

## PARTY FORMATION IN SARAWAK

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The formation of political parties was a particularly late development in Sarawak, and the process did not actually commence until 1959. Following upon a century of rule by the Brooke Rajahs (1841-1941) and the brief Japanese occupation (1941-1945), local political activity prior to 1959 was channeled through various community organizations, and furthermore was confined almost exclusively to Islamic and Chinese groups. For Muslims, the central question at issue was the Cession of Sarawak from the Brooke Rajahs to the British Crown in 1946. A vigorous series of mass protests took place from 1946 to 1949, after which the British Government firmly closed all legitimate means of reversing this alteration in constitutional status. For the Chinese, the struggle on the mainland of China was the object of considerable attention and helped stimulate analogous conflicts within the leadership of Sarawak Chinese. The result of that conflict was a decided shift in the distribution of power within the Chinese community away from the conservative and wealthy toward those of a more left-wing disposition. By contrast with Malaya, the Left in Sarawak was not emasculated by an abortive insurrection. For almost all who can be called Dayak,<sup>1</sup> political activity was a completely new sphere and even in the early 1960's, their political expression can be characterized as essentially a reaction to that initiated by the other communities.

The stimuli for forming political parties varied a good deal. The first party (SUPP) was an outgrowth of those pressure groups which had resisted Government policy in the spheres of education and trade licensing; it also expressed an inchoate desire for a measure of self-determination. The process that set the party in motion included a good deal of official British encouragement. The second party (PANAS) was concerned less with grievances than

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Editors' Note: The spelling of terms in this article will follow current Malay usage rather than the Indonesian transliterations usually employed in this journal. A map of Sarawak is located on p. 223.

1. Following Dutch usage, we have for convenience employed the term "Dayak" to describe all indigenous peoples who have not adopted the Islamic religion. The principal Dayak groups are: Iban (Sea Dayak), Land Dayak, Kenyah, Kayan and Kelabit. The only exception to this usage are the Melanau, none of whom are included as Dayak. They are coastal peoples who are steadily adopting Islam, and by 1960, only a quarter of all Melanau had not "entered" Islam.

with protecting the interests of other communities, in light of the successes achieved by SUPP. Official encouragement was even more important for PANAS. The last four parties were all formed after it had become clear that the state was shortly to gain independence within the Federation of Malaysia.

Articulation of grievances became progressively less important as first inter-communal and then intra-communal rivalries became the dominant motivation for those who were building political parties. In order to highlight this shift of emphasis in the character of each new party--particularly the change from inter- to intra-communal conflict--we shall examine in turn the political activity of each of the three major racial groups: Chinese, Malay and Dayak.

#### Sarawak United People's Party: SUPP

The Brookes used, but did not really bother to understand, the Chinese community. They respected the industry of that race but harbored a suspicion of Chinese activities and intentions, a suspicion firmly based upon mutual ignorance and common disdain. Ever since the 1857 revolt--in which Bau Chinese *kongsî* members sacked Kuching--the Brookes had rigidly enforced the law that membership in a secret society was a capital offense. Thus that organizational form of the overseas Chinese was steadily emasculated. The functional void was in due course filled by a variety of Chinese commercial, dialect and religious organizations.

The Sarawak Government officially sponsored Chinese immigration, and until 1931, a Chinese could legally be regarded as a native, a term then of nationality rather than ethnic status. Since that year "native" has been defined to mean, in effect, non-Chinese. The classification denoted a privileged status, not carrying any of the pejorative connotations only too evident elsewhere.

A coincidence of interest existed between China and Britain throughout World War II, and the Chinese in Sarawak, with but a few individual exceptions, proved to be generally anti-Japanese. They had much to gain from the new, more equal, post-war colonial order which resulted from the Cession to Britain in 1946; their educated manpower was immediately placed at a high premium because 335 Malay civil servants had resigned in protest. Due to their private school system, the Chinese were the only community able to provide the requisite skilled personnel.<sup>2</sup>

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2. Elementary literacy by race in 1947 was: Chinese 34%; Malay 15%; Melanau 9%; Land Dayak 7%; Iban and "other indigenous" 2%. Sarawak, Colonial Development and Welfare Plan 1947/8 - 1955/6, Mimeo. (Kuching, 1950), Appendix B (2).

Chinese political interest throughout the turbulent 1940's was focused upon the momentous struggle taking place on the Chinese Mainland, not toward what were regarded as the relatively insignificant changes in Borneo. The British Colonial Government, moreover, was slow to define, much less to reform, its policies toward the local Chinese. The only apparent early change in policy was the institution of tight immigration control following assumption of power by the Communist regime in China.

A central question for the community in Sarawak was to determine who would represent the Chinese--what mechanisms would be used to select leaders who could deal with the Government on behalf of the whole community. Prior to World War II, the Chamber of Commerce had been recognized as the official organ and mouthpiece of the Chinese community, and thus had served as the primary political link between the Government and the Chinese. Kapitan China and Area Headmen had been officially appointed for each dialect group, the chief criteria for their selection being wealth--sheer economic power. The Chamber of Commerce thus formed the apex of the Chinese community, granting representation and leadership roles in accordance with relative wealth.

Just four months after the Japanese capitulated, a general assembly attended by representatives of twenty-two Sarawak Chinese associations was called in order to form, in Kuching, one central Chinese organization with which the Military Administration could deal directly, thus avoiding the pitfalls inherent in dealing with a multitude of dialect associations. The resulting Chung Hua Association directed immediate concern toward clarification of a Chinese position on the question of Cession, and the formation of a "Chinese Democratic Political Society." No less pressing was the problem of resuscitating the Chinese school system. The Chung Hua Association had a short life. Its political functions were assumed by the Chinese Advisory Board, established in 1947 by the new Colonial Government, and by the new Chinese Consul installed in Kuching in 1948.<sup>3</sup> Both the Chung Hua Association and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce issued statements welcoming the new Consul, adding that he would now become the representative of Sarawak Chinese to the Chinese Government and to the local Sarawak Government.<sup>4</sup> The Colonial Government took

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3. Dr. Chan Ying-ming, former Consul in San Francisco, officially arrived in Kuching in January 1948. The local business community immediately began raising funds to build a permanent consulate in Kuching. See, Sarawak Tribune, April 28 and August 9, 1947; January 20, 1948.

4. Ibid., March 9, 1948. The Chinese Chamber of Commerce decided to divest itself of any representative functions, issuing a statement that: "The Consulate now becomes the authorized and recognized official body representing the Chinese community as a whole." Ibid., January 7, 1949.

immediate exception to such a suggestion, for Sarawak-born Chinese were regarded as British subjects, and not the responsibility of a foreign Consul.

By this time, the Administration was seeking to expand the role of its urban Chinese Advisory Boards and planning Chinese participation in its new structure of local government. At any rate, the change of regime in China terminated official Chinese representation in Sarawak. The change to a less acceptable mainland Chinese leadership brought a new Government emphasis upon the necessity for local Chinese to choose whether their future allegiance would be directed toward China or toward Sarawak. The Sarawak Government emphasized that British recognition of Communist China, "does not mean that the determination of the British Government to oppose the extension of communism into British Territories is in any way weakening. . . ." <sup>5</sup> Flying of any foreign flag was restricted, a measure that sought both to avoid demonstration of divisions within the Chinese community, as well as to prevent the old Sarawak flag being flown as a symbol of the struggle against Cession. The Government did permit the community to celebrate the new Chinese National Day with mass meetings, and the Government Secretary for Chinese Affairs even addressed at least one of these rallies. The "double tenth" anniversary of the Nationalist Chinese was also celebrated, but it was sponsored by a dwindling number of community associations, and by October 1952, received public support from only two local bodies. <sup>6</sup>

Education has always been a matter of pivotal concern for the whole of the Chinese community. Chinese settlers, wherever they have located themselves in Sarawak, have invariably established their own schools, which in due course became the focal meeting points for each local community. Prior to World War II, community leadership was held by the wealthy, who were usually Government-supported (holding the position of Kapitan or Area Headman) and who had the "correct" Kuomintang connections. These men usually underwrote the schools, and, as a result, their views regarding selection of teachers and management of schools held sway.

In Kuching, before the war, the Chinese community ran the schools on a clan basis. Thus the Hokkien School was meant to

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5. Ibid., January 7, 1950.

6. The Secretary spoke at length on "liberty" under the new Chinese regime, contrasting the restrictions there with the freedoms prevailing in Sarawak. Ibid., October 2, 1951. For a list of the associations sponsoring the yearly "double tenth" celebrations, see: Ibid., September 12, 1950; September 27, 1951; September 23, 1952.

serve the Hokkien community only, the Min Teck School to serve children of the Teochew community, and so on. Shortly after the war, a single board was formed to manage all Chinese secondary schools in Kuching, and the various associations loaned their school properties to that board.

No Chinese schools were included among the responsibilities of the Education Department until 1946. Any liaison on matters pertaining to these schools was directed through the Government Secretary for Chinese Affairs. Addressing the Council Negri in 1924, Rajah Vyner Brooke had said, "He was sorry to find in certain Chinese schools the opportunity had been taken by unscrupulous teachers to preach revolution propaganda [sic]."<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, his Government actually did little more than issue regulations. For instance, the 1924 General Regulations forbade smoking opium or cooking food in the classroom.

A dramatic change occurred after the war, when young militants began to challenge effectively the conservative's control of the Chinese schools. As a result of a series of incidents in the early 1950's, most Boards of Management were "taken over" by the Left, and the Chinese school system as a whole became the focus of a new Chinese leadership, opposed to the older and wealthier Government-recognized leaders. Chinese schools thus became the scene of sporadic conflict as the Government extended its control over activities formerly within the confines of the Chinese education system and sought to bolster the authority of all who could hinder the leftward trend.

