Hizbul Muslimin members. Having no organisation of their own, the latter attended the Kepala Batas meeting (which gave birth to PAS) in full force and dominated it to the extent of convincing others that PAS should steer clear of politics if its Islamic aims were to be realised. However, individual members of PAS were allowed to support or join any political party provided they did not hold office within the PAS. For some time, many PAS members were also UMNO members.

By early 1954, the relaxed policy on membership was changed and PAS members were prohibited from joining other political organisations; and one day before the closing day of nominations in the 1955 federal elections, PAS secured "political party" status from the Registrar of Societies. Its manifesto for this election charged that the *kaum mendatang* (immigrant communities) were "endangering the rights of the

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78. UMNO 10 Tahun, op. cit., p. 62.
79. Pillai, op. cit., p. 191
sons of the soil".  

PAS' sudden change in status from an Islamic welfare organisation to a political party committed to defending Malay rights came largely in response to UMNO's liberal accommodation of non-Malay political demands especially on the citizenship issue. After the overwhelming success of the UMNO-MCA (Malayan Chinese Association) electoral alliance in the Kuala Lumpur municipal elections in 1952, the leadership of both these parties began "to think more seriously about their temporary but fruitful alliance". Realising that the British would hand over the reins of government to those leadership groups that succeeded in establishing inter- communal cooperation, the leaders of UMNO and MCA decided to maintain their electoral alliance for the 1955 elections. Furthermore, they formulated a common stand on the merdeka issue, incorporating UMNO's concessions to the MCA's demands on jus soli (citizenship by birth) and voting rights for non-Malays.

UMNO's electoral alliance with the MCA and its concessions on the citizenship issue were seen by sections within and outside UMNO as reversals of its earlier positions. After Dato Onn's resignation, many UMNO members expected that UMNO would revert to a militant form of Malay nationalism such as that expounded by UMNO during the height

of the Malay opposition to the Malayan Union. These members, many of whom were in the Youth section, viewed UMNO's concessions to non-Malays as a "sell out" of Malay interests. At a UMNO-MCA convention in August 1953, one Malay delegate, Hashim Ghani, warned UMNO members that a coalition with MCA would result ultimately in Chinese monopolising political power but other Malay delegates did not support his view.  

Though some might have shared Hashim Ghani's fear, the desire to preserve what had become "a winning combination" probably overwhelmed them. But when UMNO leaders later conceded to MCA demands on citizenship, many Malays including some UMNO members protested vehemently. A majority of these UMNO members eventually reconciled themselves to the position taken by their leaders.

Some of those who left UMNO in protest joined PAS. In Kelantan, most of them were activists who had occupied middle or lower positions in the UMNO hierarchy. Thus they were not part of the leadership group that was going to inherit power from the British. In Kelantan and in other states, the UMNO entrants into PAS began to politicise this religious organisation with a view to opposing UMNO. They were joined by a large number of other Malays who were also disillusioned


86 Interview with Amaluddin Darus (April 10, 1973).

87 Ibid.
with UMNO's concessions. Many of the persons who later became leaders and activists within PAS became members during this period. In early 1954, PAS severed its loose links with UMNO when it prohibited its members from joining other political organisations. This was aimed mainly at those who had been members of both PAS and UMNO since the early fifties. In 1955 PAS contested the federal elections as a separate political party to oppose UMNO’s concessions and to put forward its conception of the political system to the Malay electorate. Thus, although rooted in a variety of political developments, PAS developed its identity as a champion of Malay interests when UMNO began to make concessions to non-Malay demands in pursuing its goal of independence. Had UMNO chosen the path of militant Malay nationalism in the mid-fifties, PAS would probably have remained an Islamic welfare organisation.

To sum up, the DMK and PAS are rooted in the politicisation of Dravidian (or Non-Brahmin) and Malay identities in the colonial era. While Dravidian identity grew out of elite non-Brahmins' reaction to Brahmin domination and to their loss of status, Malay identity evolved gradually largely in response to the influx of Chinese and Indian immigrants. Periyar’s leadership was instrumental in transforming the elitist Dravidian movement seeking a limited objective, the reduction of Brahmin power, into a mass-based separatist movement. In Malaya, the introduction of the Malayan Union scheme served as a catalyst for arousing political consciousness among vast segments of the Malay

88. Among these were Abdul Aziz Abdullah, Abu Bakar Hamzah and Hassan Adli.
population. As independence approached, divisions surfaced within both the Dravidian and Malay nationalist movements. In the DK, the most important Dravidian organisation in the forties, there were two groups led by Periyar and Annadurai respectively. The latter feared political eclipse if the DK did not contest elections and remained purely a sociopolitical movement. Disagreements on this and other issues led Annadurai and his followers to found the DMK. In Malaya, UMNO's (the most important Malay political organisation) concessions to MCA demands caused a polarisation in the Malay community. Those Malays who opposed these concessions and who were not part of the leadership group that was going to inherit power converted PAS into a political party to expound their concept of Tanah Melayu and to remain in contest for power.
CHAPTER 3

Challenges to the Indian and Malayan Nation-States: "Dravidanadu" and "Tanah Melayu"

Most nation-states in Asia and Africa emerged from the break-up of European colonial empires. Colonial governmental units were often the product of historical accident, of the scramble for empire, or of administrative convenience. Consequently colonial political boundaries rarely coincided with the distribution of tribal, religious or linguistic groups. In some cases, peoples of diverse social origins and cultural traditions were grouped under a single administrative system and set of communications. In others, similar peoples were split between different imperial powers or administrative regions.

The leadership groups which replaced the colonial administrators in the post-war era accepted for the most part the territorial limits and social composition of the emergent nation-states as they existed at the time of independence. According to Emerson, such acceptance was the result of a "growing awareness that any move for significant change in [the artificial] frontiers might bring the entire structure down in unpredictable confusion". ¹

In their attempts to weld together disparate social groups into a unified nation, governmental leaders in Asia and Africa faced

challenges from political parties which appealed primarily to primordial sentiments. The most serious of these challenges came from such parties which also called into question the very definition of the nation-state. The DMK and PAS's versions of the nation-states they aspired to establish emerged from the politicisation of primordial identities in the colonial period. The present chapter examines the two parties' versions as articulated in the post-independence era.

"Dravidanadu" (literally, Dravidian Land)

The DMK was the first Tamil political party to demand secession in independent India. When Annadurai and his followers formed the DMK in 1949, they set as their "political ideal" the creation of "a separate Dravidian state - separated from the Indian Union." In fact, this was the only objective they mentioned in the DMK constitution adopted in 1951.

The DMK's secessionist goal was rooted in a controversial interpretation of early Indian history. According to DMK theoreticians, the

2. In the sixties, another Tamil Nadu party, "We Tamils", wanted to create an independent Tamil state consisting of the Tamil regions of India and Ceylon.

3. C.N. Annadurai, "D.M.K. as I see it", in Iqbal Narain, ed., State Politics in India (Meerut, 1967), p. 467. According to E.V.K. Sampath, "Dravidanadu was the only basic ideology which the DMK leaders stated with conviction". Interview, July, 1972.

4. DMK Constitution, 1951 (Tamil), Article 2.

Dravidians were the original inhabitants of India and they had a flourishing culture prior to the time of the Aryan invasions. Accordingly, they saw the Sangam (Academy) age (1000 B.C. to 200 A.D.) as the golden age of early Dravidian civilisation. A pro-DMK historian, relying exclusively on ancient literary sources, concluded that society in the Sangam age was "very advanced" and "perfect in each and every sense of the term".6 Whatever their inadequacies, the remains of the literary output of the Sangam age have been the main data base the DMK leaders have used in their attempts to reconstruct the Dravidian past.7

The most cogent account of pre-Aryan Dravidian civilisation, as perceived by the DMK, is found in a collection of Annadurai's essays, Arya Mayai (Aryan Illusion).8 Citing numerous historical accounts, Annadurai argues strongly that Dravidian society was based on egalitarian principles and that it was relatively advanced in many fields. He attributes its decline to the introduction of varnashrama dharma by the invading Aryans, a system which eventually divided society into numerous castes and sub-castes, thus retarding progress.

Although Arya Mayai was first published in 1943 and reprinted three times before 1949, it was only after the emergence of the DMK that its contents began to cause concern in government circles. In 1950, both

7. These include the twin epics of Silappathikaram and Manimegalai; and Tholkappiyam, Ettuthogai, Pathuppattu and Thirukkural.
the author and the publisher of the book were charged with inciting communal hatred, under Section 153-A of the penal code. Both were found guilty and Annadurai was fined and jailed for ten days. Although the High Court subsequently quashed the decision of the lower court, the court cases proved extremely valuable to the DMK in terms of focusing popular attention on its basic goal.9

The DMK's desire to recreate the glories of the Dravidian past in a modern Dravidanadu was ridiculed from the very beginning as "an exercise in political daydreaming".10 Critics of the DMK, mainly Tamil Nadu Congressmen, charged that it had neither clear conceptions of the political set-up of Dravidanadu nor specific ideas about how to achieve its economic and military viability. One critic even went so far as to pose one hundred questions for the DMK concerning its objective.11 Although the administrative details of the proposed Dravidanadu were not precisely spelled out at its inception, the DMK leaders did have some general ideas. The details they subsequently formulated were largely in response to opponents who became increasingly specific in their criticisms.

Territorially, Dravidanadu was to consist of those areas in India where the major Dravidian languages were spoken: Andhra, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Movement leaders have never failed to mention that

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10. Interview with Rajaram Naidu, Congress Member of the Legislative Assembly (Madras), Leader of the Opposition, August 28, 1972.

"formal" recognition of this entity already existed in numerous places, including India's national anthem where all of South India is referred to as "Dravida".  

Like the Indian Union, Dravidanadu was to be a federal republic. But there was to be one major difference. The DMK leaders criticised the Indian Union as a "pseudo-federation" because of the enormous powers wielded by the central government. In contrast, according to them, Dravidanadu would be a "minimal federation" in which the four component linguistic units would enjoy a great deal of autonomy and have the right of secession. The functions that would fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government would be foreign policy, security, communications (postal, telegraph and railways), and finance.

DMK leaders were convinced of the economic and military viability of Dravidanadu. According to R. Nedunchezian, Secretary of the Propaganda section of the party until 1951, "the Dravidian state would have two major ports (Madras and Cochin) and several lesser ports along 1,700 miles of coast-line. It would get the revenues and foreign exchange that now go to New Delhi government for exports of hides and skins, pepper, groundnuts, cashews, and other Southern products. With a fair partitioning of the Indian merchant marine, Navy, Army, and Air Force it could manage its


13. Interview with Murasoli Maran, DMK Member of Parliament, August 21, 1972.

maritime and defence needs."¹⁵

DMK leaders envisaged the creation of Dravidanadu in two stages. Its four linguistic areas would first become independent of the Indian Union. Then these self-governing states, "which have so much in common", would form a federation for mutual gain.¹⁶ If the second stage were not achieved, then it was feared that "narrow chauvinism" would develop in each of the states; for example, non-Tamil speaking Dravidians residing in Tamil Nadu would become targets of persecution and would be "driven away to their own areas".¹⁷

The DMK hoped to establish Dravidanadu through constitutional means. Its leaders were fully aware that even if the DMK won all of the parliamentary seats in the four Dravidian states, this would still not be enough for them to create a Dravidanadu through an amendment to the Indian Constitution. But they pinned their hopes on "the democratic commitment of top leaders like Nehru", and what they saw as Nehru's "concern for his international reputation".¹⁸ They believed that if the electorate of the four Dravidian areas demonstrated convincingly that they favoured secession, there would be strong pressures on Nehru to enforce "the wish of the


¹⁸. Mani, op. cit., p. 21.
majority". In an interview, Nedunchezhian, the Secretary General of the DMK, remarked that the DMK leaders were initially optimistic about the possibility of mobilising majority support in the General Elections for the Dravidanadu goal.

Although support for the DMK's secessionist goal was not expressed in non-Tamil Dravidian areas, DMK leaders were confident that given more time, and organisational resources, sufficient support could be generated here also. The Kerala Socialist Party's demand for the liberation of Kerala from northern domination tended to reinforce this confidence. So did remarks by the chief ministers of various southern states to the effect that their states were being neglected by the central government.

The DMK developed the theme of northern exploitation of the economies of the southern states in great detail in order to give

19. According to Annadurai, "Jawaharlal Nehru in most of his speeches stated that anybody who wanted to secede from this country and if he had the people with him, he would give him the option of getting out of India" ("D.M.K. as I see it", op. cit., p. 468).

20. He drew a parallel with Bangladesh in the interview. Briefly, his argument was that the Awami League was able to acquire overwhelming support for its objectives in the elections and this helped to highlight the extent of dissatisfaction in East Pakistan. The repressive action that followed subsequently aroused much international sympathy and support for the Awami League. Had there been no competitive elections, it would have been difficult for organisations to claim that they have mass backing for their goals and repressive action against them would not arouse that much international reaction. September 11, 1972.


22. Nedunchezhian, op. cit., p. 15.

substance to its secessionist demand. In his 'plea for understanding', Vedaratnam alleged that "north Indian migration" was the "root cause of the present downtrodden state of South Indian society". Citing numerous examples from banking, ship chandling, textile, insurance and other businesses, Annadurai similarly alleged in his Panathottam (Money Garden) that the southern states were under the stranglehold of northern economic imperialism. He said this was partly due to the discriminatory policies of the central government which gave preference to northerners (in granting quotas and licenses to conduct business in the south), and to the fact that while "the Roopchands, the Jeevanlals and the Shiv Narayans have established their bases at Madras and have all the facilities to engage in import and export business, in items ranging from groundnuts to diamonds", there has been no "place for the -Danapals, the Annamalais, and the Arumugams" in the North, because of discriminatory policies.

The DMK charged that "a step-motherly treatment" had been accorded their part of the country by the central government, in regard to Five Year Plans. Specifically, it pointed out that the majority of the irrigation and hydroelectric projects had been concentrated in the North.

27. DMK 1957 Election Manifesto.
Annadurai alleged that the economic potentialities of the southern region were not taken into consideration in the formulation of the Five Year Plans and that economic factors were often ignored in the location of certain industries in order to favour the North. For example, he said at one time, "if you are organising an industry strictly on [an] economic basis, you should have organised [a] sugar industry in Tamilnadu and not in UP [Uttar Pradesh]. But it was started in UP because there was pressure from interested quarters." 28

"The northerner's rhetoric about 'India', 'Indian nationalism' and 'Indian culture'," alleged Annadurai, "was merely lip-service. Their real aim is to keep Dravidanadu as an agricultural country, as a producer of raw materials for export to foreign countries, and as a market for foreign products for which they are the agents." 29 The DMK charged that the leading industrial houses of the North - Tata, Birla, Dalmia, and Mofatlal - were plundering the economy of the South and that members of the north Indian business caste, the Marwari, were exploiting the Dravidian people through the control of financial institutions in Dravidanadu. 30 "The benighted south has simply passed from British hands", it claimed, "to a still worse 'Marwari tyranny'." 31

30. Annadurai, Panathottam, op. cit.
The competitive advantage of the northern capitalists over the Dravidian entrepreneurs in the South, according to Annadurai, was further aided by the latter's preoccupation with religious ritualism: "When the Dravidian capitalists and industrialists are visiting the pilgrim centres of Thirumalai, Thiruppathi, Puri, Jagannath, Kasi, Gaya, Kandi and Kathirkamam asking for favours from Gods, the Northern capitalists are touring the 'pilgrim centres' of London, Washington, Paris and Brussels, meeting industrialists and gaining expertise in business methods and technology". 32

Annadurai made it clear that his vehement opposition to northern capitalist interests in the South did not mean that he was "pro-Dravidian capitalism". According to him, "it is very easy to secure the support of the [Dravidian capitalists] to our cause by giving them a blank check. They will be only too willing to support us because of their natural desire to step into the shoes of their north Indian counterparts. But we are not here to oblige capitalism of any sort, be it North Indian or Dravidian". 33 Annadurai and other DMK leaders, however, did not elaborate on the type of economic system that they would seek to establish in the proposed Dravidanadu. Annadurai's claim, however, that the DMK was "genuinely communist" and his hope that eventually the DMK and the Communists might "jointly represent Communism" in Dravidanadu suggested that the DMK might favour the establishment of a state-controlled economy. 34

32. Annadurai, Panathottam, op. cit., p. 49.
33. Vedaratnam, op. cit., p. 34.
In addition to dominating the economy of Dravidanadu, northerners, the DMK alleged, were attempting "to impose their language [Hindi] on the South in order to complete their colonisation of this area." Hindi, adopted as India's official language in 1950, was referred to by DMK leaders as an "alien", "Northern" national language. They criticised its adoption as the official language on several grounds including the fact that it was not spoken by a majority of the Indian people and that it was a relatively "underdeveloped" language, devoid of a rich literary tradition.

Attempts by central and Madras state governments to introduce Hindi in educational institutions and the state's administrative processes were perceived by the DMK as part of a calculated attempt to destroy Dravidian "literary traditions, culture and customs". "They knew that once our language is destroyed, our race is also destroyed", remarked a DMK leader. According to Annadurai, "the Hindi issue is not just a language issue. It is an issue of political domination. It is used by those with imperialist designs on the South to ascertain the


the extent to which we can be subordinated".  

The DMK favoured a policy of multilingualism. According to Nedunchezhian, Dravidanadu would not have a single national or official language. Rather, all four Dravidian languages would be recognized as "national languages" in the new country, and the administration of each of the Dravidanadu's states would be conducted in the language spoken by the majority of that state's population. English would serve as the "link" language both for inter-state and international communications.

In summary, the DMK's principal goal was the secession of Dravidanadu from the Indian Union. It emphasised that the Dravidian people could re-establish their historical greatness in an independent Dravidanadu which sought to remove Aryan influences from their culture. It developed in great detail the themes of "northern economic exploitation" and "Hindi imperialism in the South" in order to give content to its claim that Dravidian peoples were really the subjects of "northern imperialists" in "Independent India".

The DMK leaders' aim to create a Dravidian political consciousness and mobilise support for the secession goal failed, however, due to several factors. Two of these, the linguistic reorganisation of Indian states and the rise of Kamaraj in Tamil politics, are discussed in Chapter 5. Only the historical factor is elaborated below.

While opposition to Brahmin domination was expressed by non-Brahmins in various parts of the Madras Presidency, this did not produce a common political consciousness among non-Brahmins in all language groups. There existed in fact rivalries amongst the latter, alongside the Brahmin - Non-Brahmin conflict. The most intense was the rivalry between Tamils and Telugus, which divided the Brahmin community as well. John G. Leonard reports that Telugu Brahmins in the Madras Presidency "felt threatened by the preponderance of Tamil Brahmins in the Civil Service". The linguistic rivalries affected the composition of the Dravidian movement. Most of the leaders of this movement in the twenties hailed from various Dravidian language groups. But by the mid-forties, linguistic rivalries contributed to many non-Tamil leaders leaving this movement. Since then, the Dravidian movement has been mainly a movement among Tamils.

How did the DMK leaders hope to overcome these linguistic antagonisms in their efforts to achieve a separate Dravidian state? Was the proposed state with features like minimal central authority and multilingualism merely a ploy of the DMK leaders to expand their political base in the non-Tamil regions of South India as well? Interviews with several DMK founder members, especially Nedunchezhian and Anbazhagan, revealed that these members were not under the illusion that Dravidanadu could be achieved within a short period of time and that they were in fact unsure as to how long it would take to convince Tamils about secession in the first

place. Secondly they were initially prepared to extend their support to like-minded organisations in other areas and confine their activities only to Tamil Nadu. Thirdly, it must be noted that DMK leaders made no real efforts to recruit non-Tamils into the party. Finally, the details of the Dravidian state spelled out by the DMK leaders which appeared to satisfy all language groups must not be seen as well thought out efforts to attract support in non-Tamil areas. They were merely responses to taunts from Tamil Nadu Congressmen and were often made by individual DMK leaders without consulting others. All these factors lead me to conclude that DMK's adoption of Dravidanadu as a party objective in 1949 was not motivated by power ambitions in non-Tamil areas. Whether or not it contributed to DMK's acquisition of support in Tamil Nadu, we will examine in the next chapter.

Tanah Melayu (literally, Land of the Malays)

PAS's conception of the Malayan polity was best expressed in its lengthy 1956 memorandum to the Constitutional Commission headed by Lord Reid of the United Kingdom. The best summary of PAS's conception is

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43. See Chapter 4 of this dissertation.
44. Interview with Asaithamby, July 12, 1972.
45. The other members of this Commission were Mr. Justice Abdul Hamid (Pakistan), Sir Ivor Jennings (United Kingdom), Mr. B. Malik (India), and Sir William McKell (Australia). The terms of reference included the following provisions: "the safeguarding of the special position of the Malays and the legitimate interests of other communities", "a common nationality for the whole of the Federation", and the establishment of a strong Federal government with the States enjoying a measure of autonomy. See Federation of Malaya Information Services, Bulletin 6072/56, pp. 1-2. For a fuller discussion of the workings of this Commission, see Gordon P. Means, Malaysian Politics (London, 1970), ch. 12. This Commission was appointed in early 1956.
found in Article 2 (A) of this memorandum: "this nation is a Malay nation and the rights of the Malay race have been from time to time historically proved and legally recognized. ...Any attempt, constitutionally or otherwise, to change that fact is both contradictory to human right and the principle of law. The Malays have only one position in this nation and that is they own this nation and their sovereignty is the absolute sovereignty of this nation." 46

Doubting whether the Reid Commission, one "that has come from abroad", would be able to understand this "fact", the memorandum went on to emphasise that "the true political realities" were not being reflected by the then prevailing political situation in the Federation. The latter, it claimed, was a product of the colonial period. 47 Although large scale immigration of Chinese and Indians into Malaya was not explicitly mentioned, the memorandum pointed out that "the Malay nation and the Malay race had opened its doors to foreigners and provided them with full opportunities which had no parallel anywhere else in the world." 48 The comparative economic and educational backwardness of the Malay race in relation to the immigrant communities had led, it claimed, to a weakening of the absolute sovereignty of the Malay race. It demanded that this sovereignty must be restored in the Constitution, and that foreigners must be regarded as "temporary residents" (orang menumpang) engaged in commercial activities.

47. Ibid., Article 2 (c).
48. Ibid., Article 2 (F).
only (orang dagang sahaja).49

The most cogent account of the historical basis of the above
conception of the Malayan polity is found in Dr. Burhanuddin's The Philo-
sophy of Malay Nationalism.50 Although it was written just after the
Second World War, the booklet was still considered an accurate statement
of PAS policy by Dr. Burhanuddin in early 1964, when in his eighth year
as PAS President.51 Dr. Burhanuddin's work begins with the assertion that
Malays constitute a distinct racial group and he uses ethnological and
anthropological arguments to support his assertion. He also uses refer­
ences to geographical accounts in various languages, which for centuries
have referred to a Malay area comprising present day Indonesia, Malaysia,
the Philippines and Southern Thailand.

According to Burhanuddin, British agreements with the sultans
in the Malay states of peninsular Malaya constituted recognition of the
existence of a Negara Melayu (Malay Nation). During colonial rule, how­
ever, the term "Malay" which, according to Burhanuddin, was perceived by
Malays as being synonymous with "Melayu", began to acquire an altogether
different meaning. "Melayu", thus, was no longer regarded as a nation,
but just as one community in an ethnically heterogeneous Malayan nation.
Attributing the changed conception of "Melayu" to the "divide and rule"

49. Ibid., Article 4.
50. (Djakarta, 1963).
51. Straits Times, April 8, 1964. It was also published by PAS as a
booklet in 1955.
tactics of the British colonialists, Burhanuddin called for the restoration of "Melayu" as a nationality. This, he argued, was not a narrow parochial concept; on the contrary, it cuts across class, ethnic and ideological identities and could be acquired by exchanging previous life styles for one that is characteristically Malay.52

PAS's concern with the restoration of "Melayu" as a nationality, as indicated in Chapter 2, had its origins in non-Malay demands for political rights, especially citizenship, and UMNO's liberal accommodation of such demands. A PAS document entitled "Jus Soli", issued a year before independence, strongly opposed the extension of citizenship to non-Malays. It charged that the aim of the non-Malay demand for citizenship was to "encroach" on the rights of the Malay race and the sovereignty of the Malay Sultans. It expressed the fear that "communalism with all its negative consequences would emerge in the country"53 if such demands were met.

In addition to having "Melayu" as its nationality, the Malayan polity, according to PAS, should also be organised according to Islamic principles. But it never systematically outlined the crucial question of how these "principles" would be applied in the Malayan context. While some PAS leaders cited Pakistan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia as potential models for emulation, others explicitly rejected these.54 A PAS member's remark, that


53. Persatuan Islam Sa-Malaya, Ma'lumat Jus Soli, April, 22,1956,Article 14.

54. Warta Negara, April 4, 1958; and "Excerpt from the Presidential Address Delivered by Dr. Burhanuddin Al Halimy", December 25, 1956.
"there will have to be more research on this [aspect] when we come to power", reflected the party's lack of understanding of the concept of an Islamic state.

The Federal Constitution, which came into force on merdeka day (August 31, 1957), fulfilled neither of the above basic objectives of PAS. While the Constitution recognised the "special position" of the Malays and established Islam as the "religion of the Federation", it did not create a "Melayu" nationality, and various provisions and omissions in the Constitution made it abundantly clear that Malaya was not an Islamic State. For example, the Constitution did not state that the Quran and the Sunnah would be the chief source of the public law of the land.

PAS reacted by caricaturing the attainment of merdeka as a 'Pa Kadok' (farcical/empty) victory. Claiming that "no one else" would

55. Interview with Muhammad bin Haniff, November 9, 1962.

56. "According to the PMIP, if they come to power, they would set up an Islamic State or Government fashioned on religion. What this would be like one cannot tell; certainly the PMIP has never set it out in detail. Whether they would take this course or not if they come into power is a matter of doubt" (Tunku Abdul Rahman, May 13: Before and After (Kuala Lumpur, September 1969), p. 35). However, the party did express its ideas on matters somewhat less vitally connected with the concept of an Islamic State. Among these were its demands that Friday should be a national holiday, instead of the 'Christian Sunday', that gambling should be prohibited, that liquor should not be served at government functions and that a Minister of Religion should be appointed to coordinate Islamic activities. See Straits Times and Malay Mail, September 15, 1960.

57. See Tan Sri Mohamed Suffian bin Hashim, An Introduction to the Constitution of Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur, 1972), chs. 15 and 17.

58. For a discussion of the features of an Islamic State, see Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi, Islamic Law and Constitution (Karachi, 1955).

fight for the rights of the Malay race, it pledged to struggle for "a genuine merdeka", one in which the lost sovereignty of the Malay race would be restored. In a letter to the then Prime Minister and President of UMNO (Tengku Abdul Rahman) dated 11th November 1958 PAS called on the latter to restore "Melayu" as a nationality in the Constitution "while there is still time". It also warned that the government's relaxed policy on citizenship would lead "to the drowning of the Malay race" unless checked immediately.

PAS also expressed its disagreement with the Tengku's conception of the "special position" clause in the Constitution. The Tengku, according to PAS, viewed the latter as a temporary provision to uplift the economically backward Malay community. PAS, on the other hand, argued that the "special position" of the Malays should be permanently established in the Constitution, because "they are the rightful owners of this nation" and "economic weakness or strength" should not be used as the criteria for such designation. In addition, its 1959 election manifesto specifically demanded that the positions of Prime Minister, Ministers, Assistant

60. Interview with Haji Yusof Arrawi, March 5, 1964. The phrase "mengembalikan kedaulatan Melayu" appears in several places in many PAS documents.


62. Ibid. According to Tan Sri Suffian, "one of the most important decisions made by the non-Malay leaders was to recognise the weakness of the Malay community in the economic field and the need in the interests of national unity to remove the weakness, for Malay poverty is a national problem rather than merely a Malay problem. To give effect to that decision, article 153 [special position of the Malays] has been written into the constitution" (Op. cit., pp. 245-6).
Ministers, Governors and Head of the Armed Forces be held by Malays.

UMNO's leadership, however, was unwilling to accept PAS's demands and conceptions of the Malayan polity. By then, UMNO had already succeeded in establishing a working relationship within the framework of an inter-communal "Alliance" (UMNO-MCA-MIC) party that had proved to be electorally successful. The 1957 Constitution was largely a legal summary of what is popularly referred to as the "bargains" within the Alliance.

PAS responded to UMNO's refusal to deviate from its "broad conception" of the Malayan polity by attacking it as a party that had "sold out" Malay sovereignty. The extent of hatred that consequently developed within PAS, towards the UMNO in particular, and the Alliance in general, can easily be inferred from the following sarcastic remark by one of the most articulate PAS leaders in Kelantan, Samad Gul Mianji: "I realise that people in the Alliance will find it bitter, living in this Universe, until everything that is called 'Malay' has been destroyed ... only then will their struggle end. When everything 'Malay' has been done away with,


64. "The British before transferring power insisted that the major communities should get together and agree on a constitution. Consequently when the draft constitution was being hammered out there were round the table Malays represented by UMNO leaders, Chinese represented by MCA leaders and Indians represented by MIC leaders. What eventually appeared in the constitution was the result of their bargaining and discussion during which they had to give and take and compromise, in the interest of national unity" (Tan Sri Suffian, op. cit., p. 241).

they will say, 'Amen! Thank God, our political struggle is over.'

