EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN A CHANGING SOCIETY:
SINGAPORE, 1918-1959

by

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B.A., University of British Columbia, 1969

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THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department
of
History

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
April, 1975
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Department of History

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Date April 30, 1975
Abstract

This thesis is a comparative study of the educational policies of successive governments of Singapore, and of the impact of those policies upon the ethno-linguistically complex, urban society of the island. Whereas in older, more homogeneous Southeast Asian communities the school functioned to conserve and transmit the society's culture, in Singapore—which lacked a single cultural tradition of its own—early educational institutions were operated by individual philanthropists, private teachers, and a variety of organisations such as Christian missions and groups of merchants, and the schools naturally reflected the different cultural affinities of their managers. Subsequently, schools came to be used to promote specific, politically determined ends, but in the achievement of these, the schools performed an innovative rôle with social consequences not always intended by policymakers. The study relates the nature of the governments to the kinds of policies adopted, and assesses policy in terms of the achievement of official goals, social harmony, and relevance to the needs of those being educated. The period selected provides for an examination of the policies of four types of government, each of which differed in significant respects from the others.

The pre-Pacific-war British colonial régime was concerned with the production of a group of persons literate in English and able to fill clerical and junior administrative positions in government and commerce, the control of politically objectionable activities in privately-run Chinese schools, and the protection of Malays from the effects of
contact with alien cultures. The preparation of society for ultimate self-rule was not given serious consideration.

The Japanese Occupation effectively destroyed the passive acceptance of Singapore's colonial status, and heightened political awareness. The educational policy of the period was determined primarily with the demands of Japan's continuing struggle with the West in mind, but the new emphasis placed upon the acquisition of mechanical and technical skills called into question the island's traditional rôle as an entrepôt and fostered a belief in the possibility of Singapore's technological self-sufficiency.

During the final phase of overt colonialism in the island, the post-war British administration pursued an educational policy which tended to forge cultural links between Britain and an increasingly large proportion of the island's school-age population. Those left outside the English-medium schools found themselves ill-equipped to take advantage of existing employment opportunities, and disenchantment with the system was increased by fear of cultural alienation. Radical elements operating in Chinese middle schools and trades unions joined forces, taking advantage of communal fears to create a socially explosive situation. This proved to be one of the major challenges to the authority of the government, which attempted to deal with the problem by resorting to repressive measures.

The distrust which the Chinese-educated displayed towards the government persisted, and became the most intractable situation facing the Labour Front administration—Singapore's first mainly democratically
elected government—which took office in 1955. The new government, acutely sensitive to popular pressures, sought an educational policy that would remove the causes of communal tension and promote a Malayan or Singaporean loyalty. In this they were only partly successful.

The work concludes with a discussion of the socially significant characteristics of the educational policies of the various governments, and places the study within the wider context of education in plural societies elsewhere.
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Finally, heartfelt thanks to my family—Jeanne, Julie and Alex—for their help, patience and understanding.
EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN A CHANGING SOCIETY:
SINGAPORE, 1918-1959
INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with the social implications of educational policies adopted by successive governments of Singapore in the recent past. It is intended to be a comparative study and for this reason a period has been selected which allows for consideration of the educational policies of four types of government, each differing in significant respects from the others. The types of government, and the period itself encompass the final stages of British rule in Southeast Asia, a phase of colonialism in which educational policy can provide a valuable indication of the extent to which colonial régimes endeavoured to adapt to changed circumstances and to meet unfamiliar challenges.

During the interval between the First and Second World Wars, the form of government was one that had evolved over the previous one-hundred years. It was essentially authoritarian, for no constitutional means existed by which the will of the governed could be consulted. The process by which important matters of policy were decided was nevertheless complex, subject to a variety of pressures and, not infrequently, it permitted a clash of wills between local government officials and senior civil servants of the Colonial Office in London. Constitutionally, Singapore together with Penang, Malacca and Labuan formed a colony known as the Straits Settlements; but sharing several senior officials with the government of the Federated Malay States, the island was ruled in practice as an appendage of that yet larger entity British Malaya. This fact is of relevance to the present study since it will
be argued that policies applied in Singapore generally were determined without reference to the island's special needs.

From February 1942 until August 1945, Singapore was governed as a Special Municipality (Tokubetu-si) with a Mayor who was directly responsible to the Japanese Military Administration Department for the 'Southern Area.' Government was rigidly authoritarian, but the authority was now that of an Asian rather than a European power; and although policy was determined with reference to a very much larger area than before—the Malay States, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and Celebes—in practice, a good deal of local autonomy was permitted to the individual state governments and to the Special Municipality.

The post-war years saw the return of the British. For a brief period, government was in the hands of a Military Administration, which was succeeded, on April 1st, 1946, by a civilian government. Under the terms of an Order in Council dated March 27, Singapore became a Crown Colony constitutionally detached both from the former Straits Settlements and from the new, but ill-fated, Malayan Union. The educational policies of the British Military Administration and those of the succeeding civilian government will be considered together, partly because the constitutional change was of theoretical rather than practical importance, many of the senior officials serving under both régimes; partly because the problems created by the havoc of war continued to occupy much of the attention of the civil administration; and partly because both régimes were essentially authoritarian and British dominated. But if the government was still authoritarian, the basis of authority
was no longer accepted without question by the governed or, signifi­cantly, by the officials themselves. It was clear to all that far­reaching constitutional changes were going to occur, and educational policies were profoundly affected by the growing political consciousness of the population, and by the changed philosophy of government in Whitehall. In 1948, the first small step in the direction of democratic government was taken with the admission into the twenty-three man Legislative Council of six members elected by popular vote. In 1951, a further step was taken when the number of elected members was increased from six to nine. There was thus a trend away from the complete authoritarianism of the past, although the changes were more important as an acknowledgement of the destiny of colonialism in Singapore rather than for any immediate and drastic changes in policy. Government continued to be dominated by the official and nominated 'Unofficial' members, and the interests represented by three members chosen by the Chambers of Commerce were clearly sectional rather than popular.

The final type of government, the educational policies of which are to receive close attention in this study, was transitional in character, being basically representative with, however, control over specific matters remaining in the hands of British administrators. The elections which followed the adoption of the Rendel Constitution produced, in April 1955, a 32-man Legislative Assembly from which six members were selected to be ministers; and these, together with three nominees of the Governor, formed a Council of Ministers. The Assembly
had power to debate and legislate on all matters other than external relations, defence, and internal security. Perhaps because the party led by the new Chief Minister, Mr. David Marshall, gained only ten of the twenty-five elected seats, policy tended to reflect a compromise between conflicting interests rather than a single, guiding philosophy of government. It was only with the coming to power of the People's Action Party in 1959 that government could claim with some justification to be fully representative; however, although the changes of policy introduced in the post-1959 period will be referred to for the purpose of illustrating certain points, it is not the object of this work to study recent educational policy in any detail. Such a study would require much greater access to official records than is at present allowed by the Ministry of Education; and the addition of a section covering adequately the evolution of education in Singapore over the past fifteen years would lead the present work to acquire unmanageable proportions. The period covered by this study therefore ends in 1959.

It is clear that to understand policy—the considered course of action adopted by government—one must first establish what purpose the government has in mind. When the form of government is autocratic, the purpose of the autocrat is all that must be sought. But when the government is one such as that which evolved in the Straits Settlements during the nineteenth and first two decades of the twentieth centuries, an understanding of the purpose of government is complicated by a variety of factors. First there is the question of where, and by whom, were matters of policy decided? In principle, the Governor in Council dealt
with the essential business of government, with the British Monarch reserving the right to "disallow," upon the advice of his Colonial Secretary, any ordinance passed by the local legislature. In practice, the right was seldom exercised, since matters of policy were usually decided before they reached the stage of being discussed in the Legislative Council. In the second chapter of this work, the process by which decisions involving educational policy were reached in the years between the wars is examined in some detail, and the conclusion is clear that the Governor and his senior advisers invariably had the last word. This represents a significant change from the period prior to 1867 (when responsibility for the administration of the Straits Settlements had been transferred from the India Office to the Colonial Office), for in the early years of the Settlement, decisions involving educational policy taken by the Resident not infrequently were overruled by the government in India.

Having identified the policy-makers, a further problem is to consider the extent to which personality and prejudice may have affected vital decisions. Here one treads on thin ice, for although some aspects of personality may be established beyond reasonable doubt, prejudice generally only can be inferred; and in the light of the evidence at present available, one can do little more than suggest that some relationship between personality and prejudice, on the one hand, and policy decisions on the other, does in fact exist.

Yet despite these and other complicating factors, it is possible to predicate certain general characteristics of the educational policy
of a colonial government which arise from the imperative of the relationship between colony and metropolitan power: the first consideration must be the interest, real or perceived, of the colonising state. It follows that in the formulation of general policy, priority will be given to defence of the imperial interest both from external threat and internal subversion, and it is reasonable to anticipate that a large portion of revenue will be devoted to this end. What remains must be budgeted amongst a number of services, and inevitably the funds available will be small in relation to total educational needs. Furthermore, how these limited funds are used is likely to be determined by reference to the interests of the metropolitan authority rather than those of the subject people. Where the educational system tends to be élitist, policy will seek to ensure that the élite is sympathetic to the colonial power.

Here, however, a caveat must be heeded by acknowledging that colonial policy in practice is seldom determined solely by considerations of imperial interest. Missionary aims, new ideas on the extent and purpose of government involvement in social services, new educational theories, and reform movements may each be expected to influence policy-makers, and these "humanitarian" influences would appear to conflict with, and hence mitigate, the claims of imperial interest. On the other hand, an authoritarian régime need not concern itself with the popularity or otherwise of any particular measure; and from this it may be argued that there existed, during the period of the pre-war British administration, an ideal opportunity for the introduction of
educationally sound if unpopular reforms. Yet the opportunity was not taken, and the evidence is clear that this was due to a combination of factors the most notable of which were the need to limit expenditure, a suspicion of the advice of educators unfamiliar with the local situation, and the determination of local officials to retain control of the direction of policy.

The extent to which humanitarian considerations are likely to affect policy may vary according to a number of factors. During the Japanese occupation, when the status of Singapore remained essentially that of a colony, because the period was one of continuing crisis the predominant consideration in forming policy was the perceived interest of the imperial power and, predictably, such considerations functioned to less effect.

When authority derives not from the power of an alien country but from the will of the governed, as expressed through periodic elections, one of the first considerations in the formulation of policy must be the satisfaction of the demands of the majority of the voters. The purpose of such popular policies is to maximise the degree of support for the government, which thereby secures its own continuance in office. Educational policy may therefore be expected to be egalitarian, and economic barriers such as school fees are likely to be reduced or removed. The increased intake into the primary levels which results from such a programme will create a pressure for more facilities at the secondary and tertiary levels. The system is likely to develop a momentum of its own which, divorced from rational assessment of the
needs of society as a whole, will be checked only by financial and other material limitations. Moreover, the extent to which educationally sound policies can be introduced will be found to depend upon the degree of popular support they enjoy. Ideal aims, in such a situation, must be devised within the confines of political practicality. The final type of government considered in this study, the transitional administration of the years 1955 to 1959, pursued an educational policy which generally was responsive to popular pressures, and the social implications of the policy are examined in detail in Chapter V.

Since this study sets out to compare the policies of several governments, it is relevant to note that the circumstances within which these policies evolved were constantly changing. Economic trends, prevailing opinion, the composition of the population, the extent of the resources available, and international tensions varied for each of the periods considered, indeed almost the only constants were those arising from geographic location and climate. Accordingly, it is necessary to adopt some objective criteria for comparative purposes. Since 'policy' is determined by 'purpose,' it is clear that one of the standards by which policy must be measured is that of how well it achieved the objectives of the policy-makers. A second yardstick is suggested by the fact that generally education is acknowledged to have a profound effect upon the nature of society; and hence, the question of social impact is raised in terms of whether the policy tended to be socially cohesive or divisive. And thirdly, since education is of great significance to the individual who experiences it, the satisfaction of individual wants
suggests itself. Here a difficulty emerges, for how are 'individual wants' to be determined? Is education seen solely as a process by which the future adult may acquire the skills necessary to enable him to earn a living? In traditional Southeast Asian societies, this aspect received little if any attention; education, usually provided by the religious order, offered the individual the means by which he might gain acceptance into his society, and at the same time it afforded him the satisfaction of his spiritual needs. The skills necessary for his livelihood he gained at his father's knee, or in the fields, or hunting and fishing. But in the artificial, secular, and essentially urban setting of Singapore which lacks both a natural hinterland and an indigenous traditional society, it would appear to be irrelevant to look to public education for the satisfaction of private spiritual needs; and similarly, policy can hardly be condemned for failing to provide the means of acquiring acceptance into a society which had not yet evolved a discrete identity. What remains, then, is the simple measure of how well, if at all, educational policy enabled the youthful population to survive in the rigorously competitive conditions of city life.

Having thus somewhat arbitrarily selected the criteria, it is necessary now to sketch the historical framework, to establish the political, social, and economic circumstances within which educational policies were determined, and to identify some of the problems facing those who aspired to govern Singapore.
Chapter I

THE EMERGENCE OF A DIVIDED SOCIETY

The circumstances of climate and location, although important, were not decisive factors in determining the founding or survival of Singapore. It is true that, located at the tip of the Malay Peninsula, the island with its sheltered harbour provided in the pre-steam era an ideal terminus, a pivotal point in the functioning of the East-West sea-borne trade which depended upon the alternation of the prevailing winds of the North-East and South-West monsoons. But a glimpse at the history of the island will reveal the extent to which the existence of a growing and vigorous community on its southern shore has depended upon the interests and intrigues of powerful states, rather than upon the more predictable consequences of geographical situation or regional patterns of trade. The early history of the island remains obscure, but the fact that Temasek—the site of the future Singapore—was captured and occupied by the Cholas during their punitive expedition against the south-Sumatran based empire of Sri Vijaya, suggests that the place had gained some importance by the early eleventh century, and that it owed allegiance to Sri Vijaya. After the decline of Sri Vijaya, Temasek may have recognised the suzerainty of the east-Javanese Hindu kingdom of Majapahit, although this is by no means certain. Just who the people of Temasek were, and whether their economy was based on commerce of piracy, or control of the sea-passage to the immediate south of the island, are matters that are far from well established; the
extent of the ruins that were still to be seen at the time of the founding of modern Singapore in 1819 indicates no more than that a settlement of some kind had existed on the site. During the fourteenth century, Temasek came under the control of Siam, a fact that was to lead indirectly to its destruction and ultimate abandonment. According to a Sumatran tradition which has gained wide acceptance, Parameswara, a Sailendra prince of Palembang who was involved in a dispute over the succession to the rule of Majapahit, fled in 1401 to Temasek, where he was given refuge by its ruler, a vassal of Siam. Parameswara killed his host and assumed control of the town. A year or so later, the Siamese, or perhaps one of their tributary states on the Malay peninsula, sought vengeance and destroyed the settlement, Parameswara escaping to the north where later, it is claimed, he founded Malacca. The significant fact is that after its destruction, the site of 'Singhapura' remained virtually uninhabited for over four hundred years, notwithstanding its favourable location. Other ports on the Straits of Malacca were well able to provide the facilities needed by merchants and seamen, and the re-emergence of Singapore had to wait until the conflict of Dutch and English interests led to its chance selection by Thomas Stamford Raffles as a suitable site for settlement.

The arrival of Europeans in the Straits of Malacca resulted in some disruption of the pattern of Southeast Asian trade. Largely due to bitter religious antagonism, Muslim merchants preferred or were forced to deflect their activities from Roman Catholic Portuguese Malacca to alternative ports in the area, a fact that led to the gradual decline
of Malacca as an emporium. This decline continued when Malacca came under Dutch administration, no longer for religious reasons but rather because of the determination of the Dutch to exclude European rivals from the lucrative commerce of the region. They sought to do this by focussing trade on Java, and as part of this policy, Malacca came to be used primarily as a strategic base for controlling the Straits, rather than as a trading post. Despite the movement of trade away from Malacca, the natural advantages of Singapore were insufficiently compelling to lead to the establishment of a new entrepôt on the island and it seems clear that, but for an accident of history involving the rivalry of distant powers, no settlement of importance would have developed there. The accident was basically one of timing. During the Napoleonic wars, Malacca had been one of several Dutch possessions to pass into the hands of the British under the terms of an instruction issued by the exiled Dutch Stadtholder William V, in 1795. The British, who planned to develop the recently established settlement on Penang island into a naval base to control the Straits, and who regarded Malacca as an expensive liability, ordered the demolition of the fortress and the evacuation of its inhabitants to Penang. Due to the intervention of Raffles, the plan to abandon Malacca was not carried into effect and, although the fortress had been destroyed, it seems possible that Malacca would have recovered much of its former importance as an entrepôt. Partly because of the unsuitability of Penang, and partly due to the shifting fortunes of war, the British decided not to proceed with their plan for the development of a naval base on that
island; and Malacca, under peace-time conditions and freed from Dutch imposed restrictive trade practices, might have been expected to recover a substantial share of the area's trade. If in 1818 it had been clear to everyone that Malacca was to remain under British control, there would have existed little incentive for the founding of modern Singapore. But in that year, Malacca was returned to Dutch control and Raffles, who feared the re-establishment of a Dutch monopoly of the trade of the archipelago, set about convincing Lord Hastings, the Governor-General in Bengal, of the need to safeguard the route to China by concluding a treaty with the Sultan of Acheh at the northern entrance to the Straits, and by establishing a settlement to the south of the Malay peninsula. Several possible locations were considered and some visited, but for one reason or another they were discarded until "either by accident or design," Raffles arrived at the island of Singapore. There was thus a considerable element of chance in the selection of a site for the future settlement.

If strategic considerations concerning the protection of the China trade ranked highest in the minds of the Governor-General of Bengal and his advisers, there is no doubt that a quite uncomplicated desire for profit accounted for the almost instant success of the new venture. No sooner had word of the settlement reached Malacca than a migration began. The demand in Singapore was chiefly for food, which could not be supplied locally due to the absence of a settled agricultural population; and it appears that a considerable number of enterprising Malacca citizens set out to take advantage of the situation,
their boats laden with supplies. To achieve their purpose, they had to overcome two problems: the furious opposition of the Dutch who immediately recognised Singapore as a threat to their interests, and who therefore sought to prevent any goods leaving for that destination; and the very real hazards posed by the pirates operating along the coasts of the peninsula, and particularly in the vicinity of the Kukup Strait. Despite the difficulties, an increasing number of Malaccan residents succeeded in reaching the island, and these were followed by immigrants from many other parts of the peninsula and archipelago.

Immediately prior to the establishment of the settlement, the population of Singapore is said to have consisted of about one hundred Malays who together with a few families of Orang Laut (Proto-Malays; literally: People of the Sea, or Sea gypsies) gained their livelihood from the sea. In addition, a small number of Chinese were engaged in the cultivation of pepper and gambier (a vegetable dye used in tanning). It appears likely that a community of Orang Laut had existed on the shores of the island for a considerable period—perhaps since the time of ancient Temasek—for there are numerous accounts of acts of piracy in the adjacent waters. The Malays led by their chief, the Temenggong of Johore, had arrived there in 1811, and there does not appear to be any information available concerning the date of arrival of the handful of Chinese. The subsequent growth of population, mainly by immigration, was phenomenal. According to Raffles, within four months, there were more than 5,000 people there, and by August 1820, he estimated the population to be between 10,000 and 12,000.
figures have been claimed to be exaggerated, and T. Braddell, writing in 1861, asserted that the total population of Singapore in 1821 was 5,874 of which 4,724 were Malays from various parts of the archipelago, and the remainder Chinese.\textsuperscript{17} When the first census was taken in 1824, the population numbered 10,683; and by 1830 the figure stood at 16,634.\textsuperscript{18} Of this latter figure, 6,555 were Chinese, 7,640 Malays, 1,913 Indians, and 526 "other races."\textsuperscript{19} With regard to the Malays, it should be noted that this heading included not only immigrants from the Peninsula but also those from all parts of the Archipelago, although most notably from Sumatra, Java, Bali and Sulawesi. In the following ten years, the population more than doubled, the Chinese now clearly being in the majority with 17,704, followed by the Malays with 13,200, the Indians numbering 3,375 and "other races" accounting for 1,110 of the total population of 35,389.\textsuperscript{20}

Although numerous censuses were taken in the early years of Singapore, none of the original reports prior to that of the census of 1871 has survived, and figures from secondary sources reveal inconsistencies. Table I indicates the growth of the population of Singapore in the years 1871 to 1921.

By the turn of the century, a fairly stable pattern in the ethnic composition of the population had begun to emerge; for some 72.2 per cent (or 164,041) were Chinese, 15.8 per cent (or 35,988) were "Malays," and 7.8 per cent (or 17,047) were Indians.\textsuperscript{21} In the following twenty years, the percentage composition of the population changed little; for of the 425,912 persons enumerated in 1921, 317,491 (74.5
Table I

POPULATION INCREASE IN SINGAPORE, 1871-1921

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Percentage Increase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>97,111</td>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>139,208</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>178,253</td>
<td>28.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>220,344</td>
<td>23.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>311,985</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>425,912</td>
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</tbody>
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per cent) were Chinese, Malays (including Javanese, Bugis and other immigrants from the Archipelago) numbered 58,530 (or 11.4 per cent), and Indians, who numbered 32,456, accounted for 7.6 per cent of the total. Although the size of the population continued to increase rapidly after 1921, the proportion of the total occupied by each of the major ethnic groups did not radically change.

The facts, so far as they can be established, concerning the peopling of Singapore are of more than passing interest, for when government came to be increasingly involved in the provision of social services, including education, policy was frequently influenced by the assumption that the Malays had been the original inhabitants and that their position should, in some way, be preserved or protected. Whatever possible merit this view may have held for the rest of 'British Malaya,' it was clearly irrelevant in the case of Singapore, where the growth of population up to the outbreak of the Second World War was due
principally to the continuous inflow of non-Malay immigrants. The original inhabitants had been "few in number, and contributed relatively little to this growth."24

The unsophisticated early census figures and percentages tend in the case of Singapore to conceal the exceptionally heterogeneous and fragmented nature of the population. The heading 'Chinese' would have included a significant number of Malacca Babas25 who migrated to the settlement soon after its establishment. Having had lengthy experience of European and Asian trading practices, and in some cases having trading contacts, wealth and a knowledge of English, several of these Baba acquired positions of influence and power in the commercial community.26 Less fortunate, in the main, were the China-born Chinese, most of whom arrived with little more than their individual skills, and the common hope of being able to earn sufficient to support their dependants, and to return eventually to China. Through a combination of industry, ability and luck, some of these succeeded in gaining considerable wealth and social status; but the overwhelming majority remained poverty-stricken, a quality they shared with most immigrants of the other major ethnic groups.27 Within this common bond of destitution, however, there were many divisive factors of which perhaps the most important was that of language. Although Chinese immigrants came mainly from the southeastern provinces of Kwangtung and Fukien, and all enjoyed a common heritage of cultural values, they spoke a variety of dialects which tended to fragment the community, the fragmentation being reinforced by clan and village-of-origin loyalties.28 The largest single dialect
group was that of the Hokkiens from Amoy and its hinterland in southern Fukien, followed by the Hakkas or Khehs of northern Kwangtung. In addition there were substantial numbers of Cantonese from southern Kwangtung, Teochews from the Swatow area of eastern Kwangtung, Hailams from Hainan island, Kwongsais from central Kwangsi, Hokchius from the Foochow region of Fukien and the Hokchias from coastal mid-Fukien. Of the Indian immigrants, although the majority arrived from south India and were Tamil-speakers, there were in addition substantial numbers of Malayalis, Punjabis and Bengalis. As well as linguistic differences, Indian immigrants were further divided along religious lines, the majority being Hindus, the second largest group being Muslims, followed by relatively small numbers of Christians, Sikhs, and Parsees (Zoroastrians). Although Indian Muslims shared their faith with Malays, they appear generally to have wished to retain a number of Indianised aspects of Islam, most of them adhering to the Hanafi sect, while the Malays generally belonged to the doctrinally more orthodox Shafi'i sect.

The reason for the rapid and sustained growth of population by immigration seem to have arisen from a combination of factors. Although emigration from China was subject to a government ban prior to 1860, it appears that the ban was only strictly enforced in the case of females. Owing to the increase of population which far outstripped the rate at which new land had been brought under cultivation in China during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the heavy burden of taxation, there existed positive reasons for Chinese to seek their livelihood
abroad. No doubt disturbed conditions which persisted for much of the nineteenth century in China, but particularly the carnage associated with the Taiping Rebellion (1850-64), created an atmosphere of panic and fear that would have been sufficient to overcome the obligations of filial devotion implicit in ancestor worship that served as a disincentive to migration in more settled times. These factors, coupled with the relative proximity of Malaya, the glowing accounts of the riches of the country and of the opportunities for those who were enterprising, and the blandishments of recruiting agents would have been enough to generate the growing stream of hopeful migrants.

The business opportunities of the new settlement would have been self-evident to Chinese merchants, and petty traders, but far more of the earliest Chinese immigrants were agriculturists and artisans who sought their livelihood on the clove, nutmeg or sugar estates, by the cultivation of pepper and gambier, or by vegetable gardening. The clove, nutmeg and sugar estates owned by Europeans or Chinese were early failures, and the gambier and pepper plantations rapidly exhausted the soil and depleted much of the forest cover of the island. Farmers and labourers either moved to the mainland in search of virgin soil, transferred to market gardening, or drifted into new occupations in the rapidly growing settlement. In the meantime, since by far the largest number of immigrants came from China, not surprisingly Chinese were to be found in every urban occupation other than those reserved exclusively for Europeans. Because of the effective prohibition of female emigration prior to 1860, and the poverty of the overwhelming
majority of male migrants who could not afford the passage-money for their families, and the fact that in any case they did not intend to settle in Singapore, the Chinese community was predominantly male throughout the nineteenth century. In 1860, there were 14,407 males per thousand females, but in the following years, with the relaxation of the ban in China, and cheaper travel facilities, the proportion of female immigrants increased so that by 1901, the figures were: 3,871 males per thousand females, and the imbalance had virtually disappeared by 1957.

Indian immigration into Singapore, in the early years of its existence, was little more than a trickle. In addition to a small number of merchants, some of whom were already wealthy, labourers began to arrive seeking employment in the harbour work force and on the ill-fated sugar and nutmeg estates. Up to 1860, Singapore was used as a convict settlement by the Indian government, and the convicts, from virtually all parts of India under British rule, being too poor to return to their homes remained to seek work as free labourers on the expiry of their sentences. In view of the long association of Indians with the East India Company, it was natural to find a preponderance of English-speaking Indians, mostly from the Bengal and Madras presidencies, occupying clerical positions in the government administration and in the large trading concerns. As the demand for a variety of services increased, more Indians arrived. Early arrivals included South Indian Chettiar and Muslim Tamil traders, financiers, money-changers, small shopkeepers and boatmen. These were followed by Sindhi, Gujerati and
Sikh cloth merchants; and port and harbour developments, the construction of roads and later that of the railway led to the arrival of Tamil, Telugu and Malayali workers. Tamils from Ceylon found employment particularly in the administration and maintenance work connected with the railway from the early years of the present century, and Punjabis—Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus—were in demand as railway police. Like their Chinese counterparts, Indians regarded their stay in Singapore as a means to earn sufficient to make regular remittances to their relatives in India, and as an enforced exile to be ended as soon as they had saved enough to return to their native land. The result was that, like the Chinese, the Indian population was for a long time transitory, and predominantly male. But because India was nearer and deck-passage fares cheaper, more Indians succeeded in returning to India, either for a visit or permanently, and in time, Indians in increasing numbers arranged for their wives and children to travel out to join them. The practice of both Chinese and Indian immigrants of sending regular remittances to their relatives and, in the case of those who were fortunate enough to amass sufficient wealth, of ultimately returning to their homelands with their fortunes, was a source of grievance to the administration which regretted the drain from the country of potential investment capital. Significantly, no similar objection appears to have been voiced in respect of Europeans who followed the same practice.

Very little is known about the movement of Malays to Singapore. Records of Javanese indentured labourers arriving in Singapore are available from the 1890's on, but since most of these would have been
destined for estate work on the Malay peninsula, the records are of little help to this study. No restriction was placed upon Malay immigration, regardless of their place of origin, and perhaps because of the shorter distances involved and the relative ease of travel, complete families arrived and hence the Malay community did not exhibit the early imbalance of sexes that characterised the other two major ethnic groups. Until the 1930's, it appeared to be much the most settled of the three communities, a point that is illustrated by the fact that in 1931, 73.4 per cent of the Malay community had been born in Singapore or elsewhere in 'British Malaya,' compared with 36 per cent of the Chinese and only 18 per cent of the Indians. Although a larger proportion of the Malay community than of the other two major ethnic groups resided in rural parts of the island, it is important to note that a majority of the Malays lived within the urban area. In 1921, of the total Malay community (including Javanese, Banjarese, Bugis and other immigrants from the archipelago) of 58,520 no fewer than 34,604 or 59.1 per cent were listed as part of the urban population. By 1947, the Malay component of the population had increased to 115,735 of which 72,901 or 63.1 per cent were listed as residing within the Municipality of Singapore. The point here is that, unlike Malays living elsewhere in British Malaya, the majority of the Malays of Singapore island have long been urban dwellers. Similarly, by 1931, more Singapore Malays were engaged in such modern, city-based occupations as those associated with transport and communications than in the traditional pursuits of agriculture and fishing.
In order to reveal the social implications of the foregoing brief catalogue of characteristics of the three major immigrant groups it is relevant to consider the degree to which Singapore conforms to the model of a 'plural society' as defined by J. S. Furnivall. In Furnivall's words, such a society consisted of a "medley of peoples" which

mix but do not combine. . . . Each group holds by its own religion, its own culture and language, its own ideas and ways. As individuals they meet, but only in the market-place, in buying and selling. There is a plural society, with different sections of the community living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit. Even in the economic sphere there is a division of labour along racial lines . . . There is, as it were, a caste system, but without the religious basis that incorporates caste in social life in India.52

Singapore's population certainly became a 'medley of peoples,' and Raffles' instructions for the segregation of ethnic groups tended to persist and be reinforced by the desire of the newly landed immigrant to live in association with others of his own kind. The diversity of languages, customs and religions seems to testify to the existence of a plural society in Singapore. And yet the model does not entirely describe the society, and may, in some respects, be misleading. Furnivall's plural society suggests one in which each constituent group retains its traditional "ideas and ways," more or less insulated from those of other groups. But this overlooks the impact of an important factor common to each ethno-linguistic group: that of urbanisation. For the most part, the immigrants came from traditional, rural societies, and they imported with them their sophisticated cultural systems which included not only
language, religion and attire, but also less tangible but very real customary values. Languages and religions appear to have been susceptible to change at a relatively slow rate, but in the exotic, urban setting of the new settlement, values underwent a rapid metamorphosis. The clearest expression of this change was to be found in the social order which emerged to replace traditional social structures. In Confucian China, ideally the scholar-officials enjoyed the highest prestige, to be followed in descending order by the farmers, artisans and merchants. In reality, the acquisition of wealth provided merchants with a degree of social mobility which, at least since the Sung dynasty (960-1275), enabled the more successful of them to displace farmers from second place in the traditional hierarchy, farmers in practice being relegated to the lowest social status. In the intensely commercial environment of Singapore, merchants came to wield the greatest power and influence, and hence to enjoy the highest prestige among the Chinese. The gentry-literati of China who, according to Joseph Levenson, achieved their greatest stature as essentially amateur administrators during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), did not exist in Singapore, although it has been argued that their rôle in the Chinese hierarchy was, to some extent, filled by British government officials. Farmers, struggling for a scant survival in rural Singapore, were of peripheral importance in the scale of prestige, and the status of artisans, street-vendors, and manual labourers was measured in terms of material possessions. There thus emerged two essentially economic classes within the Chinese community—merchants and workers—with money as the single indicator of success.
A somewhat analagous change occurred in the scale of values of the immigrant Indian community. Within the Hindu majority of Indian migrants, caste associations were popular in the early years, but these tended to fall into disuse. Although caste or jati loyalties continued to play a significant rôle—particularly in connection with the rites de passages—the pressures of secular urban life coupled with new educational facilities offered opportunities for individual (as opposed to group) social mobility which Indians seized without hesitation. This resulted in class differentiation along economic lines which in turn made possible the recognition of interests held in common with others of the same economic class but of different ethno-linguistic origins. The superimposition of these 'horizontal' economic divisions tended to blur the 'vertical' divisions between the communities, and the existence of a lingua franca in the form of Pasar Melayu, a debased version of Malay, further modified the over-simple structure suggested by Furnivall's plural society.

At the time of the founding of Singapore, the Malays alone of the three principal ethnic communities had the framework of a traditional social organisation. Their local leader, the Dato Temenggong of Johore, had been willing to permit the British to establish a settlement on the island, but Raffles considered that in order to secure for the Company an indefeasible claim, it was necessary to have the agreement ratified by the Sultan of Johore within whose domain the island lay. There were, at the time, two claimants to the office of Sultan, both sons of the former ruler. Away from the capital at the time of
his father's death, the elder son had returned to find that his brother had been persuaded to accept the throne, and that the Dutch had recognised and entered into agreements with the de facto ruler. Raffles seized the opportunity to invite the elder son to Singapore to be "installed" as Sultan of Johore, and thereafter obtained his signature to the agreement for the establishment of 'factories' on the island.\(^{59}\) Although it seems likely that the elder son, Hussein, held the better claim to the throne, the fact that he had been installed by Raffles, that his position depended solely upon the power of the East India Company, and that he had not been in possession of the royal regalia at the time of his installation, meant that few Malays recognised him as Sultan.\(^{60}\) The British, in their subsequent treatment of the Temenggong and Sultan undermined the prestige of both in the eyes of the Malays, who were left in no doubt that power now lay in the hands of secular, British administrators.\(^{61}\) Furthermore, Malays in Singapore came increasingly to live within the orbit of urban life. Certainly many continued to live in small villages in rural or coastal areas, their houses built in the customary manner and resting on stilts, but others sought urban employment, and found it convenient or unavoidable to live near their work. The limited opportunities for agriculture existing on the island deprived Malays of one of their traditional pursuits; and although the highly industrious activities of other immigrants tended to exclude Malays from alternative occupations resulting in a high proportion of their community becoming economically deprived, others succeeded in gaining a livelihood in non-traditional occupations. The general pattern
of occupations among the Malay community and the extent of their involvement in non-customary employment is indicated by the following table compiled from the 1931 census report (figures for Chinese and Indians have been included for comparative purposes):

Table II

PATTERN OF EMPLOYMENT AMONG CHINESE, INDIANS AND MALAYS IN 1931

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th>Malays and Immigrant Malaysians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture &amp; Fishing</td>
<td>21,470</td>
<td>1,814</td>
<td>7,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation, Supply &amp; work in material substances &amp; electricity supply</td>
<td>36,707</td>
<td>2,912</td>
<td>2,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, Quarrying &amp; treatment of Mine &amp; quarry products</td>
<td>1,921</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport &amp; Communications</td>
<td>30,922</td>
<td>5,971</td>
<td>7,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce &amp; Finance</td>
<td>47,820</td>
<td>6,558</td>
<td>1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration &amp; Defence</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>1,372</td>
<td>582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Occupations</td>
<td>4,965</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Service</td>
<td>25,080</td>
<td>3,137</td>
<td>1,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other &amp; Indeterminate, including Clerks, Warehousemen, Retired or not gainfully employed</td>
<td>250,089*</td>
<td>29,236</td>
<td>46,473</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes 57,744 listed separately as 'No gainful occupation.'


Although it is evident that Malays fared less well, proportionately, than other communities in several types of employment, particularly
those associated with 'Commerce and Finance,' it remains a fact that substantial numbers of them gained employment in each of the major types of occupation in the island, and hence assertions of occupational specialisation along ethnic lines cannot be accepted without considerable qualification. Except in the field of Public Administration and Defence, by 1931 (and for decades before), the Chinese predominated in each of the occupational categories, and it becomes apparent that Furnivall's model of a plural society in which there is "a division of labour along racial lines," useful as it may be for 'Malayan' conditions as a whole, does not adequately describe social conditions in Singapore.

Turning to the question of the constitutional position of the island, it is relevant to note that for most of the period of British rule, Singapore was administered as part of a larger entity. Under its first Resident, Colonel Farquhar, the settlement was subject to the general supervision of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bencoolen. Following the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, which defined the spheres of influence of the two European powers, Bencoolen passed out of the control of the British, and Singapore came under the administration of the Presidency of Bengal. In the same year, the Sultan and Temenggong entered into a new treaty with the British under which the entire island of Singapore, together with the immediate off-shore islands, were ceded in perpetuity to the East India Company. In 1826, a joint administration for the settlements of Penang, Malacca and Singapore was established as a fourth Presidency of India, with government headquarters located at Penang. The policy of freedom from taxation on trade, introduced by Raffles in
respect of Singapore and later extended to the other settlements, and the failure of land and agriculture to yield an adequate revenue, resulted in a somewhat anomalous situation in which the settlements, whilst prospering, represented a constant drain on the resources of the government of India.\textsuperscript{63} As a result, strict economy, frequently bordering on parsimony, became a major determinant of policy. In 1830, the Presidency was abolished and the settlements were brought under the control of the Bengal presidency, to be administered by a Resident situated initially at Penang, with Assistant-Residents in Malacca and Singapore. Later, in 1832, owing to the outstanding commercial success of Singapore, the administrative headquarters were moved to that island. For reasons connected with the functioning of the Judiciary, the Resident became known as the Governor, and the Assistant-Residents in Penang and Malacca were accorded the designation of Resident Councillors; but the reality of power lay in India. Following the abolition in 1833 of the East India Company's monopoly of the China trade, official interest in the Settlements seems to have been limited to the question of reducing the cost of administration.\textsuperscript{64} This was reflected in the reduction of the form and function of government to the minimum necessary for the maintenance of law and order, and the collection of excise revenue, licences and property taxes. Even in the matter of law and order, the administration was willing largely to surrender responsibility to the immigrant community, a fact that is revealed by the enormous power and influence wielded by the secret societies from the middle of the nineteenth century on. Until 1867, there were virtually no Chinese-speaking European officials employed in Singapore.\textsuperscript{65}
In 1867, after a period of agitation by the Singapore mercantile community, both Chinese and European, the administration was transferred from the India Office to the Colonial Office, and the Settlements became a Crown Colony with an executive council consisting of senior officials, and a legislative council made up of officials and 'Unofficials' appointed by the Governor. Although the Legislative Council meetings were open to the public and the proceedings freely reported in the press, the official members, required to support government policy, could always outvote the unofficial members. In practice, however, the Governor was instructed to defer to the views of the Officials whenever their opposition to a proposed measure was unanimous. This constitutional arrangement continued, with minor amendments, until the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941.

During the earlier part of the nineteenth century, the merchants of the Straits Settlements had developed extensive connections with the states on the western seaboard of the Malay peninsula, where the extraction of tin had gained considerable importance. From the 1870's on, these largely economic contacts had been much strengthened and extended by the establishment of political ties in the form of Residents appointed to advise Malay rulers on all matters other than those connected with religion and custom. In 1896, the states of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang united to form the Federated Malay States with a central, co-ordinating secretariat, and in 1909, under the terms of an agreement with Siam, suzerainty over the states of Trengganu, Kelantan, Kedah and Perlis was transferred to Great Britain.
These states, together with Johore, came to be known collectively as the Unfederated Malay States and, subject to the ultimate control of the Colonial Office in London, authority over all the Malay states was vested for practical purposes in the High Commissioner who was at the same time Governor of the Straits Settlements. In addition, other senior officials of the Straits Settlements administration performed analogous duties in the government of the Federated Malay States, and thus there was created a situation in which, in the interests of administrative efficiency, policies tended towards uniformity.66

This brief outline of the constitutional position of Singapore has touched on two factors which, in different ways and at different times, significantly affected the formulation of educational policy in the island. The first—the need for extreme economy—reinforced the laissez-faire philosophy of government which argued that education should be left to the care of enterprising individuals or private organisations assisted from time to time with grants from revenue, a view that prevailed for much of the nineteenth century; and the second—the concern of the administration for British Malaya as a whole, rather than for the special needs of Singapore—resulted in preoccupation with the supposed needs of Malays in a rural setting, and an inadequate provision of facilities for a cosmopolitan, urban society. Shortly after the founding of the settlement, Raffles outlined plans and created a fund for the establishment of an ambitious educational institution which was to include facilities for the study of Chinese, Siamese, Malay and other local languages as well as Western subjects, and it seems clear
that the most compelling reason for the failure of his venture was that it did not accord with the prevailing opinion of the times. Those whose unstinting support was necessary for the Institution to succeed simply were not convinced that revenue should be used for the purposes enumerated by Raffles. John Crawfurd, who became Resident upon the departure of Raffles from Singapore in 1823, noted some three years later that:

The sum . . . subscribed [for the founding of the Institution] has been long ago expended in Buildings which are still unfinished and a Printing Establishment, and on certain Salaries and as no new subscriptions have been obtained, there remains [sic] no funds available for the purpose of education which is of course at a stand.

After near three years experience of Singapore I do not hesitate to consider that the Singapore Institution for the present at least is upon far too extensive a scale, and that the pecuniary means . . . are inadequate to the objects contemplated in its formation. . . .

Having thus disposed of Raffles' somewhat visionary plans, Crawfurd went on to indicate what, in his view, should be the educational policy for the settlement. He argued:

I am clearly of opinion that [the promotion of education] will be most successfully pursued by confining our endeavours in the first place to such instruction as is purely elementary since the present inhabitants of Singapore are utter strangers to European Education. . . . The most numerous and important classes of the Inhabitants of our Eastern Settlements consist of Malays and Chinese. I would propose, therefore, that Instruction in the first instance should be confined to reading and writing in those languages, and perhaps also in Arabic; but above all to reading, writing and arithmetic in English. Instruction in the Asiatic Languages . . . will be chiefly beneficial as the means of reconciling the Natives to European education and insuring them to regular habits of subordination and study.

Despite these more modest aims, the Indian government showed little
enthusiasm for disbursing funds to support schools.

Government involvement in education in the island followed somewhat tardily the pattern set in Penang. In the latter settlement, a "Free School" was founded as a result of the efforts of the Chaplain of the Settlement, the Rev. R. S. Hutchings. Hutchings, with the assistance of a number of leading residents, formed a committee in 1816 to solicit support for the proposed school, the purposes of which combined moral and humanitarian considerations with the more practical aims of implanting "early habits of industry, order and good conduct" in the pupils who might also be instructed "in useful employment as carpenters, smiths, shoemakers, tailors, book-binders, etc." The public subscribed $5,960 to which the government added $1,500 together with the promise of a monthly subscription of $200, which they considered to be "most liberal patronage and support." The Singapore Free School, which came into existence in 1834 thanks to the endeavours of the Rev. F. J. Darrah, Chaplain of Singapore, received apparently even less official support, the Government merely allowing the temporary use of an old house for the school. And indeed, throughout the nineteenth century, education in Singapore depended almost entirely on the efforts of private individuals and groups of residents, and various missionary bodies, with minimal support from Government.

The lack of government interest in education resulted in the growth of a school system which tended to perpetuate ethno-linguistic differences and indeed to add to the complex composition of society by creating a new group which, increasingly detached from its cultural
heritage, gained competence in a new language in order to meet the demands of the merchant community for English-speaking clerks. But linguistic competence in English, although of great assistance in the search for employment, was a poor substitute for the emotional and psychological satisfactions afforded by development within a familiar cultural milieu. Those who operated the English schools of the day either did not perceive their function to be that of imparting the full riches of English culture, or were prevented from doing so by the dictates of economic necessity, which removed the majority of their pupils from their care as soon as they were able to read and write a little English. The absence of a clearly defined government policy thus permitted the emergence of an English-speaking group which, generally favoured in a material sense, was deprived culturally and ill-at-ease with the other communities of the island.

As early as 1829, the pattern of schools in Singapore had begun to appear, for by that year the unaided efforts of parents had produced a Cantonese school (at Kampong Glam) with twelve students, another (in Pekin Street) with eight boys; nearby a Hokkien school had twenty-two boys, and forty-eight boys were enrolled at an English-medium school. Fees were charged, ranging from $4 to $15 per month. Subsequently, numerous small schools appeared, many of which enjoyed no more than a brief existence, owing mainly to the problem of finance. In 1835, following a public meeting, a Singapore School Society was formed, and this took over and completed the building planned and commenced under the inspiration of Raffles. But the Institution which finally opened
was far removed from the ambitious conception of its founder, was frequently plagued by financial difficulties due largely to the lack of public interest, and operated merely as a school for the sons of a few well-to-do Chinese families. Yet it was out of these somewhat inauspicious circumstances that the extremely successful Raffles Institution evolved.

In 1852, the first major missionary involvement resulted in the establishment of St. Joseph's Institution, an English-medium school, in large premises on Bras Basah Road (where it still is). It was to be a "free" school, run by the Christian Brothers and although "every care" was to be taken "to form the Catholic children in the solid maxims of Christian piety," there was to be "no interference with the religious tenets of other creeds." The following year a small school for Chinese girls was founded by Sophia Cooke of the Society for the Promotion of Female Education in the East. Later the school was transferred to the management of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society. The Anglican Church opened the English-medium St. Andrew's School in 1862, and the American-based Methodist Episcopal Mission opened its first school in Singapore in 1886, with support from local Chinese.

Government involvement in education was restricted, at first, almost entirely to the encouragement of vernacular schools for Malays, with random small grants to English schools. Later, a system of grants-in-aid, based upon results achieved by the English schools, was introduced. As early as 1856, two Malay schools received official assistance, and after the transfer of the Straits Settlements to the administration
of the Colonial Office in 1867, more Malay schools were provided at government expense; and in 1878 a college for training Malay teachers was founded on the island. 78

The absence of an overall policy for education resulted in the proliferation of schools of many different types. In most Malay schools, lessons were restricted to learning verses from the Koran and reading and writing in the Jawi script. Yet in others, particularly those run by church missions, Western subjects were taught and although Malay was the medium of instruction, students learnt the use of the Roman script. Chinese vernacular education, which received virtually no government assistance throughout the nineteenth century, was generally provided through the efforts of groups of merchants, or occasionally as an act of philanthropy by individual wealthy members of the community. Instruction in these schools appears to have been along traditional lines: Confucian in content and taught through the medium of one or other of the Chinese dialects. This situation continued in Chinese vernacular schools until the 1920's, when the regional dialects gradually gave way to instruction in the 'National Language'—colloquial Mandarin (Kuo yu). Secondary education was limited to a few English schools in which small, post-primary divisions were organised.

The lack of guidance on the part of government which resulted in this complex mixture of private and state-aided schools, and different forms of education, indicates clearly that such basic questions as the purpose of education, the most suitable medium of instruction, and the kind of knowledge to be imparted were matters left to the
discretion of individual school managers or missionary bodies. In 1870, a Select Committee of the Legislative Council was formed "to inquire into the state of Education in the Colony," and the Report noted that there were:

a great number and variety of schools . . . , some purely educational, others combining charity with education. Many of these are under the control of the Roman Catholic Clergy, but all . . . having a system of their own, unchecked, as a rule, by any government supervision. By Government grants-in-aid, by voluntary subscriptions and other means, considerable sums of money have . . . been expended in the cause of education, but, owing to the absence of effective supervision and the want of well defined principles on which schools should be conducted, your committee is of opinion that the general result has been far from satisfactory.79

The Committee was much concerned with the results achieved by schools in which English was the language of instruction. The members regretted that such institutions had:

turned out many young men competent to earn a livelihood in Government and mercantile offices, but . . . the majority of these clerks know only how to read, write and speak English imperfectly, and . . . very few of them are in a position to make any material advance in life or to enjoy or improve their leisure by reading and adopting other means of self-culture. . . . Ideas they have none, and they are quite incapable of expressing themselves in writing, either grammatically or logically. In your committee's opinion this . . . is mainly due to the short time that boys are kept at school by their parents.80

The members of the Committee revealed, perhaps unwittingly, their own view of what the content of education should be, for on the subject of vernacular schools, they asserted that such institutions had done "little or no good. In almost every instance the sole object aimed at in such establishments is to teach the boys to read a few chapters of
the Koran, and no general knowledge is attempted to be communicated."81 This comment is also indicative of the preoccupation of administrators with the education of Malays, for the Report had little to say on the subject of Chinese vernacular education. Again, on the matter of Malay elementary education, the members asserted that, rather than religious knowledge, the students in vernacular schools should be taught "the rudiments of sound knowledge"; and, touching on a matter that was to become a subject of long-continued debate in the formulation of educational policy, they argued that "a boy, whether he be Chinese or Malay, can make no real progress in education until he is well grounded in his own language."82 The Report concluded that education in the Colony was in "a backward state."

Arising from the suggestions contained in the 1870 Report, an Inspector of Schools was appointed whose duties were to inspect and report on schools, and to make recommendations regarding government spending on education. This appointment represented the origin of the Education Department, a European-officered bureaucracy which developed to administer the complex system of grants-in-aid by means of which the government exercised its growing control of education in the Colony.83 The form this control took was to provide free vernacular education for Malays, with heavy emphasis upon handicrafts; and to support English-medium instruction, generally that provided by missionary bodies, in order to meet the demand for English-speaking clerks. In 1894, the Inspector of Schools reported that the purpose of English schools was "to supply candidates for nearly the whole of the subordinate
appointments under Government in the Colony and Native States and for clerical and other appointments in mercantile houses. . . ." By the turn of the century, educational facilities in Singapore, as in the other settlements of the Colony, provided free elementary schooling for Malays, and an assortment of private schools, some of which received government assistance and were subject to official inspection, at which students were required, generally, to pay fees. That education was far from universal in the Colony as a whole is revealed by the fact that, in 1900, of the 45,755 boys between the ages of five and fifteen, only 20,784 attended schools of any kind, and of these, 6,155 attended English schools. Female education was confined almost wholly to European and Eurasian girls. The Director of Public Instruction considered, in 1902, that it was "very creditable to the intelligence of the Chinese of the Colony that so many of them wish their children to acquire an English education, and are willing to pay fees for their doing so." In Singapore, a total of 4,186 boys and 938 girls were enrolled at schools receiving any form of government assistance, and it was asserted that "a considerable number" of small Chinese schools existed where "the Chinese character" was taught.

In 1903, owing to a recurrence of its earlier financial difficulties, the management of Raffles Institution passed into the hands of the Government, thereby becoming the first of a new category of schools administered directly by the Education Department. In the same year, and for the same reasons, Raffles Girls' School also became a "Government" school.
The larger mission-operated schools, as well as Raffles Institution and the Raffles Girls' School, provided classes for secondary education, and attendance was encouraged from 1885 on by the provision of government scholarships, the most valuable of which came to be known as Queen's Scholarships. Two of these were offered annually, and they enabled the successful candidates, drawn from English schools, to attend British universities for periods up to five years. This narrowly elitist approach to higher education meant in practice that all those desiring to continue their studies beyond the level attained by local schools were forced to do so overseas, at their own expense unless they happened to be one of the successful competitors. The effect of the Queen's Scholarships upon the school curriculum came under public criticism as early as 1902, when it was noted that, for reasons of prestige, schools tended to concentrate on cramming for the competitive examination to the detriment of good teaching; and in the face of mounting criticism from the teaching profession, the scholarships were discontinued in 1912. Because of this, by the time of the outbreak of war in Europe, there was a complete absence of local facilities for advanced training, other than the King Edward VII Medical School, which had been opened in 1905. In 1913, the Director of Education noted bluntly that there were:

no scholarships for the purpose of enabling pupils to pass to places of higher education. There are no University Colleges in the Colony. The only provision for Technical Education at present existing in the Colony consists of evening classes in the Young Men's Christian Association Building in Singapore. These classes have been instituted only during the current year.
As the centenary of the founding of Singapore approached, educational facilities in the island might be characterised as complex, in the sense that there was no single guiding policy. Schools had evolved largely as the result of private initiative, and as such they reflected a broad spectrum of educational philosophies. Government support, at first quite minimal, came to be applied increasingly to the provision of free elementary education of a specific kind for the Malays, and to the encouragement of instruction through the medium of English for a minority drawn principally from the other ethnic groups. Higher education was available only to those who could afford to travel abroad, with admission to this elite being further restricted to those who achieved success in English-medium schools. The majority of the school-age population received no formal education; and such schools as existed tended to make permanent the fragmentation of society along ethnolinguistic lines.
Chapter II

EDUCATIONAL POLICY PRIOR TO THE PACIFIC WAR

The system of education in Singapore during the years between the end of the European war of 1914 to 1918 and the outbreak of war in the Pacific in 1941, displayed a fundamental inequality of treatment and opportunity which resulted from the absence of a single, clearly enunciated, guiding policy. The most notable features of the system were its failure to provide any education whatsoever for more than half of the school-age population, and the failure of its administrators to find a solution to the twin problems of what the content of education should be, and in which language or languages instruction should be given. Furthermore, Singapore's constitutional situation as one unit of a group of ill-assorted settlements, linked for certain administrative purposes to the Federated Malay States, hampered the evolution of a school system designed to serve the needs of its essentially urban, cosmopolitan population. Owing to the authoritarian character of the colonial government there was an absence of effective channels of communication between rulers and ruled; and because of the lack of a vociferous nationalist movement, colonial administrators seldom were forced to think in terms of ultimate political objectives towards which educational policy should be directed. Schools, having been allowed to develop their curricula along divergent lines, inevitably reflected the experience, values and ideals of those who taught. Chinese-medium schools, in which the majority of teachers had been recruited from
China, were oriented towards that country; English-medium schools focussed attention on England, Europe and the British Empire; and such Tamil-medium schools as were able to sustain an uncertain existence predictably looked towards India for their inspiration. The eventual emergence of an independent state with a national identity of its own was hardly a factor in educational planning. Where it is possible to discern the existence of a government policy (as opposed to a series of ad hoc arrangements, presented in the guise of a plan), it would appear that decisions were taken at the whim of individual officials rather than as the result of careful investigation, and largely were determined by preconceptions concerning the needs of the ethno-linguistically diverse groups of which the population was composed. The application of such ill-founded plans, coupled with recurrent under-financing of education, effectively excluded a majority of the young people from facilities which the inhabitants of the island as a whole were required to support, tended to deny to Malays the means of adapting to urban life, encouraged the detachment of Tamil-speakers from their literary heritage, and continued to promote the evolution of a culturally alienated English-speaking group amongst the predominantly Chinese population. Since the decision-making process was divided between local administrators and officials of the Imperial Government in London, with authority deriving in practice from the British Parliament, it is evident that the lack of an effective system of education was due to the failure of the Colonial Office to create a clear sense of purpose and hence give emphatic direction to educational policy. To illustrate
this, it is necessary to describe briefly the machinery by which matters affecting colonial education were dealt with, and then to consider the views of those most directly involved.\(^1\)

Prior to 1918, no special machinery existed in the Colonial Office for consideration of educational problems. With the gradual erosion of the *laissez-faire* attitude towards education, questions of policy came to be decided by senior officials whose duty it was to advise the Secretary of State on matters relating to those colonies of which they had particular knowledge. Thus little, if any, educational expertise found its way into the decision-making process at this level.\(^2\)

During the five years following the end of the war in Europe, there was a growing awareness of the need to ensure that the aims of mission operated schools should not conflict with those of Government schools in the African colonies; and out of a series of contacts between the International Missionary Council and senior officials of the Colonial Office including the Under-Secretary of State, W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore, and the veteran administrator Lord Lugard, there evolved, in 1923, an Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical Africa.\(^3\)

The purpose of this Committee was to study educational developments, issue guidelines, and collect and disseminate information for the benefit of all the British African territories.\(^4\) As such, it must be considered to have been a conscious attempt on the part of the Imperial Government to adjust to the changing needs and conditions in the Empire. The Committee consisted of educationists drawn from Great Britain as well as from the Colonial Civil Service and missionary societies, with
representatives of the Colonial Office, and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State was *ex officio* chairman. In 1929 the functions of the Committee were extended to include all British colonies and protectorates, at which time its membership was increased, and its name changed to the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies.

Because of its early preoccupation with Africa, education officials in other British territories were inclined to be suspicious of the advice and guidelines originating with the Committee, and this was particularly true of Britain's colonies in Asia. Some insight into the effectiveness of the Committee may be gained from the following comment of Arthur Mayhew, former Joint-Secretary, written in 1938:

> The Committee has not obtruded its advice, and it has studied local conditions as far as possible. It has also conferred with Directors of Education home on leave. It has often found that conclusions reached by the Committee are the same as conclusions reached as a result of local experience and experiment.

> The advice tendered to the Secretary of State is passed on to the colonies for consideration with due reference to local conditions. In those dependencies where there is a large measure of self-government, and where the Legislative Council consists mainly or entirely of elected members, the advice may be, and sometimes is, disregarded. In the more autocratically governed dependencies the advice is usually interpreted in the nature of instructions. But even in such areas the governor's personal attitude counts for much. It is possible for him to interpret local conditions as to make the tendered advice impossible.

The constantly renewed contacts of the Committee with senior colonial officials on leave in England, and the compilation of annual and other reports from the various overseas Departments of Education, created an impressive body of information from which an Imperial education policy began gradually to emerge. But the labyrinth of bureaucracy which
separated policy from performance served to muffle the dictates of a distant and, perhaps, no longer entirely self-assured Emperor.

If decisions intended to translate ideal into fact became blurred on their way to the colonies, this was not so in the case of the rationale for the continued existence of the colonial relationship. Views expressed in London were readily received, echoed and amplified at the local level, where they provided the philosophical framework for educational developments. The work of Arthur Mayhew, whose opinion was highly valued and frequently deferred to in the Colonial Office during the 1930's, reveals the underlying conviction that the justification for British rule continued to be found in its ability to promote material and spiritual progress. Thus he argued:

It is . . . not the products of 'western civilisation,' which are often little more than the scum on the surface, that we want to communicate. It is the solid rock on which what is permanent and valuable in our western life is founded that we wish to select as the foundations of a new life in less fortunate lands.7

And again:

. . . refusing to mistake difference in stages of development for differences in racial ability, we are bound as educationists to have in view an ultimate good, a common civilisation, for the world. . . .8

Mayhew saw education as "an instrument for ensuring continuity and growth" which, however, could not be imposed on an unwilling community. Secretaries of State would not wish to adopt too definite a policy, he insisted, and they would be satisfied "with a few assumptions and a statement of general principles." They would not be surprised if those
principles were "adapted with the utmost elasticity to local conditions." Mayhew noted that there existed no single document defining the official attitude to the "subject races," and that the task of the British was

so to develop the lands and races committed to our charge as to benefit the world as a whole, including, of course, ourselves, and also the races that inhabit those lands. This formula would probably commend itself to the English electorate, if colonial affairs were ever an election issue. The conception . . . is implicit in many of the [Imperial Government's] pronouncements and may be regarded as determining its attitude . . . to all its dependencies. He recognised that local education officers would welcome a more precise definition of the aims of colonial education, and posed the question: "Are we to educate our pupils for self-government?" and replied:

The answer to this will be yes. But what kind of self-government? . . . the general tenor of the reply would probably be: 'self-government is, of course, our ultimate aim, but it would be useless to look too far ahead.'

And, on a closely related topic:

The secondary schoolmaster or college lecturer would like . . . to know for what kinds of administration work he is training his pupils. Are they to occupy posts of the highest responsibility and gradually replace white men in these posts as trained and competent candidates become available? The crudity of the question might provoke and would certainly justify a very cautious reply.

Despite their crudity, it was the failure of the Imperial Government to answer emphatically just such questions that resulted in many of the ambiguities in the school system of the Straits Settlements. Mayhew admitted, however, that education departments that waited for guidance
from London would be likely to be disappointed; and he noted, with apparent approval, that in practice departments did not wait, but made their own decisions with results that were "sometimes . . . difficult to adjust to the political or economic tendencies" of the colonies.13 This mixture of Imperial idealism and indecision encouraged local officials to develop education in Malaya along socially divisive lines.