For a time the scene was quite lively. In 1951, two hundred Kuching students went on strike. The Government reacted by preferring criminal charges against the leaders and proscribing two youth organizations as subversive. The Government itself precipitated confrontation in early 1954 by dropping the 17th Mile (Kuching-Serian Rd.) Chinese school from its register because of alleged pro-Communist activity by its teaching staff and Board of Management. The following year, a two-month student strike occurred in Kuching, ending only after direct government intervention. In the course of the strike, Stephen Yong and Ong Kee Hui, two leaders who subsequently gained political prominence, played a key role in a special committee established to resolve the strike. Other incidents occurred in Kuching, Sibü and Miri which the Government believed were exacerbated by the refusal, or at least inability, of school management committees to take a firm stand against dissenters. Meanwhile the Left was making considerable inroads, in a manner that the Government could not readily confront. Disparaging comments and rumors which called into question the morality of certain teachers were circulated and proved difficult to rebut directly. As a result, many teachers requested transfer to other districts, or simply

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7. Ibid., May 17, 1957.

did not have their local contracts renewed. The precarious economic position of Chinese school teachers made them especially vulnerable to any concerted pressure from those opposed to their political views.<sup>8</sup>

After completing an official study on financing education and conditions of service in the teaching profession, the Government published a White Paper and new Grant Code regulations to take effect from 1956. These recommendations, though hardly radical, represented the first real attempt by the Government substantially to assist and re-direct the system of Chinese education. In his report, Woodhead had noted the reliance of Chinese schools upon donations (some in the form of a levy upon merchants) and had suggested a "bargain," with the Government offering substantial financial assistance in return for a measure of Government control over the content of the curriculum.<sup>9</sup>

The instinctive Chinese reaction was to reject the proposals out of hand, and a Preserve Chinese Education Committee swung into action; telegrams of support came from all over Sarawak. A Sarawak Chinese Education Council was formed, in line with a suggestion from Sarikei, where local Chinese representatives had not rejected outright the Government proposals. After long and rather more sober discussion this Council resolved, by thirteen votes to twelve, to accept the Grants under the new regulations.<sup>10</sup> The Government had indeed struck a bargain, though this bargain was of a transient character. By the start of the new decade, a major new controversy had surfaced as the Government sought to determine the future of Chinese education.

In December 1954, Council Negri approved a revised scale of trade licensing fees, designed to yield a further M\$ 3.5 million per annum in revenue to the Government in order to maintain social services and meet the increased demands for educational expansion outlined in the Woodhead Report.<sup>11</sup> The new rates, in

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8. Report of the District Officer, Lubok Antu, for the second half of 1956.

9. "The recommendations are based on two assumptions; first, that aid of a sufficient size is necessary to make a reasonable bargain; second, that Chinese understand a bargain and, if the parties enter into it in the right spirit, will keep it. It is natural that they should wish to maintain their heritage of Chinese language and culture. It is clear also that, being intelligent people, they must appreciate the necessity for a loyalty to and a knowledge of the country in which they live." E. W. Woodhead, The Financing of Education and Conditions of Service in the Teaching Profession in Sarawak (Kuching: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 32.

10. Sarawak Tribune, September 30 and November 22, 1955.

11. Ibid., December 30, 1954.

some cases amounting to increases of 1,000%, were to take effect from January 1, 1955. On Christmas day, a protest committee met at the Sarikei Chinese Chamber of Commerce and resolved to close all shops for the first ten days of the new year. Binatang shopkeepers met the next day and decided to follow suit. Sibu traders "warmly aired their viewpoints in an electrifying atmosphere," and decided to close shop, as did the Kuching traders. The hartal spread to Bintulu, Miri and throughout the colony.<sup>12</sup>

Representatives of all major trading centers converged on Kuching to make their feelings known to the Government. As a result of this unprecedented pressure, the Government postponed application of the new fees, formed a Committee of Enquiry with significant local participation, and presented a substantially modified Bill to the Council Negri two months later.<sup>13</sup>

These debates concerning education and commerce, conflicts political in character, brought to the fore certain leaders of *ad hoc* bodies in Kuching, Sarikei and elsewhere. Shortly thereafter, they coalesced to explore the depth of support for a more enduring organization--a political party. Those Chinese who had led the opposition to Government policy in the areas of education and trade licensing were prominent among the prime movers toward formation of the first political party of Sarawak. Their experiences were coupled with a heightening of political activity in neighboring Singapore, and they were encouraged by the then Chief Secretary of Sarawak, Mr. J. H. Ellis, who circulated a memorandum on the need for a political party under leaders such as Ong Kee Hui.

The actual launching of a multi-racial party was first mooted in 1956 by Ong Kee Hui, Stephen Yong and S. K. Reddi with the encouragement of T. G. Dunbar.<sup>14</sup> But the Malay National

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12. On the hartal, see: for Sarikei, *Ibid.*, December 29, 1954; for Binatang, December 30, 1954; for Sibu, December 31, 1954 and January 4, 1955.

13. Sarawak, Council Negri, Debates: Official Report (Kuching: Government Printing Office, 1955), March 29 and March 30, 1955, pp. 5-6, 11-23.

14. Ong Kee Hui comes from a prominent and wealthy Hokkien family and is the grandson of Ong Tiang Swee, the most important Chinese leader during the Third Rajah's rule (1917-1941). Educated first in Kuching, then in Singapore, Ong Kee Hui next attended the Serdang College of Agriculture in Malaya. From 1936 to 1946 he worked with the Department of Agriculture--an experience that gave him a familiarity with the Dayak people that is normally missing among urban Chinese. He was stationed for a long time at Kapit. Beginning as English Secretary to the Kuching Chinese Chamber of Commerce, he helped organize the petition against increased trade license fees; he also acted as an investigator and consultant for the

Union and the Sarawak Dayak Association activists responded, in essence: "We have our organizations already, you form a Chinese one and then we can talk together."<sup>15</sup> Thus the efforts came to naught, and the idea was abandoned. The Governor, Sir Anthony Abell, did privately encourage Ong Kee Hui to form a broadly representative party, but the principal difficulty was the absence of significant native interest in and support for the idea.

Spurred by a local newspaper article written by an influential young Malay, Safri Awang, which introduced the possibility of real native participation, Ong Kee Hui, Stephen Yong and Song Thian Cheok earnestly set about founding a party that was to be, "Non-communal in character, with emphasis on loyalty to Sarawak and unity of all races."<sup>16</sup> They were aided in their efforts by discreet Government encouragement and a letter from the Tuan Muda,

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community committees investigating school disturbances and the Woodhead Report. A member of the Kuching Municipal Council since 1953 (President from 1960 to 1965), he represented that Council in the Council Negri from 1956 to 1963 and served concurrently as a member of the Cabinet, the Supreme Council. He had a close rapport with Sir Anthony Abell, Governor of Sarawak in the 1950's, but as he persisted in his intent to lead SUPP in opposition to British policy, colonial officials began to lose faith in him as their chosen leader for the state.

Stephen Yong, by contrast, came from quite humble origins, his father being a Hakka small trader in the outlying town of Simunjan. After his father's death, Yong left school and worked for a time as a messenger before receiving a scholarship to further his education. Immediately after the war he was a merchant and then went to England, becoming a Barrister-at-Law. Upon his return, he worked closely with Ong Kee Hui on the various aspects of Chinese education. His background is much more Chinese and rather more proletarian than that of Ong Kee Hui, though he is linked by marriage to a Kuching Hokkien of the Ong clan.

Both Reddi and Dunbar had practiced law in Singapore. In 1956, Dunbar and Stephen Yong had a common legal practice. S. K. Reddi, finding himself in an awkward position after representing workers at the British base in Singapore, established his permanent residence in Sarawak. T. G. Dunbar was more closely associated with Singapore, and in due course he returned there.

15. Interview, Ong Kee Hui, 1967. The Kuching Municipal elections of 1956 were then the focus that stimulated political organization. Behind the scene activities directed toward the organization of a party, or parties, were strongly rumored at the time. Sarawak Tribune, editorial, May 24, 1956.

16. Interview, Ong Kee Hui, November 1967; Sarawak Tribune, March 5, 1959. The Safri Awang article appeared in ibid., March 4, 1959.



Mr. Anthony Brooke, to the Malay National Union encouraging the latter to support the formation of a party.

Native reaction was generally non-committal. Mohd. bin Haji Bakri, president of the Malay National Union, said, "He fully and sincerely supported the suggestion and emphasized that if necessary his Union would join the party as one unit." The General Secretary of the Malay National Union, Ikhwan Haji Zainie, thought, however, "It would be much better for each community to form a National Union, such as the Chinese, Malay, Dayak and Indian National Unions, and eventually merge to form an Alliance like that in the Federation of Malaya." In the opinion of the Sarawak Dayak National Union President, Edward Brandah, "It was still too premature for the whole of Sarawak to form any political parties. At this stage, we should concentrate on the education for our younger generation and the raising of the standard of living for all communities."<sup>17</sup> Safri himself withheld personal commitment to the party, and shortly thereafter he was sent overseas for further education. No other important Malays were willing to participate in the party, but after talking with the Governor and gaining his approval, various Dayak leaders, including Temenggong Jugah and Pengarah Montegrai, did agree to support it.<sup>18</sup>

Just a few weeks before the party was formally inaugurated, however, the Governor cautioned:

It is . . . essential that party politics should not cause further divisions in our community but should have a unifying and binding effect. If a party tends to be dominated by one race or class . . . it may have a disintegrating effect on our community. . . . I frankly doubt if political parties at the present stage of development will spell faster progress in this small country. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Government ambivalence on the issue worried Dayaks who hitherto were accustomed to clear directives. The Governor's declaration had the immediate effect of persuading various important Dayaks not to join. To be successful, the party desperately needed a solid native component. The process of party formation had gained

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17. Sarawak Tribune, March 5, 1959.

18. Subsequently each side interpreted "support" differently. The Temenggong and Pengarah claimed that they had simply agreed not to oppose formation of the party; the SUPP leadership felt that a commitment to lead the party had been made and were bitterly disappointed by the failure of these two important Dayaks to join SUPP.

19. Sarawak Information Service, Sarawak By the Week, Week No. 21, 1959, p. 3.

too much momentum to be halted readily, and on June 12, 1959, the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) was formally inaugurated, ushering in the new era of party politics.