Occasionally, PAS leaders tried to differentiate between the UMNO and the Alliance in their criticisms. "We [PAS] are not opposed to UMNO, it is the Alliance we hate," remarked a PAS leader. Another described the Alliance as "a non-Malay trap which the UMNO Malays had fallen into". Most characterized UMNO as a subservient partner in the Alliance. The Alliance structure, according to PAS, had not only provided a multi-racial facade for what was essentially a MCA domination of national politics but also had made UMNO incapable of implementing policies designed to uplift the Malay community.

The theme of Malay poverty was developed at length by the PAS. It attributed the present economic ills of the Malay community to British colonial policies. The Alliance government it charged, was not attempting to reduce the economic imbalance between the Malays and the immigrant communities. It initially dismissed wholesale the government's economic policies as of no benefit to the Malay community. Later, these


68. Interview with Khaidir Khatib, April 5, 1973.


70. In interviews, nearly all PAS leaders referred to the lack of attention during colonial rule to economic and educational development in rural areas where the majority of Malays resided. For a concise discussion of economic priorities during colonial rule, see Gayl D. Ness, Bureaucracy and Rural Development in Malaysia (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967).
were criticised as benefiting only a small number of 'Alliance Malays'.

Chinese contractors were identified by PAS as the major beneficiaries of the government's five-year plans. Rural development projects such as the opening of new roads and the provision of other basic amenities, were viewed as attempts to facilitate Chinese penetration, and consequent exploitation, of rural areas primarily inhabited by Malays. A resolution passed by a PAS branch in Perak well reflected this fear; it urged the government to disallow non-Malays from operating businesses in kampungs (villages).

PAS's economic goal was that the Malays should have the major share of the country's economic activities. For example, at a party meeting in Kuala Lumpur in 1959, it was resolved that fifty-one percent of the workers in both foreign and locally owned industries should be Malays. Six years later, the party's "Council of Religious Leaders" (Dewan Ulama) called for extensive governmental intervention in the economy, giving "priority rights to the Malays."

PAS's concern with the restoration of Malay sovereignty was also reflected in its stand on the two issues that are intimately connected - national language and education. While praising the "attempt to make Malay the national language" as "the only good the Alliance-rule had

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73. Tamil Nesan, December 29, 1959.
74. Interview with an ulama who attended the meeting.
it nonetheless severely criticised the Alliance government's implementation of the language policy. It charged that the UMNO was being unduly compromising in the implementation of the national language policy in order to satisfy non-Malay interests. Indeed, PAS dissatisfaction reached such a level that the party began to express doubts about the sincerity of UMNO's commitment to Malay as the sole national language.  

Article 152 of the 1957 Malayan Constitution, which contained the provision relating to the national language, also provided for the continued use of English for official purposes (for example, parliamentary debates, court proceedings), for a ten-year period. This provision was in the Constitution largely to benefit those who were not proficient in the national language and to give them sufficient time to master it. In interviews, many PAS leaders cited this provision as another example of UMNO's concession to non-Malay pressure. Some who accepted the provision 'in principle' argued that the ten-year period was rather excessive. "It takes only six years to become a doctor, surely it doesn't require ten years to become fluent in the national language", remarked the former legal advisor of PAS.

Although Malay was formally adopted as the national language in

75. Dr. Burhanuddin made this remark in his address to the tenth General Assembly of the party. Straits Times, January 6, 1962.

76. Interview with Salahuddin Abdullah (PAS), Member of the Kelantan State Executive Council and brother-in-law of Asri, April 30, 1973.

77. Tan Sri Suffian, op. cit., p. 274.

1957, the Alliance government and the civil servants, according to PAS, were still "admiring the English language". Consequently, it claimed, they were not doing enough to speed up the use of the national language in both governmental administration and educational institutions. In his speech to Parliament, the President of PAS regretted that "the estimates for the Ministry of Education did not show much for the development of the national language, and that most of the allocation was for the development of the English language". Two years later, the Deputy President of PAS, Zulkiflee Mohamed, described the continued importance given to English by the Alliance government as "a threat to the Malay community."

PAS wanted the introduction of the national language to be hastened. Its 1959 election manifesto called on the government to make Malay the sole official language within a year, to replace English by Malay at all levels of education, and to emphasise Malay culture in the school syllabus. "Thus it was a completely Malay education system that the party had in mind. Whether English had a role or not was uncertain. What was certain was that Chinese and Tamil education had none."

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81. From a manuscript of Zulkiflee's speech over the radio in the 1964 General Elections.
PAS alleged that the delay in the implementation of the national language had provided opportunities for non-Malays "to fight for their languages." In illustration, it cited the non-Malay based People's Progressive Party's (PPP) demand for a policy of multilingualism and the Chinese Teachers Association's challenge to the Chairman of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Language and Literary Council), Syed Nasir, "to prove the unworthiness of the Chinese language to become the national language besides Bahasa Melayu". Referring to the latter, Asri emphasised that "the challenge must be met with courage to protect the status of Bahasa Melayu as the sole national language of this country".

PAS's most vociferous criticism of the Alliance government's language policy took place in 1967, when the government introduced the controversial National Language Bill. Sections 4 and 5 of this Bill provided for the continued use of English in certain areas of governmental activity; Section 3 gave the Federal Government and all State Governments "the right to use any translation of official documents or communications in the language of any other community in the Federation for such purposes as may have been deemed necessary in the public interest". PAS opposed the Bill in very strong terms. Its Senator

84. For PAS's views on this demand, see China Press, January 12, 1959.
86. Ibid.
Wan Mustapaha charged that the Bill was illegal and unconstitutional, in that it opened "the doors to the other languages". In one of his longest speeches in Parliament, the then Acting President of PAS, Asri, criticised the Bill as "an act of compromise" and specifically accused Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman (who tabled the Bill) "of wounding the heart of his own race, of disillusioning the Malay race" and of fulfilling "almost everything" that the non-Malays have demanded on the language issue.

In summary, the PAS's principal goal was the restoration of Malay sovereignty. Tracing the weakening of Malay sovereignty from the period of colonial rule, it charged that UMNO, which had emerged as the leading spokesman for Malays in the independence struggle, had failed to restore their sovereign position; in fact, it claimed that UMNO had become a subservient partner in the Alliance government. Independence had turned out to be an empty victory for the Malays, according to PAS, and it pledged to struggle for a social order in which Malay dominance would be restored in all spheres.

By adopting an uncompromisingly pro-Malay position, PAS forfeited all chances of ever acquiring control of the federal government on its own. Consequently, PAS's only prospect for acquiring power was at the state level in the Malay-dominated states. The northeastern state of

88. Wan Mustapha said he would be prepared to support Clause 3 of the Bill which provided for translations into other languages if a time limit was specified (Sunday Mail, March 12, 1967).

89. Parliamentary Debates. Dewan Raayat, Third Session, 2nd Parliament (Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur, 1968), col. 6020-6048. The full text of his speech has been published as a booklet by PAS under the title Raayat Mengugut.

90. See Ratnam and Milne, op. cit., pp. 51, 85 and 33.
Kelantan emerged as the stronghold of PAS. Reasons for PAS's electoral success in this state are discussed in Chapter 5. What needs to be emphasised here is that it was extremely easy for PAS leaders to equate Malay interests with those of Kelantan, which had a higher percentage of Malays than any other state. A good example is the Kelantan land laws which restrict private ownership of land to indigenous Kelantan Malays. All others are allowed to own land only with the approval of the "Ruler in Council" meaning the State Executive Council; in interviews, it was mentioned that it is extremely difficult to obtain this approval. In election rallies, PAS leaders told their Malay audiences that by preserving these pre-merdeka laws the PAS government had prevented "others" from acquiring their land and thus protected Malay interests. But forming a government in Kelantan also created problems for PAS. For example, limited state revenue combined with absence of federal government support made it difficult for the PAS government to carry out large-scale developmental activities. This made PAS vulnerable to attacks as a party that had not brought benefits to Malays in Kelantan.

* * * * * *

Though both the DMK and the PAS opposed the legitimacy of their respective nation-states, their goals differed. The DMK sought Dravidian secession whereas the PAS wanted the exclusion of non-Malays from the polity. The PAS did not seek a separate state for Malays by re-drawing Malaya's boundaries, because all (or most) Malays are not concentrated

91. "Others" in these rallies meant non-Malays. Legally, non-Kelantan Malays also require the approval of the State Executive Council.
in one geographic region, as is the case of the Dravidian peoples in India; and also because PAS perceived the entire Malayan state as Tanah Melayu or Malay land.

Also, although both parties devoted a great deal of attention to the language issue, the positions they took differed fundamentally. While the DMK disagreed with the adoption of Hindi as the national language and favoured instead a policy of multilingualism, the PAS was critical of the government's casualness in the implementation of Malay as the sole official language and of certain clauses in the National Language Act which it perceived as concessions to non-Malay pressure.

Both parties found "scapegoats" for the economic backwardness of their respective communities. Though foreigners controlled a substantial portion of Malaysia's economy, it was the local Chinese who figured prominently in PAS's rhetoric as economic exploiters of Malays. 92 This accusation had great appeal amongst rural Malays who resented the activities of the Chinese middlemen. 93 It was in rural Malaya that PAS concentrated most of its mobilisational activity (see Chapter 4). The DMK's linking of Dravidian backwardness to exploitation by "northerners" in general and "Marwaris" in particular allegedly led to Tamil entrepreneurs, especially those belonging to Chettiar and Mudaliar 94 castes,


aligning themselves with the DMK. These entrepreneurs found it difficult
to compete with the economically entrenched Marwaris in Madras.

The DMK and the PAS definitions of the nation-states they aspired
to establish suggest a need to modify the sharp distinction initially
made between "primordial" and "economic" ties (see Chapter 1). The DMK's
Dravidanadu concept was rooted not only in the alleged glories of the
early Dravidian civilization but also in the alleged economic discrimi­
nation against the Dravidian states by the central government. Similarly,
the PAS's quest for a Tanah Melayu was a reaction not only to the inclu­
sion of non-Malays in the political system but also to the comparative
economic backwardness of the Malays vis-à-vis non-Malays.

The economic analysis of the DMK and the PAS stopped at the
point of identifying the economic exploiters of their respective commu­
nities. There was in both cases no systematic class analysis of their
own communities. Although, from a theoretical point of view, such an
analysis would have given greater neatness to the ideologies of the two
parties, it would have been politically disadvantageous. It would have
circumscribed their social base and consequently, political support.

95. Selig S. Harrison, India: The Most Dangerous Decades (Princeton:
Mobilisation of Political Support

Recognition of a separate political identity often exists only amongst the leadership, and only later, if at all, amongst the populations represented by a given primordial party. Thus the primordial party attempts to raise the consciousness of their clientele population by emphasising those divisions that distinguish the primordial group in question from other social groups.\(^1\) This strategy is referred to as "identity building" in this study.

In contexts where primordial identities are already politically salient, primordial parties often engage in what Rabushka and Shepsle, and others, refer to as "the politics of outbidding".\(^2\) Each tries to get ahead of its competitors by adopting more extreme and uncompromising postures in order to present itself as the 'genuine' representative of that primordial group.

The DMK's mobilisational activity has been directed towards creating a Tamil political identity and establishing itself as the representative of that identity. Although there were other parties in Tamil


Nadu which also had explicitly pro-Tamil ideologies, none of these ever posed a significant threat to the DMK. In Malaya, where Malay identity is politically salient, the PAS has tried to outbid UMNO as the real defender of Malay rights by adopting relatively more extreme positions and accusing UMNO of 'selling out' Malay interests in order to satisfy non-Malay demands.

This chapter analyses the political mobilisational strategies and machineries of the DMK and the PAS. In both cases, mobilisational activities reached their peak during election periods. Between election years, the emergence of political controversies over key issues such as language and education were effectively exploited by the leadership of both parties to step up their political campaigns.

The Politics of Identity Building

Irschick, Seal and others have pointed out that the development of political consciousness among the populace of the Madras Presidency was much slower than in the rest of British India: "Madras, in fact, of all the areas originally conquered by the British, was the last to develop nationalist and political fervor."3 Further, the nationalist

politics that did develop in this Presidency differed significantly from those in Bengal and other parts of British India in the comparative mildness of their anti-colonialism theme. In fact, the dominant issue in the Presidency's politics concerned the spoils in the colonial administration which were available to local elites. This issue involved primarily upper caste Hindus, the rest of society remaining largely unaffected. Only after the emergence of the DK did an organised attempt begin to mobilise the middle and lower strata to accept a specific Dravidian identity. But the DK's activities were confined mostly to the socio-cultural plane. The transfer of this identity to the political plane was largely the work of the DMK. 4

Although the DMK's formal ideology emphasised Dravidian identity, in actual political mobilisation it was not cast in Dravidian terms. The DMK's (and the DK's) predecessor, the Justice Party (JP) had been the first party to adopt the goal of Dravidian secession. Though the JP was largely composed of Tamils, it also included a significant number of non-Tamil Dravidians as both leaders and members. However, since the forties, especially after the split in the JP in 1944 and the formation of the DK, the Dravidian movement has been primarily a movement among Tamils within Tamil Nadu. 5

4. "By itself, ethnic division may or may not lead to political division. Some form of political translation of the ethnic interests is necessary to move groups from a social space to a political space. This transition is usually achieved through the mediation of political commitment and organization". Jyotirindra Das Gupta, op. cit., p. 468.

The DMK, which grew out of the DK, made a number of feeble attempts to project a pan-Dravidian image for itself. It was quite common in the DMK's initial years for non-Tamil speakers from the other Dravidian regions to appear on DMK platforms and proclaim their support for the goal of Dravidanadu. But over the years the number of such speakers declined and by the early sixties such joint appearances had disappeared almost entirely.

Faced with the absence of a pan-Dravidian image and organisational base from its inception, the DMK began to emphasise a Tamil rather than a Dravidian political identity in its political mobilisation. This emphasis did not represent an ideological compromise for the DMK leaders because they had in effect perceived Tamil and Dravidian identities as synonymous. The original Dravidian culture was for them a Tamil culture and Thami-zhagam (literally, Tamil land) was the heartland of Dravidian society and the least polluted by Aryan influences. "The Dravidians", writes Karunanithi (President of the DMK), "were the original sons of this [Indian] soil. ... Tamil, their mother tongue is beyond question, one of the most ancient languages in the world. ... Because of the strong influence of Sanskrit the Tamil language spoken in this area was broken into fragments of Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Tulu, Malayalam, Konkani and Condū. But in spite of this onslaught, Tamil retained wonderfully its pristine purity and individuality".6

What were the social groups subsumed under a Tamil identity?

In the Dravidian ideology as articulated by Periyar and other Justice Party leaders, "Dravidian" specifically excluded Brahmins and was linked to the concepts of "non-Brahmin" and Suddhra. In contrast, the Tamil identity emphasised by the DMK encompassed all Tamil speakers. The DMK leaders argued that all Tamil speakers (including Brahmins, Adi-Dravidas, Muslims and Christians) were Dravidians, that is, of the same race. The language issue (Hindi vs. Tamil) became an important vehicle for the expression of Tamil nationalism.

The DMK's emphasis on Tamil and Tamilian identity turned out to be "bad politics as far as its impact in the other Dravidian regions where the DMK was quickly associated with Tamil chauvinism". The DMK leaders did not carefully think out the mobilisational strategy that they would have had to pursue to attain the goal of Dravidanadu. This lack of foresight is clearly evidenced by the following remark by the DMK's Secretary-General: "Initially, we felt that we should first gain a firm foothold in Thamizhagam where we knew the people well. In regard to the other areas, we did not have clear ideas. At times, we felt that after we had

7. Interview with K. Vinayakam, a Congress Member of the Legislative Assembly for several years. July 13, 1972. A lawyer by profession, he was one of the most articulate speakers in the Tamil Nadu Congress Party. After the 1971 elections, he defected to the DMK. He attributed his resignation from the Congress to his realisation that "India is not a nation but a subcontinent composed of several nations, which is the DMK view" and to his "anger with my party's leadership - M. Bhakthavathsalam, the Congress Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, always tried to put me up as a candidate in a constituency where he hoped I would be defeated".
built up enough political strength in Tamil Nadu, we should then try to move into the other areas. At other times, we were encouraged when groups in the other states began to talk about the exploitation of the South by the North. We felt that we could also ally with these groups in the long run rather than become actively involved in the other areas ourselves”.

Although the DMK emphasised a Tamil political identity in its political mobilisation, it attempted simultaneously to highlight the underlying similarities amongst the linguistically divided Dravidian peoples. This helped the party to acquire the support of some of the non-Tamil Dravidians in Tamil Nadu, especially those residing in Madras city. Though predominantly Tamil, Madras city has large numbers of Telugus and Malayalees who are important economically, in the press and in the film industry. Their alignment with the DMK helped to strengthen the party's propaganda machinery immensely.

The following section analyses the DMK's machinery for mobilisation under the following headings: formal organisation, auxiliary organisations, and theatre and cinema.

**FORMAL ORGANISATION**

For the first two years of its existence, DMK party activity was


9. The alignment raises the question of "who used whom?" For example, it was alleged by some of my respondents that M.G. Ramachandran, a Malayalee and popular film-star, used the DMK to further his interests in the film industry. Ramachandran's alignment with the DMK is discussed later in this chapter.
conducted largely on an 'ad hoc' basis and confined mostly to Madras City and other urban centres. Only towards the end of 1951 was a party constitution formally adopted. The organisational hierarchy described in this constitution remained in force until 1969/70 when important changes were made.

The basic units of the party are the "branches" (or "divisions" in Madras city) which are found in the villages, major panchayat towns and municipal towns. Only one branch can be established in each of these administrative units and a minimum membership of twenty-five is required for establishment. The DMK's growth during the period 1950 to 1970 can be gauged partly by the increase in the number of party branches and members during this period. In 1950, the party had some 600 branches, with a total membership of about 30,000. Two decades later, the figures were 7,560 and 576,000, respectively.  

Immediately above the branches in the hierarchy are the taluk (sub-district) branches. These units are composed of representatives from the branches who supervise their subsidiaries' activities in their respective taluks. In turn, the taluk units are supervised by District Committees (of which there were fourteen in 1970). On the same organisational level as the District Committees are the State Organisation Committees (SOC). These are found only in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Mysore.

They are responsible for coordinating party activities in their respective states. According to the DMK constitution, the SOCs are to remain in operation until five hundred branches are formed in the states represented. Since the number has yet to be even closely approached in these three states, the presence of the SOCs reflects the lack of support for the DMK there.

At the apex of the DMK's organisational hierarchy is the General Council, the ultimate arbiter on policy matters. This council is composed of District Secretaries, State Organizers, representatives from District Committees and SOCs, and no more than ten members appointed by the Secretary General. Through the proliferation of party units at lower levels, the size of the General Council has increased from 125 members in 1952, to 342 in 1971.

In theory, a General Council's period of office is three years, but the General Council formed in 1960 continued until 1969. Intra-party elections were not held during this period because party leaders and members were too deeply involved in one political campaign after another, and many were imprisoned for involvement in demonstrations. Also, there were no major challenges to the party leadership, challenges which would have created pressures for such elections during this period.

11. For organisational purposes, the Union State of Pondicherry is considered a district and has seven representatives in the General Council of the party.

Until 1969, the most important post in the DMK's organisational hierarchy was that of the Secretary-General. The holder of this post was formally responsible for implementing the decisions taken by the General Council and the Central Executive Committee, presiding over state-level party conferences, holding intra-party elections and taking disciplinary actions. The importance attached to the post accrued not only from these formal powers but also from the respect accorded to the incumbent, C.N. Annadurai, the founder of the DMK and holder of the post for fifteen years. Affectionately addressed as "Anna" (Elder Brother) by party leaders, members and thousands of ordinary persons in Tamil Nadu, he enjoyed almost unquestioned authority within the party. Many of the party members I interviewed linked their entry into the DMK directly to their "love" for Annadurai.

13. The Central Executive Committee was an advisory body to the Secretary-General. DMK Constitution, Article 23, Clause 5.

14. C.N. Annadurai held this important post from 1949 to 1955 and from 1960 till his death in 1969. R. Nedunchezhiyan held this post from 1955 to 1960. The latter was elected Secretary-General largely due to Annadurai's desire to utilise his leadership talents for streamlining party organisation (C.N. Annadurai, Thambikku Annavin Kadithangal vol. 1 (Madras: Paari Nilaiyam, 1963), pp. 5-11).

15. "A majority of [500] local leaders surveyed [by mailed questionnaire] mentioned Annadurai as a primary reason for joining the DMK. Some specifically referred to his writings, speeches, or political philosophy. The slogan செல்வான், கோமாண்டான், கோட்டையான் [Duty, Dignity, Discipline] was repeatedly cited as were many of Annadurai's pamphlets and books such as ஹள்ளும், செய்யும் விளை and of course his journal Dravida Nadu. Many respondents, particularly those that had joined the party between 1949 and 1956 or who had been Dravida Kazhagam members, mentioned that they favoured a social revolution and that they felt that only through following Annadurai could this be achieved. Some respondents stated that they considered Annadurai as a 'God on earth'" (Marguerite Ross Barnett, "Charisma and Politics in South India", A.P. Janarthanam, ed., Anna Commemoration Volume (Madras: Asian Printers, n.d.), p. 17).
AUXILIARY ORGANISATIONS

Dravidian Students Progressive Federation (DSPF)

DMK leaders have relied on a variety of auxiliary organisations to mobilise mass support, most importantly the DSPF and a network of mandrums (clubs) found throughout Tamil Nadu. The DSPF is the student wing of the DMK. It is rooted in several of the youth organisations which championed non-Brahmin interests in pre-Independence days and consists mainly of college and senior secondary school students.

Although card carrying membership of the DSPF is only 11,520, the actual number of pro-DMK students is much greater. The DSPF has always served as a major source of recruitment for leadership in the DMK. Thus many of the DMK leaders and legislators were once active DSPF members. Many of the DMK's political campaigns, especially those focused on the language issue, might not have succeeded had it not been for the active involvement of the DSPF members.

Mandram

There are about seven thousand mandrums in Tamil Nadu. In some


17. In the sixties, Pachaiyappa College in Madras was popularly called "DMK College" because a large number of its students were active DMK supporters.

18. The author wishes to thank Mr. Samyappan for obtaining this information.


places, mandrams are known as padippagams (reading rooms), in others as arivagams (houses of knowledge). Most mandrams are pro-DMK, fewer are allied with the Congress. The pro-DMK mandrams are not affiliated to the DMK but are linked to the party by ideological bonds and overlapping memberships. Nearly all are named after leading party stalwarts, some of whom are also popular film stars or are otherwise associated with the film industry. Mandrams are maintained partly through the patronage of these stalwarts, partly through local subscriptions and donations. The clubs serve as meeting centres for party members and sympathisers, many of whom visit them regularly to read party publications and discuss political matters. Many mandrams organise public meetings which party leaders are invited to address, and nearly all of them conduct election campaigns.

Both the formal and auxiliary organisations of the DMK have emphasised the mechanism of public rallies to mobilise mass support. The DMK has held more public rallies than any other political party in Tamil Nadu. During the 1971 election campaign, "the DMK held about one

21. Numerically, the M.G.R. mandram is the most important; there are over a thousand M.G.R. mandrams in Tamil Nadu. M.G.R's involvement in the DMK is discussed later in this chapter.

22. The official party publication is Nam Naadu. From the mid-sixties, however, Murasoli (edited by Karunanithi) has clearly overshadowed the former as the most important source of information on party activities and policies. In addition, there are more than a dozen weeklies and dailies which are openly pro-DMK.


24. This was stated by all politicians, DMK and non-DMK, interviewed by the author.
hundred rallies every night in Madras city alone whereas the Congress was struggling to hold twenty. We [Congress] did not have many speakers like the DMK".25

Rallies addressed by DMK leaders are generally well attended. A substantial number of those attending are attracted by the oratorical talents of the DMK leaders. In Tamil Nadu politics, there now exists what is popularly called the 'DMK language' (adukkumozhi) in which alliteration and rhyme are strongly emphasised.26 This "language" was popularised by Annadurai. In the sixties other parties also attempted to acquire speakers well versed in adukkumozhi for their public rallies. Another important characteristic of the DMK leaders' oratory is that they only use 'pure Tamil' words, rather than Tamil words derived from Sanskrit. This desire to use 'pure Tamil' has its roots in the Tamil literary renaissance which is inextricably bound up with the history of the Dravidian movement.

Before capturing governmental power in Tamil Nadu, the DMK and its auxiliary organisations also organised several public agitations to express their opposition to governmental policies and pronouncements on key issues. These demonstrations proved to be quite effective in developing a mass-base for the party. Some agitations were conducted on a statewide basis, others were confined to Madras City or to particular districts.

They often took the form of long processions led by party activists. In addition to distributing party pamphlets to bystanders along the procession route, participants in such processions also engaged in a great deal of slogan shouting. These processions usually ended either in front of government offices (where petitions were presented to, or 'dialogues' held with relevant governmental authorities) or in public grounds where party leaders addressed large gatherings. Some of these agitations led to small-scale violence and some destruction of public property. A few DMK supporters were killed by police firings during the agitations, many imprisoned for periods ranging from a few weeks to a year. The DMK, of course, made full political capital out of such deaths and arrests, especially when presenting its 'record of sacrifice' to the electorate.

Theatre and Cinema

The DMK also relied heavily upon the theatre as a means of political mobilisation, especially in its earlier years. Annadurai, a playwright and an actor himself, realised from the beginning the potential political value of the theatre. Thus when he was in the DK he


28. Words like "kanneer" (tears) and "thiyagam" (sacrifice) appear very frequently in the DMK leaders' speeches on their roles in building up the party. The present President of the DMK, Karunanithi, has "said more than once: 'We have built our party with our tears, bathed it in our blood, and nourished it with our bones'" (The Illustrated Weekly of India, op. cit.).

succeeded in elevating drama to the status of an official party activity, despite Periyar's opposition. During the time of the split within the DK (1949), many theatrically-oriented DK members aligned themselves with Annadurai. The best known among them is Muthuvel Karunanithi, Annadurai's successor as leader of the DMK and, according to many, the leading Tamil playwright.

The influx of theatrically talented individuals into the DMK led many of its critics to dub it as a congregation of *kuthadigal* (artistes) who were concerned solely with their own self-enrichment. Such accusations, however, did not deter Annadurai and other DMK leaders from using artistes for propaganda purposes. Many DMK meetings during the early fifties were followed by dramas in which party leaders themselves played the major roles. This combination of politics and drama drew many to attend DMK meetings. The dramas "vigorously glorified Tamil culture, declaring that the ills of the day - whether political, social, or cultural - came from the Aryan's corruption of a pristine Dravidian civilization". They further stressed that "salvation lay in forcibly rejecting Brahmin-inspired customs and values, shaking off

30. Periyar regularly criticised dramas and movies for being partly responsible for moral degradation.

31. *Kuthadigal* is the plural of *kuthadi* which is used in pejorative descriptions of actors. A chapter on the links between the DMK and actors in Nedunchezhian's book, *Thi. Mu. Ka.* has been translated into English by Karthigesu Sivathamby in *The Drama Review*, vol. 15, no. 3 (April 1971).

North Indian domination, and, obviously, supporting the DMK, which stood for all that was best in Tamil culture.  

With the advent of the "talkies", the DMK swiftly moved to capitalise on cinema as a vehicle for political propaganda. Initially, the subject matter of Tamil movies was based almost entirely on Hindu religious mythology. But by the mid-forties, public interest in such stories had begun to decline and producers began to search for new themes. They found what they were looking for in the novels and plays written by DMK leaders and sympathisers; these works dealt with contemporary social realities. South Indian film producers quickly realised the box-office potential of these works, although they were on the whole unsympathetic to the pro-Draadivian, anti-Brahmin posture of the DMK. In addition to the large financial earnings they gained, the DMK writers' involvement in the film industry also provided them with an opportunity to take their social and political messages to larger audiences. Because virtually every village in Tamil Nadu was within the reach of cinemas

33. Ibid.

34. One well-known exception was the movie "Bala Yogini", which was produced in 1938. It was a contemporary shocker. It outraged the orthodox Brahmin community, as it told the story of a Brahmin widow driven out by a rich relative who decides to live with a low caste servant who willingly shelters her and her little daughter.

35. Karthigesu Sivathamby, op. cit.

36. Interview with Kavingar Karunanatham, August 1972. Although Karunanatham does not hold any important position in the party hierarchy, he is regularly consulted by Karunanithi especially on matters related to political campaigns. After becoming Chief Minister in 1969, Karunanithi appointed him as the Deputy Director of Information and Publicity in the State Civil Service.
the DMK's message received maximum territorial coverage. Cinema dialogues written by DMK leaders often contained long, sententious speeches by the 'hero'. These speeches always included some propaganda for the DMK and the Dravidian movement. In the dialogue and numerous songs there were regular references to 'black and red' (the colours of the DMK), a 'rising sun' (DMK's symbol), 'Anna' (DMK leader), 'South' (Dravidanadu) and 'North' (Aryan India). As these references were pertinent to the scenes in which they were made, film censor boards were often unable to raise objections on the grounds of political propaganda. But there was never any doubt in the minds of most audiences that these references were clearly DMK-oriented. In fact, such scenes were often greeted by loud cheering and applause from sections of the audience. Four such dialogues are given below, for illustration.