The System of Schools

It has been noted that, towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the first years of the present century, the Government of the Straits Settlements had become involved increasingly in the provision of educational facilities: first through the control which was a necessary condition for the payment of grants-in-aid; and later through the direct administration of 'Government' schools. Although the exigencies of the war in Europe dictated a suspension of progress in the provision of state-controlled educational institutions,14 little advantage was taken of that period of enforced inactivity to reconsider the educational needs of the community. It is true that, in 1916, two new posts were created within the Department of Education, the purpose being the improvement of the standard of instruction given; but the first, that of Assistant Director in charge of Malay vernacular education, merely confirmed the existing emphasis placed upon primary instruction at the village level for rural Malays, whilst the second, that of Chief Inspector, was concerned in practice almost entirely with the operation of English-medium schools. The member of the Malay Civil Service appointed to the former position, Richard O. Winstedt, had been
selected for his "knowledge of the Malay language and the Malay mind," and the Governor, Sir Arthur Young, expressed the hope that "much good" might be derived from the appointment. Certainly Winstedt seemed to be well qualified for the position, for already he had achieved wide recognition as a Malay scholar. In the year of his appointment he was sent to Java and the Philippines to gain first-hand knowledge of vernacular and "industrial" education in Dutch and American colonial territories, and it is significant that in his report of the tour he drew attention to one of the major flaws in the system of education provided by the British for Malays. Referring to those students who sought to pursue their studies beyond the primary level he noted that:

most of our Malays go from a Malay school . . . to English schools. . . . And a boy who has passed Standard V in his Malay school has to be put in the lowest standard in the English school because he is utterly ignorant of English; though probably his knowledge of arithmetic and geography would fit him for a higher standard. This is a great handicap for Malay boys. Moreover cramming a small boy with Malay at one school, then desisting and cramming him with English at another is wrong in principle. . . . A better plan perhaps would be to have classes in Malay for Malay boys attached to some of the English schools.

Yet despite his awareness of the disadvantage to Malays who were forced, under the existing system, to delay the completion of their secondary education until they were several years older than their more fortunate contemporaries drawn from the other ethnic groups, Winstedt permitted the old system to persist and indeed, throughout the period of his attachment to the Department of Education first as Assistant Director, then as Acting Director and ultimately as Director, he became the system's most intransigent supporter. Basing his policy for Malay
education on the not unreasonable assumption that the best language of instruction is the students' mother tongue, he failed to perceive that, in fairness to the Malays, the same principle must be applied to both the other major ethnic groups. To insist on Malays alone receiving primary instruction in Malay whilst at the same time permitting the other communities the opportunity of educating their children in English—the de facto language of administration and commerce in Singapore—must result in Malays being placed at a considerable disadvantage in the competition for employment. Moreover, the limitation of occupational opportunity arising from this policy of linguistic differentiation was reinforced by the nature of the Malay school curriculum, in which great emphasis was placed upon "vocational instruction," a term which meant in practice such subjects as gardening and basket-weaving.

For a brief spell, perhaps only from the war-time hiatus in educational progress until 1920 or 1921—when the decline in world prices of rubber and tin led to a policy of retrenchment, and new demands came to be made upon the revenue of the Colony in connection with Imperial defence requirements—there existed an opportunity to change the school system fundamentally. But rather than come to grips with such basic problems as those concerned with ultimate objectives, the content of education, and the language of instruction, the Government chose to revise and extend the system of grants-in-aid to selected private English schools, to expand and modify the provision of a free but specific type of education for Malays, and to continue to ignore Chinese and Tamil education. There was, however, one significant
attempt made to depart from existing policy at that time. In his budget speech of October 1918, the Governor announced that it was the aim of the Government "to afford facilities for the free education of all children, in English, up to the Fourth Standard," and in the Annual Report for 1918, the Director of Education indicated that the administration was well aware of the financial implications of this new policy. Referring to the reasons which had led to an increase of the Education Rate earlier that year, he mentioned that, in addition to the greater sums required for grants-in-aid, money would be needed for other purposes:

Free elementary education . . . has a prominent place in the programme. It is clear that as soon as the Government is in a position to offer free elementary English education . . . Aided Schools must be enabled to give the same privilege.

Indeed, the evidence suggests that Governor Young had some perception of the educational needs of the community, for he noted in a despatch to Lord Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies, that there was "an insistent demand in this Colony for improved and higher education," and he considered that the Education Department, which had been "marking time for years" should now be allowed to "move forward." But his term of office had nearly expired, and his successor held very different views on such matters. The policy of free elementary education, in English, was quietly shelved; and notwithstanding the increasing demand for English schooling, subsequent years saw a steady retreat from Young's declared aim. In the Legislative Council in 1923, in response to a question by Tan Cheng Lock, who pressed the Government
to state when it was intended to implement the policy announced by Young in 1918, the Acting Colonial Secretary insisted:

It is clear that when Sir Arthur Young made the statement referred to that he regarded universal free education in English as not the immediate but ultimate aim. English education must grow, but its growth must be gradual. Government is concerned today not with possible future ideals, but with practical measures. . . . Even if English education for all were an immediate aim, progress could not be more rapid as staffs cannot be found and trained in a few months.23

From this it is evident that the implications of the policy, which had been apparent to the Government in 1918, now were being used to rationalise the postponement of universal free elementary education, in English, to an unpredictable time in the future; and this effectively detached the ideal from any kind of practical influence upon the planning and administration of Public Instruction. The total reversal of Young's policy, however, was not made official until ten years later when the financial stringencies of the slump gave an added incentive to the Government to offer an unattractive—and hence inexpensive—alternative objective. The new policy was produced by the then Acting Colonial Secretary who stated that it was the aim of the Government "to make available for all British subjects of whatever races a free education in the Malay vernacular," and further that it was the "definite decision of Government to abide by that policy."24 The irrelevance of such a proposal to Singapore and the shabby opportunism that seems to have motivated it became apparent in a series of questions and answers in the Legislative Council. Lim Cheng Ean, nominated 'Unofficial' member, asked the Government to cite the uses, commercial or otherwise,
to which written Malay could be put in the Colony by English, Tamil, Eurasian, Malay and Chinese boys and girls; to which the Government blandly replied that Malay was the *lingua franca* of the country and was used "by all the races mentioned in their intercourse with one another."

Pressed by Lim to give the names of offices, firms, companies and government departments in the Colony where written Malay was used as a medium of communication, the Government declined "to institute an enquiry in order to provide the information asked for." Further questioning elicited the fact that no investigation had been made to determine the number of students likely to "avail themselves of the benefits" of the new policy, and indeed that no steps had been taken to enlarge the accommodation of existing Malay schools or to provide additional teaching staff. Thus it is clear that the Government did not anticipate any significant increase in the numbers of students anxious to gain a rustic, if free, Malay education, and that the motive for the new policy was the desire to curtail Government expenditure on education.

The new policy—which included an increase of school fees in Government and Aided English-medium schools as well as the denial of grants-in-aid to Chinese and Tamil schools not already receiving assistance—was rigidly maintained, despite mounting criticism; and later in 1933, the Governor, Sir Cecil Clementi, argued that in order to promote amity amongst the different groups of the population and "an affection for the land in which they live" a common language was essential, and hence it was Government policy to provide "free primary
education in the Malay language for all children whose parents are domiciled either in the Colony or in the Malay States.\textsuperscript{28} Clementi, who throughout the period of his governorship was much preoccupied with the constitutional arrangements for encouraging the entry of the Unfederated Malay States into a closer association with the rest of British Malaya,\textsuperscript{29} was prepared to subordinate the interests of Singapore to the interests of that larger political unit he had in mind. Uniformity of educational policy was, he argued, essential:

[The] underlying principles of educational policy must be everywhere the same. . . . It would . . . be intolerable that in one part of Malaya, say, in the Federation, the basic language should be Malay and that in another, say, in Singapore Island, it should be English. There must be uniformity in essentials. . . .\textsuperscript{30}

The reactions to this statement, both inside and outside the Legislature, leave little room for doubt that the weight of articulate opinion viewed the new policy as representing a total disregard of the interests of the vast majority of the people of the Settlements. The sober-voiced \textit{Straits Times} noted:

even among the most moderate elements in the Straits-born Chinese community a feeling of despair and a conviction their future in this Colony is to be that of a people accepted merely on sufferance. They believe quite sincerely that the policy of the present administration is definitely anti-Chinese. . . . His Excellency's statement of education policy will do nothing to restore [their] confidence. . . .\textsuperscript{31}

And during the debate which followed the Governor's statement to the Legislative Council, Lim Cheng Ean made an impassioned plea to the Governor to reverse the policy of free elementary education in Malay,
at the conclusion of which he said, "This is the last appeal I shall
make to you sir, for I do not propose to continue as a member of this
Council." He then gathered his papers and left the Council chamber. 32

The policy nevertheless continued to be applied. Early in 1934, the Straits Times returned to the subject, pointing out in an editorial
that:

at the present moment there are not a dozen non-Malay children in
the Colony who are being educated in that [Malay] language; non-
Malays firmly and unshakably refuse to educate their children in
that language; the children already know as much Malay as they will
ever need for ordinary intercourse with other races; and the only
language which they wish to speak and write is English. . . . The
Government has adopted a policy which is being boycotted by the
entire population to which it applies. Where Government refuses
to build new English schools . . . private schools spring up like
mushrooms, and the spread of the English language goes on unchecked
. . . It is very difficult to believe that the Director of Educa-
tion . . . has of his own accord . . . made the mistake of offer-
ing to the non-Malay citizens . . . educational facilities which
are not merely useless but actually repugnant to them. . . . The
only thing to do is to retreat from the untenable position. . . . 33

In the Legislative Council, Tan Cheng Lock argued that, whilst it was
desirable for all to have a knowledge of colloquial Malay, it was an
unnecessary waste of precious time for a Chinese or Indian boy to attend
a Malay school for three or four years to study literary Malay which
could be of little use to him in adult life. He insisted that the
Chinese should have the opportunity to receive their elementary educa-
tion "at the expense of the State in the language . . . which is . . .
the official, commercial and common written language of the country." 34

In replying for the Government the Colonial Secretary produced a rather
novel argument in favour of the policy. It was, he said, essential
that the medium of primary education should have no market value. What existed in the Colony was a "language of barter" which, having no market value, was "basic for inter-racial bargaining . . . and quite serviceable and adequate within the sphere of the three R's." The official language, English, was he asserted:

spoken increasingly in our main streets. It has not yet permeated the lesser streets, the lanes or the workshops. It still therefore possesses a rarity value and it has the reputation of being the avenue to 'white coated' [sic] employment. So long . . . as it is associated in the public mind with the idea of an Open Sesame to what I may call 'sweatless livelihood,' so long will it . . . be a criminal folly to make it the basic language for free primary education. To do so would be inevitably to breed disillusionment and discontent.35

The conclusion to this kind of reasoning would seem to imply that the Government was in favour of retaining the "rarity value" attached to English, with the inevitable result that it would continue to be regarded as the avenue to prestigious employment. Indeed, in winding up the debate, the Governor himself asserted that it was "the intention of Government to limit English education by requiring that it should be paid for. . . . We . . . see no reason why the general taxpayer should be burdened with the cost of educating the masses . . . in a language for which after their school days they have little or no use."36

The policy continued to be staunchly supported by Government spokesmen until the arrival of a new Governor and recovery from the worst effects of the slump afforded an opportunity for its decent interment. In October 1935, the new Governor, Sir Shenton Thomas,37 announced the restoration of grants-in-aid to schools without discrimination on
grounds of the medium of instruction. And the following year, with
the acceptance by Government of the principle that "uniformity of
policy as between the Straits Settlements and the Malay States in
purely educational matters is neither necessary nor desirable," the
first hesitant steps in the direction of a rational policy for a speci-
fically urban, cosmopolitan community were taken.

This account of Government policy regarding the provision of
free elementary education, and the language in which instruction was
to be given, affords an example of the subordination of Singapore's
interests to the perceived interests of 'British Malaya,' and illus-
trates the essential unresponsiveness of Government, at least until
1935, to the frequent and vociferous demands of those few who were in a
position to make their voices heard. In order to clarify the evolu-
tion of schools in Singapore during this period, it is necessary now to
refer to the method and extent of public funding of education.

Reduced to its essentials, funds were raised by an education
rate on all rateable property, supplemented by school fees and funds
allocated from the general revenue of the Colony. In 1909, an Educa-
tion Board had been established, the functions of which had been, inter
alia, to determine the amount of fees to be charged in Government
schools, to receive all such fees, to prepare and submit to the Govern-
ment the Annual Estimates for education, and to receive the proceeds of
the education rate. In 1918, a Bill had been introduced, the effect
of which was to increase the education rate to two per cent on property
in municipalities and to one per cent on property in rural areas, the
major reasons being to meet the cost of increased grants-in-aid to non-Government schools and the upkeep of the proposed free elementary English schools. The extent to which government educational policy could be put into practice naturally depended to a large degree upon the funds available. Appendix A provides details of government expenditure on education during the years 1918 to 1938 (the last pre-war year for which complete details are available), and indicates for each year educational expenditure as a percentage of total government spending. It will be noted that throughout the period, at no time did government expenditure on education, including funds allocated to the Public Works Department for the construction, maintenance or renovation of school buildings, exceed 7.7 per cent of total government expenditure for the year. In 1932, the year for which the 'high' of 7.7 per cent was recorded, comparable figures for other British colonial territories were Ceylon: nearly 11 per cent, Mauritius: over 10 per cent, and Barbados, 13 per cent.

The Annual Financial Statements from which the percentages in Appendix A have been calculated refer to the Straits Settlements as a whole, and as such tend to obscure the position in regard to Singapore. Examination of the detailed Reports on the Income and Expenditure of the Education Board reveals the fact that, for each year of the period up to 1938, almost the whole of the annual government contribution to the Board's funds was passed on in the form of transfer payments to the Malacca, Penang and Labuan Education Boards, and it becomes apparent that the Government and Aided schools in the island were maintained
almost wholly out of revenue from school fees and the Education Rate. For example, in the year 1936, the nett Government contribution to the Education Board was $391,747.38, while funds transferred to Penang, Malacca and Labuan from the Singapore Board account amounted to $324,757.67, leaving a Government contribution to the costs of education (exclusive of Public Works Department expenditure) of a mere $66,989.71. In the same year revenue derived from the Education Rate and school fees amounted to $597,772.26. Since the total sum spent by the Board of Education in Singapore was $682,573 it is clear that the island fared rather badly in the allocation of Government funds. It is relevant to mention that for much of the period arbitrary contributions to the Imperial Defence Fund placed a severe limitation upon the extent to which revenue could have been devoted to the social services. Under the provisions of Ordinance 64, the Colony was required to pay the total cost of maintaining the local garrison, or 20 per cent of the assessed revenue of the Colony, whichever was the less. In the early years of the century, the cost of maintaining the garrison had generally been well below the 20 per cent of revenue figure, but at the instigation of the Imperial General Staff in London, much of the cost of the new Naval Base was held to be concerned with the defence of the Island, and as such became a proper charge, so it was argued, upon the Colony's revenue. By 1927, the sum demanded amounted to $5,303,211 and when the Government used its official majority to force passage of the Supply Bill, the Unofficial members unanimously supported and signed a petition of protest. Significantly, in the same year, 1927, total Government
expenditure on education amounted to $1,724,928—4.4 per cent of total Government expenditure for the year, or less than one-third of the sum demanded as the Colony's contribution to Imperial Defence. In 1929, in a confidential despatch to the Colonial Secretary, the Governor drew attention to the considerable public dissatisfaction aroused by the enforced exactions, noting that the "representatives of local public opinion" argued that under the law as it then stood, the Colony was liable to contribute only to local defence, that to exact a contribution under the Ordinance for Imperial purposes was, in view of assurances given by Joseph Chamberlain at the time of the passage of the Ordinance, a breach of faith, and essentially unjust. Notwithstanding the outcry, heavy contributions to the cost of Imperial Defence continued to be made, in one form or another, to the detriment of urgently needed social services.

In addition to the cost of defence, other charges upon the revenue of the Colony included those on account of the public debt, contributions to a fund established to replace revenue derived from the shrinking sales of chandu (opium), as well as the recurring costs of maintaining the Colonial Civil and Clerical Services, the Judiciary, the Police, the Chinese Protectorate, and the Postal and Public Works Departments. What remained had to be allocated amongst a number of services, and in view of pressing needs in the fields of public health and housing, it is not surprising to find that education appeared rather far down in the order of priorities.

The way in which funds earmarked for education in Singapore
were disbursed underlines the principal features of a policy that was never clearly stated. In view of the frequently admitted obligation of the Government to provide free, primary instruction for Malays, it is relevant to note that in 1919, excluding the cost of buildings and the salaries of the Director, Assistant Director, the Inspectors of Schools and their clerical staffs, total expenditure on Malay education in Singapore came to $20,627. To this was added a proportion of the cost of maintaining the Malacca Training College ($21,569) and fees to "Artists and Authors preparing Malay texts" ($400). The average cost to the Government per Malay pupil was estimated on this basis to be in the region of $17.00. During the year, there were twenty-two Malay schools in the Island, with an average enrolment of 1,613. The following year, with the addition of staff trained in 'Basketry,' the sum spent on Malay education was increased to $30,677 out of the total educational expenditure in the Island of $741,532: thus some 4 per cent of the total was spent on Malay vernacular education. Apart from two Chinese schools, with a total enrolment of sixty-six, and one Tamil school with fifty-four pupils, which received token Government assistance, the entire cost of Chinese and Tamil vernacular education was borne by the respective communities. The following table compiled from the Annual Departmental Report for 1919 (pp. 262ff.) indicates the distribution of students in terms of the language of instruction, in all Singapore schools in receipt of government financial assistance:
Table III
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS IN GOVERNMENT AND AIDED SCHOOLS IN 1919

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of Schools</th>
<th>No. of Schools</th>
<th>Average Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. BOYS SCHOOLS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Aided</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay Government</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Aided</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. GIRLS SCHOOLS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Government</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Aided</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay Government</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay Aided</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Aided</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. MIXED SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Aided</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singapore Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,079</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average cost to the Government per pupil in attendance at English-medium schools was approximately $30, and from this it is clear that by far the largest part of the education budget for the Island was devoted to the support of English-medium instruction. Details of Singapore's educational revenue and expenditure for the years 1918 to 1938 are to be found in Appendix B.

The social implications of the Government's policy become apparent when the school system is examined more closely. Two aspects of Malay education serve to illustrate the manner in which a programme, adopted with rural Malaya in mind, acted to the detriment of urban
Malays. The first is the emphasis consistently placed upon manual arts and crafts which, accompanied by oft-repeated assertions regarding the 'dignity of labour,' suggest that in the official view Malays were a race apart in that collectively and individually they must necessarily have a special aptitude for handicrafts. Thus, following the publication in 1917 of Winstedt's report on his visit to Java and the Philippines, great efforts were made to inculcate the art of basket-making. In 1918, basketry had been started in three schools by trainee-teachers who had passed out of the Malacca Training College, and in his report for the following year, the Assistant Director claimed that:

The new young trained teacher ... has begun to live in a different intellectual plane from that of his immediate predecessor, and this must affect in time the work in the village schools.

This change is due not merely to new text-books but to the introduction ... of school gardening and manual training in the form of basketry.

When the Sultan Idris Training College was opened in 1922, 'Rural Science' and basketry were included in the curriculum, and a pass in one or the other was essential for a leaving certificate. As recently as 1938, it was possible for the then Director of Education to assert that:

The old fashioned teacher puffed up with a little learning and full of the old Oriental scholar's prejudice against manual labour was ashamed to dig; the new delights in handicrafts and in practical acquaintance with the rotation of crops, the selection of soils and seeds and the study of pests.

Whatever may be said in favour of this kind of curriculum for schools in the Malay States, it would be difficult to justify the rigid
insistence upon its application to schools in urban Singapore, where facilities for gardening were either severely limited or non-existent, and the demand for baskets hardly sufficient to merit the expenditure of so much time and effort. Yet each year an entry was made in the Board's Statement of Account in respect of the sale of baskets. In 1935, for example, after seventeen years of assiduous development, and the placing of a basketry teacher in practically every school of the Island, the proceeds of such sales amounted to the princely sum of $40.20. The following year the item was allowed to disappear, to be subsumed, no doubt, under the heading 'Miscellaneous Receipts.' This attempt to impose rural arts and crafts on schools in an urban setting might, perhaps, be dismissed as no more than a harmless foible on the part of the Director of Education, although it is tempting to sympathise with the views of the Malay representative in the Legislative Council, Mohamed Unus bin Abdullah who, referring to a statement by Winstedt, agreed that it was true that a Malay boy would find a "congenial means of livelihood" in fishing and in agricultural pursuits. "But how," he asked, is he to make an up-to-date fisherman when he is no longer at the sea-front, and how a better agriculturist than his father was when in Singapore no agricultural areas are in sight ...? The Malay boy is told 'you have been trained to remain at the bottom, and there you must always remain.' Why, I ask, waste so much public money to attain this end when without any vernacular school, and without any special effort, the Malay boy could himself accomplish this feat?

Perhaps of greater significance than course content for the Malay student was the Government's policy in respect of the medium of
instruction. Reduced to essentials the system provided free elementary education in Malay schools, and those students who passed Standard IV before the age of eleven were permitted to enter English schools as non-fee paying students, and then were placed in intensive English-language classes, where they were expected to complete the equivalent of four standards in two years. Secondary education was also provided free of charge to those Malay students who satisfied the requirements; and through a system of grants and scholarships, the possibility existed for a few of the 'brightest' students to gain a tertiary education either locally at Raffles College or the King Edward VII College of Medicine, or in Britain by means of the reinstated Queen's Scholarships. The reason for this policy lay in the desire to safeguard the socio-economic position of the Malay community which had been jeopardised by the massive immigration of Chinese and Indians into the Malay States during the previous hundred years. The British, under whose aegis much of the immigration had occurred, were conscious of an obligation to protect and preserve the Malays who were considered to be the true 'sons of the soil.' The rulers of the Malay States saw in education the means "to equip their subjects to hold their own against the educated Indian and the vigorous intellect and energy of the Chinese," and it had been in response to these considerations that the position of Assistant Director in charge of Malay vernacular education had been created in 1916. But in practice, the policy revealed two major defects: Malay students—even the brightest—found themselves at least two and generally more years behind students who had started their
school careers in English-medium elementary schools; and the concentra-
tion on language instruction inevitably was achieved at the expense of
attention to other subjects. There was thus a good basis for the oft-
repeated contention that the system operated to the detriment of Malay
students. Despite frequent pleas, Winstedt declined throughout the
1920's to permit the teaching of English in Malay schools. In 1930,
in response to a suggestion that the period spent in Malay vernacular
schools be reduced to two years and that spent in English schools be
increased to four years, Winstedt argued that two years would be insuf­
ficient for "vernacular education," and in any case,

whatever the feelings of Malays in Singapore may be, the feeling of
the Rulers of the . . . Malay States would be strongly opposed to
any cutting out or abbreviation of Malay vernacular education. It
would mean of course the denationalisation of the members of that
race.61

Thus a major factor in determining education policy for Singapore
Malays was the desire to avoid disturbing the Malay rulers. No similar
consideration need prevent the 'denationalisation' of the members of
other communities.

Unlike the Federated Malay States, where a proportion of the
Queen's and other senior scholarships were reserved for Malays only,
the Straits Settlements provided scholarships open to all students. In
the event, very few Malay students competed successfully for admission
to Raffles College or the King Edward VII College. According to the
annual *Raffles College Report*, in the academic year 1938 to 1939 only
thirty-two of the 211 students were Malay (p. 9), and in the same year,
the Annual Report of the King Edward VII College of Medicine indicated that of the 104 students in attendance, only fifteen were Malays (p. 1). There were no Malay women students in either institution. The significance of these figures becomes apparent when it is recalled that both the institutions were intended to serve British Malaya as a whole, and not just the predominantly Chinese population of the Straits Settlements. The normal route for Malays to achieve higher education was by way of the Sultan Idris Training College, which produced elementary teachers for Malay schools, or through the School of Agriculture at Serdang. Separate figures for Singapore are not available, but in 1938, 113 students from the Straits Settlements as a whole attended the Sultan Idris Training College, where a quota system was in operation, with admissions geared to the estimated need for teachers. There were twenty-five Malays in residence at the School of Agriculture, and these were drawn from all parts of British Malaya.

In contrast to the somewhat parsimonious treatment afforded Malay education, Government and Aided English schools virtually monopolised official attention as well as the available funds. Students who successfully completed elementary school could proceed—subject to their ability to pay the fees—to a secondary institution, where they were prepared for the Cambridge Senior School Certificate examination. A number of scholarships were provided which enabled successful candidates to proceed to an overseas university or, from 1928, to Raffles College in Singapore. Senior teaching appointments at these schools were held by European staff who received, in addition to travel expenses and
subsidised accommodation, a substantially higher rate of pay than their Asian colleagues, and a pension upon retirement.\textsuperscript{64} By 1938, there were fifteen Government English schools in the Island, with an enrolment of 6,099 (boys and girls), the cost per student after deduction of fees being $77.49. In the same year, there were eighteen Aided English schools, with an enrolment of 8,493, and the cost to Government per student in these schools was $52.42.\textsuperscript{65}

The dual structure of schools, which had come into existence as a result of the policy of approving and assisting, or operating, one group of institutions whilst ignoring the rest, persisted throughout the period, although some modification of the policy itself occurred. Private schools, individually somewhat susceptible to the hazards of the free-market system, collectively displayed a remarkable resilience, and clearly satisfied a public demand. Departmental records of these schools are notably incomplete, and the information provided is of a quite unsatisfactory nature, reference to such matters as accommodation, course content and standard of teaching usually being restricted to some rather disparaging comment. Typical was the Report for 1932 which noted in respect of private English schools that overcrowding was common, that "a cheap and meagre staff [was] generally employed," and that "the pupils at such schools [were] usually overaged or dull or both."\textsuperscript{66} There emerges from these sources the faded sepia picture of a group of institutions often only barely complying with the law, and from consideration of which officialdom hastily turned, with a thinly disguised sigh of relief. Yet despite obvious disapprobation, certain
facts can be elicited from these official records. Under the terms of
the Registration of Schools Ordinance of 1920, as amended in 1926, all
schools, supervisors of schools, committees of management, and teachers,
had to be registered. For the purpose of the Ordinance, 'schools' were
defined as "places where fifteen or more persons are habitually taught
in one or more classes, except where the teaching is of a purely
religious character," and registration could be refused to any school
considered to be "unsanitary or . . . likely to be used for the purposes
of propaganda detrimental to the interests of the pupils or as a meeting
place of an unlawful society."67 The number of schools which fell out-
side the terms of the Ordinance is nowhere made apparent.68

The statistics concerning registered (but unassisted) schools
are of little help. Certainly, the impression conveyed is one in which
the quality of instruction and standard of accommodation varied very
widely. It can be established that in 1932, there were fifty-five
registered private English-medium schools in Singapore and that, of
these, eleven were "connected with religious bodies" (unspecified),
three were "afternoon Continuation schools," four were Night Schools,
two "catered exclusively for European children," three were for Tamil
children and two served the locally employed labour force at the Naval
Base. Details of the remaining thirty schools were not provided. The
approximate enrolment of these fifty-five schools was 7,500 and there
were 270 teachers, which gives an average of just under twenty-eight
students per teacher. Some indication of the position occupied by
these schools in relation to the total picture of English-medium
instruction during 1932 is provided by comparison with the 'average enrolment' figure of 13,438 pupils in twenty-three Government and Aided English schools. 69

Somewhat more information is available concerning Chinese-medium schools. Under the Registration of Schools Ordinance, Chinese schools were classified as either 'Modern' or 'Old Style,' the latter being defined as private schools run by a teacher who relied entirely upon school fees, and in which the medium of instruction was usually the regional dialect of the majority of his pupils rather than colloquial Mandarin. 70 'Modern' schools were grouped into 'Public,' Mission, Night and Private schools, and for the year 1932, there were 215 registered Chinese-medium schools of all types in Singapore and Labuan, with an average enrolment of 13,315 students and 698 registered teachers (approximately nineteen students per teacher). Ten of these schools, with 1,265 students, received a total of $9,432 in grants-in-aid, a per capita cost to Government of $7.46. 71 This compares unfavourably with an average per capita cost of $57.21 in respect of students in Government and Aided English schools during the same year. 72

The use made of public funds thus encouraged the emergence of well-equipped English-medium schools, with relatively well-paid and highly qualified teachers providing a western form of instruction geared to the English examination system, and directly related to the most desirable employment opportunities. The image created by these schools led to a demand for English education which exceeded the supply of places available, with the result that a large number of private
institutions came into existence, and in most of these, the facilities provided were sub-standard. Simultaneously, Malay students were locked into an irrelevant programme of primary instruction from which few were able to escape; and Chinese and Indian language schools continued to provide a form of education that was virtually unregulated by any local government agency.

Political Considerations

The legislation requiring all schools and their supervisors, committees of management and teachers to be registered represented a major departure from the former policy of ignoring schools in which the medium of instruction was neither English nor Malay. The circumstances leading to the introduction of the Ordinance provide an insight into the attitude of the administration towards Chinese education. In 1917, the then Director of Education summarised the position of Chinese schools in the following terms:

all Chinese Vernacular Education is in the hands of the various Chinese communities and is entirely independent of Government. The Education Department is not at present staffed with officers acquainted with the Chinese language, so that if there was supervision it could only . . . deal with such matters as sanitation, suitability of accommodation, equipment, physical exercises, etc. I have visited several schools in Singapore, but have not been impressed very favourably. Methods are very different from those in English schools. Discipline does not seem to be a very strong point. The pupils in many cases are taught military drill and are a familiar sight parading and marching in their smart little uniforms, but the spectator gets a shock when he recognises the 'goose step,' imported no doubt by instructors from China, whence indeed it is said that these schools are generally controlled.73

The comment concerning discipline is somewhat ambiguous, since it would
be reasonable to suppose that in such schools the behaviour of students would reveal a closer adherence to traditional Chinese values—including respect for teachers, and a prompt response to commands—than would be the case in the culturally alienating atmosphere of English schools. However, the most revealing part of the passage is the final aside which suggests no more than a dim awareness of the realities of a system of schools which had been seeded and nurtured in the shadow cast by the indifference of colonial rule. In the traditional view, the Chinese of the Nan Yang ("South Seas") continued to be subjects of the Emperor of China, and towards the end of the Ch'ing dynasty, the Chinese Government sought to exercise some control over these scattered communities. Following the Revolution of 1911, the Government in Peking attempted to continue and extend this policy. As part of this effort, two representatives of the Chinese Ministry of Education were sent to Singapore and Malaya in October 1917 to inspect Chinese schools, to stress the importance attached to education by the Chinese Government, and to encourage youthful Overseas Chinese to return to their 'homeland' to study at Chi Nan College. One result of this visit was the establishment of three new Chinese schools in the Island; and in the same year, 1917, the National Language Movement was launched to encourage the use of Kuo Yu (colloquial Mandarin) as the medium of instruction in all schools.

Two years later, on June 19th, 1919, inspired no doubt by the May Fourth Student Movement, a number of anti-Japanese riots broke out in Singapore. Groups of workers and teen-aged students toured the town in search of Japanese goods which were destroyed whenever they were
found, and shopkeepers were 'encouraged' to observe a boycott of such goods. Troops and police were called out, and the following day martial law was imposed and a curfew proclaimed. The Governor, anxious to establish the cause of the disturbances, called for a report from D. Beatty, the Protector of Chinese in the Straits Settlements. Beatty submitted a confidential memorandum in which he drew attention to the fact that Chinese schools were "nominally at any rate" controlled by the Board of Education in China through the Chinese Consul-General and the 'General Association for the Educational Affairs of China in British Territories in the South Seas,' a situation which was, he argued, "anomalous and derogatory to the powers of Government." Teachers had been given a free hand by the committees of management of the schools, he asserted, and although there was no reason to believe that the committees had been responsible for starting the boycott of Japanese goods, there was no doubt that Chinese teachers actively sympathised with it, or that a meeting had been held on school premises without the permission of the school manager. Beatty continued:

The local Chinese in many cases exercise no control over their schools and are afraid to interfere with their teachers . . . there is even a danger that [the teachers] may poison the minds of their scholars against the Government if it should suit their purposes at some future date.

Because of the shortage of staff competent to inspect and supervise the schools, Beatty proposed that all schools and their Boards of Management should be registered, and their teachers licensed, with the threat of withdrawal providing for the Government a powerful instrument of control.
In reporting on the riots to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Young discussed further the position of Chinese schools. They were, he said,

financed by local subscription and the local Committees of the subscribers administer the funds and engage the teachers. There is evidence to show that many of the teachers have taken an active part in preaching the political crusade—in some cases possibly with the approval, tacit or expressed, of their Management—in others without regard for their wishes. As soon as our depleted staff of Chinese-speaking officers is brought up to strength, Government must consider the necessity of exercising firm control over such institutions. . . . No educational departures should be tolerated in this British Colony which are not conducted on British lines or at least under close supervision by British authority.

Young retired shortly thereafter, but the new Governor, Sir Laurence Guillemard, hurried the proposed legislation forward and on May 31, 1920, a Bill was introduced the purpose of which clearly was to give the Government control over Chinese schools, although it provided in fact for the registration of all schools (with the exception of those already mentioned). In reporting on the object of the Ordinance, the Acting Attorney-General noted that the Government hitherto had exercised control only over Government and Aided schools, and that it was hoped that, as a result of the new powers to be exercised by the Department, the "efficiency" of all schools and teachers would be improved. It would also be possible, he continued, "to check the teaching of undesirable political doctrines" to students.

As political content was "the spirit and soul of Chinese education, the very reason for its existence," and as many Chinese believed that the purpose of the Ordinance was the destruction of Chinese
education, the widespread protests provoked by the Bill are understandable. According to Winstedt, then Acting Director of Education, the "real objects" of the Bill had been misunderstood, but that thanks to the efforts of "enlightened members of the Chinese community" public feeling had been "placated" and the Ordinance duly passed. In fact, the protests continued throughout much of 1921, due at least in part to the energetic efforts of the Chinese Government. Local Chinese forwarded petitions to the Colonial Office, and the Chinese Minister in London made representations to the Foreign Office. The Chinese Consul in Penang published in a local Chinese language daily newspaper, the Lat Pau, a telegram he had received from the Board of Foreign Affairs in Peking, containing instructions from the Board of Education, indicating certain minimum requirements (the National Language, Chinese History and Geography) in the curriculum of all Overseas Chinese schools. The Sin Kuo Min, a Singapore newspaper, published on April 7, 1921, a telegram from the Chinese Consul in Penang addressed to the Foreign Minister in Peking, urging the latter to open negotiations with the British Government in order "to save the situation," and Guillemard, writing to Winston Churchill (the new Colonial Secretary) indicated that in his view the message from the Chinese Government appearing in the Penang Lat Pau had been intended to convince local Chinese educational bodies that their policy was to be guided by the Chinese Government and not by the Government of the Colony; and that publication of the second notice had been calculated to encourage local Chinese to refuse to register under the terms of the new Ordinance.
Guillemard asked Churchill to bring pressure to bear on the Chinese Government "through the usual diplomatic channels" to prevent further interference.

A number of Chinese residents in each of the Settlements raised a memorial which was to be forwarded to Peking, and the Acting Secretary for Chinese Affairs asserted that those who had signed were "men of insignificant local standing. . . . The petitions attached to the memorial were not spontaneous . . . [but] obtained by strenuous canvassing in Chinese fashion." He went on to argue that hostility to the Ordinance was encouraged mainly by the Chinese teachers, who considered it threatened "Chinese nationality." He asserted that there was no intention to interfere with the study of Chinese language and literature, and that there would be no interference with text books which did not contain teachings prejudicial to the interests of the Colony and the British Empire. . . . The children in these schools are at the present time sedulously taught to interest themselves in Chinese politics, the local authorities being regarded as secondary to the Chinese Government. Evidence of complete indifference even active hostility to the local authorities on the part of the school teachers was one of the reasons which made their supervision an imperative necessity.

On May 27, 1921, Guillemard cabled the Colonial Office to report that the Chinese Consul-General in Singapore had asked him to postpone the date, provisionally set for June 2nd, upon which the Ordinance was to take effect. He indicated that he did not intend to change the date unless instructed to do so by London. Notices appeared in the local press warning school managers that action would be taken against those
who did not comply by the beginning of June, and despite continued pressure, particularly from the Chinese Government and the local Chinese Educational Association, the measure was introduced. After the Secretary of State's decision to confirm the legislation became known, it appears that there were some incidents in which teachers and school managers willing to co-operate with the Government were intimidated, as a result of which the Government decided to close down the Chinese Educational Association in accordance with Section 17 of the Societies Ordinance. The books and records of the Association were seized, and thereafter organised resistance to the Ordinance seems to have crumbled.

The registration of schools was carried out by the Education Department except in the case of Chinese schools, which had to be registered by the Chinese Protectorate, as the Education Department had no qualified staff for the purpose. By the end of the year, ninety-one Chinese schools had been registered, and a total of 254 teachers. By the end of 1922, the figures had increased to 115 Chinese schools and 430 Chinese teachers.

Apart from the opposition of the Chinese Government to the Bill, which can be explained adequately in terms of a perceived threat to Chinese influence in an area which for long had been a source of material strength to the supporters of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the furore aroused by the proposal indicates that local Chinese residents were far from happy. In the absence of any referendum or other means by which the population as a whole could be consulted, there is no quantitative
measure of the extent of the dissatisfaction. However, it does seem that local Chinese viewed the legislation as representing a distinct threat to Chinese culture and way of life, an impression that is strengthened in the light of the response of school boards of management to subsequent offers of Government financial assistance. The Ordinance failed to operate as effectively as had been hoped, for by 1923, Guillemand was forced to take a further step to combat what he considered the evil influence of the Kuo Min Tang in Chinese schools.

To tighten inspection and control, he created two new positions: an Assistant Director of Education for Chinese Schools in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States, and an Inspector of Chinese Schools for the Straits Settlements. In order to make these appointments palatable to those who did not show any enthusiasm for being directed or inspected, or as he put it himself, "to raise their educational standard and at the same time to provide greater facilities for the exercise of control," he introduced a system of grants-in-aid to Chinese schools. 96 There was no rush to take advantage of the new offer, even though many schools were in need of funds, for by 1932 only ten of the 215 registered Chinese schools had applied for and received grants. The reasons are not far to seek: to qualify for assistance the school must be prepared to accept regular inspection by the Department of Education, and the curriculum should be arranged as far as possible "to make it a useful preparation for an English education with special reference to arithmetic and geography." Furthermore, although teaching in the various regional dialects was to be encouraged, instruction in
Mandarin—the National Language of a re-born China—would not be considered to be grant earning.

The report of the committee appointed in 1932 to consider grants-in-aid provides a further insight into Government thinking about Chinese schools. In recommending that no new grants be extended to Chinese or Tamil schools, the committee (upon which there was no representative of the Chinese or Indian communities) admitted that it was not logical to propose different systems of grants for English and non-English schools, but nevertheless contended that there was "little or no obligation on the Government . . . to provide funds for Education other than Education in Malay and in English." During its hearings the Committee received evidence from A. M. Goodman, Secretary for Chinese Affairs of the Straits Settlements, to the effect that grants-in-aid originally had been extended to Chinese schools "in the hope that by this means . . . Government would be able to exercise some control over the teaching. . . ." Later in the hearing he made it plain that the interest of the Government was specifically political and not educational:

I must emphasise that inspection is done not with a view to improving the standard of education, it is done mainly to ensure that the school is not carrying on objectionable activities.

In 1936, grants-in-aid were restored to Chinese and Tamil schools, but in the case of the Chinese schools, all 'first grade' Primary and Junior Middle schools were required to show that they were giving instruction "with reasonable efficiency" in the Chinese language, English,
Arithmetic or Mathematics, History and Geography, and a school should not be deemed to teach English with reasonable efficiency unless instruction in that language was given for six periods of at least forty minutes per week in all classes above the second year of Primary school, and "unless the school employs for that purpose a teacher who holds the minimum qualification of a Junior Cambridge Certificate" or its equivalent. Inevitably such conditions must result in some dilution of traditional Chinese values and attitudes.

The fluctuations of Government policy towards Chinese education—which revealed first of all a lack of interest, then a desire for control through inspection and reward, later the suspension of grants as an economy measure, and the final resumption of grants with unacceptable conditions attached—tended to create in those pre-Pacific war days a climate of uncertainty and scepticism which goes far to explain the almost universal distrust displayed by the Chinese community towards the efforts of post-war administrations to restructure the school system in the light of newly perceived social and political ends. Increasingly it becomes apparent that the system of education evolved not so much as the result of a carefully planned policy but rather as a series of responses to changing conditions, the responses being determined by the nature of the colonial administration itself. In addition to the authoritarian hierarchy of officials, there existed in the Legislative Council a channel of communication through which specific interests could be represented, whilst at the same time effectively excluding the expression of any popular opinion that might be forming.
Unofficial members of the Legislature—"representatives" of the European, Chinese, Malay, Indian and Eurasian communities—were for the most part selected by the respective Chambers of Commerce, or appointed by the Governor in consultation with his immediate advisers, who chose successful business or professional men who were also socially acceptable. The business of the Council was conducted in English, and this imposed yet another essential qualification for membership. The result was that policies tended to preserve sectional interests rather than to serve society as a whole. The paternalism of officials, influenced by humanitarian considerations and a sense of obligation to protect and preserve the way of life of the 'indigenous' people, led to a policy which, as has been seen, failed to serve the best interests of the Malays. For the rest, Government policy was designed to satisfy the local demand for English-speaking clerks and junior administrative assistants. From this it followed that the Government was not interested in providing educational facilities for Chinese or Indian immigrants in their own language, and a change of attitude was forced upon it only when a positive threat was perceived. This is underscored not only by the sequence of official attitudes towards Chinese education, but also by the contrast provided by official indifference towards the Indian community, which was not considered to pose any threat. The majority of this community was of south-Indian origin, and parents who sought an education in their own tongue for their children were particularly poorly served by the Government. For much of the period, no Tamil schools in Singapore achieved even the dignity of registration,
to say nothing of assistance from the Government. By 1935, however, five Tamil schools with an enrolment of 156 pupils and twenty-six registered teachers were recorded. None of these schools received any assistance in the form of grants-in-aid. By 1938, Government expenditure on Tamil education in the Straits Settlements as a whole amounted to $22,421 or 0.5 per cent of total Government expenditure on education. In the same year, 72.4 per cent of the education budget was spent on English education (elementary and secondary), 19.1 per cent on Malay education, 4.2 per cent on Chinese education and 3.8 per cent on 'Vocational' education.

Higher and Technical Education

The nature of the colonial administration and the way in which policy decisions were made are further revealed by consideration of the Government's involvement in the field of higher education. Policy in this connection may be characterised broadly as tending to create and to perpetuate the existence of a small but influential, English-speaking westernised elite. It has been noted that, by the outbreak of the 1914 to 1918 war, the Queen's scholarships had been discontinued and, as a result, no financial assistance whatsoever was available to those who wished to pursue their studies beyond the English secondary school level. This meant that all who sought a university education must do so at their own expense, either at the University of Hong Kong, or at one of the British Universities. Policy concerning Chinese higher education had, at least, the merit of consistency: no help had been given at the Primary or Middle school levels, and none was offered to
those who wished to attend institutions in China.

In view of the apparent need for higher educational facilities, the Malayan Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, long involved in the management of local schools, decided to establish an Anglo-Chinese College in Singapore in which it was intended to train students for the external degree examinations of any "recognized British University." Other objectives included "the development and formation of the character of the students without distinction of race, nationality, sex and creed and . . . the maintenance of loyalty to the Government of His Majesty the King." It was intended that the College should include a Technical Department to provide instruction in Electrical, Mechanical, Mining and Civil Engineering, and Departments of Commerce, Agriculture and Arts, with general courses leading to the B.A. degree "as a preparation for teaching or any other profession, or for an official or business career." To raise the necessary funds, an Anglo-Chinese College Council was established, the members of which included a number of prominent Straits Chinese business-men. Plans for the College, first mooted in 1914, eventually reached the stage where it seemed advisable to inform and seek the approval of the colonial Government; and accordingly, in 1917, a deputation from the Methodist Mission called upon the Governor. Young's response was evasive: he promised to give the matter consideration, but qualified this by mentioning that "opposition must be expected in some quarters to entrusting higher education to a religious body." This first mention of the proposed Anglo-Chinese College had a dramatic effect, for it stimulated the Government to give
urgent consideration to the question of providing its own facilities for higher education. Seven weeks after the interview, the Colonial Secretary addressed a letter to the Superintendent, Singapore District of the Malaysia Mission in which he stated that it was

the intention of the Government . . . to inaugurate a system of higher education as soon as conditions admit.

That being so, the Government, whilst offering no objection to the Methodist Mission opening a College in Singapore cannot support such a project, and are unable to sanction the granting of Degrees by the proposed College.¹⁰⁷

But despite this obvious setback, in view of the very distant prospect of a Government college, and the immediacy of the need, the Methodist Mission decided to proceed with its proposals. By 1920, the sum of $400,000 had been subscribed,¹⁰⁸ and the promoters, now more than ever anxious to secure some measure of official approval, sent a representative to London, where he called first upon the President of the Board of Education, Lord Fisher, to whom he explained details of the scheme. Fisher is reported to have expressed his "utmost sympathy" with the proposal, and to have said that he could see no reason why there should be any difficulty in the establishment of the Anglo-Chinese College "unless there should be some question raised by the Colonial Office."¹⁰⁹

He provided the Mission's representative, Dr. J. F. Goucher, with a letter of introduction to the Colonial Office, where he was interviewed by Colonel L. S. Amery. According to Amery, Goucher assured him that the proposed Mission College was not intended to compete with the Government College, and that the Mission would be quite willing for its institution to affiliate with the Government College when the latter
was fully established. After this interview, Amery wrote to Goucher in the following terms:

We regard the proposal with interest and sympathy and feel sure that the educational advantages resulting therefrom will be of great benefit to Malaya as well as the Far East generally. We shall have to refer the matter officially to our Governor who may possibly have some conditions to suggest with regard to diplomas which may be given by the College and as to affiliation with Raffles College when established etc., but we have little doubt that any such conditions will not seriously interfere with the carrying out of your project.

It was just the kind of encouragement the Mission sought, and was received with jubilation and thanksgiving. More significantly, it establishes beyond any doubt the attitude of the Imperial Government towards the concept of higher education in the Colony being in the hands of a thoroughly reputable and experienced missionary organisation. But local officials had a very different view of the matter.

At the behest of the Colonial Office in London a meeting was arranged between the Rev. J. S. Nagle, Principal of the Methodist Anglo-Chinese School in Singapore and Principal-designate of the Mission's proposed College, and Dr. R. O. Winstedt, then Acting Director of Education, for the purpose of discussing a possible division of Faculties between the two Colleges. Winstedt, reporting on the meeting to Guillemard, claimed that Nagle opposed such a division, arguing that the Mission College should be permitted to follow its published prospectus and teach all subjects. "This means," wrote Winstedt,

that it will compete directly with Raffles College for students in all branches. This is a very serious matter considering how small
in numbers is the section of our community likely to require higher education. . . .114

Here Winstedt is offering an opinion unsubstantiated by any objective assessment of the actual or potential demand for higher education in Malaya. However, his real objections become clearer as his report proceeds:

The gentleman who is to be principal of the future college is at present local secretary to the mission in Malaya and Principal of the Anglo-Chinese School in Singapore. I have good reason to believe that modern history is taught in his school with a strong American bias. Every effort is made to enlist Chinese sympathy.115

It is evident that Winstedt feared the disruptive attitudes which he considered likely to be disseminated by the American missionaries. But to make quite sure that the Governor, and through him, the officials at the Colonial Office in London, would not be tempted to lend support to such a potentially subversive institution, Winstedt added:

Not only is it objectionable politically that an American College should be the highest educational institution in a British Colony in the Far East, but the standard of scholastic efficiency is likely to be exceedingly low, judged by our institutions. . . . I recommend that no further encouragement be extended to the project.116

This reflection on the probable level of "scholastic efficiency" is deceptive since it is not clear whether Winstedt was drawing a comparison between the North American College system and the more elitist universities of Great Britain, or whether he was making reference to the work of the Methodist Mission schools in the Colony as compared with that of the Government and other Aided English schools. In the
former case his comment would seem to be irrelevant, since the proposed Mission College was intended to prepare students for such local degrees as the Government might introduce, or for the external degrees of "recognized British Universities," hence its academic standards must necessarily be comparable with those of other institutions whose students competed for the same degrees. In the latter case, the comparison would appear to be misleading since, according to the published records, the results generally achieved by Mission schools in the Colony compared favourably with those of the Government schools, and were of course accomplished at much smaller cost per capita to Government.

What is beyond doubt is the fact that Winstedt perceived a threat to British prestige, and possibly to colonial authority itself, in the fact that the Mission was based in America. With the benefit of hindsight it seems inconceivable that Nagle knowingly could have fostered the establishment of a potentially disruptive institution—indeed, in 1928, he published his Ph.D. dissertation Educational Needs of the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, in which he was almost fulsome in his praise of the British colonial régime and even quite laudatory of Winstedt himself. Nevertheless, the threat must have seemed real, and as such it clearly affected the Government's educational policy.

Further evidence of the Government's attitude towards the staff of the Methodist Mission is to be found in the pages of The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, a secret Government journal produced monthly and of restricted circulation, which must have received the
close attention of senior officials. In October 1922, it noted:

The Chinese are profoundly interested in the situation in China. The varying fortunes of Sun Yat Sen have been followed with close attention. . . . Sun's adherents in Malaya are many and devoted. . . . In the meantime the doctrines being taught them in the schoolroom and the pulpit by the American missionaries and teachers . . . are not thought to be doing them much good from a British point of view.118

And again, from the same source:

The activities of Americans in Malaya, chiefly missionaries and teachers, are coming to be regarded with some suspicion. It is reported by reliable authorities that their teaching is so pro-American as to be practically anti-British. A belittlement of England, and a "boosting" of America is certainly a feature of the local cinema, and the doctrines taught in the various schools and churches are said to be on the same lines. . . .119

In the eyes of local officials, the Methodist missionaries thus stood condemned of practically subversive teaching and preaching, on the strength of nebulous evidence supported by reference to the flickering images on the silent silver screen.

In the meantime Guillemard, accepting Winstedt's assessment of the position, wrote to the Colonial Office strongly urging that no further encouragement be given the Mission's effort to establish a college. Even as a training school for teachers, he argued, the proposed institution was not "politically desirable" since the Mission schools were "not . . . altogether free from the charge of inculcating . . . a greater respect for the United States . . . than for the British Empire."120 Furthermore, through their Prospectus which was, he asserted, "misleading," the Mission had
obtained from the Chinese very big subscriptions which they would otherwise undoubtedly have preferred to give to Raffles College. . . . My advisers are unanimous in thinking it is not advisable to accord it direct support by a public pronouncement in its favour.121

In London, officials at the Colonial Office were sceptical of Guillemard's fears of the teaching of the American-based Mission, but were more impressed by his arguments concerning the competition for funds, and after some desultory internal discussion, finally agreed to concur with the Governor's wishes that further encouragement should not be extended to the scheme.122 In the absence of official approval, the enthusiasm of the proposal's supporters faltered, and to the bitter disappointment of Nagle and other members of the Methodist Mission, plans for the College ultimately had to be abandoned.

Towards the end of the 1914 to 1918 war, spurred to action by the threat of an American missionary controlled college, and by the criticism of representatives of the mercantile community,123 the Government proceeded with its own plans for higher education. In 1918, a committee under the chairmanship of W. G. Maxwell124 and including representatives of the three major communities—albeit heavily outnumbered by the European members—was appointed to consider and report upon a scheme to celebrate the centenary of Singapore. On August 1st, it reported that its members were unanimously of the opinion

that the most suitable memorial is a scheme which will provide for the advancement of the education of the Colony with a view of laying securely the foundations upon which a University may in course of time be established.125

Since the proposal was in accordance with the Government's intentions,
it was accepted; and in due course a further committee (this time of wholly European composition) was appointed to advise on the details of the scheme. Apart from specific proposals relating to the establishment of Raffles College, this second committee suggested some reorganisation of the existing English-medium schools, to enable them to act as feeders to the College. The implication of these recommendations, nowhere clearly stated, was that only those who emerged from English-medium schools would be able to take advantage of the facilities offered under the scheme. The committee members referred to the "urgent need" that existed for qualified teachers, and added that their plan was intended to afford facilities for "training in higher technical and scientific subjects . . . the growing number of young men and women in British Malaya who desire to become better fitted for the commercial and economic work of the community.".

Early in 1920, an appeal for an endowment fund for the proposed College was issued, in which it was announced that the Government had made available forty acres of land at a suitable location, and there was instituted a long-winded 'Empire Competition' intended to produce the best architectural design for the buildings, a process which effectively delayed the opening of the College for several years. Guillemard, having successfully countered the challenge posed by the Anglo-Chinese College, lost interest in the question of higher education, and for the remainder of his tenure of office was much too preoccupied by what he considered to be more pressing problems, particularly those arising from the policy of decentralisation.
In 1921, Winstedt was appointed Principal of Raffles College, a position he continued to hold after his appointment as Director of Education. The decision not to appoint a full-time Principal was indicative of the general attitude of the Government towards higher education, for under Winstedt's direction, the College languished for a seemingly interminable time before starting in 1928 to provide some limited facilities which were geared to the production of teachers. Certainly, after Raffles College commenced to operate, many parents who could afford to do so continued to send their sons overseas for a university education. In 1923, as a sop to sectional pressures and in defiance of the almost unanimous opinion of professional educators, the Queen's Scholarships were re-introduced, an arrangement which provided once again an undergraduate training at British Universities for two of the Colony's English-educated students.

With regard to technical education, apart from some evening classes run by such organisations as the Y.M.C.A., little was accomplished. A committee set up in 1925 to consider the feasibility of industrial and technical education in Singapore concluded that an "Engineering Branch" eventually might be established at Raffles College, but that "local circumstances" had not yet made this the most urgent need. The members recommended that English schools should include applied mathematics, drawing, and elementary science in the curriculum. They further recommended that any demand for intermediate technical education could be met by setting up further night classes, but they considered that it would be an "unjustifiable use of public money" to
start a Trade School in Singapore without waiting to see the result of the school that was about to be established at Kuala Lumpur. In the event, the Singapore Trade School did not materialise until 1930. In the 1928 Estimates, provision had been made for a first instalment of $35,000 for its construction and this prompted the Malay member of the Legislative Council to ask that students in Malay vernacular schools should be better prepared to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the school. In reply, Winstedt said:

I gather that the Hon. Member imagined that English would be necessary for candidates for the Trade School. The scheme . . . has not yet been definitely drawn up. . . . But . . . I have no intention of recommending to Government that English shall be required for the Trade School in Singapore.

When the Trade School finally opened, the medium of instruction, the textbooks, the Principal and Chief Instructor were all English; and as the Annual Departmental Report for 1932 noted: "No boy was admitted to the new first year course who had not completed Standard VI in an English school, it having been found that the higher up a boy had gone in an English school the better student he made at the Trade School." This of course acted as an effective bar to students from non-English schools who sought admission.

The foregoing consideration of some of the salient features of the system of education as it evolved in Singapore will have demonstrated the inappropriateness of referring to an 'educational policy.' Rather than a single plan, education in the Island can be better characterised as a series of programmes, one for each ethno-linguistic
group, another for the English-medium schools, and yet others for private schools and higher education. It is tempting to identify these separate programmes as part of an overall policy of 'divide and rule'; yet to do so would be to credit colonial officials with greater guile, or perhaps duplicity, than they appear to have had. At no point was such a policy enunciated, and the plans seem to have evolved in response to a series of challenges and to reflect the interests and prejudices of senior members of the Malayan Civil Service, as well as their perceptions of the needs of the different communities.

Personalities and the Decision-making Process

The question of where and by whom matters of educational policy were decided requires some consideration. According to colonial theory, the decisions of local government and the appointment of senior officials were subject to the approval or confirmation of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Statutes and Ordinances enacted in the Legislative Council might be 'disallowed' by the Home Government; but in practice, this power seems seldom to have been exercised. Certainly, so far as the Education Department was concerned, officials had little fear of intervention from the metropolitan authority. The system of education was thus very much a local concern, and as such was shaped largely by senior officials of the Straits Settlements Government.

So far as the Governors were concerned, interest in educational matters varied according to individual temperament and according to the strength of opinions held by the incumbent Director of Education. Sir Arthur Young, it has been noted, towards the end of his tenure of
office (1911-19), displayed some consciousness of the educational needs of the Colony. Under his aegis the policy of free elementary schooling, in English, was announced, and although it is clear that no serious attempt was made to plan for or implement the scheme, it did appear to be an objective that accorded with the wishes of a substantial part of the population. Proposals for the new Raffles College were given concrete form before he left Singapore.

Young's successor, Guillemard (1919-27), held views on education that were, by his own admission, "somewhat antediluvian," and he believed that the British had, in some respects, "gone too fast." Under his administration the scheme for the Anglo-Chinese College was discouraged out of existence, and the Raffles College project allowed to drift irresolutely towards a kind of culmination. The scheme for free education in English was quietly but firmly laid to rest and, preoccupied with his plans for decentralisation, Guillemard showed little inclination to become involved in such prosaic matters as the education system of the Colony.

Sir Hugh Clifford's term of office was, perhaps, too short (1927-29) to leave any lasting imprint, and the period of Sir Cecil Clementi's Governorship (1930-34) can only be regarded as an educational disaster. It was, in many ways, the logical conclusion of policies adopted during the previous decade heightened by the alleged necessity for extreme financial stringency. Under Sir Shenton Thomas (1934-42), a change of policies became possible with the recognition that the needs of the Colony were not necessarily identical with those of the
Malay States. It must be emphasised, however, that the basic arrangement of providing essentially different instruction for each of the ethno-linguistic groups, other than those entering the English-medium schools, was maintained.

The most important influence exercised upon the education system throughout the period under review was undoubtedly that of R. O. Winstedt. His appointment in 1916 as Assistant Director in charge of Malay vernacular education enabled him to implement policies to which he adhered inflexibly during his subsequent term of office as Director of Education (1923-31). His sympathy with and thinly concealed preference for the Malays naturally predisposed him to concentrate upon Malay education, to the detriment of the Chinese and Indian communities and, ultimately, to the considerable disadvantage of the urban Malays themselves. Following his appointment as Principal of the proposed Government College the scheme languished for so long under his personal direction that it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the objective of higher education in the Colony was not, in his opinion, a matter of much urgency. In his defence, however, it must be added that there appeared to be legitimate grounds for his doubts about the efficacy of university education in a colonial society. Such an institution, if it is to enjoy a degree of academic freedom, inevitably must draw attention to the contradiction between the continuance of colonial rule and the evolution of a free society. Winstedt had reason to be keenly aware of the increasing politicisation of student bodies in China as evidenced by the May Fourth Student Movement; and the seething discontent
that surrounded so many universities in India was common knowledge. To this was added the example of Rangoon where, no sooner had a new university been opened than the students went on strike, leading a procession to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, thereby setting an example to be followed by a later generation of youthful nationalists.  

Winstedt's educational background may help to explain his willingness to subscribe to the continuation of a 'plural' system of schools in the Settlements; it undoubtedly provides a clue to his bias in favour of the English university system as opposed to the American college model which he mistakenly supposed would be adopted by the Methodist Mission. His performances as an ex officio member of the Legislative Council in defence of policies of which he was so often the author, blended plausibility with irony and an intolerance of the views of others, always supported by the 'ultimate weapon' of the official majority.

By contrast, Winstedt's successor, F. J. Morten, played no part whatsoever in determining educational policy, either in the Straits Settlements or the Federated Malay States; and his function in the Legislative Council was confined to answering questions, supplying statistical information, and competently supporting policy which had been decided at a higher level. When the policy was reversed, he argued with equal competence in favour of the new directions. His rôle was essentially that of an administrator who knew nothing of educational theory or its practice in Malaya, a fact that is hardly surprising since, up to the time of his appointment as Director, he had displayed "not
the slightest interest in, or aptitude for dealing with educational
problems." The changing circumstances of the mid-1930's, including
the more enlightened governorship of Sir Shenton Thomas, seem to have
provided an opportunity for experimentation; but this was missed owing
to the presence of an educational nonentity as head of the Education
Department. Hence the reasons which led to the selection of such a
man for a position which was, in the eyes of Governor Clementi, analo-
gous to that of a cabinet Minister, are of more than passing interest.