Why had the Government appeared to lose its enthusiasm for this party, even prior to its actual formation? The Government had been aware of communist activities within the Chinese community, but it had not anticipated the enthusiasm with which these "angry young Chinese" would cluster behind SUPP. In early 1959, the underground communist organization distributed a treatise entitled "On the Formation of an Open Political Party and the Struggle for Independence." It was intercepted by the Government. Among other things, the pamphlet stated:

The revolution is now at a low-ebb, a passive atmosphere exists not only in the masses but even in our organization. What can be done about it? According to the analysis above, the only way open to us is to form an open political party. If we persist in secret work and fail boldly to organize a political party, we shall crawl along as before. We must readjust our ranks, propagate amongst the masses and create favorable conditions for the formation of a political party.<sup>20</sup>

The militant left-wing Chinese did wholeheartedly support SUPP, somewhat too eagerly in fact, and their enthusiasm aroused native suspicion. As time passed, the Government became progressively more worried by the militant character of SUPP branch leadership.

There is no simple way to express recruitment to each of the political parties as they developed--particularly in the absence of access to membership lists. Even if reliable lists were available, a good deal of biographical data would still be necessary in order to interpret the lists. Indeed the very definition of a party member is open to question, considering that each political party received less votes in the 1963 elections than the total number of members it claimed.<sup>21</sup>

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20. Sarawak Information Service, The Danger Within: A History of the Clandestine Communist Organisation in Sarawak (Kuching: Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 25-29.

21. SUPP was the closest to its claim; PANAS claimed 72,249 members and received 28,242 votes, and SNAP scored about the same proportion. The total number of members claimed by SUPP was 44,767 in June 1962, 50,219 in January 1963, 51,901 in November 1965 and 49,042 in June 1967. This reduction was attributed to the legal requirement that, as from January 1966, only Malaysian citizens could be members of political parties, thus excluding various Chinese born outside Malaysia until they had been naturalized. SUPP secured 45,493 votes in the 1963 District Council elections.

The characteristics of those recruited by each party can be indicated by describing party members, divided according to their race and locality, as contained in official party releases. But these sources are easily manipulated and must be treated with great reservations as they probably represent the most optimistic estimate within the realm of credibility. One could also determine the characteristics of party members by examining the composition of the branch executives of each party, that is the leaders elected to head each party at the local level.<sup>22</sup> This approach is much less susceptible to distortion. From this information, one can ascertain both the areas where the party estimated that it had enough support to form a branch, and, given the salient characteristics of branch executive members, the predominant community among which the party has gained support in any particular district. One can also ascertain the extent of penetration by the party of other organizations by identifying overlapping membership of party committees and the executive bodies of other local organizations.

SUPP branches and sub-branches spread slowly throughout Sarawak. Initial efforts were concentrated in the First and Third Divisions, but during the latter half of 1960, branches were established in all other Divisions. By the end of 1961, half the branches were located in the First Division, almost a third in the Third Division, and the remainder elsewhere. By mid-1962, SUPP appeared to have spread its influence fairly pervasively throughout the state, for its overall geographic distribution of members accorded well with a breakdown of total population by Division.

SUPP Membership by Division--June 1962<sup>23</sup>

Division of Sarawak	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Third</u>	<u>Fourth</u>	<u>Fifth</u>	<u>Total</u>
SUPP Members	34.5%	13.5%	41 %	9 %	2 %	100%
Total Population	35 %	14 %	34 %	13 %	4 %	100%

But its racial balance was skewed in favor of Chinese and against Malays, Melanaus and the "other indigenous" peoples.

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22. A third approach would be to identify and analyze the type of candidate nominated and/or elected by each party. This method is being used elsewhere by the author.
23. Report of the Secretary-General, S.K.T. Yong, given at the SUPP Third Delegates' Conference, Sarawak by the Week, Week No. 23, 1962.

SUPP Membership by Ethnic Group--January 1963<sup>24</sup>

Ethnic group	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Iban</u>	<u>Land Dayak</u>	<u>Malay, Melanau &amp; other indigenous</u>	<u>Total</u>
SUPP Members	54 %	32 %	6.5%	7.5%	100%
Total Population	31.5%	31 %	8 %	29.5%	100%

The composition of SUPP branch executives, though tending to over-represent natives as against Chinese, gives the most accurate available indication of the party's success at recruiting new members. During the period 1959 to 1962, six of the thirteen SUPP branches for which information is available did have a majority of non-Chinese executive members, and by the 1965 to 1968 period, six of the nineteen branches. For actual control, however, the position of the branch Secretary is crucial; SUPP practice has been to appoint natives to the prestigious position of Chairman, while using Chinese as Secretaries. From 1959 to 1962, five of the six native-majority branches had Chinese Secretaries, and counting the nineteen branches legally registered as of October 1967, fifteen had Chinese Secretaries and fifteen had native Chairmen--fourteen Dayaks and one Malay.<sup>25</sup> By employing the requirement of both a clear native majority and a non-Chinese branch Secretary, one finds that only the Kapit, Simanggang and Lower Sadong branches were under native control. Even that control is doubtful in the latter two, for some 40% of the executive members were Chinese in both these branches.

Of all the sub-branches existing at the end of 1967, only four could have been controlled by other than Chinese--Bekenu, Song, Pangkalan Ampat and Bengoh. The Bengoh sub-branch and the Kapit branch are the only all-native SUPP organizations. This is a new phenomenon and designed to ensure real native control over the branches. Recourse to such a racially-exclusive organizational form has been necessitated by the SUPP's conspicuous success at recruiting Chinese and its concomitant failure to attract solid native support. It also represents an effort by the moderate top leadership of SUPP to develop a measure of real support on the branch level, hitherto the province of the militant Left.

Control of SUPP is ultimately vested in its Central Committee of some 63 members, all of whom are elected by the Delegates' Conference. Day-to-day management of the party is handled by the

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24. Source: SUPP party records.

25. This has been a consistent policy; in May 1962, thirteen of the sixteen SUPP branches had native Chairmen. Sarawak Information Service, Extracts from the Chinese and Malay Press (Kuching), May 26, 1962.

fifteen-member Central Working Committee. Half of the first Central Committee were educated at St. Thomas' Anglican Mission School in Kuching,<sup>26</sup> and the majority came from Kuching. The racial breakdown was: 13 Chinese; 3 Ibans; 2 Malays; 1 Land Dayak; and 1 Christian Melanau, but one of the two Malays resigned within three weeks of his selection.

The character of the Central Committee changed markedly as the party developed its mass base. Within a year, it could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be caricatured as an "Old Thomians' Association." From 1960 onward, half of the Central Committee members have been natives, though natives have formed only one-third to one-quarter of the Central Working Committee each year.<sup>27</sup> The racial composition of the Central Committee in the period 1960 to 1962 was: 20 Chinese; 10 Ibans; 5 Malays, 3 Melanaus; and 2 Land Dayaks. A lower proportion (less than half) were from Kuching.

The characteristics of Central Committee members did not change drastically in the ensuing years, with the exception of 1962, when ten Chinese members departed for China, the Centre for Protective Custody, or the jungle--most in the wake of the abortive Brunei revolt. Five natives also resigned at that time from the Central Committee. The Central Committee elected in June 1966 included: 17 Ibans; 9 Malays; 2 Land Dayaks; 1 Kenyah; and 28 Chinese.<sup>28</sup> The twenty-eight Chinese, were: 13 Hakka/Kheh; 9 Hokkien; 3 Foochow; 2 Hailam; and 1 Cantonese. When compared with the breakdown of the Chinese population given in the 1960 Census, one notes a significant over-representation of Hakka and Hokkien within SUPP, and an under-representation of Foochow, Teochew and Cantonese.<sup>29</sup>

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26. Of the twenty members, I have positive information that nine were students and one a teacher at St. Thomas'; others may also have been educated there.
  27. The proportion of natives on the Central Committee has been as follows: 1960, 50%; 1962, 49%; 1966, 47%. The proportion of natives on the Central Working Committee has been: 1962-64, 33%; 1964-66, 13%; 1968-70, 23%.
  28. Another five Chinese under detention were symbolically elected, but, for official purposes, the party did not consider them on the Committee, and they will not be counted in this analysis.
  29. The 1960 figures for the total population list the Chinese community as composed of (in rounded figures): Foochow, 70,000; Hakka, 70,000; Hokkien, 28,000; Teochew, 22,000; Cantonese, 17,000; Henghua, 8,000; and Hailam, 6,000. Sarawak, Report on the Census of Population Taken on June 15th 1960 by L. W. Jones (Kuching: Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 128.

The party claims to receive most of its financial support from membership fees and donations. SUPP nominees are expected to donate to the party their salaries as members of the Council Negri or the Federal Parliament. This major source of support totalled M\$41,000 in the financial year 1966-67. Large creditors to the party in that year included the Kwong Lee Bank, the Sarawak Transport Company and Mr. Ho Ho Lim, the party Treasurer. The Bian Chiang Bank was reputed to have advanced substantial sums to the party to assist in meeting campaign expenses for the 1963 elections; at that time Ong Kee Hui was Manager of the Bank.<sup>30</sup>

An important source of funds for SUPP were the receipts from its periodic "fun fairs," usually held in connection with anniversary celebrations for each of the branches and for the party as a whole. These were an important means of profitably directing the energies and enthusiasm of young supporters. The Government has steadily restricted these fairs by withholding or withdrawing police permission for such gatherings. Other important sources of organized support were the Chinese trade unions; their political activities have been heavily circumscribed because the Government has sought to encourage the development of a multiplicity of smaller "peanut" unions.

The Sarawak Transport Company has played a very important role both as a source of funds and as a conduit for channeling SUPP influence throughout the First and Second Divisions. The company's buses ply almost every passable through road in those Divisions, and extend as far as Sarikei in the Third Division. A labor-intensive business, the company employs a large number of drivers, conductors and ticket sellers, many of whom are party members. The company is also able to transport party workers throughout its network and carry propaganda materials and newspapers. The Managing-Director of the company, Chan Siaw Hee,<sup>31</sup>

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30. In 1967, however, this same bank, under the management of Ong Kee Hui's brother-in-law, Dato Wee Hood Teck, made political donations totalling M\$55,478 to the rival party SNAP. Bian Chiang Bank Berhad, Directors' Report for the Financial Year Ending December 31, 1967 (Kuching, July 29, 1968), p. 4.

Wee Kheng Chiang, the founder of the bank, married the daughter of Ong Tieng Swee, thus consolidating his position as a rising power in the Hokkien business community. Wee appointed his nephew, Ong Kee Hui, as manager of the bank, which then advanced loans to SUPP, and reputedly to PANAS, to help fund their 1963 election campaigns. These "investments" did not pay particularly good dividends, and Ong was replaced as managing-director by Wee Hood Teck, son of Wee Kheng Chiang. Wee chose to underwrite SNAP, particularly after it had moved into the opposition.