I. Actor A: "The night is dark".
   Actor B: "Don't worry. The Rising Sun will soon bring light and good fortune".

37. See Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., "Film and Society in Tamil Nadu: A Profile". (This paper is a preliminary analysis of a larger study of film and society in Tamilnadu which is being done jointly by Hardgrave and S. Krishnaswamy).

38. These dialogues were obtained from a research note on "the influence of mass media, particularly the film, on behaviour patterns in Tamilnadu". It was submitted by Mr. E. Divien, a research scholar (University of Madras), to the Centre for Social Research, Edward Elliotts Road, Madras.
II. Hero: "Believe me, sister!"

Lady in distress: "I do, Anna, I do! The whole land believes in you and will follow you".

III. Actress A: "Which colour do you prefer?"
(referring to saris)
Actress B: "I always like a black sari with a red border".

IV. Two persons lost in a forest:
Actor A: "Should we turn North?"
Actor B: "No, never! South is much better".

Discussions of the DMK's use of the cinema for political propaganda would be incomplete without reference to M. Gopala Ramachandran, a Malayalee. Associated with the DMK from the mid-fifties, MGR (as he is commonly addressed) is the most popular and highest paid actor in South India. He has more than one hundred films to his credit. In real life, MGR is popularly associated with numerous charitable acts. He is alleged to have given thousands of rupees for disaster relief, slum development, orphanages, schools and colleges. His donations or at least announcements of intentions in that direction are well advertised; they are the main source of his fame. In addition to DMK propaganda, his films are filled with references to his charitable and other good deeds which, writes Hardgrave, "blurs the role and the actor into one. Indeed, for the M.G.R. fan, the man is the projection of his screen image". 39

Just as MGR's box-office standing has benefited from his identification with the DMK, so has the DMK benefited by having a makkal thilagam ('idol of the masses') on its side. Although MGR's public speeches lack the finesse of most of the other DMK leaders, his appearances on the platform are sufficient to draw thousands to a rally. He has played a leading role in DMK election campaigns, both as a contributor to election funds and as a grass-roots mobiliser. Among the promises made by some DMK candidates to their constituents in the 1967 elections was an "MGR" visit to their areas!

In summary, although the DMK had pan-Dravidian political goals, in actual political mobilisation it attempted to create a Tamil rather than a Dravidian political identity. Its attempt was conditioned by its organisational confinement to Tamil Nadu, its predominantly Tamil composition and the DMK leaders' view that the original Dravidian culture was a Tamil culture. By the mid-sixties, the DMK succeeded in developing the best organizational machinery in Tamil Nadu and emerged as the only viable alternative to a Congress party that had been controlling the state's administration since Independence.

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The Politics of Outbidding

Prior to British intervention, the composition of peninsular Malaysian or "Malay" society was exceedingly varied. It comprised groups that had originated from as far afield as Borneo, the Celebes, Java and

40. MGR is also known as vaathiyaar (teacher) and puratchi nadigar (revolutionary actor).
Sumatra, as well as a sprinkling of Arabs and Indians. These groups tended to speak different languages, to be endogamous and often to be mutually hostile and violent towards each other.\textsuperscript{41} To illustrate, in Perak the Bugis rarely inter-married with other Malaysians; in Selangor there was a tradition of hostility between the Bugis aristocracy and the Sumatran miners; and in Negri Sembilan, the Menangkabau Malays at various times expelled the Bugis and the Rawa traders.\textsuperscript{42}

Although these separate identities (sukubangsa) are still emphasised in certain contexts,\textsuperscript{43} they have on the whole been superseded as a common Malay identity has emerged. The emergence of this identity is a recent phenomenon and has not yet been systematically explored.\textsuperscript{44}

The formation of a common ethnic consciousness among the various sukubangsa in Malay society was the result of their


\textsuperscript{44} According to Horowitz, many ethnic groups in Asia and Africa "had little or no sense of collective consciousness 50 or 100 years ago. Among these are some of the most clearly identifiable and cohesive actors in the contemporary politics of their respective states - groups like the Ibo of Nigeria and the Malays of Malaysia" (Op. cit., p. 117).
juxtaposition with new immigrant groups from India and China. These new groups, themselves divided by dialect, caste and other variables, also underwent a process of fusion as a result of their juxtaposition. Colonial recruitment policy further reinforced these processes. Donald L. Horowitz has superbly summarised this aspect:

"... the British were heavily influential in this process of fusion. In a significant way, it was the colonial perception of group boundaries that prevailed. Rather crude stereotypes were employed in decision-making even in the relatively late colonialism of Malaya. Indians and Ceylonese (who had also immigrated to Malaya) were felt to be indispensable to the management of the railways and post and telegraph offices. 'Subordinate posts requiring intelligence and financial skill in the holders were best filled by Chinese'. The Malays were said to be 'unquestionably opposed to steady continuous work'; hence the encouragement given to immigration. By channeling motivation and recruitment in preconceived directions, colonial policy gave the existence of the emerging groups a firmer basis in the groups' own perceptions than it might otherwise have had. The result was to make each group increasingly conscious of the aptitudes and disabilities, virtues and vices it supposedly held in common".

The elevation of ethnic identities to the political plane occurred mostly after World War II. Inter-communal hostilities,


46. Nevertheless, intra-Chinese divisions still have some force (Horowitz, op. cit., p. 128).

especially between Malays and the Chinese-dominated Malayan Peoples Anti-Japanese Army, and constitutional changes introduced by the British provided the background conditions for the immersion of the leadership of the various communities in the politics of 'who will get what' in the post-independence era. In the case of the Malays, opposition to the Malayan Union scheme represented the formal beginning of such immersion.

As independence approached, rivalries emerged not only between ethnic groups but also within each ethnic group. They continued into the post-Independence period. Within Malay society, much of the political conflict after merdeka centred on the issues of citizenship, language, education, religion and Malay economic uplift. This conflict initially involved three political parties: UMNO, PAS and Parti Negara (PN). Of these, PN never got off the ground. It lacked leadership talent and grass-roots mobilizers. Further, its attempt to project simultaneously a multi-ethnic outlook fell flat in an environment where separate ethnic identities had become politically paramount. As one student of Malaysian politics put it, PN "fell between two stools. It was 'Malay' but not as Malay as PAS in its orientation. It claimed to be interested in other communities but clearly the Alliance was perceived as a more affective [sic] spokesman of non-Malay interests".

49. Other than Dato Onn, the party did not have leaders of calibre or who had nation-wide popularity.
Thus there were for the most part only two effective competitors for Malay political allegiances, UMNO and PAS.

As the key component of an inter-ethnic coalition government, UMNO had to tread a delicate political path. On the one hand, if it over-emphasised Malay interests it would alienate the other two component parties of the "Alliance" which represented non-Malay interests. On the other hand, the lack of such emphasis would result in its being outbid by PAS which appealed openly to Malay sentiments alone. In Chapter 3, the substantive aspects of PAS's charge that UMNO had 'sold out' Malay sovereignty were presented. Below are some examples of how this allegation was articulated at the local level to mobilise political support.

In the first General Elections (1959) following Independence, PAS speakers in public rallies and ceremahs51 showed their audiences currency notes signed by a Currency Board52 officer of Chinese origin as "concrete proof of the claim that independent Malaya was controlled by the Chinese: "The audience would be told that whoever ruled the country signed its currency notes. In independent Malaya, they were signed by a Chinese. The speakers would conclude that therefore the Chinese are ruling the country. This argument appeared very convincing especially to the poorly educated sections of the audience".53 The allegation of

51. or small-scale meetings. This is discussed later in the chapter.

52. For a description of the structure and composition of this Board, see Lee Shong-yi, The Monetary & Banking Development of Malaysia and Singapore (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1974).

53. Confidential communication to the author.
Chinese ownership was so frequently made by PAS speakers that the Malayan Prime Minister, Tengku Abdul Rahman, had to formally refute it in a public rally. 54

During its campaigns in the east coast state of Kelantan, PAS alleged that the West coast states, all under Alliance rule, were dominated by non-Malays. It warned the Kelantanese voters that "the Chinese and Indians would move into their state" too if they voted for the Alliance party. 55 Interviews with several local UMNO leaders confirmed the fact that many residents in kampungs quite distant from district capitals believed that this was a real possibility. One UMNO leader remarked: "As a result of PAS propaganda, several people in my constituency asked me what I would do if the Chinese started coming to our place in large numbers. I found it difficult to answer this question and merely said 'we will wait and see'". 56

PAS mobilisers referred to Indonesia’s confrontation policy towards Malaysia 57 as further proof of their claim that the Alliance was anti-Malay. Allegations would often start when audiences were asked the loaded question: "Why should orang Indonesia (Indonesian people), who also belong to bangsa Melayu (Malay race), oppose Malaysia?" This question would be followed by the predictable explanation: "Because both the

55. Interview with Abdul Majid (Barisan Nasional), March 3, 1973.
56. Interview with Wan Mohd bin Wan Abu Bakar, April 22, 1964. (From Professors Ratnam and Milne’s data cards on the 1964 elections).
Alliance and British-sponsored Malaysia serve only the interest of orang bukan Melayu (non Malays). That's why our Indonesian brothers are angry. 58

PAS devoted a large proportion of its anti-Alliance rhetoric to the character assassination of top UMNO leaders. Its aim was to present the UMNO leadership to PAS audiences as both subservient to the dictates of the Chinese and highly immoral when measured by Islamic standards. UMNO's President, Tengku Abdul Rahman, was the principal target. His gambling at Turf Clubs and participation in Chinese and Hindu religious functions were especially singled out for attack in ceramahs. Some PAS mobilisers even ascribed the Tengku's alleged lack of concern with protecting Malay rights to the fact that he was only 'half-Malay' since one of his parents was Siamese.

Some of these attacks were clearly 'below the belt'. The following two examples were cited in the Tengku's book on the May 13th incident. 59 First, PAS activists circulated a picture of the Tengku using a pair of chopsticks at a Chinese dinner during the 1969 General Elections, in the Kuala Kedah constituency which he had contested. "Superimposed on the photograph was a suckling pig in the centre of the table". 60 The inference viewers were expected to draw were both that the Tengku


60. Ibid., p. 32.
eats pork, *haram* (forbidden) in Islam and that he would not hesitate to violate Islamic taboos in order to be friendly with the Chinese. Another picture in circulation at that time showed Cabinet Minister, Khir Johari and his wife attired in traditional Chinese costumes. Taken at a tourist shop in Hongkong, this picture had been sent as a New Year Greeting by Khir Johari to his Chinese friends. This photograph was circulated extensively by PAS activists as evidence of its claim that "UMNO leaders would go to any extent to please the Chinese". The Tengku condemned these practices as "Machiavellian opportunism of the worst kind, previously not heard of in Malaysia history". But it must be emphasised that neither incident was initiated by the PAS high command. Both were essentially the work of local level party enthusiasts.

While itself critical of top UMNO leaders, PAS did not engage in image-building on behalf of its own leaders either as champions of Malay interests or as strict adherents to Islamic precepts. Rather, the focus was largely on the party itself. PAS speakers referred to their party as *rumah Melayu* (a house belonging to Malays) and as *parti Allah* (God's party). They described Prophet Muhammad as

61. Confidential communication to the author.
Although PAS never articulated with any clarity its conceptions of the Islamic state, Islamic rhetoric was extensively used in the actual mobilisation of political support.

The UMNO was continuously accused of 'betraying Islam', not only because it was sacrificing spiritual values for material advancement, but because its partnership with the MCA and the MIC in the Alliance amounted to co-operation with the 'infidels'. From many accounts, the PMIP used its house-to-house campaign to warn Malay voters that they would be going against the dictates of Islam if they voted for a non-Islamic party or even for a party (like the UMNO) which was working in close cooperation with non-Muslims.66

The following paragraphs examine the mobilisational machinery and tactics of PAS under the following headings: formal organisation, ceramah, welfare work and social ostracism.

**Formal Organisation**

The basic party unit is the ranting (sub-branch). It corresponds to the area covered by a polling station. A minimum membership of fifteen and the approval of the cawangan (branch) are required for its establishment. Theoretically, power within the party devolves upward from this source. The branch is composed of the Presidents and delegates of the sub-branches. According to the party constitution, one branch should be formed in a state administrative district,67 or a

66. Ratnam and Milne, op. cit., p. 120.
67. The Malay word for district in all states, except Kelantan, is daerah. In Kelantan, the word is jajahan.
parliamentary constituency, provided there is a minimum membership of one hundred. The supervision and coordination of the activities of the branch rests in the hands of the State Commissioner, the person with "the most important party post at the state level". Supreme authority within the party rests theoretically in the General Assembly but, in practice, much of it is exercised by the National Executive Committee. The PAS also has three sections which cater specifically for Youth (Dewan Pemuda), Woman (Dewan Muslimat) and the Religiously Learned (Dewan Ulama). In the past, these sections "functioned separately with their own by-laws and regulations". Now they are formally integrated into the party hierarchy. The PAS does not have clearly identifiable auxiliary organisations.

68. PAS Constitution, Article 16, Clause 1.
69. Interview with Wan Hashim, April 3, 1973. The State Commissioner is appointed by the President of the party on the advice of the executive committee. In Kelantan, the following have held this post: Asri Muda (until 1964), Khaidir Khatib (1964-1966), Haji Nor (1966-1969), and Ishak Lotfi (1969-).
70. Interview with Salahuddin Abdullah, April 30, 1973.
71. Recently, the Youth section of the party has begun to acquire some importance. Much of the dissatisfaction within PAS towards the ruling coalition government, which includes PAS, has been articulated by the Youth section.
73. Although formal links were not established, PAS expressed its support for the National Language Action Front, which, like PAS, was fundamentally opposed to any compromise on the national language issue.
The formal organisation of PAS, as described in its constitution, is a highly centralised one. Interviews with several party functionaries as well as observation of activities within party offices, however, confirmed an earlier observation that the formal organisation and actual practice vary considerably.\(^7^4\) State organisations, for instance, are neither tightly controlled nor are their activities well coordinated by the national organisation in Kuala Lumpur.\(^7^5\) Membership registers and other party records are also poorly kept. When queried on the size of the party membership, party officials could only give, to use Bertram Gross's word, "guesstimates".\(^7^6\) The most recent "guesstimate" by the party's Secretary-General is 150,000 members.\(^7^7\)

Although party leaders conceded that their organisational machinery is weak, they did not consider this a serious handicap. One young PAS leader summed it up as follows: "PAS has always placed less emphasis on continual organisation. Rather, it relies more on what I call 'the spontaneous action style' of party members and supporters".\(^7^8\)

\(^7^4\) Ratnam and Milne, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

\(^7^5\) Interview with Amaluddin Darus (PAS), February 5, 1973. Among other things, he pointed out that the activities of the PAS controlled Kelantan and Trengganu state governments were not coordinated by the national party organisation.


\(^7^7\) See statement by Haji Hassan Shukri in the *Straits Times*, December 30, 1975. PAS is now engaged in re-registering all its members.

\(^7^8\) Interview with Wan Hashim, April 20, 1973.
This is confirmed by Ratnam and Milne's observation that "where it [PAS] was successful, it was because of grass-roots enthusiasm rather than the strength of its organisation". Some PAS leaders explicitly rejected the use of party membership size as a criterion for measuring the organisational strength of PAS: "The majority of our active followers prefer to remain supporters rather than become card-carrying members. In many instances, the former have sacrificed more for the party than the latter."

The absence of strong organisation in the PAS has been partly counterbalanced by the dedicated support which the party has received from religious leaders in the rural areas where the majority of Malays reside. Both Islamic rhetoric and, in Kelantan, financial rewards from the PAS controlled state government, led many guru pondoks (religious teachers), mubalighs (religious propagators) and imams (prayer leaders) to align themselves with PAS. These religious leaders enjoy a great deal of respect and influence at the local levels in rural Malaya. In many areas they have constituted the nucleus around which

81. Until 1973, Kelantan's PAS government gave guru pondoks $240/= allowance per year. In 1973, this was raised to $360/=. See Abdul Rashid bin Haji Ahmad, Kedudokan Pondok Dalam Masyarakat Di-Kelantan, Graduation Exercise, Malay Studies Department, University of Malaya 1960.
party support has been built. Women and elder people especially were reported by my respondents to be more easily convinced than others by the pro-PAS talk of the religious leaders. During election periods, many of the religious leaders participated actively in PAS campaigns. They distributed party pamphlets, gave talks in ceramahs, and incorporated party propaganda in their sermons during Friday prayers at their mosques. 83

Ceramah

PAS's reliance on local level opinion leaders fitted in well with its emphasis on ceramahs rather than public rallies as contexts in which to mobilise support, especially in the party's earlier years. Ceramahs are literally small discussion groups. They are in practice meetings attended by fifty to one hundred persons. They are held most frequently during election periods in the homes of local level PAS leaders or PAS supporters. Invitations to these meetings are generally extended by word of mouth. They often begin with general talks on Islam by religious leaders. Prior to PAS's entry into the Barisan Nasional, much of the meetings was devoted to demonstrating that the Alliance party was anti-Islam and anti-Malay. According to one Kelantan assemblyman, the PAS speakers in these ceramahs were "extremely clever in choosing analogies that appeared convincing to the rural folk. For

83. Interview with Amaluddin Darus (a founder member of PAS in Kelantan), April 10, 1973.
example, they told the kampung people that 'politik macham rumah'
(politics can be compared to a house), then explained that the Alliance
rumah has three rooms - occupied respectively by Malays, Chinese and
Indians. They then asked the kampung people whether they would like
to stay in a house where the Chinese would be cooking babi (pork meat)
next to them or whether they would prefer the PAS rumah where only
Malays are found". 84

Welfare Work

An UMNO politician in Kelantan who was thoroughly disappointed
with his party's failure to discredit the PAS in the eyes of the peasantry,
and to get them to accept his party's view of politics, has remarked:
"These people don't elect a representative or policy-making assemblyman -
they elect themselves a welfare officer". 85 Interviews with several PAS
leaders in Kelantan confirmed the view that those who engaged more fre­
quently in welfare work, other things being equal, had better chances
of winning elections.

In Kelantan both PAS assemblymen and local leaders have long
emphasised the need for year-round welfare work amongst the kampung
people as the best means of maintaining close links with them and gain­
ing their political support. Datuk Asri (PAS President) has summarised
the nature of this work: "What they (people) want is someone who can

84. Interview with Foo Chow Yong, April 23, 1973.

85. Clive S. Kessler, "Muslim Identity and Political Behavior in Ke­
lantan", in William R. Roff, ed.; Kelantan: Religion, Society and
Politics in a Malay State (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press,
help them in time of need - a lift to town to take their children to hospital, a respected member of the community to give them face when they hold a kenduri [or feast], a man who can talk their language and understand their problems". Because many constituents are illiterate peasants, they also have a real need for someone to do the important work of petitioning government offices concerning land matters on their behalf.

Preliminary analysis of a sample of peninsular Malaysian state legislators suggests that UMNO legislators are more "constituent-oriented" than those belonging to PAS. However, an earlier study in Kelantan (based on extensive interviews), observed that from the mid-fifties on, many UMNO legislators neglected constituency work. This neglect was perhaps because they themselves hailed from higher class backgrounds and could easily get other financially rewarding occupations, if defeated at the next elections. One MCA member of the 1955 Kelantan state assembly observed that many of his UMNO counterparts

86. Straits Times, May 13, 1969.

87. Both the author and Dr. M.C. Kumbhat are currently engaged in a study of the constituent orientation of Malaysian legislators. This study is financed partly by the University of Hawaii. A preliminary paper was presented at the meeting of the Research Committee on Legislative Development, International Political Science Association, Penang, March 1973. The title of the paper is "The Perceptual-Behavioural Dimension of Constituent-Orientation: A Case Study of State Legislators in Peninsular Malaysia". A revised version of this paper has been published ("Constituent Orientation Among Malaysian State Legislators", Legislative Studies Quarterly, 1:2 (August 1976), pp. 389-404).

"were arrogant, behaved like 'masters', and never kept in touch with the grass-roots". 89 Several of my respondents attributed the defeat of UMNO by PAS in the 1959 elections in Kelantan to the social aloofness of UMNO legislators contrasted with the PAS candidates' active involvement in the daily life of their constituents. The majority of the PAS men were "of lesser means" with "no soft cushion to fall on" in case of electoral failure. 90

Social Ostracism

Through regular and close contacts with their constituents, PAS mobilisers have often succeeded in creating a sense of their constituents belonging to a community of PAS supporters. One important consequence has been that non-supporters residing in areas of PAS strength were often socially ostracised. Although such practices were never explicitly encouraged by PAS leaders, they came to be primarily associated with PAS in the rural areas. An UMNO leader, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, has described social ostracism as the "main weapon" of PAS: "An UMNO member in a PMIP stronghold is cut off from any social contact with the rest of his community. Or if a PMIP supporter is found working with us, he is immediately boycotted by other PMIP members. For the villager, social ostracism can be very deadly. It means his kenduri [feast] will be boycotted by his neighbours. The villager loses face and that is terrible". 91

90. Kessler, op. cit., p. 299.
91. Straits Times, April 11, 1969. The PAS was mostly referred to as Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP) in accounts in English.
Social ostracism has been common in rural Kelantan and Trengganu, less common in Kedah.

In summary, PAS’s mobilisational strategy was to outbid UMNO as the genuine defender of Malay rights. In rural areas where it concentrated its mobilisational activity, it presented its version of various political issues in a manner that appeared convincing to the peasantry. Because it lacked strong organisational machinery, it relied on small group meetings and local influentials to convey its message.

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The DMK and PAS mobilisational strategies have been characterized as "identity building" and "outbidding" respectively. These strategies, however, must not be seen as mutually exclusive. They overlap to some extent. For example, through its efforts to outbid UMNO, PAS contributed to a heightening of Malay communal consciousness.

The explanation for the different strategies of the DMK and the PAS lies in the differences in the nature of their objectives and opponents. The PAS's objective was to create a Tanah Melayu. It opposed the concept of an ethnically heterogeneous Malayan nation-state. Thus, PAS had to direct its appeal only to Malay primordial sentiments. Secondly, PAS's main competitor was UMNO, a Malay party. To defeat UMNO, PAS sought to project itself as a better representative of Malay interests by taking more extreme positions than UMNO on issues affecting the Malay community. The aim of the DMK, on the other hand, was to emerge as the party of all Tamils and not of a segment within Tamil
society. Consequently, it had to create a Tamil identity based on a linguistic definition of common nationality.

How effective were these strategies of the DMK and the PAS as manifested, for instance, in election results? Did involvement in electoral politics force these parties to emphasise other themes as well in these in order to win? What was the reaction of the ruling parties, especially the Tamilnadu Congress and the UMNO respectively, to these strategies? These questions are examined in the next chapter.
Electoral Involvement and Political Accommodation

The DMK and the PAS initially had different conceptions of their respective nation-states. The DMK's principal objective was the secession of Dravidanadu from the Indian Union while that of PAS was to make Tanah Melayu (Land of the Malays) coterminous with bangsa Melayu (Malay nation).

At present, however, the two parties have abandoned their initial goals. In 1963 - about fourteen years after its formation - the DMK amended the article entitled "aim" in its constitution to read as follows: "to struggle for the formation of the four linguistic provinces of Tamilnadu, Kerala, Karnatak and Andhra into a closely knit Dravidian federation which would be under Indian sovereignty and enjoy the maximum possible autonomy."  

Similarly, the PAS now accepts the multi-ethnic character of the Malaysian polity. In 1971 - about twenty years after its formation - the PAS supported the Constitution (Amendment) Bill which makes it illegal for anyone to challenge the citizenship provisions given in the Constitution.  

This chapter examines the respective political accommodations of these two parties through involvement in competitive processes that

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induced them both to abandon their positions of opposition.

An important factor that must be emphasised at the outset was the position of the ruling party in each country - the Congress and the Alliance respectively - immediately after independence. They were better organised, had abundant leadership talents (at least several leaders enjoying nation-wide popularity) and they were seen as the parties of independence. The Congress and the Alliance were each dominant and no opposition party could effectively challenge this dominance at the national level.3

Among other factors, the political security of leaders in the Congress and the Alliance allowed for tolerance toward parties of other political orientation, even those, such as the DMK and the PAS, calling for redefinition of the polity itself. Had the leaders of the Congress and the Alliance been less secure immediately after independence, it is possible that parties posing such threats might have become targets of repression or that the system of competitive politics itself would have been terminated, with appropriate 'national interest' rationalisations.

DMK: From Secession to Autonomy (1949-1963)

The DMK dropped its secessionist goal in 1963 and began

to demand greater autonomy for the states in India. This shift in its goal took place gradually. When the DMK became involved in electoral politics, its power ambition gradually overwhelmed its initial ideological aspiration.

About 50,000 members (roughly two-thirds of the party's total membership) resigned from the DK following Periyar's controversial marriage to a party worker. They joined instead the DMK which was led by Periyar's chief disciple, Annadurai. The DMK continued to propagate Periyar's social reform and rationalist ideas after the split. Its leaders, like those of the DK, saw the solution to the ills of their society in the creation of an independent Dravidanadu. Hence the DMK was identified as "a liberation movement". In its early years, several DMK propagandists spoke of their readiness to lay down their lives to achieve the goal of Dravidanadu. The rhyming slogan, *kidaithaal thiraa-vidanadu, illavittaal sudukaadu* (we attain either Dravidanadu or the graveyard) was frequently uttered.

While the DMK was being formed, the Indian Constituent Assembly was completing its work on the Constitution of India. This was

4. See Chapter 2, pp. 27-28 of this dissertation.
5. See India, Tamil Nadu, General Order 360, February 1952. A speech by Annadurai is quoted in this document.
put into effect in 1950. Two years later India's first General Elections based on universal adult franchise were held to elect central and state governments.

What was to be the DMK's role in this election? The party's General Council resolved that: "In order to demonstrate our opposition to the Indian 'Constitution which does not take into account the attitudes of the Dravidians and which infringes on the fundamental rights of the Dravidians, the DMK will not field candidates in the first General Election held under it." Thirteen years later, in a seminar gathering at the University of Rajasthan, Annadurai explained DMK's non-participation in this election as having reflected an interest mainly in "social reconstruction and intellectual resurrection of the country" rather than in politics. In my interviews with other DMK leaders, other reasons were forwarded. Firstly, the party was not organisationally prepared. Secondly, unsure of its mass support, it feared that a complete rout in the elections would adversely affect its future growth. Finally, it felt that non-participation would help refute Periyar's accusation that the DMK was formed by ex-DK members who hoped for election to the Legislative Assembly and to Parliament for personal gain.

The DMK, however, decided to test its strength by proxy. The
General Council resolved that the DMK would assist non-Congress candidates who would pledge support for DMK objectives, particularly on the issue of Dravidanadu.10 In addition to several independent candidates, two Vanniyar caste parties, the Commonweal and the Tamilnadu Toilers, accepted the DMK's condition.11 By appealing almost exclusively to caste sentiments,12 these two parties won twenty-five assembly seats from their two areas of greatest strength, North and South Arcot districts.

The DMK's initial happiness with success was short-lived, however. Both of the parties it backed reneged by aligning themselves with the Tamilnadu Congress Party (TNC), which won the highest number of assembly seats in the elections, but did not get an absolute majority (152 out of 375 seats). To strengthen Congress' position, C. Rajagopalachari, then Chief Minister, coopted the Commonweal Party by offering a cabinet appointment to its leader, Manickavelu. Later, the Chief

10. For details of this 'pledge', see Parthasarathy, op. cit.

11. For discussions of the historical origins and contemporary political roles of this caste group, see Lloyd L. Rudolph and Suzanne Hoeber Rudolph, The Modernity of Tradition: Political Development in India (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), Part I.

12. A popular slogan in the election was "Vanniyar Ottu Anniyarkku Kidayathu" (literally, "Vanniyar votes will not be given to foreigners"). It was commonly taken to mean that members of the Vanniyar community will not extend their support to candidates belonging to other caste groups in Madras state. However, according to a student DMK leader, this was not the original meaning. He explained that this slogan originated in a constituency where the candidate who opposed the Vanniyar candidate hailed from "the North", that is, in DMK terms, from alien territory.
Minister's successor, Kamaraj Nadar, coopted the Tamilnadu Toilers' Party with a similar inducement. The strength of the Congress party and its allies was thus increased; in a reorganised Assembly this grouping now held a majority (142 out of 236 seats).

The DMK recovered quickly from this betrayal and launched its own first major political campaign in 1953. Its leaders described this as the "Three Front Struggle". The first was against the Chief Minister's proposal for a new educational scheme wherein students would attend school for half a day and learn their father's occupation during the other half. Rajagopalachari's claims for this scheme were that morning and afternoon sessions would permit a larger student intake; and students would also have time to learn vocations.