As early as 1919, one of the members of the Committee appointed
to advise on the Raffles College scheme drew attention to the need for
a professional educator to hold the office of Director. He argued that
the existing system under which the control of education was entrusted
to men

whose previous experience has lain in other branches of administra-
tion is antiquated and inimical to progress. I would therefore
urge that, on the next vacancy in the office of Director of Educa-
tion, the post be given to a thoroughly competent expert in
Education of the type appointed in England as Director of Education
to counties and large towns. But the suggestion went unheeded. Towards the end of Winstedt's tenure
of office, however, the question of the appointment of a "professional
educationist" from outside the ranks of the Malayan Civil Service was
raised again on several occasions. On July 6, 1931, shortly after
Winstedt's departure to take up his new appointment as General Adviser
to the Sultan of Johore, Dr. Noel Clarke argued in the Legislative
Council that in view of the increasing complexity of education for the
cosmopolitan population of the Colony, it was essential to have as head
of the Department a professional educationist who would be fully conversant with the theory and practice of public instruction. He disposed of the argument that the Director must be entirely familiar with Malayan conditions, pointing out that the heads of the Public Works, Police and Medical Departments were all appointed from outside the Malayan Civil Service, and asserting that a competent man would soon learn enough about local conditions to enable him to adapt his knowledge and expertise to the solution of educational problems. He further argued that to have an administrator as head of the Department, reliant upon the advice of his subordinates, would result in timidity rather than boldness and conviction in the direction of educational policy. 142

In reply, the Governor argued that a professional educator from England would be "wholly unable" to offer any help in solving the problems of Chinese education in the Straits Settlements, or those of Malayan education in the Federated and Unfederated Malay States. He had not made any final decision, however, although he was, he said, searching the list of the Malayan Civil Service in order to find a "suitable successor" to Dr. Winstedt. 143

This reply reveals the fact that the Governor, who previously had been "quite prepared to consider and recommend the appointment of a professional Educationist" to succeed Winstedt, 144 had changed his mind; and it becomes clear from the correspondence between Clementi and the Colonial Office that the reason for this volte-face was an unwillingness on Clementi's part to risk a show-down with local
officials who were adamantly opposed to the appointment of an 'outsider' as head of the Department. Significantly, this opposition was led by none other than Winstedt himself. To understand the situation it is necessary to consider the arguments Clementi used against the appointment of a professional educationist, a suggestion strongly supported by officials at the Colonial Office in London. In a despatch to the Colonial Office of October 12, 1931 (Appendix C), after summarising the arguments already used—that no professional educationist could be an expert in all branches of education in three vernacular languages as well as in English, that an educationist was unlikely to be a trained administrator, that a competent man would be unwilling to leave the security of his existing post for the uncertainties of the Malayan one, and that it would take "some years" for an expert to understand local problems—Clementi makes the revealing comment that, if the topic came up again for discussion, although he would use the same arguments, he would not be mentioning

the decisive consideration which . . . renders the selection of a professional candidate impossible. . . . This consideration lies in the requirements of the new policy of decentralization in the Federated Malay States and in the need for a wider, but looser, co-ordination of administrative work on a Malayan basis. (Appendix C)

In explanation of this apparently irrelevant argument, Clementi asserts that, to avoid a "separatist movement" on the part of the Malay rulers, it was essential to appoint a "tactful member of the Malayan Civil Service" as Director of Education, since he would then be able to divert "fissiparous tendencies" into "harmless variations on points of
detail." In these circumstances, Clementi claimed to view "with distinct apprehension" the possibility of the appointment of a professional educationist who could not be familiar with Malayan political personalities or "constitutional idiosyncracies," a knowledge of which would be "so necessary during the transitional stages of development under the new policy" (Appendix C).

The total irrelevance of this argument can be demonstrated by the fact that Clementi proposed to appoint Morten, an able administrator who, nevertheless, had spent his entire period of service in the Straits Settlements, and was by his own admission completely ignorant of Malay court ceremonial and politics, having had no dealings whatsoever with the rulers of either the Federated or Unfederated Malay States. Towards the end of his despatch, the Governor reveals that he had consulted Winstedt in its preparation, and that the latter "entirely concurred" in what had been written (Appendix C). It is tempting to suppose that Winstedt had drafted the despatch himself, but in the light of present evidence this can be a matter for speculation only.

In London, officials of the Colonial Office were well aware of the weakness of the Governor's arguments in favour of appointing a member of the Malayan Civil Service as Director. Furthermore, they were conscious of the pressing need for the introduction of new ideas into the stagnant waters of Malay education, a need that was unlikely to be met by the appointment of Morten. Sir George Maxwell, a former Chief Secretary to the Federation, wrote to Arthur Mayhew that "Malaya
is doing very badly in the Education Department and wants a visit. For heaven's sake don't let them appoint a Civil Servant as D. of E." and this information had been passed on to the Colonial Office. The Colonial Office went through the motions of interviewing two possible candidates for the position, but both of these subsequently withdrew and ultimately, without advertising the vacancy or seeking suitable candidates by other means, the Governor's recommendation was accepted. On May 24, 1933, nineteen months after Clementi's original despatch, Morten's appointment was confirmed.

It is clear from the circumstances of Morten's appointment as Director, and the lengthy exchange of minutes and memoranda on the subject between Permanent Officials of the Colonial Office (Appendix D), that the educational needs of the Straits Settlements were made subservient to alleged pan-Malayan considerations and to the interests of the Malayan Civil Service. The weight of informed opinion was in favour of the appointment of a specialist who might be expected to bring new ideas to tackle the growing problems of education in a complex, urban environment. The Malayan Civil Service, on the other hand, complacent in its view of the educational system and unwilling to accept an outsider as head of this important department, opposed the suggestion, and the Governor sided with his officials. The elaborate ritual of submitting a recommendation to London, and the interminable exchange of courteously sedate minutes between officials of the Colonial Office serve to underline the fact that, unless 'Imperial interests' were involved, the Westminster Government generally was willing to defer to
the wishes of its "man on the spot," even when it was clear that by so doing, the needs of the people were being disregarded in favour of the interests of the Malayan Civil Service. The reasoned arguments concerning the merits and weaknesses of the Governor's recommendation proved to be no more than a futile academic exercise which served merely to delay the endorsement of a decision long since reached within the rigid confines of the mind of local officialdom.

There remains to be assessed the effectiveness of educational policy in terms of its relevance to the material wants of those being educated, its satisfaction of the requirements of the colonial power, and its social impact. During the period between the wars, the economy of Singapore continued to be closely integrated with that of the Peninsula, the Island serving as an entrepôt in the larger economic relationship between the industrialised metropolitan power and the colonial territory geared to the production of primary products. In this situation, there existed little incentive for the development of local industries, other than some light engineering works and facilities associated with the servicing of ships and railways. So long as this relationship continued, and Singapore remained mainly dependent on commerce, there is reason to accept the view of the 1925 Committee on Technical Education that such education would produce "a more competent Building Overseer but it will not increase the demand for Building Overseers." In practice, the English schools--Government, Aided and Private--turned out an ever-increasing number of young people with some
competence in English of whom many, but by no means all, found employment in mercantile offices, or as junior clerks in various levels of local government. Chinese, Indian and Malay schools produced students who largely were absorbed into the local work force or taken into one or other of the myriad of small businesses or shops. To this extent, the education available was related to the existing occupational opportunities.

So far as the colonial administration was concerned, although the various institutions were controlled, the system produced—by accident rather than design—a small, professional élite which might have been expected eventually to demand an increasing share of the control of the country, and which therefore represented a potential threat to the continuance of Imperial rule.

But the most significant aspect of the educational policy prior to the Pacific war was its social impact. By promoting different types of education for the various ethnic groups, and by providing no education at all for more than half of the school-age population, the Government institutionalised and hardened pre-existing linguistic and economic divisions. The creation of a new English-speaking, culturally alienated group able to monopolise the professions and most of the more prestigious government and mercantile positions sharpened the lines of potential conflict. The failure to provide a common educational experience, with shared values and language, and the clear neglect to encourage a sense of national identity, lead to the conclusion that educational policy in pre-Pacific war Singapore was socially
divisive, and tended to foster communal antagonism. It must be added that, in imposing a policy determined with British Malaya as a whole in mind, a policy which was clearly intended to protect the interests of rural Malays, the British lost the opportunity to introduce a system of education relevant to the needs of the overwhelmingly non-Malay, urban dwellers of Singapore.
Chapter III

THE IMPLICATIONS OF JAPANESE EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN SINGAPORE

From mid-February 1942 until August 1945, Singapore found itself under the administration of another imperial power. The type of government continued to be authoritarian, and the status of the island remained that of a colony in which the interests of the population must necessarily be subordinated to those of the metropolitan country. But because of the all-consuming nature of the war, the authority of the Government was now virtually absolute, being limited not at all by constitutional restraints, and only to a greatly diminished extent by humanitarian considerations. The seizure of Singapore had been carried out as part of an overall plan to break Western domination of Southeast Asia and to replace it with the domination of Japan, to be effected through the somewhat nebulous concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. In addition to political and economic goals, Japan was to provide spiritual leadership to other Asians in the construction of a New Order based upon the assumption that the Emperor of Japan was "the center of the universe and the origin of morality" and hence that Japan itself was "the manifestation of morality and the criterion of the world." More specifically, Providence had elected Japan as the champion of Asia with the sublime mission of liberating the "coloured races" and seeking the unification of the world. These broad objectives provided the philosophical framework within which policy for the
Southern Area—which included French Indo-China, Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies—was conceived. The immediate concern of the Japanese Government was to ensure an adequate supply of raw materials, particularly oil, for Japanese industry; but apart from the imperative of this need, Japanese officials zealously sought to disseminate the concept of Hakko Ichiu—the essential brotherhood of all men, to be achieved under the benevolent guidance of the Emperor of Japan.  

Education was recognised by the Japanese as a most powerful instrument to be used to achieve the major objective of "incorporating the Southern Region [into] the domain of Imperial Japan," by uniting the "cultures of the individual nationalities" with that of Japan. Because the level of political sophistication of the Malays was considered to be so low that the people "were incapable of being independent," Tokyo consistently maintained a policy of avoiding any reference to ultimate self-rule for Malaya. This policy coincided with and was perhaps largely determined by the desire to make the "Southern Region" Japan's economic and military base. On account of its location and facilities, Singapore (now renamed Syonan, the 'Light of the South'), was considered by the Japanese to be not only their defence headquarters and capital of the region, but also a key point for the extraction of much needed natural resources. To meet the servicing needs of the Japanese armed forces, mechanical and electrical engineering skills were to be promoted, and it was clearly understood that this would contribute to the increasing industrialisation of the city.

Shortly after the surrender of the Island, General Yamashita,
Commander of the Nippon Army, issued a declaration addressed to the people of Singapore in which he stated:

We . . . sweep away the arrogant and unrighteous British elements and share pain and rejoicing with all concerned peoples . . . and also hope to promote . . . social development by establishing the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere on which the New Order of justice has to be attained under 'the Great Spirit of Cosmocracy' giving all content to the respective race and individual according to their talents and faculties.9

These words foreshadowed the twin aspects of educational policy: the negative obliteration of western influence, and the positive promotion of a sense of brotherhood of all Asians living under the guidance of Tenno Heika, within the context of the proposed new economic grouping.

The extirpation of western influence was not, of course, confined to the educational system but applied to all aspects of life in the city and was implemented almost immediately upon the arrival of the Japanese. Within a week of the fall of Singapore, the Syonan Jit Poh (formerly the Sin Chew Jit Poh) recorded the deaths or capture of various prominent Chinese who were believed to have been supporters of the British régime,10 and in the Syonan Times (English language newspaper, successor to the Straits Times) there appeared on February 23rd, a decree which commanded that "all British people and enemy aliens shall gather at the Esplanade (opposite the Supreme Court) before . . . noon of February 24 in order to be taken prisoner . . . ," and naturally British members of the Malayan Education Service marched off together with their compatriots to the isolation of one of the concentration camps of the island. Subsequent issues of the Syonan Times, and of the Malay and Chinese
language newspapers, mounted an unremitting barrage of propaganda aimed at discrediting the British through the exposure of their alleged cowardice, the injustice of their rule, and the ignoble purposes for which their empire had been maintained. The positive aspect, the promotion of an Asian identity of interests under the guidance of Japan together with an incultication of Nippon-Seishin [Japanese Spirit], was pursued actively through the media of press, radio and ultimately through the school system, and took several forms. Apart from articles, radio talks and announcements, in which the themes of Asia for the Asians, the cultural affinity of the Japanese with other ethno-linguistic groups, and the concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prospersity Sphere were constantly reiterated, the most sustained effort went into the dissemination of a knowledge of the Japanese language, starting with a simple vocabulary "lesson" published in the second issue of the Syonan Times. Nippon-Go was to be popularised "in order to promote a common understanding in the Co-Prospersity Sphere," and the local press enthusiastically sought to persuade the populace, the Syonan Times arguing that Nipponese was the logical lingua franca for Malaya:

One of the first considerations in the construction of mutual well-being and prosperity in Asia is that of introducing a common language. The suggestion therefore that the language of Nippon become the lingua franca of Malaya while startling at first becomes an obvious necessity with the inclusion of this country in the New Order of Asia for the Asians. . . . There are many reasons . . . [for] the suggestion. . . . Chief of these is the similarity in grammar and vocal sounds of the languages of most Asian races obviating the excuse that learning a new language is a big obstacle. Then there is the question of suiting the majority, in the case of
Malaya the Chinese, who comprise more than 50 percent of the population. It is in this connection that similarity of language is greatest for the Nippon language characters came from China thousands of years ago. . . . The substitution of Nipponese for English as the lingua franca is but the natural recognition of a nation which . . . is now in the process of saving Asians from continuing to be the victims of the English. . . .

For those of the population of Singapore who felt that they had had enough of British rule, the slogan "same race, same culture" appearing in Chinese newspapers would no doubt have provoked an assent, no matter how qualified or unwilling, at least during the early months of the occupation. In addition to insisting upon the essential brotherhood of all Asians, and the relevance of the Co-Prosperey Sphere, policy specifically emphasised: "respect of labour," the need to promote indigenous industries, to increase production, and to develop vocational and technical skills. The attempt to achieve these objectives, the difficulties encountered, and the successes and failures of the administration are most clearly exemplified in the history of the schools and other educational institutions of Syonan.

The Japanese arrived in Singapore with the broad outlines of an educational policy already in existence. In addition to the General Principles briefly referred to above, their proposals for primary schools included a "thorough overhaul" to remove western and anti-Japanese influences. Chinese schools were to be abolished, although the Chinese language could continue to be taught as an extracurricular subject. Japanese was to be a required subject in all schools, and agriculture was to be encouraged. Middle or secondary schools were to be restricted to the "minimum number," and those permitted to function
were to be primarily agricultural or technical schools. Universities or Colleges were to be closed except in so far as they were required for "technical training."\textsuperscript{17} However, it is clear that, beyond this general framework, no detailed planning had been undertaken, nor had much consideration been given to the difficulties likely to be encountered. The question of skilled personnel to administer the system had not been discussed, and no time-table existed for the reopening of schools. The result was that education in the city was characterised by a series of improvisations, each hastily concocted to overcome an immediate problem. Thus, shortly after the occupation, with some schools destroyed and the rest either closed or commandeered by the army, large numbers of school children roamed the streets becoming involved in petty theft and hooliganism, thereby adding to the reigning lawlessness and confusion. Mamoru Shinozaki, former press attaché on the staff of the Japanese Consulate in Singapore, was pressed into service. Shinozaki had just been released from Changi prison—where he had been serving a sentence for espionage against the British—and he was asked by Shigeo Odate, Mayor of Syonan, to take charge of the Education Department, the immediate object being to get the school-children off the streets and under control.\textsuperscript{18} In this way, schools were used, initially, as an instrument for solving a specific problem—that of restoring order—and this had the effect of limiting the extent to which subsequently enunciated policy could be applied. By the time detailed instructions were received, the old school system had been to some extent resuscitated, thereby creating an obstacle in the path of
innovative ideas. Meanwhile Shinozaki, having no previous training, specialised skill, or educational experience, became at the age of thirty-two the chief officer of education, heir to a system in chaos and disorder.

The first task was to make a survey of the existing schools in order to determine which could be used, and to secure the release of occupied buildings from the military. It very soon became apparent that school equipment, particularly chairs, tables and desks, had been looted, and notices were published in the local press warning that a search would be made and that persons found to be in possession of looted property would be "severely punished." The warning seems to have been only partially successful, for Shinozaki recalls that it was necessary to "scour the city for school equipment." On March 14, 1942, the Military Administration Department issued a notice instructing all teachers of Government and Aided English, Malay, Chinese and Indian schools to register at the Department of Education. The Principals only of private schools were required to appear for the purpose of registering themselves and their staffs. On March 23rd, the "temporary heads" of former English schools were required to attend a meeting in the Examination Hall on the fifth floor of the Fullerton Building for an initial screening and briefing at which "Ogawa San" presided. Two days later a notice appeared in the local newspapers indicating that it was proposed to reopen schools "shortly" and that pupils seeking admission should register between March 30th and April 4th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Tokyo Time). The notice continued:
Pupils seeking admission must register at the school nearest their residence. It is not necessary that pupils must register at their former school unless it is the nearest. Every school will hold classes from Primary upwards. . . .

and listed were the names and locations of twenty-eight schools at which classes were to be held. These schools were all former English schools, and on April 7th, a second notice listed sixteen Malay Boys' schools and five Malay Girls' schools which were to be reopened on April 12th, "all former and new students" being required to register on the 10th or 11th of that month (a further seven Malay schools being named to reopen "in the near future"). On April 13th, a further notice was published listing one Arab school and nine Tamil schools scheduled to reopen two days later. The absence of any mention of Chinese education occasioned a good deal of misgiving, and pressure mounted during this period for Chinese schools to reopen, a fact that placed the municipal authorities in something of a dilemma in the light of the general instruction already received that Chinese schools were to be abolished. On April 9th, the Military Administration Department found it necessary to issue a stern warning that "no school should be opened in Syonan-to without the sanction of the Department of Education," but Shinozaki, who had recently been instrumental in securing the release from detention of numerous Chinese (including that most respected surviving leader of the community, Dr. Lim Boon Keng), was believed to be sympathetic to the Chinese, and indeed he soon showed himself to be prepared to listen to the pleas of distressed parents. On April 17, a Government-inspired press report noted briefly that Chinese schools were scheduled to "open shortly."
From the foregoing, it is clear that in their haste to reopen schools for the purpose of restoring order amongst the young people of the city, and without adequate, detailed preparation, the Japanese had permitted the pre-war pattern of education to re-emerge in the shape of schools divided along ethno-linguistic lines. The former system which had placed so much emphasis upon vernacular education for the Malays, which had yielded to the commercial pressure for English-medium instruction for non-Malays, and which had virtually ignored Chinese and Tamil education, had created a senseless momentum towards communalism, and this now reasserted itself. By the time instructions for the establishment of an alternative programme were received it was, in a sense, too late: the schools had taken hold of their pupils, and the system engulfed the schools. The opportunity for fundamental change had passed, and the structure that evolved was a poor compromise that included few of the rational aspects of Japanese intentions whilst retaining most of the worst features of the old system.

On April 18th, the Military Administrator of Malaya issued an instruction to the Mayor of Syonan and Governors of the States under his jurisdiction in which it was indicated that former Government and English Aided schools, Malay and Indian schools should be combined "according to their geographical locations" and should be given new names. Although former private schools generally should not be authorised to operate, those having "larger facilities" might be used as "public schools." Pupils were to be encouraged to enrol at the school nearest to their residence, and the subjects to be taught at all schools
were: singing, gymnastics, drama, handicrafts, drawing, the Japanese language, composition and gardening. The languages of instruction were to be Japanese and Malay or Japanese and Tamil. The ideal of a single type of school providing a common educational experience for the children of each of the major communities and equipping the pupils with a lingua franca was clearly intended. Professor K. Nakazima of the Tokyo Imperial University, then in Syonan under the auspices of the Military Administration Department, commented upon the cosmopolitan nature of the city and asserted that it was the intention of the authorities not only to raise the level of education but to "weld the various aspects of Malayan life into a harmonious whole." Contrasting the new policy with the "primitive" system of the past, he claimed the proposed changes would "tend to lead to the common welfare of all the inhabitants," and would give them a more "common sense" education. The new system was to be based upon the Nippon model which provided compulsory, universal primary schooling for eight years. Thereafter, attendance at middle school was optional. The Nippon administration, continued Nakazima, intended to make Malaya "self-supporting and not dependent on imported goods."²⁹

Apart from the immediate utilitarian aim of providing a skilled work force to service the Japanese war machine and support the growth of local industries, the "spiritual" value of education received much attention. Once the evils of the "European Christianized and bureaucracy planned and controlled" system had been destroyed, it was argued, the mind of the child would have to be "gradually cleansed of all its
old shibboleths, superstitions and loyalties and won over to new beliefs and new loyalties," the most important of which was to be an abiding faith in his or her future as a member of the New Order, and as a "unit" in a new civilisation. The objective of the proposed system was the creation of "a new national consciousness" in the rising generation as "co-partners . . . in the New Order." Physical training and rigorous discipline were the techniques to be used to achieve these ends. In the words of Wataru Watanabe, President of the Gunseibu (Military Administration Department), individual concerns and interests were to be forgotten in the attempt to understand the meaning of "spiritualism and its principles": and that "Present hardships endured . . . would later instil obedience. . . ." The underlying philosophy of the system was again summed up in the words Hakko Ichiu (universal brotherhood), to be achieved through the inculcation of iron discipline, total obedience to authority and loyalty to the Emperor.

The Japanese authorities, hoping to achieve certain objectives through the medium of Futo Ko Gakko (Common Public Schools), found that the schools, once reopened, operated along familiar lines which could not be changed without a further major upheaval. When, however, it was found that some private Chinese schools could not obtain sufficient funds to continue, they were taken over by the Municipality and renamed Futo Ko Gakko. By August 1942, it was claimed that there were seventy-five Futo Ko Gakko, in all of which Nippon-Go was being taught, and it was hoped that in the lower classes of former English schools at least, Nippon-Go would soon be the sole medium of instruction. Nevertheless,
because of the shortage of teachers competent to instruct in or even speak Japanese, Chinese continued to be the principal medium in Chinese schools, whether or not they were taken over by the Municipality. The change of name did not bring about an automatic change of nature. By the time the April 18th instruction had been received by Syonan officials, Chinese students were already attending former English or Chinese schools, Indians were enrolled in Tamil or English schools, and Malays continued to be segregated in Malay schools. The situation was further compounded, unintentionally, by the activities of the Indian Independence League, which became involved in the administration of Tamil schools, a natural outcome of the use made of the schools for anti-British and pro-Indian nationalist propaganda. Indian students were encouraged to attend Tamil schools rather than 'former-English' schools, and in November, 1942, the Distress Section of the Independence League, with the co-operation of the Education Department, arranged for free midday meals for all students in such institutions. Funds for this scheme, having been subscribed by the Indian community, were carefully disbursed for the benefit of the children of the community. In late 1942, an Indian National School was established in the city, with the active support and encouragement of the Japanese, a fact that was stressed by Subhas Chandra Bose when he attended the first graduation ceremony the following year. He noted that "the valuable work done . . . [had been] made possible through the extremely sympathetic attitude of the Syonan Tokubetu-si authorities." The division of schools along ethnic lines was thus further encouraged by the desire to promote
specific political ends, in this case, the liberation of India from British rule.

By the end of the third week in April 1942, the semblance of a school system had been established and had begun to function, although it is clear that a very large part of the school-age community remained outside the school gates. In the absence of official records no precise figures can be given, but a rough idea of the numbers of students involved may be gained by reference to a variety of sources, the reliability of which, however, is in some cases open to doubt. It is reasonable to assume that, in numerical terms, Malay schools and pupils were least affected by the advent of the new régime. The *Syonan Times* reported:

There were originally 19 Malay schools in Syonan city and 8 others in the neighbouring islands, but since several were demolished by fire during the siege of Singapore, 4,000 pupils are being taught in alternative morning and afternoon shifts in 21 buildings which have been opened.39

In 1938, the last pre-occupation year for which complete records are available, there had been twenty-five Government Malay schools with an 'average enrolment' of 4,228 pupils, and one Aided Malay school on Pulau Bukom with sixty-seven pupils.40 A 1946 Department of Education report recalled that

the Malay schools ... re-opened soon after the Japanese occupation and continued, though with smaller enrolments, throughout. ... Most of the Malay school teachers continued to teach under the Japanese regime.41

The same source estimated that the numbers of students in Malay schools
had increased to 5,800 by the end of 1941. The figure of 4,000 pupils mentioned by the *Syonan Times* would therefore appear to be a reasonable estimate, although the possibility of overstatement for propaganda purposes cannot be entirely ruled out.

With regard to enrolment in Indian schools, the evidence is, if anything, even more circumstantial. It has been noted that nine Tamil schools were scheduled to reopen on April 15th, and in the following June, an announcement was made concerning the commencement of the second term at the beginning of July, 1942, in which only eight of these schools—each now renamed—were listed. Since the school that had been dropped from the original list was the Tamil Adult's Night school, it is reasonable to suppose that the reduction did not represent any appreciable decline in the numbers of pupils of regular school-going age. The Japanese-controlled Education authorities claimed that in April, when schools first reopened, 634 students attended Indian schools and that by the following October, this figure had increased to 787. In the November press report concerning the distribution of free meals to Indian pupils, reference was made to "nine hundred Indian school-children." In 1938 there had been eleven registered Tamil schools with 538 pupils, but three years later the numbers had increased to eighteen registered schools with an enrolment of "nearly 1,000." It would appear, therefore, that under Japanese rule once the initial disruption had been overcome, approximately the same number of Indian students were receiving instruction in fewer than half the pre-war number of schools.
To some extent, the number of students attending former English-schools must be a matter for speculation. Initially, the secondary departments which existed at some schools, including most of the larger Mission schools, admitted students to Standards VI to IX inclusive, but on May 1st, these classes were ordered to be discontinued, the schools now being operated solely as primary schools at which children aged six to fourteen were admitted into classes numbered from I to VII. On that date, the Irish Roman Catholic school-teacher Brother Joseph Brophy noted in the diary of St. Joseph's Institution (now renamed the Bras Basah Road Boys' School) that senior pupils who had hitherto attended school were required to leave "until the Middle Classes start," and he further recorded an enrolment on that day of 258, a figure which increased to 308 by May 12th. In 1938, the average enrolment at St. Joseph's Institution had been 1,214; hence in May 1942, the enrolment was approximately one quarter of the pre-war figure. If it may be assumed that attendance at St. Joseph's Institution was representative of attendance at other former Government and Aided English schools, then one-quarter of the 1938 average enrolment at such schools of 14,698 would give a figure of 3,675. This calculation may seem somewhat farfetched but the result agrees surprisingly closely with a contemporary source which reported that in April, when schools first reopened, there were 3,065 pupils in former English schools, a number that increased to 4,870 by the following October. There is no clear indication of what happened to the 9,500 pupils who, in 1941, had been attending approximately fifty private English schools. Officially,
these schools, in common with most other private schools were forced to remain closed throughout 1942.

The question of Chinese schools remains to be considered. In 1941, there had been 370 registered Chinese schools in the island with an enrolment of approximately 38,000. Some of these schools reopened on April 27, 1942, but lacking sufficient financial support from their committees of management, the teachers were forced to depend upon such fees as they were able to collect. It is evident that only a very small fraction of the former Chinese-school population found accommodation; according to the *Syonan Times*, the number was a mere 1,293. Because of the glaringly unsatisfactory state of affairs, the *Syonan Tokubetu-si* (Municipality) took over the administration of these schools, converting them into *Futo Ko Gakko* from July 1st, 1942, when "over 1,800" were admitted to fifteen institutions. An October 14, 1942, report in the *Syonan Times* noted that this figure had increased to "more than 3,000" still a pitifully small number compared with the pre-occupation figure.

If the figures given above may be accepted as reasonably accurate, it is possible to summarise the school population in 1942 in the following terms: in mid-May, two or three weeks after the reopening of schools, there were some 4,000 students in Malay schools, 634 in Tamil schools, 3,675 in former English schools, and 1,293 in Chinese schools, giving a total of 9,602. By the following October, six months after the reopening of schools, the corresponding figures were: Malay schools, 4,572; Indian schools, 787; English schools, 4,870; and Chinese schools,
approximately 3,000, giving a total of 13,229, exclusive of technical and trade schools, and schools devoted solely to Japanese language instruction. According to a post-war British source, the school population "dwindled from 1942 onwards." Shinozaki, on the other hand, insists that attendance remained at a fairly steady level until the beginning of 1945 when, under the impact of increased Allied air-raids and the evacuation of large numbers of inhabitants to the settlements at Endau and Bahau, there was a sharp decline in attendance. The carefully maintained records of daily attendance at the Bras Basah Road Boys' School do not entirely bear out either of these patterns, for enrolment there increased steadily until June 21st, 1943, when the highest figure of 646 was reached—rather more than half of the 1938 total—after which there was a gradual decline, which accelerated sharply after the end of 1944.

A further indication of the decline in numbers attending school is to be found in the October 8th, 1942, edition of the Syonan Times which refers to the existence of 407 unemployed registered teachers. It is probable that this number was an underestimate, since there were several teachers who, for one reason or another, failed to respond to the published instruction to register themselves. The minimum number of pupils per class had already been reduced by the Education Department from twenty-eight to fourteen in order to provide employment for as many teachers as possible, and from this alone it is clear that the school population had diminished sharply from the pre-war figure.

At the end of 1942, the General Affairs Department of the Syonan
Tokubetu-si announced that private schools would be permitted to open from the beginning of the following school year. They were not, however, to be permitted to "resume their status under the former [colonial] administration—that of so-called schools serving solely as financial propositions." They would be required to satisfy the Education Department on the qualifications of teachers and the suitability of school premises. It was recalled that some 400 had existed pre-war, and that

many of these [had been] housed in dinghy [sic] and dismal little rooms where, apart from a smattering of the rudiments of either English or one of the vernacular languages, the score or more pupils learnt nothing but bad habits and acquired ill-health.63

These conditions were not to be tolerated in the future.

One of the greatest obstacles to the full implementation of the policy of 'Japanization' was the shortage of suitable text books. Due to the wartime situation, it proved to be impossible to obtain adequate supplies from Japan, and this resulted in the need to make use of existing texts which first had to be screened to ensure that no undesirable matter remained,64 a process that inevitably delayed distribution to schools. To ease the situation, efforts were made to produce texts locally, particularly primers for Japanese language instruction.

Once the schools had been reopened, those attending adapted themselves to the new routine with surprising rapidity. The tone was set early each schoolday when, during morning assembly, pupils and teachers turned to the North-East and bowed in unison as a mark of respect to the Emperor.65 Due to the shortage of text books, the
curriculum initially was largely confined to singing lessons, physical education and athletics, a matter of some embarrassment to the Chief Education Officer, who pressed forward the local preparation of lesson notes and elementary text books.  

The local authorities frequently found themselves in an ambiguous position because of orders, emanating from the Military Administration Department, which were incapable of being put into effect. One such order governed the use of English which, being an "enemy language," had been forbidden in Japan at that time, and the Gunseikan-bu, taking their cue from this prohibition, ruled that Japanese would be the sole official language and that English should be banned in Syonan, including the schools. Recognising the impossibility of enforcing such a rule, Mayor Odate obtained an interview with Colonel Watanabe (Chief of the Military Administration Department), who was finally persuaded to cancel it. Nevertheless, the dissemination of Japanese was pursued with the utmost zeal, and the early months of the occupation saw numerous courses commenced, to the accompaniment of a vigorous press campaign. Early in April, allegedly at the suggestion of Dr. Lim Boon Keng, a Japanese language course attended by ninety students was started, meeting in the hall of the Overseas Chinese Association in Club Street. It was hoped the class would be the "forerunner of . . . a Nippon-Chinese school in Syonan." It was followed by many others throughout the city, the instructors being drawn mainly from the ranks of the occupying army, many of them teaching with "an almost missionary zeal." In June, a 'Nippon-Go Popularizing Week' was held, with radio talks and instruction,
frequent exhortations in the local press, and the organisation of essay competitions with prizes offered for the best compositions dealing with Japanese culture. Radio receivers were installed in eighty-seven local elementary schools, and daily lessons were transmitted, thereby inaugurating the first regular schools broadcasting service in the island.

Indeed the key to the successful introduction of Japanese as the lingua franca was seen to lie in the schools and accordingly the most sustained effort went into the instruction of school teachers. Almost immediately after the reopening of schools, special afternoon and evening classes for teachers were arranged, and later, special vacation courses. Attendance at these courses was compulsory, but one teacher recalls that as the classes were so large, it was easy to avoid working conscientiously, and even possible to miss class simply by arranging to have one's name entered as 'present' in the attendance register. Not surprisingly, the standard achieved by teachers attending these Nippon-Go classes varied widely. Yet within a remarkably short period, these efforts began to show positive results. On May 26, 1942, a journalist, Takaohi Wada of the Nagoya Shimbun, Nagoya, Japan, visited the Bras Basah Road Boys' School and declared himself "pleased with the efforts of pupils and teachers in acquiring Nippon-Go." On July 21st, a note in Brother Brophy's Diary records that 110 copies of a Katakana primer were received, and when Mayor Odate visited the school in September he too appeared pleased with the efforts of the staff and students in acquiring the language. Although the Japanese failed in
the end to establish their language as the *lingua franca* of Singapore, there are indications that given more time and less unsettled conditions, they might have been successful. Chin Kee Onn, writing in 1946, argued:

The real danger lay with the young and coming generations. They were the ones that mattered. And the Japanese saw to it that the young plastic minds should be moulded according to Japanese ideas. ... Given a further five years, [Japan's] programme of Nipponisation would be so consolidated that all East Asia would be thoroughly conquered politically, economically, spiritually and culturally.76

And a correspondent writing to the *Straits Times* in the same year recalled that

Every conceivable facility was given to those who wished to study the Japanese language. Scholarships, allowances and even remunerative posts were given to those who graduated. Credit must be given to the Japanese for the fact that their efforts were wholehearted and they achieved not a little success.77

On the other hand, it is undoubtedly the case that the appalling massacre of Chinese which occurred shortly after the fall of Singapore left a residue of fear, bitterness and hatred which tended to negate attempts at cultural indoctrination; similarly, the Japanese suspicion of the Eurasian community, frequently bordering on open hostility, provoked and sustained reciprocal feelings. One former pupil recalls that she and her friends consciously rejected a knowledge of Japanese because of the feelings of hatred they shared towards their new rulers.78 And yet, despite such resentment, the teaching of the language met with marked success partly for pragmatic reasons, and partly
because of the impressive energy that went into the promotion of the campaign. A former teacher recalls:

We had to learn Japanese to keep ourselves alive. . . . The Japanese gave us willing assistance. Japanese classes sprang up in every quarter of the town and suburbs. . . . All Singapore made a rush for the new education. Some of us attended two, or even three, schools a day.

Very little of this enthusiasm was inspired by genuine love for things Japanese. Most of it was the result of a love for novelty or was frankly utilitarian. A smattering of the language might come in useful. . . .

The Japanese had no hesitation in emphasising the material advantages to be gained from a knowledge of their language, a fact that is borne out by the constant exhortations and notices such as the following:

It would be a waste of time to apply for a typist's position unless you can handle a typewriter. In the same way you will be at a disadvantage in applying for any position without a knowledge of Nippon-Go. Don't waste your time.

Such advice to a community long accustomed to viewing education as a means to profitable employment must have made its point. Another informant, whose schooldays commenced during the occupation, remembers that he and his class-mates had gained a reasonable degree of fluency in Japanese by the end of the war, and it is evident that the dissemination of the language amongst people of naturally varying linguistic ability made significant progress during the three-and-a-half years of Japanese rule.

Another aspect of educational policy which was to have a more lasting impact on Singapore was the heavy emphasis placed by the Japanese on technical and vocational training. The closure of secondary
schools upon the instructions received from Army Headquarters was fol­lowed by the establishment of a number of centres for the teaching of vocational skills, particularly those related to electrical and mechanical engineering. Lieutenant Tsugiyoshi Torii, who had been supervisor of the teaching staff of the Gunseikan-bu Kokugo Gakko (Military Administration National Language School) was placed in charge of the Queen Street Nippon-go Kyushu-jo (Trade School) which provided technical education for boys of fourteen years and older. He recalls that he was faced initially with two major problems: a lack of text books, and a complete absence of equipment. The former he overcame by writing two technical texts himself, and the latter—the lack of equipment—was remedied by the Army, which supplied the necessary items, some of the instructors, and much of the expertise. The school was well attended, the graduates finding ready employment as civilian mechanics with the Naval, Army and Air Force authorities. Indeed, much of the emphasis placed upon teaching technical skills was determined by the need to satisfy immediate military demands rather than any long-term social requirements. But in the event, the proliferation of junior technical schools and trade schools produced the nucleus of a skilled labour force that was to play an important rôle in the metamorphosis of post-war Singapore.

In changing the emphasis from academic to technical subjects, and in extolling the virtue of manual labour and artisan training, the Japanese were effectively relating education to occupational opportuni­ties, a fact which could be exploited also for its propaganda potential.
An editorial appearing in the *Syonan Shimbun* early in 1943 commented:

Education being such an essential part of the economic well-being of a people, it is gratifying to note that although barely one year has elapsed since the occupation of this island, considerable headway has been made by the authorities in *Syonan*, for today, in addition to the many public schools there are a number of technical institutions . . . where youths . . . may obtain training in a field where there is plenty of scope and an expanding need for their services.

The tragic result of the educational system under the former administration, which continued to turn out men only fit for "white collar" jobs in ever increasing numbers, out of all proportion to the limited needs of employers of clerical labour, has been evident . . . for several years past. Yet little was done by the former administration to make any appreciable change in their obsolete educational policy.

Today all this is changed. There is ample opportunity for former clerks . . . to forget about their office desks by availing themselves of the generous "training with pay" schemes offered by workshop benches which will open up to them new avenues of industry and earning power. The future of these people is bright and . . . how much brighter is the future of the children now going through the public schools? They can now complete their school careers not with the dread of being unable to find an office job, but with enthusiasm for the technical training and professional careers which lie ahead of them. . . .

This piece of journalism has the essentials of effective propaganda: a large measure of truth combined with judicious exaggeration.

Various apprenticeship schemes were introduced, generally directly related to the wartime needs of the occupying force. One such scheme involved the employment of 240 youths between the ages of fourteen and eighteen at the Seletar Naval Base where, in addition to learning special skills, the apprentices were given instruction in *Nippon-Go*, elementary mathematics and parade-ground drills. According to the *Syonan Shimbun* of March 22, 1943, there were, in the city, "no fewer than six technical schools" where students were given training as technicians, mechanics, electricians, mechanical engineers, and
aero-mechanics. A possible forerunner of the Singapore Polytechnic may be recognised in the announcement by the Municipality of its intention to establish a "polytechnic school" in 1944. The institution was to enrol boys between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, no fees were to be charged, and the courses were to include a one-year "regular" course for 120 students and a six-month "selective" course of mechanics for fifty students. Because of the steadily worsening war situation, the 'polytechnic school' failed to get beyond the planning stage.

The combination of technical schools and apprenticeship schemes accompanied by a vigorous press and radio campaign aimed at drawing male employees away from "non-essential" office work, created a pool of skilled and semi-skilled labour which did not evaporate overnight when the war ended, but rather remained to provide the basic work force necessary for the immediate post-war reconstruction. The returning British administrations, both military and civil, were preoccupied with the enormous task of providing facilities to meet the demand for primary education, and neglected technical and industrial training. It is significant that the shortage of skilled labour did not become acute, and thereby gain political overtones, until the building programme under the Colony's Medical and Educational plans had to be virtually abandoned in 1951. Up to that time the residue of vocational skills acquired during the occupation served Singapore well.

There remains to be considered the application of Japanese policy in respect of higher education. According to a document entitled "Directives Concerning Education" dated October 6, 1942, from the
Gunseikan (Superintendent of the Military Administration) addressed to the Mayor of Syonan and State Governors, the general rule was laid down that higher educational facilities were not to be established, although exceptions were to be made "upon the Gunseikan's approval" for the training of "special technicians." Former normal schools were, however, to be reopened for the purpose of training local teachers. Raffles College, pressed into service as the Army Headquarters, remained closed as an institution of higher learning throughout the occupation. The Japanese Medical Corps occupied the premises of the King Edward VII Medical College, and is reported to have conducted research into malaria and other tropical diseases, after first restoring the laboratories which had been destroyed during the siege of the city. Medical students, dispersed at the time of the invasion, were unable to resume their studies during 1942, but in mid-March, 1943, Dr. Todashi Sato, Director of the Municipal Sanitary Department, announced plans for the reopening of the Medical College by the end of April. The college was to occupy the former Tan Tock Seng Hospital, and the number of students to be admitted initially was to be "about 100," entrance being restricted to males between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five who held Cambridge Senior School Certificates. In addition, only students recommended by the various State or Municipal authorities and provided with scholarships were to be accepted, and for these students tuition would be free. The courses envisaged were to be of five years' duration in respect of medical and four years' for dental students. After graduation the students would be assigned to hospitals "to practise for a period
of two years." Former first, second, and third-year students of the King Edward VII Medical College were to be admitted to the new school at the appropriate level of studies.  

On April 27, 1943, the Syonan Ikadaigaku (Medical College) opened, with an initial enrolment of 127 students which included, despite the earlier restriction, five girls. These students were drawn "from all parts of Malai and Sumatra," and consisted of 104 in the first-year class and twenty-three in the second-year. The programme of study commenced with an intensive course in Nippon-Go to enable the students to follow the lectures of the panel of Japanese "medical teachers" which had been appointed. Formal lectures commenced on July 1st. In June, former fourth and fifth-year students were "urgently requested" to contact the Head of the Sanitation Department, who outlined a scheme whereby those who applied would be able to complete their studies and gain "licences to practise," after a period of study of Nippon-Go and "Nippon medical science." The wording of this announcement suggests that the decision to reopen a school for medical studies was taken in response to the urgent and growing demand for doctors and other medical staff.

Students admitted to the College were given an allowance of $60 per month "to defray board, lodging and other expenses." On February 1st, 1944, the College was removed to Malacca and renamed the Malai Medical College. Due to the "rapid progress" of the students, the period of study was reduced from five years to four years, and it was therefore anticipated that the first graduates of the college would commence public practice in 1947. Medical students who had been accustomed
to viewing the West as the source of all medical knowledge would have been impressed by the discovery that medical science and practice in Japan, as evidenced by the all-Asian panel of instructors, was no less advanced than in the West. Unfortunately for the students concerned, the British authorities who returned after the end of the war were not similarly impressed. Twelve interns serving at the Tan Tock Seng and Kandang Kerbau hospitals were permitted to continue to practise until May, 1946, when without prior warning they were informed that their monthly salary of $220 had been reduced to $75, because their diplomas, issued under the Japanese régime, were not acceptable. The change in salary was an effective indication of their reduction in status to that of medical orderly.

Another aspect of higher education to receive attention under the Japanese administration was that of teacher training. Apart from the various language classes organised for trained teachers, efforts were concentrated on two institutions: the Jyokyo Shihan Gakko (Higher Normal School) established in Upper Serangoon Road on August 1st, 1943, and the Shihan Gakko (Normal School) conducted at the Bras Basah Road Boys' School from November 16, 1943. The former was intended to provide three different courses each of six months' duration: a 'training course,' a 'main course' (restricted to agriculture and technical work), and a 'special course,' in which a knowledge of handicraft, domestic science (for women teachers) and music would be taught. The "latest Nippon methods of modern education" were to be imparted, and one of the main aims of the College was to imbue the teachers with the Nippon spirit.
which they, in turn, were expected to pass on to their students. Later, the organisation of courses appears to have been amended somewhat, for a local press report of the second graduation ceremony, held on April 21, 1944, speaks of thirty-two students passing out of the training course, twenty-nine completing the "sportsmasters' course" and thirty finishing the "science course." The Higher Normal School was operated by the Military Administration Department of Malaya.

The Shihan Gakko (Normal School), on the other hand, was administered by the Municipality. Two courses were offered: Renseika (Advanced Training Course) for trained teachers; and Yoseika (Regular Course) for prospective teachers, and the enrolment was approximately thirty in each course. In order to make room for the Normal School, several classes had to be transferred from the elementary section of the Boys' school to other schools, a matter of some distress both to the students concerned and their teachers. The Renseika was scheduled to last six months, tuition was free, and an allowance of $30 per month was made to successful applicants. In the case of the Yoseika, applicants were required to be under the age of eighteen years and to have completed elementary school. The period of study was to be three years, tuition was free, with allowances ranging from $10 to $30 per month according to the year of study.

Once trained, teachers were closely supervised and required to adhere to educational policy. A Teachers' Association, formed in November 1942 under the aegis of E. V. Davies, Chief Inspector of Schools, served as an instrument of control and indoctrination in the hands of the
authorities rather than as a means to represent the interests of the profession. If teachers were unable to exercise any very positive influence in the direction of school policy or the improvement of conditions of employment, they nevertheless presented an obstacle to the introduction of radical change. In December, 1942, Mayor Odate sanctioned a new salary scheme intended to remove the inequalities inherent in the old scale which gave greatest reward to teachers holding English qualifications such as Raffles College Diplomas or Cambridge Senior School Certificates, and to give equal recognition to those with vernacular qualifications. Opposition to this scheme was led by none other than the Chief Inspector of Schools—himself the former Principal of an English school—who argued that the teachers who held 'English' qualifications were indeed more highly qualified than their colleagues teaching at Malay, Chinese and Indian schools, and accordingly should receive higher pay. His view was accepted, and the fact that the qualifications of 'English' teachers hardly fitted them better to teach the new curriculum with its heavy emphasis on the Japanese language, appears to have been overlooked, for the teachers at former English schools continued to receive preferential rates of pay throughout the occupation.

Before leaving the subject of higher education, it is necessary to refer briefly to plans—announced at the end of 1943—for a new technical school to train "selected students" in Architecture and Civil Engineering. Initially some forty students between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five would be accepted for the courses, which were to be of ten months' duration. Nothing seems to have come of the proposal,
probably due to the worsening war situation. Also falling into the
category of intention rather than performance was the plan to provide
secondary academic education. Although the hope was expressed publicly
as early as August 1942 that middle schools would "soon" reopen, it
was not until March 1945, with the war fast approaching its tumultuous
conclusion, that proposals were announced for the opening of a Koto
Kogakko (Public High School) and a Jyoshi Koto Kogakko (Girls' High
School) the following month at the Jalan Besar Boys' School and Sophia
Road Girls' School respectively. The course of study was to be four
years, the prerequisite for admission being graduation from the Futu
Kogakko course. During 1945, attendance at most schools fell off
sharply, and teachers became involved increasingly in extracurricular
activities such as night street-patrols and fire-watching. The schools
themselves served as centres for the distribution to the students of
the ever-diminishing supplies of rice and bread. Despite the increasing
hardship of life in the city, official pronouncements maintained the
façade of normalcy and continued to extol the virtues of the new educa-
tional system, emphasis being placed upon the extent and relevance of
the opportunities available to the youth of the city. The widening
gulf between official claims and actual performance created a cloud of
incredulity which tended to conceal the real achievements of the earlier
years of the occupation.

In times of peace, a useful indicator of the attitude of a
government towards education is provided by the proportion of the budget
allocated for purposes related to public instruction. Unfortunately,
in the case of wartime Singapore, no such ready measure exists, for virtually all official records were destroyed prior to the arrival of the British Military Administration. Furthermore, the practice of the Japanese authorities of meeting financial requirements by the simple expedient of printing as much 'paper money' as necessary would have reduced the value of any such records that may have been kept. There can be no doubt, however, that education was viewed as a matter of considerable and lasting importance by the Japanese. The efforts made to restore and reopen schools, the willingness to maintain the administrative machinery, to employ existing teachers and to train new teachers, and the readiness of the military to co-operate with the civil authorities by providing instructors and equipment, all testify to the high priority accorded to education by the occupying power. Further evidence is to be found in the decision, announced at the end of 1943, to suspend school fees thereby providing Singapore with its first free primary education.

In retrospect, it is possible to detect significant similarities as well as differences between the Japanese educational programme and that of the former British régime. They were both deliberately elitist: the Queen's Scholarships were paralleled by a scheme introduced by the Marquis Yoshichika Tokugawa which provided annually for three young men, and two girls--selected for their "character and accomplishments"--to proceed to Japan to further their studies, the intention being to create a small group of leaders which would be sympathetic to the ruling power. Both the British and the Japanese school systems in practice tended to
ossify communal differences, although this was no part of the Japanese intention. Both systems were essentially authoritarian, imposed without reference to the wishes of parents and with only peripheral regard to the needs of the community. Both systems were used to impart the cultural values of alien rulers. The major difference lay in the fact that whereas the British system was shaped within the liberal-arts tradition of the West, tending to produce a more or less literate population with goals identified in terms of academic rather than technological achievement, the Japanese system was frankly utilitarian, geared to the imperatives of a wartime situation, but retaining the concept of a future in which Singapore would be an integral part of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and would perform a function very different from its entrepôt past. As an agent for change, the significance of Japanese educational policy lay in the question it forced future educators and politicians to consider: given the fact that an educational system designed to preserve the colonial status was no longer acceptable, what form of education should now be provided for the island? The emphasis placed by the Japanese upon self-sufficiency had demonstrated hitherto unsuspected capabilities; and when the opportunity occurred for expression to be given to the popular will, educational planners were left in no doubt that whatever programme might be adopted, the primary consideration should now be its relevance to the needs of the people of Singapore rather than those of some alien power.
Chapter IV

FAMILIAR PROBLEMS IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

The events of the years 1942 to 1945, coupled with the change in political philosophy of the Imperial Government at Westminster which followed the General Elections of July 1945, led to new relationships between the territories of British Malaya and the metropolitan power, and ultimately to the emergence of Singapore as an independent city-state. The former Straits Settlements were now dismantled, Penang and Malacca being joined with the erstwhile Federated and Unfederated Malay States to form the ill-fated Malayan Union. The Union was intended to have a strong central government, and to provide citizenship rights to the members of all races who had been born in Malaya or who had lived in the country for at least ten of the preceding fifteen years. But the threat to the special status of the Malay community implicit in such an arrangement was soon recognised, and a campaign of opposition to the Union rapidly gathered momentum. As a result, in 1948 the Union was dissolved, to be replaced by the somewhat awkwardly structured Federation of Malaya which, in 1957, achieved independence within the British Commonwealth. Although this new Federation offered common citizenship rights to all who were born in the country, in order to acquire citizenship those who were not born locally were required to have been resident not less than fifteen of the previous twenty-five years, and be able to speak Malay or English. These requirements effectively excluded a large proportion of China-born Chinese from participation in the political process, and
ensured that, when power should be handed over by the British, it would be exercised by Malay leaders, a fact that was not lost upon the residents of Singapore.

Meanwhile, in 1946, Singapore had been established as a separate Crown Colony. As early as 1943, a Malayan Planning Unit had been established by the British, the purpose being to work out post-war objectives and programmes. By early 1945, two distinct, embryonic administrations had evolved within this Unit, one for the proposed Malayan Union, and the other for Singapore. There appear to have been three major considerations which led to the decision to separate the island from the peninsula. The first arose from the anticipated imperial strategic situation in the Far East. Singapore provided an ideal military, naval and air base from which British control could be exercised in the region and as such, it should be separated, so far as possible, from future political developments in the Malay peninsula. Then there was the economic aspect: British commercial interests required for their operations a secure base, which also, ideally, should be insulated from whatever political changes might occur on the mainland. And finally, there was the political factor: former members of the Malayan Civil Service were conscious of the extent of British responsibility for the events which had resulted in the growth of a large, economically powerful and potentially politically aggressive minority within the Malay states. They recognised that the addition of the overwhelmingly Chinese population of Singapore to the proposed pan-Malayan Union would further jeopardise the special position of the Malay community; and so the decision was taken to create of
Singapore a separate colony that might remain under British rule with, perhaps, some limited participation in government by the local population. This decision was not reversed when the British Labour Party came to power, and it was to have a profound effect upon all major policy decisions.¹

When the colonial administration was formally instituted by an Order in Council dated March 27, 1946, the United Kingdom government, seeking to deflect possible adverse criticism, specified that it was not intended "to preclude or prejudice in any way the fusion of Singapore and the Malayan Union in a wider union at a future date should it be considered that such a course were desirable."² Despite this proviso, the realisation of the implications of Singapore's changed constitutional position had a considerable impact upon informed opinion. Although before the war, separate governments had existed for the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, in practice a common administrative superstructure had evolved, and people and capital moved freely between the nominally separate political units. The entrepôt trade, upon which Singapore's prosperity was based, had grown in direct proportion to the degree of freedom of access to Malaya's markets and raw materials enjoyed by Singapore's merchants. Prior to 1942, it is true that the Federated Malay States and each Unfederated State had their own customs services, and set individual tariff barriers which tended to operate against goods from the free-port of Singapore; but under the proposed arrangement, all Malay States as well as the settlements of Penang and Malacca would now be grouped behind a single tariff barrier which could
be raised or lowered without reference to the interests of Singapore.

The prospect of such future economic exclusion failed to appeal to Singapore's commerce-conscious community. Throughout the period of Singapore's existence as a separate Crown Colony, the assumption that the island's survival depended upon some form of close political as well as economic association with the rest of Malaya was implicit in the policy statements of all who claimed to speak for its inhabitants. The awareness of Singapore's vulnerability in a potentially hostile South-east Asian setting inspired the desire for association with a larger political unit, and the logic of physical setting and past history pointed unmistakably to the peninsula. When the nation building potential of education came under consideration, the nation perceived was pan-Malayan rather than Singaporean. The island's first post-war political party, the Malayan Democratic Union (M.D.U.)—formed by a group of young, left-wing intellectuals—argued strongly in favour of free, compulsory elementary education, with "all races and tongues . . . assembled into the same building" and that only thus could the "essential unity of the various sections of the Malayan people . . . be achieved." Furthermore, to provide a lingua franca for the country, the M.D.U. insisted that at the post-primary stage Malay should be a compulsory subject for all non-Malay speaking students, and that to promote a "common sense of citizenship" there was need for a "unified pan-Malayan educational administration." The aim was a single political unit, and to achieve this, education should be used for the promotion of a pan-Malayan identity.
The growing consciousness of the need to relate education to the development of a new, if not yet clearly defined nation-state seems to have derived not only from such external considerations as the dependence of the island's economy upon access to the Malayan market and materials, and the importance of maintaining international trading contacts, but also from a significant change of attitude of the island's Chinese and Indian communities. It has been noted that the phenomenal growth of population in Singapore during the nineteenth and first twenty years of the present centuries was due largely to immigration rather than natural increase, and that the general expectation of immigrants from both China and India was that of an ultimate return to the land of birth. This assumption naturally resulted in loyalties being directed towards India or China rather than Singapore or Malaya, which accounts for the oft-noted transient character of a large part of the population. The significance of this lies in the fact that there was relatively little interest displayed in local affairs, the sense of national identity expressing itself through membership in local branches of one or other of the China-based political organisations such as the Kuomintang or Chinese Communist Party or, in the case of Indians, in one of the various caste associations or the Singapore Indian Association. During the Japanese occupation, Indian nationalism found ready expression through the activities of the Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army. However, changes in the pattern of immigration led to a growth of interest in local affairs and hence a larger popular involvement in the decision-making process. Immigration had received its first
check during the First World War, and later, at times of trade recession in the 1920's, the numbers of new arrivals declined. During the Depression years of 1929 to 1934, immigration virtually ceased, and indeed, Singapore in common with the rest of Malaya became a net exporter of population. In 1938, the Indian government ban on the emigration of labour reduced Indian immigration to a trickle, and the Pacific War froze the movement of people for a period of more than three-and-a-half years. The emergence of independent governments on the Indian subcontinent did nothing to encourage the resumption of the flow of people to Singapore from India or Pakistan, and in China the acquisition of power by the Chinese Communist Party in 1949 resulted in the almost total discontinuance of movement from the Chinese Mainland to the island colony. These factors, combined with the more evenly balanced sex ratio, led more and more people to accept the possibility—and perhaps even the desirability—of a future for themselves and their families in their adopted surroundings.

The changed character of the Singaporean community is most graphically demonstrated by the following comparative figures of Chinese born locally (i.e., in Singapore or Malaya) for the three census years of 1921, 1931 and 1947:

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1947</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nos. of Chinese born locally</td>
<td>79,686</td>
<td>150,033</td>
<td>437,243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total Singaporean</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese population</td>
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These figures were, in the opinion of the Chief Census officer, "positive evidence . . . of a general intention amongst the Chinese community to settle." The idea of permanency in turn stimulated a heightened interest in local matters, an interest which expressed itself in a variety of ways, and which resulted in the emergence of several parties and a plethora of politically active trade unions. It also resulted in the increasing involvement of Chinese secondary school students in politics. These expressions of heightened public awareness occurred, for the most part, during the "Emergency" (1948-60), and educational developments can be understood only if viewed within this wider context.

The major pre-occupation of the British Military Administration which governed the island for six months following the Japanese surrender was the restoration of law and order, and the efficient administration of social services. Officials set about this formidable task with energy and enthusiasm, and received, for the most part, the willing co-operation of the population. But, temporarily obscured by the size of problems connected with the finding and distribution of adequate supplies of rice, the control of burgeoning black-market operations, the settlement of property and war-damage claims in the absence of supporting documentation, and the vociferous demands for vengeance against all who were suspected of collaboration with the Japanese, there remained the unresolved question of the future of Singapore. The Malayan Communist Party (M.C.P.), which had led the resistance to Japanese rule throughout Malaya, now sought the realisation of its ideal of an independent, Communist State through the establishment of trade unions—which might
later be used for disruptive purposes—and the infiltration and control of political organisations.\textsuperscript{11} During those early months of military rule, little consideration was given to the ultimate aims of education, such attention as could be spared to public instruction being devoted almost wholly to the reopening of schools.\textsuperscript{12} During this period, education in Singapore came under the jurisdiction of the Civil Affairs Section of the Military Administration, and a Major D. Roper was appointed to take charge. Pressed by the need to find accommodation for the very considerable numbers of military personnel, schools were initially viewed as providing a solution to this problem, and many were commandeered. Major Roper asserted that the people of Singapore,

\ldots though naturally eager for the day when these schools will revert to their normal use, will not in the meantime unduly begrudge the proper housing of the liberating forces necessary for the firm foundation of law and order.\ldots It is the desire of the Chief Civil Affairs Officer \ldots that schools not required for military purposes shall be reopened if only to get the children off the streets.\textsuperscript{13}

The demand was, indeed, enormous. All parents now seemed to desire an education for their children, the position being exacerbated by older youths and young adults whose schooling had been interrupted or prevented by the war. On September 25, 1945 "thousands of children flocked to Singapore schools \ldots in an effort to catch up with their education" and the authorities, who had anticipated a "big rush" for registration nonetheless were "astounded."\textsuperscript{14} As the schools of the American Methodist Mission had been occupied by the Army, arrangements were made for their schools to be conducted in Government school buildings during the
afternoons from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. The practice of conducting two schools daily in each building was subsequently extended to practically all schools in the island, and, with some amendment in the hours, is one which has continued to this day.

Government announcements concerning educational policy were equivocal. On October 6, 1945, an official release stated: "The guiding principle underlining the future educational policy of Malaya will be, to aim at a system that will be in keeping with the ideal of Malaya as one country with one destiny." But the nature of the "destiny" was nowhere specified. It was, the release continued, "too early to outline a clear cut statement on what the future of education" was to be, although the matter was being "carefully considered" by the authorities. The problem was "a very difficult and complicated one" and no early decision could be expected. In the meantime, it was proposed to resume grants-in-aid to those institutions which had previously received such assistance, and to "utilize the machinery" which had been established before the war. The former regulations must remain in force, and registration of schools and teachers was "an essential part of the control of education in any civilized country" for it was the only means by which "the qualifications and characters of teachers as well as the standards of the schools themselves" could be maintained "at the level required by the public interest."