31. Chan, a Chao Ann of respectable means, has long been an enigmatic figure within the party. He could deal authoritatively with the Government on behalf of the militant left wing of the party and regularly issued strident denunciations of

is Publicity Officer of SUPP and a prominent militant member of the party's Central Working Committee. Because its continued prosperity is dependent upon official licenses, the company is vulnerable to Government pressure, especially at a time when, in other Divisions, natives are accorded clear preference in the field of transportation. Thus twin arguments--both political and native advancement--could readily be employed to re-allocate licenses from the Sarawak Transport Company, removing an important financial and organizational proffered from SUPP.

Based upon a check of overlapping membership, SUPP members and sympathizers over the past decade have controlled the Kuching Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the leading commercial body in Sarawak since 1930. This was true for each year except 1964 and 1965, the same two years in which there was a dramatic increase in the proportion of the party executive who were Teochew and Cantonese and a decrease in the number of Hokkien and Hakka. Almost to a man, the new Teochew and Cantonese Committee members were supporters of the conservative Sarawak Chinese Association. These same men were voted off the Committee when the Hokkien and Hakka, who favored SUPP, regained control.

Communist penetration of SUPP is the subject of many Government statements and documents. The other side of the issue, apart from strident denials, has not been adequately aired, and it is difficult to evaluate how much weight and reliability to place upon official statements released to serve as political polemics. The moderate leaders of SUPP faced a dilemma about how to treat those party members detained by the Government but not tried and convicted by a court. Party leaders could not justify expulsion without any substantive evidence being proffered by the Government, evidence which would satisfy a court of law.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, the Government became annoyed, then

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Government policy, yet he remained free of political detention, unlike many who were more cautious. When he was finally detained in August 1968 (for fourteen months), the Government tried to win him over by kindness; upon release he issued a quite conditional confession, phrased to allow him to continue an active role within the party.

32. Interviews with Ong Kee Hui, January 21, 1963, and September 3, 1964. The Central Working Committee did decide to expel all members convicted by the Court of Subversive Activities--a substantial concession since the law interpreted "subversion" quite broadly. The party also "relieved of their duties" members held under the Restricted Residence Ordinance. The left-wing members clearly feared that the Government, working together with the moderate SUPP leaders, would follow the example of Singapore, where a judicious wave of detentions tipped the balance of control within the People's Action Party, enabling Lee Kuan Yew and his colleagues to maintain control at a critical period. Some SUPP members feared

somewhat suspicious, at the failure of the leaders to act against men it considered to be dedicated communists.

At the top level of the party, there was only one openly publicized crisis between the moderate and militant members of the Central Committee. That dispute occurred in 1965 and concerned participation of SUPP in the Malaysia Solidarity Convention, a front of pro-Malaysia opposition parties headed by Lee Kuan Yew. On this issue, the Central Committee divided, with twenty-four "moderates" favoring and twenty-nine "militants" against SUPP participation; at this juncture, the Chairman and Secretary-General, Ong Kee Hui and Stephen Yong, resigned temporarily.<sup>33</sup>

#### Sarawak Chinese Association: SCA

With the imminent approach of independence in 1963, various wealthy Chinese had perceived their need for a political organization other than SUPP. Though SUPP had gained very substantial support from Sarawak Chinese, it was committed to remain socialist in outlook and might well be left completely outside the Government. By mid-1962, moves were afoot, with Malayan encouragement, to form an alliance of Sarawak right-wing parties--similar to that which had successfully governed the Malayan Federation for the past five years. With the urging of the Malayan Chinese Association, the uni-racial Sarawak Chinese Association (SCA) was inaugurated in July 1962. The party pledged to work toward communal unity as a preliminary to broader national unity, based upon an alliance of racial parties, and also considered the possibility of affiliation with the Malayan Chinese Association.<sup>34</sup> The chronological connection between the visits of Malayan Chinese Association delegates, the founding of the Sarawak Chinese Association and the formation of a Sarawak Alliance was rather too close to be coincidental.

The founders of the SCA were drawn from two business groups conspicuously absent from SUPP Central Committees--the Kuching

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that their leadership had access to security records and especially suspected the Chairman; he never did have such a right apparently.

33. Sarawak Tribune, June 28, 1965.

34. Ibid., August 3, 1962. The original constitution included the sentence: "The Association may be affiliated to the MCA whose headquarters are in Kuala Lumpur." This line was typed, but then struck out from the final draft. The SCA constitution was almost an exact copy of the MCA constitution, with only minor amendments. See also: ibid., June 27, 1962.



Teochews and the Sibü Foochow. William Tan, the first President of the party and a former civil servant, was a "Queen's Chinese" in every way.<sup>35</sup> In addition to wealthy businessmen, the founders included some younger English-educated Chinese and others who were simply dissatisfied with SUPP. SCA also attracted the older, more conservative Chinese-educated who considered SUPP a youngsters' party and resented its activities, but SCA was marked by its nearly complete failure to engender any real enthusiasm among the young. This is explained by its image as just another Chinese Association, a group of wealthy businessmen of the past era seeking to perpetuate their influence by participation in the new Malaysian ruling elite.<sup>36</sup> SCA has claimed between 2,000 and 3,000 members throughout Sarawak, a figure considered fairly accurate in contrast to the inflated claims of most other parties.

The Kuching group formed a majority of members of the first Central Committee of SCA. But with the approach of general elections, feelings of dissatisfaction arose within the party regarding alleged inadequate preparation and funding for the SCA campaign, and as a result, the composition of the Central Committee was changed. In the process, William Tan was relegated to the newly-created position of Patron, and a wealthy Sibü timber merchant, Ling Beng Siew became President.<sup>37</sup>

The representatives from the First Division (principally Teochew) held a majority on the first Central Committee, but with the passage of time, the party came under control of Third Division members (principally Foochow). By 1967, well over half of the Committee members lived in the Third Division and just

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35. William Tan is a Teochew, Roman Catholic and was educated at St. Joseph's School, Kuching. In these three respects, he differs from Ong Kee Hui and the other wealthy founders of SUPP. Important commercial rivalries were transferred into the political arena when he became a founder Vice-President of PANAS, then President of SCA. Before that time, he had been President of the first fully-elected Kuching Municipal Council (1956-1959) and a member of the State Cabinet (Supreme Council) from 1957 to 1959. He is presently speaker of the Council Negri and a Federal Senator.

36. There were even some "old school" differences between SUPP and SCA. The top English-educated SCA leaders were from St. Joseph's School (Catholic) in contrast to the majority of the SUPP leaders who were educated at St. Thomas' School (Anglican, S.P.G.).

37. Ling Beng Siew is an extraordinarily astute Foochow businessman, who has by his own acumen built from nothing a business empire that rivals any existing in Sarawak. He has been most conspicuously successful in the timber trade, where his enterprises predominate. His sheer drive, and willingness to spend freely, secured for him the presidency of SCA, at the expense of the more conservative William Tan.

over half of the twenty-three Central Committee members were Foochow. It seems that SCA is in fact striving to stimulate support based upon dialect group, and to establish itself as the party for the rich young aspiring Chinese executive.

Party Negara Sarawak: PANAS

The relationship between the Brooke Rajahs and their indigenous subjects had acquired a distinctly sentimental character, and there remained strong native support for continuation of the Raj. The Brookes had accorded privileged status to the Malay community in the realm of administration and government and had provided educational facilities principally for that ethnic group. At the end of Brooke rule, the permanent civil service consisted of: 1371 Malays; 456 Dayaks; 426 Chinese; and 49 Europeans. The ethnic breakdown of the last Brooke-appointed Council Negri was: 19 Malays; 12 Europeans; 4 Dayaks; 3 Chinese; and 1 Indian.<sup>38</sup> Malays, however, accounted for less than one-quarter of the state's population.

Wartime acquiescence to Japanese rule on the part of the Malay leadership only served to confirm Colonial Office opinions that preferential treatment for the Malays should be discontinued. This basic policy change set the British directly at odds with the Malay community, but London successfully effected the policy shift in Sarawak, in contrast to the unsuccessful Malayan Union plan in Malaya. Sarawak was ceded to Britain and formally became a British colony on July 1, 1946. British success in Sarawak resulted largely from the much smaller proportion of Malays in the population--18%, compared with nearly 50% in Malaya. The British expeditiously divided the local Malay aristocracy, buying the support of important leaders for the British position as "the only realistic stance." At the same time, a British political quarantine of Sarawak during this period assisted efforts to achieve compliance.

A major cleavage appeared within the Malay community as a result of the bitter dispute over Cession. An analysis of that controversy is beyond the limits of this study, suffice it to consider here but a few of its enduring consequences. During the late 1940's, a proliferation of organizations had formed to oppose Cession. Some seventeen associations declared their

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38. Higher ranking Malay Civil Servants were essentially drawn from a limited number of families with "aristocratic" connections. Not until September 1940, was the first Malay officer who was not from this "charmed circle" appointed (Mohd. Aton bin Saji). The ethnic composition of the civil service is in: Max Seitleman, "The Cession of Sarawak," Far Eastern Economic Review, February 11, 1948, p. 36; and of the Council Negri in: Sarawak Gazette, July 31, 1964.

support for independence under the Rajah: most important, the Malay National Union and its affiliates the Pergerakan Pemuda Melayu (Malay Youth Movement) and the Barisan Pemuda Sarawak (Sarawak Youth Front). The Malay National Union had been formed in 1939, all the other associations were post-war phenomena. By contrast, the only Malay organization supporting Cession was the Young Malay Association, under the leadership of the then-Assistant Commissioner of Police, Abang Othman. This latter organization, though avowedly non-political, enjoyed the imprimatur of the Colonial authorities, and it fervently celebrated British Royal weddings and births.