But in the DMK's view, the proposal had an ulterior motive: to perpetuate caste. DMK reasoning was evident in the kinds of questions asked: "Must a roadsweeper's son also become a roadsweeper? Can't he aspire to become a scientist?" Similar rhetorical questions were asked in public rallies.

The second aspect of the struggle concerned the government's proposal to name a town in honour of Dalmia, a north Indian cement magnate. The DMK opposed because: (i) the town already had a well-known historic name (Kallakudi); (ii) Dalmia had been associated with several fraud cases, and the new name would be an affront to residents; and (iii) since northerners had never named their towns after South Indian leaders, there was no reason to reciprocate. Although this was a local issue,

it came to symbolise widely the DMK's opposition to northern Indian influences in the South.\textsuperscript{14}

The third "struggle" was waged against the derogatory remarks Nehru had allegedly made about the Tamils in general and the DMK in particular. Under the linguistic reorganisation of Indian states proposed by the Dhar Commission,\textsuperscript{15} Chitoor district, with a Tamil majority, was to be included in Andhra. However, M.P. Sivagnam of the Tamil Rule Party campaigned with Annadurai's support for the inclusion of this district in Madras. Nehru allegedly referred to this campaign as "nonsense", as reflecting a "tribal mentality".\textsuperscript{16} The DMK claimed that these remarks insulted Tamils in general, and assumed for itself the role of condemning Nehru on their behalf.

The "three front struggle" which began on July 15, 1953 involved demonstrations at the Chief Minister's residence and other government offices, protest marches, public rallies, obstruction of railway lines to prevent central government-run railways from operating in Madras state, and the display of black flags during Nehru's trip to Madras. Several DMK leaders and hundreds of members and supporters were arrested for these activities, and a few were killed in police shooting.

\textsuperscript{14} Parthasarathy, op. cit., pp. 225 and 263-4.

\textsuperscript{15} The Dhar Commission was appointed to advise the Constituent Assembly in its deliberations on demands for linguistic states in late 1948.

The "three front struggle", however, was a success for the DMK in several respects. Its mobilisation of mass opposition contributed to the decision by the Madras Congress government to abandon its education proposal. Further, the decision to change Kallakudi's name to Dalmiapuram was also at least temporarily shelved.17

In addition, the arrests, the related court cases and the funerals of those killed were given extensive press coverage.18 This publicity created an image of the DMK as a militant organisation which used extra-parliamentary means to achieve its goals. For the majority of the DMK members involved in this struggle, this was their first immersion in political activity, and the subsequent emergence of many as 'prison graduates' gave them a martyr status hitherto absent.

As the second General Election approached, the DMK was again confronted with the dilemma it had faced in 1952. Would it continue to operate primarily outside the framework of parliamentary politics? The response this time was conditioned by several factors, the most important being the rise of Kamaraj in state political activity.

Born in July, 1903, Kamaraj had had very little formal education. But early in life he developed a keen interest in politics and was an active participant in several nationalist agitations against colonial rule. He was jailed six times, spending a total of eight years in jail.

17. Parthasarathy, op. cit., p. 255.
18. Pandiyan, op. cit., p. 47.
He was appointed Secretary of the Tamilnadu Congress Committee in 1943, became President in 1946 and held this post until 1954.

Kamaraj's main factional rival in the Tamilnadu Congress was Rajagopalachari. The latter made several attempts to remove him but, each time, Kamaraj emerged more powerful than before. Finally in 1954, when Rajagopalachari resigned (partly because of the unpopularity of his education proposal) Kamaraj took over the reins of state government, defeating C. Subramaniam (currently Central government minister) who had been preferred by Rajagopalachari.¹⁹

Kamaraj's assumption of the chief ministership appeared to undercut the DMK's potential for developing a mass-based party. For the first time the Madras state government was led by a member of the low, Nadar caste.²⁰ There was not a single Brahmin member in the cabinet and the DMK found it difficult to level its usual charge that the Congress was a Brahmin-dominated party.

Periyar's enthusiastic endorsement of Kamaraj further added to the difficulty. Periyar hailed Kamaraj as a pachai thamizhan (pure Tamilian), under whose leadership the status of the lower castes would be raised, and pledged the DK's full support for the 'Kamaraj

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²⁰ For an account of this caste, see Hardgrave, op. cit.
Periyar's unsolicited support gave Kamaraj "a foothold in the Dravidian nationalist camp and made it difficult for the DMK to accuse him as an Aryan stooge."\(^{22}\)

Finally, Kamaraj's simple life-style, 'plain talk', his welfare policies and his extensive tours throughout the state enhanced his popularity, especially amongst the lower castes. In short, Kamaraj's leadership provided the Congress with a powerful basis for establishing political hegemony in Madras state. The support base of the Congress expanded so rapidly after this that other political organisations soon could aspire only for political "crumbs".

In explaining DMK's attitude towards the elections, the party's Secretary General acknowledged that: "We were fully aware of the impact of Kamaraj ... But, we were better organised in 1956 than in 1952. We felt that if we did not contest, Kamaraj would totally sweep the election and we would be pushed into the political wilderness."\(^{23}\)

These were not the only factors that influenced the DMK's attitude: three other factors were probably equally important. First, there was the experience of betrayal by other parties in the 1952 elections.

\(^{21}\) Link, November 26, 1961.


\(^{23}\) Interview with Nedunchezhian (Madras, November 11, 1972).
Next, there was Annadurai's firm belief in the use of parliamentary means. Finally, there was the strong possibility of winning a sizeable number of seats, with the support of voters who had been sympathetic to the goal of Dravidanadu in the 1952 election.

The issue of DMK participation in the 1957 election was formally decided at the party's conference, at Tiruchirappalli, in May 1956, in which a majority of the party's General Council and Executive Committee members favoured direct electoral participation, but a minority opposed, for fear this "would sidetrack the DMK from its basic goal." In the end a referendum was held among those attending the conference and the "people's command" was in the affirmative (57 thousand to 4 thousand). This referendum helped the DMK leaders to project the DMK as a democratic, mass-based organisation.

The DMK's electoral propaganda centred around the notion of "antithetical interests of the North and South and the impossibility of a fair deal for the South in a United India dominated by North."

In addition, DMK leaders sensed a need for populist appeals to elicit

24. See Chapter 2, p. 27 of this dissertation.
26. Interview with N.V. Natarajan, DMK General Council Member (Madras, September 8, 1972).
the support of those "who did not agree with the Dravidanadu goal or
did not understand what it meant but who were dissatisfied with the
Congress." 29 Hence, they called for minimum wages, housing and
medical facilities for the working classes, nationalisation of in-
dustry, and a ceiling on landholdings to help the peasantry overcome
exploitation by intermediaries. 30 Thus, the requirements of electoral
politics forced the DMK to incorporate objectives which were not
directly connected with its basic goal. Their importance increased as
the party became more deeply involved in electoral activity, and
eventually the DMK could survive, and indeed prosper politically with­
out its basic ideological goal.

In 1957, the DMK contested in 112 state and 11 parliamentary
constituencies and supported candidates sympathetic to its objectives
in twelve (seven state and five parliamentary) constituencies. The
DMK's decision to contest in more than half of the state assembly
constituencies clearly reflected organisational growth and leadership
confidence. In number of assembly seats contested, the DMK was second
only to the ruling Tamilnadu Congress which contested all 205 seats.

The Tamilnadu Congress, which denounced the DMK's election
manifesto as "a patched up affair of bits of the Congress manifesto,"

was engulfed in factional infighting on the eve of the election.\textsuperscript{31} This however did not seriously affect the Tamilnadu Congress' electoral performance. It won in a landslide, with 70 percent of the seats (151 out of 205), although polling only 43.5 percent of all votes cast. The DMK, with 14.6 percent of the votes, finished second with 15 assembly and two parliamentary seats. Indications were that DMK support was more urban than rural, with rural support coming primarily from the Vanniya Kula Kshatriya and other backward castes.\textsuperscript{32}

In assessing the DMK's electoral performance, several factors must be taken into consideration. Firstly, DMK candidates finished as runners up in 47 constituencies, and in many of these it lost by margins of less than a thousand votes. Secondly, where there were three-cornered fights between the Congress, the DMK and the Communists, the latter two split the non-Congress vote and the Congress won easily.\textsuperscript{33} Finally, many DMK supporters were youths, at that time still below voting age.\textsuperscript{34}

The DMK's formal emergence as a political party in 1957 marked the beginning of a shift in orientation. While the attainment of Dravidanadu remained an objective, most of the party's energies began

\textsuperscript{31} Hindu, February 17, 1957. For a brief discussion of the factional struggle within the Tamilnadu Congress, see Raman, \textit{op. cit.}


\textsuperscript{33} Raman, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 19-20.

\textsuperscript{34} Hindu, April 2, 1957.
to be directed toward the central goal of most political parties, winning elections. DMK began to shed its militancy and to acquire the characteristics of a responsible political party. The DMK's transformation is examined below within the broader context of Madras politics.

Under the States Reorganisation Act of 1956, Madras state was considerably reduced in size. It lost the regions of South Kanara, Malabar, Rayalaseema and Northern Circars. With the loss of its Kannadam, Malayalam and Telugu language areas, Madras now consisted only of unilingual Tamil Nadu. This provided a new impetus for the growth of exclusively Tamil nationalism. The Periyar-led DK, which had also advocated Dravidian secession, began to express doubts about this goal under the altered circumstances. In early July 1956, Periyar announced his party's abandonment of the Dravidanadu goal in favour of a more restricted, independent Tamil state.

The DMK, however, did not give up its Dravidanadu goal. According to a senior party leader,

> it was common knowledge that linguistic consciousness would be heightened with the re-organization of states. In the South, this was already happening from the beginning of the fifties. But this development did not shake us. The Dravidanadu that we wanted was a multi-lingual federation. Many of us were prepared to accept the liberation of Thamizhagam as the first step in the direction of our ultimate goal.

The DMK emerged as the vanguard of Tamil nationalism largely through


37. Interview with N.V.Natarajan (Madras, September 8, 1972).
its successful leadership of the anti-Hindi movement in Madras. The DMK argued that the adoption of Hindi as the 'official language' was part of a grand design by the Northerners to subjugate the South. 38

For the Indian central government, the important issue was whether Hindi should quickly replace English (then constitutionally permitted to be used until 1965), or whether it should be introduced more gradually. To the DMK, this was not the issue: it challenged the very raison d'être of Hindi as the 'official language'. The Official Language Commission, set up in 1955 in accordance with a constitutional provision, ignored such fundamental challenges and concluded that the constitution's formula could not be improved. The DMK responded by stepping up its agitational activity against "Hindi imperialism in the South."

The DMK-led anti-Hindi movement rapidly gathered such momentum in Madras that a parliamentary sub-committee, set up in 1958 to review the Language Commission's Report, expressed anxiety about a too-hurried switch to Hindi. In the following year, Nehru attempted to allay the fears of non-Hindi speakers by personally guaranteeing that Hindi would not be imposed on them. He said: "for an indefinite period ... I would have English as an alternative language as long as the people required it and I would leave the decision not to the Hindi-knowing people but to the non-Hindi-knowing people." 39 A year later, on August

38. See Chapter 3, p. 55 of this dissertation.

15, 1960 (Independence Day), India's President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, gave a similar assurance during his speech at Marina Beach, Madras. Such assurances, however, failed to appease the DMK. A young DMK leader reacted as follows: "They have adopted Hindi as the official language. They also say that Hindi would not be imposed on non-Hindi speakers. If so, who are they going to impose it on? Americans? Germans? Russians? Such assurances are only gimmicks. It would be stupid to believe them." The DMK charged that such assurances had not put a brake on Hindi imperialism. It alleged that Hindi was being rapidly introduced in federal departments and in the armed forces and special preference was being given to Hindi speakers in recruitment for government jobs. This linking of the Hindi issue with job opportunities impressed Tamil college youth who extended their support to the DMK campaign. Many played crucial roles in the 1965 Language riots in Madras.

While at one level its leadership of the anti-Hindi agitations helped preserve for the DMK its earlier image as a militant political movement, at another level, the DMK began to operate within the framework of parliamentary rules commencing from its direct involvement in the 1957 elections. Immediately after the 1957 elections, Annadurai promised that DMK legislators would "work as responsible members and not indulge

41. Ibid., p. 115.
42. Ibid., p. 78.
in impractical talk", in the Assembly. A veteran Congress legislator confirmed that, on the whole, this promise was kept: "The DMK's 15 MLAs turned out to be first-rate parliamentarians. They backed up their arguments with facts and spoke in excellent Tamil. Legislative assembly debates became more lively and sometimes, heated. They kept Congress ministers on their toes." 

Annadurai and his colleagues realised that the DMK's emergence as a strong political party depended largely upon the expansion of their electoral base, and this in turn, was linked to the ability of the leaders to replace "negative" images, with electorally appealing postures.

Largely because of its strong condemnation of Hindu religious orthodoxy, the Dravidian movement was perceived by many as an anti-God movement at least in part. This perception was reinforced by the leadership of atheist Periyar who castigated those who believed in God and preached that religion was for "fools and barbarians." The DMK as the leading platform of the Dravidian movement in independent India had inherited this "anti-God" designation.

The DMK leaders realised that such a designation could be electorally damaging in Madras state, where Hindu caste rituals are deep rooted. Some opponents of the DMK warned against voting for the atheist DMK. Annadurai countered that the DMK believed in the existence

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43. *Hindu*, April 1, 1957.
44. Interview with K. Vinayakam (Madras, July 13, 1972).
45. Interview with Periyar (Madras, August 26, 1972).
of "one God". The DMK leaders conceived God not as an almighty Being, as is the case in most religions, but as a quality found in "acts of sacrifice", "hard work" and the "quest for knowledge". This conception found easy acceptance among Hindus "who had an enlightened understanding of religion," but to those more deeply rooted in religious ritual, its meaning remained unclear.

DMK leaders also attempted to erase the "anti-Brahmin" image inherited from the party's historical links with the Dravidian movement and Periyar. The latter's hatred for Brahmins was often expressed, as in one of his best-known remarks: "If you see a Brahmin and a snake, kill the Brahmin first." The DMK attempted to dissociate itself from Periyar's view by distinguishing between "Brahmin" and "Brahminism". The latter, it explained, referred to superstitious religious practices found among both Brahmins and non-Brahmins. The DMK asserted that it was these practices, not the Brahmin community as such, that it opposed. It also toned down its attacks on varnashrama dharma to allay Brahmin fears.

Erasing "negative" images was, of course, only part of the DMK's efforts to expand its electoral base. The party had also to acquire more "positive" images. Vague appeals to Dravidian nationalism and glorification of Dravidian culture, were inadequate. Hence party leaders began to articulate and champion more specific grievances.


47. "I (Annadurai) mean by real faith, prayer to God through service and work which will be related to the generating of faith in society". Ibid. Also, see M. Karunanidhi, As We March On: Social and Political Speeches (Madras: Rising Sun Publications, n.d.).

These grievances included unemployment, food shortage, rising prices, prohibition, the lack of educational and medical facilities, rural development and slum eradication.

Thus in the late fifties, Annadurai began to refer to the DMK as the representative of the "common man", whom he pictured as follows: "He lives in a hut. He cannot read or write. His energy is sapped up by disease. He labours up to 15 hours a day. He works on land he does not own. He and his family are usually hungry. He dies young. But he still has hopes for his children - that they will be strong and healthy and will be able to read and write." The DMK accused the ruling Congress of being more concerned with protecting vested interests than with uplifting the "common man". For example, in September 1961 Annadurai denounced the Congress' Land Ceiling Bill as "a half-hearted measure ... not a bill to impose ceiling, but one to protect the holdings of landlords."

The DMK's emphasis on "bread and butter" issues and its electoral and parliamentary activity appeared, on the surface, to reveal ideological conflict within the DMK, centring on the seemingly bypassed Dravidanadu goal. A senior party leader, E.V.K. Sampath, accused Annadurai of

51. E.V.K. Sampath, a nephew of Periyar, was an active DK member and a founder member of the DMK. He was a member of the executive committee of the party from 1952 to 1960. In the 1957 General Elections, he was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Namakkal constituency. In 1960, he was unanimously elected party Chairman under a compromise formula worked out by Annadurai.
having become "soft" on this objective: he called for a deadline, and for militant methods, including direct action. Annadurai reiterated his "rock-like faith in the destiny of the Dravidian homeland", congratulated Sampath on his "spirit of daring", but cautioned that direct actions would invite "ruthless repression ... We can only grow by the strength of our arguments and by converting people to our ideology."  

While extolling the virtues of the persuasive method, Annadurai nonetheless supported the DMK General Council's decision to serve an ultimatum on the Indian President demanding the unconditional withdrawal of his order declaring Hindi to be India's official language. The ultimatum threatened crippling agitation in 24 hours if the order was not withdrawn. Thus Annadurai appeared to match Sampath's posture of defiance.

The rejection of Annadurai's ultimatum by the central government would have put him in a difficult position. However, timely concessions by the government helped him to maintain his grip on the party. Home Minister G.B.Pant promised legislation to extend beyond 1965 the use of English for official purposes and Prime Minister Nehru later wrote to Sampath reiterating this assurance.

Sampath's political extremism was only a facade; he had already abandoned the Dravidanadu goal. This did not take place suddenly.

52. Link, March 27, 1960.
His experience in the Lok Sabha convinced him that the South and the North had "a lot in common", and he saw in the Soviet Union that various linguistic groups could coexist within a nation-state. He also felt that India's international influence stemmed partly from the size of the country and that internal partitioning would reduce that influence. In short, Sampath, the Dravidian secessionist, had gradually become a supporter of the Indian Union.

His outward extremism on the Dravidanadu goal was basically a tactical move to counteract a factional challenge to his leadership position. The challenge, from the "film lobby", was spearheaded by M.G. Ramachandran, S.S. Rajendran and M. Karunanithi. Sampath had opposed the increasing dominance of the "film lobby" within the party. Several minor clashes occurred between this group and Sampath's supporters. Annadurai's attempts at conciliation were ineffective and were followed by still more intense factional conflict. By early 1961, Sampath's opponents had gained the upper hand in the party's General Council.

Annadurai's failure to take disciplinary actions against those who had attacked Sampath and his supporters led Sampath to suspect Annadurai. Guessing that Annadurai had backed his opponents, Sampath began to accuse him of being insincere on the Dravidanadu goal, of being unable to maintain party discipline, and of allowing film stars

55. Interview with Sampath (Madras, July 7, 1972).

56. Interview with Kavingar Karunanantham (Madras, September 5, 1972).
to use the party for personal ends.

Sampath calculated that his political extremism on the Dravidanadu goal and his call for militant action would receive majority backing in the party and that he could then use this backing to counteract opposition. Madras newspapers, mainly pro-Congress, gave extensive coverage to the rift between Annadurai and Sampath, and they conveyed the impression that the majority of party members were in Sampath's camp. His perception of this gave him the impetus needed for subsequent action.

On April 19, 1961, after accusing the DMK of being a "political fraud," Sampath resigned from the party, and announced his intention of leading a new party. For the next few days, pro-Congress newspapers alleged mass resignations, but actually only a negligible few left with Sampath. The majority remained in the DMK under Annadurai's leadership. According to Hardgrave, "the promise of political office held the aspiring candidate in the grip of the party and the DMK's increasing concern with specific economic demands was far too attractive to be abandoned by those who had given support to the party." To these reasons must be added the factor of personal loyalty and devotion to Annadurai. He was for many an Anna (elder brother) not only in

57. Link, April 30. 1961. It is pertinent to note that Sampath, who projected himself as the genuine Dravidian secessionist in the leadership rivalry, chose to name his party as the "Tamil (and not Dravidian) Nationalist Party".

political life but in other spheres as well. Sampath had never had such stature in the DMK.

Shortly after overcoming this leadership crisis, the DMK had to prepare for the third General Elections in 1962. By then, its popularity led two other important parties, the rightist Swatantra and the Communist Party of India (CPI), to hope that they might benefit from a state-wide electoral alliance with the DMK. Because of ideological incompatibility, however, each insisted on the exclusion of the other from such an alliance, and the DMK had to choose between them.

The DMK also sought electoral alliances but faced a difficult choice. Annadurai favoured an electoral alliance with the Swatantra but feared this might damage the DMK's own left-wing image. Unable to resolve the dilemma, the DMK abandoned its attempts, with one exception. In several constituencies it did succeed in establishing tacit understandings with both the Swatantra and the CPI.

59. Karunanithi, the current DMK President, described the impact of Annadurai's death on him as follows: "The sorrow that I did experience when I lost my father and the gloom that I did feel when my mother expired are nothing compared with the poignancy of the sorrow and gloom I experienced at the demise of ANNA; the poignancy is there and it will be there till I die. Till then, I will have to continue to bemoan the irreparable loss," As We March On, op. cit.

60. For an authoritative discussion of this party, see Howard L. Erdman, The Swatantra Party and Indian Conservatism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

61. For a discussion of the relationship between Swatantra leader, Rajagopalachari and Annadurai, see Ramanujam, op. cit.

62. This was the Muslim League under Ismail Sahib's leadership. For a discussion of this party, See T.P. Wright, Jr., "The Muslim League in South India Since Independence: A Study in Minority Group Political Strategies", American Political Science Review, 60:3 (September 1966).
Although a formal Swatantra-DMK-CPI electoral alliance did not emerge, the attempts to forge one reveal two significant points. Firstly, the fact that two parties with diametrically opposed ideologies sought alliance with the DMK indicated the extent to which the DMK was ideologically flexible. Secondly, the DMK was prepared to ally itself with two all-India parties that were opposed to Dravidian secession, purely because of electoral expediency. The DMK's subsequent, local level understandings with such parties indicated that its desire for power had become more important than its secessionist aspirations.

The Tamilnadu Congress approached the elections with confidence. Madras state under Kamaraj's leadership had acquired a reputation as one of the better administered states in India. It had overcome the food shortage and was encouraging rapid industrial development. The Congress government had also introduced popular social welfare programmes such as old age pensions, free mid-day meals in schools, and the abolition of school fees for students from lower income groups.

Kamaraj had firmly entrenched himself as party leader and the Tamilnadu Congress no longer experienced the internal factional rivalry it had undergone prior to the 1957 elections. Externally, the failure of opposition parties to form alliances added to Congress confidence.

As usual, the Tamilnadu Congress contested all 206 Madras assembly constituencies and the DMK contested only 143. Each of the other parties contested less than half the constituencies. Thus, the DMK was the only non-Congress party in the State which could capture political power on its own.
The DMK released an election manifesto. Only two pages out of 36 were devoted to expounding the Dravidanadu goal. The Congress party was accused of using its control over the government machinery "to suppress Dravidian liberation consciousness". The manifesto pledged to wrest governmental control from the Congress. The rest of the DMK manifesto outlined its record of service. It also called for the creation of a socialist economy, urging policy measures like the nationalisation of banks and big commercial chains and the fixing of a 15-acre land ceiling.

The Tamilnadu Congress concentrated its electoral attacks on its key rival, the DMK. Home Minister, M. Bhakthavathsalam, described the DMK's manifesto as "an election stunt." Industries Minister, R. Venkatraman, predicted "chaos" if the DMK came to power. Finance Minister, C. Subramaniam, challenged Annadurai to make "secession" the key election issue with the condition that Annadurai should "give up politics for good if the people's verdict in the polls went against it."

Congress' chief election tactician, Kamaraj, based his strategy on two assumptions: one, that DMK's support was concentrated in the 15 constituencies it won in 1957; two, that DMK's popularity was based on its appeals to Tamil nationalism. Consequently, Kamaraj spent most of

64. Ramanujam, op. cit., p. 129.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid., p. 126; and Link, July 3, 1960.
his time mobilising support in the 15 constituencies, projecting himself as the guardian of Tamil interests. He even suggested that the capital of Madras should be shifted to Madurai, a city noted for its Pandiyan royal traditions and classical Tamil literary contributions. Kamaraj had calculated that the DMK's defeat in the 15 constituencies would "wipe them out of the political scene in Tamilnad." 67

Election results disproved him. Special attention to the 15 constituencies led to Congress victories in 14 of them, including the constituency won by Annadurai in 1957, 68 but the DMK made up for these losses elsewhere and emerged stronger than before, taking 27.1 percent of the votes as compared with the 14.6 percent it had polled in 1957. It more than trebled its strength in seats held: from 15 in the assembly in 1957 to 50 now, and from 2 in the Lok Sabha in 1957 to 7 in 1962. The results indicated additionally that the geographical base of the DMK's electoral support had also expanded. In 1957, the party drew support mainly from North and South Arcot, Chengelpet, Salem and Madras City. In 1962 it had penetrated into the central and southern parts of the State, except for the southernmost districts, Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli.

67. Ibid.

68. For Annadurai's diagnosis of his defeat, see Kanjipurathu Therthral Rakasiyam (Madras: Anbu Nilaiyam, 1962). Annadurai's defeat by a politically unknown Congress member, S.Y. Nadesa Mudaliar, by a margin of about 5,000 votes came as a shock to DMK members. Annadurai's subsequent election to the Rajya Sabha, where his speeches attracted national attention, did provide some consolation to the DMK members. Annadurai's election to this House was the result of an understanding between DMK and Swatantra legislators.
Although the Tamilnadu Congress won with 139 seats, its majority was reduced from 49 in 1957 to 36 in 1962. Political competition in Madras now came to resemble a 'two-party' system. The DMK had clearly emerged as an alternative. With each general election, the DMK was coming closer to the corridors of state power. Fully aware of this, the party continued to project itself as a responsible organisation concerned with the common man's interests. In this regard, rising prices of essential commodities after the 1962 elections worked to the DMK's advantage. In July, 1962 the party organised mass agitations against Congress government's failure to maintain price stability, and nearly 5,000 persons including its top leaders were arrested.

The DMK faced its first test of national loyalty when the Sino-Indian border clashes erupted in late 1962. Tamilnadu Congress elements expected the DMK with its secessionist aspirations to remain silent on this issue, but "Annadurai shocked us by strongly condemning Chinese aggression." In fact, the DMK pledged full support for the defence effort, and organised several mass rallies in which its leaders outvoiced even the most ardent Congressmen in their condemnation of Chinese aggression.

This enthusiastic support for the defence effort caught the Tamilnadu Congress off-guard. As one Tamilnadu Congress leader put it, Of course, we could have reversed the accusation. Because they supported Indian unity,

69. See Neville Maxwell, India's China War (Penguin, 1972).
70. Interview with K. Vinayakam (Madras, July 13, 1972).
we could have accused them of propagating a phony objective [Dravidanadu] until then. But the DMK, I'm sure would have come up with a clever explanation of their position. Also, devoting our energies at that time to such accusations would have created the impression that we were interested only in party politics whereas only the DMK was concerned about national interests.\textsuperscript{71}

The DMK's rapid growth through skillful exploitation of popular grievances began to cause uneasiness in Tamilnadu Congress circles. Kamaraj portrayed the DMK as an "unsound political opposition" to the Congress because it stood for secession.\textsuperscript{72} Unable to check the growth of the DMK through constitutional means, the Tamilnadu Congress attempted to suppress it through legislation. The Tamilnadu Congress' pressures contributed in part to the central government's adoption of the 16th amendment to the Indian constitution (March, 1963) declaring that parties advocating secession would not be legal.\textsuperscript{73}

Tamilnadu Congress leaders expected the DMK with its talk of "rock-like faith" in the Dravidanadu objective to defy the constitutional amendment, but they again miscalculated the political acumen of DMK leaders, especially Annadurai, and the nature of the DMK's electoral base. Annadurai clearly perceived that among other things the 16th Amendment was directed at the DMK. Consequently, with the support of his party's General Council, he took appropriate action to ensure the party's

\textsuperscript{71} Interview with Rajaram Naidu (Madras, August 8, 1972).

\textsuperscript{72} Ramanujam, op. cit., p. 136.

continued legal existence. In his words,

The bill which was passed into Act does not ask to give up secession. It says that people who advocate secession cannot contest elections. ... The Congressmen [in Madras state] wanted to deprive the DMK of the right to contest elections and thus [retain] their monopoly of power. I saw through their game, and changed the constitution of the DMK giving up the secession demand.74

The Tamilnadu Congress leaders reacted by caricaturing DMK as a party lacking in basic principles, as a party of "cowards". In contrast, they pointed to the bravery of Congressmen who had openly defied legislation enacted by the British colonialists and had consequently endured hardships. Annadurai immediately responded by exposing the underlying fear of the DMK in such accusations: "When we asked for secession, our opponents branded us as anti-national. Now they call us cowards for giving it up."75

Annadurai also dismissed accusations that the DMK, after giving up its secessionist goal, had no further reason for existence. He pointed out that the DMK had also been established to struggle for "good administration". Thus, he argued, that although the DMK no longer sought secession, the reasons for that objective still remained: the economic neglect of the South, Hindi imperialism, and the excessive centralisation of constitutional powers. He stressed that the DMK must continue to struggle against these within the framework of the 16th Amendment. Annadurai's compromise

75. Nanbargal Ketpatharku (Kanjipuram: Parimalam Pathippagam, n.d.).
formula was that "Dravidanadu" would still be the theoretical objective of the party, but with an important modification. Rather than becoming an independent state, "Dravidanadu" would remain under Indian sovereignty, enjoying maximum possible autonomy.  