In November, without warning, it was announced that school fees were to be introduced retroactively from the beginning of October, and the news came as a shock to many parents. In face of mounting protests,
it was subsequently agreed that parents in receipt of 'emergency relief' whose children attended Government or Aided schools, would not be required to pay such fees.\textsuperscript{19} On November 21, 1945, the \textit{Straits Times} carried an editorial which argued strongly in favour of free education, stating that its provision could be regarded as "an essential duty." The comment went on to assert that the future civil government would "commit a grave error" if it did not provide free education "on a far greater scale than anything contemplated by its predecessors." The volume of the demand for education suggests that the belief was now widely held that education should be available to all as a matter of right, rather than as a privilege to be enjoyed by those who could afford it. The response of the administration indicates, by and large, that this view was accepted and indeed shared by officials. The initial decision to reimpose fees bears all the appearances of a panic measure to limit the number of would-be students, in view of the acute shortage of accommodation. Indeed, the history of education in Singapore during the period 1946 to 1951 can be summed up as an ambitious attempt to provide a kind of instruction for as many as possible of the school age population of Singapore, a fact that is illustrated by the increase in government expenditure on education, which rose from 5.3 per cent of the total budget for 1946 to 13.2 per cent of the budget in the latter year (see Appendix E). But in seeking to satisfy the enormous demand, the administration found itself unable to devote much effort to discovering a solution to the other major problems of education in the Island: most notably, the question of the language of instruction, and the
related enigma presented by the continued existence of a separate system of Chinese schools.

Neither of these problems was, of course, new. The failure of the pre-war administration to establish a single, guiding educational policy had permitted, as we have seen, the hardening of linguistic divisions within society, whilst at the same time, it encouraged the growth of a largely unregulated system of private schools. The Japanese occupation had done nothing to dispose of either of these ailments, which now reappeared in acute form. Before considering the policy adopted by the administration to deal with these problems, it is necessary to comment briefly upon the nature of the government of Singapore during the period under review. Under the British Military Administration, the chief Civil Affairs officer had been assisted by an Advisory Council which consisted of a number of senior officials and nominated unofficial members. Although this council lacked precise definition by law, it was permitted to continue to function until the end of 1947. In July of that year, an Ordinance was passed which provided for the division of the island into four electoral divisions: in the Municipal Area there were to be two double member constituencies, and in the Rural Area, two single-member constituencies. To be eligible to vote, the essential qualifications were possession of British citizenship and not less than one year's residence in the Colony prior to the polling date. The extent of popular interest in these new arrangements can be gauged by the fact that following voter registration, 22,387 names appeared on the roll, or somewhere between 20 and 25 per cent of those judged to be eligible.
When the new Council was formed in 1948, it consisted of the Governor, four *ex officio* members, five nominated official members (officials), three members elected by the Chambers of Commerce and six popularly elected members. In this way, the principle of popular representation was introduced in Singapore for the first time. In 1951, the number of popularly elected members was increased from six to nine, and the Council thus constituted continued in existence until revised arrangements were introduced in 1955, following the recommendations of a Commission headed by Sir George Rendel.

Politics in Singapore were, predictably, much affected by the 'Emergency,' which commenced in June, 1948. Prior to that date, most shades of opinion falling under the rubric 'radical' found effective expression through the Malayan Democratic Union, which argued and demonstrated in favour of an immediate end to all forms of imperialism, and played a crucial role in fostering a political awareness amongst many who hitherto had been apathetic. In 1947, leaders of the party "harangued the citizens of Singapore," and early the following year, 10,000 people joined a march organised by the M.D.U. "to make known to the British . . . our determination for self-government." But the M.D.U. derived much of its inspiration and support from the Malayan Communist Party--indeed, several of its founder members were known communists --and under the threat of special security regulations introduced in response to the "Emergency," the party voluntarily disbanded itself, many of its more militant members going underground. The result was that politics, within the limits permitted by the law, were dominated
until the end of 1954 by the more moderate, generally pro-British, and entirely westernised Progressive Party. This party derived most of its support from the Chinese business and professional community, and was indeed formed to protect the interests of the "Straits-born and domiciled." Thus it transpired that there was little serious division of opinion over objectives between the members of the Council and the Government during the years prior to 1955, notwithstanding the frequently sharp criticism offered by elected members over the means adopted to achieve those generally agreed ends. The Annual Report for 1949 makes reference to the progress towards self-government made "in the constructive harmony of the Legislative Council" (p. 5).

In retrospect, the major educational problems of the period can be seen to have fallen into one of three major inter-related categories, each dependent for its solution upon a decision concerning the ultimate purpose of education. Under the general heading 'volume' appear such questions as who were to receive education, and for how long, and at whose expense. Although questions of this nature were not posed in quite these terms for public debate, there does appear to have been a wide measure of agreement amongst educators and officials that some form of elementary education should be available to all. No doubt, educational developments in the United Kingdom had had their effect on attitudes, and in this respect it is worthy of mention that the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction of 1943, which foreshadowed the 1944 Education Act, clearly indicated the Government's acceptance of responsibility in Great Britain "to secure for children a happier childhood
and a better start in life; to ensure a fuller measure of education and opportunity for young people and to provide means for all of developing the various talents with which they are endowed. . . ."\textsuperscript{26} The 1944 Act provided, \textit{inter alia}, for compulsory education between the ages of five and fifteen.\textsuperscript{27} In Singapore, where previously never more than half the school-age population had attended recognised schools, the facilities clearly did not exist to allow for universal education; nevertheless, the principle of 'education for all' was now accepted, and to provide this, the existing facilities—both public and private—were to be supported and extended within the limits imposed by other demands on the Colony's resources. What this meant in practice will be revealed by consideration of the local Government's proposals, and the proportion of public funds allocated to education.

The second category of problems was that concerned with the language of instruction. Amongst the welter of emotional appeals and intellectual arguments, it is possible here to determine certain general trends. First of all, the system of separate schools for each of the four major language groups, established under pre-war British colonial rule, which had survived the Japanese occupation, now perpetuated itself, a process that was reinforced by the fears of cultural extinction on the part of each of the communities. Government policy generally acquiesced in this process, while at the same time actively seeking to increase the facilities available for English-medium education. During the period under review, by far the largest part of government expenditure on education was devoted to the support and extension of English-medium
instruction. Thus, in 1948, 75.3 per cent of official expenditure on education in Singapore was devoted to English primary, secondary and higher education. In the same year, Malay education accounted for 8.7 per cent, Chinese 5.6 per cent and Indian 0.5 per cent of the education budget. In 1954, the last full year before the 'Rendel' constitution was introduced, the corresponding figures were: English education 73.6 per cent, Malay education 4.0 per cent, Chinese education 14.4 per cent, and Indian education 0.4 per cent. In the matter of expenditure, the evidence is clear that the government sought to meet the continuing demand for English-medium education, while intermittently increasing assistance to Chinese schools, and de-emphasising both Malay and Indian education.

The final group of problems with which government educational policy was concerned was that of control. The plural system of schools that had evolved during the earlier colonial period came increasingly to present a specifically political challenge to the government. The immediate post-war years saw a rapid increase in the number of private English, Chinese and Indian schools called into existence by a demand for education which could not be satisfied by government and government-aided schools alone. Schools in which English was the medium of instruction presented little difficulty in terms of control: once such schools were registered, they were subject to periodic inspection and, assuming they met certain minimum requirements, they could apply for financial assistance. The threat of withdrawal of support and de-registration was always sufficient to ensure the compliance of these schools with the
existing regulations. But Chinese schools, in particular, presented a different problem. The Education Department's inspectorate was inadequately staffed with officers capable of undertaking the kind of close supervision required, and the curricula of such schools followed patterns established in China. The text-books were published in China, for Chinese schools and, at least until 1949, the school-teachers themselves were generally trained in that country. The boards of management of Chinese schools were unwilling to accept the conditions attached to grants-in-aid, and the schools consciously fostered loyalties directed towards China.

In order to deal with these three major categories of problems, the Government, at the suggestion of the Colonial Office in London, prepared an Education Programme, generally referred to as the Ten Year Plan, which was tabled before the Advisory Council on December 19, 1946. The principles underlying the Plan were:

a) that Education should aim at fostering and extending the capacity for self-government, and the ideal of civic loyalty and responsibility;

b) that equal educational opportunity should be afforded to the children—both boys and girls—of all races; and

c) that upon a basis of free primary education there should be developed such secondary, vocational and higher education as would best meet the needs of the country.

With regard to the first principle, it will be noted that the "capacity
for self-government" was related quite directly to the "ideal of civic loyalty," and from this it is evident that it was not the intention to foster a pan-Malayan consciousness. Although publication of the Plan aroused a good deal of interest and discussion, the implications of the first principle appear to have gone unremarked until after the Plan had been adopted by the Council, when Francis Thomas, then a senior teacher at St. Andrews School, drew attention to it, claiming that civic loyalty concerned solely with Singapore, was "too narrow and selfish." The essential point about this first principle is that, in seeking to redirect loyalties away from China and India, the new object of loyalty was to be insular rather than peninsular, and as such, it appears to have conflicted with the prevailing opinion of its day.

The second and third principles marked a major break with the past, although the means proposed for their achievement retained many features deriving directly from the former system. Policy now was to be directed towards the provision of "universal free primary education" through the medium of one or other of the four main languages of the island. The question of whether or not education should be compulsory could not be considered until enough "efficient schools" had been provided, and the first objective was to develop a six-year free primary course for all between the approximate ages of six and twelve years, with provision for this period to be extended, when practicable, to correspond with that prevailing in the United Kingdom. In Primary Chinese, Malay and Tamil schools, English was to be introduced as a subject at the beginning of the third year, which placed the official
seal of approval upon the establishment of English as the *lingua franca*. The plan recognised the fact that, in the past, the only schools in which students drawn from all ethnic communities intermingled freely had been the English schools, and the intention was stated emphatically that in future, all schools should be "regional rather than racial," to "ensure the intermingling of pupils of all races in all the activities of school life." This expression of intention, however, appears to have been no more than a gesture, since nobody anticipated a sudden rush on the part of, for example, Chinese parents to gain admission for their children into Malay or Tamil schools, in preference to English schools.

When the original plan had been prepared by J. B. Neilson, the Director of Education, it had contained the proposal that admission to free Primary English schools should be open only to children whose mother-tongue was English, or in whose homes English was spoken. Subsequently, a Select Committee of the Council, appointed to consider and suggest means of financing the scheme, recommended an extension to include children of families with "English School associations." But when the programme was finally debated in the Advisory Council, removal of any such restriction was sought by one of the unofficial members, C. C. Tan, who subsequently was to become leader of the Progressive Party. Tan argued that, under the existing system, students of all ethnic groups had been admissible to English primary schools without qualification concerning their mother-tongue, whereas now, large sections of the school-going population would be excluded on the grounds that English was not their mother-tongue, or that they lacked the necessary
"association" with an English-school. He pointed out that such a provision would be in direct contradiction with the principle implied in "regional" rather than "racial" schools. Despite the spirited opposition of the Director of Education—who argued that there was widespread agreement on the part of educationists both in Singapore and abroad, that the best approach to education was through the medium of the mother-tongue—Tan's amendment received the unanimous support of other unofficial members, and the matter was finally decided by the President of the Council who, whilst noting the practical difficulties involved in providing sufficient facilities, accepted the principle underlying the amendment, which was thereupon adopted without being put to the vote.37

The assumption that English-medium instruction was preferable to vernacular education, although nowhere clearly stated, was implicit in several of the provisions of the Plan. Thus, paragraph nine of the Plan provided for "the generous selection by merit, after the third vernacular school year, of Chinese, Malay, and Indian pupils from the primary vernacular schools for free training in an Intensive Special Course through the medium of English in the Primary English School," where previously such special classes had been provided for Malay pupils only, the purpose being to enable such students to transfer into "the appropriate ordinary English Schools" as soon as they were fit to join them.

The Plan made provision for an extensive development of "post-primary" schools which were to be fee-paying, and admission to which would be restricted to pupils from primary schools who had reached "the
prescribed standard of attainment." Post-primary English education could lead either to an academic secondary school curriculum culminating in a School Certificate examination in preparation for possible higher education, or to a Junior Technical School course. Vernacular post-primary schools were to provide "general, practical and vocational studies such as [would] prepare pupils for careers open to vernacular students." The authors of the Plan indicated that one of the main functions of such schools would be to serve as a source for the supply of potential vernacular school teachers. There was no indication in the Plan as to what other careers might be open to the graduates of vernacular post-primary schools in Singapore.

Amongst other aspects of education dealt with by the Plan, provision was made for the establishment of a full-time Teachers' Training College in the island. The hope was expressed that the Malayan Union would continue to permit Singapore's Malay students to train at the Sultan Idris Training College at Tanjong Malim, and at the Malay Women Teachers' Training College at Malacca. But apart from these exceptions, it was indicated that the intention was for students from each of the communities to "intermingle in all college activities," in order to breakdown "racial isolation." Teachers for secondary classes would continue to be recruited from Raffles College.

The Plan assumed that an estimated 100,000 pupils would eventually become eligible for free primary education under the scheme, and noted that in the past, the Government had provided free vernacular education to Malay students only. In 1947, the Government operated
thirty-five Malay schools with a total enrolment of 6,463, and it argued that, as the new policy would mean "practically the introduction of a new system rather than the extension of an already widely based one," development would have to be gradual. In order to implement the Plan, it was proposed as an initial step to make free places available for from 5 to 10 per cent of the enrolment in all primary schools, the figure to be increased when public finances permitted. Furthermore, it was intended as soon as possible for the basis of vernacular grants-in-aid to be changed from the existing "per capita" system to the scheme which operated in respect of Aided English schools, whereby an amount equal to the difference between "approved" expenditure and the school's revenue should be granted from government funds. It was noted, however, that the granting of assistance to vernacular schools on the same basis as that for English schools could only be achieved when the economic situation became more stable, and salaries and school fees had "found a general level." In addition to increased assistance to existing institutions, the Plan provided for the construction of an average of ten government Primary Schools each year, each school to accommodate some 500 pupils. It was estimated that when fully implemented the Annually Recurrent cost of the plan would be in the region of $13,500,000, with capital expenditure on buildings during the ten-year period being approximately one and a half million dollars annually. The Select Committee noted that Annual Recurrent Expenditure on education in the island at the time was roughly $3,000,000 or some 5 per cent of total public expenditure; nevertheless, it was their opinion that, although additional
revenue would have to be found, "a great part of the policy can be achieved by the allocation to education of a more generous proportion of the present public expenditure--a proportion more in accord with that prevailing in Great Britain." An Unofficial Member of the Advisory Council, Thio Chan Bee, pointed out during the course of the debate on the Plan that the proportion of public expenditure on education in England and Wales at the time was about 19 per cent, and that according to the 1947 Estimates for Singapore, it was proposed to spend more on Broadcasting than on Education. The Plan was speedily adopted.

At the time of the preparation of the Ten Years' Plan, little in the way of statistical information had been available. The proposals had been based upon an estimated population of 770,000, but by August 1947 the rough results of the 1947 census had become available, and these indicated a total population of 940,756 made up as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>728,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Malay races&quot;</td>
<td>116,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>71,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>24,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>940,756</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indeed, during the period after the war, there was an unpredicted and persistent increase in the number of births registered, with the result that in the years 1947 to 1957 more than one-third of the population was under ten years, and more than half under twenty years of age. It soon became apparent that, even if all the new schools proposed in the
Plan were built on schedule, there would still be insufficient accommodation for all those eligible for free education. Furthermore, before all the provisions could be implemented, detailed planning was required, with the result that little real progress was made in 1948. In that year, efforts were concentrated on the re-habilitation of existing facilities, and plans prepared for the establishment of the proposed Teachers' Training College so that staff would be available for the new schools. Under the terms of an Education Ordinance, an Education Finance Committee and Education Committee were established, the former to take over the work of the old Straits Settlements Education Board, and the latter to advise the Government, its function being perceived as "vital . . . for the planned development of educational advance in this Colony along lines best adapted to local requirements."  

In 1949, with data available from a major educational survey a Supplementary Five Year Plan was prepared, which provided for an additional eighteen new primary schools each year commencing in 1950, to accommodate the extra 90,000 pupils which, it was estimated, would require places if the objective of free, universal education was to be achieved. Each school would accommodate between 480 and 500 students, or from 960 to 1,000 students in double sessions each day. These schools were designed according to a simple plan, and were expected to be "cheap but serviceable, with classrooms, administration and latrine blocks." The intention was to construct nine of these schools each year by June 1st, and the second nine by September 1st. This Plan was not, of course, intended to replace the Ten Years' Programme, but
rather to make additional provision in the light of new anticipated requirements. As the greatest demand was found to be for places in the English schools, it was decided that the new schools under the Supplementary plan would be English schools.

To provide the necessary teachers for Government Aided, and private schools, a building was acquired for the Teachers' Training College; but when the arrangements were announced, it was found that in the first year the College would provide training for only 150 teachers for English schools and forty for Chinese schools. Significantly the proposal to train teachers in Singapore for Chinese schools aroused the antagonism of the Boards of Management of Chinese schools, the opinion being forcefully expressed that teachers trained locally would not possess the necessary background or qualifications which could be acquired only through training in China. Since the achievement of power in China by the Chinese Communist Party, a new problem was that training in China was no longer readily available to the graduates of local Chinese schools. In the meantime, the system of Normal training for teachers continued to produce staff for English and Malay, as well as Chinese elementary schools, although towards the end of 1950, a Select Committee recommended to the Legislative Council that full-time training in the Teachers' Training College be the basic qualification for admission to the proposed Unified Education Service, and that Normal training be abolished as soon as the existing crisis in school staffing had been overcome.

In terms of building progress, the eighteen schools proposed under the Supplementary Plan were completed during 1950 (although not
by the September 1st deadline), but only four of the "regional" schools under the Ten Years' Programme were commenced, and none completed. The new schools, coupled with extensions of existing buildings, provided an additional 17,000 new places, which made 1950 the year of greatest material progress in the period under review. Thereafter, the rate of expansion slowed down as it became more difficult to find, and acquire, new sites; as building costs rose rapidly; and as the shortage of teachers persisted. In October 1951, Dr. C. J. P. Paglar (the Member for Changi) drew attention to the "dilatory action" being taken by the Government to give effect to the Education Plans, noting that there was a "terrific, staggering backlog" which was likely to involve double the original time needed for full implementation. He urged the Government to give building contracts to private firms if the Public Works Department was unable to handle the plan, as "more than 50,000 children of school-age" had been denied admission to schools. By the end of 1952, the position was that only six of the "regional" schools of the Ten Years' Programme had been completed, with two more under construction, while under the Supplementary Plan, only thirty-two of the scheduled fifty-four schools had been completed, with no more under construction. Members of the Legislative Council expressed their keen disappointment over the failure of the Government to achieve the targets set under the two plans.

The great emphasis placed upon universally available elementary education tended to divert attention away from the necessity to expand post-primary institutions, and the extension of secondary education
facilities proposed under the Ten Years' Programme did not keep pace with the progress made in elementary schools. The implications of this began to become apparent by 1952 when, in response to mounting criticism, the Director of Education protested that it was quite impossible to build up an education system overnight. . . . We are now in the position, if we could only get the buildings as we first planned them, to turn every one of our Ten-Year Regional Plan Schools into Secondary Schools, because our 90 Supplementary Plan Schools [would] give us sufficient accommodation for our . . . primary children. . . . We also, of course, want teachers. . . . The question of teachers for Secondary schools is a most formidable problem. . . . The young men and women who ought to go into Secondary Schools are not coming out of the University. They are going into other and more lucrative walks of life. . . .56

Thio Chan Bee returned to the subject later in the year when he asked what was to be done about the students who were then completing their elementary schooling, but for whom no further education would be available, as the planned secondary schools had not been built. Education in the highest elementary school class was, he said, "half-baked"; students at that level did not know enough to be employable, yet they had learnt enough not to wish to be engaged in manual labour. Then again, he continued, at the age of thirteen they are not supposed to be employed. We have to provide for their schooling for at least two years more. . . . Otherwise they will be just ripe for juvenile delinquency or subversive propaganda.57

The demand for additional post-primary facilities might have been reduced or at least deferred by increasing the period of primary schooling; but unfortunately, there were never sufficient places in recognised schools
to accommodate all would-be students between the ages of 6+ and 12+, and the construction of new secondary schools, and the extension of existing institutions, proved to be quite unequal to the demand.

Turning to the range of problems associated with the question of language of instruction, it is possible to identify in post-war Singapore two conflicting currents of opinion, both of which may well be traceable to the early nineteenth-century controversy in British India between the 'Orientalists,' and the 'Westernizers.' On the one hand there was the view, held in the pre-war period by senior officials such as Winstedt and Clementi, that vernacular instruction should be encouraged, with some provision for English instruction to meet certain specific needs. In the immediate post-war period, the cause of vernacular education was supported most cogently by D. D. Chelliah who was, at the time, Vice-Principal of St. Andrews (English) School. In a thesis originally submitted for the Ph.D. degree at the University of London in 1940, but published—with some amendments—in 1947, Chelliah argued, on educationally sound grounds, that the fullest development of the individual personality in harmony with his "society or community" could be achieved only through instruction imparted in the mother-tongue. Since the society was made up of different linguistic communities, Chelliah argued that all primary education should be given in the mother-tongue of the pupil so that his cultural heritage might be preserved, but with provision made for English to be taught as a second language, to provide the lingua franca essential in the polyglot colony. Post-primary education would provide for vocation-oriented schools in
which instruction would continue to be through the vernacular, but with English further developed to the point of being an effective means of communication. In addition, there would be Anglo-Vernacular schools, in which the vernaculars would continue to be taught, but with some and ultimately all other subjects taught through the medium of English. These schools would lead, in suitable cases, to further academic education, in English, but with continuing opportunities for studies of oriental cultures. The object was not to superimpose Western culture on Eastern, but to achieve "a careful blending of both" resulting in what Chelliah termed a 'modern Malayan culture.' Chelliah argued that the content of education should be related to the circumstances of Malaya, and that the curricula of the various language streams, being basically similar, would tend to draw the communities into a closer understanding.

The second view was one that in essence argued for the widest possible extension of English-medium instruction, and the partial or complete removal of government support from Vernacular education. The reasons advanced in support of this view tended, before the Pacific War, to be related to the commercial value of an English education. But in the post-war years, a further and in some respects more compelling argument was put forward: since vernacular education in practice had succeeded in producing a society of disparate communities, each clinging tenaciously to its own language, interests and cultural values, what was needed to weld these communities into a single harmonious society, with shared values and a common cultural heritage, was an education system
with a common curriculum, taught through the medium of a single language. Since English was already virtually the *lingua franca* of Malaya (including Singapore) and since, so the argument went, access to modern, Western science could most easily be gained through that language, it was only natural that the Government should devote its efforts to the extension of the English school system. One teacher, Tan Teik Kooi, writing in the January issue of *The Malayan Educator* (published by the Malayan Teachers' Union) went further, asserting that "all schools should be brought under a common code of regulations, common standards of staffing, equipment and amenities." He stated that "Education . . . should be in the hands of the State, since only a 'state system' of schools could achieve social unity." In November, 1948, the Director of Education (A. W. Frisby), speaking of the two new "regional" schools it was proposed shortly to open, announced that although parents would have the opportunity of "saying whether English or a vernacular language would be the medium of tuition," he thought that they would choose English, and if that were the case, vernacular languages would be "taught as subjects." Some ten days later, the leading English language newspaper argued that there should be a major extension of English-medium education for the Chinese of Singapore. It drew attention to the fact that the Chinese population now contained "a large local born element, quite distinct from the Straits-born Chinese community in the traditional sense," which spoke only Chinese and had not been assimilated "to Singapore as a city of the British Commonwealth and of the English-speaking world," and that it had no ties with the rest of the "domiciled population."
The editorial continued:

In a city with a Chinese population of 78.8 percent, the sort of education which Chinese children get is bound to be the major influence in determining the political and cultural climate of the future. The English school is the mould of Malayan citizenship, proved and attested by the Straits Chinese, whereas the Chinese vernacular school merely perpetuates the present barriers between the Chinese-speaking population and the rest.65

The editorial went on to argue that top priority should be given to the employment of Malaya-trained rather than China-trained teachers, in order to foster "Malaya-centred consciousness."

The public pronouncements of senior officials were ambiguous at times, but the general trend of official comment in support of English education during the years 1946 to 1954 was unmistakable. In 1950, the Annual Report for the Colony noted (p. 73) that,

parents of Singapore have shown an increased desire for educational facilities for their children and although there are still some who insist on vernacular education the present indications are that the majority . . . prefer their children to be educated in English schools and would fulfil their preference if accommodation were available.

The degree of priority afforded to vernacular education, as well as its ultimate destiny, might well have been inferred from such comments as the following which appeared in the 1950 Education Report:

With the English education of the majority of Singapore's children assured, plans can now be developed to improve the condition of vernacular education and to absorb it where possible into the regional school system where a consistent demand for vernacular education survives. We shall now be in a position to ensure that it is efficient and of a nature likely to centre the thoughts and sympathies of its pupils on Malaya and Singapore rather than on an alien and overseas culture.66
Elsewhere, the same report asserted that it had become apparent as early as 1947 that communal schools had not been "likely to assist in producing that unity and corporate feeling that was essential [in the younger generation of Singapore] if progress towards nationhood was to be made." While it was realised that primary instruction should ideally be given through the medium of the mother-tongue, "the need of literacy in English in a polyglot population, such as Singapore," was overriding. Furthermore, the report continued,

there is no indication whether children attend vernacular schools by the choice of their parents or because they cannot obtain admission to English schools. There is no doubt . . . that if all parents could select the language medium for the education of their children, a very large number who now send their children to vernacular schools would elect to send them to schools where English is the medium of instruction. . . . When put into practice . . . the [Supplementary Five-Year] Plan will probably mean the extension of English education in the first place.

In May, 1951, the Government notified the Committees of Management of Chinese schools of its intention to withdraw grants-in-aid in respect of primary class students "in accordance with the progress of the Ten-Year Education Plan and the Five-Year Supplementary Plan." The withdrawal of assistance was to be progressive, and would begin when the number of vacancies in English primary schools equalled the estimated number of six-year old children in the Colony. This decision may well have been the logical conclusion to the policy pursued over the previous six years; but coming, as it did, without prior notice and without discussion in the Legislative Council, it served to crystallise the long-standing fears of Chinese educators, and it provoked a stormy response.
which foreshadowed yet more turbulent events in connection with the progress of Chinese education. On June 9, 1951, a protest meeting was held at the Chinese Y.M.C.A. which was attended by delegates from over 300 Chinese schools and presided over by Lim Soo Bau, chairman of the Chung Cheng High School. The opinion was expressed that the goodwill previously shown by the Government towards Chinese schools was being withdrawn, along with the financial aid, and that Chinese education was being sacrificed in order to enable the Government to further its policy of developing English education. The meeting resolved unanimously to ask the Education Department to reconsider the "drastic step" of withdrawing aid, and to ask various influential Chinese organisations, including the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, to make representations to the Government on behalf of Chinese schools. Furthermore, the meeting wholeheartedly agreed that the Education Department's policy of controlling the appointments, remuneration, and dismissal of English-language teachers in Chinese schools interfered with the administration of the schools.

The Government, whilst avoiding any direct response to these resolutions, quietly shelved its proposal to discontinue aid to Chinese schools, and under constant pressure, grants were increased during subsequent years. Nevertheless, the cumulative effect of Government policy during the years 1945 to 1954 was to transform the pattern of school attendance in terms of volume and distribution between schools of different media of instruction, as is revealed by the following table. Conclusions concerning the preference of parents for the type of education for their children can be drawn only with the greatest caution from
Table V

SINGAPORE SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS, 1945-1954

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<tr>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>20,423</td>
<td>46,699</td>
<td>53,478</td>
<td>58,096</td>
<td>68,434</td>
<td>72,951</td>
<td>75,974</td>
<td>74,104</td>
<td>79,272</td>
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<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>14,194</td>
<td>23,821</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>4,102</td>
<td>5,551</td>
<td>6,463</td>
<td>7,157</td>
<td>7,862</td>
<td>8,436</td>
<td>8,505</td>
<td>8,579</td>
<td>9,236</td>
<td>10,470</td>
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<td>Indian Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>1,012</td>
<td>1,315</td>
<td>1,486</td>
<td>1,272</td>
<td>1,205</td>
<td>1,271</td>
<td>1,465</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Annual Reports for Singapore, 1946-1947;
these figures, since at no time during the period were there sufficient places in the four types of schools for complete freedom of choice to be exercised. Furthermore, restrictions concerning the pupil-teacher ratio were applied more rigorously in English than in Chinese schools, and the pay and other conditions of service of the teaching staff in the English schools were invariably better than those for vernacular-school teachers, both factors that would have affected the public perception of what constituted the most desirable education. These considerations apart, it is relevant to note that, taking 1946 as the first post-war year for which complete records for registered schools are available, whilst enrolment in Chinese schools showed an increase of 75 per cent by 1954, enrolment in English schools in 1954 was three-and-a half times the 1946 figure. Perhaps of greater significance to the Chinese community of Singapore was the fact that in 1954, the total enrolment in English schools exceeded for the first time the total enrolment in Chinese schools.

With regard to the figures for Malay schools, it should be noted that, although there was a 90 per cent increase in enrolment, the 1954 figure of 10,470 represents a decline in the proportion of the total school-going population of students attending Malay schools compared with the 1946 figure (from 7.2 per cent in 1946 to 5.9 per cent in 1954). In 1950, a press release from the Department of Education indicated that, in the light of the "unmistakable desire on the part of the large majority of Singapore parents" for their children to receive an English education, government Malay schools could be expected to undergo "a
gradual change into English schools." This announcement heralded a major departure from the previous policy towards Malay education; and in May, 1951, a further press report indicated that a scheme was being prepared for English to be taught as a subject in the regular curriculum of Malay schools instead of the former arrangement of offering the language as an "extra" on Saturdays only. Soon after, the Department of Education announced its "Re-orientation Plan" for Malay schools, to take effect from January 1st, 1952. The Government now argued that in view of changed conditions, Malays could no longer isolate themselves from the rest of society and, in order to be able to compete effectively with other races, they must acquire a command of English. Under the plan, Malay was to be used as a medium of instruction for the first three school years only. During that time, English was to be taught as a subject (from the first year on), and after the third year, all subjects other than Malay language and literature were to be studied in English. Those who successfully completed Parjah VII would be permitted to enter a Special Malay Class in an English school at Standard V level. The object was to enable Malay pupils to acquire a working knowledge of their mother-tongue and sufficient knowledge of English to enter a Secondary school of either the academic or vocational kind. According to the Governor, the suggestion for the change had come from the Malay teachers "supported by a large section of the parents," but it has been asserted that neither the Singapore Malay Teachers' Union, nor any other body representative of Malay opinion had been consulted before the plan was announced, with the result that some antagonism was aroused
over what was perceived to be a threat to Malay culture. Within a year, three trained and eighty-six Probationer Teachers of English were working in the Malay schools of the island, thereby introducing "a substantial amount" of English into the curriculum.

With regard to attendance at Indian schools, although the figures in Table V indicate that almost three times as many students enrolled in such schools in 1954 as had been the case eight years earlier, the total of 1,465 pupils serves to underline the poverty of Indian education in the island, and the fact that faced with clearly inadequate facilities and the discouraging indifference of the Department of Education, most Indian parents elected to send their children to English schools where, in any case, their prospects of future employment were so much brighter.

Indeed, the pattern of school-attendance was undoubtedly largely determined by the public perception of the relationship between education and opportunities for employment, and in this respect, government policy was quite unambiguous. The complete absence of post-primary education facilities for students from government Malay schools and aided or private Tamil schools made it clear that apart from the fortunate few who succeeded in escaping from these institutions to an English school, pupils would be obliged to accept employment in jobs requiring minimal education. In Chinese education, thanks to the largely unaided efforts of a few wealthy members of the community, there existed some facilities for secondary education. Ideally, the system provided for six years in primary school, followed by three years
in Junior Middle school and three years in Senior Middle school; but in practice, few students went beyond the primary level. Prior to 1949, those who completed a Senior Middle school education might hope to pursue a higher education, at their parents' expense, in China; but after that year many parents were hesitant to send their children for further education in China under the new régime. Such facilities as existed within Singapore for higher education, although open to the members of all communities, provided instruction through the medium of English; and in practice, the graduates of Chinese Middle schools were seldom able to gain admission. Thus, the professions, other than teaching, were effectively closed to graduates of Chinese schools. In the matter of employment, since the language of administration was English, employment in the government service was available only at the lowest salary levels, with few prospects of promotion.

Only those who entered English schools could hope to acquire the kind of education that would lead to entry into one of the professions, or the senior ranks of the local civil service. But the political significance of this becomes more apparent when it is noted that the development of Raffles College and the King Edward VII College of Medicine into a university had been encouraged by the United Kingdom government as a necessary step in the direction of self-government. As early as 1943, a commission under the chairmanship of Lord Justice Asquith had been set up to prepare a programme to foster higher education in the "colonial territories advancing to independence." The Report of this commission, published in 1945, noted:
The main consideration . . . is that His Majesty's Government has entered upon a programme of social and economic development for the Colonies which is not merely the outcome of a desire to fulfil our moral obligations as trustees of the welfare of Colonial peoples, but is also designed to lead to the exercise of self-government by them. In the stage preparatory to self-government universities have an important part to play; indeed they may be said to be indispensable. To them we must look for the production of men and women with the . . . capacity for leadership which self-rule requires. It is the university which should offer the best means of counteracting the influence of racial differences and sectional rivalries which impede the formation of political institutions on a national basis.82

Before the war, an investigating commission under the chairmanship of Sir W. H. McLean had recommended that the two colleges be united to form a university college as a transitional step in the development of a University of Malaya, but in 1947 a further commission was appointed, this time under the chairmanship of Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders (who had been a member of the Asquith Commission), and the report of this body recommended an immediate advance to full university status. The recommendation was welcomed in the Federation and Singapore; and thus an institution, the function of which was clearly perceived to be related not only to the attainment of professional status, but also to the exercise of political power, came into existence in 1949. In practice, only those who had received an English-school education could hope to take advantage of the prospects that it offered.

Even in the matter of technical education, the opportunities for the graduates of vernacular schools were severely limited, for the few institutions maintained or supported by the Government all required proficiency in English. It was in these circumstances that the Chinese community characteristically decided to meet its needs on its
own initiative and out of its own resources.

As early as 1950, Singapore merchants were reported to be "seriously considering" the establishment of a university to enable Chinese students to receive an academic education in Chinese language, arts and science. In that year, the millionaire-businessman Tan Lark Sye addressed the local Hokkien Association on the subject, drawing attention to the "critical problems" of Chinese education, which included the "migration" of students to English schools; and he proposed the establishment of a Chinese university to reverse the trend and meet the needs of those who sought to further their studies in Chinese culture. The suggestion, however, evoked little response at the time, partly, perhaps, because of the suggestion that a Chinese Department might be endowed at the University of Malaya. But by October 1952, when there was still no early prospect of such a Department coming into existence, pressure once again mounted for some provision to be made for higher education for graduates of the Chinese school system. In due course a Nanyang University General Committee was formed which issued, on April 7th, 1953, a "manifesto." Subsequently, a fund-raising committee was convened, and financial contributions were received from all sections of the Chinese community. Some indication of the enthusiasm with which the project was greeted may be gauged from the fact that the island's tri-shaw riders and taxi-drivers contributed a day's earnings to the project, a sum which amounted to $20,000. Funds were received from many sources, including a pledge of $100,000 yearly from a local Chinese-language Newspaper, but the largest single contribution--
$5 million—was alleged to have been promised by Tan Lark Sye himself, who remained the scheme's most enthusiastic and vocal supporter. Writing to urge the well-known scholar and novelist, Lin Yutang, to accept appointment as Chancellor of the new university, Tan indicated something of the fear that lay behind such widespread support for the project.

If we do not take steps to preserve our culture now, 10 years from now we may find that the education of our people will be on shaky ground. Twenty or 30 years from now our language or literature may perish. In 40 or 50 years perhaps we shall no longer call ourselves Chinese.

The students of Chinese middle schools, not unnaturally, threw themselves with enthusiasm into the task of helping to raise funds. Work commenced on the site in 1954, and the University went into full operation in 1956.

The Government's policy of encouraging English education thus had two profoundly significant effects upon the Chinese-speaking community: it served to create a sense of bitter frustration on the part of those who were in, or who had recently graduated from, Chinese schools and who were denied just reward for their labours; and it provoked fears of cultural extinction. These fears were heightened by educational developments in the Federation, particularly from 1951 on. In that year, a committee of Malays and Europeans under the chairmanship of L. J. Barnes (an Oxford don), published a report which, although originally intended to deal solely with Malay education, in fact made recommendations which affected all aspects of education in the Federation.
These recommendations were greeted with dismay by the peninsula Chinese and, as they were accepted for the most part by the Government of the Federation, there was much anxiety on the part of Singaporean Chinese lest the Government of the Colony should be tempted to follow suit. The Barnes report proposed that primary education should be treated "avowedly and with full deliberation as an instrument for building up a common nationality." The former system of separate vernacular schools was roundly condemned, and in its place, a system of 'National Schools' open to students of all races was to be established, and in these, two languages, Malay and English, were to be used "freely and interchangeably" as the media of instruction. No further encouragement or support was to be extended to vernacular schools, since the aim was now to be a single bilingual educational system open to the children of all ethnic groups. The threat to the survival of Chinese culture under such an arrangement was clear and unmistakable, and the fears of the Chinese in Singapore were not allayed by statements such as that of the Colony's Director of Education, A. W. Frisby, that the Federation's intention of replacing vernacular schools with National Schools was "exactly what we are trying to do here."

While the Barnes Committee was considering Malay education, at the invitation of the Federation Government, two highly respected educationists were conducting an investigation into Chinese schools in the Federation. At the request of the Singapore Government this enquiry was extended to include Chinese education in the island, and the members of the Mission--Dr. William P. Fenn and Dr. Wu Teh Yao--in due course
published their report. Although this report related primarily to the rather different circumstances of the Federation, the findings and comments were in many ways relevant to the schools of Singapore. The original terms of reference for the Mission called for

a preliminary survey of the whole field of Chinese education . . . with particular reference to
(i) bridging the gap between the present communal system of schools and the time when education will be on a non-communal basis with English or Malay as medium of instruction and other language as optional subject, and advising on
(ii) preparation of textbooks for present use with a Malayan as distinct from Chinese background. (p. 2)

Because of the furore these terms of reference created in the local Chinese press, and the "extreme suspicion" on the part of the Chinese community generally, the Mission subsequently re-interpreted its aims and purposes

to survey sympathetically but objectively the entire field of the education of Chinese in Malaya, and to recommend such constructive changes and improvements as would lead to . . . Chinese schools making the greatest contribution to the future welfare and happiness of the people of Malaya and in particular of the Chinese who have chosen that prosperous land as their home.98

Clearly, in re-interpreting their terms of reference in this way, the Mission was in fact calling into question the Government's expressed intention of moving towards a non-communal school-system.

The Mission noted that Western culture had not yet "succeeded in providing the common ground for complete cultural fusion" in a land of several distinct races and cultures, and that it was not possible to create artificially a single culture since "to force unwilling fusion
will almost certainly lead to further cleavage." The report went on to argue in favour of concentrating on "present realities" rather than adopting policies designed to shape the future. In reference to the situation on the Peninsula, it was asserted that the Chinese, by and large, had accepted the desirability of gaining a knowledge of Malay and also of English, and that being so, they should not be required "to surrender the cultural heritage of China." Their conclusion was that it would be desirable for the Chinese to be trilingual, while bilingualism would be sufficient for the Malays and Indians. The Mission advanced the view that there was a continuing need for Chinese schools and that they should be strengthened and helped, rather than eliminated, and encouraged to amend their syllabus, teaching methods and outlook "to fit students as citizens of Malaya." The report proposed methods for the better training of teachers and the improvement of second-language instruction. The Mission was impressed by the degree to which Chinese Malayans not only accept the need for English but actively insist on learning it. This demand is motivated . . . by obvious utilitarian value, but it also stems in part from a recognition of its political and cultural values. To them English is [the] logical and destined lingua franca for Malaya. This fact explains both the Chinese preference, in many cases, for English schools and their insistence that English be taught, and taught effectively, in the Chinese schools.

The teaching of English in Chinese schools seems to us to be in a generally deplorable state. . . .

The Fenn-Wu report recommended an increase of government subsidies to Chinese schools of 100 per cent in 1952, with a further similar increase in 1953, and that the textbooks for all schools, including the Chinese schools, should be "prepared with life in Malaya in mind and . . . based
on modern pedagogical methods." To meet the need for Malayan-centred textbooks, the Mission recommended the establishment of a Committee for Revision and Preparation of Textbooks for Use in Chinese Schools.¹⁰³

The reaction of the Chinese in Singapore to publication of the Fenn-Wu report was generally favourable. Chinese educationists "hailed" the report, although arguing that it was "quite impossible" for students to learn three languages successfully in school. The answer was, they felt, for them to be instructed in Mandarin and one other language "which would be most useful [and] valuable to [them] after school. That would be English and not Malay."¹⁰⁴ The Singapore Chamber of Commerce, after appointing a committee to study the report, endorsed the proposals and strongly urged the Government to "more than double subsidies to Chinese schools . . . next year, with a further increase in 1953."¹⁰⁵ Even the local English-language press was generally approving in tone. The Straits Times noted in an editorial:

In some respects the Fenn-Wu report is an indictment of British administrators and British educationists in this country, who have allowed feelings of suspicion and insecurity to arise among the Chinese with regard to their own schools and their own cultural heritage . . . ; and it is regrettable that it should have taken a foreign mission to this country to discover how intense and universal those feelings were among the Chinese.¹⁰⁶

On the other hand, the report did not entirely escape criticism, particularly from such organisations as the Singapore Chinese British Association and others who, generally, supported the Government in its emphasis upon English education. It was pointed out that the authors had gained their experience chiefly in China and the U.S.A., and were not familiar
with the Malayan conditions; and that whilst it was true that a "Malayan" culture could not be created "by fiat," there was an urgent need to "foster and create ... a unity of outlook among the various racial elements." The Fenn-Wu proposals were irrelevant to the existing conditions and if adopted, Chinese schools would "fail to make their students the citizens we wish them to be." No one, it was argued, was seriously suggesting the elimination of the Chinese language or Chinese culture, even if that were possible, when supporting Regional or National schools. But although cultural diversity was desirable, it could not be permitted to stand in the way of "binding the different racial groups into a united people." In the Federation, the Government tended to favour the recommendations of the Barnes report, although rather than a single kind of school it was finally decided to have two types, one in which Malay would be the medium of instruction, and the other in which instruction would be in English (a proposal that did not much please even the Malays, who argued that such a system would create two nationalities). The future prospects of Chinese education in the Federation were therefore far from encouraging; and as interim measures pending the anticipated demise of the system, the Government there determined upon closer control and inspection of Chinese schools, and the censorship or re-orientation of the contents of Chinese school textbooks.

Since neither the Barnes nor the Fenn-Wu reports had been commissioned by the Singapore Government, no formal decisions were necessary. The reactions of the local press, the Chambers of Commerce, and Unofficial and elected representatives in the legislature clearly indicated,
however, the depth of feelings aroused by the issue, and the Government, whilst continuing its policy of placing emphasis upon English education, stepped up its efforts to draw Chinese schools closer to the concept of 'Regional' schools. This raised in acute form the problems associated with the control of a system which had hitherto succeeded in weathering the rigorous climate of official disinterest with its prevailing wind of disapproval, interrupted by occasional and unpredictable squalls of interference.

It has been noted that in the 1920's and 1930's, the Government of the Straits Settlements sought to control Chinese schools through a system of registration and inspection, with a financial inducement offered to those schools willing to make certain changes in their curricula. In the post-war period, this system was resumed; but with the evolution of the policy objective of 'Regional' schools, financial assistance—vastly increased to English schools—continued to be limited to small, per capita grants to approved Chinese schools, and the payment of the salaries of English-teachers attached to these schools.

During the years 1947 to 1951, several factors combined to depress the standard of education offered by Chinese schools. Apart from overcrowded classes, and inadequate or insanitary premises, the principal difficulty was that of staffing the schools. Due to the poor rates of pay, there were never sufficient teachers, and those who were available frequently were obliged to work through both morning and afternoon sessions. Furthermore, teachers employed to teach English as a second language in these schools were constantly being attracted
to better-paid positions in Government or Aided-English schools. After 1949, the supply of China-trained teachers was curtailed, and the facilities for training teachers locally were quite inadequate to meet the demand. These conditions led to demands for increased Government assistance from organisations representative of both Chinese schools and their teachers.

The widespread sense of dismay that greeted the announcement of the Government's intention to discontinue, in due course, grants-in-aid to Chinese primary schools, followed by the heated debate provoked by publication of the Barnes and Fenn-Wu reports, led to pressure on the Government to reverse its policy concerning assistance to Chinese schools. Rather than encourage the natural withering away that must follow the withdrawal of Government aid from these schools, the policy now was to offer considerably increased grants with conditions attached designed specifically to alter the nature and content of Chinese education. By the end of 1953, the Government's revised means of achieving its long-term aims in respect of vernacular education had been made clear, first of all by the Governor in the course of his annual Budget Address, and later by a Paper on the subject, laid before the Legislative Council. Referring to the Government's "ultimate aim" of a common type of school in Singapore, in which all schools would adopt the same curriculum, the same textbooks and make use of the same medium of instruction, the Governor, Sir John Nicoll, sought to allay fears concerning the effect this would have upon Chinese culture. There was, he said, "no intention of damaging in any way the traditional cultures" which formed "an
invaluable background to the various racial groups" that made up the population of Singapore. The value of these cultures was, he claimed, fully recognised, and they were "so deep seated that ... any talk of damaging them [was] as idle as attempting to ignore them."\(^{117}\)

Despite these assurances of concern for the preservation of traditional cultures, it is difficult to see how the aim of a common type of school could be introduced without radically affecting each of the cultures concerned. As the Chung Shing Jit Pao was to point out later, schools "are places where languages and cultures are developed. If a language or culture is not developed in a school, it will be replaced . . . by another language or culture. . . . The Chinese therefore will fight to the end for the existence of their schools. . . ."\(^{118}\) The precise means by which the Government proposed to achieve its objectives were made public in a White Paper entitled "Chinese Education--Bilingual Education and Increased Aid," which was tabled before the Legislature in December, 1953. In essence, the Government was prepared to give the additional aid sought by Chinese schools provided the courses were designed

\begin{itemize}
  \item[a)] to give all their pupils a working knowledge of English as well as Chinese; and
  \item[b)] to turn out good citizens of this Colony rather than just good Europeans or good Chinese.\(^{119}\)
\end{itemize}

It was noted that, despite the increase in grants paid during 1952, few Chinese schools could afford to pay salaries comparable in any way with those paid to teachers in English schools, and it was therefore proposed
that increased grants would be paid in order to achieve the desired "improvement in efficiency." Only "public non-profit-making schools" would be eligible to receive the grant, and the committees of management of such schools must be prepared to submit a draft constitution for their schools, acceptable to the Director of Education (a number of "guidelines" were suggested); a detailed statement of estimated income and expenditure for 1954; forms showing the conditions of service for each member of staff; and a statement showing the measures the school authorities had taken and proposed to take to introduce into the school a system of bilingual education "designed primarily to produce good citizens" of Singapore who should have "a sound working knowledge of both English and Kuo-yu." Each school was to be visited at least once a term by an inspector of schools, who would report not only on the physical conditions of the school, but also on its administration, the capabilities, qualifications and competence of the staff, the "general tone" of the school, time-tables, syllabuses, text-books and the standards attained by the pupils. It was "suggested" that schools should aim at a curriculum in which time devoted to the teaching of English and of other subjects in the medium of English would be, in Primary schools, at least one third, in Junior Middle schools one half, and in Senior Middle schools two-thirds of the total teaching time. It was further noted that it was not enough merely to increase the time given to the teaching of English; it was "equally important that the subject matter to be studied should be planned to produce good citizens of Singapore." To achieve this, the syllabuses and texts in use "in
all Singapore schools" should therefore deal with "a local Singapore and Malayan background, and then by stages with the Far East, the Commonwealth and the World." The cost of the proposed additional aid was estimated to be about $1,160,000.

The response to these proposals, not surprisingly, was mixed. Lee Kong Chian, Chairman of the Management Committee of the Singapore Chinese High School, and a prominent member of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, pleaded for the much needed increased aid to be given to the schools without delay, and a conference of Chinese schools resolved unanimously to ask the Government to provide the funds "without conditions." It was pointed out that less than half of the school-going population of 160,000 were in Government or Government Aided English schools, and that over 80,000 students were in Chinese schools which might expect to receive only about $2 million of the $20 million which the Government would be spending on education that year. The English educated sections of the community, on the other hand, generally welcomed the proposals. The principles set out in the White Paper were, claimed the Straits Times in an editorial,

an honest attempt to promote better education, and to assist the Chinese schools on condition . . . [they] will become bilingual schools. . . . If these principles are accepted then the crisis in the Chinese educational world is reduced to the comparatively simple matter of increased aid.

The editorial went on to deal with the objections raised to the White Paper:

Other spokesmen unfortunately have questioned the principle of bil­lingual education. There is no compulsion about it. No Chinese
school need change its curriculum, or use English as a medium of instruction or teach the English language. ... Obviously, however, no school can expect to qualify for more than a token grant unless it intends to fit itself into the pattern of an agreed policy.

The weakness of this argument, however, lay in the fact that the policy had not been agreed to by representatives of the very large section of the community which would be most affected. The matter was highlighted by the formation of a delegation representative of Chinese schools and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which met with the Director of Education to press the claim for unconditional financial assistance to schools providing an education to locally-born British subjects, who it was argued were entitled to equality of consideration on the part of Government. At the end of the interview, the Director (D. McLellan) was reported to have agreed to put the views of the delegation to the Government, in order that consideration might be given to aid "without bilingual strings" attached. 127

At this time, public attention was focussing on constitutional developments under which a new Legislative Assembly, with a largely elected membership, would be established, with automatic registration of voters to replace the former voluntary system which had proved unsatisfactory. 128 And indeed, before the question of assistance to Chinese schools could be decided to anyone's satisfaction, the students of some of these schools became involved in events which were to pose a far more urgent and specifically political challenge to the Government.

It will be recalled that in addition to the powerful incentive of financial assistance, the Government had early provided itself with
a statutory instrument for the control of schools in Singapore. Under
the Registration of Schools Ordinance (Ordinance No. 21 of 1920), as
amended subsequently, the Department of Education possessed the power
to close any school used for "unlawful purposes," and to refuse a cer­
tificate of registration to any teacher. The "unlawful purposes" the
Government had most in mind were those that might be expected to emerge
within a community the loyalties of which were suspect. As early as
1947, the Director of Education declared himself "reasonably satisfied"
that in the "better class of vernacular schools" politics were not being
taught. According to the Assistant Director of Education (Chinese),
the grounds upon which most schools which had been refused registration
up to that time were those connected with inadequate accommodation or
lack of sanitary facilities, rather than political activities.

In May, 1948, a number of left-wing groups amongst the Chinese-speaking
community determined to hold a rally in protest against the installation
of Chiang Kai-shek as first President of China under the new constitu­
tion. The Singapore Chinese School Teachers Union decided to support
the rally; whereupon the Education Department re-issued an earlier
notice warning teachers and management committees of Chinese schools
that schools could not be used for political purposes, and that any
infringement of the ban would render them "liable to penalty."

In 1949, a good deal of political activity occurred in Chinese
schools. This was a reflection of the heightened tensions within the
community, which was split between supporters of the Nationalists and
Communists, following the victory of the latter on the Chinese Mainland.
On the occasion of the Double Tenth, students of various Chinese schools had been polled to determine whether the K.M.T. or C.C.P. flag should be flown on the school flag-masts, and this led to a number of "incidents." As a result the principal of the Yock Eng High School, one of the biggest schools in the Colony, announced that his school "should never be used as a forum for political discussions. Views of pupils or teachers should be kept to themselves." Subsequently the Government decided to introduce legislation which would enable it to enforce more effective control over Chinese schools. During the year, "self-governing" student organisations made their appearance in four Chinese Middle schools (including two Girls' schools), but these decided to disband themselves after receiving a warning from the Government that they must either register themselves under the Societies Ordinance, or dissolve. Later events suggest that these organisations in fact continued in existence, notwithstanding their declared intention to dissolve.

In 1950, the Government introduced a revised Registration of Schools Bill, under the terms of which, the registrar would be able to refuse to register any new school if he considered the educational facilities existing in the area adequate. He would also have power to refuse to re-register any school which he considered to be "detrimental to the interests of Singapore or the public," and the Bill provided for fines of up to $1,000 or prison sentences of up to one year for anyone guilty of making a false declaration.

Early in 1950, the Department of Education announced plans for
an 'Education Week' in May, the purpose being to publicise its proposals under the Ten Years' and Supplementary Five Years' Programmes. Early in May leaflets appeared, signed by "Shock Troops Stationed in Singapore of the Malayan National Liberation Army," threatening punishment of teachers and students taking any part in the events organised by the "British Imperialists." On the assurances of protection given by the Government, the students of several Chinese schools joined the parades and processions of 14,000 school-children, which took place under the shadow of Bren-gun carriers, soldiers, and "every available police officer." The events went off without incident. 135 During Education Week, the Governor, Sir Franklin Gimson, noted, however, "a tendency in some Singapore schools to allow the boys in higher classes to develop their personalities regardless of any direction of the teachers." These boys were allowed, he claimed, "to take a large part in controlling school activities," and as a result they fell prey to "subversive elements," which were only too prepared to use education for their own ends. 136 A March 1951 press report speaks of the "unsettled conditions" in certain leading Chinese middle schools as being the cause of a rush of applicants for admission to English schools, 137 and during subsequent months, the Special Branch of the local police were active in breaking up alleged "Red cells" in Chinese schools. 138 In December 1951, a summary "trial" of 100 students was conducted by the Principal of the Singapore Chinese Catholic High School, on charges of "disorderly conduct." This procedure was the result of repeated complaints of students causing disturbances and insulting teachers in front
of the class. The 'prosecution' was conducted by the teachers themselves, parents being invited to defend their sons, and those found 'guilty' were 'invited' to withdraw from school and seek accommodation elsewhere. 139

These scattered reports suggest a pattern of increasing politicisation within the student body in Chinese schools, and the Government, now keenly sensitive to a potential threat to its authority, invited school children to become informers, and to advise the Police or the Department of Education of the name of any teacher who taught "communist principles" when school inspectors were not present. 140

During 1952, the Chinese press became increasingly critical of the Government, not only on the subject of its education policy, but also over such matters as the question of citizenship. There was a growing sense of frustration over the continued denial of citizenship to those who, for whatever reason, had adopted the country as their permanent home; and such grievances tended to coalesce into a conviction that official policy discriminated against the Chinese community. 141

Nevertheless, it was still possible, in 1953, for the Member for the Indian Chamber of Commerce to ask, in the Legislative Council:

Are we fit for independence? The average man in the street is not interested in politics ... only 20 per cent of the local-born has registered as voters and less than half ... take the trouble to vote. ... 142

But change was in the air. The Chinese Chamber of Commerce which, for so long, had been representative of the well-to-do section of the Chinese community and the "acknowledged voice of social and political
authority," came increasingly to be used as a forum within which contending factions struggled for supremacy. Under the influence of a small group of immigrant intelligentsia from China, the Chamber was forced into a new rôle in promoting a campaign for equal rights for the China-born Chinese, and for the equal treatment of Chinese culture. One observer noted in 1953 the "mounting volume of frustration" which was "waiting only for the ending of the Emergency to seek an outlet," and he drew attention to the failure of the "remote, autocratic regimes" of both Malaya and Singapore to strike any responsive spark in the hearts of the politically conscious. Denied effective representation in the Legislative Council, the discontent of the Chinese-speaking community found expression through such alternative channels as the trade unions, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and the Chinese schools.

By early 1954, the situation of teachers in Chinese schools had become almost untenable. As they were grossly underpaid by comparison with their counterparts in English schools, the offer of considerably increased funds from the Government had a particularly unsettling effect, for the money must be paid, in the first instance, to the school management committees, and the management committees could not decide whether to accept the conditions which were attached to the grants. By the end of March, denied any early prospect of an increase in pay, the Chinese middle school teachers decided upon strike action. In this decision, they enjoyed the worried support of the Chinese press. At almost the same time, another situation developed which effectively monopolised public attention and jolted all sections of the community into a new political awareness.
In December 1953, an Ordinance had been enacted which made provision for the calling up for National Service of male British Subjects and Federal citizens of the ages eighteen to twenty. In his opening address to the Legislative Council on March 16, 1954, the Officer Administering the Government noted, à propos the constitutional changes recommended by the Rendel Commission, that with acceptance of the new political power must go "an acceptance of the liability to defend the country." Registration was to commence in April, and although it was not considered practical to call up all who registered for training, it was the intention to select those who were "best suited to serve." Those selected were to begin training in July and the training would be part-time, so as to interfere as little as possible with the occupations of National Servicemen, who were in any case to be "remunerated for their services."  

The Chinese press and various leaders of the community supported National Service, the Chung Shing Jit Pao referring to it as "a glorious obligation that admits of no excuse," and urged students not to be "made use of by destructive elements" but to register before the closing date. The Nanyang Siang Pau considered that National Service was a measure to "meet the demand of the times" and added:

For the safety of this country, youths of the correct age of every community should understand the significance of the Government measure and register themselves without hesitation so as to demonstrate their law-abiding spirit and carry out their glorious obligation.