The struggle against Cession caused great personal hardship to certain Malay families. The new Government insisted that all Civil Servants sign a Circular expressing their loyalty to the British Crown. A total of 338 officers (335 of them Malays) in higher Government positions refused to comply and resigned effective April 1, 1947.<sup>39</sup> For more than two years thereafter, feelings and frustrations simmered throughout the Malay kampongs. Recriminations were rife, directed more against those Malays who had benefitted from Cession than against the Colonial authorities themselves. The heir apparent to the Raj, Mr. Anthony Brooke, was himself prohibited from re-entering Sarawak under a provision of the Undesirable Persons Ordinance.<sup>40</sup>

The Chinese community tended to benefit from the withdrawal of the privileged status hitherto accorded to the Malays, as did the Dayaks. Individual Malays were seen to "adjust" unobtrusively to the new order. The passage of time was definitely against those determined to restore the Brooke Raj. The situation was one of frustration, perhaps desperation, for there appeared to be no legitimate means of restoring Brooke rule. By early 1949, a Sibu-based clandestine association, The Thirteen Essential Ingredients, was formed by members of the Pergerakan Pemuda Melayu. The thirteen members were sworn to achieve two objects. First, "To sacrifice themselves if the necessity arose, because they had been resisting in vain for three years. It was essential to get liberation restored as soon as possible. They must take action because the justice they had awaited from the British Government had not materialized." Second, "To wait for the

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39. A breakdown of the Government departments from which they resigned indicates the following as the most important: Education, 76 resignations; Posts and Telegraphs, 43; Marine, 40; Customs, 26; Medical and Health, 18; Printing, 18; Land and Survey, 18. Most also lived in the vicinity of Kuching. The Government admitted that more than half of its Malay teachers had resigned also because of Cession, causing the closure of one-third of all Government Malay Schools. Sarawak, Annual Report, 1947 (Kuching: Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 47.

40. Sarawak Tribune, March 11, 1947.

opportunity to take precise action and assassinate the Governor and other British officials."<sup>41</sup>

Concealed among a group of Sibu school children, lined up in honor of the Governor's first visit, two members fatally stabbed Duncan Stewart, the Second Governor. This outrage galvanized opinion against the anti-Cessionists and terminated the effective political influence of all Malay organizations opposed to the Colonial regime. Four conspirators were hanged and another seven given long prison sentences; the Pergerakan Pemuda Melayu was declared an illegal society. One indication of the chilling and longlasting effect of this political violence is shown by the suspension of all meetings by the Barisan Pemuda Sarawak until 1958.

Two subsequent external developments helped consolidate the position of the Colonial Government. First, the rapid rise in commodity prices as a result of the Korean War greatly increased the general level of prosperity throughout Sarawak. Second, there was a general decline in the security of the Western position throughout Asia, as evidenced by the Korean War, the Malayan Emergency, and the gravity of the fighting in Indo-China. In view of the international situation, Mr. Anthony Brooke, the Rajah Muda, resolved to cease his activities against Cession and urged all in Sarawak to do likewise.<sup>42</sup> From that time onward, the organizations working against Cession lay dormant, never to regain effective popular support.

The formation of SUPP brought to a head Malay apprehension of the growing wealth and power of the Chinese community. The Brooke regime had never quite forgotten the Chinese rebellion of 1857, and consequently had been reluctant to utilize Chinese industry and talent to its full capacity. Thus they had chosen to rely heavily upon the Malays who were particularly well represented throughout the administrative machine, especially in the police force. The Malays had come to regard themselves as a privileged class, with a few aristocrats acting as the conduits and dispensers of political power.

With the Colonial regime came the spread of education to other native races and the growing economic predominance of the Chinese. The widespread involvement of the other races in Government and then politics served to underline the lowered status and importance of the Malay community. The leaders of the Malay community lived in sufficiently close proximity to observe the growing wealth and power of the Chinese in the urban districts.

41. Ibid., January 7, 1950.

42. Ibid., February 5, 1951. For the response of the Anti-Cession Movement and of the Sarawak Government, see: ibid., February 8, 1951.

They were sufficiently sophisticated to grasp the implication of the formation of a party that commanded the active support of the Chinese community. The Malays were also more familiar with the tactics of political maneuver than were other natives, for though the campaign against Cession had been unsuccessful, much experience had been accumulated in the process.

The 1959 General Elections spurred Malay leaders to action. In that contest, SUPP had achieved notable success not only in the Kuching Municipal area, but also in the predominantly native Kuching rural districts. During that campaign, the Datu Bandar (the highest ranking Malay) and a handful of colleagues carried out an improvised campaign in the coastal areas, endeavoring to convince over-eager prospective candidates that plural nominations for a single seat would only serve to ensure SUPP victories. On December 7, 1959, the Datu Bandar called all members of Council Negri who had not joined SUPP to a meeting at his residence. There he emphasized the urgency of forming a party "with an entirely different outlook than the SUPP." A majority of the Councillors present assured their support, and the Datu Bandar<sup>43</sup> was then given three months leave from his post as Government Advisor for Native Affairs to organize the party.

Party Negara Sarawak (PANAS) was duly registered on April 9, 1960, only ten months after the formation of SUPP. The first Central Executive of the party had a fairly balanced representation of Malays, Chinese and Dayaks, with the Datu Bandar as Chairman and his brother, Abang Othman,<sup>44</sup> Secretary-General. The party was, in effect, the semi-official answer to SUPP, and included within its ranks a number of Dayaks, some wealthier

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43. Report of the Secretary-General, Abang Othman, to the PANAS General Meeting for 1960 and 1961, Mimeo. (Kuching, May 1962). The Datu Bandar, Abang Haji Mustapha, was the grandson of the original Datu Hakim under the first Rajah of Sarawak. In 1941, the Rajah appointed him Datu Pahlawan and promoted him to Datu Bandar in 1946. As the highest ranking Malay, one who had been in Government service all his life, he was continually chosen to advise the new Government on matters pertaining to his community. He was a member of the Supreme Council from 1960 to 1963. According to one source, the Datu Bandar mortgaged his personal resources to support PANAS; at his death a large part of the receipts from the sale of his house were needed to liquidate his debt to the Bian Chiang Bank--the same bank which played a significant role as financier of SUPP and later SNAP.
44. Abang Othman, brother of the late Datu Bandar, retired from his post as Deputy Superintendent of the Sarawak Constabulary to become a founding member of PANAS. While in Government service, he had served as Secretary of the Young Malay Association, formed to support the Cession.

Chinese and many Malays--especially those who had not strenuously opposed Cession. The party included a broad group of established leaders, "established" in the sense that they were Government recognized, of reasonable means, and frequently appointed by the Government to representative institutions.

Despite initial significant representation of each major race, the party over time came increasingly under Malay control, with other communities having only token representation. The racial composition of the PANAS Central Executive Committee of 1963, compared with that for 1960 (given in parentheses), serves to underline this change in ethnic support: Malays, 20 (5); Chinese, 6 (7); Ibans, 4 (3); Land Dayaks, 1 (2); Kayans, 1 (0); Indians, 1 (0); uncertain, 2 (2); total, 35 (19).

PANAS rapidly expanded its support throughout the First Division, particularly in the Malay kampongs and adjacent Land Dayak districts. The Secretary-General of the party reported that, by May 1962, the total racial composition of PANAS was:

PANAS Membership by Ethnic Group--May 1962<sup>45</sup>

Ethnic group	Malay	Iban	Land Dayak	Melanau	Chinese	Javanese & Bugis	Other	Total
PANAS members	38 %	37%	19.5%	3%	1 %	1 %	0.5%	100%
Total population	17.5%	31%	8 %	6%	31.5%	6%		100%

The object of the party was primarily, "To protect, safeguard, support, foster and promote the political, educational, religious, economic, social and cultural interests of the indigenous people of Sarawak particularly and of the Ra'ayat of Sarawak generally."<sup>46</sup> Though the initial policy of PANAS was to "provide equality of opportunity for all communities," it became increasingly evident to the leaders that this approach could not solve the problem of uplifting the indigenous races to a level comparable with the Chinese: "We the indigenous people are backward in almost every sphere of political enterprise such as in education, economy, etc. There is no doubt about it and this is evident in the

45. Report of the Secretary General to the PANAS General Meeting, Kuching, May 1962 (typescript).

46. Object No. 1 of the PANAS constitution; the constitution specifies that the expression "Ra'ayat of Sarawak" means: "All persons of whatever race who were born and have their true homes in Sarawak."

villages, longhouses and kampongs throughout the country."<sup>47</sup>

This pro-native emphasis was both cause and consequence of decreased Chinese support for PANAS, and the party soon changed from its broadly non-communal stance to one which sought to maximize support from a more limited communal base. Despite ideological differences, a process only too familiar to the SUPP leadership was occurring also in PANAS. The over-representation of one ethnic group led to emphasis on the issues of most interest to that section, and that led to loss of interest in the party by other races. One further imperative spurred PANAS, and to a lesser degree SUPP, to more strident explication of communal concerns--the formation of more parties with narrower racial bases of support.

#### Barisan Ra'ayat Jati Sarawak: BARJASA

Those Malays opposed to Cession had remained politically dormant for a full nine years after the assassination of the Second Governor, Duncan Stewart. In August 1958, supporters of the defunct Barisan Pemuda Sarawak (BPS) met in Kuching and resolved to revive the organization. The former President of Barisan Pemuda Sarawak observed, "You can see by yourselves how very far our people are being left behind now." The new President, Ahmad Zaidie bin Adruce, said:

I am sick at heart to see the present conditions of our people. . . . We are not contented with our present situation and that is why we make various movements to fight for our rights in our own land. I am sad because we are still asleep. I call you all to wake up. . . . If you are afraid that 'your rice pot be inverted one day, you will find yourselves imprisoned under a big cauldron.'<sup>48</sup>

The organization as reconstituted was racial and political; its re-vitalization was in response to growing Chinese preponderance in the economy, the administration and political life. Its leader was clearly Admad Zaidie, a passionate Malay revolutionary, and he gathered around himself many young admirers.

Ahmad Zaidie captured, better than any other Sarawak Malay, the feelings of frustrated Malay nationalism. The Malays, who had lost their former privileges, could only look with envy to Indonesia and Sukarno--the great Malay liberator! Ahmad Zaidie focused intellectual Malay discontent toward his vision of a Borneo federation, "Bornesia," under the Sultan of Brunei, side-

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47. Report of the Secretary-General to the PANAS General Meeting, May 1962.