After three days of debate, the DMK's General Council accepted Annadurai's formula. Only a small minority was reported to have favoured open defiance of the 16th Amendment. In the end, however, these opponents too accepted the majority position and remained within the fold, probably influenced by the failure of Sampath's earlier challenge of Annadurai.  

The DMK's abandonment of the secessionist goal did not destroy its image as both a militant movement and a parliamentary organisation. The continued salience of the Hindi issue in local politics, and the DMK's active involvement in this issue, preserved its posture of militancy. Nor was the DMK's popular support lessened. In fact this now continued to expand in response to the articulation of the economic grievances of the middle and lower middle classes. Deterioration of the state's economy, the failures of Congress leaders to respond effectively, and the development of cooperative understandings among non-Congress parties paved the way for the DMK's capture of state power in the 1967 General Elections.

76. Ibid.

77. Since his resignation from the DMK, despite several attempts, Sampath has been unable to exert any significant impact in Madras politics.
In summary, the DMK functioned principally as a secessionist movement until 1957; after that it began to function as a political party as well. Its involvement in electoral politics led to deliberate efforts to change the party's emphasis and political image. The DMK began to project itself as a responsible and pragmatic party concerned with popular economic frustrations.

Electoral involvement also brought the DMK into cooperative relationships with all-India parties, for mutual gain. By 1963, through its successful articulation of Tamil nationalist feelings and abetted by the growing popular dissatisfaction with Congress rule, the DMK emerged as the only alternative to the Congress. When the Congress party attempted to suppress it through legislation, the DMK amended its own constitution and became firmly wedded to parliamentary politics, moving closer and closer to power.

The DMK was not prepared to abandon the progress it had thus far achieved in favour of an extra-parliamentary struggle to achieve its goal of an independent Dravidanadu. The lack of enthusiasm for this objective in the non-Tamil areas further convinced the DMK leaders that the use of extra-parliamentary methods would invite repression and inevitably be a "politically hopeless" exercise.

PAS: Dilution of Uniethnic Emphasis (1955-1971)

Four General Elections have been held in Malaya (now Peninsular Malaysia) since independence - in 1959, 1964, 1969 and 1974. The PAS participated in all four elections. This involvement set in motion forces

78. Interview with Nedunchezhian (Madras, November 11, 1972).
which eventually forced PAS to shed its uniethnic conception of the Malayan polity.\textsuperscript{79} This took place formally in 1971 when PAS supported the Constitution (Amendment) Act.

When elections were held to elect municipal and town councils in Malaya in 1952, PAS was a religious association. Its transformation into a political party occurred only during the next three years, in reaction to UMNO's liberal concessions to non-Malay demands on \textit{jus soli} (citizenship by birth) and voting rights.\textsuperscript{80}

PAS contested the first national elections held in July 1955. It adopted as its election symbol the "palm". This was given Islamic significance.\textsuperscript{81} Its one-page manifesto charged that immigrant communities were threatening the rights of Malays. Abolition of the 
\textit{dasar pintu terbuka} (open door policy) was demanded. Being a late entrant, however, PAS had difficulty in recruiting candidates and was able to contest in only 11 out of the 52 constituencies. These were in the overwhelmingly Malay areas of northwestern and northeastern Malaya.

The Alliance Party, which had pressured the colonial government into holding this election, contested in all 52 constituencies\textsuperscript{82} while

\textsuperscript{79} In his address to a PAS division members, PAS President Datuk Asri criticised some leaders "who still used 'Malay nationalism' as the basis for their struggles" and urged that PAS should struggle "not only for Malays, but also for all people who were weak and oppressed" (\textit{The Star}, June 21, 1976, p. 2).

\textsuperscript{80} See Chapter 2, pp.

\textsuperscript{81} The five fingers were equated with the five basic principles of Islam.

its main opponent, Parti Negara (PN), contested in 30. Both parties espoused programs that were very similar, in that neither "wanted any radical social or economic change. Each wanted self-government, the Alliance in four years and the Negara in five."\(^{83}\) In the election campaigns, the Alliance emphasised the _merdeka_ (independence) theme whereas the PN appealed to the primordial sentiments of the Malays who composed about 85 percent of the electorate\(^{84}\) in anticipation that voting would follow communal lines. On one point, however, they held identical views; they assessed the competition from PAS as a _kudis gatal_ ("small scratch").\(^{85}\)

The Alliance's emphasis on _merdeka_ and the superiority of its party machinery helped it score a landslide victory. It secured 80 percent of all votes polled and took 51 of the 52 constituencies. The PN, receiving only 7.6 percent of all votes, was totally annihilated. All of its candidates lost; and some even lost their deposits.\(^{86}\) The PAS got a meagre 3.9 percent of the votes, but it did capture the Krian (Perak) constituency where the electorate was 93 percent Malay. Its

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84. Ratnam, _op. cit._, pp. 186-87.


candidate there, Haji Ahmad bin Haji Hussin, won by a narrow margin.\footnote{450 votes. "The number of votes declared invalid in this particular constituency was 1,071. Whether or not the outcome of the election was affected by this is a matter purely for speculation". Ratnam, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 195.}

Being the sole winning opponent of the Alliance, Ahmad was immediately dubbed "Mr. Opposition" by the local press, but he was colourless and ineffective in the legislative council.\footnote{Interview with Amaludin Darus (April 10, 1973).}

Organisationally and financially weak in this first involvement in competitive politics, PAS was naturally interested in electoral pacts with other parties and was drawn into electoral agreement with the PN, Alliance's chief rival. However, its political convictions precluded pacts with non-Malay parties, and PAS could not initially join PN in the latter's attempt to form an anti-Alliance front composed of Malay and non-Malay parties.\footnote{Ratnam, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 195.} PN failed, however, and this paved the way for PAS to agree informally with PN that these two parties would back each other's candidates in some constituencies. It was alleged by the Alliance that PAS also received funds from the PN to finance election expense.\footnote{The Malay Mail, June 22, 1955.} While this electoral understanding with PN could be defended on the ground that both campaigned on a 'pro-Malay' platform, it must be noted that the PN included several non-Malay members and that for a major part of its existence the PN had tried to maintain a 'multi-racial
After its landslide victory, the Alliance pressed ahead to demand full self-government, shortening its timetable for merdeka from four to two years. At a conference in London in early 1956, the British government accepted the Alliance's timetable. Subsequently, an independent Commission headed by Lord Reid was appointed to devise a constitution for a fully self-governing and independent Federation of Malaya. The Reid Commission, as it came to be called, was sensitive to the political strength of the Alliance. It consequently based its recommendations mostly on the Alliance memorandum which was essentially an inter-communal bargain. The Commission's draft constitution was accepted by the Sultans and the Alliance government after some modifications, and on August 31, 1957 Malaya's independence was formally proclaimed.

According to the Constitution, Malaya was a constitutional monarchy, a federal state with a dominant centre, and a parliamentary democracy.

91. "These (non-Malays) supporters tended to discuss the resort to Malay communalism as 'so much campaign oratory'. They preferred to look at the record of Negara members in the Legislative Council as support for their belief that Negara was 'less communal' than the Alliance; they still had faith Dato Onn retained a balanced view of communal harmony, and retained as his ultimate objective 'non-communalism' in politics" (Gordon P. Means, Malaysian Politics (London: University of London Press Ltd., 1970), pp. 159-60).

92. "The U.M.N.O. Youth Movement felt that four years was too long to wait for independence, and pressed Tengku Abdul Rahman to shorten the period to two years. He agreed to demand it by August 31, 1957, 'if possible', on the second anniversary of the establishment of the Alliance government" (Mills, op. cit., p. 97).

93. The terms of reference of this Commission are found in Federation of Malaya Information Services, Bulletin No. 6072/56, pp. 1-2.
with a bicameral federal legislature. The Constitution also entrusted the King with the responsibility for protecting the "special position" of the Malays and the "legitimate interests" of other communities, a responsibility that was to be exercised on Cabinet advice.

More important than the constitutional provisions for the working of the political system was the "unspoken symbiotic bargain" between the partners in the Alliance, principally the UMNO and the MCA. Stated briefly, this provided that political and administrative powers was to be a Malay preserve and economic power a Chinese preserve.

It was to be a kind of quid pro quo arrangement: the non-Malays would not make too many encroachments on the preserve of the Malays, and the Malays in turn would not make serious incursions into the spheres of activity of non-Malays.

The "bargain", however, was conceived not as a static but as dynamic arrangement. In time there was to be an exchange of Chinese cooperation in uplifting the economic position of the Malays for Malay support in improving the political position of the Chinese.

97. In interviews, several MIC members and leaders asserted that the interests of the Indian community were not satisfactorily articulated by the national leadership of the party during the merdeka negotiations between the component parties of the Alliance. The current economic backwardness of the Indian community was attributed in part to this failure.
Although the Alliance under Tengku Abdul Rahman's leadership functioned on the basis of the "bargain" worked out at the time of independence, there still existed several points of friction both within and between the component parties of the Alliance. Centred mostly on the sensitive issues of citizenship, national language and education policy, these frictions began to surface when the more extremist factions within each party began to press on their party leaders. In turn, such frictions strained inter-party relations, threatening to weaken the Alliance.  

Sensitive to potential discord within the Alliance and, in some states, to the political inroads made by opposition parties which had benefited from factional bickerings within the Alliance, Tengku Abdul Rahman decided to assume formal responsibility for strengthening the Alliance. In April 1959, he resigned as Prime Minister to concentrate on strengthening the Alliance in preparation for independent Malaya's first General Election in August of that year.  

In the 1959 General Election, the strongest challenge to UMNO (the dominant partner in the Alliance) came from PAS, which viewed the merdeka constitution and the "bargain" as a surrender of Malay sovereignty, interpreting independence as an empty victory, and pledging to struggle for the restoration of Malay sovereign rights. One factor that aided

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100. For a detailed discussion, see Means, op. cit., ch. 13.

101. The Deputy Prime Minister, Dato Abdul Razak, was sworn in as the Prime Minister on April 16. But the Tengku was still recognised as the leader of the Alliance.
PAS in its struggle was the calibre of its leadership. Dr. Burhanuddin, a well-known ideologue of radical Malay nationalism,\textsuperscript{102} and Professor Zulkiflee Mohamed, an Islamic reformer-cum-Malay nationalist,\textsuperscript{103} had been elected President and Vice-President of the party in December 1956. These two men dominated PAS for nearly a decade and determined its basic political directions. A broad 'division of labour' appeared to exist between them. While Dr. Burhanuddin devoted greater attention to expounding the PAS version of Malay nationalism, Professor Zulkiflee was more concerned with the role of Islam in society.\textsuperscript{104}

Five months prior to Malaya's independence, Dr. Burhanuddin outlined at a public rally the basic belief structure of PAS. Upon this all of PAS's other views were constructed:

First and foremost it should be emphasised that Malaya belongs to the Malays and they are the masters of this country. It is to the Malays as the rightful owners that this country should be returned. The Malays should not be asked to pay for the mistake of the imperialists in bringing non-Malays into the country. This does not mean that we must push non-Malays out, but there must be a distinction between aliens and masters.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{102} See Ahmad Boestman, Dr. Burhanuddin: Putera Setia Melayu Raya (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Kejara, 1972); and Abdullah Hussain, "Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmy", Dewan Masyarakat (November 1969).


\textsuperscript{104} This was the impression obtained from interviews with several PAS leaders and members.

\textsuperscript{105} Straits Budget, March 28, 1957, p. 9.
Under Dr. Burhanuddin's leadership, PAS won support among the sub-elites in Malay society who were dissatisfied with the political concessions to the non-Malays and were not getting the benefits expected from *merdeka*. These Malays were mainly wealthy peasants, school teachers, Al-Azhar graduates and *ulamas*.

A minor economic slump and the fall in rubber prices immediately after *merdeka* had created economic hardships for all peasants. But the more "severely affected [were] the wealthier and influential villagers."^106 For them, *merdeka* thus meant economic decline rather than improvement. Two other dissatisfied groups were the Malay school teachers, many of whom were members of the powerful Federation of Malay School Teachers' Association, and the Malay graduates of the Al-Azhar (Islamic) university in Cairo. While the former were in part dissatisfied with their lower status and pay when compared with their counterparts in English and Chinese medium schools,^107 the latter, on their return to Malaya, found that their degrees were not given proper recognition and that they had difficulty in finding

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The perception of relative deprivation by members of these groups made them receptive to the appeals of PAS. The party, in turn, responded to these expressions of grievance by blaming the Alliance party and the constitutional provisions it has encouraged. In particular, the call for restoration of Malay political supremacy, the introduction of a purely Malay educational system, and greater emphasis on religious education were popularly supported and led many to an alignment with PAS. In addition, the party's expressions of its political demands in an Islamic idiom led to a strengthening of historical links with ulamas and to the acquisition of support from students in Islamic schools.

Spearheaded by members of the above groups, the PAS reached out widely to Malays in scattered kampungs. The support it gained

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108. Ismail Daud, President of the 6,000 strong Malaysian National Union of Muslim Students, issued the following statement in late 1967: "They (Al-Azhar graduates) will flock to the (PAS) because they are the most discontented and frustrated lot of Muslim students in the country. These Al-Azhar graduates are drawing very poor salaries in comparison with our (University of Malaya) graduates in Islamic studies. They work as ulamas and religious teachers. Besides, their degrees have not been given proper recognition by the government" (Straits Times, November 11, 1967).

109. Relative deprivation is defined by Ted Gurr as "the actors' perceptions of discrepancy between their value expectations (the goods and conditions of life to which they believe they are justifiably entitled) and their value capabilities (the amounts of those goods and conditions that they think they are able to get and keep") ("A Causal Model of Civil Strife: A Comparative Analysis Using New Indices", American Political Science Review, LXII, no. 4 (December 1968), p. 1104).

110. Keesler, op. cit.
as reflected in the 1959 election results far exceeded even its own expectations. PAS won control of the predominantly Malay states of Kelantan and Trengganu,\textsuperscript{111} capturing 41 of the 53 seats at stake in these two states. In other states - primarily in Kedah, Pahang, Perak and Selangor - it received scattered support but was able to elect only one other assemblyman (from its previous stronghold, the Krian district of Perak).

In the parliamentary elections, later in the year, PAS performance followed a similar pattern. Nine out of ten seats were captured in Kelantan and four out of six in the adjoining state of Trengganu. In other states, the percentage of votes received varied from 40.4 in Perlis to 2.3 in Johore, but PAS did not win a single seat. Victories in 13 parliamentary constituencies made PAS the most important Malay opposition party. Parti Negara also appealed to Malay primordialism but it never recovered from its 1955 electoral humiliation and won only one seat.

PAS's success in the state and parliamentary constituencies in Kelantan and Trengganu surprised both national and local Alliance leaders. Even more surprised were the PAS leaders themselves. A founder member of PAS in Kelantan observed that: "The results shocked us. In Kelantan, we hoped to win only 30 percent of the seats."\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{111} In Kelantan, Malays constitute 93 percent of the state population.\textsuperscript{112} Interview with Amaludin Darus (Kuala Lumpur, April 10, 1973).
In closed door party meetings after the elections, leaders confessed their unpreparedness for the task of governance when they remarked that their party had acquired power "too quickly." 113

The reasons for the Alliance's electoral debacle, especially in Kelantan, are still the subject of much speculation. In my interviews, the following were frequently mentioned: (i) the social aloofness of UMNO assemblymen and their consequent neglect of constituency work; (ii) factional rivalries within UMNO which tended to reduce enthusiasm among party workers; and (iii) UMNO leaders' casual approach to the elections in confidence of victory as the 'party of independence'.

In an effort to explain UMNO's defeat in Kelantan, Kessler has recently proposed a class interpretation of politics in this ethnically homogeneous state. He argues that UMNO failed to respond to the economic hardships of the Malay peasants immediately after independence. In the eyes of the peasantry, UMNO had in fact become a party of the rich, the townspeople, and the bureaucratic elite. Malay peasants extended their support to PAS candidates, many of whom lived among them, shared in their anxieties and consequently were able to articulate their grievances effectively. 114 Though Kessler's interpretation has some appeal, it must be noted that PAS has employed mostly ethnic and religious and not class themes in its political campaigns.

113. Interview with Salahudin Abdullah (Kota Bharu, April 30, 1973).

Despite its losses in Kelantan and Trengganu, the Alliance performed well in this election, considering the following developments. Firstly, intra-party bickerings had adversely affected the party's image. Secondly, the Alliance had to account for its own government in the preceding two years. Thirdly, it had to adjust to a massive increase in non-Malay voters. The Alliance won in 74 of the 104 parliamentary constituencies and received 51.5 percent of the total votes polled. It also won comfortable majorities in the other nine states.

Elated by his party's electoral success, PAS President Dr. Burhanuddin stepped up his political activities. He criticised the Alliance government for its "still unclear" policy regarding nationality and religion. And he urged the government to tighten immigration and citizenship laws so that Malays would not become "a minority" in their own country.

PAS encountered many problems in the two states where it was entrusted with the task of governance. In Kelantan, limited sources of state revenue combined with the PAS leaders' lack of expertise in management led to numerous financial difficulties, which were added to

116. Ibid., p. 252.
118. Utusan Melayu, October 9, 1959.
by lack of cooperation with the Alliance controlled central government. 120

Governmental power also had a corrupting influence on some PAS leaders. Ironically, they fell prey to the financial temptations offered by Chinese businessmen, taking bribes for help in getting timberlogging licenses and other contracts. It was reported that some MCA towkays (rich businessmen) had "close understandings" with PAS leaders in this regard and their dealings were conducted "not through the MCA but through the Chinese Chambers of Commerce." 121 A senior State civil servant, who claimed personal knowledge of numerous cases of bribery, remarked that "the PAS scolds the Chinese once every five years. They are good friends after that." 122

In Trengganu, the factionalism which initially arose within the party over the choice of candidates in the 1959 elections became more intense after the party assumed the reins of state power. Disagreements over the distribution of government posts widened existing chasms between party leaders. The national leadership of PAS was unable to resolve the factional disputes which had led to governmental immobilisme.

The PAS government did not convene the state assembly for nearly seven months. During that period, the Alliance succeeded in

120. See Chapter 6, pp.
122. Interview (May 17, 1973)
"buying over" two PAS assemblymen. When the body finally convened, the PAS government was defeated on a "no confidence" motion. At this time, two PAS and all four Parti Negara assemblymen defected to the Alliance. This switch gave the Alliance a working majority which enabled it to take control of the state government. The PAS's diagnosis of its debacle was simply, "wrong candidates were chosen".

Encouraging PAS leaders and members to defect in return for financial rewards was one of the several undermining methods used by the Alliance. Alliance ministers regularly reminded the electorate in PAS strongholds that development programs would be implemented in their areas only if they withdrew their support from PAS and extended it to the Alliance. To drive home the point, Alliance ministers sometimes bypassed state government channels and gave direct financial assistance to "pro-Alliance" areas in Kelantan and Trengganu.

In July 1961, Tun Razak made a much-publicized tour of Trengganu. One of his first visits was to Kemaman, a district in which the Alliance party was in control. Here he granted over M$400,000 for roads, bridges, and schools, including M$38,000 for four mosques. In Besut, another Alliance stronghold in Trengganu, the Minister granted M$387,000 for development, including M$15,000 for mosques and M$25,000 for community halls. The same pattern was followed in Kelantan, where the Minister dispensed M$500,000 in his visits to the eight districts.

123. Interview with UMNO official (Kuala Trengganu, April 14, 1973).
The Alliance also attempted to impress on the rural Malay electorate that it was as concerned as PAS with the promotion of Islam. Thus the Alliance government stepped up the building of mosques and suraus in various parts of Malaya. Financially, the construction of these "benefited primarily Chinese contractors," but politically, they had a much different impact.

The event that overshadowed all other political developments in the post-1959 period was the formation of Malaysia on September 16, 1963. Although its Youth section expressed support for Tengku Abdul Rahman's proposal to integrate the British Borneo territories, Singapore and Malaya, into a new political entity, PAS maintained official silence on this proposal for five months. Finally it decided to oppose the proposal on the ground that it would result in an increase in the number of Chinese citizens, creating grave obstacles for Malays and Islam as well. Consistent with its calls for the restoration of Malay sovereignty, PAS now put forward a counter proposal for a union of all territories in the Malay archipelago into a greater Melayu Raya.

PAS as the representative of the Kelantan government made an eleventh hour bid to halt the formation of Malaysia. Arguing that the

126. Interview with PAS Member of Parliament (May 6, 1975).
127. For a brief discussion, see Milne, op. cit., pp. 60-73.
128. The Malay Mail, August 9, 1961.
Sultans were not consulted, it asked the Federal Court to declare null and void the Malaysia Act which had received Royal Assent, on August 26, 1963. In deciding the case, Dato Sir James Thompson rejected PAS's claim on the ground that Parliament's actions on this subject were in accordance with constitutional provisions. Two days after his decision, Malaysia formally came into existence.

The formation of Malaysia led to the intensification of Indo­nesian hostilities towards Malaysia. According to Indonesia, the formation of Malaysia was the result of a "neo-colonialist" plot. Indonesia's 'confrontation' policy towards Malaysia included not only verbal wars with Malaysian representatives in international forums, but also sea and airborne military landings in Malaya and plans for the destruction of public properties in Singapore.

Although the Indonesian confrontation as seen from Malaysia at the time posed a serious threat to internal security, the Alliance government did not use it as a pretext to postpone the 1964 General Elections. In fact, the Alliance successfully turned the election into a plebiscite on a single issue.


Although the Alliance went through the motions of preparing and distributing a manifesto (and a great deal of other literature) which covered a fairly comprehensive list of subjects, its leaders made it quite clear that the only 'real' issue facing the electorate was whether they wanted to continue as an independent and prosperous nation or be an impoverished Indonesian colony.\(^\text{132}\)

PAS's opposition to Malaysia placed it at a great disadvantage in this election. The Alliance alleged that PAS leaders received funds from Indonesia for their election campaigns and bluntly charged that they were engaged in fifth-column activities. The discovery of arms and ammunition on a beach near Bachok, Kelantan (PAS's stronghold) was presented by the Alliance as proof that PAS had "connections" with Indonesia.\(^\text{133}\) In brief, the Alliance successfully forced PAS into a defensive position. As a result, PAS had to concentrate on refuting the charges of disloyalty.

While nationally the Indonesian confrontation was the most important election issue, at the local level, especially in Kelantan, local issues were also significant. In Kelantan, the only state where its representatives were sitting on opposition benches, the Alliance went all out to regain control. Alliance leaders told Kelantanese voters that Malays in Alliance-controlled states had witnessed rapid economic growth while in Kelantan, Malays, under PAS rule, had experienced only misery and economic stagnation. The case of Trengganu


\(\text{\footnotesize 133. Ibid., p. 112.}\)
where the toppling of a PAS government in 1961 had led to a massive in-
flow of federal funds was frequently cited at public rallies as an il-
lustration. Similar results were promised to the Kalantanese if they
would vote the Alliance party to power.

In this election the Alliance also charged that PAS had sa-
crificed Malay interests to non-Malays, an accusation that PAS tradi-
tionally levelled against the UMNO in particular. The Alliance did
this dramatically. Five days before polling day, it caused a sensation
by declaring that the PAS state government was planning to mortgage one-
fifth of Kelantan to a Chinese timber company, tax and rent-free, for a
33-year period in return for substantial contributions to the party
coffers. An Alliance statement proclaimed this plan as "the greatest
treachery in Kelantan's history, against the Malay race, Malay land and
the Islamic religion." During the last days of the campaign, the
Alliance made a frantic attempt to unseat the PAS government on this
single issue.

The PAS defended itself over the land "deal" by claiming that
it was a routine land development project which would benefit thousands
of new settlers. It also emphasised that the land in question had only
been 'leased' and therefore remained an exclusively Malay possession.
Despite PAS's 'explanation', the Alliance widely distributed leaflets

134. Hans H. Indorf, Party System Adaptation to Political Development
in Malaysia During the First Decade of Independence, 1957-67
of its own version of the story, even air-dropping a half a million of them in the state.

Its success in equating support for the Alliance with national patriotism contributed to the Alliance securing a landslide victory nationally. The Alliance's share of parliamentary seats rose from 74 in 1959 to 89, and of state seats from 207 in 1959 to 240.\textsuperscript{136} The PAS, pushed into a defensive position, did worse both in terms of seats and votes than in 1959. Its share of parliamentary seats declined from 13 in 1959 to 9, its share of state seats declined from 42 to 25. Although it retained control of the state government in its stronghold, Kelantan, the majority even there was reduced from 13 to 6. But there were also some 'gains' as well: in the predominantly Malay states of Kedah and Perlis, although PAS did not win any parliamentary seats, its share of all votes cast increased significantly. Meanwhile, it captured one state seat in Perlis.

The period between 1964 and the 1969 General Elections was eventful in Malaysian politics. The Indonesian confrontation ended, Singapore was expelled from the Federation, and the divisive political issues of language and education came to dominate political debate.\textsuperscript{137} Dissensions both within and among parties on the latter issues and other developments\textsuperscript{138} evoked a climate of intercommunal hostility which culminated in the tragic "May 13 riots".

\textsuperscript{136} For an analysis of the results of this election, see \textit{ibid.}, ch.12.
\textsuperscript{137} See Vasil, \textit{op. cit.}, ch. 2.
In the case of the PAS in Kelantan, the 1964 election was followed immediately by cordial relations with the Alliance federal government, to which PAS Mentri Besar, Datuk Asri Muda pledged full cooperation. This lasted for only six months, however, because the Kelantan UMNO leaders saw it as eventually undermining their own political strength. Their pressures contributed to a rapid deterioration of relations; in May 1967 Tun Razak declared that the PAS government was uncooperative and announced the discontinuance of all federal assistance to the state.

At the national level, Lee Kuan Yew's remarks about the "Malay race", his regular references to the "40-40-20" racial arithmetic of Malaysia, and his lining up of several non-Malay opposition parties under the Malaysian Solidarity Convention tended to heighten

139. It was also reported that the PAS government had accepted the federal government's rural development programmes (Berita Harian, November 7, 1964).


141. He publicly asserted that none of the three races in Malaysia could claim to be more native than the others because all their ancestors came to Malaysia not more than 1,000 years ago. The Malay community saw his speech as a deliberate attempt to challenge their indigenous heritage and the idea of Malaya as their native homeland (Straits Times, May 5, 1965; and Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, From Malayan Union to Singapore Separatism (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti, 1974), pp. 201-2).

142. That is, the population of Malaysia is composed of 40% Malays, 40% Chinese and 20% Indians and Others. He frequently asserted that if either of the 40% attempted to dominate the polity, they would be overpowered by the remaining 60%. The author has attended several public rallies where Mr. Lee made this analysis.

communal tensions. Non-Malay political assertiveness in the post-1964 period, generated in large part by Lee Kuan Yew's political activity, did not decline with the expulsion of Singapore in 1965. Non-Malay opposition parties (and factions within the MCA) in Malaya stepped up their political campaigns. They raised issues, which Tengku Abdul Rahman and his cabinet colleagues, considered to have been already settled in the _merdeka_ constitution and in the related, unwritten agreement about the political position of the non-Malays and the role of their languages and cultures.

Within the Malay community the fear of an emerging non-Malay threat coupled with an increasing consciousness of their own economic backwardness created a political atmosphere highly favourable to PAS. After all, PAS's political appeal has been based partly on the articulation of this fear and grievance. One issue that aggravated Malay reaction to non-Malay political assertiveness was the National Language Bill introduced in Parliament in 1967. Several sections of the Malay community interpreted the various clauses in this Bill as concessions to non-Malay pressure. In Parliament, the strongest condemnation came from PAS which accused Tengku Abdul Rahman (who tabled the Bill) of "wounding the heart of his own race."144

PAS also aligned itself with Malay groups hostile to the Bill. The most important of these groups was the _Barisan Bertindak Bahasa_

Kebangsaan (National Language Action Front). In one demonstration led by the BBBK, effigies of the Prime Minister were burned. In spite of this opposition, however, the Bill was passed on March 3, 1967. Opposition from Malay groups to the Language Bill was in part a reflection of concern for economic opportunities. Many Malays thought that if their language were not firmly entrenched, Malay education would continue to receive less attention than English education and that Malay medium students would be disadvantaged in the competition for jobs. 145

Malay resentment at their overall economic position would soon come to be expressed even more vociferously. This development provided PAS with a further opportunity to discredit the Alliance government. Although rural development had been given top priority in the Second Malaysia Plan (1961-1965), such emphasis had not led to any immediate improvement in the economic status of impoverished rural Malays. A report released by the Federal Agricultural and Marketing Authority (FAMA) revealed that most farmers in Kedah and Perlis were heavily in debt. 146 Extensive flood damage to the rice crop in 1967 and abnormally low rubber prices in early 1969 brought severe economic hardship to rural Malays.

In urban Malaya, Malay businessmen complained that the government was not assisting them enough. Their grievances were aired in the Second Bumiputra Congress in September 1968. Resolutions passed at

145. Interview with a Malay School Principal, July 14, 1974.
146. Berita Harian, March 12, 1968. The objectives of FAMA include the elimination of the (Chinese) "middle men" and ensuring a market and fair prices for agricultural produce.
this Congress called for the reservation of 50 percent of the shares of public companies for bumiputras ("sons of the soil") and more liberal extension of credit facilities to bumiputra businessmen by both governmental agencies and commercial banks. The Malay press also regularly charged that non-Malay businessmen were resisting Malay efforts to enter the commercial sector.