The overwhelming majority of those eligible complied with the new law,
but while registration was progressing, a pamphlet entitled "Freedom News" opposing National Service as an Imperialist ploy and urging students to refuse to register, was distributed, reportedly by the Malayan Communist Party, and some students heeded the advice. On May 7th, a petition signed by some 250 students of the Chung Cheng High School was submitted to the Governor requesting exemption from National Service on the grounds that it would interfere with their schooling. This was followed by a delegation which, however, failed to see the Governor; and subsequently a further petition, this time signed by 700 students of the Chinese High School, was submitted, also requesting exemption from service. It was pointed out by the Secretary for Defence that the Ordinance made provision, for those who registered, to seek postponement of service if the call-up would interfere with the Senior middle school final examination, but that it would be postponement and not exemption, and that registration must occur first. On May 13, students marched to Government House, the official residence of the Governor, to give their "moral support" to a delegation which was, on this occasion, to be received by the Officer Administering the Government. Under the Emergency Regulations, the demonstration was illegal, and the Police were called upon to disperse the marchers. According to Chung Shing Jit Pao, the Police "rashly resorted to the use of force. They batoned. They kicked." The Malay press, which might be expected to be relatively impartial, called for an enquiry, one paper noting: "National Service has nothing to do with the action of the Police who used absolutely unnecessary force on school students. . . ."
Charges and counter charges followed, 300 members of the University of Malaya Students' Union submitted a protest against the "inhuman methods" adopted by the Police, and the Government responded with the assertion that the demonstration had been "Communist inspired," a charge which stung Yap Pheng Geck, Vice-President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, to comment that raising the Communist bogey was "comparable to a physician trying to treat every difficult case as syphilis."53

It is not proposed to weigh here the evidence concerning the extent of communist infiltration of the Singapore Chinese middle schools, nor to determine whether the use made of the students of these schools was decided upon at a local level, or upon instructions from Peking as part of some grand design. 154 It is, however, undeniably the case that Chinese secondary school students were organised and used for specifically politically purposes, and that their activities posed a formidable challenge to the authority of the Government. But if the disciplined zeal displayed by these youthful partisans indicated the effectiveness of the organisational techniques and indoctrination methods used in the schools, it also demonstrated that the students themselves were moved by a deep sense of idealism which combined preservation of Chinese culture with service to their spiritual home and motherland. Leadership was provided by senior students, some of whom were twenty or more years of age, 155 and the Government unwittingly provided the opportunity for the students to gain maximum sympathy amongst the Chinese-speaking community, and hence make the greatest political impact. In response to the indignant students' demands for a public enquiry into the behaviour
of the Police and for exemption from National Service, the Department of Education requested the school management committees of four Chinese middle schools to advance the date of the school vacation, thereby achieving the closure of the schools most directly involved. The students reacted by occupying two of the schools—the Chinese High School on Bukit Timah Road, and Chung Cheng High School on Goodman Road—where they remained for three weeks, defying the appeals of parents as well as those of the committees of management and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. A steady supply of food was brought by parents and sympathisers, and classes were conducted by senior students. The situation served to reveal the dilemma in which the members of the management committees found themselves: as the schools were private property, the police could not legally enter the grounds to evict the students unless invited to do so by the committees. But the committees were unwilling to accept responsibility for invoking such drastic measures, which might involve further injuries and which would certainly be unpopular.156

The result was a stalemate, during which the students called press conferences, issued statements reiterating their demands, and generally upbraided the Chinese Chamber of Commerce for its failure to intercede effectively on their behalf with the Government.157 In addition to normal school classes, special hsüeh-hsiih ("study-for-action") political discussion groups were organised, based, so the Government claimed, upon the model developed by Mao Tse-tung between 1938 and 1941.158 The students, however, consistently denied that their actions had anything to do with communism, their leaders asserting, when the 'camp-in' finally
dispersed, that they would never become "stooges of the Communists."\textsuperscript{159}

The Government refused to offer the guaranteed exemption from National Service sought by the students, and the latter, having reduced their original demands essentially to postponement of service, an enquiry into the "May 13 Incident," and an undertaking that no violence should be used by the authorities in their dealings with students, finally agreed to vacate the school premises. They did so after receiving assurances, so they subsequently claimed, that students' applications for postponement of service would be handled for them by the schools' management committees and school principals, and that there was every likelihood that such applications would be approved. This formula enabled the students to claim victory in their struggle.\textsuperscript{160}

Significantly, throughout the period of these and later student disturbances, activities in the English schools followed their accustomed routine. The overwhelming majority of the students in these schools were Chinese, yet there is no evidence of any interest on their part in the conduct of their fellow students in the Chinese schools, and no serious effort was made to enlist their support.\textsuperscript{161} But of greater immediate consequence was the fact that out of the experience of this student strike there evolved a form of student organisation within the Chinese middle schools which effectively undermined what remained of the authority of the management committees, and posed a series of challenges to successive governments of the island. This "student government" was the Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union.

As the day was fast approaching when constitutional changes
would place enhanced powers over the internal administration of Singapore in the hands of a largely elected Legislative Assembly, the behaviour of the Chinese middle school students had had a particularly disturbing effect upon the Government. It had, indeed, finally shocked senior officials into an awareness of their lack of control over the Colony's Chinese schools; and the widespread sympathy with the students displayed by the Chinese-speaking section of the community, no less than the submissive attitude of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, underlined the potential hazards of the situation. To deal with this threat, the Government decided to strengthen and make further use of the two instruments of coercion that it already held, rather than adopt any radical change of policy towards Chinese education. Early in September, 1954, the Government announced its intention to introduce a Bill which would give it powers to close any school immediately which did not comply with the Schools Registration Ordinance; and to serve a notice on the supervisor of a school to show cause why his school should not be closed if in the preceding six months it appeared to the Director of Education that it was being used for political propaganda detrimental to the Colony or the public or the pupils, or was being used as a meeting place of an unlawful society. The reaction to this announcement by the English-language press was generally favourable, one editorial noting: "The unpleasant fact is that . . . there are communist elements in the schools as events in Singapore . . . only too well attest." The response of the Chinese community was, predictably, considerably less favourable. The students of five Chinese middle schools issued a
petition to the teachers and management committees of their schools protesting against the proposed Bill which, they recognised, was aimed primarily against Chinese schools; and teachers and the Chinese-language newspapers supported or initiated protests of their own. Students of the Nan Chiau Girls' High School sent a letter to the school management committees not only bitterly complaining about the terms of the proposed legislation, but accusing the committees of failing in their duty to protect the schools and Chinese culture. Copies of the letter were circulated to the students of other Chinese middle schools, and are reported to have provoked heated discussion.

Senior colonial officials, who were now keenly sensitive to the reactions of the Chinese community as reflected in the local press, vainly sought to allay the fears and suspicions aroused. The Governor, Sir John Nicoll, speaking in the Legislative Council on September 21st, 1954, deplored the suggestion in press reports that the Government had been adopting an "anti-Chinese School policy," and he also denied allegations that the Government sought direct management of the schools.

At the same time, the Governor made reference to the second of the two weapons at his command when he indicated his intention to increase substantially the financial assistance to Chinese schools. A series of discussions was conducted by the Director of Education with representatives of the school management committees, to determine the amount of additional aid needed, and the conditions under which it would be paid. On October 5, details of the scheme were announced. The Government offered, in effect, grants of up to $12 million a year to Chinese schools,
on condition that the management of the schools would be surrendered, in most respects, to a new statutory board to consist of the Director of Education as chairman, representatives of the Chinese community "closely associated with Chinese education" appointed by the Governor-in-Council, and representatives of the Government. The "representatives" of the Chinese community were to be in a majority, and the Board would be required to supervise Chinese schools "within the framework of the bi-lingual policy already agreed on." Provision was made for free primary education, and a reduction of fees in secondary schools, thereby bringing them into line with the fee schedule in English secondary schools. Teachers' salaries were to be made comparable with salaries of teachers in Government and Aided-English schools.

Despite the Governor's disclaimers, the plan was recognised by all sections of the community for what it was. The Nanyang Siang Pau noted, on October 6, that the conditions attached to the increased grants were designed primarily to secure management of all Chinese schools by the Government in the same way that it managed Aided English schools. During their discussions with the Director of Education which preceded formal announcement of the plan, the management committees had pointed out that their own existence would become superfluous if the powers of administration and control over their schools were to be exercised by the proposed Board, and they had advanced the counter-proposal, entirely unacceptable to Government, that the increased aid should be given without conditions, other than an undertaking on their part to reduce school fees and increase teachers' salaries. The
Singapore Progressive Party, still largely representative of the English-speaking sections of the population, supported the Government's proposal. Thio Chan Bee, long recognised as the Party's spokesman on educational matters, hoped that the scheme would be implemented rapidly, pointing out that teachers in Chinese schools were in a difficult financial position and would welcome the proposal to bring their pay-scales into line with those of English teachers. In view of the fears expressed by "certain sections in the Chinese community" he urged the Government not to insist upon a time limit for acceptance but to keep the offer open, in order to avoid creating an atmosphere of compulsion. 171

On October 23, 1954, the management committees and school principals met to discuss the Government's offer, and whilst generally agreeing that the money would be most welcome, they concluded that it could be accepted only "if no strings [were] attached." 172 A few days later, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce submitted several counter proposals to the Government, one of which suggested that the projected Board should consist solely of representatives of the Chamber and other Chinese public and educational bodies; and another that the three Government officials should act only in an advisory capacity. 173 The Governor's response was to reject these alternatives, to withdraw the proposal to establish a Statutory Board, as well as the offer of $12 million, stating that the Government was not prepared to hand over large sums of public money without "effective Government representation." Chinese schools could still have grants-in-aid "on the same basis as English schools," but each school would have to apply individually and, he implied, would have
to satisfy the Department's requirements. The reaction of Chinese schools to this situation was mixed: some accepted the full grants along with the Government's conditions; others continued to accept the limited grants they had hitherto received, in the hope that the Department of Education would not apply the lesser terms and conditions any more effectively in the future than they had in the past because of the inadequate Chinese schools inspectorate; and some declined any assistance whatsoever. Within twelve months, eighty-four of Singapore's Chinese schools had accepted the full aid scheme, whilst 132 schools continued to draw limited grants, and the remaining fifty-six schools received no government assistance.

Meanwhile, other events were leading towards a new grouping of forces which was to alter profoundly the political situation in Singapore. Charges arising out of the "May 13 Incident" and the refusal of some students to register for National Service had been laid against three students, and the services of a well-known British socialist barrister, D. N. Pritt, had been retained to lead the defence. In this he was assisted by the brilliant young Cambridge-trained lawyer Lee Kuan Yew. Pritt urged the Chinese-school students, and the more radically minded students of the University of Malaya, to unite with left-wing trade-unionists in a common struggle for political and cultural freedom; and it was out of this suggestion that the several groups of student activists in the secondary schools organised the Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union. This organisation lent its support to Lee Kuan Yew's Joint Action Council which, with the
first election under the new constitution drawing closer, shortly reformed itself into the People's Action Party. The Straits Times noted, on October 18, 1954, that the purpose of the Union was to look after the welfare of its members and to counter "any misconception that students in Chinese schools [were] being subjected to Communist influence." The Director of Education, asked by a reporter for his views, said that the formation of such a union had nothing to do with him or his department, and that it was a matter for the consideration of the Registrar of Societies. The Registrar declined to make any comment. A formal request for registration under the Registration of Societies Ordinance was made on January 7, 1955, and a week later it was announced that this request had been refused on the grounds that the Registrar was not satisfied that the purposes of the Union were "non-political." During the campaign preceding the elections for the new Legislative Assembly, a one-day strike was organised on March 30, 1955, just four days before the elections, and on polling day a petition appealing the decision was sent to the Governor. The Government claimed, not unreasonably, that both the strike and the petition had been timed to "remind electors and candidates of the wishes of the students."

It has been noted elsewhere that with each constitutional change in the direction of more democratic government, extensions of the franchise had the effect of increasing the proportion of Chinese-educated voters. But Chinese schools had produced, in Singapore, a large and growing group of disadvantaged people whose interests and loyalties were directed towards China. Clearly, any party that could call upon
the support of this section of the adult population would wield tremendous power. There is no doubt that, organised and directed by the Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union, students played a vital rôle in marshalling the Chinese-speaking section of the electorate in support of the limited number of candidates the P.A.P. decided should contest the election. Three of the four candidates were successful, and were to provide an effective voice for the hitherto unrepresented Chinese-educated Singaporeans.

In seeking to assess the educational policies of the years 1945 to 1955 in terms of the criteria adopted for this study, it is necessary first to recapitulate the main purposes, so far as they are known, of the colonial administration. First among these was the aim to maintain a secure base in Singapore for commercial and strategic purposes. Closely associated with this was the second objective (although some may claim that it was a means rather than an end), to produce a "responsible" leadership group to which certain undefined powers of self-government eventually could be entrusted. By implication these leaders should be amenable to some continued form of association with Great Britain. Finally, also closely related to the first two considerations, policy should aim at the creation of local rather than external (and hence possibly subversive) loyalty. Although Singapore continued to provide the commercial and strategic base of operations that was desired by the British, it is clear that the policies pursued failed to provide the necessary degree of security. The 1955 elections produced a minority government which failed to command sufficient confidence for
the Imperial Government to surrender to it powers over internal security. Certainly, an élite group had been produced which, English-speaking and oriented towards the West, might be expected to maintain conditions favourable to British interests. However, those very qualities effectively alienated them from the increasingly enfranchised Chinese-speaking community. And so far as the reorientation of loyalties was concerned, educational policies clearly had failed. Part of the reason for this appears to have derived from the consistent attempts of the administration to create a sense of Singaporean rather than Malayan identity. Thus, whilst education plans in the Federation made constant reference to National schools, the concept promoted so rigorously in Singapore was that of Regional schools. In this, the colonial government seems to have gone against the prevailing current of opinion, although in the light of educational trends in post-1965 Singapore, it could be argued that the objective of a Singaporean identity was not unattainable.

With regard to the question of the extent to which educational policies tended to be socially cohesive or divisive, the answer is not, perhaps, so simple as the results suggest. Certainly, the violence and industrial unrest of the years 1954 to 1959 suggest the complete failure of the educational system to overcome the deep socio-economic and ethno-linguistic divisions of the population it was supposed to serve. In this connection, it is of no more than academic interest to wonder whether, if the policy of a free primary education, in English, had been adopted sooner—say in the 1920's or even early 1930's—the fears and strife aroused when the policy finally was adopted could have
been avoided. The relevant fact is that when the colonial administration finally committed itself to this policy, it did so without consulting the wishes of the very section of the community it was designed most to affect. This serves merely to underline the essentially authoritarian nature of a government which, however, was constrained from making full use of all the considerable power it controlled to enforce its will. The tendency of the policy, as revealed by the performance of English schools, was to produce an English-speaking community with tastes and values directed towards the West, and increasingly alienated from the cultural heritages of China, Malaya and India. Those who emerged from the English schools appear to have been, for the most part, politically apathetic, and in this respect might have been expected to contribute to the maintenance of the status quo of Singapore. But the success of the policy pre-supposed the willingness of a considerable and highly sensitive part of the community to agree to and assist in its own cultural suicide. That changes affecting the very nature of Chinese civilisation were taking place at the time in China, is an irrelevant consideration. Even if Chinese schools in Singapore had been encouraged to pursue their own form of education without Government interference, they could not have been insulated effectively from a multitude of non-Chinese influences. The people directly affected perceived an anti-Chinese trend in Government policies, and whether their fears were justified or not, the perception resulted in an emphatic rejection of the policies and an exacerbation of communal tensions.

The third measure by which educational policies of this period
must be judged is that of how well they were related to the occupational opportunities of the island. In this connection it must be noted that despite some lip-service paid to the desirability of technical and vocational training, the thrust of the Government's effort continued to be in the direction of an academic education. By the early 1950's, the lack of skilled technicians and artisans, as well as middle-range business administrators was making itself glaringly apparent. As had been the case so often in the past, the Government ignored the need until members of the community were compelled to take the initiative. A group of local merchants and business-men set up an ad hoc committee to study the matter, and it was only after they made urgent representations to the colonial secretary that the Government decided late in 1952 to appoint a committee under the chairmanship of Professor E. H. G. Dobby of the University of Malaya to "consider and formulate proposals for the establishment of a Singapore Polytechnic Institute." The Committee reached the unanimous conclusion that there was "an immediate need" for such an institution; and the Government, accepting in principle the recommendations made by the Committee, invited the Principal of the Dudley and Staffordshire Technical College in England, A. W. Gibson, to advise on the detailed steps to be taken. Gibson's proposals, the cost of which were estimated to involve an annual recurrent expenditure rising from $1,178,000 to $2,400,000 in the first five working years, were submitted in May 1954, and these proposals led to the belated establishment of the Singapore Polytechnic. In the meantime, there is little evidence to indicate whether or not the incomplete primary
education in English, which was all that could be provided for the vast majority attending English schools, was of any real assistance in securing employment. The majority of graduates of primary English as well as vernacular schools appears to have been absorbed eventually into the local work force which, however, continued to reveal the fact that most of the better-paid and virtually all of the official positions were occupied by English-educated personnel. So long as the Singaporean economy remained buoyant, there was little serious unemployment; but whenever there was anything in the nature of a trade recession, such as occurred towards the end of 1953, the graduates of vernacular schools were the first to feel the pinch. As an instrument of policy education had failed to promote equality of opportunity or unity of purpose.
Chapter V

EXPERIMENTS IN DEMOCRACY

Whoever forms the next Government should give this bouquet to the departing Labour Front Government. They charted a minefield. We now know where the booby traps are, and have a fair idea where a few more might be. They got hurt in the process. . . . We hope that when our turn comes we will not be so badly hurt.

--Lee Kuan Yew, April 22, 1958.

At the beginning of 1955, the form of government in Singapore was still essentially that of an imposed colonial administration with, however, some limited local representation. By mid-1959, the people of the island had achieved almost complete internal self-government, with Britain retaining control over defence and a shared responsibility for internal security. During the transitional period, a variety of interests contended for power, forming themselves into legal, quasi-legal and extra-legal organisations each attempting to gain a mass following which alone could bring success. The period was one of considerable confusion during which violence or latent violence were seldom absent. Divisions within society became more sharply apparent as each group perceived in the increasing uncertainties of the future not only a challenge but also the threat of domination by others. In addition to the 'vertical' ethno-linguistic divisions and 'horizontal' economic classes, the society was further fragmented in terms of external loyalties and conflicting ideologies. The existence of gross economic disparities gave impetus to the growth of trade unions and sporadic outbursts of industrial unrest; while a division of loyalties became apparent over
such matters as the question of citizenship. Within the Chinese com-
munity, many of the English-educated continued to value their status as
citizens of Great Britain and the Colonies, whilst among the Chinese-
educated, the concept of *jus sanguinis* encouraged a loyalty directed
towards China. This latter group was further split between those who
regarded the Nationalist Government on Formosa as the legitimate Govern-
ment of China, and those who recognised the Chinese Communist Party
régime in Peking. Yet on the whole, ideological differences tended to
follow linguistic rather than economic divisions, and with the extension
of the franchise to include a larger proportion of the Chinese-educated,
left-wing parties became dominant.\(^1\) Prior to the 1955 elections, the
right-wing Progressive Party—representative of the English-speaking
business and professional community—had been pre-eminent; but after its
overwhelming electoral defeat, the party combined with the more recently
formed Democratic Party, which represented Chinese-speaking mercantile
interests, to form the so-called Liberal-Socialist Party in a vain
attempt to secure a mass base. During these transitional years, the
Government became particularly responsive to popular pressures, and this
was reflected in its repeated efforts to acquire popular acceptance and
approval of its educational policy. At the same time, the schools them-
selves became one of the principal arenas within which the struggle for
power occurred.

The Rendel Constitution provided for a Legislative Assembly con-
sisting of thirty-two members, twenty-five of whom were to be elected
by single-member constituencies, and the remainder to be nominated or
ex officio members. Provision was made for a Council of Ministers to be selected from the majority party, and this Council was to exercise extensive powers over the internal administration of the island. Although the franchise was restricted to citizens of the United Kingdom and the Colonies, automatic voter registration resulted in an increase in the electorate from some 76,000 in the 1948 elections to over 300,000 in 1955. The Rendel Commission had recommended that the official language of the new legislative body should continue to be English, a view that was bitterly opposed by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which argued that restriction of the choice of representatives to a minority group tended to produce "a ruling class on the one hand and a second class citizenry on the other" which would prove to be a source of friction and dissension, isolating the Government from the people, thereby weakening popular support for the new constitution which was essential for success in the promotion of "responsible and progressive self-government" in Singapore. During the Legislative Council debate on a motion introduced by Dasaratha Raj recommending multi-lingualism in the new Assembly, Thio Chan Bee pointed out that if more English schools had been provided during the previous twenty or thirty years, the problem would not have arisen; whilst a nominated Unofficial member of the Council, P. F. de Souza, in opposing the motion, asserted that automatic registration of voters had resulted in an electorate that was "75 per cent Chinese," and that the demand for multi-lingualism in the Assembly was in reality "a call for the use of the Chinese language in this Council." The motion was defeated.
Under the Emergency Regulations, the Malayan Communist Party had been declared illegal and hence could not contest the 1955 elections. The radical left therefore gave its support to the recently formed People's Action Party which, however, decided to offer only four candidates since it was believed that it would be 'fatal' to form the Government under the Rendel Constitution. All that was needed was an effective voice in the Assembly, to be used to expose the basically colonialist nature of the new constitution.\(^6\) Trade unionists and Chinese middle-school students threw themselves zealously into the campaign in support of the P.A.P. candidates, three of whom were successful, the Party receiving the highest percentage of votes cast in respect of those seats it contested. The P.A.P. Assemblymen thus had sufficient prestige to command attention without having to share responsibility for the functioning of the constitution. The record of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly bears witness to the effective manner in which this position was exploited, and indeed the popularity of the Party was confirmed in the 1957 City Council elections, when thirteen of its fourteen candidates were successful.

In the elections for the new Legislative Assembly, the right-wing vote was split between the Progressives and the Democrats, with the result that only six right-wing Assemblymen were elected, although right-wing candidates polled more than 45 per cent of the total votes cast. Thus it was by default that the Labour Front—a loose association of mildly socialist, English-educated intellectuals, with virtually no party organisation\(^7\)—was most successful, winning ten of the seventeen
seats it contested, although gaining only 27 per cent of the votes cast. The Labour Front, with the support of three Assemblymen of the Singapore branch of the UMNO/MCA/Singapore Malay Union Alliance, was able to command a slender majority of the elected members, and so formed the Government of Singapore for four fateful years. The first Chief Minister was David Marshall, who was succeeded in that position by Lim Yew Hock in June, 1956.

The new constitution provided for a Minister for Education, a position held for almost the entire period of the Labour Front Coalition Government by Chew Swee Kee, and the Director of Education now held also the post of Permanent Secretary to the Ministry. In this capacity he was assisted by three Deputy Secretaries who were responsible respectively for professional matters generally, for the administration of the development programme, and for relations with "outside agencies." Later in 1955, an Assistant Minister of Education, Inche Mohd. Sidik bin Haji Abdul Hamid, was also appointed. During the period 1955 to 1959, the sustained rapid growth of population was reflected in the continuing increase in school enrolments as indicated in Table VI (p. 215). The sheer volume of the demand for places provided one of the major challenges to the Government, which could only be met with some decline in qualitative standards. It will be noted that enrolments in English schools maintained and increased their lead over enrolments in Chinese schools, and indeed by 1958, they exceeded enrolments in all other schools combined.

The constitution of the Labour Front followed closely the model
Table VI
PUPIL ENROLMENT: REGISTERED SCHOOLS BY LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>English Schools*</th>
<th>Chinese Schools</th>
<th>Malay Schools</th>
<th>Tamil Schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>97,057</td>
<td>94,244</td>
<td>11,595</td>
<td>1,258</td>
<td>204,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>112,575</td>
<td>108,490</td>
<td>12,531</td>
<td>1,256</td>
<td>234,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>127,853</td>
<td>117,374</td>
<td>13,419</td>
<td>1,351</td>
<td>259,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>145,362</td>
<td>129,155</td>
<td>14,213</td>
<td>1,399</td>
<td>290,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>163,486</td>
<td>140,231</td>
<td>15,804</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>320,977</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* including Junior Technical and Trade Schools.


afforded by the British Labour Party, but it is clear that little in the way of detailed planning had gone into the preparation of policy.

The general attitude of the Government towards education was enunciated by the Governor, Sir John Fears Nicoll, in his Opening Address in the Assembly on April 22, 1955:

In education the policy of the Government is to aim at equal treatment for all schools and all teachers in those schools. The foundation stone of the policy will be a six year course of free primary education for all children. Technical education, which the Government regards as of paramount importance for the economic development of Singapore, will be expanded as rapidly as possible and the question of apprenticeship and training of industrial workers and clerks will be studied at an early date.

As a statement of policy, the Governor's remarks were notable for a
shift of emphasis in respect of trends which already had begun to develop under the previous administration, rather than for any radical changes. Equality of treatment for all schools and teachers had been accepted in principle, although little had been achieved in practice; and the "foundation stone" of a six year course of free primary education could be regarded as deriving rather directly from the Ten Year Plan of 1948. Technical and vocational education had received some belated recognition in 1953 and 1954, with encouragement given to the establishment of Trade Schools and the proposed Polytechnic; and these were now to be accorded a higher degree of priority. But the implications of equal treatment for all schools and teachers were nowhere spelled out; and nowhere in the Governor's speech was there any suggestion of Government intervention to ensure equality of employment opportunity for the graduates of English and Asian language schools, without which 'equal treatment' must remain a hollow phrase.

But the Government's attention was to be directed towards educational policy quite forcibly almost immediately following its assumption of office. On April 25, 1955, the Committee of the Singapore Chinese Schools Management/Staff Association met with representatives of various Chinese educational bodies under the chairmanship of Lee Kong Chian, and it was decided to call a general meeting of representatives of all Chinese school management committees and educational associations for the purpose of preparing a brief for submission to the new Government with the object of securing a radical change in educational policy. This meeting was held at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce on April 30th,
when a series of resolutions was passed expressing the desire for an end to the "colonial" educational system, and urging the Government to honour its election pledge to accord equal status to the schools of all communities, to announce a new policy "appropriate to democracy" and to give Chinese schools increased aid pending announcement of a new policy. It was also decided to form a committee to fight for equality of status for Chinese schools, and to appoint a delegation to negotiate an acceptable educational policy with the Government. Before these moves could achieve any positive results, students of several Chinese Middle schools became involved in an industrial dispute, the violence of which shocked the Government and people of Singapore into an awareness of the explosive nature of the issues at stake and the force of communal passion.

During April, the public transportation system was disrupted by a strike of the workers of one of the major bus companies, the Hock Lee Amalgamated Bus Company. When strikers attempted to prevent buses leaving the depot, the police used force to break up the 'human chain,' and this appears to have provoked a number of large gatherings of strikers and their sympathisers, at which fiery speeches were made condemning the police action. The Government's version of these and subsequent events was provided by the British Chief Secretary, W. A. C. Goode, an official who was responsible to the Governor, rather than to the Legislative Assembly. Goode argued that:

The action taken by the Police was grossly exaggerated by the agitators and their student sympathisers. These indignation
meetings, supported by large groups of students and addressed continuously by agitators through loud-speakers, continued for several days. . . . After nearly two weeks of constant efforts to obtain a settlement, the negotiations broke down. . . . On the morning of . . . 10th May, 1955, the strikers again resorted to their manoeuvre of forming a human barrier in front of the gate. . . . The Commissioner of Police dispersed them by means of hoses from trailer pumps.14

The meetings of strikers and their supporters continued until May 12th, when there was an explosion of violence. On that day, buses driven by strike-breakers were attacked, and the drivers intimidated, and in the evening, rioting assumed major proportions. The Chief Secretary's account of the rôle of students in these events was specific:

As I have already stated, large numbers of students from the Chinese High School, Chung Cheng School, the Chung Hwa Girls' School, the Nanyang Girls' School, and the Nan Chiau Girls' School visited the Hock Lee strikers day after day. They have also been visiting other strikers. They arrived in lorries, regimented and organised. They have given large sums of money to workers. They have made speeches. They have danced and sung inflammatory songs. And this has been happening day after day. . . . On 1st May, several hundred students drove up and down Alexandra Road [the location of the bus depot] in lorries . . . shouting abuse at the Police, calling them 'running dogs.' They have been round . . . demonstrating and inciting and singing Communist songs. . . . It is quite clear . . . that in certain Chinese schools the students have been highly organised to take part in these disputes and to incite violence. Lorries have been ordered to the schools and large numbers of students have been persuaded to go into them and have then been transported to the scenes of strikers and recently to riots.

On May 12 . . . 17 lorry-loads of students arrived down Alexandra Road . . . we could not stop them flooding across the fields to join in the dispute. . . . It is . . . the students of these Chinese schools who have done much to cause hatred and bloodshed in Singapore.15

During the riots on the night of May 12/13, two Chinese volunteer police officers were killed, one beaten to death, the other doused with gasoline and set aflame; and in another incident a Chinese student was
fatally wounded when a British police officer fired his revolver. The
dying student was paraded through the streets for three hours, the
victim being displayed in this way to further inflame feelings against
the Government. An American reporter who attempted to photograph the
procession, was clubbed to death by the irate crowd. In the official
view, there was no doubt that Chinese school students were being used
deliberately as part of an overall plan to subvert the Government, and
that the danger lay in the structure of Chinese schools. The Chief
Secretary gave the Government's analysis of the position:

Neither the school principals nor the school committees have done
anything to put a stop to this subversion of the youth of Singapore.
The principals are frightened. They are frightened that if they
thwart the Malayan Communist Party they will be assassinated. . . .
The management committees refuse to take a strong line. They seem
to be . . . frightened of the students and their one endeavour is
to hand the problem to the Government. The situation in these
Chinese middle schools is the most serious problem that faces Singa-
pore. Youth in these schools is being corrupted and perverted,
through the skilful use of Chinese nationalism and propaganda,
into a dangerous weapon for the Malayan Communist Party.
The present Government has been tolerant and sympathetic towards
Chinese students. We offered to register their Middle School Union
if they . . . would undertake to keep clear of politics. The offer
was rejected with insolence. . . . If no one else will stop these
boys and girls from being worked up, intimidated and regimented at
their schools . . . then the Government must. . . . I attribute
the rioting on Thursday night to irresponsible political leaders and
to Chinese students. It was they who deliberately provoked wide-
spread industrial unrest and, by a vicious emotional campaign,
aroused the workers against the police. 16

On May 13, the Government requested the management committees of
the Chung Cheng High School, the Chung Cheng Branch School and the
Chinese High School to close their schools "because of the deterioration
in the strike situation and the increased participation in that
situation by pupils of these schools in particular,\textsuperscript{17} whereupon 300 students of the Chung Cheng High School broke into the grounds of their school and held a meeting at which they demanded that they should continue to be taught, and that the police should be required to leave the school premises.\textsuperscript{18} The students of five other Chinese middle schools issued a joint statement in which the closure of the schools was deplored as an indication of "the terrible prejudice and discrimination of the Government against the Chinese school students and its deliberate intention to eliminate Chinese education..."\textsuperscript{19} The statement went on to claim that the closure of the schools had been deliberately planned by the Government, which had consistently disseminated news unfavourable to the students, accusing them of being "organised," "directed" and "trained" in the agitation of labour unrest. It was pointed out that the Chief Minister, who had visited the scene of the strike, must have observed that sympathisers had been drawn from all sections of the public, and far out-numbered the students. The statement concluded with an appeal to all school management committees to unite with students to achieve an early settlement of the problem.

The Hock Lee Bus strike was settled on Monday, May 16, but the closure of the three high schools remained in force, and the Chinese press, individual students, teachers' associations, groups of parents, and trade unions joined in the barrage of protests against the Government's action.

Meanwhile, the Government announced its intention of de-registering the affected schools unless a certain number of "ringleaders"
were expelled. The Chief Minister, David Marshall, said that the Government was considering a reorganisation of Chinese schools in order that they might "return to their primary object of education in the arts of life—not in thuggery and intimidation." It was, he said, the Government's primary duty "to protect Chinese education in Singapore and we intend to do it whether you cry 'destruction of Chinese culture' or not." No sooner had the notices requiring school supervisors to "show cause" why their schools should not be declared unlawful been served, than some 2,000 students barricaded themselves in their schools, and proceeded to conduct orderly classes, with parents and friends bringing them food.

The reaction of the English-language press to the Government's action was generally favourable, one paper asserting that the Government had acted "with commendable speed," whilst another argued that Chinese middle schools, such as the Chung Cheng School with an enrolment of 4,500, were too big for adequate discipline to be maintained, and that the solution to the problem might lie in the establishment of smaller schools. The Chief Minister, in an address to students and faculty of the University of Malaya, claimed that his government had inherited a tradition of hatred for constituted authority which had been engendered by the former government's economic and educational policies. He stressed the need to strengthen Chinese education and Chinese culture, and when a member of his audience suggested that communal cultures should perhaps be de-emphasised in order to strengthen a "Malayan outlook," he rejected the view, arguing that the culture of every community
should be fully encouraged "to contribute to a common outlook in the plural society of Singapore." In retrospect, it does seem that this question, and the Chief Minister's answer, touched on the major dilemma facing Singapore's post-war governments. For if all were agreed that a common outlook, be it Malayan or Singaporean, was now a most desirable objective, it was quite clear that this could be achieved only by drawing the different communities closer together through the provision of a common educational experience. Yet such a programme must inevitably involve some surrender of traditional values, and given the acute sensitivity of the Chinese community to any threat to Chinese culture, it could be regarded only as politically impractical at the time.

In order to avert the immediate threat to its authority, and in an endeavour to find a non-partisan long-term solution to the problem posed by Singapore's fragmented system of education, the Government decided to appoint a committee representative of all parties in the Legislative Assembly, to consider the matter. In first announcing the appointment of the Committee, the Government indicated that its purpose was "to investigate the situation in the Chinese schools with a view to making such recommendations for the improvement of Chinese culture which the committee considers to be desirable in the interest of orderly progress towards self-government and ultimate independence in Singapore." Subsequently, the somewhat ambitious purpose of making recommendations "for the improvement of Chinese culture" was modified to read "to investigate the situation in Chinese schools in Singapore and to make recommendations for the improvement and strengthening of Chinese
education in the interests of Chinese culture and orderly progress towards self-government and ultimate independence in Singapore." When the motion approving the appointment of the committee was introduced in the Legislative Assembly, the wording of its terms of reference underwent a further small, but significant change. At the suggestion of Lee Kuan Yew, the final two words, "in Singapore" were deleted since, as Lee pointed out, it was entirely contrary to the philosophy of the People's Action Party "to think of ultimate independence in Singapore as divorced from the wider concept of independence of Malaya." The All-Party Committee was to meet under the chairmanship of the Minister for Education, and was to receive the submissions and views of any public bodies or private individuals who were interested in education, and who had any constructive suggestions to make.

Even before its appointment had been approved by the Legislative Assembly, the Committee acted quickly to avert a further confrontation between students and the Government, recommending that the "drastic measures" of the Government against the three Chinese schools be temporarily set aside. It also called on the committees of Management of the schools, principals, teachers and parents to co-operate to restore order and proper school discipline. The Government accepted the Committee's recommendation, a decision greeted with strong disapproval by the English-language Press. In its editorial, the Singapore Free Press pointed out that:

The business of Government is to govern. . . . The Government must be firm. This it owes to the people of the Colony. Its authority
is being challenged. The Chinese High School students, at a meet-
ing yesterday, resolved that the Government should be asked "to
give an assurance that in future no order would be given at random
to stop lessons in order not to hamper the students in their
studies." This is the measure of their defiance of the Government.

On the other hand, students of the affected Chinese middle schools hailed
the Government's decision as a "victory . . . won as a result of unity
and strife on the part of all fellow-students . . . and the support from
our parents, teachers, management committee members, workers and the
Press." The students proceeded to draw up a list of demands, which in-
cluded: the withdrawal of the "old, unreasonable and unfair education
policy" and its replacement with a new policy of "equality for all races";
and the unconditional reopening of all schools, without the threat of
expulsion of any students. The Singapore Free Press, on May 23rd,
cited a further statement alleged to have been made by students of the
Chung Cheng and Chinese High Schools in reference to the Government's
threatened closure of the schools: "In future we shall not tolerate such
high-handed action by the Government against the students," and the
editorial asked,

Excuse the poor public if it is in some confusion over who holds
the reins of authority. You have said that the aim of your Govern-
ment, Mr. Marshall, is complete self-rule within four years. How
can this be possible when within a few short weeks the cause of
self-rule has received shocks it will take a long time to overcome?

And another paper made the following foreboding comment:

Democratic party government means rule by the organised majority.
But Singapore, with a constitution which introduces the party sys-
tem, now appears to be entering a phase in which it is not impossible
that we shall have virtual government by coalition of unorganised mobs and an organised minority of minors. ... In beating this retreat, the Government ignobly seeks shelter behind the All-Party Committee of Assemblymen which, it takes great pains to emphasize, "is as representative of different political points of view as can be found in the Colony." ... There has been no capitulation, says the Minister for Education. While he has deceived himself, he has not deceived the public nor the rebels of Bukit Timah, Goodman Road and Kim Yam Road. The students chant 'Victory' ... .

These and similar charges clearly stung the Government. In seconding the motion approving the appointment of the All-Party Committee, David Marshall replied to the critics:

Government has been told ... that our action, and our inaction, has undermined authority. We are told that our son has publicly cocked his snook at us, and our other sons stand by wondering at our forbearance, perturbed, even dismayed. Some have cried out that we should use the whip.

Sir, our son is as one who is ill. He lies stricken with the chicken pox, his body a mass of red spots, and the more we forbid him to scratch, the more he stubbornly scratches, and the more those spots suppurate. What would you have us do? Use a knife to excoriate those red spots? Take down the whip and lash out in a frenzy of hurt pride, and then weep at the damage we have done? This ... is not the time for the whip, or the knife. I have no pride in the face of this illness.

During the ensuing debate, Assemblyman Lee Kuan Yew analysed the educational problem, as he saw it, in relation to the future status of Singapore as part of an independent Malaya. It was essential, he argued, to restore the confidence of the Chinese in their schools, and one of the difficulties to be overcome was the fear that the policy of the British Government in Malaya was the "Anglicisation" of the Chinese, a policy which might reduce Chinese to the position of a secondary language in their own schools. This was a basic problem, yet before it could be resolved, the question of the destination of Singapore must be decided:
In a free and independent Malaya in which every Chinese, every Indian, every Malay, will no longer be Chinese, Malay or Indian but Malayan, what language or languages shall they speak? What language or languages shall the Government use? What language or languages will be acceptable to the people? What are the language or languages of an independent and democratic Malaya? They are thorny delicate problems. . . . One . . . basic fact is that no racial or linguistic group in this country will give up its own language, its own culture, its own traditions, completely for either English or any other Anglicised form of Malayan languages, culture, or tradition.32

The motion approving the appointment of the All-Party Committee was agreed to unanimously.

The announcement of the establishment of an All-Party Committee and its purpose and terms of reference, received wide coverage by the news media; and as the problem at issue was one which affected virtually every family in Singapore, its deliberations were followed with considerable interest, and its report awaited with undisguised impatience. More significantly, the Committee's avowed intention to receive and consider the views of all who were interested in Chinese education led to the extensive involvement of the Chinese-speaking section of the community in an extra-parliamentary process designed to influence public policy. As such, this process may well have been the first experiment in practical democracy for a large part of the population and for this reason, as well as the fact that the All-Party Committee's Report, when it finally appeared, exercised a profound influence on the subsequent development of education in Singapore, the process merits close attention. Not surprisingly, the process was being conducted within the community.

On May 24th, in its editorial column, the Sin Chew Jit Poh
called upon Chinese educational circles to seize the opportunity to submit memoranda to the All-Party Committee to serve as a basis for the new policy. On the same day, the Chinese School Management/Staff Association submitted a suggestion to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce that the Chamber should send representatives to join a proposed delegation of all educational bodies to approach the Government in order to secure equality for vernacular schools in Singapore. The Chamber of Commerce, at its monthly meeting, also received a joint request from Lim Chin Siong (the youthful president of the All-Singapore Chinese Schools Parents' Association who was also secretary of the militant Factory and Shopworkers' Union, and one of the three P.A.P. Assemblymen), the Chinese Primary School Teacher's Association and eight alumni associations that the Chamber convene a mass meeting to discuss the cause of Chinese education.33 These approaches to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce provoked a heated debate, for opinions were sharply divided over the wisest course to pursue. One group, led by Yap Pheng Geck, the Vice-President of the Chamber, argued that caution was necessary, that the Chamber should make its views known to Government, but that to call a mass meeting would be to invite further disturbances, given the prevailing inflamed communal feelings. The second group, led by Tan Lark Sye, Chairman of the Nanyang University Council, argued that the time was ripe for the Chamber, in conjunction with educational bodies, to make vigorous approach to Government to secure genuine equality of treatment for Chinese education. Tan went on to support Lim Chin Siong's request for the Chamber to convene a mass meeting to demonstrate the
solidarity and determination of the Chinese community to secure a just and democratic educational policy. In the event, it was decided that the claim for equality of treatment for Chinese education should be pressed, and that a joint meeting of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce Committee, the Chairman of the Management/Staff Association (Lee Kong Chian), and representatives of six educational bodies be called to discuss the submission of views and claims to Government and, if considered "necessary," to call a mass meeting to rally Chinese public opinion on this matter.\textsuperscript{34} This first round in the battle between the moderate and the more radical members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce thus ended in a deferred decision. Both sides agreed that the claim for citizenship for resident Chinese be pressed more firmly, and that copies of relevant memoranda and documents be sent to all local political parties, and all Legislative Assemblymen, with a request for their support. The date for the second round was set for the following Friday, May 27.

During the intervening period, the lines of the continuing struggle were drawn more sharply, the radicals making most effective use of the time to marshal support for their point of view. Lim Chin Siong welcomed the determination of the Chamber of Commerce to demand equality for Chinese education, and commended Tan Lark Sye's expressed desire to see the end of the colonial policy and its ordinances. On the other hand, he regretted the hesitancy of the Chamber to call a mass meeting, and appealed to its leaders not to surrender their responsibility to represent the views of the Chinese community.\textsuperscript{35}

The Chinese press divided along lines which had by now become
predictable, most papers supporting the more radical point of view. Editorial comment in *Sin Chew Jit Poh* attacked "a certain section of the Press" which was normally indifferent to the development of Chinese education, but which had written a great deal about Chinese schools in the past few days, praising the Government when it closed the schools, and accusing the Government of surrender when the schools were reopened. The English Press appeared prepared to go to any lengths to achieve the permanent closure of Chinese schools. The editorial went on to urge the forthcoming Conference at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce to consider education policy as a whole, since Chinese education could not be considered in isolation from the education of the other communities, or apart from political considerations concerned with the future status of Singapore. Elsewhere in the same paper, Yap Pheng Geck was attacked for his ignorance of Chinese educational matters, and his advocacy of "soft and dispassionate" measures which, it was suggested, revealed Yap's shortcomings as a leader. Only the *Chung Shing Jit Pao*, generally recognised as a supporter of the Chinese Nationalist cause, urged restraint, arguing that the Conference should submit its views to the All-Party Committee, and then await the reactions of Government. At that time, the editorial asserted, it was unnecessary to call a mass meeting to demonstrate the collective strength of the Chinese, since the community was only expressing its opinions, and not fighting a cause.

The joint meeting of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce committee and various educational bodies lasted for three hours of heated debate,
during which it was decided, by a vote of twelve to nine to call a "Representative meeting of Singapore Chinese Associations to study the question of Chinese education." All registered Chinese societies, schools and educational bodies in Singapore were invited to send one representative each to the meeting, which was to be held on June 6th. The public was requested to submit views to the Chamber before June 2nd. A fifteen-member committee was appointed for the purpose of considering and collating the opinions received, in preparation for the meeting.

Once again, arguments in favour of a general meeting were advanced most persuasively by Tan Lark Sye and Lee Kong Chian; whilst those opposed to the idea tended to group themselves behind the Vice-President of the Chamber, Yap Pheng Geck, who advised caution, arguing that a general meeting should be called only "as a last resort." During the meeting a draft memorandum on education, prepared by the Chamber, was read, and it was agreed that this should be considered by the Committee which had been appointed to prepare for the Representative Meeting. The memorandum was notable for its general tone of moderation, many of the suggestions deriving, apparently, from the Fenn-Wu Report. It argued, inter alia, that school textbooks were out of date and should be recompiled and modernised; that modern books on Mathematics and Science should be acquired; that textbooks should be Malayanised, with Chinese History, Geography and Social Studies forming an integral part of the study of Asia; that the methods used in the teaching of English in Chinese schools were out of date, and should be improved. On the subject of the curriculum, the Memorandum argued for a more Malayan-centred approach to such
subjects as Civics, History, Geography, Politics and Economics, whilst specific training should be offered to Senior Middle school students to prepare them for admission to university, or for employment. The Memorandum also included a series of recommendations aimed at improving conditions for teachers in Chinese schools, the effects of which would have been to give such teachers salaries, annual increments, pensions, and teacher-training facilities on a par with those enjoyed by teachers in the English schools. The Memorandum appears to have been considered non-controversial at the time, for its reading did not provoke any discussion.

Meanwhile, discussion of the Government's action in setting up an All-Party Committee, and the means by which the Chinese Chamber of Commerce should assemble and represent the views of the Chinese community to the committee, became widespread in Chinese educational circles and, particularly, in the various clan associations, as on May 30th, for example, at a meeting of the Chin Kang Huay Kuan which had been called to celebrate the election of one of its members, Lim Chin Siong, as an Assemblyman. Lim had some emphatic comments to make on both the function of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and on the problems of Chinese education. Clan associations, he pointed out, existed to protect and further the interests of minority groups, and as such, had performed a useful function. But there always existed the danger that such associations might become too strong, with the formation of cliques and factions. In the past, these societies had been united and guided by the supreme authority within the community, the Chinese
Chamber of Commerce. But the Chamber now had lost its sense of purpose and direction, and confusion reigned. The Chamber should accept its responsibility, and seek to form a united front—the phrase had a familiar ring—to fight for the common interest and to protect Chinese education.

On the subject of education, after pointing to the evils of the colonial system, under which the provision of Chinese schools had been left entirely to the Chinese community, with the authorities seeking control through the infamous Registration of Schools Ordinance, and suppression through the Ten Year and Supplementary Five Year Plans, which promoted the rapid growth of English schools at the expense of Chinese schools, Lim called upon the Government to discard the old policies and ordinances, and to announce a new policy in keeping with the United Nations Charter which, he claimed, asserted the right of all races freely to develop education in their own mother tongue.

Lim Chin Siong's position as Secretary of the Singapore Shop and Factory Workers Union enabled him to marshal the support of a number of affiliated trade unions. On May 31st, a meeting of these unions was held under Lim's chairmanship, at which a memorandum was prepared for submission to the preparatory committee for the forthcoming Representative Meeting sponsored by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. In addition to the suggestions made by Lim at the meeting of the Chin Kang Huay Kuan, the memorandum embodied the following recommendations: that Chinese schools should receive equal status in the local education system; that Government should allocate funds for building Chinese schools
and extending classrooms, and that students in Chinese schools should receive six years of free primary education; that student "Self-Government Societies" should be encouraged (here, the memorandum seemed to indicate that literary, drama and music societies were intended, rather than that students should have any say in the management of the schools); and that the revision of school textbooks was a matter to be dealt with by a "specialised organisation" set up by the Chinese themselves; that schools should have the right freely to select textbooks which conformed to modern educational principles, but that such textbooks should have a Malayan background and be concerned with the interests of Chinese, Malays and Indians; that the policy of "Anglicised education" should be opposed, and the various communities should be encouraged to develop their cultures without unreasonable restrictions. The memorandum also made suggestions for overcoming the shortage of teachers for Chinese schools, and urged the creation of a Chinese Education Committee for the protection of Chinese education, and the establishment of similar committees to care for Indian and Malay education.

Meanwhile, the committee established to prepare for the Representative Meeting to be held at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce was running into difficulties in attempting to decide upon the qualifications of participants. At its first meeting, this committee found that no fewer than 502 Chinese public bodies of which thirty-four had sent in their views on Chinese education, had enrolled to take part in the proposed meeting, and there ensued a heated debate over the question
of which organisations were entitled to attend. The chairman of the committee, Ko Teck Kin, pointed out that at the previous meeting, it had been laid down that all registered bodies could take part in the assembly, but other members argued that public bodies with mixed memberships drawn from all communities should not be permitted to take part in a meeting which claimed to be representative of specifically Chinese associations. This view was opposed by those who felt that, since all the bodies were Chinese associations, the presence of some non-Chinese members should not be made an issue. It soon became clear that the issue was more than a matter of form, since insistence on all-Chinese membership would mean that organisations such as the Singapore Bus Workers' Union, with Indian and Malay members, would be excluded, as well as representatives of the English Teachers (Chinese Schools) Association because of its mixed membership. It was pointed out that if such a rule were to be applied, even the representative of the Nanyang Girls' High School would have to be excluded, on the ground of the attendance of a single Indian student at the school. It is clear that this procedural argument was concerned with the question of whether the 'moderate' or 'radical' groups would control the approaching meeting, and significantly, the meeting finally adjourned without a decision being reached on the matter. It was agreed, however, that the question would be considered further at an "emergency" meeting, to be held before the June 6th Representative Meeting.

On June 4th, the Preparatory Committee succeeded in reducing the number of suggested resolutions to seven. These were:
1) that the Government should be requested to abolish the colonial educational policy and "unreasonable" ordinances, and speedily draw up a new policy based upon the spirit of democratic self-government;

2) that the "good tradition and system" of Chinese education should be maintained, with particular attention paid to education through the mother tongue;

3) that Chinese schools should receive equal treatment by the Government, and that public funds should be allotted to management committees for building Chinese schools, particularly in rural areas;

4) that conditions of service for Chinese teachers should be equal to those for teachers at English schools;

5) that students in Chinese primary schools should enjoy six years of free education;

6) that the curricula of Chinese schools should be suited to the needs of the environment, and that the existing numbers of hours for the various subjects should not be cut; and

7) that the use of students by political parties should be strictly prohibited, so that students might pursue their studies in peace.

Furthermore, at this special "emergency" meeting of the Preparatory Committee, it was finally agreed that all applicants for participation in the assembly would be accepted, but that the resolutions simply would be put to the meeting to be decided upon by a straight vote, and that
no explanations, or proposals, would be allowed from the floor. The discussion which preceded these decisions revealed the fear of several members of the Committee that the meeting could easily degenerate into chaos, and that almost certainly it would be used by political extremists.

When the Preparatory Committee's decisions became known, several of the participating bodies expressed their resentment, particularly over what was considered to be the arbitrary omission of many resolutions, such as the call for a Chinese Education Committee, and the rewording of others, the view being expressed that only the Representative Meeting itself had the power to make such decisions. But time for further debate had expired, as the Representative Meeting had been arranged for June 6th.

When the representatives of 503 participating "Chinese bodies" assembled at the Chamber's premises, the worst fears of those members of the Preparatory Committee were soon realised. One Western correspondent who was present has provided his own, somewhat tendentious, version of the commencement of that marathon meeting:

At the official table sat the Chamber's foolish, frightened president, flanked by his opportunistic vice-president, the pregnant woman who was executive secretary, an anti-Japanese guerrilla colonel fallen on hard times, and two old men. The first six rows in the audience were occupied by Singapore's few Kuomintang stalwarts, businessmen and a number of school principals. But the remaining twenty rows were younger. Although no one was invited to represent the students, they were the overwhelming majority of the audience, present as representatives of community organizations including the Brass Gong Musical Society and a score of elementary school alumni associations organized for the occasion.

After five hours of heated debate, the first five of the seven proposed
resolutions were adopted, and the last two dropped. In addition, de­
spite the rules of procedure, a motion from the floor calling for the
appointment of a Chinese Education Committee was adopted, and twenty­
one members were appointed, the members including representatives of
several schools and school alumni associations, the Naval Base Labour
Union, the Singapore Bus Workers' Union, several clan associations,
various teachers' unions and school management committees, and the Pres­
ident and Vice-President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. 48

It is clear that control of this meeting soon passed from
officials of the Chamber to representatives of left-wing trade unions,
in particular to Lim Chin Siong of the Factory and Shopworkers' Union,
and to Fong Swee Suan, who represented the Bus Workers' Union. The
first two resolutions (dealing with the ending of the colonial system
of education and the preservation of Chinese education) were adopted
without amendment or dissent. But when the third proposal (on the
allocation of public funds for building Chinese schools) was read out,
Fong Swee Suan and others asked to speak. When the Secretary of the
Chamber drew attention to the rules of procedure which allowed no explana­tion or discussion of proposals, Lim Chin Siong asked the chairman to
respect "the opinion" of the meeting. Under pressure, the Chairman pro­
posed that speeches be allowed after all resolutions had been voted on,
a suggestion that provoked a charge from the floor that he was being
"undemocratic." Fong Swee Suan then suggested that each proposal be
allowed twenty minutes for discussion, and when the Chairman demurred,
Fong appealed to the gathering, which indicated its tumultuous approval,
after which no further opposition was offered from the chair. The fourth and fifth proposals (dealing respectively with equal treatment for Chinese teachers, and free elementary education in Chinese schools) were eventually adopted, although only after considerable dissatisfaction had been expressed over the Preparatory Committee's action in arbitrarily deleting the submissions of various bodies. But when the sixth resolution, which dealt with changes in the curricula and textbooks to make them more relevant to Malayan conditions, came up for discussion, it soon became apparent that the idea found little favour with the meeting. The principal of the Chung Cheng High School pointed out that textbooks in keeping with local conditions would be irrelevant to conditions in China. He explained that History and Geography textbooks then in use in the middle schools referred specifically to events in China, and that to change them would be inappropriate to a Chinese education, and he therefore suggested that the proposal be dropped. His suggestion met with an "enthusiastic response" and when put to the vote, was unanimously carried. Clearly, the idea of making Chinese education more relevant to its local setting had little communal appeal.

The seventh proposal, however, was the one that generated the most heat. This proposal, dealing with the prohibition of political parties from engaging Chinese school students in political activities, was staunchly supported by one of the more moderate members of the Chinese Chamber, Chuang Hui Tsuan, who, despite continuous heckling and booing which made his comments barely audible, stressed the importance of allowing students who were still young and of immature mind to
concentrate on their studies. A suggestion from another participant that the proposal be withdrawn was "loudly applauded," and in the event, the proposal was never put to the vote. The assembly finally ended after it had been agreed that its resolutions be submitted to the All-Party Committee by the President and Vice-President of the Chamber.

The Representative Meeting was loudly acclaimed by the Chinese Press, one paper concluding that the "unity" shown at the meeting was "tantamount to a guarantee for the success" of the various resolutions, while another asserted that the community could be "proud of the achievements of the assembly which in so short a time . . . laid down the broad outline for the long-term development of education" in Singapore.

But from the Government's point of view, the gathering had provided little in the way of encouragement or comfort. The scale of involvement of the Chinese community, and the impassioned nature of the debate, merely underlined what was already known: that a large section of the Chinese community had been thoroughly aroused, and readily could resort to violence at the instigation of its more radical leaders. Any perceived threat to Chinese culture would be sufficient pretext. The resolutions that had been adopted provided few constructive suggestions. The Government itself had already given notice of its intention to grant equality of treatment to all schools and teachers, and to provide six years of free primary education for all children, thereby rendering superfluous the substance of most of the resolutions. The emphatic rejection of the proposal to amend curricula and textbooks on the ground that any change would make them less relevant to Chinese education was
a clear warning that the community was not prepared, in its present mood, to surrender any part of its "culture" in the interests of the development of a new national identity. And there had been no resounding condemnation of the rôle played by students in the recent strikes and riots, no approval of the prohibition of students from taking part in political activities, but rather a jubilant affirmation of support for the existing, essentially communal, system of Chinese schools, and the well-organised, militant activities of their students. Commenting on the failure of the Representative Meeting to adopt the 'prohibition of politics' resolution, a leader writer in the Straits Times observed:

Education in China has always had a political bias. Since the Han dynasty, for more than two thousand years, students have always had an official career in mind. It is an axiom in China that the students of today are the rulers of tomorrow.

Politics being the science and art of government, it just didn't make sense to tell the Chinese student not to concern himself with politics. It was the justification for his existence. The Confucian classics, which formed the staple of his education, are preoccupied with questions of good government. After the Revolution in 1911, the Confucian classics were swapped in favour of modern textbooks. But the students inherited the political bias as well as the prestige of their predecessors.52

The generally militant attitude of the representatives of the various teachers' unions and associations provided a subject for comment in the same article:

Our Chinese schools were entirely and still are largely, staffed by men and women from China whose formative years were spent in that exhilarating atmosphere made up of idealism, patriotism, self-righteousness and righteous-indignation. Their experiences in Malaya did nothing to sweeten their tempers. They had to eat humble-pie at the hands of their committees of management, parents and even pupils. Their contracts were for six months at a time.
. . . They consoled themselves by uttering gibes, calling Chinese schools 'hsueh-diang'—learning-shops, on a par with tailor-shops and coffee-shops. . . 53

Whatever the underlying causes, the Representative Meeting had delineated certain unmistakable boundaries across which the Government could move only at its peril.

Meanwhile, another matter involving the political activities of students was taking its course. It will be recalled that under the previous government, an application for registration submitted by the Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union (SCMSSU) had been rejected on the ground that the Registrar of Societies was not satisfied that the Union would not be used for political purposes. Shortly after the new Government took office, the application for registration was renewed, and the Council of Ministers—no doubt more sensitive to public opinion than its predecessors—agreed to register the Union, on condition that the Union did not engage, under any circumstances, in political activities. Despite some pressure, the Government refused to waive this condition, and in due course, the Preparatory Committee of the SCMSSU agreed reluctantly to accept it in order to secure registration. In doing so, it issued a statement to the Press in which it claimed registration as "a great victory for us students made possible by the valuable help and support given us by the workers, the Pan-Malayan Students' Union, the democratic political parties, and the general public." The statement outlined the history of the application for registration, and indicated that the Union intended to "fight to have the unreasonable condition removed" so that it would not be
"subjected to interference" by the Government. The statement went on to assert the right of students "to take lawful measures to fight for [their] freedom of learning, of study, of publication, of association, of assembly, of speech . . . of movement, etc." The following day, the same Committee addressed a letter to the newly formed Chinese Education Committee, deploring the undertaking given by the Minister for Education in his capacity as Chairman of the All-Party Committee to give due consideration to all constructive memoranda, including those submitted anonymously. The reason for considering anonymous submissions had been explained in the Legislative Assembly—that certain persons, such as teachers at Chinese schools, might have "firm but not necessarily popular" ideas about education, and these individuals might hesitate to make known their views out of fear of possible "repercussions." But the Preparatory Committee of the SCMSSU argued that any sincere person willing to submit his views on Chinese education could have no reason for failing to affix his signature to show his "responsibility." The students argued that the Minister's readiness to accept unsigned memoranda had resulted in "a batch of anonymous persons [who had] . . . sold their own conscience and [were] endangering Chinese education and impairing the interests of the Chinese public." It was evident that the SCMSSU intended to interpret quite flexibly their undertaking not to engage in political activities.

Also evident was the sense of misgiving with which the Malay and Indian communities viewed the activities of Chinese school students. The Tamil Murasu pointed to the fact that although there was widespread
agreement that students should not be permitted to join political parties, no political party had accepted this, but on the contrary, all parties had established special sections for youthful members. There was, the editorial asserted, a general desire for legislation to prevent students from joining political parties. Similar views were expressed in the Malay Press. The SCMSSU organised numerous meetings and issued statements and pamphlets on various aspects of public policy, the tone of which became increasingly critical of the administration, until finally, in September 1956, the Government was obliged to dissolve the Union. In defence of its action, the Government issued a White Paper in which it exposed what it referred to as the "subversive activities" of the Union.

But during the Summer months of 1955, the All-Party Committee of the Legislative Assembly continued to attract much public attention. The Committee received eighty-seven memoranda from various educational, political and other organisations, and from individuals; it interviewed numerous persons, made enquiries through Government Ministries and Departments in both Singapore and Hong Kong, and it visited eight of the Singapore Chinese middle schools. It met at frequent intervals throughout the remaining months of 1955, and its deliberations continued until its final meeting on January 28, 1956. The Committee declined to publish the texts of the memoranda received on the ground that to do so would have made its report—already seventy-three pages—too voluminous, but some memoranda were made public by those who submitted them. Thus the University of Malaya Society, the Faculty of Arts alumnus
organisation, argued that it was essential that those in control of Chinese schools be given assurance that the policy in those schools would be part of the same policy applied to all other schools in the island. In the opinion of the Society, children in all schools should be required to be bilingual. Children in English schools should be required to take Malay, Chinese or Tamil as an additional, compulsory subject, and conversely, children in vernacular schools should be required to study an additional language, which might be English, Malay, Chinese or Tamil. Although this suggestion, if implemented, would have tended to increase the degree of mutual comprehension between groups, it clearly did not aim to produce a single *lingua franca*, and in a community of three major ethnic groups and four language streams, it would still leave some members of the population unable to communicate with others.

The question of language was a major preoccupation with the Straits Chinese British Association. In its memorandum, the Association regretted the fact that the British Government had "lost its greatest opportunity" in the immediate post-Pacific war days by failing to provide more English schools for immigrant Chinese children. The memorandum went on to claim that to mould the various races in Singapore into "one people, one ideology, one flag, one patriotism, one basic loyalty," there must be a uniform educational policy. "In any nation where there is a common loyalty and patriotism, there must also be a common language . . . [in which] all its people although of different racial origins can converse and understand one another," the Association argued, and
although it rather diffidently refrained from suggesting which should be the **lingua franca**, the implication was clear.  

Meanwhile, that somewhat unloved group, the teachers of English in Chinese schools, had submitted their views to the All-Party Committee. There was, they felt, an urgent need to give Chinese students in Singapore a sense of 'Malayan consciousness,' and one way of achieving this, they suggested, would be to Malayanise the English textbooks used in Chinese schools in order to "make the students aware of the cultural and social heritage of Malaya." They considered that prominence should be given to the teaching of Chinese, but English could continue to be treated as a secondary language which, they thought, would not arouse "the latent hostility of the Chinese who wished to preserve their culture." Significantly, there were no proposals in their submission for the improvement of English instruction, the standard of which, in Chinese schools, was, by common consent, generally deplorable.