48. Barisan Pemuda Sarawak, General Meeting, August 16, 1958.

by-side with Indonesia. He attended for a year the Sultan Idris Training College in Malaya, and then during the Japanese occupation, he was sent to the Bogor Veterinary College in Java where he became a close friend of A. M. Azahari. He took part in the struggle against the Dutch, being promoted to a Staff Officer in the Kalimantan Marine Division.<sup>49</sup> Upon return to Sarawak at the end of 1947, he joined the Education Department, which sent him to Scotland for further training. He studied there until 1955, returning with an M.A. Degree--a much higher educational level than any other Sarawak Malay. He inspired his youthful followers with oratory that glorified the past greatness of the Malays--their Majapahit, their Malacca, their Brunei. He emphasized how the natives must unite and rise. He was bitterly anti-Chinese and believed in bloodshed if they did not submit. In 1956, he was elected Vice-Chairman of the Kuching Municipal Council. The following year he became President of the Barisan Pemuda Sarawak and was appointed a Government Education Officer, the highest ranking Malay officer in that Department, and stationed in Sibul. He exerted his greatest influence (from 1957 until late 1961) through his Presidency of the BPS and his close relationship with Malay teachers. Primary School teachers can be very influential in the small kampong communities.

The uprising against the British "colonialists" was to be modelled on the Indonesian experience. But the concept of Malaysia threw Zaidie off balance--it jeopardized his plans, his dream, and was the turning point in his leadership. His followers split. Ahmad Zaidie came to believe that Malaysia was a trick, whereas many of his followers saw it as a sure way to *merdeka* (independence). The "year of decision" was 1962 and the verdict was against Zaidie's brand of militance, although the Indonesian appeal to one people, one language, one country still struck a ready cord, and the struggle of the Sarawak Malays retained an affinity with the Indonesian struggle. But Malaysia was to be a reality within two years; Zaidie still offered only a vision. The new party, BARJASA, drew the moderates from his BPS and directed their energies toward the fight for Malaysia. BPS itself declared for Malaysia, and Zaidie lost the chance to lead the mainstream of Malay action. A confidant says he withdrew from the crowds, grew downhearted, and lost his grip on reality. Yet his cause was not without significant pockets of support.

The Sundar branch of BPS (in the Fifth Division) told the Cobbold Commission, "The Malaysia Plan was just a ruse used on the Borneo people to make them give up their fight for self-determination. It was a trick by which Malaya hoped to colonise the Borneo territories. . . . The three Borneo territories should

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49. He held the rank of First Lieutenant in the Angkatan Laut Republik Indonesia, Divisi IV and performed the functions of Kepala Staf I. H. Hassan Basry, Kisah Gerila Kalimantan (Dalam Revolusi Indonesia) 1945-1949 (Bandjarmasin: Lambung Mangkurat, 1961), p. 92.



be given independence first."<sup>50</sup> The District Officer reported that "Barisan Pemuda had a strong following in the Malay/Kedayan parts of the (Fifth) Division. . . Some of its leaders had strong pro-Indonesian leanings."<sup>51</sup>

The Brunei revolt came a year too late for any real possibility of "liberating" more than Brunei and its immediate environs. When it did take place, it was triggered prematurely by the arrest of a number of rebels on the Sarawak side of the border. The outcome was not what Zaidie had promised. There was no simultaneous uprising. The only apparent result was the complete discrediting of the Limbang BPS branch for its complicity and the arrest of many associates for their support of the Tentara Nasional Kalimantan Utara (TNKU). Zaidie himself was imprisoned and later placed under house arrest. On Malaysia Day 1963, he slipped away to Indonesia. It is ironic that had he remained in Sarawak, he would likely have been appointed Director of Education by 1967 or 1968. Instead he was on the list of the men most "wanted" by the Malaysian Government during the period of Indonesian Confrontation.

The membership of BPS was limited exclusively to natives. Its stated political objectives were: to unite and prepare the natives of Sarawak for self-determination; to protect the rights of the natives and promote their interests; and to combat any element from inside or outside Sarawak which was deemed detrimental to the interests of the natives and the country.<sup>52</sup> BPS branches were systematically established in Malay kampongs in every Sarawak division in the period from July 1959 to February 1963. Because of the common race and religion, it might have been expected that these Malays would join PANAS, but BPS activists usually were not willing to do so for two principal reasons. First, the Chairman of PANAS, the Datu Bandar, had strongly supported Cession--a stance which had led to allegations that he had received substantial personal rewards from the British. He was indeed awarded a C.B.E., appointed to numerous Government boards as the highest-ranking leader of the Malay community, and he tended to be somewhat dictatorial in his dealings with subordinates. Second, PANAS was led by the Kuching Malay "Abangs," the aristocrats of their community, and thus there was a difference of class, age and outlook between the leaders of PANAS and the members of BPS.

At the end of 1961, Sarawak's fourth political party was officially registered. The party, Barisan Ra'ayat Jati Sarawak (BARJASA), served to underline and help perpetuate the most basic cleavage within the Malay community, one which had disrupted

50. Ibid., March 21, 1962.

51. Annual Report of the Resident, Fifth Division for 1963, in: Sarawak Gazette, June 30, 1964.

52. Barisan Pemuda Sarawak, Revised Draft By-Laws, September 1958 (typescript).

personal relationships from the time of Cession. The Chairman of the party was Datu Tuanku Bujang,<sup>53</sup> the highest ranking Sibul Malay; he had clashed bitterly with the Datu Bandar at the time of Cession. The party set out to include all natives, but the four Dayaks on the first Central Executive had all been associated with the anti-Cession Sarawak Dayak Association. The party did allow a few Chinese to join (one appeared on the Central Executive in 1962), but they were never in a position to influence policy. BARJASA leaders openly argued in favor of special privileges for the indigenous peoples and omitted Chinese from their list of "Sarawak races."

The intellectual drive behind the party came from three men--Abdul Rahman bin Yakub, Abdul Taib bin Mahmud and Abang Han bin Abang Ahmad--two were public servants and their names could not appear on party executive lists.

Abang Han was made Publicity Chief of the party upon formation, and became its Executive Secretary in 1963. He had an early initiation to politics in Sibul, where he was at one time librarian to the Pergerakan Pemuda Melayu. He had been sentenced to death in connection with the murder of Duncan Stewart, but the sentence was later commuted, and he served a ten-year term in prison. Abdul Rahman bin Yakub, a Muslim Melanau and son of a Bintulu fisherman, had surmounted many difficulties in his quest for education and promotion. Through part-time work and study, he finally earned his Senior Cambridge Certificate, and later graduated in law from the University of Southampton. Upon his return to Sarawak, he was appointed a Deputy Public Prosecutor, but his promotion was impeded by unsympathetic expatriate officers. Abdul Taib bin Mahmud, nephew of Abdul Rahman bin Yakub, encountered few of the difficulties that hindered Abdul Rahman's progress, mainly due to the changes that had taken place in the eight years that separated the two men. The war was well over when Taib needed his secondary education; qualified natives were promised accelerated promotion, when the time came for Taib to return from his legal training at the University of Adelaide. Though Taib did not stand for election in 1963, he was nominated to the first State Cabinet, and thus became the only well-educated native member.

Other prominent leaders of BARJASA included: Haji Su'ut bin Tahir and Che Ajibah binte Abol, both of whom had been prominent anti-Cessionists; Ainnie bin Dhobi, whose brother had been hanged for the assassination of Duncan Stewart; Ustaz Mohd. Mortadza bin Haji Daud; Ustaz Abdul Kadir bin Hassan; and Haji Busrah bin Osman, Iman of the Indian Mosque. Ustaz Mortadza was chosen by BARJASA to broadcast its election policy speech. He and Ustaz Abdul Kadir were at that time lecturers attached to the Majlis Islam of Sarawak, the chief authority for Islamic

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53. In 1969, he was appointed Governor of Sarawak by the Prime Minister.

religion and Malay customary law. Ustaz Mortadza has subsequently been appointed President of the Majlis Islam. Though both lecturers formally resigned from BARJASA in December 1963, they continued to be closely associated with the party leadership.

Thus the party had a core of younger activist Muslims, conscious of their religion and tending to be much less friendly to the Colonial Government than the "Abangs" of PANAS. Because their appeal to Malays was at the expense of the aristocratic "recognized" leaders of the First Division, their immediate recruitment potential was limited. More than half of the Malays live in the First Division, and the old-established ties of respect for the "Abangs" militated against BARJASA's efforts to win the support of these Malays. In fact, the conspicuous successes were registered among Muslim Melanaus, some Land Dayaks, and Malays resident in the other Divisions of Sarawak.

A social profile of the type of candidate successfully elected by BARJASA (in 1963) exhibits the following characteristics, in comparison with the PANAS Councillor. The BARJASA Councillor is five years younger, has double the chance of being a professional, and is more likely to have been a Government employee at some time during his life. He is less well educated, though more likely to have received that education in the English medium than in Malay. Whereas more than one in four of all PANAS Councillors were Government-paid Tua Kampongs, only one in nine of the BARJASA Councillors could claim the same distinction. Thus there are rather important social differences between those recruited to PANAS and those recruited to BARJASA, the two principal Muslim parties.

#### Sarawak National Party: SNAP

The British colonial administration believed that the Malays and the Dayaks had shown markedly different attitudes toward the Japanese invaders. Whereas the Malays "treated the Japanese with respect," the Dayaks had "fiercely resented their presence and did their best to make things difficult for them. . . ." Moreover, when re-occupation began, "The Dayaks rose in their thousands and took a heavy toll of the Japanese."<sup>54</sup>

The Japanese occupation authorities did not impinge upon the local populace as deeply as in neighboring states of Southeast Asia. In contrast even to Sabah, there were no rebellions as such and only limited Japanese repression. Among the positive features of that period was the initial promotion of Malays and Dayaks to replace lower echelon European administrative officers.

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54. Mr. C. W. Dawson, the Chief Secretary of Sarawak, Private papers, November 25, 1947 (typescript).

A Dayak was even appointed Resident of the Second Division, one of the top six posts in the Rajah's Government. There were scattered incidents during 1945, mostly attacks against the Japanese, and an ugly situation did develop in the Kanowit district of the Third Division, where some twenty-three Chinese were killed by Dayak irregular forces.<sup>55</sup> This affair soured local race relations, and memory of it was kept alive by persistent Chinese efforts to re-open the case, consequent upon the acquittal of those responsible. Still this one incident was an isolated exception, not the rule.