Sensing growing discontent among the Malays, the PAS attributed it partly to the Alliance government's economic policies, alleging that they had brought benefits only to the Chinese. One PAS leader remarked that prior to independence, "most of the estates belonged to the British, but now the Chinese capitalists ... seem to have inherited the fortune" and that the Malays had nothing except their "so-called special privileges." On the economic front, PAS had been publicly concerned with problems of "the ordinary Malays". Specifically, this involved articulation of the problems of Malay fishermen, farmers, small rubber holders, school teachers, petty traders and workers in cottage industries.

According to PAS, Malay poverty was fundamentally linked to the

148. This was the theme of several editorials in the Utusan Melayu.
150. Interview with Zahari Awang, PAS MP., Gucil, Kelantan, July 1, 1975.
loss of Malay political power. A PAS document declared that "if we (Malays) had been politically strong, our resources and wealth would not have fallen into Chinese hands."\(^{152}\) The solution to Malay poverty, PAS therefore advocated, lay in the restoration of Malay political supremacy. In this regard, PAS once again introduced a motion to amend the constitution, in August 1965. Unlike its 1962 motion, which sought to establish the principle that "Malaya belongs to the Malays", this 1965 motion merely asked Parliament to amend the Constitution "with the aim of guaranteeing the rights of the bumiputras in the fields of economics, politics, education and culture."\(^{153}\) Although the motion was defeated, PAS kept the issue alive in its publications and ceramahs.

Malay political power was the dominant theme in the PAS campaigns in the 1969 General Election. PAS told the Malay electorate that they had nothing left in their own country except their so-called special privileges, and that even these were being eroded by a non-Malay dominated Alliance government. PAS leaders called for a national government composed alone of Malays to prevent the further erosion of Malay political power.\(^{154}\)

The Alliance, in particular the UMNO, charged that PAS was raising these issues only to divert the people's attention from its own

\(^{152}\) "Penyata Politik", n.d.

\(^{153}\) Perbahatan Parlimen, Parlimen Kedua, Dewan Raayat, Jilid 11, August 11, 1965.

\(^{154}\) Siaran PAS Kelantan, vol, 2, no. 9 (September - October, 1967).
failures and its own connections with the Chinese. In an election rally at Kota Bharu, Tun Abdul Razak, then Deputy Prime Minister, charged that PAS is bringing up this concept [one-race government] clearly to cover up its failures to develop the State [of Kelantan]. In its 10 years of rule, the [PAS] could not put aside the role played by the Chinese. They have realised this. Ask Asri, Nik Man, and the other [PAS] leaders who their business partners are and where their party got the money for the 1964 and the present election. Before, it was from the Timber Mine Corporation, now it is from other Chinese businessmen.155

The Alliance also accused PAS of having links with the predominantly Chinese-based Malayan Communist Party156 and of wanting to abolish the Malay sultanate.157 In Kelantan, the Alliance not only attempted to discredit the PAS, but also promised better government if returned to power. The Alliance pledged in a special manifesto for the State that the huge sum of M$548 million would be invested in the State.158

In 1964 the Alliance used the Confrontation issue to undermine its principal rivals; by 1969 this issue had disappeared. An attempt to build up the Philippine claim to Sabah and the resulting tension


156. Straits Times, April 15, 1969; November 12, 1968; and November 15, 1968.

157. Vasil, op. cit., p. 28; Straits Times, April 26, 1969.

158. Straits Times, April 11, 1969.
between the two countries as the key election issue failed.159

In this election the opposition parties generally succeeded in forcing the Alliance into a defensive position. The MCA (and to a lesser extent, the MIC) became the principal targets of attack by all non-Malay opposition parties. The MCA was accused of serving only the interests of rich Chinese and of ignoring the problems of the majority of the Chinese who, the opposition said, received very few benefits under prevailing political and economic arrangements.160 The MCA was unable to respond effectively to this charge.

The UMNO faced a similar dilemma. The PAS accused it of having sold Malay rights to the Chinese. Only in Kelantan did the UMNO successfully level counter charges against the PAS state government. In the northwestern areas of Malaya it appeared that PAS had gained the upper hand in the competition for Malay votes.

Internal quarrels which beset the Alliance throughout the country, but especially in Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Sarawak and Selangor, added to the Alliance's difficulties.161 In contrast, its opponents were 'united'; they had reached a "gentlemen's agreement" not to compete with each other.

159. Straits Times, March 22, 1969. For background discussions of this claim, see Martin Meadows, "The Philippine Claim to North Borneo", Political Science Quarterly, LXXVII, no. 3 (1962); and Pacifico A. Ortiz, "Legal Aspects of the North Borneo Question", Philippine Studies, 2:1 (1963).

160. See Vasil, op. cit., ch. 3.

in order to prevent the splitting of opposition vote. What is significant about this arrangement was PAS's involvement in it. The PAS put up candidates in some Malay minority areas to split the Malay vote and increase the chances of a Democratic Action Party or People's Progressive Party victory there. In return, the latter tried to split the Chinese vote in some Malay majority areas to increase PAS's victory chances. This willingness to cooperate with others who campaigned for political equality for non-Malays clearly indicated that PAS's ambition to capture parliamentary seats and state governments had become more important than its substantive goal, the restoration of Malay sovereignty.

The election results showed that PAS had recovered the serious losses it suffered in 1964. It increased its parliamentary seats from 9 to 12, its state seats from 25 to 40. Significant gains were also made in Kedah, home state of Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman, and Perlis. Indeed there was very little difference in the number of votes for PAS and UMNO in these two states. PAS captured 8 state seats in Kedah, where it had none before. In Kelantan, despite the tremendous effort by UMNO to dislodge it, PAS retained control. 162

The Alliance, on the other hand, suffered serious losses. Its share of parliamentary seats in peninsular Malaysia declined from 89 in 1964 to 66. In state elections in peninsular Malaysia, the Alliance failed to oust PAS in Kelantan and lost the control of Penang

The Alliance won clear majorities in only seven state assemblies, losing its majorities in Perak and Selangor.

The 1969 elections were immediately followed by "victory" celebrations by non-Malay opposition parties in Kuala Lumpur, by the outbreak of communal riots, by the national declaration of an Emergency situation, and the suspension of parliamentary government. As these developments have been well described elsewhere, they will not be discussed here.

From May 1969 to February 1971, the country was ruled by the National Operations Council (NOC) headed by Tun Abdul Razak. Several significant developments (to be examined in the next chapter) occurred during these twenty months. It remains here to consider amendments to the Malaysian Constitution which left the PAS with no choice but to accept non-Malays as legitimate members of the political system, and to formally abandon its "Malaya belongs to the Malays" talk.

163. The Gerakan Pakyat Malaysia was inaugurated on March 24, 1968. It was initially led by two university professors, and former leaders of the Labour and United Democratic Parties. Its attempts to project a non-communal image failed, and currently it functions predominantly as a Chinese party.

Two months after the "May 13 riots", Tun Dr. Ismail, a member of the NOC, attributed the high proportion of Malay support for PAS in the 1969 elections to Malay fears "that their rights will be taken away." At a press conference he assured Malays that he would not allow any group either to "grab Malay privileges" or even to question them. He also gave similar assurances about the status of Malay as the sole official and national language. "The government will not allow anybody to say that while he supports Malay as the sole official language he also asked that other languages be given 'equal status'".

A year later these assurances took form in the NOC's White Paper on the communal disturbances. In a preface, Tun Abdul Razak called for the "reinforcement" of Part III (pertaining to citizenship), Article 71 (rights and prerogatives of Malay rulers), Article 152 (designating Malay as the National Language), and Article 153 (special position of the Malays) of the Constitution by the enactment of new laws making it a criminal offence to publicly criticise or question these provisions.

The government accepted the above recommendation and introduced the Constitution (Amendment) Bill in Parliament on February 23, 1971. The government made its position clear from the beginning. In the words of PAS Senator, Amaluddin Damus,

166. Utusan Melayu, July 18, 1969.
When the Government presented this Bill we were given an ultimatum - pass the Bill and Parliament will be restored. Otherwise Parliament is discontinued.  

The introduction of the Bill created a dilemma for PAS. Its passage would mean that PAS could no longer question a prevailing concept of citizenship which gave political and other rights to non-Malays and their right to use their languages for non-official purposes and have state-supported Chinese and Tamil-medium primary schools. These issues had hitherto constituted the lifeblood of PAS's political campaigns. PAS leaders knew they would lose Malay votes if they supported the amendments, but their decision was to support. Datuk Asri, PAS President, explained that his party did so because otherwise Parliamentary democracy would not be restored. The PAS's decision, however, was not inspired by any abiding love for Parliamentary democracy. It was based on fear of the alternative which was, as Datuk Asri put it, "back to NOC rule", or "the Alliance's rule except that there would be less opportunity to air one's views, comments, etc."  

PAS leaders had developed a stake in the political system and were clearly not prepared to accept an arrangement that would deny them a political role. As members of the ruling government in Kelantan since 1959, PAS leaders and members had enjoyed several benefits. For example, priority was given to PAS supporters and members in state land development.


schemes. Some PAS leaders had also used their executive powers to alienate large acreages of timber forests for themselves. Their control of the state government also brought them into contact with Chinese business elements, as approvals of timber licenses and other contracts were given out, a relationship that served to enrich party coffers and individual pockets.

In the states of Perlis and Kedah, PAS political fortunes were clearly on the rise. The PAS share of the total votes increased with each state election. In Kedah state power appeared to be within reach. In short, their prospects for continued enjoyment of benefits conferred by state power in Kelantan and the capture of state power in Kedah, and possibly Perlis, lay in the restoration of democratic politics. The type of democratic politics that PAS would have preferred was that which prevailed before parliamentary democracy was suspended but the Constitution (Amendment) Act had made that an impossibility. As one PAS leader put it, "we can participate in politics but we cannot raise political issues". What was PAS's answer to this dilemma? Its response will be explored in the next chapter.

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In the above sections, political accommodation by the DMK and the PAS has been analysed separately. Below, they are examined separately. Below, they are examined

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170. Information obtained from interviews and examination of confidential papers. See "Korapsi dalam PKINK (SEDC) Perbadanan Iktisad Negeri Kelantan" (mimeo); and "Mengapa Haji Ishak Lotfi bin Omar Tidak Layak Menjadi Pesurohjaya PAS dan Mentri Besar Kelantan" (mimeo).

171. Interview with PAS leader, August 21, 1972.
comparatively with a view to identifying the similarities and the
differences and to accounting for them.

The chapter began with the argument that the relative political
security of the Congress and the Alliance respectively at the time of
independence allowed for tolerance toward parties such as the DMK and
the PAS which called for a fundamental redefinition of the polity. In
the post-independence period, they in fact made some "concessions" to
Tamil and Malay primordialisms as articulated by the DMK and the PAS
respectively.

After 1947, the Congress party in Madras state adapted itself
to the emerging social forces in a manner that enabled it to retain
state power until the mid-sixties. Specifically, it adapted itself to:
(i) the shift in the centre of political power (from Brahmins to the
backward castes and the Untouchables) with the introduction of universal
franchise and the consequent need to build a new winning coalition en­
ccompassing emerging caste groups; and (ii) Tamil nationalism as arti­
culated by the DMK. The adaptation took several forms: Congress' al­
liances with the Vanniyar caste parties and with the DK; the emergence
of "pure Tamilian" Kamaraj (of the low Nadar caste) as Congress leader;
the absence of Brahmins in Kamaraj's cabinet; and Kamaraj's alignment
with Tamil nationalist sentiments. It could be argued that an impor­
tant "achievement" of the DMK was the "tamilization" of the Congress
party in Madras.

In Malaya, the UMNO was able to acquire and retain governmental
power by forming an inter-communal coalition (the Alliance). Only in
ethnically homogeneous Kelantan (and in Trengganu for two years) was UMNO stripped of power by PAS in 1959. After that, Kelantan remained a PAS stronghold. An important part of the explanation for UMNO's defeat in Kelantan lies in the failure of Kelantan UMNO leadership to align itself with the Malay peasantry, who constituted the majority of the electorate. The Kelantan UMNO and the Alliance central government subsequently used a variety of methods to unseat the PAS government. These methods contributed to the reduction of PAS strength in the Kelantan assembly. But in the northwestern states, PAS support increased, in part due to its ability to capitalise on Malay economic frustrations and fears of a growing non-Malay threat. In the post-May 1969 period, the central government responded to these frustrations and fears through legislative and other measures which reiterated, among other things, that Malaysia was essentially a Malay polity. Thus, it could be argued that although PAS failed to create a Tanah Melayu, it had succeeded in inducing government policies to move some distance in that direction.

One consequence of the attempts by the ruling parties to respond to some of the primordial demands of the DMK and the PAS was that they forced the latter to emphasise specific economic issues as well in their appeals in order to win elections. This emphasis was one aspect of the two parties' varied responses to the dictates of electoral politics.

The DMK's dissociation from Periyar's atheism, anti-Brahminism and anti-Hinduism must be understood within a broader context of DMK efforts to broaden its electoral base in the highly caste and ritual conscious Madras state. In an effort to acquire the support of the
rising urban lower middle classes, the middling farmers and particularly the backward castes, the DMK projected itself as the party of the "common man". These efforts together with its electoral understandings with all-India based parties contributed to the DMK's emergence as a strong contender for state power.

The PAS response was similar to that of the DMK in two respects: (i) it sought to project itself as a party of the "ordinary Malays"; and (ii) it reached opportunistic understandings (with Chinese business interests in Kelantan and with Chinese-based parties in the 1969 elections). But, unlike the DMK, there was never any need for PAS to moderate its postures because it was seeking the support of only the Malay electorate and its opponent was a Malay party. The PAS had to outbid its opponent for support.

What was the role of "coercion" in the political accommodation of the DMK and the PAS? The "anti-secession" amendment to the Indian constitution was aimed in part against the DMK which was threatening the Congress position in Madras state. When the DMK dropped its secessionist objective in 1963 in response to this amendment, it was only ratifying a previous change in its own position. By then, several factors had contributed to making DMK's secessionist objective only an empty slogan. The absence of significant opposition within the DMK when the party leadership dropped the secessionist goal further confirms this assertion. Thus, the DMK's accommodation cannot be attributed to legislative coercion.

In contrast, governmental pressure appears to have had some
influence in PAS's accommodation. Unlike the DMK, which had gradually pushed its secessionist goal into the background, the PAS continued to emphasise the theme of Malay political supremacy. By identifying itself with Malay fears and frustrations, PAS had begun to undermine UMNO's position in the northwestern states. Both the amendments to the Sedition Ordinance (see Chapter 6) and the Constitution (Amendment) Act were in part aimed at reducing the appeal of PAS and other opposition parties which thrived on primordial issues. Clear governmental indication that the new provisions would be strictly enforced left PAS leaders with no choice but to accept them. There was opposition within PAS to the leadership's decision to support the Constitution (Amendment) Act and consequently, party leaders had to tour the country to explain their decision to the rank-and-file. The PAS's decision to support the Act, however, must be seen not only in terms of a fear of the consequences of violating the Act (and the "gains" mentioned earlier) but also in terms of the party's involvement in competitive politics from 1955. This involvement had led PAS leaders to develop a stake in the political system. They were therefore prepared to accept the new rules.

172. Pillai, op. cit., p. 244.
CHAPTER 6

The Politics of Expediency

The political accommodation of the DMK and the PAS went beyond their acceptance of the legitimacy of their respective nation-states. Both subsequently extended their support to the incumbent regime of the central governments. The DMK contributed significantly to the political survival of the Congress government led by Indira Gandhi during the 1969-71 period. The PAS is now a member of the UMNO-led coalition or Barisan Nasional (National Front) which currently governs Malaysia.

The Congress and the UMNO were the principal political rivals of the DMK and the PAS, respectively. While the DMK castigated the Congress as the vanguard of Aryan imperialism and representative of vested interests, the PAS accused UMNO of surrendering Malay sovereign rights and of failing to uplift the Malays economically. In turn, the Congress and the UMNO respectively branded the DMK and the PAS as 'anti-national' parties that threatened territorial integrity and communal harmony. Given such hostile attitudes, what factors explain the temporary DMK-Congress alliance in the 1969-71 period and PAS's inclusion in the UMNO-led coalition in 1973? This chapter will argue that, in both cases, it was prompted by pragmatic calculations of mutual political and economic benefits.

DMK:

This part of the chapter focuses on (i) why the DMK captured power in 1967, (ii) its performance in government, and (iii) its short-
lived connection with the Congress government led by Indira Gandhi.

The Path to Power

Between 1962 and 1967, the DMK was transformed from the position of a ginger group opposition in the Madras State Assembly to governing party of Madras State. How was this transformation brought about? It resulted from the conjunction of a variety of factors. Four important factors are discussed below.

Firstly, Kamaraj's entry into national politics and his consequent neglect of Madras politics affected the TNC adversely. From the mid-fifties, Kamaraj dominated Madras politics and was the only popular Congress leader with grass roots support. Although factionalism within the TNC was not far beneath the surface of state level party politics, Kamaraj's undisputed leadership gave the TNC a certain cohesion. In 1963, under a 'Plan' which Kamaraj is alleged to have authored, he resigned from the chief ministership of Madras and became the President of the All-India Congress Committee (AICC). Kamaraj's immersion in AICC politics and his long absences from Madras created a leadership vacuum in the TNC. No other TNC leader appeared to have the requisite skills to maintain the close links between large sections

1. Under this Plan, "leading Congressmen who are in government should relinquish their ministerial posts and offer themselves for full-time organisational work" (Stanley A. Kochanek, The Congress Party of India (Princeton, N.J.; Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 78-79). According to Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., this Plan was "generally regarded as a device to get rid of Morarji Desai, considered conservative and rigid, but its more significant consequence was the induction of state party bosses into positions of power at the national level, with Kamaraj at the helm of the organisation as new Congress president" (India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1970), pp. 131-32).
of the electorate and the party machinery Kamaraj had established. This, of course, worked to the advantage of the DMK. It expressed its 'happiness' with Kamaraj's assumption of the AICC's Presidency by describing it as a great honour for the Tamil people.

Secondly, the political and administrative incompetence of Kamaraj's successor, M. Bhakthavathsalam, in the Madras government led to significant sections of the population transferring their political allegiances from the Congress to a DMK which more successfully articulated their frustrations. Under the stewardship of Kamaraj, Madras State had acquired a reputation as one of the better administered states in India. Also, Kamaraj's skillful alignment of the Congress with Tamil nationalist feelings prevented the DMK from pre-empting the articulation of these feelings by itself. His successor, M. Bhakthavathsalam, was a colourless personality.

During his three years as Chief Minister, M. Bhakthavathsalam brought notoriety to the Madras Congress government by his maladministration. His period of chief ministership was marked by persistent rumours of ministerial corruption, a deteriorating food crisis in the state arising in large part from poor procurement and distribution mechanisms, black marketing and rising prices of essential commodities. His lack of political acumen is best exemplified in his handling of the anti-Hindi agitations in 1965. His attempts to deal with the agitations through harsh measures during the first three days of the agitations were based on a "...fundamental misunderstanding of the intensity and scale of popular dissatisfaction, and contributed a great
deal to inflame the masses of the people". The net result of such developments was a rapid decline in the popularity of the Congress.

Thirdly, through intense campaign activities, the DMK succeeded in projecting itself as a party that was mature enough to assume the reins of government in Madras State. Although ideologically rooted in the anti-Brahmin movements, after its involvement in competitive politics, the DMK shifted its focus. On the economic front, it successfully articulated the economic frustrations of the "common man". On the political front, it successfully projected an image of itself as the party of all Tamils regardless of caste, class, region or age. Its leader, Annadurai, filled the leadership vacuum in Madras politics following Kamaraj's exit. Already "deified" by his own party members, Annadurai's moderate and conciliatory political postures won the praise and support of other parties and their leaders. In this regard, Rajagopalachari's (the Swatantra leader's) support for Annadurai proved beneficial for the DMK. It ensured the support of the Brahmin community and business groups, the principal supporters of the Swatantra.


3. M.R. Barnett reports that some of her respondents considered Annadurai as "God on earth." "Charisma and Politics in South India" in Anna Commemoration Volume, p. 17.
Fourthly, the agreement among several opposition parties to the formation of a DMK-led anti-Congress electoral alliance was a crucial factor that led eventually to the defeat of the Congress and the formation of a DMK ministry in the state. Hitherto the inability of these parties to reach an accord had led to the splitting of the non-Congress vote, with the result that the Congress had won easily in numerous constituencies.

The TNC was thoroughly routed, however, in the 1967 General Elections. Though it contested all 234 state and 39 parliamentary constituencies, it won only 49 state and 3 parliamentary constituencies. Its top leaders, including Kamaraj, Subramaniam (then Union Food Minister), Alagesan (then Union Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals) and Chief Minister Bhakvathsalam and all his cabinet colleagues - with the exception of one (Bhuvaragan) - were defeated, most of them at the hands of DMK candidates.

In contrast, the DMK won 139 state and 25 parliamentary constituencies. In 73 state constituencies, the DMK won by a comfortable margin of well over 10,000 votes. Its share of the votes polled increased from 27 percent in 1962 to 41 percent in 1967. Other parties in the DMK-led anti-Congress alliance won 44 state and 11 parliamentary seats.


5. The other parties were: Swatantra, Left Communists, Praja Socialist Party, Samyukta Socialist Party, Muslim League, We Tamils, Tamil Arasu Kazhagam, and the Forward Bloc.
The above analysis of the DMK's rise to state power suggests that factors other than successful appeals to primordial sentiments were probably more important for power acquisition. The factors include success in forging a winning electoral alliance with parties of other orientations, acquiring an image of respectability especially as a party that had the capacity to govern if given the opportunity, the shortcomings of the ruling party, and rising economic discontent.

The Governing Function

The DMK was the first non-Congress party to form a non-coalition state government in India. On March 6, 1967, the DMK ministry was sworn in with Annadurai as Chief Minister. The latter's period of office lasted for only about a year. He died of cancer on February 3, 1968. His successor, M. Karunanithi, was noted for his quick decision-making abilities and was generally recognised as the DMK's chief election tactician. He also had close links with the film industry in the State.

In the mobilisation of support, though the DMK extensively used the vocabulary of the socialist left, this was not rooted in any fundamental socialist convictions. In fact the DMK never formulated a well-defined economic programme of its own. This was clearly reflected in the public policies of the DMK ministry which continued the "centrist" policies of the Congress and, in some cases, resorted to ad hoc measures.6

In discussing the DMK ministry's handling of the textile crisis in the State, the Tribune of May 31, 1968 remarked: "Looking back at the DMK's handling of the situation, the worker wonders if he voted for the party only to wake up and find the Congress still in power." When criticised by TNC leaders that the DMK administration was only continuing Congress policies which it had ridiculed in the past, Chief Minister Annadurai could do no better than retort that instead of criticising this the Congress should congratulate the DMK for successfully implementing such policies.

The middle and lower middle class character of the DMK's support was also reflected in its public policy emphasis. Only "half-hearted" attempts were made to improve the lot of the lower classes. The DMK government, for example, was not prepared to undertake fundamental land reforms that would have brought benefits to the landless farmers, although its 1967 election manifesto promised 'land to the tiller'. In this regard, the best the DMK government could do was to pass legislation early in 1970 lowering the ceiling on landholdings from 30 to 15 acres. But even this legislation contained sufficient loopholes to make it ineffective.

Another good example was the DMK government's indifference to the plight of Adi-Dravida labourers, especially in Thanjavur district.

9. Interview with senior civil servants, September 14, 1972.
("the rice bowl of Tamilnadu"). After the 1968 harvest, serious conflicts developed between the labourers and the misrasdars (owners of medium sized landholdings) over wages. These culminated in the Kilavelmani arson in which 32 Adi-Dravidas were burned alive. Beyond setting up a one-man commission of inquiry, the DMK did not show any interest in addressing itself to the root causes of the conflict. It was reported in one confidential document that the DMK was not prepared to support the peasantry against the mirasdars because it was both sympathetic to and afraid of losing the support of the large segment of landowners who owned fewer than ten acres.11

Some of the DMK government's policies were, in the words of a DMK Member of the Legislative Council, "eye-catching but not problem-solving". They attempted to deal with symptoms (and even here only partially), and not the root causes of the problems. Two such policies which were given extensive publicity as "achievements" of the DMK government are discussed below, for illustration. Immediately after assuming office, the DMK government attempted to fulfill its election promise of giving "one measure of rice per rupee" to the people. Because of inadequate resources, the DMK government was unable to implement this throughout the State. It was able to do so in only two

10. Thanjavur or Tanjore district has been studied more intensively by social anthropologists than any other district in Tamilnadu. Among the best-known ones are Gough, Beteille, and Silvertsen.


12. Interview, Madras, June 14, 1972.
urban centres, Madras City and Coimbatore. For the DMK propagandists, this was sufficient evidence of the DMK's concern for the poor. The state subsidised scheme cost the exchequer rupees eight crores in the first year and was subsequently abandoned. In 1971, the DMK Chief Minister launched the "Beggar Rehabilitation" scheme to solve the beggary problem, especially in the urban areas. Three rehabilitation centres were temporarily established. But after the initial publicity, little was done in following up with comprehensive programs dealing with this social problem.

In the sphere of religious policy too, the DMK government's actions were at variance with its earlier position. The DMK was strongly opposed to Hindu religious ritualism and had consequently acquired the image of an atheist party. A DMK government circular in mid-1968 tended initially to reinforce this image. It called on the Heads of Departments to remove pictures and idols of religious figures exhibited or installed in government offices, "in view of the secular nature of our State." But contrary to opposition charges, this circular was not inspired by atheistic feelings. The issuance of the circular appeared to be the product of a bureaucratic blunder. In fact, subsequent to this incident, DMK leaders made a concerted effort to erase the anti-God image by, among other things, accepting invitations

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13. This scheme is based on a sloppily-written one-page report by the Asaithambi Committee which was set-up to examine the causes of beggary. See Tamil Arasu (June 5, 1981).

to Hindu religious functions, allowing pictures of Hindu deities to be restored in public offices, and (in some cases) making donations to Hindu temples.\textsuperscript{15} Probably the most significant development was the active interest shown by the DMK government in the reform of temple administration.\textsuperscript{16} This was intimately bound up with DMK patronage. DMK members were appointed to temple trust boards in several places. Also it was alleged that DMK-controlled trust boards gave preference to pro-DMK individuals in leasing temple properties and lands.\textsuperscript{17}

The DMK government skilfully diverted the people's attention from its failure to evolve a consistent programme to deal with the principal social and economic problems by making dramatic gestures of a purely symbolic nature. Many of these sought to satisfy Tamil cultural sentiments. These included endless re-namings of terms (for example, carnatic music was re-named Thol Isai) and places (Madras State itself was re-named Tamil Nadu but not Thanizh nadu in 1969), the organising of a spectacular World Tamil Conference, the displaying of quotations from \textit{Tirukkural} in state buses, requesting temple priests to conduct \textit{archanais} in Tamil, and encouraging civil servants and those in the legal profession to use the Tamil language extensively in public administration and courts. Such gestures were given extensive publicity as "great achievements" of the DMK government.

\textsuperscript{15} Interview with several DMK officials.

\textsuperscript{16} See "Temple Administration in Tamil Nadu" in Tamil Arasu (December 20, 1970), pp. 31-35.

\textsuperscript{17} Information obtained from interviews with several politicians and temple officials.
The DMK had come to power in part by championing anti-Hindi sentiments in Tamilnadu. After assuming power, it sought to de-emphasise the language issue but succeeded only for a brief period. The introduction of a bill to amend the Official Languages Act in Parliament reactivated linguistic xenophobia both in the Hindi and non-Hindi areas.\(^{18}\) The bill stipulated that notwithstanding the expiration of 15 years from the commencement of the Constitution (1950), English "may continue to be used" in addition to Hindi for a number of specified purposes. Hindi chauvinists in Parliament expressed their opposition to the Bill, and those outside organised several "Angrezi hatao" (abolish English) demonstrations. The Home Minister who moved the bill in the Rajya Sabha sought to appease Hindi fanatics by saying that the ultimate aim was to make Hindi the sole official language as soon as possible.\(^{19}\)

The demonstrations in the North and the subsequent expressions of support by Congress ministers for the plan to make Hindi ultimately the sole official language sparked off anti-Hindi demonstrations in the South - first in the towns of Tamilnadu, then in the towns of the other three southern states. Shops owned by North Indians and Union Government property (principally that of the railways) were the principal targets of attack. College students who had played leading roles

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18. See chapter 5, pp. 123 of this dissertation.

in the DMK-led anti-Hindi campaigns in the past were once again in the forefront.