Throughout 1955, the Chinese language Press continued to lay stress on the need to dispense with the "colonial" system of education, and to introduce genuine equality of treatment for Chinese schools; and these twin demands frequently were interpreted, by the English language Press, as a form of subversion. In November, 1955, Lee Kuan Yew--himself a member of the All-Party Committee--felt obliged to assert that:

>militant agitation for equality of treatment in education is not Communist propaganda. We fully endorse . . . the necessity of harmonising the various cultural and linguistic groups in the country. We . . . hope that the Government will . . . formulate a definite policy . . . to give a beginning to this re-orientated education policy."
At the other end of the political spectrum, John Ede, a member of the Progressive Party, drew attention to the failure of the Government to complete its building programme for 1955, as a result of which some 2,000 students would have to be failed in the secondary schools entrance examination "due not to a lack of ability but to lack of accommodation."

Ede argued that the Government should not wait for the report of the All-Party Committee before defining its educational policy. He pressed the Government to proceed with the building and running of its own Chinese secondary schools, and suggested that funds should be set aside for the instruction of Chinese, Malay and Indian teachers at the Teachers' Training College. Ede's comments are of particular interest as an indication of the changing attitude of the Progressives towards the politically sensitive issue of education. Ede argued that "all the main languages and cultures which should make up . . . Malayan nationalism must be regarded as complementary to each other," and he asserted that a way must be found to achieve the total eradication of the charge that there was a plot to exterminate the Malay, Chinese and Indian cultures. It would also be necessary to remove the causes of the somewhat justifiable complaint that young people in English schools were being brought up "as imitation Westerners with no real cultural roots of their own." Finally, he asserted the right of parents to decide whether their children were to have a "predominantly Chinese, or Malay, or Indian, or English education . . . always within a Malayan framework."

A frequently outspoken critic of the Labour Front Government, the Democratic Assemblyman for Changi constituency, Lim Cher Kheng,
pointed out that despite many differences, all parties had one aim in common, and this was the removal of colonialism, and hence it was essential to be rid of the colonial educational policy. He asserted that the Government had failed to live up to its promise of providing equality of education for all races, and accused the Minister for Education of relying on the advice of expatriate officers, who were committed to the policy of encouraging English education. Lim alleged that an "education expert" had been invited from Hong Kong to give advice on bilingual education, and pointed out that in that Colony the medium of instruction was Cantonese, not Kuo-yu, "with profit-making as the motive." Education in Hong Kong was not only "colonised but commercialised." 68

Shortly after the debate in the Legislative Assembly, during the course of which these opinions had been expressed, the Minister for Education announced the Government's intention of establishing, as an experiment, its own Chinese primary and secondary schools in January, 1956, and these would offer places for 680 students. The curriculum was to be based on that used in private and Aided Chinese schools, but would place greater stress on the teaching of English. Chew said that the new schools would make their pupils "very proficient" in English as well as in Chinese. Teachers were to have the same pay, privileges and conditions of service as English school teachers. 69 The announcement was greeted with some misgiving by the Chinese community, which continued to suspect the Government of planning to weaken the content of Chinese education and thereby undermine Chinese culture. 70

As 1955 drew to a close, the All-Party Committee of the
Legislative Assembly continued to struggle with the many problems involved in arriving at an educational policy acceptable to most groups in the island. It continued to receive advice, suggestions and demands, some of which appeared to be mutually incompatible, or at least, if adopted, unlikely to contribute to the aim of "orderly progress towards self-government and ultimate independence." During the year, more and more Chinese schools found it expedient to apply for full Government financial aid, with the result that a larger proportion of public funds was spent on Chinese education than in any previous year. Grants-in-aid paid to English schools amounted to $6,358,819 or an average of $218.70 per pupil, while grants of $6,128,813 were paid to Chinese schools, or an average of $70.25 per pupil. Total grants to Indian schools amounted to $118,495, or an average of $94.10 per pupil. 71

In February, 1956, the All-Party Committee published its long-awaited Report, after eight months of painstaking investigation and deliberation. The Report included a series of recommendations, and although not all of these were immediately acceptable to the Government, they provided a well-informed basis for all subsequent discussions of educational policy in Singapore. The calm language and reasonableness of the arguments bore witness to the determined and sustained efforts of the nine Committee-members, jointly representative of widely differing points of view, to achieve a constructive policy designed to bring a degree of harmony to the fragmented, island society. An underlying assumption of the Report was that the future of Singapore must lie in some form of close association with the Federation, yet the very
uncertainty of the nature of such an association and when it might occur
created some ambiguity in the Report. Thus, in discussing the question
of the reorientation of school textbooks to give them a local focus—a
matter intimately concerned with the creation of a national identity—
the Committee was obliged to make use of the rather equivocal objective
of encouraging "a Singapore-centred loyalty and a Malayan-consciousness."\(^72\)
Furthermore, the Committee recommended "as the ideal solution" the crea-
tion of a Pan-Malayan textbooks committee to revise school texts, but
if this was not feasible, it would be necessary for "immediate action"
to be taken in Singapore "leaving room for consultation with the Federa-
tion later on," to ensure that such a loyalty would be inculcated
through standardised textbooks.\(^73\)

The Report included recommendations clearly designed to allay
the fears of the Chinese community. It noted that:

In protecting fiercely the continuance of Chinese education . . .
the Chinese . . . are but voicing the innate fears that once a blow
is struck at their language, culture would follow next, and without
culture . . . no people could preserve its identity and racial
dignity.\(^74\)

The Government therefore was urged to establish an Educational Advisory
Council representative of the various types of schools on the island,
and to give an unequivocal assurance that in future there would be
equal treatment for all schools.\(^75\) The Committee found that the Regis-
tration of Schools Ordinance of 1950 was "bitterly resented" as a form
of political control aimed at preventing the resurgence of Chinese edu-

cation and culture, and that the terms of the Ordinance were believed
not to extend to English schools. It was recommended, therefore, that existing ordinances should be consolidated into a single new ordinance, the terms of which clearly should be held to apply to all schools. 76

The Committee considered the existing division into English and Vernacular education "unhealthy" for the future of Singapore, and argued that the problem of integrating the main streams into a single Educational System would have to be faced ultimately, and that the sooner it was faced the better for all concerned. This led to consideration of the problems of "official" and "compulsory" languages, since the Committee felt that without at least one common language officially encouraged and fostered in schools, the ideal of unifying the various ethnic groups into a single people could not be realised. Because of the cosmopolitan nature of the population, and the diversity of languages spoken, the matter was complicated; but in seeking "languages of wide communication," the Committee felt that it was "inevitable" that English would continue to be one such language. It was already

more of a common language amongst the various races, including the communities which are real minorities, such as Ceylonese, Arabs, Jews, Indonesians, Sikhs, etc., than any other language. It is in our interest as a commercial, and perhaps soon an industrial nation to continue the teaching of English. 77

The Committee also argued for the inclusion of Malay as an "additional compulsory language" because it was to be the official language of the Federation, and because of its regional importance. The members were "pleasantly surprised" to find that Chinese schools and many Chinese educationists were not opposed to the introduction of Malay as a
language in Chinese schools provided they could preserve the "traditional system" of Chinese education. Elsewhere in the Report, it was recommended that in the proposed General Education System, in which Chinese and other vernacular education would be integrated, provision should be made for bilingual education in the primary stage, and trilingual in the secondary; and that based on the four main languages of Mandarin, Malay, Tamil and English, primary education should be started in the language of the home, followed by English. Where pupils started with English, a choice restricted to one of the three other languages would be given for the second language. The third language, introduced in the secondary (or middle) school, should be continued for not less than two years. In order to promote linguistic proficiency, the Committee made the novel suggestion that at least two of the four major languages of the island be used as media of instruction in all schools. The result of these recommendations, if adopted, would be to create in Singapore two common languages, Malay and English, and in practice this would mean that the onus of becoming effectively trilingual must fall most heavily upon Chinese and Indian students.

As the population was predominantly ethnic Chinese, it might have been anticipated that Chinese would be proposed as a common language, yet the Report makes no mention of such a suggestion. The members of the Committee, with the single exception of Lim Cher Kheng, were all English-educated, a fact that laid them open to the charge of bias; yet such a charge would have been based on an oversimplification. The Chairman had received a Chinese primary education, and was fluent
in both Mandarin and English; and at least one of the eight other members was engaged actively in improving his knowledge of Chinese at the time. A few days after publication of the Committee's Report, the Assembly voted unanimously to approve the use of Mandarin as well as Malay, Tamil and English as official languages for use in the Legislature. In the circumstances, it is reasonable to conclude that the Committee considered the imposition of three common languages too great a burden upon the students, and upon the available educational facilities; and that the reasons for proposing Malay and English were more compelling than any that could be adduced in favour of Chinese.

Other recommendations in the Report included the suggestion that the Government should pay not only Grants-in-Aid but also Capital Grants to Chinese schools; that Civics should be taught as part of the curriculum, with "proper" textbooks on the subject prepared for use in all schools; that teachers in Chinese schools should be paid on the same terms as teachers in English schools, with the same treatment being extended to teachers in Malay and Tamil schools; that the system of school management in Chinese schools be continued, but also strengthened to ensure improved discipline and control, and that this system should be extended to all Government and Aided English schools. On the subject of discipline, the members of the Committee noted "with deep satisfaction" that whilst the Report was in preparation, the Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union had been accepted for registration on condition that its members would not "participate in politics nor in industrial strife of any kind," a decision which the
Committee endorsed. The Report then noted that in Chinese schools there had been a tradition for students "feeling strongly about politics" and that some students had wanted to translate their feelings into actions. Because of the "lively and even partisan interest" in political developments, there had tended to be "a vociferous clamour for action" to right what students considered to be radically wrong in the body politic. On the other hand there had been such a discouragement "if not active suppression" of political "inclinations" in English schools, that interest in the previous elections had had to be whipped up, and "was so luke-warm towards new developments as to make some quarters think they did not want Self-Government." The Committee proceeded to draw a distinction between the discussion of politics, which they considered desirable, even essential, and political action which, together with participation in trade and industrial disputes, should be banned categorically in schools. The Report noted, however, that although it would have been quite easy to recommend that repressive measures and restraints be imposed on Chinese students, dispassionate reflection led to the conclusion that such measures could not solve the root causes of discontent and dissatisfaction. It was argued that the main reason why Chinese school students considered that the existing educational system discriminated against them was in "the almost total disregard" of what was going to happen to them when they left school. Previously it had been possible for such students to further their studies in China, but the Committee did not wish the youth of Singapore to continue to develop a "China-consciousness" which militated against their
identification with the land of their birth; and hence it recommended that local facilities for higher education be provided immediately, and plans prepared for the absorption of Chinese students into employment "compatible with their capabilities and aspirations." Here, the Committee was coming to grips with one of the most intractable problems of education in Singapore: for so long as preference in employment was extended to the English-educated, no amount of expenditure on vernacular education could ever produce that sense of justice and equality which alone could lead to genuine integration of the various communities. The Committee therefore suggested that the main avenues of employment should be surveyed and planning undertaken to ensure occupations for the future products of bilingual education, and that at the same time opportunities should be created to enable those with "a mainly vernacular education" to be trained in industrial or technical skills.86

In general, reaction to the Report was favourable, although not surprisingly, some aspects found greater approval than others. One commentator, after giving a resumé of the Report, referred to the Committee's recommendation against students' participation in active party politics or in trade and industrial disputes, and observed:

The warnings have been heard before. Will they be heeded this time? The fact that they have been sounded this time by an All-Party Committee in harmonious chorus does not erase the question mark.87

Only one group was emphatic in its rejection of the Report. Two days after its publication, the Singapore English Teachers' Union (Chinese Schools) issued a statement in which the Government was asked to ignore
the Report, condemned as "a shameless piece of colonial prudery" [sic], as it did not attempt to appreciate Chinese education and culture, nor the part played by these in moulding national institutions. It claimed that the Report was as disappointing as it was absurd, and continued:

We expected it to advocate a sensible and far-seeing policy but instead we are presented with a dispirited and lifeless report that reflects little credit on the committee responsible for drafting it.

It deserves neither our thanks nor interest. Why should the All-Party Committee recommend . . . that Chinese school students should not participate in political activities and industrial disputes? . . . When Malaya is progressing through a political and social revolution . . . is it logical or even expedient on our part to deny our children full access to facts and their interpretation? The . . . report claims that by teaching civics a political objective is to be gained. We are at a loss to understand what specific political objective the Government has in mind. . . .

The statement went on to urge the Government to appoint another committee, this time of "members of the public who have a close understanding of Chinese education." This assessment of the Report was of interest for the light it threw upon the covert struggle for power within the People's Action Party. One of the nine members of the All-Party Committee had been Lee Kuan Yew, leader of the P.A.P. in the Legislative Assembly, yet two of the signatories of the extremely critical statement, Tann Wee Keng and S. W. Dragoon, President and Vice-President respectively of the Singapore English Teachers' Union (Chinese Schools), were also members of the policy-making Executive Committee of the P.A.P.

The Report also drew criticism from other quarters. A former member of the staff of the Singapore Teachers' Training College, K. A. Owen, noted that, although English schools already included Civics and
a study of current events in their curricula, the Report had condemned them for their lack of political activity and disinclination to be "whipped up" into "a frenzy of political argument and demonstration."

Owen claimed that there was more intelligent interest in current affairs and new developments among English school students, and more knowledge about them, than there was among Chinese school students. After nearly two months of silence, the Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union issued a statement in which it rather grudgingly conceded that the Report contained "many constructive suggestions," although the Union was critical of the recommendations concerning bilingualism and trilingualism which, it claimed, could only be implemented at the expense of vernacular languages. The Union was also critical of the conditions which the Report proposed as necessary for the payment of grants-in-aid, yet on the other hand, the recommendation concerning the Malayanisation of textbooks received approval. Perhaps surprisingly for an organisation which hitherto had mustered much of its support by a somewhat ethno-centric appeal, the SCMSSU's statement called on the Government to make Malay the national language, and a compulsory subject in all schools. This was part of the P.A.P.'s policy, and it is relevant to note that Lee Kuan Yew was Legal Adviser to the SCMSSU at that time. The response of the English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil Press to the Report was generally favourable, and may be summed up by the editorial comment in the Straits Times of February 13, 1956, which noted that although there were faults, the broad recommendations demanded approval.

The Government gave urgent consideration to the Report. In some
respects, such as the establishment of a Government Chinese school and the provision of local facilities for the training of Chinese teachers, it had anticipated the recommendations, and it now published a White Paper on Education Policy (No. Cmd. 15 of 1956), in which its attitude towards other aspects of the All-Party Report was clarified. The White Paper dealt with Malay, English and Tamil education, as well as Chinese. On the subject of Malay schools, the Government gave notice of its intention to provide facilities for secondary education in Malay, and to extend the existing Teachers' Training College to include a section to supplement the small quota of teachers trained at the Sultan Idris Training College at Tanjong Malim, and the Malacca Women's Training Centre. Tamil education received scant attention, the White Paper merely noting that as Tamil was now taught in Government English schools, it was possible for students to obtain a better Tamil education in an English than a Tamil school, where there were still teachers whose only qualification was that they had completed primary school.

The White Paper revealed once again a certain ambiguity on the subject of nation-building. Nationalism, it noted, was in the air:

The future of Singapore depends on the triumph of those forces which are trying to build a Singapore or Malayan nationalism, and it is in our schools that the foundations of that nationalism must be built. It must be stated here categorically that the main aim of this Government's education policy is to build a Malayan nation.

In seeking to create a common loyalty, the White Paper rejected the suggestion made by some "local educationists" that all children should be sent to a common school in which the medium would be English or, for
that matter, Mandarin, Malay or Tamil. It was pointed out that such a
solution could have been adopted only if a single language had been
much more widely established and more generally acceptable than any
local language then was. The Government believed that its policy should
be based on "equal respect for the four principal cultures of Singapore,"
and it therefore agreed with the All-Party Committee that every parent
should have the right to choose an English, Chinese, Malay or Tamil edu-
cation for his child. In the matter of a second language, the Govern-
ment would also seek to accommodate the wishes of parents, although it
anticipated that in general pupils attending Chinese, Tamil and Malay
schools would be taught English as the second language. The willing-
ness of the Government to provide facilities for Malay to be taught as
a second language must necessarily be limited by the availability of
Malay teachers.

On the All-Party Committee's recommendation that a third of the
main local languages be taught in secondary schools to achieve a degree
of trilingualism the White Paper pointed out that only with first-class
teaching, and with pupils of "more than average linguistic ability
whose curricula were already not too heavily overloaded," could such an
objective be accomplished. The Government therefore intended to try
out the proposal experimentally in a few selected schools. The White
Paper drew attention to the major problems involved in the training of
teachers competent to give language instruction, and to the necessity
of ruthlessly pruning the syllabuses, so that the curriculum should not
be grossly overloaded, with the new emphasis on second-language
instruction. The Government hoped that it would be possible for pupils to complete their primary education "competent in one language and with a fair working knowledge of the other."\(^94\)

The Government had already anticipated the All-Party Committee's recommendation on the subject of the revision of school textbooks, and had established a committee representative of all types of schools to draw up syllabuses suitable for Singapore, and to make recommendations for the writing of textbooks. The White Paper indicated the Government's intention to introduce the teaching of Civics in all schools during 1957, subject to the availability of appropriate Teachers' Notes.

Turning to the question of equality of treatment for Chinese schools, the Government proposed to introduce legislation to replace the existing ordinances and regulations with a single Education Ordinance applicable to all schools; to introduce a new Grant Code which dealt with grants-in-aid; and to re-organise the Education Department to provide for a new and enlarged Aided Schools section, the purpose of which would be to co-ordinate the administration of all grants-in-aid and ensure equality of treatment for all.\(^95\) The conditions a school must satisfy to be eligible for grants included a number concerned with management and discipline, the need to keep proper records and submit regular statements of accounts, and the appointment and dismissal of staff. No school in receipt of grants could be conducted for profit; and all aided schools must maintain "certain educational standards" in order to make an "effective contribution to the country's education system," and, significantly, the general policy of such schools "must
not in any way conflict with the education policy laid down by the Government." Here, the White Paper was making explicit the principle that where public funds were to be used, the Government had the final authority to determine how those funds might be used. The White Paper also gave notice of the Government's intention to do away with the system of partial aid which hitherto had been available, and to offer schools full aid, or none at all. If a school accepted full aid, it must comply with all the Government's conditions. The Government accepted the All-Party suggestion to establish a new Education Advisory Council which should be representative of the various education systems, and to which school management committees could turn for advice and assistance particularly in matters affecting school discipline.

Looking to the future, the White Paper forecast a continuing increase in the demand for school places, and warned of the need to relate the provision of secondary education not only to the number of pupils able to profit from it, but also to the number of teachers available, the country's financial resources, and the needs of prospective employers. Whilst anxious to admit as many students as possible to secondary schools, the Government expressed its determination to avoid any appreciable decline in standards.

On the All-Party Committee's suggestion that the Government should widen the field of employment to provide greater opportunities for the graduates of Chinese schools, the White Paper tended to be equivocal. It was, the Government argued, necessary to look at this problem from the employer's point of view. He required certain "qualities of
character and standards of attainment" in his prospective employees, and he would seek to recruit from those schools which most nearly satisfied his requirements. There was need for co-operation between schools and employers, and schools must be prepared "to abandon curricula and syllabuses which are politically and pedagogically outmoded." As one step in the direction of a solution to this problem, the Government proposed to invite representatives of employers to serve on the Educational Advisory Committee. This suggestion might be interpreted as a frank admission that, whatever policy were adopted by Government, the final arbiters of the type of education available in the Singapore of the future would be commerce and industry. Indeed, the Ministry of Education had undertaken an unofficial survey of the members of the various chambers of commerce, the results of which indicated beyond any doubt that employers would give senior positions to those with an English education. But the Government seemed to be overlooking the fact that it was itself the largest single employer on the island, and as such could do much to influence employment prospects.

The Government's education policy outlined in the White Paper was adopted unanimously, but not before some trenchant criticisms had been expressed. John Ede (Progressive, Tanglin) asserted that the White Paper was the work of politicians rather than educationists, in that its authors had avoided dealing with the implications of the policies proposed. He was particularly critical of the proposal to establish a committee to Malayanise textbooks, asserting that no committee would be able to produce Malayanised textbooks in the three
languages comparable to the "beauty and grandeur of Confucius or Mencius, Shakespeare or Milton." But this was something of a red-herring, as the All-Party Committee had indicated that it did not consider Chinese (and by implication English) literature appropriate for Malayanisation, and this point had been accepted by the Government. More relevant, perhaps, were the comments of Lee Kuan Yew (P.A.P., Tanjong Pagar), whose main criticism of the White Paper was that it departed from the recommendations of the All-Party Committee's Report in failing to include Malay as a *lingua franca*. The White Paper, he argued, placed emphasis upon English, and in this respect it was out of touch with the "revolution" in Asia:

If we had to solve the language problem in Singapore alone, I think the solution [would] be somewhat different from that which would be arrived at if [we] solved it on a Pan-Malayan basis. And I still wish to talk on a Pan-Malayan basis because the other alternative is uncomfortable.

Lee went on to castigate the Government for its complacency over the inadequacy of secondary and higher educational facilities for Malays, but concluded by saying that, in so far as the White Paper indicated the Government's intention to carry out the All-Party Committee's proposals, the P.A.P. would support it.

The Government proceeded to implement its policy, not all at once, not without difficulties, and sometimes with a faltering hand. Sometimes, a politically explosive situation would arise, which seemed to suggest that the new direction was a failure, that the policy was unacceptable to too many people. And the objective of promoting a
single national identity in which communal differences would seem less threatening appeared to be as elusive as ever. The Government had yet to face a series of challenges to its authority, culminating in the riots of October 1956, during which further confrontations between Chinese school students and the Police occurred. Following the dissolution of the SCMSSU as part of a programme intended to avert a perceived Communist plot, the Government arrested a number of students, and "required" the management committees of the Chinese High School and Chung Cheng School to expel 142 students whose activities were considered to have been of a subversive character. Immediately afterwards, large numbers of students occupied these two schools and, following the now familiar pattern, proceeded to conduct their own classes and "study-sessions," aided once more by the Singapore Bus Workers' Union. But on this occasion, perhaps feeling itself to be in a stronger moral position, the Government proceeded to take firm action against the students. It established temporary schools for those students who wished to continue their studies; and when students attempting to attend these schools were intimidated by their more zealous colleagues, the new Chief Minister, Lim Yew Hock, spoke of the crisis in a broadcast over Radio Malaya:

The events of the past few days have brought to a head the situation in our Singapore middle schools. And it is not a problem of education; it is a matter of discipline. . . . No community can allow this persistent defiant and aggressive indiscipline to continue . . . in its younger generation. Theirs is not a threat to any particular government; it is a threat to all governments of any kind. . . .

When frequently repeated appeals to students and their parents failed,
the Police moved in with tear gas, and achieved the clearance of the schools, without serious casualty. Subsequently, the schools were permitted to reopen and students to re-register upon a guarantee of good behaviour being given by two adults in respect of each student. The schools returned to an uneasy quiet.

Meanwhile, more and more Chinese schools elected to apply for full aid under the Government's revised scheme. By the end of March, 1957, all eligible schools had submitted applications for such aid, and all but eighteen of these had been approved. Expenditure on education mounted sharply throughout the period of the Labour Front Government, and the proportion of these funds devoted to Chinese education continued to increase, as indicated in the following tables:

Table VII
DISTRIBUTION OF EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURE, 1955-1957 INCLUSIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head of Charge</th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1956</th>
<th>1957</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gross Expend.</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>Gross Expend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>1,763,557</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1,347,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Scndry.&amp; Higher)</td>
<td>5,255,333</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>7,920,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Primary)</td>
<td>19,568,228</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>24,548,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay Education</td>
<td>2,111,032</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>2,381,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Education</td>
<td>6,128,813</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>8,123,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Education</td>
<td>120,082</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>123,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voctnl. Education</td>
<td>3,060,998</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>1,797,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>38,008,043</td>
<td></td>
<td>46,242,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: First Education Triennial Survey covering the years 1955-57 inclusive.
Unfortunately, owing to a change in the system of accounting adopted by the Department of Education, exactly comparable figures are not available for 1958. But the effect on public expenditure of the rapid increase in the number of Chinese schools accepting Government assistance and control is suggested by the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1956</th>
<th>1957</th>
<th>1958</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Schools</td>
<td>6,358,800</td>
<td>6,919,000</td>
<td>7,321,784</td>
<td>8,828,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Schools</td>
<td>5,392,800</td>
<td>7,511,700</td>
<td>12,939,601</td>
<td>16,630,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Schools</td>
<td>118,500</td>
<td>123,500</td>
<td>127,309</td>
<td>134,467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Chinese doubts concerning the Government's good faith did not evaporate over-night. Some schools were encouraged to resist the attractions of financial solvency promised by grants-in-aid, on the ground that acceptance meant the end of Chinese education and culture. On January 21, 1957, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce decided once more to call a mass meeting to protest the Government's Grants-in-Aid policy, Tan Lark Sye claiming that under the new regulations school management committees would become mere "jagas" (watchmen) for the Education Department. But already too many school management committees had accepted the aid, and the emotional steam had been allowed to escape. The Ministry of Education agreed to the request of a number of management
committees that an officer should be appointed to "attend to the needs" of Chinese schools, and that correspondence with the schools should henceforward be conducted in Chinese. When the Government indicated its intention to reduce the enrolment of secondary schools to a maximum of 1,200 the announcement was greeted with hardly a murmur of dissent, and indeed, with approval by the management committees themselves. Although the threat of cultural annihilation would remain a potentially explosive issue, to be made use of from time to time for political purposes, the fuse of Chinese education had been effectively detached. Major problems remained, but now these could be dealt with in a calmer, more rational atmosphere.

The All-Party Committee's Report might be seen as a compromise between a number of ideal solutions to a social problem, proposed by conflicting interests. The process by which it materialised was unique in the history of Singapore, in that it drew its inspiration directly from the wishes, emotions and prejudices of a large section of the community its recommendations were intended to serve. The Government's response, in the shape of its White Paper on Education Policy which formed the substance of the Education Bill of 1957, represented an assessment of the extent to which the ideal of an "equal" education for all could be introduced in the face of perceived political and economic realities.

In addition to attempting to introduce major changes designed to give equal treatment to Chinese schools, Government policy during this period also indicated a growing awareness of the need for technical
and industrial training, with plans for the polytechnic and a number of trade schools and apprenticeship schemes pushed forward. Also, by the end of 1958, the Government's building programme practically had achieved the aim of providing six years of free primary education for all the youthful population of Singapore.

In other respects, the Government's educational achievement was less commendable. The All-Party Committee's recommendation that the Government should actively seek ways of improving the prospects of employment for the Chinese-educated received only half-hearted attention, and thus one of the underlying causes of the sense of injustice experienced by the Chinese community continued in being. The findings of the Government Commission concerned with the Malayanisation of the Civil Service clearly indicated that in future there would be considerably improved opportunities for university graduates to secure senior appointments, yet the Government failed to give an assurance that a specific proportion of these would be available to the graduates of Nanyang University. And when the former Chief Minister asked the Government whether an Inter-Departmental Committee could be appointed to investigate what posts in the Public Service were available or could be made available for the graduates of Chinese middle schools, the Acting Chief-Secretary to the Government replied that he did not consider the appointment of such a committee essential.

Again, despite the Government's frequently reiterated promises to give equal treatment to English and vernacular education, this seems to have meant, in practice, equality of treatment to English and Chinese
schools. Tamil education received no more than token gestures in the way of assistance or recognition, and leaders of the Malay community frequently expressed dissatisfaction over the extent of the Government's commitment to Malay education. 109

In matters of higher education, the Government's most notable achievements were, perhaps, the establishment in October, 1958, of the Singapore polytechnic, and the decision to recognise and extend official support to Nanyang University. At the time of its founding, the University had been registered as a private company, an indication of the official attitude of the day towards this venture of Chinese private enterprise into the field of higher education. In April, 1958, the Government announced its intention to appoint a commission "to examine the standards of the university" and to advise on the recognition of its degrees. In December, legislation was adopted incorporating the University as a public institution. During the debate, a matter was touched on that was to plague the University throughout the 1960's. Although the Government had set up its commission to consider Nanyang degrees, it became clear that the Government of the Federation had declined to be associated with the commission, or to make any contribution towards the support of the University, despite the fact that many Nanyang students were drawn from the Federation. 110

The period during which the Rendel Constitution was in operation in Singapore was too brief to allow the full impact of policies adopted to become apparent. Nevertheless, certain trends can be detected which
make possible a tentative assessment of the educational policies in terms of their effectiveness in achieving the Government's purposes, their social effect, and their relevance to the needs of those being educated. During its period in office, the Government had negotiated the terms of a new constitution which amounted to virtual full internal self-government, with an extension of citizenship rights to almost all residents of the island prepared to give allegiance to Singapore. Since it may be assumed that the first purpose of a popularly elected Government is to secure its own return to office, the result of the 1959 elections—in which the P.A.P. gained forty-three of the fifty-one seats—clearly points to the failure of official policies to achieve this objective. Whilst it cannot be established that educational policy was the single major factor contributing to this failure, one aspect of government policy directly associated with education certainly had a significant impact. Following the 1957 Municipal elections, which resulted in the selection of a P.A.P. Mayor, the decision was taken to recruit Chinese-educated personnel into all City Council departments; and the contrast between the policy of the P.A.P. dominated City Council and that of the Labour Front Government was not lost upon the voters of Singapore. Yet the Government was proud of its educational record, regarding it in some respects as its most praiseworthy accomplishment. 111

Consideration of the social impact of educational policies of this period presents certain difficulties, for a policy designed to reduce communal tension does not necessarily lead to social integration. In seeking to remove the deeply felt sense of grievance of the Chinese-
speaking community, the Government proposed to strengthen the very institutions which tended to perpetuate linguistic divisions within society. Yet in guaranteeing Chinese schools nothing less than complete equality of treatment, the Government was doing no more than recognising the political imperatives of the situation. The process by which the policy had been determined had provided an opportunity for all sections of the population to express their views, and the fact that the All-Party Committee's Report also formed the basis of the P.A.P. Government's policy suggests that, in essentials, the proposals were widely acceptable. The future status of Singapore as a separate yet apparently unviable polity was a prospect that no leader viewed with equanimity. Yet a form of closer association with the Federation, evidently essential for economic survival, seemed neither imminent nor even ultimately certain. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Labour Front Government failed to project a clear image of the kind of national identity which should be created through its school system. The failure, however, may have worked to the benefit of Singapore, since it is clear that any attempt to force Chinese education into a Singaporean or Malayan mould would have exacerbated communal passions. And so, although its educational policy failed to produce a single type of school within which Singaporeans from all ethno-linguistic groups might receive instruction through the medium of a single language, and hence acquire a shared system of values, the Government could take credit for removing some of the causes of tension which set people apart. In this rather negative sense, the educational policy of the
period may be judged to have contributed to social cohesion. 113

There remains the question of the relevance of the type of education provided to the needs of those being educated. Here, it is necessary to distinguish between the kind of education demanded—whether by politicians, parents, or students imbued with patriotic fervour or fear of cultural extinction—and the kind of opportunities for employment that awaited those who completed their schooling. It may be noted that despite the massive increase in expenditure on education that occurred during the years 1955 to 1958 inclusive (see Appendix E), much of which was devoted to instruction through the media of Asian languages, little was done to alter the pattern of employment in Singapore. So far as the Indian community was concerned, apart from a belated attempt to set up a Tamil Studies department at the University of Malaya, and to run one or two Tamil classes in English secondary schools, there was no provision of secondary or higher education in the language. Malay education fared only marginally better, with the Government giving a token nod in the direction of equality by an undertaking to establish Malay secondary classes, subject to demand and the availability of qualified teachers. Young people of these communities anxious to pursue higher education could do so, locally, only through the medium of English. The rest were obliged to become semi-skilled or unskilled labourers, or to join the growing ranks of unemployed. In the case of the Chinese-speaking section of the community, despite the Government's deep involvement in the provision of primary and secondary schools and its somewhat tardy acceptance in principle of the need
to extend aid and recognition to Nanyang University, practically nothing was done to improve the employment opportunities for graduates of the Chinese educational system. There is little doubt that this fact helps to explain the continuing overall increase in enrolments in English schools. Nevertheless, despite these serious shortcomings, the educational policies adopted by the Government during the period of operation of the Rendel Constitution represented a major break with Singapore's colonial past, and a determined and partially successful attempt to remove the cause of considerable social injustice. They also represented an impressive effort by a substantial part of the population of the island to influence the formation of policy by direct but unorthodox methods. The Chinese-speaking section of the community, still largely excluded by the citizenship laws from participation in the democratic process, made use of a familiar, if outmoded, institution—the Chinese Chamber of Commerce—and adapted it to serve a new and popular purpose. Unmistakable notice had been served that the wishes of this part of the population could no longer be disregarded by those who aspired to power in Singapore.
CONCLUSION

A decisive factor in the formulation and introduction of educational policy is the perception held by policymakers of the time-span within which goals must be achieved. In the orderly, unhurried, pre-Pacific war days, officials of the British colonial administration came to accept the fact that the old order could not be preserved indefinitely, and that certain changes were inevitable although not necessarily desirable. To adapt to these distant, future challenges, new policy goals were sometimes proposed, but whether the new goals were concerned with the provision of free, primary education for all, or the training of administrators and leaders capable of occupying the highest positions of government, the sense of indefinite time at their disposal coupled with a certain complacency, encouraged officials to regard such aims as "ultimate" rather than "immediate."

During the period of the Japanese Occupation, such sense of urgency as existed arose directly from the circumstances of the unfinished war and the demands of the armed forces, and this contributed to the speedy implementation of those aspects of policy concerned with training in mechanical and other technical skills. But officials of the Japanese administration seem to have accepted without question the permanency of the New Order, at least for the first two years or longer, and educational policy reflected the sense of timelessness in the adoption of new, and to present-day eyes, impractical goals. The determination to disseminate Japanese cultural values, and to overcome the linguistic divisions within society by introducing yet another
language which henceforth should be the lingua franca, together with the dedicated zeal with which these aims were pursued, could be based only upon an assumption of victory in the war against the West, and the establishment of a long-lasting new era of Japanese hegemony.

In the post-war administrations, similar assumptions of timelessness were notably absent. British rule during the years 1945 to 1955 frequently revealed an awareness of the imminence of constitutional changes in the direction of self-government, and educational policy was designed not merely to encourage a locally-focussed loyalty and to train personnel for a locally-recruited Civil Service, but also to ensure that the élite created would share western values in general, and be sympathetic to British interests in particular. The heavy emphasis placed upon English education, the ambitious school building programme, the arrangements made for the training of teachers for English schools, and the elevation of the two local colleges into an English-medium university suggest a desire to protect and perpetuate the essentials of an existing relationship through the forging of links between Singapore and Great Britain capable of withstanding the vicissitudes of Merdeka. The consciousness of British officials of the limited time available to accomplish these aims helps to explain the inadequacies of the Ten Year and Supplementary Five Year Plans, as well as the apparent insensitivity of the colonial administration to the social consequences of attempting to produce a single school mould into which the children of all communities would be channeled.

From 1955 until the general elections of 1959, the clamour of
political parties and personalities provoked the hitherto mainly quiescent, disenfranchised Chinese-speaking community into a much more active involvement in the policy-making process. Now, the administration was acutely conscious not only of the limited time at its disposal, but also of its own somewhat tenuous position within the Legislature. An added sense of urgency was created by the obvious danger of communal strife which had been exacerbated by the educational policies of the previous government. The establishment of the All-Party Committee was an acknowledgement of the fact that the Government alone could not determine the future of education in Singapore, and the Committee's proclaimed willingness to seek the views of all who were interested stimulated an impressive community response. Notwithstanding the existence of deep socio-linguistic divisions, the fragile ideal of a democratic city-state seems to have taken a perceptible step closer to realisation in Singapore during those years. Issues were hotly debated, not least in an outspoken, uncensored press; and public opinion found channels of effective expression. But the threat--real or imagined--of rampant communism, and the harsh reality of riots and strikes, persuaded the administration to revert to a more authoritarian style of government, under which radical organisations were proscribed and their leaders imprisoned. The apparently improved prospects of security for vital British interests provided by the more determinedly anti-communist Lim Yew Hock administration encouraged the metropolitan power eventually to yield to the demand for a greater measure of independence in the island.

In comparing the social impact of educational policies adopted
during the four periods under review, as well as the relevance of those policies to the needs of the youth of Singapore, it has been noted that the system of schools which existed at the outbreak of the war in the Pacific had evolved in response to a variety of demands and inhibiting factors, and as such had been for the most part unplanned. Goals were seldom clearly identified, but as the Government became increasingly involved, the practices adopted gave maximum encouragement to English schools, with a separate and inferior education for Malays. As Chinese schools acquired a political rôle, the Government sought to control "undesirable" aspects of Chinese education without eliminating the schools themselves, a course that would have involved a vastly increased expenditure on public education. Tamil education was ignored. No attempt was made to create a system of education that would produce a Malayan (or Singaporean) national identity. Educational policies did not envisage any radical change in Singapore's entrepôt status, and the English and Chinese schools more than satisfied the demand for junior administrators, clerks, and shop-assistants.

During the Occupation, the Japanese Weltanschauung provided a general framework within which educational policies could, perhaps, have produced a sense of national identity on the part of those being educated, with a single lingua franca and shared values deriving from Japanese culture. But owing to the lack of adequate preparation, and the need to meet the extraordinary demands of the moment, education under the Japanese became a series of ad hoc measures which, in practice, allowed many features of the established school system to continue
unchanged. Furthermore, even if one accepts the Japanese claim that by August, 1944, "approximately 25,000" pupils were enrolled in ninety-two schools in the island,¹ this figure represented little more than one-third of the school enrolment of 1941,² and hence only a small proportion—probably less than one-fifth—of the school-age population received any formal education. Such a situation clearly could contribute little to social integration or equality of opportunity; but given the prevailing war-time conditions, it seems unlikely that anything more could have been achieved. No doubt the policy stress upon technical training was determined by the need to provide a skilled and semi-skilled work force in support of the Japanese mechanised forces; but in so far as such training equipped those who received it to take advantage of existing occupational opportunities, it was related to the needs of the students, and the skills acquired were to prove invaluable in the post-war period. The lot of those who received no formal schooling or technical training was unenviable, for many were drafted into the ranks of the Gunpo or Hei-ho (Auxiliary non-combatant servicemen) to provide unskilled labour.³

It has been noted elsewhere that during the period of their rule, the Japanese encouraged disharmony between the races in Malaya and Singapore.⁴ Yet this appears to have resulted from the excesses of local army commanders acting out of a deep sense of antagonism towards the Nanyang Chinese for the latter's support of those who opposed Japanese aspirations in China, rather than from any deliberate policy. Certainly, there was little in the educational policies or practices adopted in
Syonan to support the charge of discrimination against the Chinese. The attempt to replace Chinese with Japanese as the medium of instruction was never seriously pressed and was no more effective in Chinese schools than was the attempt to use Japanese for the same purpose in "Former English" schools. The intention—implicit in this language policy, and frequently proclaimed publicly—was to weld the various communities into a "harmonious whole." Officially, Chinese language could still be taught as an additional subject, and in practice, Japanese officials obligingly turned a deaf ear to its continued use as the language of instruction. The objective of creating an integrated society was a long-term one; and in the meantime, the problem posed by the natural propensity of Overseas Chinese to pledge their loyalties to the Chinese motherland seemed capable of solution through the simple expedient of drumming up support for the Wang Ching-wei régime.

The post-war British administration, much preoccupied with the sheer volume of demand for education, devoted the major portion of its educational budget to the provision of school buildings and the training of teachers to staff them. Although the Ten Year Plan of 1946/47 announced the Government's intention of encouraging vernacular education and of providing post-primary vernacular schools, the underlying thrust of the policy was to encourage English education at the expense of the Asian language streams. Furthermore, the application of the policy in practice tended to promote English as the de facto common language. Had it been possible to introduce such a policy without arousing the fears of the predominantly Chinese-speaking community, it
seems likely that a degree of social integration would have been achieved through the adoption of a common, if alien, culture. But the policy was introduced without finesse, and in any case, was so much in conflict with the prevailing trend of events that it could not fail to provoke an emotional rejection from the now thoroughly politicised Chinese community. Educational policy and practice during this period was thus unmistakably, if unintentionally, socially divisive.

The relevance of the education provided during the years 1945 to 1955 to the needs of the youth of Singapore depended to a considerable extent upon the medium of instruction. The pre-war situation in which those receiving an English education enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the prospects of prestigious employment continued in being, and indeed became more irritatingly apparent with the establishment of a local English-medium university. The limited opportunities for higher education which formerly had existed for the graduates of Chinese middle schools were, after 1949, no longer available, except to those prepared to travel to China with the intention of remaining there. Thus, the overwhelming majority of the Chinese-educated were obliged to seek employment either with local merchants, where a minimal knowledge of English was necessary, or in the labour force. Malay education, which now included English as a subject, continued to satisfy the demand for chauffeurs, gardeners and other similar types of employment, with some limited opportunities for higher education available to those who made the successful transition into the English school system. The rather large number of Indians employed in such menial occupations as street-sweeping may suggest, in
the absence of statistics, the limited prospects open to those who emerged from Tamil schools.

The social consequences of unemployment and under-employment in Singapore during the 1950's have been detailed elsewhere, and it must be noted that these conditions were not notably relieved during the period of the Labour Front Government. Yet despite the existence of sharp disparities in income levels and employment opportunities, the expression of violent discontent along communal lines progressively diminished after 1956. It has been argued in this study that the reduction of communal tension was due in large measure to the willingness of the Government to accord equality of status to all language streams. If in practice this meant upgrading the quality of Chinese education by reducing the large gap that existed between the budgetary support given to English schools and that given to Chinese schools, with Malay and Tamil education lagging always further behind, this must be ascribed to the fact that the Government now was obliged to satisfy the demands of the majority of the electorate; and the majority was Chinese. Indian parents appear to have accepted the situation with a mixture of resignation and pragmatism, for enrolments in Tamil schools remained almost static, with a majority of Indian children attending English schools. Malay parents, perhaps partly because of the physical setting of Singapore in an Islamic region and the probability of some form of merger, ultimately, with the Federation, continued to prefer a Malay education, although at the same time becoming increasingly insistent in their demands for its improvement. This was to be achieved through the
provision of Malay secondary schools, a Malay Teachers' Training College, and even the establishment of a Malay University. In summarising the social consequences of the educational policies of this period it is necessary to note that the effects were not uniform on each of the language streams. There was a perceptible lessening of tension between the English- and Chinese-educated, although there was little positive progress towards integration of the two communities. The Indian community moved, whether willingly or not, in the direction of integration through the rising proportion of its young people attending English schools, while the Malay community became more critical of the Government's lack of concern, and therefore may be considered to have become increasingly alienated from the rest of the population. Nevertheless, in attempting to give not only the reality but also the appearance of equality to each of the four language streams, the Government sought to remove the immediate cause of communal fear. With the passage of time, commercial and utilitarian considerations might well determine that one linguistic group would become dominant. Whether the Government considered this can only be a matter for conjecture in the light of existing evidence.

Although the parameters of area, ethnic composition of population, and economic circumstances are, in combination, uniquely Singaporean, problems associated with the administration of this multilingual, insular society are of international concern. In Singapore, these problems are constantly in public view; and through the intermingling of the communities, which is enforced by the sheer physical
limitations of the island and the essentially urban nature of the environment, a sense of urgency is created. Elsewhere, the most pressing problem facing the government of a multi-lingual society may well be that of preserving the unity of the state against fissiparous tendencies based on cultural differences. In several countries, a solution has been sought through the adoption of a federal form of government, in which varying degrees of autonomy are allowed to the component units. Perhaps the most successful example of a stable, multi-lingual state is that of the Confederation of Switzerland which, during the course of its lengthy history, has evolved a constitution which appears to operate to the satisfaction of most of its population. In Switzerland, as in the Republic of Singapore, there are four official languages, and although some 70 per cent of the population is German-speaking, the degree of autonomy permitted to the twenty-two Cantons is such that the French and Italian-speaking minorities do not feel themselves to be dominated by their more numerous, German-speaking compatriots. It must be acknowledged that, historically, the Cantons existed before Confederation, and that only specific powers were surrendered to the Federal Government, the remainder (including jurisdiction over education) resting where they have long been held, in the legislative assemblies and executive councils of the individual Cantons. 9

In other more recently established multi-lingual states where the federal form of government has been adopted, tendencies towards separation are seen to present a continuing threat. In India, steadily growing agitation resulted, in 1956, in a radical reorganisation of the
country along linguistic lines; yet the new states gave no guarantee of an end to separatism. The disturbances of early 1965 sounded a clear warning of the sense of resentment experienced in the Tamil-speaking south over the decision to adopt Hindi as the sole national language. In Canada, the separation of Quebec continues to be a real possibility, notwithstanding some Federal Government efforts to create equality of treatment for French- and English-speaking Canadians. Quebec, indeed, provides an interesting example of the politics of language, for the Provincial Government itself, as revealed by the recent debate provoked by the official language bill, is faced with the problem of adopting a policy concerning the language of instruction in its schools which will alienate neither its own English-speaking minority nor the French-speaking majority, many of whom fear, perhaps with good reason, the ultimate extinction of French culture in North America.

Yet even if federalism provided a solution to the problems of multi-lingual states, it is clearly not one that could be applied in Singapore. What is practical in Switzerland, where a population of some five millions is distributed over a surface area of nearly 16,000 square miles is clearly impractical in Singapore, with its 2.2 million people crammed into a mere 224 square miles. Since the choice of political sub-division is not available to Singaporeans, the question at issue is whether multi-lingualism and multi-culturalism can survive, and if so, whether they should be encouraged to do so. Since the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965, with the consequent abandonment
by the P.A.P. Government of its objective of fostering a Malayan (later Malaysian) national identity, the aim of educational policy has been the creation of a Singaporean identity, while yet retaining the four major cultures represented in the island's population. But whatever may have been the intention of the Government, and despite the very considerable efforts to promote a community of multi-lingual individuals by such methods as devoting up to 40 per cent of the curriculum time in primary schools to second language instruction, and placing emphasis upon "integrated" schools, the trends in favour of English education, and the use of English as the lingua franca—clearly perceptible during the years 1945 to 1959—have continued. Yet, although the Government of Singapore itself provided the statistics which reveal these trends, the editors of Chinese language newspapers who sought to muster public opinion to force their reversal were liable to be silenced by the authorities on the ground of incitement to communalism. From this it seems evident that social antagonisms have not yet entirely yielded to the Government's programmes designed to foster social cohesion.

Another political entity that invites comparison with Singapore is that of the British Crown Colony Hong Kong. In some physical respects, the similarities are marked: the Colony has a large population crowded within a small island with some adjacent mainland territory—approximately four million people occupying 398 square miles. Like Singapore, Hong Kong has insufficient sources of fresh water to supply its needs, and has been obliged to seek additional supplies from its not-always-friendly neighbour. Like Singapore, Hong Kong's population is almost
entirely of recent immigrant origin. The Colony's prosperity and the wealth of its merchants derived originally from its free-port, entrepôt status; but, like Singapore, recent political and economic changes have led to the rapid development of local industries. There, however, the similarities begin to falter; for although Hong Kong, like Singapore, has a predominantly youthful population (36 per cent is under the age of fifteen), here the population is much more homogeneous than in Singapore. Over 99 per cent of the people are Chinese, and at least four-fifths of these are from Kwangtung and speak Cantonese. In comparison with Singapore, Switzerland and Canada, for instance, Hong Kong can not be regarded as a "plural" society, and can be considered multi-lingual only to the extent that English is the language of administration, and the second language of a substantial and growing proportion of the population.

In the second half of the last century, schools in Hong Kong were established by philanthropic or missionary groups, or by private individuals--the government becoming involved later through a complex system of subsidies and grants-in-aid, through inspection and control, and ultimately, through the establishment of its own institutions. The kind of education available varied widely; and the number of places proved to be quite inadequate to meet the demand which followed the influx of refugees from post-1949 China. To deal with the situation, the government increased the amount of financial assistance to aided schools, and conducted an extensive school-building programme. At the same time, many new private schools sprang into existence. Despite these
developments, as recently as 1964, the number of places available was insufficient to meet the demand. During the mid-1960's, the government introduced legislation designed to rationalise the system of schools, and as a result it is possible to identify three major categories of primary schools (leaving aside the question of ownership and management): Anglo-Chinese schools, in which instruction begins in Cantonese but ends in English; Chinese schools, in which instruction is given in Cantonese, with English taught as a second language from the third year on; and English schools (there are only five) in which English is the only language of instruction, although Chinese may be taught as a second language. The last group of schools is intended for those "whose normal language is English." Secondary education is provided by Anglo-Chinese Grammar schools, Chinese Middle schools, Secondary Technical and Secondary Modern schools. The Anglo-Chinese Grammar schools, which in 1968 had an enrolment of 150,000, serve as feeders to the University of Hong Kong, whilst graduates of the Chinese Middle schools (with a 1968 enrolment of some 50,000) may seek admission to the new Chinese University or, after satisfying an English language requirement, the Hong Kong University. Courses at the Chinese University are taught in Cantonese or Mandarin.

The relevance of such a brief survey of Hong Kong's educational system to the theme of this study will become apparent when it is noted that, despite the existence of several types of school in each of which different emphasis is placed upon the learning of English, Hong Kong society continues to display a great deal of linguistic homogeneity: everybody can speak Chinese and, it is claimed, a considerable proportion
of the population can understand Kuo yu (Mandarin). Those who enter the Anglo-Chinese schools continue to be taught Chinese as a subject, and the threat of cultural alienation, if present, is barely perceptible. Although one may question the wisdom of the selection of English as a prerequisite for higher education in a homogeneous Chinese society, it is clear that colonial education in Hong Kong has failed to produce the kind of social antagonisms that are the heritage of colonialism in Singapore.

The present government of Singapore is well aware of the nation-building potential of a unified system of public instruction, whilst recognising the tenacity with which each of the constituent communities of the population clings to its own cultural heritage. In seeking to overcome the socially disruptive aspects of communalism, policies designed to de-emphasise cultural differences have been adopted. Every effort is made to ensure that the kind of education provided in elementary and secondary schools will be as nearly uniform as possible. Textbooks for use in the various language streams must be approved by the Ministry of Education, and the content of these is under constant review, to make sure that the kind of information and values imparted are the same. Sports events and other extra-curricular activities are organised along non-linguistic lines, and the government is continuing to promote "integrated" schools, in which two or three language streams attend the same institutions. Great emphasis is placed upon the teaching of a variety of subjects in the students' second or third languages; and these efforts have been accompanied by an attempt to make the content
of education, regardless of language, more relevant to the employment opportunities in Singapore. In pursuit of this latter aim, the former academic orientation of the curriculum has been changed to encourage the attainment of technical and vocational goals. It is, probably, still too early to gauge the success of these measures; yet the impression remains of a policy designed to gain time while more inexorable forces determine which, if any, is to be the lingua franca of Singapore, and which the dominant culture.

And the question of whether or not Singapore should have a single culture may yet prove to be the most socially significant of all the problems facing the island republic. The impact of educational policies adopted during the period covered by this study varied widely, and the effects were seldom those anticipated by policy-makers. One of the least considered effects was that of the cultural discontinuity which must inevitably result from exposure to a non-traditional education imparted in an alien tongue. The symptoms of such alienation have long been present, yet successive governments preferred to ignore them. It will be recalled that the Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed in 1870 had drawn attention to the products of the English schools as "young men competent to earn a livelihood . . . but . . . the majority . . . know only how to read, write and speak English imperfectly, and . . . very few of them are in a position to make any material advance in life or to enjoy or improve their leisure by reading and adopting other means of self-culture. . . ." Similar observations were recorded on several occasions in subsequent years, and in 1939, the commission
appointed to review higher education in Malaya found itself unable to recommend the elevation of Raffles College to university status principally on the grounds that its students were, for the most part, incapable of competing successfully for the external Arts degree of London University. Apart from the fact that the London University curriculum required Latin as a subject for the Intermediate B.A. Examination and Anglo-Saxon and Middle English in the Final Examination, none of which was normally taught in the Colony, the Commissioners found that students entering Raffles College simply did not have the background in or command of the language necessary for a full appreciation of English literature or western culture. Yet, the imperatives of trade and commerce and the encouragement of governments led an ever increasing number of unsuspecting young people into the cultural desolation of an English education. The economically advantaged but deculturised group that emerged was at once separated from and resented by each of the other ethno-linguistic communities. There had been no genuine exchange of one culture for another: the majority of English-educated Singaporeans had learnt how to write the School Certificate examinations (suitably amended to relieve them of the necessity of knowing as much about English literature as their British contemporaries) and had learnt sufficient English to enable them to obtain employment. And in the process, they had been effectively detached from the rich cultural heritages of China, the Malay world, or India. English education remains, for the majority, a superficial experience which denies them the opportunity of appreciating in full the western cultural tradition. The result is a spiritual
aridity, symptomatic of which is the absence of any recognisably Singaporean literary or artistic tradition. David Marshall has recently asserted that:

It was and still is my firm belief that a culturally uprooted citizen is an anaemic citizen, and that the different races should have a thorough grounding in their own languages and traditional cultures with a "topping" of a basic common outlook...23

Whether such a "topping" would be capable of withstanding the fissiparous tendencies of communalism is open to question. However that may be, the lack of a vigorous Singaporean culture—one report speaks derisively of the national creed as "money-theism"24—provides little incentive for the Chinese, Malay or Tamil educated to surrender the emotional and psychological satisfactions afforded by their own cultures. The standard by which the present government's educational policies are likely to be judged is that of how far they encouraged the emergence of a cultural milieu within which all might feel at ease, and from which might be expected to evolve a greater degree of social cohesion and a sense of national identity.
Notes to Chapter I


2 Ibid., p. 208.


4 The three theories regarding the origin of the name 'Singhapura' or Singapore are reviewed by Wheatley, pp. 102-4.

5 Malacca, for example, became an influential state gaining much from its strategic position commanding the Straits of Malacca and its rôle as an emporium. By the latter part of the fifteenth century, it had become "... a political power of the first rank... the most important centre in South-East Asia..."—Hall, p. 211. This is borne out by the comments of contemporary European visitors, as for example, those of Ludovico di Varthema, who visited Malacca six years before it fell to the Portuguese. He believed that "... more ships arrive here than in any other place in the world,"—*The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna*, translated from the original Italian edition of 1510 by John Winter Jones, for the Hakluyt Society; ed. Sir Richard Carnac Temple (London: The Argonaut Press, 1928), p. 84. A few years after Malacca's capture, Duarte Barbosa commented, "this city of Malaca is the richest seaport with the greatest number of wholesale merchants and abundance of shipping and trade that can be found in the whole world."—*The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, II, tr. and ed. M. L. Dames (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1918), 175-76.

6 The North Sumatran Sultanate of Acheh appears to have been one of the principal beneficiaries of this disruption—see for example Denys Lombard, *Le Sultanate d'Atjeh au temps d'Iskander Muda 1607-1636* (Paris: Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient, 1967), p. 36.


8 Ibid., pp. 160-63.

9 The Malay scholar, Munshi Abdullah, who was residing in Malacca at the time, noted shortly after the destruction of the fortress that "Malacca was at peace and much merchandise went in and out, coming from all countries trading with it. Even poor people could earn their living, much more so those already rich."—Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir,
The Hikayat Abdullah, tr. A. H. Hill (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 64. One of the most telling arguments used by Raffles in opposing the abandonment of Malacca had been that the settlement would shortly recover its former strength and prosperity and, in other hands, it would be a dangerous rival to Penang.—L. A. Mills, British Malaya 1824-1867 (1925; rpt. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 50.


11 Frank Swettenham, British Malaya (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1908), p. 66. Swettenham asserts that "... if there had been no Raffles in 1819, there would have been no British Singapore today," ibid., p. 71.

12 Abdullah, pp. 149-53.


14 Munshi Abdullah records that there were "hundreds" of human skulls lying on the shore close to the mouth of the Singapore River, in varying stages of decomposition. According to the Orang Laut, they were the skulls of victims of acts of piracy.—Abdullah, p. 146. In an address presented by the merchants of Singapore to Raffles on the latter's departure from the island in 1823, mention is made of Singapore as the former "haunt of pirates,"—Swettenham, p. 73. See also Mills, p. 56.


16 Lady Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Stamford Raffles (London: John Murray, 1835), I, 383.


19 Ibid., p. 57.

20 Ibid.
A number of Chinese families had resided in Malacca for several generations, often intermarrying with Malays to form a separate Baba community. Whilst retaining many features of Chinese culture, they adopted numerous Malay customs, and generally spoke a very distinctive Malay patois, for a description of which see W. G. Shellabear, "Baba Malay," JSBRAS, 45 (December, 1913), 49-63.


Iain Buchanan, Singapore in Southeast Asia (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1972), pp. 165-66; Turnbull, p. 36; Nathan, p. 93.


Purcell, pp. 4-10, and 85-86.

Ibid., p. 194. A policy of unrestricted immigration of Chinese into Singapore had long been maintained by the Directors of the East India Company—see Eunice Thio, "The Singapore Chinese Protectorate: Events and Conditions Leading to Its Establishment, 1823-1877," Journal of the South Seas Society, 16, Parts I & II (1960), 41.


34 Turnbull, pp. 146-47.

35 Wheatley, "Land Use . . .," p. 66.

36 Turnbull, pp. 149-52.

37 Purcell, pp. 92-93.

38 Ibid., pp. 85-86.

39 Saw, p. 60.

40 Arasaratnam, p. 28.

41 Ibid.; Turnbull, pp. 47-51; Sandhu, p. 133.

42 Sandhu, pp. 220-21; Arasaratnam, p. 35.


44 Ibid., p. 185.

45 The report on the 1921 census noted that "To induce immigrants to bring their wives and families with them, to create Chinese and Indian communities here who will look upon British Malaya as their permanent home, to stop the drain to China and India of wealth which has been produced in this country and should be reinvested here, are problems which have long exercised the minds not only of the Government, but of every employer of labour."—Nathan, p. 93. See also Turnbull, p. 52.

46 Saw, pp. 53-55.


49 Nathan, pp. 30, and 40-41.


51 The figures were: Transport and Communications, 7,320;
Agriculture and Fishing, 7,104. These figures include both 'Immigrant Malaysians' and 'Malays,' and are for the island as a whole.—Vlieland, pp. 262-68.


54 This point has been made by Wang Gungwu in "Traditional Leadership in a new nation: The Chinese in Malaya and Singapore," The Cultural Problems of Malaysia in the Context of Southeast Asia, ed. S. Taktir Alisjahbana et al. (Kuala Lumpur: The Malaysian Society of Orientalists, 1966), pp. 172-73. See also Purcell, p. 73.


56 Wang Gungwu, p. 173. If this is true, it would help to explain the willingness of many Chinese parents to arrange for their children to receive an English-medium Western education.


58 Ibid., pp. 102-3.

59 For a fuller account of the circumstances leading to the founding of Singapore, and of the agreement between Raffles and the Malay leaders, see R. O. Winstedt, "A History of Johore," JMBRAS, 10, pt. III (1932), 71-85.

60 The significance of the lack of the royal regalia should not be underestimated. In some parts of the Malay world the view was held that it was the regalia which reigned, the sultan merely governing in their name—see Robert Heine-Geldern, "Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia," Far Eastern Quarterly (November, 1942), pp. 26-27. See also Harry J. Benda, "Political Elites in Colonial Southeast Asia: An Historical Analysis," Comparative Studies in Society and History, 8 (1965), 236-37.


62 Iain Buchanan, for example, contends that there was "a strong tendency for Singapore's different ethnic groups to concentrate in
specific economic activities. . . . The pattern of economic life in the city encouraged an ethnic division of labour. . . ."—Buchanan, p. 167.