Because many Malays remained hostile to the Colonial regime, its officers identified emotionally with the Dayaks, whom the Rajah had left as "happy savages in happy, savage surroundings."<sup>56</sup> The ideal of the simple and trustworthy Dayaks was juxtaposed against a caricature of scheming Malays and greedy Chinese, both participating in political movements at variance with British colonial desires. There were important historical precedents for reliance upon the Dayaks, for, as Pringle has shown, the very continuance of the Brooke Raj, for a time, was utterly dependent upon its Dayak backing.<sup>57</sup> Shortly after the war, the British began a major thrust to propel into modernity the hitherto neglected Dayaks. After only a year and one-half of Colonial rule, the number of non-Malay natives attending school was already almost four times the figure for 1940,<sup>58</sup> such was the higher priority accorded to the Dayaks under the new Government.

Early Dayak political aspirations were of a fragmentary character. From the small educated group in Kuching, a Sarawak Dayak Association was formed which supported the Malay National Union in the fight against Cession. At its inception, the Sarawak Dayak Association included representatives of various families whose members have since achieved considerable prominence in the political arena, but as it committed itself more exclusively to the fight against Cession, and then, in December 1947, added "politics" as one of its aims and objects, the SDA rapidly lost its character as a representative of the educated urban Dayak. Throughout the 1950's, two men controlled the Association, Eliab Bayang and Robert Jitam. Eliab Bayang had been Resident of the Second Division under the Japanese and became embittered after the British dismissed him from the Administration. Robert Jitam, also from a traditionally prominent Sebuyau Dayak family, was detained for a month at the end of 1962 for alleged complicity in the abortive Brunei revolt. Both men identified themselves

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55. Annual Report of the District Officer, Kanowit, for the year 1946 (typescript).

56. C. W. Dawson, Private papers, November 7, 1950 (typescript).

57. Robert Maxwell Pringle, "The Ibans of Sarawak under Brooke Rule, 1841-1941" (Unpub. Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1967).

58. Sarawak, Colonial Development and Welfare Plan, p. 14 (typescript, 1950).

closely with the Brooke Malay leadership--a new, exclusively-Dayak leadership passed them by.

Outside the capital, there were few expressions of Dayak feeling for or against Cession. The only outbursts were from those who employed the issue as a way of articulating their generalized hostility toward Government authority.<sup>59</sup> Except for a limited degree of sentimental attachment, the Third Rajah had not affected the Dayaks in such a manner as would have engendered basic hostility to Cession. Objectively, the Dayaks had little to lose from the change.

The inclusion by SUPP of a number of Dayaks in its Central Committee was indicative of its intention to gain maximum native support. The party did in fact successfully gain a good deal of Dayak support in its early years, more than is generally recognized. To the Ibans, particularly of the Saribas areas, PANAS was not a viable alternative, for they believed that party to be Malay controlled. The formation of the third party--the Sarawak National Party (SNAP)--took the Government by surprise, for none of the founders were Government recognized leaders (Kapitans, Penghulus or Tua Kampongs) or members of the Council Negri.<sup>60</sup> This was in distinct contrast to SUPP and particularly PANAS. The first SNAP Executive Committee was composed exclusively of Ibans originating from the Saribas district of Sarawak's Second Division. Half of the Executive members had been employed by Shell Oilfields Ltd.--in Brunei or in adjacent areas of Sarawak. Shell had provided a somewhat different political tutelage to that of the Government in Kuching.

The founders were a particularly mobile self-made group of Ibans. The Chairman of SNAP, J. S. Tinker, was born in Betong, educated in Kuching, and worked with Shell through the 1920's before joining the Government service in Kuching. He worked as a District Officer during the Japanese occupation. Both Vice-Chairmen had spent considerable time in Singapore. Edward Howell was educated there at St. Andrew's School and then the Raffles Institution. Lionell Bediman Ketit had worked in a

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59. Some Dayaks took an opposite line to the Malays by espousing a pro-British cause, objecting to claims that "the natives of Sarawak are against Cession. . . . [On the other hand] a few ex-Penghulus and other trouble makers also belong to the Pergerakan Pemuda Melayu . . . merely because it is 'agin the Government.'" Annual Report of the District Officer, Kanowit (typescript, 1947).

60. Not only was SNAP dominated by Ibans, but there has been a conspicuous absence of Government-appointed Dayaks at all levels of the party. For instance, the proportion of Penghulus, Pengarahs, Tua Kampongs, Tuai Rumahs and Orang Kaya Pemanchas to Dayak members of the Central Executive Committee rose from 6% in 1964 to only 14% in 1966-67 and dropped to 12% in 1967-68.

family business in Singapore from 1933 to the end of the war and for Brunei Shell from 1949 to 1961. His family is prominent in the Saribas district. Ketit was Vice-President of the Dayak Association, Brunei, from its inception in 1958. The Secretary-General of SNAP was Stephen Kalong Ningkan, who had worked as a Hospital Assistant for Brunei Shell from 1950 to 1960. While there he had formed the Dayak Association (1958), in competition with the Company sponsored Dayak Club, and was elected its President. Ningkan had worked earlier with the Police in the Third Division, stationed at Kapit during the Japanese occupation.

These four men--Tinker, Howell, Ketit and Ningkan--were the prime movers behind the formation of SNAP. Other members of the first Central Committee were Edwin Howell, who had served as an engineer with Brunei Shell; David Lawrence Usit, who had moved to Sabah and spent the years prior to the war working there; Matthew Danna Ujai, who had also spent some time in Singapore and Malaya; Andrew Bunga; and Azarias Malong.

The actual decision to form the party was taken in Brunei; the prime movers then resigned from their Shell positions and proceeded to Kuching to effect registration. The party was formally inaugurated on April 10, 1961. It appears to have existed on meagre resources, principally the pensions and savings of the founders. The financial report for the first year (to May 14, 1962) lists loans to the party from S. K. Ningkan (M\$1,724), Bediman Ketit (M\$851), and J. S. Tinker (M\$385).

A year later the Central Executive Committee, though changed a little, was still entirely Iban with one exception--Maurice Krishna Menon, a former Shell employee. Though an Indian, he was married to an Iban and lived in Betong, administrative headquarters of the Saribas district.

SNAP formed its first branches in the First, Second, Fourth and Fifth Division--within those divisions almost all the branches were located in predominantly Iban districts. The Fourth and Fifth Division branches were in the areas where Ibans had migrated from the Second Division. In 1962, SNAP extended to the Third Division, but confined its branches to the northern Mukah, Oya and Balingian districts--areas which were also linked by migration from the Second Division.

In the period 1963 to 1965, SNAP consolidated its branch structure in the Second and Fourth Divisions. The party, though including other races, remained predominantly Iban through 1965--introducing the first two Chinese to the eighteen-member Central Executive Committee in 1964, and adding one more Chinese in 1965. No Malays were yet included, a factor related in some measure to the history of antipathy toward Malays in the Saribas District, from which the original founders of SNAP came. The dramatic changes in SNAP took place in 1966, stimulated by its ejection from the ruling Alliance Government. These changes will be discussed as we consider the Sarawak Alliance Party.

Initial policy statements by SNAP suggested an "input" from various directions, for the party stressed Sarawak nationalism, advancement of native interests, and conservative economics. The first two elements can be viewed as a reflection of Iban leadership, and the communal interests of that race; support for conservative economics is more likely a reflection of tutorship by Shell Oil Company personnel.<sup>61</sup>

#### Party Pesaka Anak Sarawak: PESAKA

The Ibans have also been divided in the course of history. Rajah Charles Brooke employed Second Division Ibans (Sea Dayaks), principally from the Saribas district, in his efforts to pacify Ibans of the Rejang River, Third Division. The animosities aroused by those campaigns still persist. The Brookes also allocated exclusive territory to particular Christian Missions. The Second Division was an Anglican (S.P.G.) preserve and that Mission established schools in the Dayak areas--most notably St. Augustine's, Betong, in the heart of the Saribas district. The Rajah permitted the Methodist and Catholic churches to proselytize in the Third Division. Both those churches chose to locate their schools in the predominantly Chinese and Malay town areas. The Ibans of the Second Division had thus been exposed to Government, and to education, longer and more thoroughly than those of the Third Division. The historic cleavage, born in battle, was cemented on a more durable base. For this reason, the formation of SNAP had very little impact throughout the whole length of the Rejang and its watershed. The only areas of the Third Division where SNAP developed significant support were the Mukah, Oya and Balingian Districts--areas linked by comparatively recent migration from the Second Division.

The Dayaks of the Third Division were fragmented politically. Some were members of SUPP, others had followed Temenggong Jugah and joined PANAS, and those in the northern district had joined SNAP. Numerically they were of critical importance to the future of Sarawak, particularly under the tiered electoral system. The Third Division has the highest population of any Division, and the Ibans are a clear majority of its population. By mid-1962, those with a broader view could see that the British Government was intent upon forging ahead with the formation of Malaysia, thus substantially accelerating the drive toward independence. It was also clear that although the Third Division Ibans were in a pivotal position, they were so split as to be rendered politically

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61. A senior Shell officer was reputed to have personally guided Stephen Kalong Ningkan during his years in Brunei. A Shell lawyer drafted the party's constitution. The first two "internal" policies to be followed by SNAP were listed as: "1. A balanced budget," and "2. A reduced national debt." Neither of those planks were stressed in subsequent party policy statements.

ineffectual, and could be "swamped" within Malaysia.<sup>62</sup>

A senior expatriate officer initiated unofficial efforts to form a party that would unite the Rejang River Dayaks, and thus create a bond that would enable them to become politically potent and stand on their own feet. The key Dayaks in the formation of this new Party PESAKA were Penghulu Masam anak Radin, T. R. Francis Bujang anak Manja, Penghulu Francis Umpau and Penghulu Chundi anak Resa. The first three lived in the Kanowit district and the fourth in Sungei Aup, Sibu district. Penghulus Masam and Francis Bujang had served as trackers with the Sarawak Rangers during the Malayan Emergency. Penghulu Umpau was a brother-in-law of Penghulu Francis Bujang, and they both had been Primary School teachers. Another important Iban was soon to leave SUPP and join PESAKA--Jonathan Bangau, who had been both a schoolteacher and an enterprising businessman.