The DMK government attempted to appease anti-Hindi sentiments in a dramatic fashion. It summoned a special meeting of the state legislature on January 23, 1968, and presented a resolution which expressed its opposition to the plan to impose Hindi eventually on non-Hindi speakers and called for a constitutional amendment to make all fourteen state languages official languages. It was also resolved that "three-language formula be scrapped, and Tamil and English alone shall be taught, and Hindi shall be completely eliminated from the curriculum in all the schools in Tamilnadu, and that in the National Cadet and other Corps words of command shall not be in Hindi, and if the Union Government refuses to accept this suggestion, such Corps shall be disbanded".  20

The DMK leaders sought to convince the Tamil populace in general and their supporters in particular that with the passing of these resolutions, the 'Hindi issue' had been solved. At a public meeting on January 25, 1968, to commemorate the "martyrs" of the 1965 anti-Hindi agitations, Annadurai proclaimed that the thirty-year war against Hindi had been finally won.  21 Such pronouncements were part of the DMK's style of governance; again, it had avoided, not resolved a basic conflict. In an interview, a DMK MLA and student organizer

20. Ibid., p. 90.

21. Interview with DMK MLA who attended this meeting, Madras, July 15, 1972.
confessed that

the language resolution passed in the Tamil-
nadu legislative assembly is a bogus resolu-
tion. The resolution has been passed from
the angle of education which is a state subject.
It has not touched on the Official Language
issue which is a central subject. Thus, the
language issue has not been solved. The DMK
has side-tracked the language issue.22

The DMK's failure to cope successfully with many of the basic
economic and social conflicts in Tamilnadu helped to re-activate the
Tamilnadu Congress. Kamaraj Nadar blamed the DMK ministry for the
deteriorating law and order situation in the state. In December,
1968 Kamaraj formally returned to legislative politics when he won the
Nagercoil parliamentary by-election. He defeated the DMK-supported
Swatantra candidate. Many Congressmen interpreted his victory as in-
dicative of Congress' recovery from its 1967 debacle. They conse-
quently stepped up their anti-DMK campaign.

The DMK-Indira Gandhi Nexus

Although concerned about Kamaraj's active return to Tamilnadu
politics, the DMK leaders on the whole did not perceive any immediate
threat to their control of the state government. With the exception of
Nagercoil, victories in all other by-elections convinced them that they
continued to enjoy mass backing. They realised, however, that being
entirely a one-state political party their long-term political survival

leader, C. Subramaniam, referred to the "language resolution" as
the "biggest political fraud" (Hindu, February 11, 1969).
was crucially dependent upon the establishment of some kind of a *modus operandi* with the central government, in particular with the dominant faction within the Congress party. In this regard, a series of unanticipated events helped the DMK acquire a position of indispensability to the ruling Congress. Karunanithi, in turn, effectively consolidated the DMK's political position in the State.

Immediately after the 1967 elections, there were fears that the DMK, which had once advocated secession, might revive the demand and pursue a policy of confrontation in its dealings with the central government. Annadurai sought to dispel these fears immediately. Said he: "We are forming the government with the hope of getting the full cooperation of the Centre and not at all itching for a clash between the Centre and the State." 23 Except for organising a statewide "Demands Day" to press the Centre to approve the state's claim for the Salem steel plant and the Tuticorin Harbour project, the DMK government did not engage in any attempt to 'confront' the Centre. Even the "Demands Day" was relatively incident-free. Soon afterwards, Dr. Rao's (Union Minister for Transport and Shipping) assurance that the Tuticorin Harbour project would be included in the Fourth Plan gave a big boost to the DMK's prestige. On the whole, the Central government ministers who visited Madras had nothing but praise for Annadurai's

administration. 24

The amicable relationship between the DMK and the central government embittered many Congressmen in Tamilnadu. Internal factional rivalries - principally those between groups led by C. Subramaniam and groups led by Kamaraj - added to the TNC's difficulties. Meanwhile, important changes were taking place in the Congress at the national level. Indira Gandhi, who became Prime Minister largely because of the backing she received from the "Syndicate" (including Kamaraj), 25 increasingly began to assert her independence. Tensions developed between Indira Gandhi's faction and her opponents over several issues; the two best known ones centred on her decision to nationalise fourteen major commercial banks and her support for V.V. Giri in the presidential elections. The tensions eventually led to an open split in the Congress party at the national level. This was followed by splits in state Congress organisations as well. The state of Tamil Nadu, however, was the least affected. The vast majority of Tamil Nadu Congressmen chose to support Kamaraj and this group was referred to as "Kamaraj Congress." Only a negligible minority including C. Subramaniam chose to support the Congress faction led by Indira Gandhi and referred to themselves mostly

24. In June 1968, Jagjivan Ram criticised those Congressmen in Tamilnadu who ridiculed the DMK. He pointed out the DMK worked for the interests of the poor. (Interview with Congress MLC, Madras, July 16, 1972).

25. The "Syndicate" was an informally organised group of powerful state Congress leaders. It included S.K. Patil (Bombay), S.Nijalingappa (Mysore), Atulya Ghosh (West Bengal), Kamaraj (Madras) and Sanjiva Reddy (Andhra). See Michael Brecher, Nehru's Mantle: The Politics of Succession in India (New York: Praeger, 1966).
as the "New Congress".

Indira Gandhi, who had the support of 228 Congress MPs, retained control of the Central government but was without an absolute majority in Parliament. Her political survival as Prime Minister depended upon the acquisition of the support from certain opposition parties. Her secularist and socialist leanings meant that the Hindu-oriented Jana Sangh and the capitalist Swatantra could not be counted upon for political support. Eventually, the DMK (with twenty-five MPs in the Lok Sabha) emerged as one of the consistent supporters of Indira Gandhi's government, contributing to her political survival.

What was the basis of the Indira Gandhi-DMK nexus? Was it based on bonds of ideological congruence? To the latter, the answer is "yes" but only in a very vague sense in that the DMK, like Indira Gandhi, had a secular orientation and a fair share of socialist rhetoric. But these were not really fundamental to the DMK's belief system. This was based substantially on Tamil nationalism and was therefore, at least at times, in conflict with the all-India perspectives of Indira Gandhi.

The Indira Gandhi-DMK nexus was based essentially on two factors. Firstly, both shared a common political enemy, Kamaraj. In Tamilnadu the Kamaraj-led Congress was the most important opponent of the DMK government. At the national level, Kamaraj was prominent in spearheading various attempts to "dump Indira". Thus, both the DMK and Indira Gandhi were united in their common desire to erode the power
base of their common political foe. From the perspective of Indira Gandhi, given the weakness of her faction in Tamilnadu, the DMK was the only organisation that could effectively counteract Kamaraj's influence.

Secondly, the DMK needed financial support from Indira Gandhi's government to fulfill some of its election promises as much as she needed their parliamentary support for her political survival. Thus there was mutual dependency. What the DMK could not get from the central government in the past could now be obtained with ease in exchange for political support. For example, when the DMK had pressed for a steel plant at Salem on "Demands day" (July 23, 1967), Indira Gandhi responded that the "tight situation" with regard to resources made it impossible for the central government to establish any further steel plants at that moment. When Karunanithi revived the demand after the 1969 Congress split, however, Indira Gandhi announced that three new steel plants would be set up, including one to be located at Salem, thus strongly suggesting that the latter was a trade-off for political support. It was also alleged that this decision was entirely Indira Gandhi's and that there was no serious consultation with the Planning Commission and the Steel ministry, which, since 1955, had been in charge of the location of steel projects. Again, the suggestion here is that political considerations determined the decision-making.


The DMK's cooperative political relationship with Indira Gandhi's government also brought economic dividends when Tamilnadu experienced serious drought conditions. The DMK government did not have adequate funds to engage in drought relief work. Karunanithi, however, took the initiative in formulating a rupees twenty crores budget for this purpose. Using his strong bargaining position with Indira Gandhi, he managed to secure Central government aid in the form of grants and loans to the tune of rupees eleven and a half crores. According to one Madras Congress leader, "because of political factors, Karunanithi was able to obtain Central assistance with ease, whereas under normal circumstances, even a Congress state government would have to put up a fight before such assistance is given".

The Subramanian-led "New Congress" in Tamilnadu was unable to make much headway in its attempts to build an independent political base of its own. In part this was because of the cooperative relationships that developed between Indira Gandhi and the DMK government. When Indira Gandhi attended a New Congress conference in Tamilnadu on April 19, 1970, several New Congress local speakers made scathing attacks on the DMK but "the Prime Minister and the [New] Congress President [Jagjivan Ram] discreetly avoided doing so." It was clear that Indira Gandhi's political survival in the Centre was more important

29. Interview with senior civil servant, Madras, September 14, 1972.
30. Interview with Congress MLC, Madras, July 16, 1972.
in her political calculations than the power ambitions of her followers in Tamilnadu.

The extent to which Indira Gandhi was prepared to make concessions to the DMK was best exhibited in the negotiations over the constituencies to be contested by the New Congress and the DMK respectively in Tamilnadu in the fifth General Elections (held a year ahead of schedule), in 1971. The New Congress wanted at least 25 state assembly and 12 Lok Sabha constituencies. Karunanithi was prepared to concede only 10 Lok Sabha seats, and none for the state assembly constituencies, to the New Congress. No agreement was reached after several rounds of negotiations. Even a last minute intervention by Indira Gandhi proved fruitless. Eventually she and other Tamilnadu New Congress leaders accepted Karunanithi's offer of only 10 Lok Sabha seats.

This was seen as a "betrayal" by the rank-and-file of the Tamilnadu New Congress, and they demanded the resignation of their leaders. Disturbed by this development, Indira Gandhi made another attempt to secure some state assembly seats for her partymen. But Karunanithi was unwilling to make further concessions. In the end, New Congress members reluctantly accepted the electoral agreement with the DMK. This incident again clearly indicates that Indira Gandhi placed a higher premium on maintaining a cooperative relationship with the DMK than on the interests of her own partymen in Tamilnadu.

At the national level, the New Congress won a landslide victory in the 1971 elections, obtaining a two-thirds majority. In Tamilnadu, the DMK further consolidated its grip on the state government by
increasing its share of the state seats from 138 in 1967, to 181. Although firmly entrenched in power in Tamilnadu, the DMK could no longer bargain from a position of strength with the Indira Gandhi-led central government; the latter no longer required the DMK's support for political survival. However the cooperative relationship established earlier continued after the 1971 elections. For example, in response to Karunanithi's speech to the National Development Council on December 9, 1973, the Minister for Planning (Dhar) remarked as follows:

I mention this [proposed Central government-financed projects in Tamilnadu] in order to allay apprehensions, if there was any room for it, for my distinguished friend, Mr. Karunanithi, that in the matter of development, he need have no apprehensions whatsoever from us, from the Planning Commission, because in his case, and if I may say so, in no other case, I always have an enquiry or two which I receive from the Prime Minister.

But this cooperative relationship did not last long. Deprived of a formal role in state politics, frustrated Tamilnadu New Congress leaders and members increasingly began to express their opposition to the DMK government in stronger terms. Firmly entrenched in power, Indira Gandhi was in position to deal with the DMK, so to speak. There were four major factors which provided the background conditions for such an action: one, internal dissensions within the DMK which adversely affected its popularity; two, the increasing desire amongst Congressmen in Tamilnadu to reunite the divided Congress party; three, the alleged corrupt

32. Ibid.

33. Quoted by Karunanithi in his speech to the Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly on January 28, 1974.
practices of DMK leaders; and finally and latterly, the DMK’s critical attitude towards Emergency rule.

Prior to assuming governmental power (pre-1967), the only major factional rivalry within the DMK was between Annadurai and Sampath. In the post-1967 phase, although there were several instances of conflicts between senior party leaders and their respective followers, only one of them assumed serious proportions and, like the earlier Annadurai-Sampath rivalry, split the DMK. This was the rivalry between Karunanithi and MGR, DMK’s Treasurer and a popular film star. As the background and events that led to this rivalry and the subsequent split have been described elsewhere, it will not be elaborated here except to add that it was alleged by members of the Karunanithi faction that Indira Gandhi agreed to write-off MGR’s huge Income Tax arrears in return for his cooperation in splitting the DMK. Members of the MGR faction attributed the split primarily to Karunanithi. They accused him of using dictatorial methods in running the party and of corruption.

The MGR-led faction formed a rival party, calling it the "Anna" DMK (hereafter, ADMK). It claimed to be the genuine adherent of the late Annadurai’s principles and accused the "Karunanithi DMK" of having


abandoned those principles. Although several DMK legislators defected to the ADMK, the DMK still possessed an absolute majority in the state legislature. But large-scale defections among the rank-and-file and the enthusiastic support of the lower classes for the new party caused serious concern among Karunanithi's supporters. In a parliamentary by-election in Coimbatore in late 1973, the ADMK won a landslide victory, signalling its rise to "instant party" status. The emergence of the ADMK complicated political alignments in Tamilnadu. There were now three parties with significant mass support: DMK, ADMK and the Kamaraj-led Congress.

Although highly vocal, the Tamilnadu New Congress never acquired a significant mass base of its own and therefore was eager to effect a merger with the mass-based "Kamaraj Congress". The latter, in turn, deprived of state power for nearly seven years, was keen on merger because this would provide it with access to Central-government resources and backing for its attempts to topple the DMK. This led to a series of informal discussion between the two organisations.

While the discussions were in progress, emergency rule was promulgated in India in June, 1975, following Indira Gandhi's conviction for election offences in the Allahabad High Court. Her arrest of opposition leaders and members did not evoke mass protests. In fact, her subsequent populist measures appeared to have the support of a large majority. It became increasingly clear to several opposition politicians that in the altered circumstances their political fortunes depended on securing an alignment with Indira Gandhi. In
Tamil Nadu, the death of Kamaraj in late 1975 led many of his supporters to conclude that only Indira Gandhi could fill the vacuum in their party's leadership. This provided further impetus for the merger talks and agreement was reported to have been reached by December 1975.\(^{36}\)

While arrangements were being made for a formal merger between the two Congresses in Tamil Nadu, the DMK government's period of office was coming to an end on February 10, 1976. From the perspective of the unofficially re-united Congress, there were still details of the merger to be worked out, especially on organisational matters. Consequently, it was not prepared for immediate electoral activity. Furthermore, although the DMK's popularity appeared to be declining, it was not clear that it would be defeated in the elections. Therefore, a postponement of the elections would give the TNC more time to consolidate itself to challenge the DMK (and also the ADMK whose political alignments continued to vacillate). The increase in the accusations of corruptions against DMK leaders and the DMK government, the DMK's criticism of emergency rule and an allegation by the central government that the DMK was planning state-wide agitations against emergency rule, provided the immediate pretexts for the imposition of presidential rule in Tamilnadu on February 14, 1976. Among other things, this meant there would be a postponement of state elections. The Congress government has now embarked on a systematic campaign to further discredit the DMK in the eyes of the Tamil populace.

\(^{36}\) Communication to the author from a Tamilnadu Congress leader.
PAS: Coalition Politics

Following the 1969 General Elections and the subsequent breakdown of political order, the Alliance, in particular the UMNO, took a series of steps to strengthen its support base and ensure national political stability.

Alliance leaders were convinced that the ground gained by their opponents in the 1969 election resulted in part from their successful exploitation of sensitive communal issues. Realising that these issues required "subtle understanding and delicate handling", the government amended the Sedition Ordinance. The amendments received Royal Assent on August 12, 1970. Sensitive issues were thus removed from the realm of public debate. Shortly after this, the Vice-Chairman of the DAP Penang branch (a Chinese) and an Utusan Melayu editor (a Malay) were prosecuted under this Act. This was a clear indication to the opposition parties that the government intended to enforce the Act strictly, without reference to racial background. Consequently, the opposition parties had to reassess their political options.

As a second step, the Alliance government promulgated a national ideology (the Rukunegara) which it hoped would serve as the "nexus" to bind the Malaysian people together. The Rukunegara was composed of five principles - belief in God, loyalty to King and country, the upholding


of the Constitution, the rule of law and good behaviour, and public morality - which were to guide efforts to obtain the following ends: a united nation and a democratic, just, liberal and progressive society. The Rukunegara remained at best only a symbolic declaration of lofty ideals. 39

Thirdly, the government strengthened its coercive capabilities. The defence budget for the year 1970 showed an increase of 62 percent over the preceding year's budget and the defence ministry's share of the total budget increased from slightly more than one-eighth in 1969 to nearly a fifth in 1970. 40 The Royal Malay Regiment was expanded and several new infantry battalions and support units were raised. The government placed the responsibility for coordinating this increased coercive power in a National Security Council.

Fourthly, several measures were taken to allay Malay fears (which arose from non-Malay political assertiveness) and reaffirm the idea that Malaysia was basically a Malay polity. Entrenching permanently in the Constitution the "special position" of the Malays in the country, and the sovereignty of the Malay rulers, was one such measure. 41 Another was the reaffirmation that only Bahasa Malaysia (meaning Malay) would be used for official purposes. Although this had already been


41. See Chapter 5, pp. 168 of this dissertation.
established by an Act of Parliament in 1967, there remained some doubt about the meaning of "official purposes," and English had remained widely in use in governmental affairs. In order to clear up the confusion, "official purposes" were now defined as "the purposes of all public authorities," that is, the Federal Government, the state governments and other authorities established by law. In addition, the Government announced plans to step up the use of Bahasa Malaysia as the sole medium of instruction and examination in universities and other institutions. These appeased principally Malay school teachers and literary groups which had hitherto been critical of the government's lack of firmness in the implementation of the national language.

A third measure developed to allay Malay fears concerned the granting of citizenship, especially to non-Malays. The Government recalled for re-examination the citizenship papers of some 250,000 Malaysians (the majority of whom were Chinese) who were granted citizenship under Article 30 of the Constitution. According to this Article, the government may, "on the application of any person with respect to whose citizenship a doubt exists, whether of fact or law, certify that that person is a citizen." This Article was "used on many occasions as a loophole for those who were not qualified for those who were not qualified for citizenship." These actions

42. Interview with a former Home Ministry official who was attached to the citizenship Section. October 17, 1974.
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42. Interview with a former Home Ministry official who was attached to the citizenship Section. October 17, 1974.


heightened anxiety levels among non-Malays. For Malays, however, they provided an assurance that the government was finally responding to "one of [their] oldest grievances", their belief that citizenship had been given too easily to Chinese and Indians.\textsuperscript{45}

Fourthly, it was reiterated in unequivocal terms that though the country was formally governed by an inter-communal party, the Alliance, it was the Malay component, the UMNO, that would be the ultimate arbiter on the political and economic priorities of the nation. Tun Abdul Razak, then NOC Director and Deputy UMNO President, said:

> The source of strength of our government lies with the party [UMNO]. UMNO members and leaders must be responsible in determining the guidelines to coordinate the policies of the Government and those of the party so that aspirations for change among the people may be fulfilled.\textsuperscript{46}

Intense factional rivalries in the Chinese component of the Alliance, the MCA, and its consequent inability to assert itself tended to reinforce the image of UMNO as the dominant force in Malaysian politics.\textsuperscript{47} For many Malays, the "restoration" of UMNO was synonymous with Malay political supremacy.

On the economic front, the government announced a series of measures which appeared to deal primarily with Malay economic frustrations. Among other things, a five-point economic program announced by

\textsuperscript{45. Ibid}

\textsuperscript{46. Straits Times, January 24, 1971.}

\textsuperscript{47. Ibid., January 19 and 20, April 17 and 18, 1971.}
Tun Razak on July 2, 1969 included special Government incentive awards to industries willing to locate in depressed rural areas [where the majority of Malays reside] and the opening of new land schemes to speed the tempo of land settlement and to absorb the jobless in agricultural activities. Tun Abdul Razak denied that the program would help only the Malay community. But one observer commented: "Tun Razak appears to have decided that the root cause of the May riots was Malay economic resentment, and his policies seem geared toward propitiating this demon". 48

Without doubt the most significant governmental action on the economic front was the announcement of the New Economic Policy (NEP) and the subsequent launching of the Second Malaysia Plan (1971-1975). 49 Although the Plan's formal objectives were the removal of the identification of economic function with race and the eradication of poverty, irrespective of racial background, it was clear from the tenor of public statements of governmental leaders that the government's immediate emphasis was going to be on the encouragement of Malay participation in the commercial sector. For many Malays, these measures were a clear indication that their economic problems would no longer be, to repeat an oft-


used phrase in Malaysian politics, "swept under the carpet."

By the beginning of 1971, Malaysian government leaders were convinced that they had laid the initial foundations for the emergence of a stable political order and that the people's confidence in the government had been restored. Consequently, they reintroduced parliamentary democracy, albeit in a modified form to suit their perceptions of Malaysian political conditions, in February, 1971.

From the perspective of the PAS, the post-May 1969 policies of the government - especially the reiteration that Malaysia was basically a Malay polity, the emphasis on Malay economic development in the NEP, the removal of sensitive issues from public debate, and the plans to speed up the changeover to Bahasa Malaysia as the sole medium of instruction in educational institutions - appeared to undercut its potential for growth. PAS could no longer accuse its principal political foe, the UMNO, "of a 'lack of resolve', of 'compromise with the non-Malays', of 'strengthening English education at the expense of Malay education' and so on."50

PAS's prospects for growth were hindered in another sense. The Sedition Act prevented non-Malay opposition parties from challenging, among other things, Malay special privileges and the status of Bahasa Malaysia as the sole official language of the country. In the past, such challenges had provided opportunities for PAS to whip up Malay primordial sentiments as a counter to non-Malay political assertiveness and to

accuse UMNO of failing to resist effectively what it saw as the emerging non-Malay threat to Malay political supremacy. In the altered circumstances, in turn, it was unlikely that such opportunities would present themselves again, at least in the immediate future.

The results of the by-elections held after the resumption of parliamentary rule convinced PAS leaders further that UMNO had regained a substantial portion of the support base it had been losing steadily to PAS after 1964. Though Alliance victories were in constituencies held previously by the Alliance, in a number of these its majority was increased substantially and in a few constituencies, the increase occurred at the expense of PAS. Only one of the by-elections was in a constituency previously held by PAS – Tumpat Barat, Kelantan. Though PAS again won this by-election, its majority was reduced.

PAS's immediate response to the changed situation was to emphasise the Islamic component of its belief system. Among other things, it accused the Alliance government of neglecting "(Islamic) spiritual development" in its policies, renewed its call for the establishment of an Islamic university and urged the government to make Islam a compulsory subject at all levels in the educational system. The Islamic emphasis was not brought about by a sudden 'change of heart' but was dictated by tactical considerations. While there were now legal impediments to raising the issue of 'the restoration of Malay sovereignty',

there were no such impediments against calls for the establishment of an Islamic social order. Furthermore, in a Malaysia where all Malays are Muslims and Islam is viewed by a large number of Malays and others (excluding Indian and Chinese Muslims) as a Malay institution, calls for the promotion of Islam were often in fact synonymous with the promotion of Malay interests. Thus, Islam was used by PAS as a convenient substitute for "Malay rights".

Rather than responding to PAS's new emphasis, governmental leaders, in particular Tun Abdul Razak, began to think in terms of more permanent solutions to the problems of political rule in the context of politically salient ethnic divisions. The current Alliance "formula" appeared unsuitable in the post-May, 1969 context. While UMNO had succeeded in strengthening its position as the core party of Malaysian politics, the possibility of PAS reasserting itself always remained if governmental performance, especially in the area of Malay economic development, did not match its promise. The other important component of the Alliance, the MCA, remained submerged in internal factional struggles. Furthermore, other Chinese-based parties had now acquired considerable support among the Chinese. Consequently, the MCA could no longer be considered as the only spokesman of Chinese interests. Tun Razak's (and his colleagues) solution to these dilemmas was to extend the Alliance "formula" to include several opposition parties. This new political arrangement is now

53. In addition to the MCA, other important parties with predominantly Chinese support were the Democratic Action Party (DAP), the People's Progressive Party (PPP) and the Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (GRM).
called Barisan Nasional (National Front).

It is not clear when the first moves were made to form the Barisan Nasional. According to some sources, shortly after the outbreak of communal riots in May, 1969, Tun Abdul Razak sent a helicopter to Kota Bharu (the capital of Kelantan) and Penang to bring Datuk Asri (PAS President) and Dr. Lim Chong Eu (Gerakan leader) to the federal capital, Kuala Lumpur. Tun Abdul Razak's discussions with these leaders was identified by these sources as the first round of a set of negotiations which led eventually to a coalition with these (and other) parties. One close confidant of Datuk Asri mentioned that in a private meeting with the latter, Tun Abdul Razak cried as he emphasised the need for (PAS and UMNO) Malays to be united to meet the challenges ahead.\(^{54}\)

One of the earliest to go on record as having suggested a grand coalition for governing the country was an MCA leader, Tan Sri Khaw Kai Boh. He suggested that the coalition should be patterned along the lines of the national government in Britain during the Second World War.\(^{55}\) Around the same time (December, 1970), Abdul Samad Idris, then a Deputy Minister, in speeches at Trengganu and Kelantan suggested the possibility of a coalition arrangement between PAS and the Alliance.\(^{56}\) But there was no immediate reaction from PAS leaders to these remarks. It was only in

\(^{54}\) Interview with Zahari Awang, Penang, June 23, 1973.

\(^{55}\) Straits Times, December 7, 1970.

\(^{56}\) Ismail Bukhary, "PAS: Kerajaan Campuran PAS dengan Perikatan" (Student research paper), p. 2.
the second half of 1971 that intense negotiations between the Alliance and three opposition parties, (Gerakan, PPP and PAS) appeared to begin. They were successfully concluded the following year. The formation of an Alliance-Gerakan coalition government in Penang and an Alliance-PPP coalition government in Perak were announced respectively in February and May, 1972.

Coalition negotiations between PAS and the Alliance proceeded at a slower pace in part because of differing objectives. The Alliance appeared to be interested in forming a coalition government with PAS, only in Kelantan. On April 30, 1972, Ghafar Baba, then a Federal minister, was quoted by most local papers as having said that "if the PAS government wishes to form a coalition government in this state (Kelantan), we are ready to consider it." There was no immediate reaction to this from PAS President, Asri, who was at that time in Thailand. Two months later, on June 24, 1972, Tun Abdul Razak, in his presidential address to the UMNO assembly, mentioned that the possibility of establishing a cooperative relationship with the PAS in Kelantan was now being discussed.57

Unlike the Gerakan and the PPP, both of which had coalition arrangements with the Alliance in their two areas of greatest strength, Penang and Perak respectively, the PAS was not interested in a coalition arrangement in one state (Kelantan) only. PAS was not entirely a one-state party. In addition to Kelantan, it also had substantial followings elsewhere, particularly in Kedah, Trengganu and Perlis. In the

57. Speech to the 23rd annual UMNO assembly held at the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur.
1969 elections, according to one analysis, more Malays voted for PAS than for UMNO. Thus, PAS cast its bargaining net wide and asked for coalition arrangements at seluruh peringkat (all levels of government).

In the negotiations that followed, the PAS was represented by Mohamed Asri and Abu Bakar Hamzah, while the Alliance was represented by Tun Abdul Razak and Tun Dr. Ismail, then Deputy Prime Minister. It is not known how many rounds of negotiations were held between these leaders. However, agreement was finally reached in late September, 1972, and a PAS Congress was held at Kuala Lumpur on December 21, 1972 to discuss whether PAS's coalition agreement with the Alliance would result in mengurbankan prinsip-prinsip perjuangan PAS (a sacrifice of PAS's principles of struggle). Of the 303 delegates who voted on this issue, the majority, 190, voted in favour of coalition. Of the remainder, 94 delegates voted against and 19 abstained.

On January 1, 1973, the formation of a coalition between the Alliance and the PAS was formally announced. It was to be based on the "Perjanjian 13 perkara" (or the 13-point Agreement) signed by the leaders of both parties. Under this agreement, PAS was given one federal ministry, the Ministry of Lands and Special Functions.


59. Zahari Awang, "Satu Tinjauan Keatas Politik Malaysia Selepas Pilihanraya 1969" (mimeo.), paper presented at PAS meeting. Of the 332 delegates who attended the meeting at the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 29 were not present at the time of voting. See Berita PAS, January 1973.
This was headed by PAS President, Asri. PAS members were appointed to the State Executive Councils of Kedah and Trengganu, Alliance members to the Kelantan State Executive Council. Thus coalition governments resulted in these three predominantly Malay states. PAS members were to be appointed to other posts, such as the posts of Deputy Minister, Parliamentary Secretary and Political Secretary, after relevant discussions were completed between the two parties and with the approval of the Prime Minister. Also, PAS members were to be included in government delegations that went abroad.

Both parties also agreed not to contest against each other in future elections. If a seat held by PAS fell vacant, it was to be contested by a PAS candidate. The same understanding applied in the case of an UMNO seat. In the case of constituencies won by other parties, discussions were to be held between the two parties with the view to fielding a mutually acceptable candidate.

The willingness of the Alliance, in particular the UMNO, to enter into coalition arrangements with PAS not only in Kelantan but also in two other states, and at the federal level, was dictated ultimately by pragmatic political considerations. A coalition agreement involving only Kelantan would have left a substantial number of PAS members and supporters in the other states outside the framework of coalition politics. Consequently, the possibility of political contests between PAS and UMNO Malays in these states would have remained, a possibility that UMNO wanted to avoid.  