63 Turnbull, p. 188.
64 Ibid., p. 58.
65 Ibid., pp. 126-27; Thio, p. 43.
68 J. Crawfurd, Resident, to C. Lushington Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort William, February 7th, 1826, Straits Settlements Records, 1800-1867, A28, 442-45. In the same letter, Crawfurd noted that, according to the Prospectus of the Singapore Institution, "the establishment was to have consisted of three Colleges or Departments viz. a Scientific Department, and Anglo-Chinese College, and a Malayan College. The objects . . . to be embraced, consisted of the physical sciences, ethics, the English Language and Literature; and the Chinese, Siamese, Malay, Javanese, Bugis and other insular Languages and Literature. The Institution was to have had European Professors and Native Teachers. . . ."
69 Ibid.
70 Chelliah, pp. 36-37.
71 Ibid., p. 38. The Free School was only free in the sense that it was intended to be open to the children of the island without regard to ethno-linguistic differences. In this it followed the practice adopted in Madras and Calcutta, and provision was made for the collection of fees from pupils.
72 Ibid., p. 40. Buckley notes that in response to a request for government assistance, Darrah was informed that "there could be but one opinion as to the utility of the objects he proposed, but, on the score of the economy, so rigidly enforced by the Government in Calcutta, they could not assist him. . . ."—Buckley, I, 230.
In this respect, Singapore differed little from other British colonial territories and dependencies. Arthur Mayhew, a senior official attached to the Colonial Office in London noted, in 1938, that:

In practically all our dependencies the government at first ignored education, being concerned with the maintenance of law and order, defence from external attack, and economic development. Education they left to the Christian missions, to whom they gave usually a free hand. And they did not interfere with local and indigenous methods of education. Thus we see that from the start a fundamental feature of our colonial policy established itself, free scope for private enterprise, a suspicion or mistrust of rigid official control, arising, no doubt, from the absence of clear educational ideas on the Government's part, as well as from a lack of belief in education, and a feeling that more important matters demanded all their time and energy.


74 Buckley, I, 206.
75 Ibid., p. 263.
76 Buckley, II, 581.
77 Chelliah, p. 90.
78 Straits Settlements. *Annual Departmental Reports for the year 1930* (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1932), p. 740. Hereafter this series of documents will be referred to by the abbreviation SS.ADR followed by the year to which the Reports relate.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid.
82 Ibid., p. 139.
83 Ibid., p. 140.
85 Board of Education. *Special Reports* ..., pp. 140-41.
86 Ibid., p. 141.
87 Ibid., p. 143.


Notes to Chapter II


2 Mayhew, pp. 39-40.

3 Clatworthy, pp. 11-33.

4 Ibid., p. 25.

5 Mayhew, pp. 41-42.

6 Ibid., p. 42.

7 Ibid., p. 11.

8 Ibid., p. 13.

9 Ibid., pp. 32-33.

10 Ibid., pp. 33-34. Instances are not lacking of similar arguments. A former Professor of Education at Dalhousie University, for example, had developed the same theme a year or two earlier. He wrote:

The task of governing backward races may be justified on several grounds. The extraordinary expansion of traffic . . . has created of the world one economic unit. Countries which are storehouses of raw materials have become useful to distant populations. Only the more technically advanced peoples can make these stores available. Individual nations have their rights and needs; but so has humanity. Valuable products needed by mankind cannot be left to lie idle and rot unused. . . . The leadership of other nations is called for. Exploitation of the helplessness and ignorance of weaker peoples can only be held in check by a government strong enough to impose its will on all alike and maintain impartially the rights of all.


11 Mayhew, pp. 35-36.

12 Ibid., p. 36.

13 Ibid., p. 37.
Sir Arthur Young, the Governor, noted in his annual address to the Legislative Council in 1915 that although the war had had little effect on the number of pupils attending Government schools, it had reduced the number of European teachers and had "made it inexpedient to introduce changes either in system or in personnel. . . . But for this shorthandedness there would have been some changes in the system of training local teachers and a Normal Instructor would have been sent out from England to supervise the work."--PLC, 1915, p. C167.

ADR, 1929, pp. 892-93.

PLC, 1916, p. C109. Sir Arthur Henderson Young (b. 1854), educated at Edinburgh Academy, Rugby and Sandhurst, had had a lengthy career in the civil administration in Cyprus, where he had been appointed Chief Secretary in 1895. He became the Colonial Secretary to the Straits Settlements Government in 1906, Chief Secretary, Federated Malay States in 1911 and later in the same year he was appointed Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner for the Malay States.


PLC, 1918, p. C98.

ADR, 1918, pp. 597-98.


Tan Cheng Lock (b. 1883), received an English education at Malacca High School, and at Raffles Institution in Singapore. He gained some first hand experience of the problems of education as a schoolmaster at Raffles Institution from 1902 on. In 1908 he moved into the business world, becoming an Assistant Manager of Bukit Kajang Rubber
Estates Ltd., and Manager of Ayer Molek Rubber Co. Ltd., later floating a successful company of his own. He held various directorships, and in 1912 was appointed Justice of the Peace. He was a Municipal Commissioner in Malacca from 1912 until 1922, and was a founder member of the ill-fated Anglo-Chinese College Council in 1918.—Biographies of Prominent Chinese in Singapore, ed. Victor Sim (Singapore: Nam Kok Publication Company, 1950), p. 3. Tan was to play a major rôle in the formation and activities of the Malayan Chinese Association after the Pacific war—see R. S. Milne, Government and Politics in Malaysia (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967), pp. 34-35. Tan's later views on education, and many other issues, are to be found in Tan Cheng Lock, Malayan Problems from a Chinese Point of View (Singapore: Tannsco, 1947).

26 Paper laid before the Legislative Council by Command of His Excellency the Governor on 19th October, 1932, ADR, 1932, pp. 824-25; and PLC, 1933, p. B111. The fees formerly charged for English education were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys per month</th>
<th>Girls per month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to and including Standard IV</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above Standard IV</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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</tbody>
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These were increased as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Boys and Girls per month</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to and including Standard VI</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Above Standard VI                    | Fees of $6.00 or $9.00 according to the result of an annual qualifying test.

27 Sir Cecil Clementi (1875-1947); educated at St. Paul's School and Magdalen College, Oxford. Posted to Hong Kong in 1899, he became Land Officer and Police Magistrate from 1903-6. He gained some knowledge of the Chinese language at this time, having passed the Civil Service examinations in Cantonese in 1900 and in Pekingese in 1906. He served as Colonial Secretary in British Guiana from 1913-22, and in the same post in Ceylon from 1922-25. From 1925 until 1930 he was Governor of Hong Kong, after which he was appointed Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner for the Malay States, positions which he held until his resignation in 1934.—The Concise Dictionary of National Biography, 1961, p. 89, and Who's Who, 1935, pp. 644-45.

29 For an account of the constitutional issues involved, see Rupert Emerson, Malaysia: A Study in Direct and Indirect Rule, 2nd ed. (1937; rpt. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1964), pp. 135-74 and 313ff. An official of the Colonial Office in London asserted, in 1932, that Clementi was "obsessed with the importance of his new policy of devolution [of powers to the individual states] and uses it without any justification as an argument for the most diverse proposals."--Minute by H. Q. Cowell, March 2, 1932, see Appendix D.

30 PLC, 1933, p. B162.

31 Straits Times, October 26, 1933. See also the editorial comment in the Straits Times, October 27, 1933 and the comments of Dr. N. L. Clarke, leader of the Eurasian community, in the Legislative Council on October 2, 1933, PLC, 1933, p. B141.

32 Straits Times, October 26, 1933. Lim Cheng Ean (b. 1888); educated at Clare College, Cambridge (B.A., LL.B., 1914); called to the Bar, 1916. Appointed Municipal Commissioner, Georgetown, Penang in 1923. Nominated to represent the Chinese of Penang in the Legislative Council in 1929.--Correspondence from Mr. Lim to the author, December 20, 1973. Mr. Lim maintains that Clementi was much influenced by Winstedt and other "pro-Malay" officers. Lim's withdrawal from the Council had an added although not widely appreciated dramatic aspect, for he and his wife and daughter had a few nights before stayed overnight at Government House as the guests of Clementi, thereby becoming the first Asians ever to be so 'honoured.' Clementi had assured Lim, on that occasion, that it was his intention to aid Chinese education by sending "promising students" from Chinese schools to Hong Kong to be trained as teachers. Lim contends that Clementi was persuaded to change his mind on this and other matters by Winstedt, who exercised a strong influence over the Governor.--Correspondence from Lim Cheng Ean to the author, dated December 18, 1973 and January 18, 1974.

33 Straits Times, February 17, 1934.


37 Sir Thomas Shenton Whitelegge Thomas, K.C.M.G. (b. 1879), continued in office as Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Straits Settlements, and High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States until the fall of Singapore in February, 1942. He had been educated at St. John's
School, Leatherhead, and Queen's College, Cambridge, joining the Colonial Civil Service in 1909. He arrived in Singapore, having served as Governor of the Nyasaland Protectorate (1929) and of the Gold Coast (1932).


39 Paper No. 94 laid before the Legislative Council on October 26, 1936, **PLC**, 1936, p. C379.

40 **ADR**, 1938, p. 641.

41 **PLC**, 1918, p. B174. In reporting on the Ordinance to amend the Board of Education Ordinance, 1909 (No. 7 of 1919), the Attorney-General noted that the reason for the proposed increase was that additional funds would be required to pay increased grants-in-aid to non-Government schools and "to contribute towards the upkeep of the proposed Free Elementary English Schools"—Enclosure No. 3 to Straits Despatch No. 109 of March 7, 1919, Young to Milner, CO 273, vol. 482.


43 Reports on the Income and Expenditure of the Education Board appended to the **PLC** for the years 1918 to 1938 inclusive.


45 **PLC**, 1928, pp. B132-B133. See also the acrimonious debate on the Imperial Government's proposal to replace the 20 per cent of assessed revenue figure with a fixed annual contribution of $5 millions for five years.—**PLC**, 1931, pp. B123-B126 and B177-B192. For an account of the origin of this controversial issue, see Emerson, pp. 306-11.

46 **ADR**, 1927, p. 429.

47 Sir Hugh Clifford to the Rt. Hon. L. C. M. S. Amery, February 14, 1929, Colonial Office, Original Correspondence, CO 273, File 62093.

48 The local Colonial Secretary, in his report on housing conditions in urban areas noted that in a large number of cases, houses were "insufficiently ventilated and, in many streets, are not provided with back lanes. The former defect conduces to the spread of tuberculosis and the latter interferes with the proper collection of night soil. Many of the houses are divided into small cubicles in the upper
storeys by the erection of temporary partitions, without regard to the
entry of light and air. It is in these cubicles that the worst type
of overcrowding is found, and it is not unknown to find in a street of
these houses an average of 46 people per house. The majority of the
labouring and artisan class find a home in these cubicles or in common
lodging houses. With so many of the wage earners living in such ill-
ventilated and insanitary dwellings, it is not surprising that tubercu-
losis in urban areas is so prevalent and that the infant death rate is
high. The common lodging houses are found in the densely populated
areas and frequently consist of an overcrowded dormitory over a shop or
store." The 'corrected' infantile mortality rate in 1931 was 180.65
per thousand births, compared with 193.94 in 1930 and 181.92 in each of
the two preceding years.—ADR, 1931, pp. 596 and 606-7.

49 ADR, 1919, p. 252. There were six students from Singapore
in residence at the Malacca Training College during the year.

50 ADR, 1920, p. 262.

51 ADR, 1918, p. 589.

52 ADR, 1919, pp. 254-55.

53 ADR, 1938, p. 637.

54 For an account of the impact of British educational policy
on rural Malays see David James Radcliffe, "Education and Cultural
Change among the Malays, 1900-1940" (Diss., University of Wisconsin,
Madison, 1970). See also Philip Loh Fook Seng, "The Nineteenth-century
British Approach to Malay Education," Jurnal Pendidekan, 1, No. 1

55 PLC, 1936, p. C140.

56 PLC, 1925, p. B150.


58 ADR, 1929, p. 892. For an account of the circumstances
which led to the decision, in the nineteenth century, to support Malay
but not Chinese or Tamil instruction, see Chelliah, pp. 24-31.

59 ADR, 1929, p. 892.

60 See for example PLC, 1924, pp. B38, B114-B115; PLC, 1928, p.


62 ADR, 1938, p. 690.
For a comment upon the anomalous situation arising from different rates of pay for European and Asian teaching staff, see Francis Thomas, Memoirs of a Migrant (Singapore: University Education Press, 1972), pp. 32-33. From 1921, the monthly rate of pay for European masters was $400 x 25 to $800, and for women teachers, $300 x 25 to $500.—PLC, 1922, p. B25. Non-European male teachers could earn up to a maximum of $300 per month, women up to $150 per month.—PLC, 1923, p. B83.


A further problem connected with Government statistics relating to private schools is that of determining to what extent, if any, the progressive increase in the numbers recorded represents a genuine growth or, more likely, merely indicates that more schools, already existing, were being registered to comply with the law.

Control appears to have been exercised through consuls and local branches of the Kuomintang—see Png Poh Seng, "The Kuomintang in Malaya, 1912-1941," Journal of Southeast Asian History, 2, No. 1 (March 1961), particularly pp. 19ff. The growth of the Government of China's interest in the affairs of the Overseas Chinese has been recorded by several authors, most recently by Stephen Fitzgerald, China and the Overseas Chinese (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 5-9 and passim. According to Victor Purcell, one-time Inspector of Chinese Schools and later Assistant Director of Education (Chinese), Straits Settlements, the Chinese Government not only sent representatives to inspect Chinese schools overseas, it also demanded returns to be submitted to Nanking and instituted its own

75 Cheng, p. 332.

76 Confidential Despatch No. 147, Young to Milner, July 26, 1919, Straits Settlements, Secret and Confidential Despatches to the Secretary of State, Colonial Office, pp. 4-6.


79 Ibid.

80 Confidential Despatch No. 147, Young to Milner, July 26, 1919, pp. 6-7.

81 Sir Laurence Nunns Guillemard (b. June 1862); educated at Charterhouse, and Trinity College, Cambridge, entered the Treasury in 1888. Governing body of Charterhouse School, 1906 to 1920; 1931 to 1935; Deputy Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, 1902 to 1908; Chairman, Customs and Excise, 1909 to 1919; Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner for the Malay States, 1919 to 1927. In 1921, the Japanese Order of the Rising Sun, First Class, was conferred on him.—Who's Who, 1935, p. 1381. There would appear to be little in Guillemard's background to suggest that he had been particularly well prepared for the task of governing the Colony.


83 Lee Ah Chai, pp. 86-87.

84 Ibid.

85 ADR, 1920, p. 267.


87 Ibid., pp. 522-27.


90 Ibid.


93 According to a telegram published in the Sin Kuo Min on July 16, 1921, the Chinese Minister in London, Wellington Koo, had five interviews with the British Foreign Office, and was under the impression that his representations were still under consideration.—CO 273, vol. 510, p. 407.


95 ADR, 1922, p. 228.


97 ADR, 1923, pp. 120-21.

98 Report of the Committee appointed by His Excellency the Governor and High Commissioner to consider the system of Grants in Aid to Schools in the S.S. and F.M.S., PLC, 1932, p. C559.


102 ADR, 1938, p. 647. For an account of the somewhat analogous situation that had evolved in the schools in the Malay States, see Robert O. Tilman, "Education and Political Development in Malaysia" (Symposium held in Brussels by the Centre du Sud-est Asiatique et de l'Extrême-Orient, April 1966), pp. 209-28.
At the second meeting of the Council in July 1919, a target of $2 millions was set, and in order to avoid appearing to conflict with Government efforts to raise funds for Raffles College, it was agreed that money should be raised exclusively by "private solicitation." --The Malaysia Message, 28, No. 11 (August 1919), 84. For a more detailed account of the Methodist Mission's proposal and its ultimate abandonment, see H. E. Wilson, "An abortive plan for an Anglo-Chinese College in Singapore," Journal of the Malaysian Branch Royal Asiatic Society, 45, Pt. 2 (1972), 97-109.

The substance of the conversation was reported to London by Young's successor in office.—Confidential Despatch, Guillemard to Colonial Office, October 18, 1920, CO 273, vol. 502.


Guillemard to Colonial Office, October 18, 1920.

Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Session of the Malaysia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church held in Singapore, Straits Settlements, February 10th to 17th, 1921 (Singapore: Methodist Publishing House, 1921), p. 53.


Minutes . . . of the Malaysia Conference . . . 1921, p. 53.

This is substantiated by The Rev. Robert A. Blasdell, a former member of the Methodist Mission, who was in Malaya at the time and knew the Principal-designate very well, in a letter to the author dated August 25, 1973.

In 1917, the American Methodist Mission operated the Anglo-Chinese Boys' schools in Singapore and Penang, the Anglo-Tamil schools in Singapore and Penang, two girls' schools in Singapore and one in Penang, a school at Bukit Mertajam and another at Nibong Tebal, a total of nine schools having a combined enrolment of 4,777 boys and girls.—ADR, 1917, pp. 237-38.

Winstedt to Governor, September 30, 1920, ibid.

Ibid.


The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence (October, 1922), p. 84. Guillemard forwarded a copy of this journal to the Colonial Office with his Secret Despatch dated November 18, 1922, CO 273, vol. 518.

Ibid.

Confidential Despatch, Guillemard to Secretary of State for the Colonies, October 18, 1920, CO 273, vol. 502.

Ibid.

Endorsement to Guillemard's Confidential Despatch of October 18, 1920.

On October 22, 1917, C. W. Darbyshire, one of the Unofficial Members, returned to the subject of the Anglo-Chinese College, which had first been the subject of a question in the Council on September 24, 1917. His words were representative of much of the comment in the English-language press of the day:

There is no doubt that [education] has been neglected . . . by the Government. . . . However, whatever the policy of the Government may be in the future . . . I think that there is no doubt at all that the enlightened citizens of Singapore are determined to have more education, and more education, and if they cannot get it from the source to which they naturally look for it—the Government—they will get it by other means. . . . Government initiative is responsible for a very miserable share in the education of this Colony . . . three-quarters of the education . . . is not conducted directly by the Government. . . . We have heard of this proposed American College, with its diplomas and degrees and all the rest of it, and of course it would be discourteous of us to turn an inhospitable face to these new allies of ours, but at the same time, has the Government policy of laissez faire been considered in all its bearings? It seems to me that if we have this American College . . . there will be a tendency for the boys who intend to go to that college to get their grounding in the American elementary schools . . . and it may mean another nail in the coffin of our English schools. The whole trouble is that the Government have never had any definite scheme, and they have consistently grudged giving the money.

—PLC, 1917, p. B121. For further evidence of the effect of the threat

Sir William George Maxwell, K.B.E., C.M.G. (b. 1871), was educated at Clifton College, and joined the Perak Civil Service in 1891. A Barrister, he held various magisterial and judicial appointments in the Federated Malay States and the Straits Settlements, including those of Solicitor-General and Acting Attorney-General, Straits Settlements. He was appointed British Adviser to the Sultan of Kedah upon the transfer of suzerainty of that state from Siam to Great Britain in 1909. He was Acting Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements from 1914 to 1916, and Acting British Resident in Perak in 1917, being appointed to act as Secretary to the High Commissioner for the Federated Malay States and Brunei in the same year. General Adviser to the Government of Johore, 1918, he was appointed Chief Secretary to the Government of the F.M.S. in 1920, a position he held until his retirement in 1926. Who's Who, 1933, p. 2210. The relations between Maxwell and Guillemard were frequently strained, a situation that was exacerbated by Guillemard's proposal to abolish the post of Chief Secretary to the F.M.S. as part of his overall plan for the devolution of powers to the individual states.

Report of the Committee appointed to consider and report upon a scheme to Commemorate the Centenary of Singapore, PLC, 1913, pp. C61-C62.

Report by the Committee appointed by His Excellency the Governor to advise as to a scheme for the Advancement of Education preparatory to a University in Singapore, PLC, 1919, pp. C16-C19.

Ibid., p. C16.

Appeal for the Endowment Fund, a copy of which was forwarded to the Colonial Office by F. S. James, Officer Administering the Government, with his Despatch No. 42, of January 22, 1920, CO 270, vol. 498. For the eventual use to which this grant of land was put, see Wilson, "An abortive plan . . . .", pp. 102-3.


In a debate in the Legislative Council in March 1933, the College was criticised on the ground that the students were "budding
teachers supported by the Government" and that the trend of development was towards a Teachers' Training College, rather than towards a University.—PLC, 1933, pp. C52ff. See also Philip Loh, "The Beginnings . . . ," pp. 14-17. The preoccupation of Raffles College with the production of teachers is confirmed by the fact that up to the year 1938, 82 per cent of the male graduates and all of the female graduates became teachers.—Great Britain, Colonial Office, Higher Education in Malaya (London: HMSO, 1939), pp. 24-25. It seems that the Imperial Government in London came to recognise the inherent weakness of appointing the Director of Education to the office of Principal of a College, for when plans were made for the establishment of the experimental Achimota College in the Gold Coast, the Colonial Office readily agreed to the appointment of Dr. J. E. K. Aggrey (an African) and the Rev. Alexander G. Fraser to head jointly the staff of the College. The Director of Education of the Gold Coast was to be a member of the College Committee.—Clatworthy, pp. 76-78; Philip Foster, Education and Social Change in Ghana (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 166-68; W. E. F. Ward, Fraser of Trinity and Achimata (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1965), pp. 168-72.

131 Winstedt, giving evidence before the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, in London, in reply to a question by Lord Lugard as to whether encouragement to take degrees locally was given by the Government stated that this was indeed the policy of the Government, "but nothing would prevent wealthy Chinese in Malaya from sending their boys to England," and at that time there were 100 students from Malaya in the United Kingdom.—Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, held on January 19, 1930, p. 5, File 72024, CO 273, vol. 562, 1930.

132 ADR, 1923, pp. 124-25. The principal objection to the Scholarships was that the work of the senior classes was disrupted in order to prepare candidates for the highly competitive examinations.


135 ADR, 1932, p. 783.


138 Nagle, in seeking to correct the general view that the mission intended to establish an American type of college, stated categorically:
so frequently it has been stated that the Methodist Mission proposes to establish an American College or University here. We have no desire along this line. ... In support of this position it may be stated that it is our plan to secure a large percentage of English professors. Furthermore, it may be added that the majority of the membership of the College Council is British and not American.

--Minutes ... of the Malaysia Conference ... 1921, p. 53.

139 Minute by Sir Charles Jeffries (Under-Secretary of State and author of The Colonial Empire and its Civil Service), dated November 30, 1931, Great Britain, Colonial Office, Original Correspondence from the Straits Settlements, CO 273, vol. 576. Most of this minute is reproduced in Appendix D.

140 Sir Cecil Clementi to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Confidential Despatch, October 12, 1931. This despatch appears as Appendix C.

141 Rider by R. H. Pinhorn, appended to the Report by the Committee appointed by His Excellency the Governor to advise as to a Scheme for the Advancement of Education ... 1919, PLC, p. C20. Pinhorn had been invited to serve on the Committee as representative of the Aided Schools.

142 PLC, 1931, pp. B85-B86.

143 Ibid., p. B89.

144 Minute by G. J. F. Tomlinson, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, dated December 8, 1931. The full text of the minute is given in Appendix D.

145 Memorandum by G. J. F. Tomlinson, dated January 4, 1932; see Appendix D.

146 Memorandum by Arthur Mayhew, dated March 3, 1932, Appendix D.


148 See, for example, the minute by Arthur Mayhew dated February 26, 1932, Appendix D.


Notes to Chapter III


2 These were the views of Dr. Okawa as expressed in his works: Sato Shinen's Ideal State [1924] and Asia, Europe and Japan [1925], and in the principles adopted by a society, the Kochisha, which he organised. These views appear to have been widely accepted by members of the Japanese Armed Forces,—vide International Military Tribunal for the Far East, II, Part B, 1948, 525.

3 International Military Tribunal for the Far East, I, 85. Japanese intentions and objectives in the occupied areas are set out in Nampo senryochi gyosei jisshi yoryo ["Principles Governing The Administration of Occupied Southern Areas"], adopted at the Liaison Conference between Imperial Headquarters and the Government, November 20, 1941. A copy of this document in translation is to be found in Harry J. Benda et al., Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia: Selected Documents (Yale: Translation Series No. 6, Southeast Asian Studies Yale University, 1965), pp. 1-3. Much of the material which follows is drawn from a paper first presented at a Seminar held at the University of Singapore on February 16, 1973, and subsequently published as Educational Policy and Performance in Singapore, 1942-1945, Occasional Paper No. 16 (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1973).


6 Yoji Akashi, pp. 1-2; see also Outline of Economic Policies for the Southern Areas [Nampo keizai taisaku yoko], Document 5, in Benda et al., pp. 17-25.


8 Syonan Tokubetu-si Notice No. 120, Syonan Times, September 19, Syowa 17 (1942). See also comments of M. Shinozaki, then Kosei-katyo [Head of Education Department], reported in Syonan Times, September 20th, Koki 2602 [1942], and Directive Concerning Education, October 6, 1942, Tomi Shusei So No. 269, from Gunseikan [Superintendent of Military Administration] to Mayor and Governors, Yoji Akashi, Appendix. The Syonan Times became the Syonan Sinbun between December 8, 1942 and December 7, 1943. Thereafter the title Syonan Shimbun was used. For the sake of consistency, the more common spelling of Syonan Shimbun will be used throughout this chapter.


11 Syonan Times, February 21, 2602.

12 Fundamental Policy Concerning Education . . . , General Principle No. 3.

13 Syonan Times, February 28, 2602.


15 Fundamental Policy . . . , General Principles 2 and 4. See also "Outline on the Conduct of Military Administration in Occupied Areas [Senryochi gunsei shori yoko], in Benda et al., p. 33.

16 Fundamental Policy . . . , Principles for Implementation.

17 Ibid.

18 Interview with Mamoru Shinozaki, November 4, 1972.

19 Syonan Times, March 14, 2602.

20 Shinozaki interview, November 4, 1972.

21 Syonan Times, March 14, 2602.

22 Brother Joseph Brophy, Diary, April 2602 to August 1945 [sic]. Title page: Bras Basah Road Boys' School. Diary. Syonan-To (Unpublished).
This diary was kindly made available to the author by the present Principal of St. Joseph's Institution, the Reverend Brother Patrick. Lieutenant Ogawa, former Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Rykkyo University, was an official of the Gunseikan-bu (Military Administration Department) charged with the administration of education throughout the Southern Region. He was a Protestant, a fact which led, according to Shinozaki, to the Protestant Mission Schools receiving more favourable treatment than the other Mission schools.

23 M.A.D. Notice No. 22, Syonan Times, March 25, Koki 2602. This notice was repeated in several succeeding editions.

24 Syonan Times, April 7, Koki 2602.

25 M.A.D. Notice No. 35, Syonan Times, April 9, Koki 2602.

26 Low and Cheng, pp. 34, 162; see also letter from "Man in the Street," published in the Straits Times, August 17, 1946, which asserted that Shinozaki was then being unfairly victimised, that during the occupation, Shinozaki had performed the difficult task of pacifying Japanese Army personnel whilst at the same time doing all he could to help the people of Singapore. By his help "a great many people" had had their lot eased, and he had "befriended the . . . Chinese population."

27 Syonan Times, April 17, Koki 2602.

28 "Matter Relating to the Reopening of Primary Schools," Tomi shusei So No. 12, April 18, 1942, Yoji Akashi, Appendix.

29 Syonan Times, August 26, Koki 2602. See also Syonan Times, September 20, Koki 2602; and Syonan Shimbun, October 9, Koki 2603 (1943). The suggestion that schools were to be modelled on the Japanese system reveals a small but significant departure from the policy which had previously been laid down: according to the April 18th instruction, primary classes were to be organised to provide seven years of instruction rather than the eight years given in Japanese schools.

30 "Education In Malaya And A New National Consciousness," Syonan Times, August 27, Koki 2602.


32 Syonan Times, May 22, Koki 2602.

33 Chin Kee Onn, Malaya Upside Down, 2nd ed. (Singapore: Jitts & Co. Ltd., 1946), p. 148; Syonan Shimbun, April 24, Koki 2603.

34 Department of Education Notice, Syonan Times, June 30, Koki
See also Annual Report of the Department of Education 1946, p. 3.

35 Syonan Times, August 25, Koki 2602.

36 This has been confirmed to the author in the course of several interviews with former students and teachers, and with Mamoru Shinozaki.

37 Syonan Times, November 10, Koki 2602.

38 Syonan Shimbun, December 29, Koki 2603 (1943).

39 Syonan Times, April 17, Koki 2602.

40 Annual Departmental Reports of the Straits Settlements for the year 1938, II (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1940), 650 & 822.


42 Ibid., p. 2.

43 Syonan Times, June 3, Koki 2602.

44 Syonan Times, October 14, Koki 2602.

45 Syonan Times, November 10, Koki 2602.

46 Annual Departmental Reports . . . for the year 1938, II, 823.


48 Brother Brophy's Diary. See also "Matter Relating to Reopening of Primary Schools," Instruction No. 9, Yoji Akashi, Appendix.

49 Annual Department Reports . . . 1938, II, 812.

50 Ibid., p. 813.

51 Syonan Times, October 14, Koki 2602.


53 Ibid.

54 Syonan Times, April 27, Koki 2602.

55 Annual Report . . . 1946, p. 3.

56 Syonan Times, October 14, Koki 2602.
One former teacher at the Paya Lebar Methodist English School recalls that she was afraid to register herself, and remained in virtual hiding throughout the occupation, maintaining herself by giving private tuition surreptitiously—Interview with Miss J. Chua, December 24, 1972.

Low and Cheng, p. 92. This was confirmed by Shinozaki—Interview, November 24, 1972.

Syonan Shimbun, December 30, Koki 2602.

Fundamental Policy . . . , Yoji Akashi, Appendix.

Shinozaki interview, November 24, 1972.

Shinozaki interview, November 4, 1972.

Mr. Shinozaki, speaking at the inaugural meeting, Syonan Times, April 14, Koki 2602.

Low and Cheng, p. 90.

"Saturday Supplement" to the Syonan Times, June 6, Koki 2602, p. 11.

Syonan Times, June 8, Koki 2602.

Brother Brophy, Diary, May 26 and June 2, 1942.

Low and Cheng, pp. 91 and 98-101.

Brother Brophy, Diary.

Ibid., September 12, 1942.

Chin Kee Onn, p. 155.

Letter from Lim Joo Guan to the Editor, Straits Times, October 26, 1946.

Interview, Mrs. Hedwig Anuar, Director, National Library and
National Archives and Records Centre, Singapore, November 21, 1972.

79 N. I. Low in Low and Cheng, pp. 90-91.

80 *Syonan Times*, August 2, *Koki* 2602.

81 Interview, Mr. M. Manickavasagar, Singapore, December 23, 1972. The Reverend T. R. Doraisamy, former Principal, Teachers' Training College, Singapore, who was a teacher at the Bras Basah Road Boys' School during the occupation confirms that the standard of language instruction was "excellent."—Interview, Singapore, January 10, 1973. These views conflict sharply with that of O. W. Gilmour who asserts that the attempt to introduce Nippon-go in Malaya was "a conspicuous failure."—O. W. Gilmour, *With Freedom to Singapore* (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1950), p. 114.

82 *Syonan Times*, October 31, *Koki* 2602.

83 Interview, Singapore, January 1, 1973. Professor Torii is now Dean of the Faculty of Education, Shizuoka University.

84 *Syonan Shimbun*, January 13, *Koki* 2603. See also *Syonan Shimbun*, May 26, July 2, July 3, September 3, September 17 and October 2, *Koki* 2603, and *Syonan Shimbun*, February 21, *Koki* 2604.

85 *Syonan Shimbun*, February 17, *Koki* 2603.

86 *Syonan Shimbun*, February 29, *Koki* 2604.

87 Apart from the by then acute shortage of skilled labour, shortages of building materials and rising prices were named as factors contributing to the suspension of building.—*Straits Times*, May 3, 1951. See also debate on the motion of N. A. Mallal, May 22, 1951, in the Legislative Council, *Proceedings*, 1951, p. B352; and Dr. C. J. Paglar's question addressed to the Colonial Secretary on February 20, 1952, *Proceedings*, 1952, pp. B8-B9. See also the editorial comment in *Straits Times*, May 5, 1952.

88 *Tomi Shusei So* No. 269, Yoji Akashi, Appendix.

89 *Syonan Times*, September 23, *Koki* 2602.

90 *Syonan Shimbun*, March 16, *Koki* 2603.

91 *Syonan Shimbun*, March 20, *Koki* 2603.

92 *Syonan Shimbun*, June 11, *Koki* 2603.

93 Ibid.
According to Colonel S. Fujiyama, Principal of the National Language School, teachers were "the pilots to propagate the true spirit of Japan" in their pupils.—Syonan Shim bun, December 16, Koki 2602.

The new scale provided a special grade for senior members of the Education Department rising from $301 to $400 per month, and seven other grades, starting from Grade VII (from $30 to $50), and going up to Grade I ($251 to $300), according to qualifications and experience.—Syonan Shim bun, December 26, Koki 2602.

In March, 1945, the Chief of the Education Department asserted that, notwithstanding the "decisive stage" reached in the war, education was continuing to make rapid strides. He listed the following courses available to Syonan students:

1. Primary Education for children from six to fifteen years of age.
2. Middle School (four years training) for those who passed out from Primary Schools.
3. Trade School (four years pre-Medical School course (post-Primary).
4. For those who passed out from Middle School there was to be a Koa Kunren Syo (one years' training), the Sihan Gakko (two years' training), and the Medical School (three years' training).
5. Those who passed out from the Trade School might also be admitted to the Koa Kunren Syo or the Sihan Gakko.
7. Those passing out from the pre-Medical School could join the Medical College for a three years' course.
8. A two-years' "Further Research Course" at the Medical College.

--Syonan Shimbun, March 23, Koki 2605.


110 Syonan Shimbun, December 31, Koki 2603. Free tuition had been introduced at several schools in the island earlier in 1943--see Brother Brophy's Diary, November 22, 1943.

111 Syonan Shimbun, December 16, Koki 2602.

112 Singapore's present Prime Minister has observed:

My colleagues and I are of that generation of young men who went through the Second World War and the Japanese Occupation and emerged determined that no one--neither the Japanese nor the British--had the right to push and kick us around. We determined that we could govern ourselves and bring up our children in a country where we can be proud to be a self-respecting people.

When the war came to an end in 1945, there was never a chance of old type of British colonial system ever being re-created. The scales had fallen from our eyes and we saw for ourselves that the local people could run the country.

Notes to Chapter IV


3 With the exception of the proscribed Malayan Communist Party, and Communist front organisations, which recognised the disadvantages, from their own point of view of Singapore becoming part of a 'neo-colonialist' political unit, dominated by Conservative elements in Kuala Lumpur—see, for example, Justus M. van der Kroef, Communism in Malaysia and Singapore: A Contemporary Survey (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), pp. 36, 43-44, 50 and passim. For a succinct discussion of the problems involved in merger, and the unattractive alternatives open to Singapore, see Osborne, p. 7.

4 "A Domiciled Malayan View of the New Schools in Malaya," The Straits Budget, January 2, 1947.

5 Ibid.

6 T. H. Silcock has noted that complete separation of the two territories was considered to be "unthinkable except to the economically illiterate" and that "the great majority of the inhabitants of Singapore believed that separation could not persist against "the obvious facts of economics and geography."--Silcock, p. 98. Lee Kuan Yew himself reflected the opinion, widely held during the 1950's, when he asserted that an independent Singapore was "a political, economic and geographic absurdity,"—T. J. S. George, Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore (London: André Deutsch, 1973), p. 74. See also State of Singapore, Ministry of Culture, The Merger Plan (Singapore: Government Printing Office, c. 1962), p. 1.

7 Arasaratnam, p. 83. The Association had been formed in 1923. See also Jagit Singh Sidhu, "Sir Cecil Clementi and the Kuomintang in Malaya," Malaya in History, 9, Nos. 1 & 2 (1965), 18-21.

9 Ibid., pp. 84-85.


13 *Straits Times*, September 24, 1945.

14 *Straits Times*, September 26, 1945.

15 *Straits Times*, September 24, 1945. The newspapers of the day contain headlines such as "Thousands Clamour for Enrolment," and "Married Women Want To Continue Studies."

16 *Straits Times*, October 7, 1945.

17 Ibid.

18 *Straits Times*, November 6, 1945.

19 *Straits Times*, November 20, 1945.


23 Of the original five founder-members of the M.D.U.—all English educated—the following were self-confessed members of the Communist Party: Lim Hong Bee (Chinese, a graduate of Raffles Institution and Cambridge University, and a former Queen's Scholar); John Eber (Eurasian, educated at Harrow and Cambridge); and Gerald de Cruz.
(Eurasian, a graduate of Raffles Institution). Lim and Eber were lawyers and de Cruz a journalist and trade union official.—Yeo Kim Wah, "Political Development in Singapore, 1945-55" (M.A. thesis, University of Singapore, 1968), passim; Gerald de Cruz, "How a communist minority . . .," New Nation, November 14, 1972.

24 Yeo Kim Wah, p. 106.

25 Yeo Kim Wah, p. 107; van der Kroef, p. 34. Yeo Kim Wah asserts that the party was formed, with the encouragement of the British administration, as a counter to left-wing forces in the Colony and that its membership, restricted to British and British Protected subjects, was 75 per cent "middle or upper-middle class"—pp. 113-14.


27 Ibid., pp. 224-25. The belief that education was a right rather than a privilege had become widely held by the 1940's, as is evidenced by the adoption in 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the twenty-sixth article of which asserts that "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary . . . stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit," see Horace M. Kallen, "The Demand for Education as a Human Right," in The World Year Book of Education 1965: The Education Explosion, eds. George Z. F. Bereday and Joseph A. Lauwers (London: Evans Brothers Ltd., 1965), pp. 21-22.


30 The staff entrusted with the supervision of 154 registered Chinese schools with an enrolment of 53,478 students in 1947 consisted of an Assistant Director of Chinese Education, one Inspector of Chinese Schools, aided by two Assistant Inspectors.—Report on Singapore for the year 1947, pp. 64-65. Altogether, in 1947, there were approximately 300 Chinese schools and between thirty and forty Indian schools in Singapore.—"Educational Policy in the Colony of Singapore: Ten Years' Programme" (Mimeo), p. 6.

31 Council Paper No. 15 of 1946. The Colonial Office suggestion had originally envisaged a five year programme (Colonial Office Despatch No. 189 of August 16, 1946), but due to the financial and other problems
involved, it was decided that plans on a ten-year rather than five-year basis should be made.


"Educational Policy . . .: Ten Years' Programme," p. 1.

Ibid., p. 2.

Ibid.


"Educational Policy . . . Ten Years' Programme," p. 4.


Ibid., p. 7.

Ibid., p. 8.

Ibid., p. 9.

Ibid., p. 10.

Ibid., p. 6. Thio Chan Bee, B.A., J.P., a leader of the Straits Chinese British Association, had had a lengthy experience in the school system and was familiar with the many problems of education in Singapore. Subsequently, he became a founder-member of the Progressive Party, and as a member of the Singapore Legislative Council (1948-55) frequently spoke in favour of educational reforms, and particularly pressed for improvements in the conditions of employment and training of teachers.

"Educational Policy . . . Ten Years' Programme," p. 6, footnote. The final total population figure for Singapore in 1947 was 940,824 of whom 752,737 or 80 per cent were listed as urban dwellers.—M. V. Del Tufo, Report, p. 43.

Colony of Singapore, Proceedings of the Legislative Council, Colony of Singapore, 1st Session, 1948 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1950), p. B99-B100. The Education Committee was to include all members of the Education Finance Committee, the Medical Officer in Charge of Schools, the Secretary for Social Welfare, representation from the Senate of Raffles College (or any higher successor body, i.e., university), representation from the Teachers' Unions, Headmasters' Associations, grant-in-aid bodies, and Mission societies.


Straits Times, April 29, 1949. This figure was increased to 380 for the academic year 1951-52, but the maximum number of students that could be accommodated at any one time was 420 "and that only as an emergency." The College opened on March 1, 1950.—K. A. Owen, "The History of the Singapore Teachers' Training College as an Instrument of Government Educational Policy, 1950 to 1955" (M.A. thesis, University of Wales, Cardiff, 1957), pp. 86-90.

Singapore Free Press, April 14, 1949.

Singapore Free Press, December 19, 1950; Owen, p. 146.


Ibid., pp. 147-49.

Ibid., pp. 149-54. Here, Chelliah's plan derives many of its ideas from a 1938 report prepared by a senior official of the Department of Education—see H. R. Cheeseman, "Report on Vocational Education in Malaya," *PLC*, 1938, pp. C286-C293. Chelliah cited with approval an earlier conclusion of the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies that, in the earlier stages of education, it was desirable for instruction to be given through the medium of the mother tongue. However, the Committee also noted that, in secondary and higher education, English was the recognised medium, and that despite their importance, local languages and literatures, and oriental classical studies, could not always be found a place in the curricula of secondary or higher courses. See Arthur Mayhew, *Education in the Colonial Empire* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1938), pp. 53-54.

The best statement of the case for English education probably remains that of Ho Seng Ong in his Ed.D. dissertation submitted to the University of Denver in 1949 and subsequently published as *Education for Unity in Malaya* (Penang: Malayan Teachers' Union, 1952).


* Straits Times*, November 25, 1948. Several authors have noted an earlier comment appearing in the editorial column of the *Straits Times* (October 29, 1948): "It is not the products of the English schools (with very rare exceptions) who are found among the terrorists and their sympathisers. Every dollar spent on English schools is an investment in Malayan citizenship. But grants-in-aid to vernacular schools . . . in what securities is that Malayan money being invested?"—see Ho Seng Ong, p. 6; Owen, p. 71.

Education Report for 1950, p. 59. An official of the Department of Education expected that the enrolment in vernacular schools would decline but he estimated that, assuming the "better type of vernacular schools" succeeded in retaining their students, some 25,000
pupils would remain outside the English school system.—*Singapore Free Press*, July 15, 1950.


68 Ibid., p. 57. In 1951, the Education Department claimed that it was evident that the public of Singapore wanted a "non-communal education system" which would train future generations in the use of English "as an universal language" in the Colony.—*Education Report for 1951*, p. 41.

69 *Straits Times*, May 22, 1951.

70 *Sunday Times* (Singapore), June 10, 1951. Chinese educators had been increasingly fearful for the future of their schools since at least April, 1950, when a petition requesting a 200 per cent increase in the grants paid to Chinese schools to meet rising costs had gone unanswered. In November, 1950, during a visit to Singapore by Sir Christopher Cox, Adviser on Education to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the principals of Chinese schools had submitted a memorandum asking for clarification of Government policy towards Chinese schools, and this too had received no direct response.—*Straits Times*, November 21, 1950. An editorial comment noted that several pronouncements by highly placed British officials during the previous two or three years had made "a very unfortunate impression" upon the Chinese, who had taken them to reveal "a spirit of hostility to Chinese schools."—*Straits Times*, June 30, 1951.

71 The Department of Education set a limit of forty students per class, but it was commonplace for fifty to seventy students per class to be registered in Chinese schools.—*Singapore Free Press*, January 13, 1949; Khoo Ee Guan, "Correspondence," *Straits Times*, February 8, 1950; Editorial, *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, October 9, 1952.


74 *Sunday Times* (Singapore), May 27, 1951.


77 Zahoor Ahmad, p. 19.


79 In an editorial in which the slackness and indifference of the committees of management of Tamil schools was deplored, a local Indian paper asked why, if these conditions were so well known, did the Government tolerate them? The editorial went on to argue that the reason for the lack of support of Tamil schools by the Indian community was that the type of education offered failed to help pupils to earn a livelihood later, and that the Government failed to provide English instruction in Tamil schools, as it did in the case of Malay and Chinese schools.—Tamil Murasu, October 20, 1952. See also Tamil Murasu, October 21, 1952.

80 Frederic Mason, The Schools of Malaya (Singapore: Donald Moore, 1954), p. 11. Mason provides the following revealing figures concerning pupils enrolled in Aided Chinese schools in Singapore for the year 1952:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of study</th>
<th>Primary School</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Enrolment</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>10,500</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9,156</td>
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<td>8,174</td>
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85 On February 15, 1949, Governor Sir Franklin Gimson remarked, in connection with the proposed establishment of the University of Malaya,
that it was "imperative . . . from every aspect of the future of Malaya that there should be a nucleus of persons of education and culture to whose hands the direction of public life can be safely entrusted."—PLC, 1949, p. B4.

86 In 1952, there were in Singapore: (i) a Government Junior Technical School with an enrolment of 190; (ii) a Government-Aided Trade School, enrolment 140; (iii) evening classes given at the Junior Technical School, with an enrolment of 526.—PLC, 1952, pp. B105-B106.

87 Sunday Times (Singapore), September 17, 1950.

88 Sin Chew Jit Poh, October 9, 1952; Nanyang Siang Pau, October 21, 1952.

89 Sin Chew Jit Poh, April 11, 1953. See also Owen, p. 160.

90 Yeo Kim Wah, pp. 193-94. A year later, Singapore's taxi-drivers made a further contribution of a day's earnings.—Sin Chew Jit Poh, August 7, 1954.

91 Nanyang Siang Pau, May 19, 1953. This paper was owned by Lee Kong Chian, another wealthy merchant of Singapore who was to play a significant rôle in the early affairs of Nanyang University.

92 Nanyang Siang Pau, May 27, 1953. The first Chancellor of the University claims, however, that Tan's pledge was for $1.7 millions and that in fact less than half of this was actually paid.—Lin Yutang, "How a Citadel for Freedom was Destroyed by the Reds," Life (May 2, 1955), p. 140. Tan was to be rewarded for his philanthropy, ten years later, by having his citizenship revoked. The immediate cause for this action by the P.A.P. Government was, however, Tan's support for the opposition Barisan Sosialis Party.—George, p. 131; Milne, p. 205.


94 Fear of the weakening effect of Government educational policy upon Chinese culture formed the theme of almost daily comment in the Chinese press of the period, see for example Sin Chew Jit Poh, November 11, November 17, November 20, December 10, 1952; April 11, April 16, October 22, 1953; Nanyang Siang Pau, April 22, May 5, May 7, May 27, October 23, 1953. The generally pro-Kuomintang paper Chung Shing Jit Pao was equally concerned. The fear was not, of course, new. In 1940, the K.M.T. Government had drawn attention to "interference" in Chinese schools by overseas governments, and referred to the implicit threat to Chinese culture as an "education crisis."—Stephen Fitzgerald, China


96 Straits Times, June 12, 1951. The impact upon local Chinese opinion of schemes in the Federation to Anglicise or Malayanise education is dealt with in Hsu, pp. 97-127.


98 Ibid., p. 3.

99 Ibid., p. 4.

100 Ibid., p. 6.

101 Ibid., p. 12.

102 Ibid., p. 41.

103 Ibid., pp. 46-47.

104 Sunday Times (Singapore), July 8, 1951.

105 Straits Times, July 27, 1951.

106 July 11, 1951. Dr. William P. Fenn was a noted scholar of Chinese, having had lengthy associations with universities in both China and the United States. He had lived for many years in China prior to the Communist take-over in that country. Dr. Wu Teh Yao was at the time an official of the United Nations, with a lengthy experience of education in the U.S.

107 Ho Seng Ong, pp. 176-77. Mrs. Elizabeth Choy, Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council argued, on September 15, 1953, that it was mainly in English schools that the "constituent races of the population could meet in an atmosphere in which racial differences were forgotten." This was, she said, essential if the attempt to "weld a single nation out of many races was to succeed."—PLC, 1953, p. B273.

108 Ho Seng Ong, p. 177. The reactions of the Singapore Chinese to publication of the two reports are discussed more fully in Yeo Kim Wah, pp. 159-61.

109 Melayu Raya, November 18, 1952.

110 "Note of a Meeting held at King's House on 2nd February, 1952" (Mimeo).
One report spoke of average classes of "about 100" in Chinese primary schools.—*Sunday Times* (Singapore), February 12, 1950.

In 1949, thirty-nine Chinese schools were refused registration on the grounds of insanitary premises. These schools had an enrolment of 5,200 pupils, and were permitted to continue to function on the understanding that they would attempt to improve the standard of facilities.—*Colony of Singapore Annual Report, 1949*, p. 71. No doubt an additional reason for the continued existence of these schools was the lack of satisfactory alternative accommodation for their students.

According to a survey conducted in 1950, the average pay for teachers in these schools was "about $150 a month."—*Sunday Times* (Singapore), February 12, 1950.

*Straits Times*, January 31, 1950. Other reasons given for the drain of teachers from Chinese schools were: that there were no prospects for promotion; that principals could and did sack teachers at any time they liked; and that deductions were made from salaries whenever teachers were absent due to sickness. See, for example, correspondence from Khoo Ee Guan in *Straits Times*, February 8, 1950.

In January, 1947, the Education Department commenced a scheme to train teachers for Chinese schools in Normal classes held once a week. Only forty-two students were enrolled in the first class. —*Free Press*, January 30, 1947. In addition, some Chinese schools organised Normal classes of their own, but the system almost broke down in 1950-51, when it became necessary for the Department of Education to provide lecturers for these classes.—Owen, p. 146. Prior to 1951, the Department was prepared to register teachers in Chinese schools with only primary education followed by a four years' "simplified Normal Course," but in that year, the minimum qualification was raised to six years post-primary study.—*Education Report, 1951*, p. 47.

In 1950, the Singapore Chinese Schools Association decided unanimously to ask the Government for increased assistance to enable vernacular schools to provide "adequate facilities" for students, and to offer more attractive pay to teachers.—*Free Press*, February 7, 1950; *Straits Times*, March 15, 1950. When, however, the request was made, it was stressed that the increased assistance should be given without strings attached.—*Free Press*, April 17, 1950. In 1951, a conference of Chinese schools decided to ask the Government to provide a training school for Chinese teachers "to give them the same opportunities as English teachers."—*Straits Times*, January 8, 1951.


*Editorial*, April 7, 1954.

*Colonial of Singapore,* "Chinese Schools—Bilingual Education
and Increased Aid" (Paper No. 81 of 1953), p. 1. See also PLC, 1953, pp. C542-C547.

120 "Chinese Schools--Bilingual Education . . . ," p. 2.
121 Ibid., p. 4.
122 Ibid., p. 6.
123 Straits Times; January 7, 1954.
124 Straits Times, January 8, 1954.
125 Ibid. See also Singapore Free Press, January 8, 1954.
126 Straits Times, January 8, 1954.
130 Sunday Times (Singapore), April 20, 1947.
132 Straits Times, October 15, 1949.
134 Straits Times, April 26, 1950. The souring effect this Bill had on relations between the Education Department and the Chinese community have been discussed by Saravanan Gopinathan in "Towards a National System of Education in Singapore 1945-1970" (M.Ed. thesis, University of Singapore, 1971), pp. 19-20.
136 Singapore Free Press, May 9, 1950.
138 Straits Times, July 12, 1951.
The Acting Director of Education, R. M. Young, claimed to have received allegations of such incidents and indicated that if anyone would let him have specific reports, including teachers' names, he would "make use of that information." He added that the Police had opened a channel for such information through a local Post Office Box number, and school-children could take advantage of it as occasion arose.—Singapore Free Press, September 20, 1952.

See, for example, the correspondence and articles on this subject in Nanfang Evening Post, October 27, 1952; Chung Shing Jit Pao, October 28 and November 18, 1952; and Nanyang Siang Pau, October 29, 1952.

Remarks of R. Jumabhoy on November 24, 1953, PLC, 1953, p. B367. The significance of this lack of popular involvement in the limited form of representative government then available lies in the fact that the Chinese-speaking community was, and felt itself to be, entirely unrepresented. English was the language of the Legislature, and only those who were fluent in it could gain admittance. But those who had received an English education had interests which conflicted with those of the Chinese-speaking community and hence, prior to the formation of the P.A.P. in 1954, there was no effective bridge between English-speaking candidates and the potentially large and economically disadvantaged Chinese electorate.—See Lee Kuan Yew, The Battle for Merger (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 17-18.


Francis G. Carnell, "Communalism and Communism in Malaya," Pacific Affairs, 26, No. 2 (June 1953), p. 112.

Chung Shing Jit Pao, April 1, 1954. The worry was that the action of the teachers would force the management committees to accept the unpalatable conditions, or that if unsuccessful, the teachers would be forced to find alternative employment. In either case, Chinese education would suffer.


Editorial, May 12, 1954.

The Chung Cheng High School, formerly known as the Chiang Kai-shek High School, was founded in 1939 by a group of Chinese educationists and merchants, and had received small grants-in-aid from its inception. By 1954, it had become the largest Chinese middle school with an enrolment of 3,288 pupils and 111 teachers. The Chinese High School was the oldest middle school in Singapore, having been founded by Tan Kah Kee in 1918. In 1954, it had an enrolment of 1,873 pupils and sixty-four teachers.—Straits Times, May 22, 1954.

A somewhat tendentious account of the May 13 Incident and subsequent events is to be found in Elegant, pp. 129-54.

The reporter of another Malay newspaper, Warta, May 18, 1954, noted that the police had gone to the demonstration prepared for trouble, since they had been equipped with rifles and batons, weapons which, he argued, were unsuitable for dealing with boys, and he termed the action taken by the police 'rough.' See also Elegant, pp. 130-32.

Local English-language press comment, and some other Western accounts of the involvement of students in the disturbances in Singapore during the years 1954 to 1956 assume or explicitly assert that direction came from Peking—see for example, Elegant, pp. 19-20 & 133ff.; Spector, pp. 65-73; Lloyd Morgan, "The Monster in our Schools," Straits Times, September 26, 1956. More recent assessments, however, cast a good deal of doubt on this view. Thus Stephen Fitzgerald has argued "Where direction and control is not proven . . . the activities of Overseas Chinese communists are not necessarily an indication of the wishes of the Chinese Communist Party," and he concludes, from a detailed examination of Chinese sources based on the 'Peking perspective' of relations with the Overseas Chinese, that the "militant activities of Overseas Chinese students in Singapore . . . and their blatant appeals to Chinese chauvinism ran directly counter to the whole direction of China's Overseas Chinese policy."—Fitzgerald, pp. 12, 128. This view is supported by Goh Cheng Teik in "Peking, Kuala Lumpur and the Chinese Minority in Malaysia," South-East Asian Spectrum, 2, No. 2 (January 1974), 38-39.

155 Elegant, p. 131.
156 Chung Shing Jit Pao, June 9, 1954 (editorial).
159 Sin Chew Jit Poh and Nanyang Siang Pau, June 22, 1954.
161 Interview with Francis Thomas, January 9, 1973. Mr. Thomas was senior master at St. Andrews Government-Aided English school at the time. From 1955 until 1958 he was Minister of Communications and Works in both Labour Front governments, and is now (1974) Principal of St. Andrews School.
162 Under the terms of the Rendel Constitution, twenty-five of the thirty-two seats in the Legislative Assembly were to be filled by direct election, and a Council of Ministers was to replace the former Executive Council. The Governor as representative of the Crown was to retain control over defence and internal security, and had power to suspend the constitution and rule by decree if necessary.
163 According to Stanley Spector, the attitude of the Chinese community towards the rebellious students had been largely determined by four, popularly perceived, student "attributes." These derived from: the traditional high status accorded to the scholar gentry of China; the historical association of students with nationalist and revolutionary movements; the identification of students with pro-Chinese movements of resistance against foreign aggression; and the status of students as potential political leaders.—Spector, pp. 72-73.
164 Straits Times, September 14, 1954.
166 Straits Times, September 20 & 21, 1954; Nanyang Siang Pau, September 20, 1954. The schools concerned were: Chinese High School, Nanyang Girls' Middle School, Chung Hwa Girls' Middle School, Nan Hwa Girls' Middle School, and Chung Cheng High School.
167 Nanyang Siang Pau, September 17, 1954. This letter was published in the two leading Chinese newspapers, and was typical of other protests made by various student bodies in the following weeks. A translation prepared for the Government's "Daily Digest of the Non-English Press," is included as Appendix F.
PLC, 1954/55, p. B240. The channels of communication between the Government and the Chinese-speaking community had been vastly extended by the establishment, in 1952, of a translation service which produced a "Daily Digest of the Non-English Press." These mimeographed pages, containing either direct translations or summaries of the editorials and leading news items were circulated within the administration with relevant sections marked for the special attention of the various heads of departments.

168 Straits Times, October 7, 1954.

169 Nanyang Siang Pau, September 17, 1954.


171 Sunday Times (Singapore), October 24, 1954.


173 Straits Times, November 18, 1954.

174 Owen, p. 172.

175 Remarks by G. P. Darke, Adviser for Chinese Schools, reported in Straits Times, November 11, 1955, compared with figures given in the Department of Education's Annual Report 1955, p. 27.

176 This was not the first occasion the two had co-operated in defence of students. A charge of sedition against the publishers of Fajar (Dawn), the journal of the University of Malaya's Socialist Club, had been quashed earlier in the year, as a result of the effectiveness of their arguments. The case, which had been something of a cause célèbre, had done much to enhance Lee Kuan Yew's stature as a leader in the struggle against colonial rule.—George, pp. 34-35.

177 Spector, p. 68; van der Kroef, p. 35; Yeo Kim Wah, p. 207.


179 Singapore Free Press, October 20, 1954.

180 Ibid.

181 Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union, Sessional Paper No. Cmd. 53 of 1956, p. 3.
183 Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union, Sessional Paper No. Cmd. 53 of 1956, p. 3.


186 See, for example, the questions by Dr. C. J. Paglar (Member for Changi, and a leader of the Eurasian community) on this subject in the Legislative Council, February 20, 1952, PLC, 1952, pp. B8-B9; and by N. A. Mallal (Member for City) on April 17, 1952, ibid., pp. B105-B106 and B127-B128. Singapore's "many plans for expansion" had revealed the shortage of skilled workers and lack of training facilities in the Colony, claimed an editorial in the Straits Times, May 5, 1952. The Governor, noting the growing demands for skilled personnel, conceded on October 14, 1952, that "It does seem that a polytechnic would fill a gap which exists in our educational system."—PLC, 1952, p. B302. See also Owen, p. 33.


189 Singapore Free Press, December 23, 1953. It was noted that in the past, most graduates of Chinese schools had been able to obtain employment with local Chinese businesses, but that unless conditions improved, such firms could not take on further help. As a result, many of the school-leavers had sought admission to English schools "to study English for better chances of getting work."
Notes to Chapter V

1 R. S. Milne, Government and Politics in Malaysia (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1967), p. 43. The radical intelligentsia, however, was drawn from both the Chinese and English educated groups.


3 C. R. Dasaratha Raj, an Indian born in Malacca, had been educated at Kluang English school, and was a merchant and a member of the Indian Chamber of Commerce. A member of the Legislative Council from 1951 to 1955, he joined the Singapore Labour Party, under the leadership of Lim Yew Hock, during this period.


5 Ibid., p. B424.


7 Francis Thomas, Memoirs of a Migrant (Singapore: University Education Press, 1972), pp. 94-96.

8 Chew Swee Kee (b. May 15, 1918), attended the Chung Wah Chinese school in Kampar, but later received an English education at the Methodist Anglo-Chinese School in Tpoh (Perak). Before the Pacific war, he had been employed in the Chinese Secretariat and in the Singapore Police Courts as Chinese Interpreter. After the war, Chew became a businessman and accountant. He was Minister for Education from 1955 until 1959 when, apparently deeply implicated in a scandal involving a considerable sum of money alleged to have been paid by the C.I.A., Chew resigned and disappeared from Singapore.


10 Thomas, pp. 91, 95.

11 Singapore, Legislative Assembly Debates. Official Report. First Session of the First Legislative Assembly, 22nd April, 1955 to 7th June, 1956 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1958), pp. 8-9. Hereafter, Reports in this series are referred to as LAD, followed by the appropriate year and page or column number.

12 Nanyang Siang Pau, April 26, 1955. Lee Kong Chian, a rubber
"magnate" with extensive interests in Thailand and Indonesia, as well as in Malaya and Singapore, was chairman of the management committee of Singapore's Hua-Chiao High School, and was widely regarded as a supporter of the Peking Government and the Chinese and Malayan Communist parties. Lee was chairman of the Chinese Schools Management/Staff Association.