Though Penghulu Umpau was a member of the PANAS Central Committee, he was quite willing to step down and form a new party. The same was not true for Temenggong Jugah, then a Vice-Chairman of PANAS, who seemed to value the "old boy" character of PANAS. In mid-July 1962, the Temenggong was confronted by the four founders, and their many supporters, at the Sibu airport. A passionate argument ensued with Jugah relenting in the end and agreeing to proceed to Kanowit. Drafting of the inaugural statement and constitution and the selection of officers took the following four days and nights. Party PESAKA limited its membership exclusively to Dayaks, and its objects among others included:<sup>63</sup>

To assist all Dayaks to unite in pursuing the common aim and interest with the object of promoting and presenting an unifying [sic] approach to problems which affect their people in the successful government of this country.

To preserve the heritage of Sarawak having regard to the necessity of promoting the political, social, economical and cultural advancement of the Dayaks in a constantly changing world.

To ensure by all constitutional means the Dayaks have a rightful say in the government of the territory.

Temenggong Jugah became the founder President of the new party.

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62. Pengarah Banyang and Penghulu Umpau, announcing their intention to form a political party, stressed that unless the Dayaks "could present a common and united front, they would be completely overwhelmed." They went on to confidently assert their belief that "future leadership would, of course, rest with the Dayak people." Sarawak Tribune, June 18, 1962.

63. Ibid., July 20, 1962.



By contrast with SNAP, more than half of the Central Executive Committee members of PESAKA were of the rank of Penghulu or above. This remained true until 1966, and PESAKA has often been criticized by SNAP members as a "Penghulus' party." The situation is attributable to the relative absence of educated alternative Dayak leadership in the Third Division, a state of affairs which is rapidly changing.

Some 40% of all successful PESAKA Councillors (in 1963) held the rank of Penghulu, Pengarah or Orang Kaya Pemancha. The comparable proportion for SNAP was 22%. As with SNAP, PESAKA Councillors were overwhelmingly Iban (86% and 91% respectively), though PESAKA picked up its extra support from the "other indigenous" category of peoples. SNAP found its residual support from the Land Dayaks. Almost two-thirds of the Councillors of both parties were Christian (62% of PESAKA and 65% of SNAP), though Anglican was the religion for SNAP and Roman Catholic or Methodist for PESAKA. The remaining SNAP and PESAKA Councillors were nearly all animist. Age differences between Councillors of the two parties are not statistically significant, but the level of education of those educated is appreciably higher in SNAP than for PESAKA. There is an interesting and influential group of eight PESAKA Councillors who have served in the Armed forces--most of them having been members of the Sarawak Rangers Unit sent to Malaya during the Emergency. These men have played an important leadership role in the party.

### Conclusion

For the first two years, formal party politics was the exclusive province of two parties, both initially created under the auspices of elite groups. SUPP was founded by a core group of Hokkien business interests and PANAS by the Kuching Malay Abangs. But elite control could not be adequately maintained, for a challenge was mounted from within SUPP and from without PANAS, a challenge that severely circumscribed each elite's capacity to establish and maintain its hegemony over one whole race. The creation of a series of parties, each based upon a segment of one major community, set in motion a process that threatened to displace the established leadership in each community. Elite displacement is in fact positively correlated with its inability to form a dominant communal party, and the ensuing challenge to its ruling position from those of the same race.

Maurice Duverger related the origins and growth of political parties to the advent of parliaments and an extension in the size of the electorate.<sup>64</sup> This sequential cause-effect association was borne out in Sarawak, though often it is inappropriate as a

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64. Maurice Duverger, Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State (New York: Wiley, 1963).

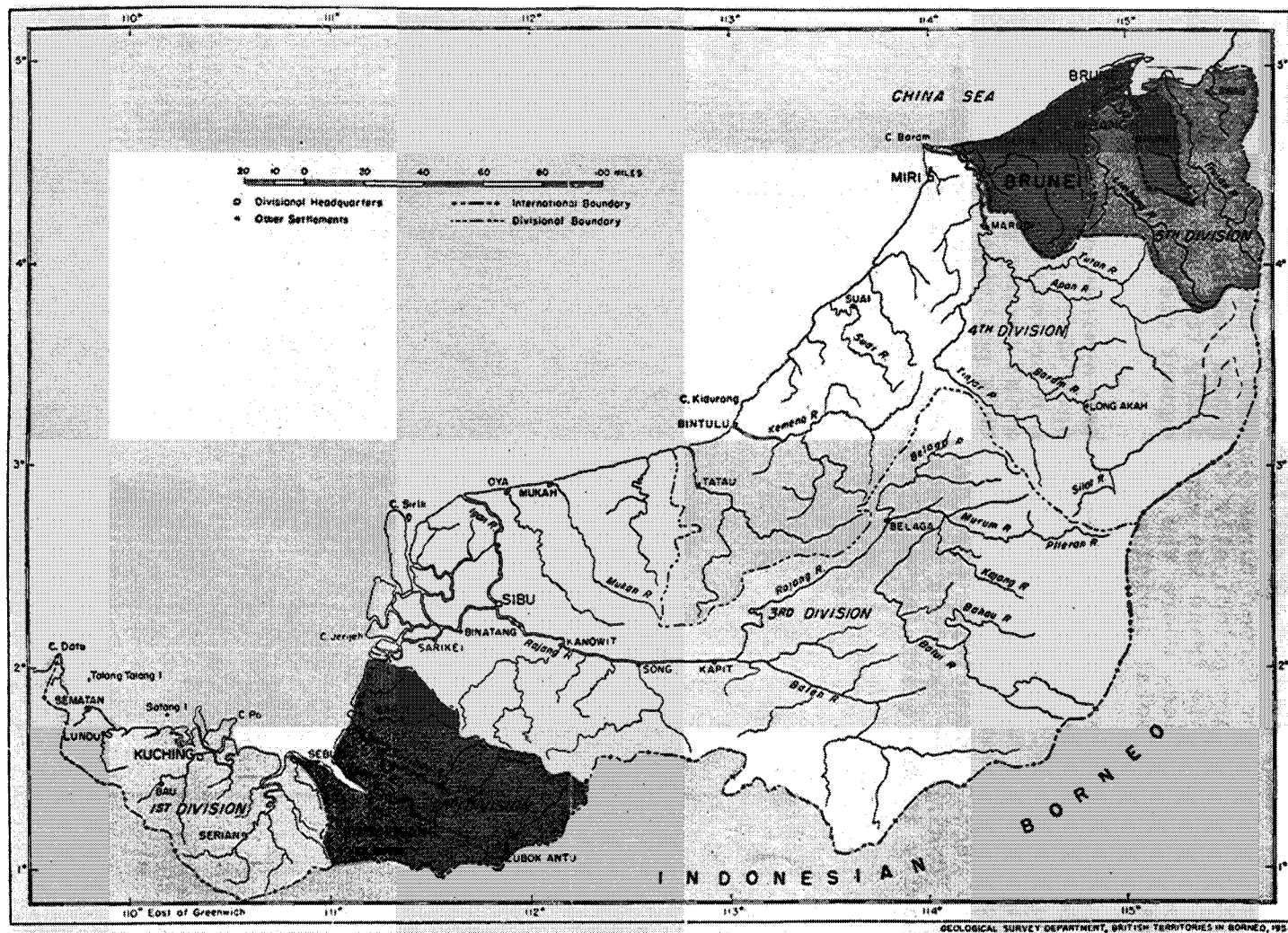
description of political evolution in Asia. In those states where gaining independence involved militant struggle, parties characteristically antedated extension of the popular franchise and introduction of meaningful parliamentary institutions. There was an element of that experience in Sarawak during the abortive struggle against Cession (1946-1949), when both the Malay National Union and the Barisan Pemuda Sarawak performed most of the functions of a political party.

Sarawak party formation in the period under consideration (1959-1963) was stimulated by extension of the electorate and introduction of responsible parliamentary institutions. However the principal motivating force for all but the first two parties (SUPP and PANAS) was the impending grant of independence in 1963. In a process that gathered momentum, each group perceived that this was the moment when they must jockey to establish and preserve their claim to power--hence the ensuing proliferation of parties.

Duverger distinguished "internally-created" from "externally-created" parties, the latter emerging from outside the existing group of legislators and involving a challenge to the ruling group. SUPP was at its inception an "internally-created" party, a creation of those who were already legislators. It was followed by another such party, PANAS, and later both PESAKA and SCA too were such creations. For instance, the number of Council Negri members from the period 1955-1959 who joined each party was: PANAS 8, SUPP 5, SCA 4, and PESAKA 3. By contrast only one joined BARJASA and one gave his support to SNAP. At the inception of BARJASA and SNAP, their leaders emerged from outside the Parliament and represented a challenge to the previously-appointed group of legislators. They were the two "externally-created" parties.

Although internally-created, the functioning of a democratically organized party structure soon changed the character of SUPP. As influence began to flow reciprocally in two directions, those lower down in the network soon learned to manipulate the party in order to change its essence, as understood by party founders. By 1963, SUPP was recruiting most candidates from outside the realm of the previously-elected leadership. For if we take all District Councillors elected in the 1963 election and identify them by the party which they joined (even if not directly elected under its auspices), we find that the proportion of Councillors elected for the first time was highest in SUPP (69%), with all other parties ranked in the following order: SNAP (62%), BARJASA (55%), PANAS (50%), PESAKA (33%) and SCA (0%). This is a fair indication of the ranking from external to internal creation.

Once SUPP had clearly identified itself as hostile to the Colonial Government, and SCA had been created in its stead to pursue the conservative stance, each major community had two parties--each striving to represent that community plus whoever



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else could be attracted its way. For every major ethnic group one party could legitimately claim official support, namely PANAS, PESAKA and SCA. The other three, BARJASA, SNAP and SUPP sought to usurp power from the influential leadership, as represented by the former three parties. Campaigning energies and bitterness were principally directed inward, within each ethnic group. This trend was especially true for the Malay and Chinese communities, where the subsequent election campaign caused serious social division.

The very cleavages that militated against communal unity created a multiplicity of disagreements which have in face promoted conflict resolution through a process of flexible realignments. Rather than making racial blocks more rigid, as occurred elsewhere in Malaysia, this political division within racial communities provided a ready basis for compromise, forcing the factions to seek allies outside their community in the quest for political power.