In their public pronouncements, PAS leaders in part justified their coalition agreement in catch-phrases. These included "national security" (meaning the need for Malay unity to face the Communist threat) and "national development" (meaning that PAS's presence in the government would impart an Islamic flavour to public policies). While these emphases no doubt had some influence, other important factors also at work led PAS to enter into coalition. These were: the general political conditions in the country after May 1969; fear of PAS's declining power in Kelantan; the possibility of obtaining federal assistance for Kelantan; threats to Asri's leadership position; and finally, the Alliance government's manoeuvres against the corrupt practices of PAS leaders.

Several major developments in the post-May, 1969 period convinced PAS leaders of the need to make adjustments in their party's orientations if they wished to ensure long-term political survival: the amendments to the Constitution, UMNO's commitment to the promotion of Malay interests (particularly in the issues of language and economic uplift) and the results of the by-elections. PAS could no longer whip up Malay primordial sentiments to mobilise support. The alterations in the rules of the political game left PAS with three choices. One, it could oppose the new rules. The government's clear indication that it would impose the new rules stringently, however, convinced PAS leaders that opposition would be a politically costly and futile exercise. Two, it could accept the new rules and continue to function as a separate political organization. This choice was
hardly attractive. As one PAS leader put it: "A tiger without its teeth is no longer a tiger. It becomes just a big cat."\textsuperscript{61} Three, it could join the side that now makes the rules. Several factors contributed to PAS making this choice eventually.

Though PAS originated in northwestern Malaya, its power base or "core area" had always been an east coast state, Kelantan, especially since its unexpected landslide victory in this state in the 1959 election.\textsuperscript{62} The only other state where PAS acquired governmental power was Trengganu. But here it was toppled by the Alliance two years after it assumed office. Attempts by the Alliance to bring about the defeat of PAS in Kelantan did not succeed, though the Alliance appeared to be getting closer to this goal with each election. In 1959, the PAS had a majority of 13 in the 30-seat Assembly. In 1969 its majority was reduced to 4. The steady erosion of their support, plus the results of the by-election held after May, 1969, impressed on PAS leaders that the removal from state power in Kelantan had become a real possibility.

PAS leaders realised that their declining support in Kelantan was in part connected with their inability to satisfy the increasing popular demands now being better articulated by the UMNO.\textsuperscript{63} The low responsive capability of the PAS government, in turn, was linked to

\textsuperscript{61} Interview with PAS State Executive Council Member, Kota Bharu. April 23, 1974.


\textsuperscript{63} Interview with Dato Haji Mohamed Nasir, Deputy Mentri Besar, Kelantan, May 1973.
the limited sources of governmental revenue in the state. The state government was heavily dependent on the central government. But since 1959, when PAS captured power in the state, the relationship between the PAS government and the central government had been characterised, on the whole by confrontation and mutual accusations of non-cooperation.

The central government blocked PAS-initiated projects. In 1962, with the assistance of an Australian firm, the PAS government drew up a comprehensive development plan for the Lembah Lebir (Lebir Valley) area of Ulu Kelantan.64 Five years later, in 1967, the PAS government made plans to give land concessions to a Canadian company for the purpose of setting up plywood and paper mill factories in Kelantan.65 According to PAS leaders, Tun Abdul Razak intervened personally to block both projects from being carried out.

The central government also delayed payment on capitation grants to the state,66 did not honour its promise to give a loan for the Yehya Petra bridge project,67 and for two years (1962 and 1963) did not contribute to the cost of Islamic instruction in government assisted primary schools.68 The extent to which Kelantan suffered financially for

64. Information obtained from interviews with two PAS Senators.
65. Interviews with Amaluddin Darus (PAS Senator) and Salahuddin Abdullah (Kelantan PAS State Executive Council Member).
electing PAS governments was stated by Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman at an election rally at Kota Bharu in 1969. He described the Alliance's $548 million special manifesto for Kelantan as "the accumulated sum due to the state over the last ten years."

The PAS government's hostile postures toward central government projects added to the plight of Kelantan. The PAS government was unwilling to extend its cooperation to numerous projects, especially those over which it could not exercise any control. Many of these projects were really "on the spot grants" made by Alliance ministers to pro-Alliance areas for the construction and repair of schools, mosques and bridges. Fearing that the success of these projects would boost the Alliance's image in their areas and tempt PAS supporters to switch their allegiances, the PAS government sought to obstruct these projects. Where they required new land sites, it was alleged that the PAS government delayed the application for land (which was under state government jurisdiction). In some cases PAS tried to transfer projects to areas in which it exercised control.

Deprived of financial support from the central government, the PAS government found itself in financial difficulties on more than one occasion. Probably the most publicised occasion was in December, 1967 when the state government did not have sufficient funds even to pay the

69. Straits Times, April 24, 1969.
70. Interview with Mohamed Idris (UMNO), Pasir Puteh, May 8, 1973.
salaries of government officers. Fortunately, the central government provided a $1 million loan under an agreement to the state government for this purpose. The central government used this opportunity to acquire some control over the state's finances. Under the loan agreement, the advice of federal Treasury officials now had to be sought in the preparation of future state budgets. But the PAS government continued its hostile posture by not adhering to this stipulation in the preparation of the state budget for 1968. It argued that since the loan agreement was signed only after it had prepared the 1968 state budget, the agreement was not applicable in this case. This put an end to the possibility of improved relationships between the state and federal governments. Consequently, no new federal financial assistance was given to the state. In the elections held the following year (1969), PAS's majority in the state assembly was reduced to four.

PAS leaders in Kelantan realised that their continued retention of state power in Kelantan depended in part upon their ability to respond to popular demands and implement development projects. This required substantial federal financial support. The post-May 1969 policies of the Alliance government were creating the right political climate for seeking this support. In particular, the Alliance government's emphasis on Malay economic development impressed PAS leaders, and Kelantan, being a predominantly Malay state, stood to gain, provided its government was prepared to enter into a cooperative relationship with the federal government.  

72 Under the Second Malaysia Plan, the Central government planned to spend $226 million to develop Kelantan. Straits Times, December 5, 1971.
It was suggested in interviews that threats to his position as Mentri Besar (Chief Minister) of Kelantan might also have contributed to Asri's willingness to enter into a coalition with the Alliance, and thus to consolidate his position. Asri had been Mentri Besar since 1964. Opposition to his leadership grew slowly among his party assemblymen. A few did not approve of his hostile postures towards the central government. Many resented his use of executive powers to confer various benefits on his relatives and close friends. In the past, the Alliance government sought to exploit these grievances to bring about the downfall of the PAS government, but without success. After the 1969 elections, with PAS having a majority of only four in the state assembly, the prospects of succeeding in a similar attempt seemed brighter. The UMNO offered a PAS State Executive Council member the post of Mentri Besar if he was prepared to lead a 'coup' against Asri. This member confessed to the author that he 'couldn't make up his mind on the offer.' But the UMNO continued its efforts. According to several sources, these moves convinced Asri that the security of his position depended upon his ability to establish a modus operandi with the opposition Alliance.

Finally, the Alliance government's initial investigations of the actions of the PAS government and its leaders in Kelantan no doubt also contributed to Asri's decision to enter into a coalition with the Alliance. As early as August, 1959 Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman compared PAS

74. Interview, Kota Bharu.
leaders to "ants searching for places with abundant sugar". Many PAS leaders had been men of small means prior to assuming office and subsequently had acquired considerable wealth. It was alleged that a substantial portion of this wealth was corruptly obtained from Chinese businessmen. Several firms and individuals were very frequently cited (by name) by my respondents as "friends" of PAS leaders. These included construction and logging companies, and owners of saw-mills and rice-mills.

One PAS State Executive Council member's description of how other PAS leaders tried to bring him into their "corruption network" is cited below:

When I was in Kuala Lumpur, Lim Kit Seng [pseud.] invited me to a dinner (through 'X') at a hotel. I told 'X' that I did not have a lounge suit to attend the dinner. Lim Kit Seng then went out of his way to have the dinner changed to another spot in the hotel where informal dress is permitted. During the dinner, Lim Kit Seng told me that he could arrange for me to stay at top hotels in Kuala Lumpur at concession rates (less 50 percent) whenever I visited Kuala Lumpur. I did not understand this overt friendliness until 5 a.m. next morning when (a close friend of 'X') invited me for a morning walk. During the walk, he asked me whether I was interested in having investments and shares. When I replied that I had no money for such things, he said that arrangements can be made. Only then did I realise that attempts were being made to bring me into their corruption network.

My respondents felt that the degree to which different PAS leaders were corrupt varied but were unanimous in the identification of the single most corrupt leader ('X'). It was alleged that most of the properties

75. Utusan Melayu, August 13, 1959.
76. Interview.
that 'X' had acquired with corrupt income were registered in the names of his relatives and close friends. 'X' was also accused by many in interviews with nepotism. One instance where X's attempts did not succeed is cited below for illustration:

When interviews for various jobs - clerks, office-boys - in the Kelantan State Economic Development Corporation were being conducted, 'X' gave me [a member of the interview board] a list of his relatives' names to be hired for these jobs. This would have meant more than half the jobs going to X's relatives. I ignored X's request. Whenever a relative of 'X' turned up at the interview, I was immediately prejudiced and asked them difficult questions. Most of X's relatives who turned up for the interview were quite stupid fellows. 77

It is not known when the first investigations into corruption began in Kelantan. In late 1967, the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA), now known as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), commenced investigations into the affairs of the Kelantan Forestry Department, in conjunction with reports which alleged that a lumbering permit was given by the authority without calling for tenders. 78 In 1971, the Kelantan State Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) became the target of investigations. Officers of the ACA removed several files relating to timber concessions from the SEDC premises. 79 One Kelantan PAS leader described this action as "the first warning signal" from the Alliance central

77. Interview, May 1, 1973
78. Utusan Melayu, October 31, 1967.
79. Interviews with PAS State Executive Council Member and a former SEDC official.
80. Interview.
Fearing that these investigations would eventually hurt his own interests, it was alleged by my respondents that 'X' was keen on "patching up" his relations with the Alliance. The coalition arrangement apparently provided a convenient outlet.

Whatever were PAS motives for entering into a coalition arrangement with the Alliance, its participation in a multi-ethnic government implies that PAS now accepts non-Malays as permanent members of the Malaysian polity. PAS President, Asri, has emphasised that the party should now struggle "not only for Malays, but also for all people who are weak and oppressed". Also, PAS leaders, as members of a multi-ethnic government, have now assumed, together with UMNO ministers, the formal responsibility for protecting the political, economic and cultural interests of non-Malays as well as Malay communities. For a party that began with the objective of restoring Malay sovereignty and regarded non-Malays as temporary residents of the country, this represents a fundamental change, a change brought about in part by its involvement in competitive political processes.

Part of this chapter examined the DMK's rise to state power and DMK government's policies. Factors other than appeals to Tamil primordial sentiments appear to have been important for DMK's power acquisition. As a government, it was unwilling to alienate landed interests and consequently paid little attention to uplift of the peasantry. It excelled mainly in symbolic gestures to Tamil primordial sentiments.
The comparative concern of this chapter relates to the alignment of the DMK and the PAS with central governments they had previously accused of allegedly neglecting Tamil or Malay interests, respectively. Indira Gandhi's political desperation as head of a minority government forced her to establish an informal nexus with the DMK. In contrast, the Alliance government in Malaysia faced no immediate threat to its power position. Though opposition parties increased their share of votes and seats in the 1969 elections, the Alliance still had a parliamentary majority. The Alliance's, especially UMNO's, interest in a coalition with PAS arose in part from a potential threat that the latter could pose in the event of the government's failure to deal with Malay economic dissatisfactions.

The nexus with Indira Gandhi provided the DMK with additional backing in its competition against the "Kamaraj Congress". Indira Gandhi succeeded in portraying Kamaraj, Morarji Desai and other Congress leaders who opposed her as a reactionary lot determined to obstruct her "progressive" policies. Additionally, the nexus also resulted in more central government projects and assistance for Tamil Nadu. Entry into the coalition government provided PAS leaders with posts such as cabinet ministers, parliamentary secretaries, and also State Executive Council members in Kedah and Trengganu. It led to greater developmental assistance from the Centre to Kelantan. Also, the likelihood of investigations into the corrupt practices of some PAS leaders appears to have been removed,
at least for the moment. What did PAS supporters and members 'gain' from the coalition arrangement? Probably the most important 'gain' was the assurance that government policies would henceforth be more openly pro-Malay. Other governmental measures related to Islam must also have pleased them. These included changing the name of "Red Cross" to "Red Crescent", broadcasting Islamic prayer calls over television and radio, and ending the practice of serving liquor in official state functions.

The Tamil Nadu and the Kelantan organisations of the national ruling parties disapproved of the latters' alignment with the DMK and the PAS respectively. Kelantan UMNO was getting closer to its goal of dislodging PAS from state power with each election. By freezing the status quo, the coalition arrangement had blocked the likelihood of Kelantan UMNO emerging as the sole governing party in the state.

82. Prime Minister Hussein Onn appears to have taken a tougher stand against corruption in high places than his predecessor. The Mentri Besar of Selangor (and UMNO Youth leader) has been prosecuted for corrupt practices. Since then, several names (which includes PAS leaders) were mentioned in private discussions in Kuala Lumpur as "next on the list".

83. Crescent is an Islamic symbol. The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Council for Islamic Affairs. PAS President Asri, attended the meeting (The Vanguard (Sarawak), July 19, 1974, p.1).

84. Ibid.

85. Consumption of liquor is considered haram (forbidden) in Islam.
Indira Gandhi's nexus with the DMK created difficulties for the Tamil Nadu New Congress. It wanted to capitalize on the emerging "Indira wave" and acquire political power in the state. But Indira Gandhi's dependence on DMK parliamentary support and her consequent willingness to accept the DMK's offer of only a few seats to the Tamil Nadu New Congress in the 1971 elections made that an impossibility.
CHAPTER 7

Summary and Conclusion

In this study, Geertz' concept of primordialism was used to examine the political accommodation of the DMK and the PAS. A primordial tie stems from the givens of social existence such as kinship, language or religion. In contrast, in a party context, civil ties are found in class-based parties which are considered less of a threat to the nation-state than the former. Civil loyalties may challenge existing governmental forms but rarely the nation-state itself; primordial loyalties envision irredentism, merger, or secession.  

Geertz and others have noted that in Asian and African states, the tradition of civil politics is weak and that primordial attachments tend to be adhered to and preferred as bases for political mobilization. Competitive party politics have been viewed unfavourably in these contexts partly because they are perceived as contributing to the heightening of primordial tensions and consequently threatening national stability: "If tribalism is the enemy, elections are partly responsible for ."

1. The usefulness of the "primordial-civil" dichotomy for understanding politics in Asian and African states has been discussed in several works. Probably the best discussion is found in Martin C. Doornbos, "Some Conceptual Problems Concerning Ethnicity in Integration Analysis", Civilisations, 22:2 (1972), pp. 268-83.

encouraging it". This threat, it has been argued, significantly influenced the subsequent adoption of authoritarian regimes in many of these countries.

Will the authoritarian regimes in Asia and Africa lay the foundations for the eventual reemergence of political systems which are integrated, stable and democratic? Preliminary evidence offers little room for this possibility. Though these regimes attempt to be authoritarian, they have little authority. Most Asian and African states do not have the resources required to operate effectively an authoritarian, highly centralised regime. Further, in the absence of alternatives, opponents of regimes in these states have generally engaged in violence to influence political priorities. Consequently, politics in these states have been characterised by coups, insurrections, mutinies, severe riots and assassinations.


5. This point has been forcefully argued for Ghana, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Mali and Senegal in A.R. Zolberg, *Creating Political Order* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966), especially Chapter 5.

A few scholars have recently challenged the widely prevalent view of the democratic system as a post-integrational system. Three outstanding contributions in this regard are Liddle's Indonesian case-study *Ethnicity, Party, and National Integration*, Das Gupta's analysis of linguistic politics *Language Conflict and National Development*, and Brass' study of nationality-formation *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*. All three view the democratic system as a developmental system that can initiate and promote political integration. In Liddle's words, "the very forces generally thought inimical to the development of national unity are in fact inseparable from it".

This study provides additional support for the emerging view that democratic politics can contribute to political integration in the

7. Without great variation in phrasing, several contributors to the SSRC series on "political development" have argued that the introduction of competitive politics prior to the solution of "identity", "legitimacy" and "authority" crises will result in anarchy or civil war. See Leonard Binder, et al., *Crises and Sequences in Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971). Also, see Eric A. Nordlinger, "Political Development: Time Sequences and rates of change", in Finkle and Gable, op. cit., p. 458.


11. A useful summary of definitions of political integration may be found in Myron Weiner, "Political Integration and Political Development", *Annals of the American Academy of the Political and Social Sciences*, 358 (1965).

12. Op. cit., p. 230. An Indian political scientist has observed that a country as "pluralistic as India can be effectively united only through a participant and accommodative model of politics" (Kothari, op. cit., p. 337).
primordially divided states of Asia and Africa. It has examined the transformational effects of competitive politics on two political parties that articulated primordial loyalties: the DMK and the PAS. In both India and Malaya, competitive politics provided arenas in which parties such as the DMK and the PAS could enter their claims and make bids for political power. In pursuing their power ambitions, the DMK and the PAS developed a stake in the existing political system which they had initially set out to alter.

The immediate origins of the DMK and the PAS are found in the power aspirations respectively of a group led by Annadurai in the DK, and of a group composed of radical nationalists, Islamic reformers and dissident UMNO members in Malaya. They had not developed a strong political base for making a bid for inclusion in the decision making structures after the departure of the British. Thus the coming of independence meant for them a likelihood of being pushed into political oblivion. Paradoxically, it also left them with an opportunity to acquire power. With the introduction of universal suffrage after independence, the center of political gravity in Madras state and in the Malay community would shift to more numerous castes further down the social order, and the rural Malay peasantry, respectively. Both the DMK and the PAS leaders realised that if they did not move quickly to align themselves with the new power centers, their power ambitions might be forever thwarted. Annadurai's eagerness to convert the DK into an election machinery and the registration of PAS, an Islamic welfare association, as a political party just before the 1955
federal elections were reflections of this realisation.

The emergence of the DMK and the PAS, however, cannot be explained solely in terms of the power ambitions of certain elite groups. Both parties have deeper roots in Dravidian and Malay primordialisms which emerged in the colonial era. The PAS's concept of Tanah Melayu was anchored in a deep-seated resentment within the Malay community against growing non-Malay political and economic influence. The DMK's secessionist aspiration was rooted in the desire of several non-Brahmin groups not only to eliminate the political and administrative power of the "alien" Brahmans but also to create a new order which would accord them social dignity, unlike the prevailing order which had condemned all of them to "inferior" status.

In the post-independence era, the DMK and PAS gave more specific content to their political objectives. While the DMK focused on the alleged exploitation of the Dravidian economy by northern Aryan capitalists and on Hindi imperialism in the south, the PAS focused on the alleged non-Malay dominance of the economy and the polity. Both used political symbols and strategies that fitted well the cultural milieus in which they operated.

The involvement of the DMK in the competitive political process in India set in motion a complex set of forces that eventually led the party to accept the Indian nation-state as organised and defined by the national ruling elites. Its initial goal, the modification of this definition, was gradually pushed into the background in its rhetoric as it became more deeply involved in electoral activity.
It began to pay greater attention to winning elections.

Once the DMK became involved in the quest for power within the framework of parliamentary politics, important changes began to take place in its appeal and strategy. Firstly, with a view to establishing as broad an electoral support base as possible, it (i) discontinued its attacks on Hinduism, the caste system and varnashrama dharma; and (ii) projected itself as a party of all Tamil speakers and of the "common man". Secondly, it gave greater emphasis to articulating economic grievances such as unemployment, food shortage and rising prices which had a more immediate electoral appeal. Finally, it reached electoral understandings with parties, many of whom were opposed to the DMK's secessionist goal, in order to avoid splitting the opposition vote.

The net consequences of these changes was that by 1962 the DMK emerged as the only alternative to the Congress government in Madras state. When the Indian government outlawed secessionist activities in 1963, the DMK, by then more concerned with power acquisition, dropped its secessionist demand. It continued to give lip-service to the Dravidanadu goal, but only in a modified form that accorded with the anti-secession law. The DMK's quest for power, indeed, had contributed to a modification of its basic goal.

Unlike the DMK, the PAS, from 1959, had a dual existence. While in Kelantan (and in Trengganu up to 1961) it was the governing party, in a few other states and at the national level it functioned as an opposition party. In the former, it was concerned with the retention of, and in the latter, with the acquisition of, governmental power.
In Kelantan, PAS leaders told the electorate that non-Malays dominated the Alliance-controlled states, whereas Malay interests in Kelantan were well protected under PAS rule, a point they found easy to make in ethnically homogeneous Kelantan. At the same time, the corrupting influence of governmental power and the lack of access to federal funds brought Kelantan PAS leaders closer to Chinese business interests.

Most of PAS's charges were directed against the central, Alliance government which they portrayed as non-Malay, especially Chinese, dominated and serving primarily non-Malay interests. Only a handful of 'Alliance Malays' were alleged to have benefited from Alliance rule, with the Malay majority allegedly having nothing except so-called 'special privileges'. Consequently, PAS articulated the economic frustrations of the 'ordinary Malays' and linked these frustrations to the loss of Malay political power.

In this regard, PAS's differing roles clearly influenced the postures it took. In Kelantan, where it encountered difficulty in undertaking developmental schemes, it emphasised the need for Islamic spiritual development and castigated the Alliance for seeking primarily material progress. In other areas, as a Malay opposition party, it played up Malay economic backwardness and placed the blame on the

Alliance government.

In 1965, PAS demanded in Parliament a constitutional amendment to guarantee bumiputra rights. In late 1967, it called for a wholly Malay-run national government. In the 1969 election, it emphasised the theme of Malay power, but, at the same time, it sought the support of non-Malay opposition parties to split the Chinese vote in constituencies with non-Malay minorities and thus to increase its victory chances. In this election, it won more Malay votes than the UMNO, retained its control of Kelantan and emerged as a strong political force in Kedah and Perlis. When PAS decided to support the post-May 1969 governmental measures which forbade public debate on sensitive primordial issues, its decision was influenced in no small measure by the desire to hold on to the political gains that it had thus far achieved.

Government willingness to accommodate some of the demands of the DMK and the PAS have also been crucial in the transformations of the two parties. In an effort to counter growing DMK influence, the Tamil Nadu Congress became "Tamilised"; it removed the image of Congress as a Brahmin-dominated organisation. Nationally, the Congress central government sought to allay Tamil fears of Hindi imposition by guaranteeing the continued use of English. In Malaya, especially in the north and northeast, UMNO sought to counter PAS's influence by, among other things, showing that it was as interested as PAS in Islamic matters. On the issue of Malay interests, the UMNO even took the offensive in accusing PAS of betraying the Malays in Kelantan. Probably, the most important "concession"
by the government to PAS demands occurred after May 1969 when government made it clear that public policies would henceforth have a greater pro-Malay emphasis. Had the governments in both countries responded to the demands of the DMK and the PAS only with coercive measures, it is quite likely that the reactions of these parties might have taken violent forms and also alienated them from the existing political system.

The subsequent alignment of the DMK and the PAS with the respective central governments was dictated by the prospects of political and economic benefits. For the DMK, such alignment resulted in its government obtaining federal funds and projects with ease. In turn, this contributed to the consolidation of DMK's grip on the state government. For PAS, entry into the Barisan Nasional removed its fear of losing control in Kelantan, provided it with a share of power at the federal level and in two other states, and prevented possible government investigations into the corrupt practices of some of its leaders.

The national ruling parties in both countries were eager to forge an alignment with the DMK and the PAS mainly because of the potential or actual threat to their control of the central government. Had Indira Gandhi's faction retained an absolute parliamentary majority following the split in the Congress, it is less likely that a nexus between Indira Gandhi and the DMK would have emerged. Similarly, had UMNO's leadership been firmly convinced that it could erode the PAS support base and make it politically ineffective in the long-run, it is less likely that a coalition with PAS would have been encouraged. The likelihood of a PAS resurgence in the event of UMNO's failure to fulfill its pledges to the Malay community was certainly an important consideration in UMNO's calculations on the coalition.  

14. See C.S. Pillai, "Coalition Politics" (ms.).
UMNO's accommodation of PAS's demands did not take place within a "zero-sum" situation in which PAS's "gains" were UMNO's "losses". UMNO's accommodation had in fact been at the expense of non-Malays, at least initially. Recently, the rising threat to national security from communist underground elements and a recognition that Chinese support for the government would be crucial in meeting this threat have forced the government to tone down the Malay emphasis in its policies. Eradication of poverty, irrespective of race, has emerged as the main theme in the Third Malaysia Plan launched in August of this year.15

In contrast, Indira Gandhi's concessions to the DMK demands from 1969 to 1971 have largely been at the expense of her own party in Tamil Nadu. By acceding to the DMK's requests, she contributed to the strengthening of its grip on state power and thus made it more difficult for the Tamil Nadu New Congress to emerge as a strong political force, at least from 1969 to 1971. The recent dismissal of the DMK government and the imposition of Presidential rule in the state have, however, turned the power balance in favour of the re-united Congress party.

This study suggests several additional factors which may exercise an important influence in the political accommodation of primordial parties. They are presented below as hypotheses which may be explored in future studies. The first hypothesis relates to federalism. The two political systems, India and Malaysia, in which accommodation has

occurred, are both federal systems. In contrast to a unitary system, a federal system emphasises the constitutional division of power between one national and a series of subnational territorial governments. Federal systems have provided opportunities for the two parties studied here to seek political power in areas where the primordial group that they sought to represent were concentrated and receptive to their appeals. Clearly, the opportunities for power acquisition, in the first instance at the state level, were an important factor that influenced each party's transformation. The absence of such opportunities could be one reason why this type of party might be forced in the direction of extremist demands, as can be witnessed in the case of the Federal Party in the unitary state of Ceylon.16 Thus, the hypothesis advanced here is that a federal system is more conducive to primordial party accommodation than a unitary system.

The second hypothesis concerns a primordial party's definition of the nation-state it seeks to establish. Accommodation is more likely to occur where the party's goals do not imply redrawing the boundaries of neighbouring political systems. Though the DMK and the PAS expressed concern over the plight of Tamils and Malays, respectively, living in neighbouring states, these were not included in the party versions of the nation-state. The DMK's Dravidanadu did not include the Tamil area of Ceylon, the PAS's Tanah Melayu

16. This party is currently demanding the secession of the Tamil region of Ceylon. See Manchester Guardian Weekly, September 12, 1976, p. 9.
did not encompass the Malay areas of southern Thailand. Had these areas been included, the parties would have had to develop organizational roots in or links with like-minded organisations in the other countries. This would have complicated the political existence of these two parties. It would have made accommodation less likely.

Finally, this study suggests that the factor of leadership security (defined as the relative absence of challenges to the authority of the top leaders of a primordial party) is not necessarily related to primordial party accommodation. While Annadurai enjoyed relatively unquestioned authority within the DMK when the party dropped its secessionist goal, Asri's position as head of the Kelantan PAS government was relatively insecure after the 1969 elections when PAS adjusted itself to the new political rules. Thus, both secure and insecure leaders may adopt accommodative stands.

This study has argued that competitive party politics can have an integrative effect in primordially divided societies. The processes involved in the political accommodation of the DMK and the PAS provide the substance of this argument. Their entry into the contest for electoral support set in motion a complex set of forces that led to abandonment of their initial goals, and then to an alignment with the ruling parties at the federal level. Their primordial urges gave way to pragmatic accommodation.
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A.P. Janarthanan
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A.V.P. Asaithambi
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Chandramouli
Damodaran Mudaliar
E.E. Divien
Era Sziyian
Eswaran Moorthy
E.V.R. Periyar
E.V.K. Sampath
Gururajan
Harikrishnan
Kamaraj Nadar
Karunanithi
Kavingar Karunanantham
K. Natarajan
K. Vinayakam
L. Ganesan

Maruthanayakam
Murasoli Maran
Mythili Shivaraman
Nallarasu
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Navalar Nedunchezhiyan
N. Ramachandran
N.K. Manoharan
N.V. Natarajan
P. Chandrasekhar
P. Seenivasan
Purushothaman
Rajagopalan
Rajamanickam
Rajaram Naidu
Ramakrishna
R. Kasturi
Samyappan
Shetty (Dr.)
S. Kandapan
S. Vijayalakshmi
Thurai Ezhilveliyian
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Velur Narayanan

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Abu Bakar
Abdul Aziz Abdullah
Abdul Kadir
Abdul Ghaffar
Abdul Majid
Abdul Rahman
Abdullah (Datuk, Hj.)
Abdullah Sulaiman
Amaluddin Darus
Ariffin
Ariffin (Datuk)
Chandrasekaran
Foo Chow Yong
Hassan
Hassan Ahmad
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Ismail Bukhary
Khaidar Khatib
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Manaan
Mani
Mohd. Basheer
Mohd. Idris
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Nazri Othman
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Nik Rashid
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Rajalingam
Rahim Kadir
Ramli Abdullah
Razaleigh
Salahuddin Abdullah
Wan Hashim
Wan Ismail (Datuk)
Wan Mustapha (Datuk)
Wee Khoon Hock (Datuk)
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