15 Ibid., column 191.

16 Ibid., columns 192-94.


20 Straits Times, May 18, 1955.


22 Straits Times, May 18, 1955.

23 Straits Times, May 19, 1955.

24 Ibid.

25 LAD, 1955/56, column 256.

26 Ibid., column 262. Mr. David Marshall has since confirmed, in correspondence with the author, that "The complete independence of Singapore as a distinct entity separated from Malaya was not envisaged. What was envisaged was . . . self-Government until such time as there would be a Federation or Confederation with Malaya."


LAD, 1955/56, column 258. In general, the Malay-language press applauded the Government's action, characterised in one paper as "a wise action to restore calmness in the Chinese schools."—Utusan Melayu, May 24, 1955.

Nanyang Siang Pau, May 28, 1955. The Straits Times of the same date, referred inaccurately to the Chamber's decision to call a "mass" meeting. But the members of the Committee were quite emphatic that it should be a "representative" meeting, despite Lim Chin Siong's original call for a "mass" meeting.


Nanyang Siang Pau, June 4, 1955.


Ibid.

Sin Chew Jit Poh, June 6, 1955.


Nanyang Siang Pau, June 7, 1955.

Sin Chew Jit Poh, June 7, 1955.
Ibid. Victor Purcell, a former Malayan Civil Servant long associated with the Chinese Secretariat had noted several years previously that China-born teachers "often brought with them the politics of China. Chinese nationalism in its extreme form had some tenets that were inimical to the constituted Governments of Malaya, and communism favoured teachings that no government could tolerate. . . ." He pointed out that textbooks were "full of subversive matter . . . [and] calculated to arouse racial hatred," and that "the whole tone of the curriculum was unfavourable to the cultivation of a sense of Malayan nationality, and inculcated racial separatism."—Victor Purcell, Malaya, Outline of a Colony (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1946), pp. 102-3.

See, for example, editorial comment in Utusan Zaman, June 10, 1955.

Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union, Sessional Paper No. Cmd. 53 of 1956. Lim Yew Hock claimed quite emphatically that in dissolving the SCNSSU, together with a number of other organisations, his Government had been "striking at the root of evil forces" which had been building up "a powerful force to overthrow democratic government" in Singapore.—Debate, November 5, 1956, LAD, 2nd Session, 1956, vol. 2, columns 412-14. Lim Yew Hock's predecessor as Chief Minister, David Marshall has stated: "The Labour Front Government genuinely believed that the students were being manipulated by communists for political purposes. Whether this was factually accurate, we were not allowed to know, since the Rendel Constitution did not give us access to the internal security reports; and neither the Governor nor the Chief Secretary was prepared to disclose them!"—Letter to the author dated November 4, 1974. For an account of the activities of the SDMSSU based largely upon the recollections of a number of the senior British officials involved, see Richard Clutterbuck, Riot and Revolution In Singapore and Malaya 1945-1963 (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1973), pp. 84-98.

Report of the All-Party Committee of the Singapore Legislative

61 Straits Times, June 9, 1955.

62 Sunday Times (Singapore), June 12, 1955.

63 Memorandum submitted by the Singapore English Teachers' Union (Chinese Schools), Straits Times, June 10, 1955.

64 See, for example, Federation of Malaya, Chinese Schools and the Education of Chinese Malayans (the Fenn-Wu Report), p. 41. Although this report referred primarily to Chinese schools in the Federation, its comments on the teaching of English in such schools applied equally well to Chinese schools in Singapore.


66 Ibid., columns 1229-32. Locally qualified teachers for Chinese and Indian schools hitherto had received instruction in Normal classes organised by the schools, with some assistance from the Department of Education. In the period from its establishment in 1950 until 1955, the Singapore Teachers' Training College had produced 1,579 teachers, of which only 159 had been trained for employment in vernacular schools, and these as teachers of English.—K. A. Owen, "The History of the Singapore Teachers' Training College as an Instrument of Government Educational Policy, 1950 to 1955" (M.A. thesis, University of Wales, 1957), p. 161.

67 LAD, 1955/56, column 1233. John Ede, born and educated in England, had gained the LL.B. degree at Cambridge University. He was a business executive, and had spent some years in India, where he had served as a member of the Senate of Agra University.

68 Ibid., columns 1320-23.

69 Straits Times, December 2, 1955.

70 See, for example, editorial comment in Sin Chew Jit Poh, December 5, 1955.


72 All-Party Report, p. 13.

73 Ibid., p. 15.
74 All-Party Report, p. 4.
75 Ibid., p. 5.
76 Ibid., pp. 6-7.
77 Ibid., p. 9.
78 Ibid., p. 10.
79 Ibid., pp. 43-44.
80 Ibid., p. 11.
81 Straits Times, February 10, 1956.
82 All Party Report, p. 25.
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid., pp. 25-27.
86 Ibid., pp. 36-39.
87 Lee Siew Yee, "Will Chinese Schools Now Accept Control?" Straits Times, February 8, 1956.
88 Straits Times, February 10, 1956.
89 Owen, pp. 157-58.
90 Straits Times, March 31, 1956; LAD, 1955/56, column 1917.
92 White Paper on Education Policy, p. 4 (emphasis added).
93 Ibid., pp. 4-5.
94 Ibid., p. 6.
96 Ibid., p. 8.
97 For statistics concerning the enrolments and costs of secondary education during these years, see Andrew Ng Lian Timn, "A Study of the Costs of Primary and Secondary Education in Singapore 1945-1963" (M.Ed. thesis, University of Singapore, 1968).
98 White Paper on Education Policy, p. 11.
99 Straits Times, April 13, 1956.
100 Debate, April 12, 1956, LAD, 1955/56, columns 1900-1909.
101 Ibid., columns 1916-17.
102 LAD, 1956, vol. II, column 415. Lim had received an English education at Raffles Institution, and had long been associated with the more moderate trade unions, serving as President of the Singapore Clerical and Administrative Union in 1946 and later as President of the Singapore T.U.C. He first entered the Legislative Council, as a Nominated member, in 1948 and subsequently became a founder member of the Labour Front.
103 The most detailed account of these events, from the Government's point of view, was given on November 5, 1956, by Lim Yew Hock and Chew Swee Kee in statements to the Legislative Assembly.——LAD, Second Session, Part I (1956), vol. II, columns 412-31. See also report appearing in Nanyang Siang Pau, September 26, 1956; Lloyd Morgan, "The Monster in our Midst," Straits Times, September 26, 1956, and various reports appearing in both English and Chinese newspapers up to October 27, 1956. See also Department of Education Annual Report 1956, pp. 1-3.
104 Straits Times, January 22, 1957.
106 Straits Times, January 11, 1957.
108 Question by David Marshall, April 24, 1957, LAD (9th January to 30th July, 1957), columns 1494-95.
109 The Vice-President of the Singapore Malay Education Council, Inche Abdul Rahman Mohamed Said, remarked bitterly that the Singapore
Government did not care for Malay education, and that it had failed to carry out its promise to permit religious teaching in Malay schools. Furthermore, he claimed that there had been no increase in the number of Malay schools since the war, and the result was that "hundreds" of Malays were being forced to attend English schools.—Straits Times, June 9, 1958.


111 This was confirmed to the author by Francis Thomas, former Minister for Communications and Works.—Interview, Singapore, January 9, 1973.

112 The first P.A.P. Minister for Education, Yong Nyuk Lin, announced that the new Government's policy was based on three principles: equality of treatment for the four language streams as recommended by the All-Party Report; secondly, the acceptance of Malay as the national language; and thirdly, the placing of greater emphasis in the curriculum on mathematics, science, and the study of languages.—State of Singapore, Legislative Assembly Debates, 1959, vol. II, columns 177-79; see also the Ministry of Culture's publication, A Year of Construction (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 16-17.

113 In a more positive sense, the Government may be credited with starting the system of integrated schools which was to be adopted so energetically by the present Government of the island. In September, 1956, Chew Swee Kee announced his Government's intention, on an experimental basis, to introduce Chinese or Tamil streams into some English schools.—LAD, Second Session, Part I, vol. 2, columns 28-29. The efficacy of housing two or more language streams in a single school building as a means of breaking down communal barriers is a matter upon which views are still deeply divided in Singapore. The view was expressed to the author by one leading educationist that "forcing neighbours to live in the same house did not necessarily make for warmer relationships." But the contrary view, that the integrated schools' programme was proving to be a success, was voiced by several teachers, as well as by a senior official of the Ministry of Education.

114 It is relevant to note, however, that despite the P.A.P. Government's emphasis on multi-lingualism and equality of employment opportunities, the trend continued throughout the 1960's. By June, 1970, the enrolment in English streams was almost exactly double that in Chinese streams, the respective figures being: English streams, 319,873 (or 62.3 per cent of the school-going population); Chinese stream, 163,978 (or 31.9 per cent). At the same time, there were 28,340 students enrolled in the Malay streams (or 5.3 per cent of total enrolments); and 1,472 students (or 0.3 per cent) in the Tamil streams.—"Statistical Bulletin: Statistics on Schools, Pupils and Teachers," Ministry of Education (Mimeo), June 30, 1970, n.p.
Notes to Conclusion

1 Syonan Shimbun, August 4, Koki 2604 (1944).

2 The 1941 school enrolment was roughly 72,100.—Colony of Singapore, Annual Report of the Department of Education, 1946, p. 2.

3 Syonan Sinbun, May 25, Syowa 18; Ibid., December 6, Syowa 18 (1943).


5 Stephen Fitzgerald, China and the Overseas Chinese (Cambridge: University Press, 1972), pp. 129-30. In addition to the C.C.P.'s policy of encouraging Overseas Chinese students to remain in China after completion of their education, the Governments of the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore actively discouraged the return of such students.

6 Barrington Kaye, Upper Nankin Street Singapore (Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1960).

7 Colony of Singapore, Department of Education Annual Report 1956, p. 3. During the debate in the Legislative Assembly on July 17, 1959, the Member for Kampong Kembangan, Mohd. Ali bin Alwi (U.M.N.O.) again drew attention to the plight of "the indigenous people of Singapore, that is, the Malays" in respect of the educational facilities available, a comment which stung Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew into enquiring whether the speaker considered all non-Malays in Singapore to be "Bangsa asing" (Foreigners).—State of Singapore, Legislative Assembly Debates . . . 1959, vol. II, columns 222-24.

8 In a letter to the author dated November 4, 1974, David Marshall asserts that this was not so in the case of his government.

9 The Swiss insist on education through the mother tongue, and in bilingual and trilingual Cantons, where the burden of providing separate schools for each language stream would be too heavy for local taxpayers, the Federal Government provides financial assistance.—vide H. G. Rickover, Swiss Schools and Ours: Why Theirs Are Better (Boston: Atlantic-Little, Brown and Company, 1962), p. 42.


11 These fears were noted by a Royal Commission established to consider the problems of education in Quebec in the early 1960's, vide *Report of the Royal Commission of inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec* (Quebec: Government of the Province of Quebec, 1966), Part 3, pp. 98ff. The same fears were examined in greater detail during the lengthy investigation of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

12 The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. S. Rajaratnam, in an address to the United Nations General Assembly on September 22, 1965, asserted

> The multi-racial and multi-cultural character of my country has made us somewhat sceptical of those who think of the superiority and exclusiveness of one culture and one race. In a multi-racial society, one soon learns that no one people has the monopoly of wisdom and that one's own culture is not without flaw... This not only breeds tolerance for different viewpoints, but also a readiness to learn and borrow from the accumulated wisdom of other people. These are... attitudes of mind essential for a smooth and constructive development of a multi-racial and multi-cultural society.

13 *Straits Times*, November 4, 1972. The failure to achieve the aim of bilingualism had been referred to in an editorial in the *New Nation*, October 19, 1972. See also Masie Kwee, "Bi-lingualism's slow start," *Straits Times*, February 9, 1973.

14 The continuing increase in English-stream enrolments is claimed by the Government to be a temporary phenomenon which is the result of the current emphasis placed on technical education and vocational training,—see, for example, Publicity Division, Ministry of Culture, *Singapore '72* (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 149. The implication of this explanation is that the facilities for technical and vocational training in Singapore are mainly available through the medium of English. But this is a condition which could be changed by the Government if it so willed. The major trends of Singapore's educational policies during the years 1959 to 1970 are discussed by Saravanan Gopinathan, in *Towards A National System of Education in Singapore* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, forthcoming), Chapters 4 & 5. For an account of the circumstances leading to the arrest of Lee Mau Seng and three other top executives of the *Nanyang Siang Pau*, who were accused of trying "to strike up communal tension over Chinese language and culture with inflammatory editorials," see the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 15 and May 22, 1971. Lee Mau Seng has recently been
permitted to emigrate to Canada, and is at present residing in West Vancouver, see Vancouver Sun, October 12, 1974, p. 45.


16 Norman K. Henderson, Educational Developments and Research with Special Reference to Hong Kong (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Council for Educational Research, Hong Kong University Press, 1964), pp. 1-3.


19 Norman Henderson claims that 95 per cent of the population could understand Kuo yu, although he does not indicate the source of this information.—Henderson, p. 1.


22 The culturally alienating effects of an English education have been noted by Wolfgang Franke, "Problems of Chinese Education in Singapore and Malaya," Malaysian Journal of Education, 2, No. 2 (December 1965), 189-90.


BIBLIOGRAPHY
A Note on Sources

The different kinds of material available for the pre-war, war-time and post-war periods have presented obstacles in the way of a comparative study. Thus, details of Governmental expenditure on education in the Straits Settlements are reasonably complete up to and including the year 1938, and it is possible to isolate those figures which relate specifically to Singapore. But most financial records in respect of the years 1939 to 1941 inclusive failed to survive the war, and there exist no records at all of educational expenditure during the Japanese Occupation. The practice of compiling and publishing annual departmental reports was resumed after the war, but due to a change of the "Heads of Expenditure" adopted by the Education Department in 1955, figures for comparative purposes are difficult, and sometimes impossible, to identify.

While official sources are most detailed and informative for the pre-war years, with the exception of those already noted, and almost completely absent for the years 1942 to 1945, in the post-war years the operation of the twenty-five year "secrecy" rule imposes a reliance upon published records and reports which, of course, only provide such information as the administration of the day considered to be appropriate for publication. These circumstances will help to explain the rather heavy reliance placed upon official sources, whether published or not, in the second chapter of this study, as well as the extensive use made of the Syonan Shimbun, personal interviews, memoirs, and such sources as Brother Brophy's Diary in the chapter dealing with the Japanese Occupation. The post-war years provide a rich source of non-official materials
and, from 1952, the existence of a daily digest of the non-English press, a cyclostyled series which includes numerous articles and news items translated in full, proved to be an invaluable aid to a non-Chinese speaking investigator such as myself. In this connection it must be admitted that valuable sources—such as the records of various clan associations and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce—await investigation by those competent in Chinese.

All official records, as well as copies of the English language newspapers (including the *Syonan Shimbun*), used in the course of my research are located in the National Archives and Records Centre, the National Library (Reference Division), or the library of the University of Singapore. The minutes of the various conferences of the Malaysia Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church are located in the Church Archives at 23-B Coleman Street, Singapore 6, and the diary of Brother Joseph Brophy is held in the safekeeping of Brother I. Patrick, the Brother Director of St. Joseph's Institution, Bras Basah Road, Singapore 7.

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VII. Theses and Academic Exercises

Ahmad, Zahoor. See Zahoor Ahmad bin Haji Fazal Hussain.


Appendix A

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS: EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ANNUAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE, 1918-1938

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Education Expenditure as % of Total Annual Government Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1921</td>
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<td>1931</td>
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<td>1932</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table IX

**STRAITS SETTLEMENTS: EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ANNUAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE (STRAITS SETTLEMENTS DOLLARS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Education Actual Payments</th>
<th>P.W.D. Expenditure Recurrent &amp; Extra-ordinary on school buildings, maintenance &amp; renovations</th>
<th>Total A plus B</th>
<th>A plus B as percentage of Total Government Expenditure for the Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>344,793</td>
<td>20,366</td>
<td>365,159</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>385,478</td>
<td>55,519</td>
<td>440,997</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>562,085</td>
<td>80,721</td>
<td>642,806</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>911,121</td>
<td>104,379</td>
<td>1,015,500</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>871,306</td>
<td>143,914</td>
<td>1,015,220</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>860,034</td>
<td>255,033</td>
<td>1,115,067</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>957,113</td>
<td>379,060</td>
<td>1,336,173</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1,063,978</td>
<td>399,781</td>
<td>1,463,759</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>1,106,086</td>
<td>612,876</td>
<td>1,718,962</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>1,228,038</td>
<td>496,890</td>
<td>1,724,928</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>1,301,209</td>
<td>379,576</td>
<td>1,680,785</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>1929</td>
<td>1,427,987</td>
<td>585,055</td>
<td>2,013,042</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>1,536,663</td>
<td>608,679</td>
<td>2,145,342</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1,937,027</td>
<td>492,618</td>
<td>2,429,645</td>
<td>5.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>2,234,075</td>
<td>402,255</td>
<td>2,636,330</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>2,118,580</td>
<td>89,803</td>
<td>2,208,383</td>
<td>7.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>2,005,134</td>
<td>161,720</td>
<td>2,166,854</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>2,002,648</td>
<td>97,054</td>
<td>2,099,702</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>2,170,692</td>
<td>198,613</td>
<td>2,369,305</td>
<td>7.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>2,234,495</td>
<td>341,549</td>
<td>2,576,044</td>
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<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>2,514,670</td>
<td>312,899</td>
<td>2,827,569</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Compiled from the Financial Statements, ADR, 1918-1938.*
Appendix B

SINGAPORE: REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION, 1918-1938
## Table X

**SINGAPORE: REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION, 1918-1938 (STRAITS SETTLEMENTS DOLLARS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School Fees</th>
<th>Education Rate</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
<th>Total Revenue</th>
<th>Personal Emoluments</th>
<th>Education Board</th>
<th>P.W.D. Expenditure</th>
<th>Total Expenditure</th>
<th>Net Expenditure After Deducting the Revenue from School fees, Education Rate &amp; Miscellaneous Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>54,803</td>
<td>126,012</td>
<td>2,772</td>
<td>183,587</td>
<td>172,181¹</td>
<td>116,497</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>288,678</td>
<td>105,091</td>
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<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>62,792</td>
<td>258,501</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>321,293</td>
<td>156,196¹</td>
<td>144,228</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>300,424</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>67,530</td>
<td>315,718</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>384,278</td>
<td>229,621¹</td>
<td>511,911</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>741,532</td>
<td>357,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>76,447</td>
<td>371,670</td>
<td>2,388</td>
<td>450,505</td>
<td>220,527¹</td>
<td>351,925</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>572,453</td>
<td>121,947</td>
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<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>80,008</td>
<td>473,007</td>
<td>8,706</td>
<td>561,721</td>
<td>363,127¹</td>
<td>421,003¹²</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>784,130</td>
<td>222,408</td>
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<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>94,285</td>
<td>483,779</td>
<td>13,818</td>
<td>591,882</td>
<td>368,121</td>
<td>348,982</td>
<td>162,976</td>
<td>880,079</td>
<td>288,197</td>
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<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>103,176</td>
<td>486,970</td>
<td>25,990</td>
<td>616,136</td>
<td>502,718</td>
<td>383,325</td>
<td>186,176</td>
<td>1,072,219</td>
<td>456,082</td>
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<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>116,315</td>
<td>487,474</td>
<td>27,668²</td>
<td>631,457</td>
<td>477,923</td>
<td>420,174</td>
<td>123,428</td>
<td>1,021,525</td>
<td>390,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>116,669</td>
<td>501,076</td>
<td>122,733³</td>
<td>740,478</td>
<td>481,559</td>
<td>496,951</td>
<td>205,134</td>
<td>1,183,644</td>
<td>443,166</td>
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<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>123,857</td>
<td>530,285</td>
<td>143,200³</td>
<td>797,342</td>
<td>525,629</td>
<td>554,756</td>
<td>238,456</td>
<td>1,318,841</td>
<td>521,499</td>
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<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>132,614</td>
<td>564,963</td>
<td>78,295³</td>
<td>775,872</td>
<td>563,224</td>
<td>585,651</td>
<td>46,970</td>
<td>1,197,845</td>
<td>421,973</td>
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<td>1929</td>
<td>149,326</td>
<td>582,119</td>
<td>3,798</td>
<td>735,243</td>
<td>571,522</td>
<td>586,723</td>
<td>170,482</td>
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<td>593,484</td>
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<td>1930</td>
<td>164,209</td>
<td>559,939</td>
<td>31,792</td>
<td>755,940</td>
<td>584,243</td>
<td>669,231</td>
<td>131,909</td>
<td>1,385,383</td>
<td>629,443</td>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>179,099</td>
<td>486,968</td>
<td>263,815⁴</td>
<td>929,882</td>
<td>666,050</td>
<td>714,805</td>
<td>92,361</td>
<td>1,473,216</td>
<td>543,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>188,297</td>
<td>399,642</td>
<td>456,761</td>
<td>1,044,700</td>
<td>671,197</td>
<td>655,198</td>
<td>180,426</td>
<td>1,506,821</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>179,201</td>
<td>399,451</td>
<td>430,238</td>
<td>1,008,890</td>
<td>605,293</td>
<td>647,386</td>
<td>45,778</td>
<td>1,298,457</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>188,971</td>
<td>338,053</td>
<td>333,370</td>
<td>860,394</td>
<td>654,539</td>
<td>592,934</td>
<td>27,045</td>
<td>1,274,518</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>201,047</td>
<td>369,946</td>
<td>313,028</td>
<td>884,021</td>
<td>678,331</td>
<td>623,638</td>
<td>26,998</td>
<td>1,328,967</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>214,861</td>
<td>382,160</td>
<td>397,524</td>
<td>994,546</td>
<td>728,225</td>
<td>682,573</td>
<td>77,161</td>
<td>1,487,959</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>230,695</td>
<td>472,184</td>
<td>295,149</td>
<td>998,028</td>
<td>763,322</td>
<td>732,382</td>
<td>96,530</td>
<td>1,592,236</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>221,461</td>
<td>399,598</td>
<td>580,059</td>
<td>1,201,119</td>
<td>825,819</td>
<td>782,895</td>
<td>180,727</td>
<td>1,789,442</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Includes Government Expenditure through the P.W.D. (not separately detailed).
2. Includes $13,544 received under the Rubber Lands Assessment Ordinance.
3. Includes "a sum" received under the Rubber Lands Assessment Ordinance.
4. Includes contribution of $231,653 from Government.
5. Includes Government contribution of $454,144.
10. Includes Government contribution of $288,556.
11. Includes Government contribution of $567,376.
12. Includes refund to Colonial Treasury of $89,242, drawn against Government contribution.

N.B. With the introduction of the new system of calculating Grants-in-Aid, Grants for both 1919 and 1920 were paid in 1920.

Source: Financial Statements Appended to PLC, 1918-38, and ADR, 1918-38.
Appendix C

DESPATCH, SIR CECIL CLEMENTI TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, OCTOBER 12, 1931
The Right Honourable
James Henry Thomas, P.C., M.P.,
Etc., Etc., Etc.,
Colonial Office.

Sir,

I have the honour to address you on the subject of filling the appointment of Director of Education, Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, which is rendered vacant by the promotion of Dr. R. O. Winstedt, C.M.G., D.Litt. to be General Adviser of Johore. Dr. Winstedt has already taken up the duties of the appointment in Johore and the post of Director of Education is being filled temporarily by Mr. J. Watson, Chief Inspector of English Schools.

2. The question of appointing a professional educationist, rather than a member of the Malayan Civil Service, as head of the Education Department has been raised on two or three occasions in the Legislative Council of the Colony and the Federal Council of the Federated Malay States. The matter was debated at length on a Resolution moved by Mr. J. H. M. Robson in Federal Council on the 8th March, 1926. The Government's spokesman on that occasion was Mr. E. C. H. Wolff, Malayan Civil Service, who held the appointment of Director of Education from 1st June, 1921 to 9th May, 1923. Mr. Wolff argued that

(a) Malayan education comprised vernacular education in three languages, and English, commercial, physical and technical education and that no educationist could be expert on all these branches;

(b) that the professional schoolmaster (who seemed to be in the mind of the advocates for an expert director) was not often a trained administrator;

(c) that competent educationists have generally found their niche in life by the age of 40 and that it was found
impossible, for example, to recruit a suitable President for Raffles College at $1,800 per mensem;

(d) that it would take some years for a competent expert to grasp all Malaya's local problems and that until he had done so a sensible officer would mark time; and finally

(e) that, until the Malayan Education Department could provide its own expert, the post should be given to a cadet.

The debate was adjourned until the next meeting of the Council; but the question was not again debated, as at the meeting of the Council held on the 22nd June, 1926, the Resolution was withdrawn from the Orders of the Day.

3. The question was again raised by Dr. Noel Clarke [Unofficial Member representing the Eurasian community] on the adjournment of Legislative Council on the 6th July, 1931. He argued that for other Malayan Departments specialists had been recruited from outside, that "it is contrary to the duties of the head of a department in that he acts not necessarily on his own convictions but on the advice of those who are subject to him" and that a specialist would have continuity of service. In reply I pointed out that a professional educationist from home would be quite unable to assist Government over the problem of Chinese education or probably in the matter of Malay vernacular education. I might have added that in other Malayan Departments specialists recruited from elsewhere have not seldom failed to justify their appointment and that the Director of Education as a member of the Legislative and Federal Councils is very much in the position of a Minister, who often acts "on the advice of those subject to him."

4. The arguments adducible in favour of appointing a professional Director are specious rather than strong, and they can in any case be countered by stronger; but I recognise that more discussion is likely to ensue on this subject in Federal as well as in Legislative Council. In that event I should employ for purposes of debate the same lines of argument that have been followed hitherto by speakers on the Government side. Nevertheless, I should not be mentioning the decisive consideration
which, in my view, renders the selection of a professional candidate impossible at the present juncture, even if its desirability were conceded. This consideration lies in the requirements of the new policy of decentralisation in the Federated Malay States and in the need for a wider, but looser, co-ordination of administrative work on a Malayan basis.

5. It will be readily understood that the Education Department, especially on the vernacular side, is one of intimate interest and concern to Their Highnesses the Rulers; and I am particularly anxious to avoid a separatist movement on the part of the Protected States in educational matters. It is to my mind essential that the Director of Education in the Colony should remain also the Adviser on Education to the Malay States. In the Resident of Perak's diary for January last, however, the Raja Sir Chulan, K.B.E., is reported to have suggested the severing of educational ties between the Federated Malay States and the Straits Settlements and the constitution of two distinct departments.

6. I have no doubt that fissiparous tendencies of this nature can be diverted into harmless variations on points of detail so long as the Director of Education remains a tactful member of the Malayan Civil Service, conversant with the ways and manners of Malayan Courts and able to exert a personal influence over Their Highnesses, when he meets them. But I should view with distinct apprehension the appointment at this moment of a professional educationist,—even if he were possessed of local scholastic experience,—because that experience would certainly not include the familiarity with Malayan political personalities and Malayan constitutional idiosyncrasies which will be so necessary during the transitional stages of development under the new policy. For the present it appears to me essential to appoint a man who can be relied upon to safeguard the Malayan focus of his appointment and the Malayan status of the European Educational Service, and to preserve both from political notice or criticism until such time as the Peninsula has settled down quietly on the basis of the new policy to a future of complete understanding and confidence as between the component administrations.
When that day arrives will occur the opportunity to reconsider the arguments for and against a professional Director, but for the present the need for a Malayan Civil Servant in that position is, I submit, both patent and paramount.

7. A point that Dr. Clarke made was that the present system does not encourage continuity of service. With regard to this I would point out that Dr. Winstedt held the appointment from May, 1923 to June, 1931, and I propose, subject to your concurrence, to select as a successor to Dr. Winstedt a member of the Malayan Civil Service, whose age would permit him to hold the office for several years. The officer on whom my choice has fallen is Mr. F. J. Morten, an officer in Class II of the Malayan Civil Service. Mr. Morten will be 43 years old in October and is an officer of out-standing ability and, in the opinion of my advisers, will fill the appointment of Director of Education with success. I propose that he should be appointed to act in the appointment on his return from furlough in January next and that, if after six months' probation he has given satisfaction in the performance of his duties, he should then be confirmed in the appointment, on the understanding that he will hold it for some 7 or 8 years.

8. In view of Dr. Winstedt's long and successful tenure of the post of Director of Education, I consulted him in the preparation of this despatch and I am glad to find that he entirely concurs in what I have written.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

[Signed] C. Clementi

GOVERNOR

Appendix D

SELECTED MINUTES AND MEMORANDA BY PERMANENT OFFICIALS OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE ON THE SUBJECT OF THE APPOINTMENT OF A DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION IN THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS AND FEDERATED MALAY STATES, 1931-1932
Mr. Calder.

As it is possible that the question of filling the Malay Directorship of Education may come up during my absence in the West Indies, I leave the following note for you.

I understand that no final decision will be submitted for the Secretary of State's approval pending the proposals of the Governor which are awaited.

I can suggest no-one at present serving in any Colonial Education Department as suitable to be put in over the head of Mr. Watson, who is at present acting as D. of E.

I would not personally put forward any arguments against the appointment of Mr. Watson if the Governor unequivocally recommends him.

From what I have heard, I think it possible that the Governor may recommend Mr. Forster, Professor of Education in Hong Kong University, whom he knew well in Hong Kong. Sir Cecil Clementi knows far more about him than I do. From the many talks I have had with Mr. Forster when he was home on leave, I have inferred nothing that would, in my opinion, disqualify him if strongly recommended by the Governor.

If no strong recommendation is made by the Governor, my own feeling is that what Malaya really needs for the next three years or so is a well trained and competent education administrator with proved experience under the Board of Education or some English local education authority. But he would have to be a really first-class man, and he would have to be prepared for a considerable feeling against him at the start in the Education Department, which I feel sure would not welcome the supersession of Mr. Watson or the bringing in of an outsider. From my talk with Sir Cecil Clementi when he was home I gather that he was at least considering this possibility, but it is quite possible that he has changed his mind since then.

Previous registered minutes and papers relating to the subject
will show the accepted policy [J. A. Calder noted in the margin that he could not find any accepted policy "unless it be that both cadets and educationalists will be considered." regarding the future appointments of Civil Service cadets to this post. Personally I venture to hope that this policy will be maintained and that if no officer of the local Education Department or from other oversea Education Departments or Universities is found fitted for the post an attempt will be made to find a first-class man from England.

[Minute by Wm. R. G. Crosse dated 12/11 (1931)]:

The post has been filled temporarily by Mr. J. Watson, Chief Inspector of English Schools, and Mr. Morten, whom the Governor proposes should subsequently be appointed to the post, does not return to the S.S. until about the 23rd of January [1932].....

It would therefore appear that there is no great urgency about the matter, and that there is need for caution in considering the Governor's proposal, since it is obvious that there is likely to be a certain amount of criticism of the appointment, if it is approved.

? The question may be referred to Mr. Mayhew [Arthur Mayhew, Joint Secretary of the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, and author of several texts on colonial education] for his [observations] in the first instance.

[Minute by J. A. Calder (Deputy Assistant Under-Secretary, Far East Department, Colonial Office), dated 19/11/31]

I annexe a minute which Mr. Mayhew left with me embodying his views.... It is admitted that Dr. Winstedt was a success & we may hope that Mr. Morten would be so too, if he is selected & kept in the post for 7 or 8 years. The appointment of a professional educationist without knowledge of Malayan conditions would certainly involve considerable risk.

[Minute dated 26/11 (1931), signature indecipherable]

I should not be prepared to accept the arguments against a
professional educationist as set out in paragraph 2 of the [Governor's] despatch. It is hard to believe that the Head of the Department must have all the expertness set out at (a), or that a cadet has much of it beyond languages. The reference to a professional schoolmaster is misleading. The attempt to recruit a President for Raffles College was made in 1920, which must have been a very difficult time at which to find a man possessing the qualifications required for that post, while as regards (d) the Director, even though a professional, would presumably have "the advice of those subject to him."

I should have supposed that in matters affecting the Rulers, the Director would have had the advice and guidance of the Residents. At the same time it seems impossible to contravert the view that the Director of Education is, in effect, a Minister and that at the present time it is wise that he should be familiar with Malayan constitutional idiosyncrasies.

Mr. Mayhew was not prepared to suggest anyone from the Colonial Education Service more suitable than Mr. J. Watson, Chief Inspector of English Schools in Malaya, an officer of 25 years' service, who acted as Director of Education for several months last year. I should say that in the circumstances we cannot press Mr. Watson on the Governor and still less the appointment of an outsider and that it is wise that the post of Director should be held by a cadet. On the other hand, I should have thought it desirable that the posts of Assistant Directors of Education should, if possible, be given to professional educationalists. The post of Assistant Director of Education, which has apparently been vacant for some time, is treated as a Class III post in the Civil Service, as are the two posts of Director of Education of Chinese Schools in the F.M.S. and Straits Settlements. Mr. Jordan, the acting holder of the F.M.S. post has spent most of his career as Protector of Chinese or Controller of Labour. Mr. Purcell, who is acting in the Straits Settlements post, had some short previous educational experience, but has spent most of his career in the miscellaneous posts which are usually the lot of a Malayan cadet. Presumably there are Educational
officers in Malaya who could undertake these posts and supply the Director with expert educational advice.

Mr. F. J. Morten, who is proposed as the new Director of Education, is, so far as Promotions Branch can judge, one of the distinguished officers of the Malayan Service. He joined the service in 1912 and has had varied experience as District Judge and Magistrate, District Officer, Assistant to the Resident, Malacca, Agent to the Food Controller, Assistant Treasurer, Malacca, Acting Registrar and Sheriff, Supreme Court, Penang, and as Assistant Secretary and Clerk of Councils.

 Approve his appointment.

[Minute by C. J. Jeffries (Sir Charles Jeffries, author of The Colonial Empire and its Civil Service), dated 30/11/31]

It is unfortunate that Mr. Mayhew is not here, but having regard to the strong opinion which he has expressed I do not think that we can accept the local view off-hand. Indeed, I think that the Secretary of State ought to have the views of the Advisory Committee before agreeing that this important post should be for the next 7 or 8 years in the hands of an officer with no educational experience whatever, regarding whom there is no shred of evidence that he has shown the slightest interest in, or aptitude for dealing with educational problems.

The arguments in the Gov's despatch would be more impressive if we had not had them before in connection with other posts where he felt that the Secretary of State might wish to consider candidates from outside the M.C.S. In the cases of the Postmaster-General and the Financial Adviser we have agreed to the appointment of members of the M.C.S.; in those cases it is possible to accept without much difficulty the view that general administrative experience and training should equip a suitable officer for the duties. But it is by no means as clear that this view can be accepted in the sphere of education. Prima facie one would suppose that there were plenty of people in Malaya who could supply the necessary local knowledge and keep a Director straight, & that what was wanted was someone to supply specialist knowledge and to apply the experience of other countries to the local problem.
Mr. Morten is now on leave and is not due back till January. No harm would therefore be done if a decision were deferred until Mr. Mayhew's return, should this be considered desirable. In the meantime Mr. Morten could, if necessary, be interviewed with a view to some judgment being formed of his capacity for educational work. Such a matter was naturally not touched upon when I saw him in July. . . .

[Minute by Hanns Vischer (Sir Hanns Vischer, Joint Secretary to the Advisory Committee on Education, sometime Director of Education in Northern Nigeria), dated 7.12.31]

The Governor in his despatch makes a very strong recommendation in favour of Mr. Morten, and seems quite convinced that this appointment would be the proper solution. Purely from an educational point of view, I entirely agree with Mr. Mayhew. If anything, my views on the principle involved are rather stronger, although from a general administrative point of view, it is difficult to separate education from pure administration and the general policy pursued by Government, with which an administrative officer would probably be more conversant than would an educationist. I understand the Governor's arguments, but, on the other hand, it is a fact that the problems of education, as such, and the way in which they are handled must in the first instance be kept in line and remain in harmony with the general progress of education throughout the Empire. The further advanced education becomes, the more it is bound to depend on its proper direction, and it seems clear to me that the right person to direct an Education Department like that of the Straits, is a professional educationist, just in the same way as an expert is required at the head of the Medical and Agricultural Departments.

Mr. Mayhew has given a great deal of thought to this matter, and I attach the greatest importance to his views. He has a far better knowledge of local conditions than I have, and has seen a good deal of Dr. Winstedt and a number of officers from his Department. I therefore agree with Mr. Jeffries that we should see Mr. Morten while he is on leave, and defer a decision pending Mr. Mayhew's return.
I have no objection to postponement but I incline to agree with the Governor. I doubt if a professional educationist of the right type is easily to be had, & if he could be found he would have to begin by learning the Malayan conditions.

I find it difficult to believe the peculiarity of Malayan conditions is such that no outsider can become acquainted with them without long years of residence. I wonder, too, whether the temperament of Malayan Rajahs & the ceremonial of their courts present obstacles which are unknown to Directors of Education who have to deal with Native Rulers in other Colonies. My doubts are increased by the fact that Sir C. Clementi, when he was in England earlier in the year, was quite prepared to consider & recommend the appointment of a professional Educationist to succeed Dr. Winstedt.

I would not go so far as to say that the post of D. of E. should never again be held by a member of the Malayan Civil Service. Even at the present juncture I would not oppose the appt. of Mr. Morten if it were clear that we could not produce a worthy rival. But I think we ought to be sure of our ground before a decision is reached.

? Wait as proposed.

I saw Mr. Morten today and had a talk with him about education in Malaya. I then went with him to Mr. Tomlinson, with whom we continued the conversation. My impression is that Mr. Morten's qualifications for filling any administrative post of responsibility leave nothing to
be desired, and probably he would deal very well with the administrative side and the financial side of the work. Admittedly he knows nothing about education generally, and very little about education in Malaya, to which his work and experience have been confined. He had some interesting things to say as regards the political side of education in Malaya. Apparently administrative officers are not interested in the schools in their districts, and it is not their practice to discuss education either with the education officers in their districts or with the natives.

In reply to my question as to what would happen if any of the technical Departments—for instance, the Medical Department—had at its head an officer with no knowledge of medicine, he said that he thought that it would not matter very much, as the head of any Department was concerned purely with administrative work, and in this instance all the medical knowledge of the officer seemed wasted, while it would probably result in the saving of a great deal of money if a trained administrator occupied the position of head of the Department. I felt that when he said this he expressed the general opinion of the Malayan Government. I believe that it is generally acknowledged nowadays that an education officer, be he teacher, inspector, or head of his Department, must have some special technical knowledge of the subject. While I can well understand the necessity of using an administrative officer without any special educational knowledge in the earliest stages of education in a particular territory where it is of the first importance that the work of education should go hand in hand with that of administration, I do think that there lies a real danger in the proposal to put a man without any knowledge of education in charge of the Department in a territory like Malaya, where the initial stage is long past and where the very important problems of higher and university education have to be faced.

The man whom I would suggest for the post should have some definite knowledge of education history—a man, for instance, with the experience and knowledge of Mr. Mayhew. I would call such qualifications
far more important than any local experience. I do not think we have
this kind of man in Africa, and I do not know if we can find him in any
of our other colonies; but I have seen men recently returned from educa-
tional work in India on the one side, and officers of the Board of
Education in London on the other, who, in my opinion, might well fill
the post, and whose knowledge of the subject and of the whole history
of education at home and abroad, including its evolution through the
primary, secondary and university stages, would be a guarantee of avoid­
ing the disastrous mistakes in Malaya which have been made elsewhere,
notably in India.

As I noted before, I am of opinion that the whole question should
be gone into by Mr. Mayhew on his return from abroad. In the meantime,
I have sent to Mr. Morten, at his request, various papers and memoranda
showing the work done and the general policy adopted by the Advisory
Committee on Education.

[Minute initialled 'G.J.F.T.' (Tomlinson), dated 4th January, 1932.]

Mr. Vischer brought Mr. Morten to see me on 23rd December. He
struck me as a sensible, capable and experienced officer. But what also
struck me was his entire ignorance of education—not merely of educa­
tional theory but of educational practice in Malaya. It was ignorance
of a kind that is certainly not common among administrative officers in
Nigeria where Residents and District Officers make it their business to
keep in close touch with the schools and the work of the Education De­
partment generally. For example I was surprised to hear from Mr.
Morten that a District officer when on tour would not usually pay either
formal or informal visits to schools.

I noted that Mr. Morten's service in Malaya has been entirely
confined to the Colony.

I asked him to what extent a Director of Education, if brought
in from outside, would find himself handicapped by ignorance of the
forms and ceremonial of the Courts of Malayan Sultans. He replied that
he did not suppose that the Director of Education would come to any
great extent into direct contact with the Sultans, but would usually deal with the Residents and Advisers. I don't know how far his reply was accurate in view of his ignorance of the Federated and Unfederated Malay States, but it is somewhat significant in view of para. 6 [of] Sir C. Clementi's despatch.

Altogether I feel very doubtful about advising that Sir C. Clementi's proposal should be approved. There would be no harm in letting Mr. Morten act as Director of Education for a time. We might send an interim reply to the despatch saying that the Secretary of State has not yet come to a decision and that Mr. Morten's acting tenure of office must not be regarded as setting up a claim to the substantive post. If this is done, I should let the whole question stand over until Mr. Mayhew returns.

[On the 8th January, 1932, the following despatch was drafted for transmission to the Governor, Straits Settlements. It was signed by Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, then Secretary of State for the Colonies]:

I have . . . to refer to your Confidential despatch of the 12th October in which you recommend that Mr. F. J. Morten, an officer in Class II of the Malayan Civil Service, should be appointed to act in the post of Director of Education, and that, if after six months probation he has given satisfaction in the performance of his duties, he should then be confirmed in the appointment.

2. I have not yet come to a final decision upon the matter, but I agree with your proposal that Mr. Morten should be appointed to act in the appointment on his return from furlough. I do this only on the clear understanding that such acting tenure of office must not in any way be regarded as setting up a claim to the substantive post.

[Upon his return from a visit to the West Indies, Arthur Mayhew was handed the file, to which he appended the following minute dated 26th February, 1932]

Sir Cecil Clementi makes out a reasonably strong case for the
appointment of a Civil Service Cadet, but none of his arguments against the appointment of an educational administrator from outside seem to me convincing. I cannot help thinking that what has really weighed most with the Governor has been the realisation that any educationist from outside would have to face, probably for a considerable time, a very strong feeling against him on the part of the whole of the official world in Malaya. This feeling would be shared by the Education Department, which, so far as I can judge from talks I have had with a good many members of it, would far prefer a local Cadet to an educationist from outside. To this obstacle must now be added, unfortunately, inability to rely on support from the Governor, who has definitely championed the cause of the Civil Service.

2. I doubt very much whether we could find an educational administrator, of the type that is required, who would be prepared to face this situation if it were honestly put before him as a candidate, though I do not think it impossible that the right kind of man would in course of time win public support and confidence.

3. I am more than ever convinced that what Malaya needs just now is a man with a sound and varied experience of educational administration and of educational theory and practice, who would be able to see on what up-to-date lines the existing system of education is capable of development, more particularly on the side of vocational training and adaptation to industrial and agricultural needs. The present system has some very excellent features, but it is undoubtedly suffering from self-satisfaction, lack of ideas, and reluctance to face new possibilities and needs among those at the top. The fact that Sir Cecil Clementi, who in his talk at home showed a full recognition of this, has omitted in his despatch any reference to the need for new light, is in itself proof that self-satisfaction is a dominant note amongst his advisers there.

4. From the previous minutes and on a priori grounds, I see no reason for hoping that Mr. Morten will provide the fresh impetus and new ideas that are required.
5. In the absence of any recommendation or even suggestion on the Governor's part, I am unable to urge the claims of any present member of the local Education Department. Nor have I altered my views regarding the absence of suitable candidates from other Colonial Education Departments. If the appointment of an outside educationist is still contemplated, I think it will be necessary to rely on the Board of Education and their personal knowledge of L.E.A. [London Education Authority] Directors and Assistant-Directors of Education, as well as of Inspectors of Schools on their staff.

6. I venture to suggest that I might be allowed to discuss frankly the situation with Sir Henry Richards of the Board of Education and with Mr. Wood. If, as I think unlikely, they can suggest a man who is both competent for the work and likely to consider accepting it, he might be invited to meet persons at this office.

7. If this is thought inexpedient, or if it is allowed and produces no results, I can only suggest that when the financial situation improves, Malaya should be advised to pay for the special services of the kind of administrator that I have in mind to examine and overhaul the whole matter and advise on further lines of development. It would be at least a year's work. It is certainly most important that they should not be allowed to think that by the appointment of Mr. Morten they have met the really urgent needs of Malaya education.

[Minute by J. A. Calder, dated 29th February, 1932]

Mr. Mayhew might discuss as suggested, but the best way out will probably be to appoint Mr. Morten, & when the financial position improves, let an expert educationist go out and report.

[Minute by C. J. Jeffries, dated 29th February, 1932]

I think we should go slowly. It is clear that there is a measure of unofficial support for the appt. of an educationist, and in as far as Sir C. Clementi's objections are based upon the imminence of decentralisation they cannot at present be regarded as securely founded.
Let Mr. Mayhew discuss as he proposes and then consider further.

[Minute by H. Q. Cowell, dated 2nd March, 1932]
I agree that a final decision on this question should not be reached at present while the devolution proposals are under consideration; and we may as well fill in time by discussing the possibility of obtaining a suitable candidate with educational experience.

It will be seen that Sir C. Clementi is obsessed with the importance of his new policy of devolution and uses it without any justification as an argument for the most diverse proposals. It would seem to me that so long as the present federal system exists there is a good deal to be said for the appointment as Director of Education of an administrative officer, since his duties will be, to a large extent, those of organising and controlling the staff. If, however, there should be a real devolution and each State has its own Education Department with an administrative head, it seems clear that the adviser should be a person with technical experience since he will not be concerned directly with administration. It seems to me that the reference to the relations between the Director and the Rulers is quite beside the point: the duty of advising the Rulers falls on the Residents and not on any technical officer.

[Note by 'G.J.F.T.' (Tomlinson), dated 3rd March, 1932]
I agree. Let Mr. Mayhew discuss as he proposes.

[Memorandum by Arthur Mayhew, addressed to Mr. (J. A.) Calder, and dated 3rd March, 1932]
Director of Education, Malaya.
In a letter written to me dealing with other subjects, Sir George Maxwell has written, "Malaya is doing very badly in the Education Department and wants a visit. For heaven's sake don't let them appoint a Civil Servant as D. of E." I have not, either in writing or orally,
mentioned the subject of Malaya to Sir George Maxwell for many months. Nor does he know anything about the recent Minute which I wrote on the subject. I venture to send this on to you, not because Sir George Maxwell is a member of the Advisory Committee on Education, for he realises that that Committee has nothing to do with appointments, but because he was in very close contact with education during the latter portion of his service in Malaya, and has kept in very close touch ever since.

[Minute by Arthur Mayhew addressed to J. A. Calder, dated March 6, '32] . . . Could you let me know the pay of the post with a view to the informal discussions I am to have? Dr. Winstedt I think drew an extra allowance as Principal of Raffles College—but this is not to continue?

[Minute by J. A. Calder, dated March 7, 1932, in reply to Mayhew's minute of the previous day]

The salary is $1200 per month. We have no information as to what is being done regarding the Principal of Raffles College. Do you think it sufficiently important to telegraph enquiring?

[Minute, Mayhew to Calder, dated March 14th (1932)]

I have had a preliminary (informal) talk with the B. of E. man Mr. Wood. He thinks a great deal will depend on the salary and would like to get more definite information on this point. So could a cable be sent out to S.S. asking (a) what the salary of the D. of E's post now is, (b) whether this includes pay for Principalship of Raffles College, and (c) if so how much this pay is?

Am I right in supposing that $1200 p.m. represents £3070 per annum at present? [Calder has made a marginal note: "No. It equals £1680 p.a.]

Could I have this file back as soon as the cable has been sent, Mr. Wood wants to have a further talk with me before I leave on the 23rd March.
[A cable of enquiry was sent to the Straits Settlements, regarding the terms of appointment of the Director of Education, and the Governor replied (on March 18th, 1932) to the effect that the Principal of the Medical College was to be President of Raffles College in future.]

[Minute by Wm. R. G. Crosse, dated March 22, 1932]

I spoke to Mr. Mayhew on the phone about this as it was not clear to me whether [the contents of the Governor's cable] had come to his notice.

He explained (and asked that a note be made on the papers to this effect) that he had already had an informal talk with Mr. Wood (B. of E.) in which he had acquainted him of the salary of the post, and the substance of [the Governor's cabled reply].

Mr. Wood (who, Mr. Mayhew is confident, can be entirely relied on in such matters) is to consult one or two other people in confidence about the vacancy during Mr. Mayhew's absence (from the 23rd of March), and on Mr. Mayhew's return (in the first or second week in May) any likely candidates who may have been forthcoming will be sent over here, when they will be seen by this Dept.

? Put by

[Minute by Arthur Mayhew, addressed to J. A. Calder, dated 4.6.32]

I had a talk on 3.6.32 with Mr. Wood and Sir Henry Richards, Chief Inspector of Schools, Board of Education. There are two H.M. Inspectors of Schools whom Sir Henry Richards feels that he could with confidence recommend as suitable for the Director's work in Malaya in view of the full information that I have given him and Mr. Wood regarding the work and general situation there. Both are interested in the idea and would like, if there is still any prospect of an outside appointment being made, to get further information about the post, more particularly with reference to the period of service and ultimate prospects. Sir Henry Richards tells me that the Board of Education would raise no objection to seconding either for a period of two to
four years if there is any difficulty on either side about a permanent appointment. From what I was told about both candidates I think that further discussion will be well worth while.

I suggest that the next step should be a letter to Mr. S. H. Wood, Board of Education, saying that you or any other member of the Far East Department's staff who may be found suitable will be glad to have a talk with both these possible candidates and to give such further information as may be required. Either can, apparently, come up to London for the purpose, and perhaps they might be allowed to suggest a few alternative dates. If I am wanted, I shall be glad to be present at the talk and perhaps you may feel that a member of the Personnel Division should also be present. On the whole, I think it would be better if a letter issued s.o. from someone in the F.E. Department, but I am quite prepared to write if you prefer it.

[There follows a lengthy exchange of minutes on the question of how the interviews should be arranged, and on whether or not the candidates should be informed that no firm decision had been taken to appoint an 'outsider.' Both candidates were interviewed at the Colonial Office in July, 1932; and in due course, they both decided that they did not wish to be considered for the position. On October 30th, 1932, Sir Cecil Clementi submitted a Confidential Despatch in which he stated that he was "well satisfied" with Morten's performance of his duties as Director of Education, and recommending his confirmation in the appointment, with effect from April 15th, 1932, the date on which he took up the acting appointment. It was then tacitly agreed by the officials of the Colonial Office that no further efforts should be made to find a suitable candidate for the post, and that a final decision regarding the confirmation of Morten's appointment should await the return of Brig.-General Sir Samuel Wilson, Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, who was at the time on a visit to Malaya. On May 13th, 1933, Wilson approved the confirmation of Morten, and on May 24th, Sir Cecil Clementi was advised accordingly (Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister's]
Confidential Despatch to the Governor, Straits Settlements).

Appendix E

SINGAPORE: REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION, 1946–1960
Table XI

SINGAPORE: REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION, 1946-1960 (MALAYAN DOLLARS)

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<th>Education Rate</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
<th>Total Revenue</th>
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<td>3,109,249</td>
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<td>4,336,652</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* April 1st to December 31st.

1 These figures are taken from the Annual Report for 1955, pp. 45, 55 and 108. The figures do not agree with those published in the First Education Triennial Survey covering the years 1955-57 inclusive, the major difference being under the heading Revenue from School fees. In the latter publication, revenue from this source is given as $541,717 (p. 28). No explanation of the apparent discrepancy could be found in official sources. The figures in the Triennial Survey would appear to be more reliable, as they accord more closely to the corresponding figures for the years before 1955 and after 1957.

2 These figures are taken from the Annual Report for 1956, pp. 51, 59 and 120. But according to the First Triennial Survey, revenue from school fees amounted to $595,414 (p. 28). See note (1) above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Personal Emoluments</th>
<th>Education Board</th>
<th>Misc. Other Charges</th>
<th>P.W.D. Expenditure</th>
<th>Total Education Expenditure</th>
<th>Net Expenditure After Deducting from School Fees, Education Rate &amp; Miscellaneous</th>
<th>Net Expenditure on Education As a Percentage of Total Government Expenditure</th>
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<td>1946*</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>60,873,699</td>
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<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 These figures are taken from the Annual Report for 1955, pp. 45, 55 and 108. The figures do not agree with those published in the First Education Triennial Survey covering the years 1955-57 inclusive, the major difference being under the heading Revenue from School fees. In the latter publication, revenue from this source is given as $541,717 (p. 28). No explanation of the apparent discrepancy could be found in official sources. The figures in the Triennial Survey would appear to be more reliable, as they accord more closely to the corresponding figures for the years before 1955 and after 1957.

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Appendix F

LETTER FROM NAN CHIAU GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' AID SOCIETY, DATED SEPTEMBER 16, 1954 (translated)
[Letter from the Nan Chiau Girls' High School Students' Aid Society to School Management Committees on amendments to the Registration of Schools Ordinance, 1950. (Published in Nanyang Siang Pau and Sin Chew Jit Poh on September 16, 1954, and translated for the Daily Digest of the Non-English Press.).]

Translation

Sometime in August Mr. Young, Director of Education, suggested that he would seek the approval of the Legislative Council under the Registration of Schools Ordinance 1950 to tighten the control over the use of Chinese schools premises. We students expressed great surprise and concern over this report. Unfortunately, we have no freedom of speech (we categorically affirm that the so-called "elected councillors" in the Legislative Council will never heed our appeal). Chinese schools are not government schools. They are an emblem of the love and support of the entire Chinese community for their mother tongue and the traditional culture of their home country. That is to say they are the treasure of all our Chinese compatriots. You as directors of Chinese schools in particular are the managers and spokesmen of such enterprise. We deeply deplore the fact that in such a situation you have neither expressed any opinion nor unite all sections of the Chinese community to struggle against it. But, callous facts no longer allow us to stop in a state of painful regret. On the 10th instant the Education Department suddenly sent a formal notice to the Chinese schools ordering the Supervisors and Principals to carry out its revised "Schools (General) Regulations." Under Regulation 18 on "the use of school premises," the Registrar, as long as the premises are used in a way not to his satisfaction, has the power to prohibit the use of any portion of the premises and close it! In view of this how can we remain silent any longer? In the notice it is particularly stated that the "Regulations" were made at the request of the various Chinese schools authorities! This was a greater surprise to us! Did "the various Chinese authorities" refer to schools directors or principals? Could it be possible that at
a time when the Chinese schools are faced with grave crises and when members of all section of the Chinese public who have respect for their own race (such as Mr. Lim Liang Geok, Chairman of the Teachers General Association in the Federation) are fighting their hardest and appealing for the withdrawal of an Education Ordinance threatening racial cultures, there are people who requested Government to make more regulations to tighten the control over the Chinese schools? In our bewilderment we finally saw the school principal(s), but the principal(s) denied there was such a thing. We greatly sympathise with the principal(s) in the grievance they suffered. From this we can see in what conditions educational workers today are finding themselves in. This shows we teachers and students should rally under the banner of protesting Chinese education and struggle for our common interests.

2. We now give illustrations of how such "Regulations" as we understand them will affect the personal interests of the students and the future of the development of our culture as a whole:

(a) First, the provisions in the "Regulations" are most empty and vague. What sort of activities would be considered unsatisfactory by the Registrar? On what standard is this to be judged? What we really do not know is what sorts of activities will be considered satisfactory by the Registrar. Such Ordinance may be subject to a thousand and one changes according to the authorities' likes and dislikes. As for us to whom the Ordinance and Regulations apply, we can never know where we stand; for us there is great danger in store. Are the school directors aware of this?

(b) The Regulations directly affect the healthy and proper extra-curricular activities, which are an indispensable part of our school life. Our present activities such as Students' Aid Society, Farewell Meetings, Dramatic Research Society and Class Meetings, undoubtedly are under the guidance and assistance of our teachers. Such activities are compatible with educational and ethical principles as well...
as the tradition of the Chinese race, and are indeed worthy of promotion. Nevertheless, we can never be sure that such minimum activities of a cultural, entertainment and mutual aid nature will satisfy the Registrar. In this way are not the personal interests of we students lost under such "dissatisfaction?" By that time when the law has been made, we fear that no matter how we press our claim according to reasons or how we appeal to school directors to claim our interests, the school directors will say, "This is against the law and we are helpless."

(c) The fact that only the Chinese schools are asked to carry out the "Regulations" speaks in itself of discrimination against Chinese education and culture. May we ask, "Why does the Education Department notify only the Chinese schools, as if there are no extra-curricular activities in The English schools? How is it that the University of Malaya is allowed to have a Socialist Club as political activity? Not only have the Chinese schools enjoyed no equal treatment financially, but the healthy extra-curricular activities of the students also suffer unequal restrictions. We do not feel jealous because English students have such right, nor do we oppose it. We do hope that in this respect they will achieve genuine success. It is also our view that in a democratic country students and teachers should be encouraged to and not prevented from joining any movement that is capable of advancing the political progress of that country. (As the Malayan Mirror says.)

(d) Another point which is most unreasonable is that as long [as] the Registrar is not satisfied with any activity in the school, he may close the school, stop the students from schooling or meeting in school and the teachers, from teaching. As it is, the Chinese schools today depend on
fees from the students to balance their budgets, and no adequate and equal aid comes from the Government. We do not entertain too high a hope in this respect. We believe our culture will still advance in the face of multiple difficulties if only the Chinese will unite together and our teachers will endure all hardships and remain firm at their educational posts. Nevertheless the amendment to the Registration of Schools Ordinance has gone a step further in threatening the future of the development of Chinese schools. This is contrary to the principles of education and to the spirit of democracy.

May we ask, "Even at the worst if some individual students have carried out "undesirable" activities, is it not only proper, on principles of education, to direct and reform them with love? Is it right on this ground to close down the school, and thus send a large number of youths into the streets, throw the teachers out of employment to struggle in hunger and thirst and obstruct the development of racial culture? Is this compatible with the principles of education? Does it not speak of the failure of educational policy? Is it compatible with the spirit of democracy to ignore the interests of the majority on account of the minority?" "But evidently the Education Department has monopolised too much power. One thing we should understand: the Education Department seems to have forgotten that Chinese schools were founded by the Chinese community and will forever remain the property of Chinese school management committees. As long as they do not contravene the law they are fully justified in exercising their own rights." (As the Malayan Mirror says.)

For instance again, eight students of the University of Malaya were recently charged with the offence of publishing seditious literature. If the same incident takes place in
the Chinese school, will not the life of the students and the livelihood of the teachers be affected? While the charge against the eight students did not stand, the same incident in a Chinese school would bring irreparable loss to the Chinese school. Thus we may see that so long as the Ordinance exists, the progress of the Chinese schools will be inextricably restricted and threatened.

Finally we feel that school directors have their bounden duty to protect the interests of Chinese education. We, therefore, hope that school directors will share the same view with the students with regard to protection of the interests of Chinese education, and claim an equal place for Chinese education in the cultural field of Malaya. We also hope the school directors will appeal to all sections of the public to unite together and press the claim according to reasons. If this is done we are positively sure that success will be achieved. It may be recalled that recently a strong protest was lodged by the educational circles, the school directors and Chinese public bodies in Malacca such as the MCA against the local Education Department's order that English school students will not be allowed to study in their vernacular schools (principally Chinese schools). In the face of such protest and with the support of vernacular press and public opinion, this unreasonable education order was withdrawn. From this we may see that if we rally under the banner of protecting Chinese education and struggle for our common interests, we will certainly be able to enjoy the support of all sections of the public. We, therefore, earnestly request school directors to lodge a protest before this most detrimental Registration of Schools (Amendment) Ordinance is passed by the Legislative Council, and struggle to the end for the future of Chinese education and particularly for the preservation of Chinese culture. If you do not consider our appeal, Chinese education will suffer serious threat and loss. Then you certainly cannot win the understanding of the public nor can you free yourselves from the responsibility of having to bear all consequences to Chinese education.